

# Lenard Allen Grundvig

*A Small Cog in the Machine of War*

A Historical Companion to the Chronological Reading Edition

Company C, 362nd Infantry, 91st “Wild West” Division

American Expeditionary Forces, 1917–1919

*Research companion prepared as a private study aid — not manuscript text.*

*Historical context keyed to the letters and notebook entries in the Smooth-Reading Aggregate.*

## How to Read This Document

This companion follows Lenard chronologically from the Wellington and Desert Lake farm diary of 1913 to the Le Mans embarkation area in early 1919. Each section names the letters or notebook entries it accompanies, quotes a line or two of his own words in italics, and then widens the lens: what his unit was doing, what the war was doing, and what the numbers were. Full-page plates, numbered I through XVII, present the period photographs at the point in the story where each belongs; every plate carries its own caption and source line. Nearly everything cited is public domain — U.S. Army Signal Corps photographs at the National Archives, Library of Congress panoramas, and the division's own 1919 published history.

One source deserves special mention at the outset. *The Story of the 91st Division*, published in San Francisco in 1919 by the division's own officers, is freely available in full at [archive.org](http://archive.org). It contains maps, casualty rolls, photographs, and day-by-day operational narrative for every action described below. It is the single best companion volume to these letters, and because Lenard's Company C appears in its pages, it functions almost as the official counterpart to his private record.

A few conventions govern what follows. Lenard's own words are always in italics and are quoted exactly as he wrote them — spelling, punctuation, and all. His phonetic renderings of French place-names (“Cle-su-tile” for Is-sur-Tille) are identified once and then left in his spelling, because the mishearings are themselves part of the record: they preserve how France sounded to a Utah farm boy who had never heard the language spoken. Dates are given as he headed them; where a letter is undated, the dating assigned from internal evidence is noted. Bracketed citations — [Bib. N] — point to the numbered bibliography at the back of this companion.

The commentary corrects nothing in the letters and softens nothing. Where Lenard repeats a rumor or misjudges a distance, the note says so, and says why the error itself is informative. And where the letters are silent, the silence is preserved. The most important events of his war are precisely the ones he wrote least about, and a reader should feel that gap rather than have it paved over with borrowed detail.

# I. The World He Left — Wellington and Desert Lake, 1913

Accompanies: the Farm Diary, 1 June – 31 August 1913.

*June 20. Erected derrick, nearly by hell. ... July 4. Had one hell of a time.*

— Farm Diary, 1913

The diary is worth reading closely before any of the war material, because it establishes the scale of Lenard's world: hay by the acre, water by the barrel, fish caught in a mud puddle, fifty-six automobiles passing through Wellington counted as an event. It is a nineteenth-century agricultural life running on into the twentieth. Two details reward attention. First, he is a reader — the Bible in daily chapters, Abe Lincoln Yarns, and Orison Swett Marden's *Pushing to the Front*, the best-selling self-improvement gospel of the era. That book preaches exactly the doctrine Lenard will write out for himself six years later in a French billet under the heading “Ways of Self Improvement.” The through-line from the Desert Lake hayfields to the army notebook is unbroken.

Second, the date. When Lenard closed this diary at the end of August 1913, Europe had a little less than one year of peace remaining. The continent he would eventually cross was an armed camp of alliances — Germany and Austria-Hungary on one side, France, Russia, and Britain loosely on the other — held in balance by treaties and mobilization timetables. On 28 June 1914, ten months after the last diary entry, Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated at Sarajevo, and by early August the timetables had taken over. Nothing in the diary suggests the slightest awareness that any of this machinery existed. That innocence was general: almost no one in Carbon County in 1913 imagined that events in the Balkans would one day put Wellington farm boys in Belgium.

Between 1914 and 1917 the United States watched from a distance that steadily shrank. German submarines sank the liner *Lusitania* in May 1915 with 128 Americans among the dead. In January 1917 Germany gambled on unrestricted submarine warfare — sinking neutral ships on sight — calculating that Britain could be starved out before American power could matter. The intercepted Zimmermann Telegram, in which Germany offered Mexico an alliance and the return of the American Southwest, removed the last doubt. The United States declared war on 6 April 1917.

The country then had a Regular Army of a little over 125,000 men — smaller than Portugal's. To build a force that could matter in Europe, Congress passed the Selective Service Act on 18 May 1917. On 5 June, nearly ten million men registered in a single day; by war's end some twenty-four million had registered and about 2.8 million were inducted. The first lottery numbers were drawn in Washington on 20 July 1917, and the first increments of drafted men reported to brand-new training camps that September. Lenard's number came up in that first great wave. He was one of roughly 4.7 million Americans who would ultimately serve, and one of about two million who would reach France.

## II. Camp Lewis and the Wild West Division — September 1917 to June 1918

### PLATE I

#### Camp Lewis, Tacoma, Washington, 1917

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*The cantonment newly completed — mile after mile of identical two-story barracks thrown up in roughly ninety days on the American Lake prairie south of Tacoma. Lenard's first army address, and the physical scale of the National Army effort in a single frame.*

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Panoramic Photographs Collection. Public domain. [Bib. 13]

Accompanies: the Company C retrospective history; “Learning to Drill” (11 October 1917); “A Trip to the Football Game” (10 November 1917); “Camp Lewis Drill” (14 November 1917); “Christmas at Camp” (24 December 1917); the Mother's Day note (12 May 1918).

