

Still in France
Nov 4, 1918

Dear Mr. Tauber:

You have not heard from me in some time, but I am sure you and those at the office that still remember me, will be happy to hear how I like this peaceful war and arrange to keep ducking shells. This life as you know is just a little different than one I spent with you, but really Mr. Tauber I would not miss this experience, or desert to go over it again for anything in God's world. The hardships are plenty, but, when one is seasoned with the career a soldier must lead in active service, the daily routine becomes a secondary matter. Right now I am just as health[y] as I ever was before in my life, and just as fun in spirits, and this is because I know I am doing my little bit in this great struggle. What I have gone through is all a pleasure for the simple reason I realize that some will be very instrumental in making a better man out of me when I return to civilian life.

When we first landed in France, we were trained with the British, we did not stay with them very long thank the Lord and we were very happy to get away from cheese, tea, and hard tack. It was then that most of us realized we were soldiers for we had the great pleasure of hiking for three days. I often wonder how many times I blessed the Kaiser on that journey. This was in June so of course we had to have our overcoats just to make our pack a little heavier. When night came we were happy to rest anywhere which usually was under the stars. After this young hike of 75 miles we were put aboard French side door Pullmans, we had some straw so that the thirty of us in the car would feel at home for the two-day trip. We had army chicken (bully-beef) and hard tack for 48 hours. We all arrived safely excepting that our teeth needed some attention.

After a little more hiking we finally established a hospital on a quiet sector, we had it very nice here for six weeks for the hospital was in barracks and we had nice quarters and fine food while we were here. It was a sad day for us when we had to leave this place for since then we have been in active service and have lived very much under adverse conditions.

We have set up hospital after hospital but always find it impossible to get settled anywhere for our doughboys have chased the hun[s] so far that it is impossible to have a hospital near them they move so fast. In the drives we had to move daily. Our division has yet to retreat once and we have been in the lines for three months now, so you can realize how much moving we have done. We are so use[d] to this we can have our hospital all set anywhere in one hour.

I shall never forget the night the drive started at the last front we were at, we had our hospital all set that day and looked forward for a peaceful nights rest when at exactly 11:30pm every gun around went off at once and continued delivering iron rations to the Germans all that night, that racket it still rings in my ears, the harmony was wonderful, the shells kept sailing over our heads without a let up. It was a wonderful spot to spend the evening, it sure was no place for anyone with an uncurable headache. Our nights rest was very much interfered with.

We were kept very busy at this place when the wounded started to come in and most of our boys worked day and night to help the poor fellows along. The American boys Mr. Tauber certainly deserve all the credit in the world and you could agree with me if you seen the condition they were in when they arrived at our hospital, death staring them in the face, and still all full of smiles. In that week 2,500 passed through our hospital.

We are operating a hospital now and before we drove the Germans back we had a little fun around here, it was necessary for us to dig our homes in the ground in order that we would not annoy any shells that were flying in our direction we had to be on the alert all the time, for they would come over at no specified hour. There was some observation balloons very near us that offered us great amusement during the day, for Jerry's planes tried on several occasions to bring them down, and every time he would get to[o] close, the observers would decide it was very much healthier on earth so they would jump out with a parachute, these sights were all very interesting to us around here. We have had quite a few wounded Germans come into our hospital here, some of them were not more than seventeen, in pretty near every instance they were wounded badly, it certainly does prove that our boys sure do shoot straight. They all were happy to be taken prisoners and say they are beaten and the war will be over soon.

I might say a word about the girls with Y.M.C.A. they certainly are doing wonders for the wounded, they are always around our hospital singing and entertaining the boys, it puts new life into the wounded as they lay here impossible to move.

We all feel that this war will end soon now, but the boys are still after them and will be until they admit they are beaten.

I know I have taken quite a little of your time up with this long letter Mr. Tauber, but I am sure you will be glad to hear a little of my experience over here. Hoping to hear from you and trusting this finds you and your family in the best of health, and with kindest regards to everyone at the office and yourself. I am as ever-

William Tandler
307 Field Hospital
302 Sanitary Train A.E.F.

P.S. I am enclosing tag which was in the shirt that was issued to me on Oct 25th just one year to the day, after the contract was placed. I am happy to wear it and find T.R.& Co shirts just as comfortable as ever.