*Company “C” of the 362nd was organized in the early part of September 1917, being made up principally of Montana boys... It was about that time that I became a member of the company.*

— Company history

Camp Lewis, on the American Lake prairie south of Tacoma, Washington, was one of sixteen enormous cantonments the Army threw up in the summer of 1917 to house the National Army — the draftee force, distinct from the old Regular Army and the National Guard. Built in about ninety days on some seventy thousand acres, it could hold on the order of forty to fifty thousand men, and it was widely considered the finest of the sixteen. Lenard's first night in a newly built mule stable was the authentic Camp Lewis experience: the men frequently arrived faster than the buildings.

PLATE II  
**Infantry Drill, Camp Lewis**

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*Infantry of the 361st — the sister regiment of Lenard's own 362nd in the 181st Brigade — at drill on the Camp Lewis parade ground. The position-and-aiming work he describes in “Learning to Drill” and “Camp Lewis Drill” looked exactly like this.*

U.S. National Archives, Record Group 111-SC, NARA ID 31475884. Public domain. [Bib. 14]

The division organized there was the 91st, drawing draftees from Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, and Alaska — hence the “Wild West Division,” with a green fir tree for its shoulder insignia and the battle cry “Powder River! Let 'er Buck!” Its infantry was organized in two brigades: the 181st Brigade held the 361st and 362nd Infantry Regiments, the 182nd held the 363rd and 364th. Lenard's 362nd was predominantly Montana men, which is exactly what his company history says. A full-strength wartime infantry company ran to about 250 men; a regiment about 3,700; the division as a whole about 27,000 — twice the size of a British or German division. Keep the figure of 250 in mind. It is the number that gives his December 1918 sentence about “about 20 old men left” its true weight.

The training Lenard describes — position and aiming drill, bayonet work, gas mask instruction — was the standard ten-month syllabus, and his complaint about repeatedly losing trained men to transfers is historically exact. Western divisions were bled again and again for replacements to fill

earlier-sailing units, then rebuilt with fresh drafts. It was a system that infuriated every division commander in the Army, and it is why the 91st did not sail until the summer of 1918.

*There comes the 91st Division team onto the field... the time is up and the score is 13 to 0 in their favor.*

— “A Trip to the Football Game,” 10 November 1917

The football excursion is a small window into a genuine phenomenon of 1917: great service teams stocked with college stars, drawing enormous crowds. The Camp Lewis–Marine rivalry Lenard watched at the Tacoma Stadium that fall culminated seven weeks later in the Rose Bowl itself — on 1 January 1918 the Mare Island Marines beat the Camp Lewis Army team 19–7 in Pasadena. Lenard, in other words, watched a preview of the Rose Bowl from the bleachers with sixty pounds of army wool on his back, and the Indianapolis sliding past in Tacoma Bay behind the goalposts.

The Christmas 1917 letter needs its financial footnote: a private's pay was \$30 a month, and Lenard was having premiums for a \$10,000 War Risk Insurance policy deducted from it — the government life insurance program created in October 1917. Millions of soldiers carried it. It is why he is short of cash for Christmas presents, and it is the same bureaucratic machinery behind the army serial number — 2,260,009 — that he will carefully teach his mother in July 1918. A man was a name to his family and a number to the machine, and Lenard understood, correctly, that in any dealings with the machine the number was the thing that counted.

While Company C drilled in the Puget Sound rain, the war was turning in Germany's favor. The British offensive at Passchendaele in Flanders — the ground Lenard would later cross — ended in mid-November 1917 after three months of fighting in the mud that cost the two sides combined casualties approaching half a million men for an advance of about five miles. The same month, the Bolsheviks seized power in Russia; by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in March 1918 Russia was out of the war entirely, freeing roughly fifty German divisions for the Western Front. Every planner in Europe could read the arithmetic: Germany would have numerical superiority in the West for one campaigning season, until the Americans arrived in strength. The spring of 1918 would be a race, and Lenard was part of the stake.

The order came at last in June. Final drafts had arrived through the spring to bring the regiments to war strength — thousands of men with only weeks of training, a fact that would matter cruelly in the Argonne — and in the third week of June 1918 the division began entraining for the East Coast, ten months after its first draftees had slept in the mule stables. The Camp Lewis chapter of the 91st was over; the prairie cantonment would go on training other men for other divisions until the Armistice.

### III. The Race Across the Atlantic — June and July 1918

Accompanies: “Troop Train East” (1 July 1918) and the crossing narrative in the Company C history.

*Kids would flock around the train so thick and fast that it was almost impossible for 3 policemen to keep them back.*

— Letter from Camp Merritt, 1 July 1918

The reason for the haste — six days across the continent, five days at Camp Merritt, straight onto a ship — was that the German gamble had come very close to succeeding. Beginning on 21 March 1918, Ludendorff launched a series of massive offensives: Operation Michael against the British, then Georgette in Flanders, then Blücher-Yorck in May, which broke through to the Marne River about fifty miles from Paris. The German army suffered on the order of 700,000 to 800,000 casualties in these offensives and inflicted comparable losses on the Allies. The Allied response was to demand American manpower immediately, in any condition, and the transatlantic ferry went to full throttle: from a trickle in 1917 to roughly ten thousand men a day by the summer of 1918. July 1918, the very month Lenard crossed, was the peak — over 300,000 American soldiers shipped in thirty-one days. The crowds of Chicago children mobbing his troop train were watching that flood go past their doorsteps.

Camp Merritt, New Jersey, was the great staging pen for the Hoboken port of embarkation — the origin of the doughboy slogan “Heaven, Hell, or Hoboken by Christmas.” On 5 July the company marched to Alpine Landing on the Hudson, ferried down to the harbor, and boarded the Empress of Russia — a requisitioned Canadian Pacific ocean liner, one of the fast former passenger ships that carried much of the AEF. His unsentimental memories of the British crew and the stewed-cat rations are a fair sample of what nearly every doughboy wrote about British trooping arrangements.

The crossing itself, which the company history compresses into a few dry lines, followed the standard pattern of the summer surge. Troopships sailed in convoy and zigzagged on a fixed schedule day and night; life belts were worn or carried at all times and lifeboat drill was held daily; lights, smoking on deck, and even thrown-overboard refuse were controlled, because a floating orange peel could mark a convoy's track for a submarine. The British two-meals-a-day ration was a standing grievance across the entire AEF — Lenard's stewed-cat verdict has ten thousand parallels in other men's letters. On the approach to the danger zone the escort thickened exactly as he describes on 17 July: destroyers first, then dirigibles and observation balloons, the whole apparatus of the anti-submarine war turning out to walk the convoy in to port, and thence across the Channel to Le Havre and the waiting boxcars.

PLATE III  
**The Empress of Russia**

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*The requisitioned Canadian Pacific liner in wartime service — the fast former passenger ship that carried Company C out of New York harbor in July 1918, stewed-cat rations and all.*

Wikimedia Commons; pre-1929 photograph, presumed public domain. [Bib. 15]

The convoy arrangements he describes on 17 July — destroyers, dirigibles, and observation balloons appearing off the Irish coast — were the system that won the tonnage war. After Britain adopted convoying in mid-1917, shipping losses fell steeply, and the troop pipeline itself proved astonishingly safe: of the roughly two million Americans carried to Europe, only a few hundred were lost to submarine attack, almost all in a handful of incidents such as the sinking of the *Tuscania* in February 1918. Not one heavily loaded eastbound American troopship went down in the summer surge that carried Lenard. The U-boat campaign that had brought America into the war failed utterly to stop America from arriving.

## IV. A French Summer — Billets, Gas Masks, and the Turning Tide

Accompanies: “Somewhere in France: Farm Life” (late summer 1918) and “Somewhere in France: Camp Life” (early autumn 1918).

*Occasionally we help a farmer (sometimes a man and sometimes a woman) unload a load of grain.*

— Letter, late summer 1918

From Le Havre the division moved by rail past Rouen and around Paris to its training area in the Haute-Marne, the rolling farm country of northeastern France. The village Lenard renders as “Dammartin” is almost certainly Dammartin-sur-Meuse, in the cluster of villages around Montigny-le-Roi where the 91st trained — and only a few miles from Chaumont, General Pershing's General Headquarters of the entire AEF. Lenard spent his French summer, without quite saying so, in the shadow of the war's American nerve center.

His letters from this period are a nearly perfect specimen of the AEF billeting system. American units were quartered in French villages — haylofts, barns, spare rooms — paying rent to the owners, and the image he draws of stone villages with the barn, dwelling, and manure pile under one arrangement, with no farmhouses out on the land, is exactly how doughboys from the American West described a countryside that had been continuously farmed for a thousand years. The detail that the grain was being brought in “sometimes by a man and sometimes a woman” carries more history than it seems to: by the summer of 1918 France had suffered well over a million military dead from a population of under forty million, and its fields were worked to a great degree by women, old men, and boys.

Note also the Carbon County thread that runs through even these letters: John Colgani of Helper teaching the evening French class, Dennis Kidwell billeted in the same village. The National Army kept neighbors together, which meant that when a company was destroyed, the grief was geographically concentrated at home — a fact that will matter in Section VI.

The maneuvers and gas drill he mentions were the final polish. Gas discipline was drilled obsessively because gas — chlorine, phosgene, and above all mustard — caused roughly a quarter of all American battle casualties, though it killed comparatively few. And while Company C practiced, the initiative changed hands for good. The Second Battle of the Marne in mid-July threw the Germans back from the river; on 8 August at Amiens the British broke the German line so badly that Ludendorff called it “the black day of the German Army”; and on 12–16 September, the brand-new American First Army — over half a million men — erased the Saint-Mihiel salient in the first fully independent American operation of the war. When Lenard wrote that “the Yanks are here in hundreds of thousands and are starting to make their determination felt,” he was reporting, accurately, the strategic fact of the autumn of 1918.

## V. Pleurisy — The Illness That Probably Saved His Life

Accompanies: “Hospital and Pleurisy” (15 September 1918) and “Base Hospital” (2 October 1918).

*I have been in the hospital two weeks from pleurisy... they will not let one go again until they are entirely well.*

— Letter, 15 September 1918

Around the first of September 1918, Lenard entered Camp Hospital No. 8, near Montigny — he himself locates it “not so far from Chaumont” — with pleurisy, an inflammation of the lining of the lungs. The old fort he toured on his convalescent walk in the 2 October letter was almost certainly one of the ring of nineteenth-century forts around Langres, the walled hilltop town nearby that the AEF used as its great schools center.

The timing of this illness is the hinge of his entire war, and it is worth being direct about it. While he lay in a 36-bed ward eating blackberries with canned milk, his division moved north by rail and bus to the Meuse-Argonne front, and on 26 September Company C went over the top without him. By the time he was discharged and had worked his way forward through the replacement system — through Is-sur-Tille (his phonetic “Cle-su-tile”), the enormous regulating station and casual camp near Dijon, then Saint-Dizier, then Revigny — the battle that destroyed his company was over. Pleurisy is a painful, tedious, unglamorous illness. It very probably saved his life, and the December letter shows he understood this: “I thought it unfortunate that I was unable to be with them... but after seeing things after they came back, I may be fortunate.”

His hospital weeks also coincided exactly with the arrival in France of the second and deadliest wave of the influenza pandemic. September and October 1918 saw the AEF's hospitals overwhelmed — not with wounds but with flu and the pneumonia that followed it. October 1918 remains the deadliest single month in recorded American history: on the order of 195,000 Americans died of influenza at home in those thirty-one days. Roughly 45,000 American soldiers and sailors died of flu and pneumonia during the war — within reach of the 53,402 who died in battle — and worldwide the pandemic killed at least fifty million people, several times the war's own total. Lenard's pleurisy was not influenza, but every hospital scene in his letters should be read against that background: he was recuperating inside a medical system entering its worst weeks since the Civil War.

## VI. The Meuse-Argonne — The Battle He Missed

Accompanies: the retrospective passage in the letter of 15 December 1918 (“Belgium Post-Armistice”).

*There was only about 20 old men left in the company, and they were in very poor condition. Our outfit suffered losses so heavy that it seemed that all were either killed or wounded.*

— Letter, 15 December 1918

The Meuse-Argonne Offensive, launched on 26 September 1918 between the Argonne Forest and the Meuse River, was and remains the largest battle in American military history. Over its forty-seven days about 1.2 million American soldiers took part. It cost 26,277 American dead and over 95,000 wounded — more American battle deaths than any other battle before or since. Its purpose was to cut the great lateral railroad behind the German front at Sedan, without which the German armies in France could not be supplied. It succeeded, and it broke the German army's ability to continue the war.

The 91st Division jumped off in the center of V Corps on the first morning, attacking north out of the Bois de Cheppy. On the first day it advanced roughly five miles — among the deepest penetrations anywhere on the front — taking Épinonville and Éclisfontaine in the following days against machine-gun rearguards and constant artillery. Then came Gesnes. The division's own 1919 history tells it plainly. On the afternoon of 29 September, with the 37th Division already reported retiring off the right flank, the 181st Brigade — Lenard's 362nd and its sister 361st — was nevertheless ordered forward at 3:30 p.m. to take the fortified village of Gesnes. The 362nd advanced in three lines behind a rolling barrage, Colonel J. H. Parker leading the assault battalion, and walked into a counter-barrage the history calls terrific, with machine-gun fire from front and flank. They crossed the open field anyway, drove the enemy out of Gesnes, and pushed a battalion onto Hill 255 at the army objective. Then, because both neighboring divisions had fallen back and the 91st's line now stretched eight kilometers instead of two, the advanced elements were ordered to withdraw that same night: ground bought with the lives of their friends, handed back before morning.

The cost, in the division history's own words: “This attack was very costly to the 362nd Infantry... the total loss of the regiment in killed and wounded being at least five hundred.” Colonel Parker and Major Bradbury were both wounded. At 9 a.m. on 30 September, the Division Commander found only five hundred men of the 362nd present — out of a regiment of roughly 3,700. Wounded men lay hidden in the dugouts and cellars of Gesnes all through the 30th and were carried out after dark. That night the rolling kitchens were brought up into the woods and the men got their first warm food since the evening of 25 September. In four days the division as a whole lost 8 field officers, 125 company officers, and 3,000 men; its official Meuse-Argonne total came to 1,019 killed and 3,916 wounded — 4,935 casualties, about one-quarter of its entire strength, in seventeen days. This is the arithmetic behind Lenard's sentence about twenty old men: a company that went in 250 strong and came out with twenty unwounded originals had ceased, in every sense but the administrative one, to exist.

PLATE IV  
**The Meuse-Argonne Front**

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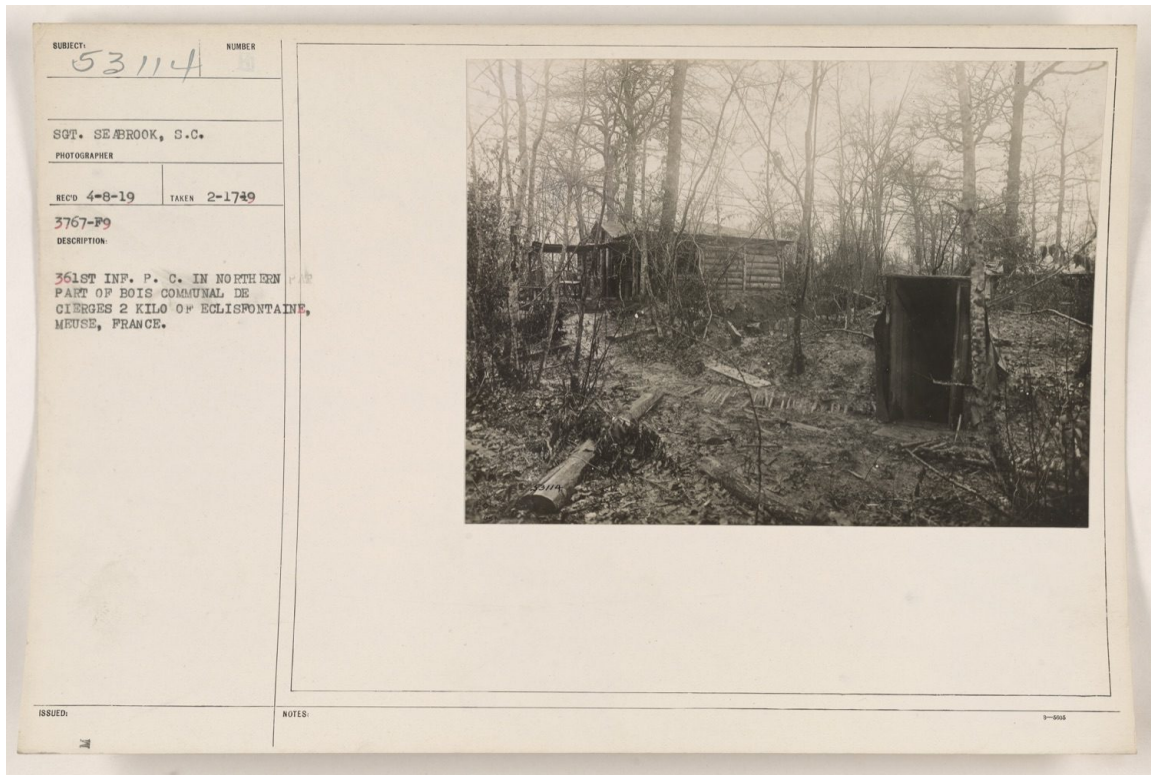


*U.S. Army Signal Corps photograph from the Meuse-Argonne sector, autumn 1918 —  
the ground of the largest battle in American military history.*

U.S. National Archives, Record Group 111-SC, photograph 111-SC-24644, NARA ID 55208897. Public domain.  
[Bib. 16]

PLATE V  
**Bois Communal de Cierges**

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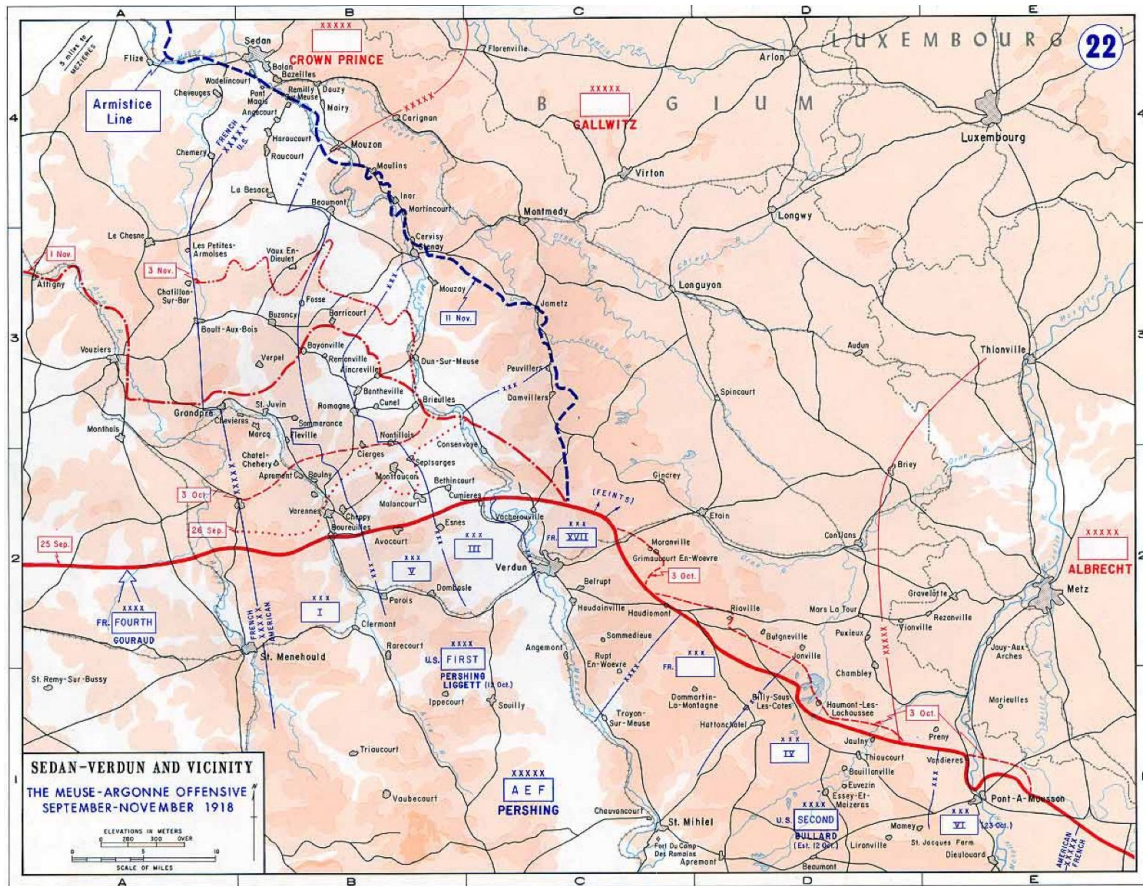


*The 361st Infantry's post of command in the northern part of the Bois Communal de Cierges, two kilometers from Éclisfontaine — the same woods and open ground Lenard's 362nd crossed in the advance on Gesnes.*

U.S. Signal Corps photograph, via the Digital Public Library of America. Public domain. [Bib. 17]

PLATE VI

The Meuse-Argonne Offensive, September–November 1918

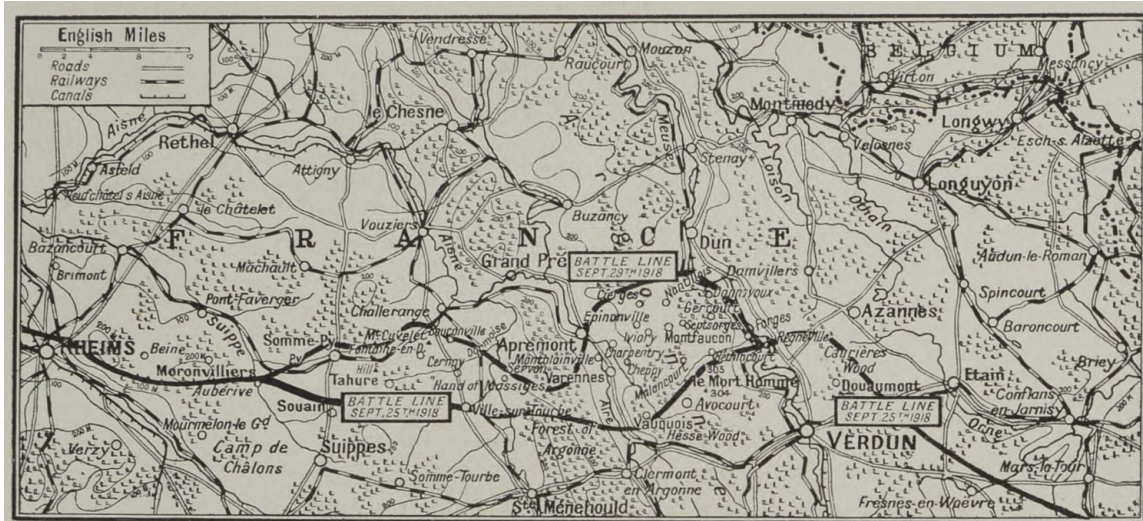


*Sedan–Verdun and vicinity, with the phase lines of the American advance from the jump-off of 26 September to the Armistice line. The 91st attacked in the center of V Corps on the first morning.*

United States Military Academy, Department of History. Public domain (U.S. government work). [Bib. 18]

PLATE VII

The Argonne Front Toward the Meuse



Copyright. AREA OF THE FRANCO-AMERICAN OPERATIONS ON THE ARGONNE FRONT TOWARDS THE MEUSE. The Great War. The First American Army occupied the old battlefield of Verdun, extending thence to the southern portion of the Argonne Forest, where it linked up with Gouraud's army. The attack was directed upon the enemy's railway communications between Metz and Sedan, the main objective being Montfaucon Hill.

*The area of the Franco-American operations on the Argonne front — the wider frame around Gesnes, Épinonville, and the Bois de Cheppy.*

Operational map; origin as noted in the bibliography. [Bib. 19]

PLATE VIII

**Downed German Aircraft, Forest of the Argonne**

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*A German Hannover CL.IIIa two-seater brought down over the Argonne forest, 1918.*

U.S. Army Air Service photograph, via Wikimedia Commons. Public domain. [Bib. 20]

PLATE IX  
**The Cost of the Argonne**

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*A German machine gunner dead at his post in the Meuse-Argonne — an unposed image of the fighting Lenard's illness kept him out of, and a corrective to any romantic reading of "about 20 old men left."*

U.S. Signal Corps photograph, 1918, via Wikimedia Commons. Public domain. [Bib. 21]

For the book's purposes, the essential fact is what this meant in Carbon County terms. Because the drafts were regional, the men who fell at Gesnes were Montana, Utah, Oregon, and Washington men in concentrated batches — the same towns reading the same casualty lists in the same week. Wellington, Helper, and Price read the Meuse-Argonne lists in late October and November 1918, at the precise moment the influenza pandemic was peaking in those same towns and the coal camps were under quarantine. Any Carbon County family of 1918 experienced the war's climax and the pandemic's climax as a single indistinguishable season of dread. That convergence — telegram and fever together — is the emotional weather of the home front in the closing chapters of the war, and it bears directly on the world Nina and the Grundvigs inhabited.

Lenard rejoined at Revigny as the survivors came out of the line, a corporal now among replacements and remnants. The division was given only days to absorb new men — Lenard

among them, effectively a replacement in his own company — before entraining north for Belgium.

What “absorbing new men” meant in practice deserves a moment, because it is the machinery that produced the company Lenard describes in December. A rifle company that has lost most of its strength is not reinforced; it is rebuilt. Drafts of replacements arrived from the depot divisions by way of the great casual camps — the same Is-sur-Tille pipeline Lenard himself had just traveled — carrying their records in envelopes and knowing no one. Surviving privates were made corporals and corporals sergeants in a week, because someone had to know how things were done; the handful of unwounded originals became the institutional memory of an organization that was otherwise brand new. The Company C that entrained for Belgium in mid-October wore the same designation and carried the same rolls as the company that had walked toward Gesnes, but it was in every human sense a new organism wearing an old name. That is the precise sense of Lenard's careful phrase “about 20 old men left” — he was distinguishing, as every AEF soldier learned to, between a company as an administrative fact and a company as a set of faces.

One more geographic fact closes the section. The ground the 181st Brigade fought over — Épinonville, Éclisfontaine, Gesnes, Hill 255 — was retaken for good in the offensive's later phases, and the American dead of the Argonne were gathered after the war onto a single hillside at Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, a few kilometers northeast of Gesnes. The Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery holds over fourteen thousand graves, the largest American military cemetery in Europe — larger than the better-known Normandy cemetery of the next war. The men of Company C who did not answer the roll on 30 September 1918 are almost all either buried there or named on its walls among the missing. When the letters in this archive fall silent about the battle — and they conspicuously do, except for the December letter's few unsparing sentences — that hillside is the other half of the record.

## VI-A. A Second Voice from the Brigade — Private Romeo's Diary

A companion source now in the archive: the Diary of Pvt. Guiseppe L. Romeo, Co. E, 361st Infantry (Tacoma, 1919) — a fifty-cent pamphlet by a private in the sister regiment of Lenard's own brigade. Romeo was an Italian immigrant — born near Chimea in 1891, naturalized in 1913, drafted in Seattle on 4 October 1917 — which makes him a specimen of the other great tributary of the National Army: Lenard's company had its Danish-descended Utah farm boys and its John Colgani of Helper; the 361st had its Romeos. His diary runs the same route as Lenard's letters — Camp Lewis, the June troop train, Hoboken, an eleven-day crossing, the Haute-Marne billets, gas-mask drill, the boxcars — but with one enormous difference: Romeo was present for the battle Lenard missed, and his entries for those days are the closest thing available to what Company C's dead and survivors lived through.

*September 29th. Beaucoup shelling snippers. Afternoon over the top. Captured three big German guns. Barrage. Many killed and wounded... Captured Gesnes. September 30th. Had to move back out of Gesnes as the Divisions on the right and left had not advanced in support. October 1st. In support. Heavy artillery fire. Very few present for roll call.*

— Diary of Pvt. Romeo, 361st Infantry

“Very few present for roll call” is the private's rendering of the same fact the Division Commander recorded that morning about the 362nd, and the same fact Lenard found at Revigny two weeks later. Read in sequence — the division history's operational account, Romeo's diary entries, and Lenard's December letter — the three documents form a complete chain of testimony on Gesnes: the order, the experience, and the aftermath. Romeo's pamphlet also prints a division casualty roll worth citing directly: the 362nd Infantry — 240 killed in action, 64 died of wounds, 190 missing, 11 taken prisoner — the heaviest dead-and-missing total of any regiment in the division. And it preserves the address of Colonel W. D. Davis of the 361st over his regiment's dead — a document with its own terrible coda, noted in the next section.

Romeo's later diary is also useful as the shadow side of Lenard's: where Lenard became the steady clerk of the personnel office, Romeo went AWOL in Paris, was court-martialed, and served three months' hard labor in the military prison system, recording MP beatings and 700 prisoners fed from one kitchen in the mud. Both are true faces of the post-Armistice AEF — two million young men with the war over and no ships home. And his final pages give the homecoming in exact detail: aboard the USS Mexican out of Saint-Nazaire on 3 April 1919, New York on the 14th, then the long train west with Montana towns turning out whole to meet it — “Got into Roundup at 8:30 and the whole town was out to greet us” — discharge on 1 May, and the last line in the book: “Hurrah! Let 'er Buck! Powder River!”

## VII. Flanders — Two Days of War

Accompanies: “First Days at the Front” (9 November 1918) and “Armistice Day” (11 November 1918).

*I have been to the front once and just got an introduction to war with its destruction... lights are a luxury where you can [not] be seen by the Boshe.*

— Letter, 9 November 1918

In mid-October the 91st and 37th Divisions were detached from the American First Army and sent north to serve under King Albert's Group of Armies in Flanders — a political as much as a military gesture, placing American troops in the liberation of Belgium. There the 91st took part in the Ypres-Lys offensive: the final Allied push across the Belgian plain toward the Scheldt (Escaut) River. In its first phase, from 31 October, the division fought through the Spitaals Bosschen woods and reached the Scheldt at Audenarde — Oudenaarde — by 2 November. The second phase, the push across the river, was beginning in the war's last days; the division's forward elements were still fighting on the morning of 11 November. Its official Ypres-Lys casualties were 215 killed and 714 wounded — 929 in all. Among the dead was Colonel W. D. Davis of the 361st, whose story binds the two battles together: wounded at Gesnes on 28 September, he refused to give up his regiment and was placing his men on the defensive line two days later with his arm in a sling — then was killed in action in Belgium on 2 November 1918, nine days before the Armistice, and buried at Waregem, where the American Flanders Field cemetery stands today.

Lenard's own combat service — “I have been to the front once” — belongs to those final days along the Scheldt: lying out in holes dug in Belgian turnip fields, one canteen of water stretched across two or three days, meals arriving “when luck came our way.” His turnips deserve a footnote of their own. Belgium under German occupation had been systematically stripped; the turnip, the food of desperation, is what the occupiers forced into the ground. Germans at home knew the winter of 1916–17, when the potato crop failed and the civilian ration collapsed, as the *Türnip Winter*. When Lenard describes dead German soldiers with holes in their shoes and bare feet touching the ground, he is describing the end state of the Allied blockade: an army that was starving, shoeless, and beaten, still killing to the last hour. Both details — the turnips and the shoes — are the blockade made visible in a private's letter.

*Hostilities ceased today at 11 o'clock, making an odd number all the way round:  
11th month, 11th day, 11th hour.*

— Letter, 11 November 1918

The Armistice was signed in a railway carriage at Compiègne at about 5 a.m. and took effect at 11:00. Fighting continued to the minute in many sectors — there were on the order of ten thousand casualties on the last morning of the war. Lenard's letter, written the same day while “drawing back from the front awaiting the results of peace negotiations,” is therefore a same-day primary source for the Armistice as experienced by a rifleman, and its most striking feature is its restraint: no celebration, an accounting of turnips and canteens, an unforgiving paragraph about Belgium, and the weather — “the atmosphere seems so clear and fresh, too, that one can truly appreciate it.” Many Armistice-day accounts from the front report exactly this: not joy, but a sudden, enormous quiet.

A number for the ground he was standing on: the Ypres salient, a few miles from his December billets, had been fought over continuously for four years. The Third Battle of Ypres alone — Passchendaele, autumn 1917 — cost the British and German armies combined casualties approaching half a million men. The “mass of ruins” Lenard reports, and the hundreds of ruined towns on his postcards, sit inside the most concentrated zone of destruction on the Western Front. His flat sentence that it is “some different to fight where the country is in a normal condition” than among shell holes and fragments of trees is a rifleman's summary of what four years of industrial war did to fifty miles of Belgium.

PLATE X

**No Man's Land, Flanders Field**



*“No Man's Land, Flanders Field, France, 1919” — the shell-torn ground itself, stripped bare and stumped with dead trees: the landscape of Lenard's December hikes through the salient.*

W. L. King, courtesy Military Intelligence Division, General Staff, U.S. Army; Library of Congress, Panoramic Photographs Collection. Public domain. [Bib. 22]

PLATE XI  
**Ypres in Ruins**

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*The towers of the Cloth Hall and cathedral above the wreckage of Ypres — the “mass of ruins” of Lenard’s 15 December letter. He enclosed a prewar postcard of the town: the before to this after.*

Rijksarchief in België / State Archives of Belgium, Bestanddeelnr. 22035-001, via Wikimedia Commons. [Bib. 23]

PLATE XII  
**The Ypres Battlefield**

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*The shattered salient — fought over continuously for four years, the most concentrated zone of destruction on the Western Front.*

Rijksarchief in België / State Archives of Belgium, Bestanddeelnr. 22035-011, via Wikimedia Commons. [Bib. 24]

PLATE XIII  
**St. Martin's Cathedral, Ypres**

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*The gate to St. Martin's Cathedral — the same skyline of broken towers Lenard walked past, a few streets from the Cloth Hall.*

Imperial War Museum (10004762), via Wikimedia Commons. Crown copyright expired. [Bib. 25]

PLATE XIV  
**Armistice, 11 November 1918**

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*American soldiers rejoice at the Armistice. The contrast with Lenard's flat, weather-noting letter of the same day is the point: the war ended in celebration everywhere except the ground where men had just been dying.*

U.S. National Archives, via Wikimedia Commons. Public domain. [Bib. 26]

PLATE XV  
Peace Demonstration, 1918

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*The same news on the home front — the celebration Wellington, Helper, and Price joined while the casualty lists from the Meuse-Argonne were still arriving.*

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, LCCN 2016844526. Public domain. [Bib. 27]

PLATE XVI  
**The Cheering Column**

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*A cheering column of doughboys — the two million who now had to wait for the boat.*

Wikimedia Commons (4688525688). Public domain. [Bib. 28]

## VIII. Waiting for the Boat — Belgium and the Sarthe, November 1918 to February 1919

Accompanies: entries 15 through 44 — the Belgian farm letters, the itinerary letter, Oostvleteren, the boxcar journey, and the Saint-Cosme notebook run.

*After the armistice was signed, we advanced almost to Brussels, then returned...*

— Letter, 15 December 1918

The Armistice ended the shooting but not the army. Two million Americans were in France with no ships to take them home — the same tonnage crisis that had delayed their arrival now governed their departure, and the AEF flowed backward through the system at the pace shipping allowed. The 91st spent November and December marching across liberated Belgium — Lenard's itinerary letter traces it — to within twenty-odd miles of Brussels and then back west by stages, Hooglede to Oostvleteren, thirty-four kilometers in the day marches he pronounces “a healthy little hike.” His Belgian farm letters, with their real bed and actual chairs — “seems like a dream” — and the handmade lace mailed home for Christmas, record the strange gentle interlude between the war and the voyage home.

On New Year's Eve 1918 the division entrained in French boxcars — the notorious “40 hommes / 8 chevaux” wagons, forty men or eight horses, thirty men in Lenard's — for the two-day ride to La Ferté-Bernard in the Sarthe, then walked seventeen kilometers that felt like thirty to Saint-Cosme-de-Vair (today Saint-Cosme-en-Vairais). The village lay inside the American Embarkation Center at Le Mans: the vast administrative funnel through which most of the AEF passed on its way to the ports. Its business was paperwork and hygiene — service records reconciled, equipment inspected, men bathed and deloused (his “cootie destroyer”) — because no man sailed until his records were straight and his uniform was free of lice.

This is where the notebook becomes, for the book's purposes, the most quietly devastating material in the archive. Lenard, literate and steady, was pulled into the personnel office and put to work on the company roster and service records — which in January 1919 meant closing the books on the Meuse-Argonne. The entry for 13 January — letters for departed comrades — records the office answering mail addressed to the dead of Company C: families still writing to men killed at Gesnes in September, the letters chasing the company across France for months, and clerks like Lenard drafting the replies. The next day's entry reads “Hated myself all forenoon.” He never says why, and it needs no explanation. He had joined the company's remnant too late to share its ordeal, survived it by accident of illness, and now sat recording its dead by name. The “Ways of Self Improvement” memorandum — master yourself; do not let your mind slip back to former days and leave you crippled; the world has a right to expect great things of you — written in that same notebook in those same weeks, reads very differently once you know what the man was doing at that desk all day. It is Pushing to the Front, the creed of the 1913 hayfields, redeployed as armor.

On 19 February he went down with influenza — the pandemic's third wave, which swept the embarkation camps that winter — spent a week in a tent at Mobile Hospital No. 7 and then a third-story room in a château, and recovered. His cheerful Le Mans tourist letter of 16 February, with the Y.M.C.A. guide, the cathedral, and the tunnel newly named Rue Wilbur Wright (Wright had

made his epochal public flights at Le Mans in 1908, and France had not forgotten), was written three days before the fever hit.

The division's units sailed from Saint-Nazaire in late March and early April 1919 — Romeo's transport, the USS Mexican, left on 3 April and made New York on the 14th — and were sorted at the port among four Western demobilization points. The division history records the date that matters here: the 362nd Infantry was demobilized at Fort D. A. Russell, Wyoming, on 29 April 1919. Barring a hospital delay, that is where and approximately when Corporal Lenard A. Grundvig became a civilian again; he would have been back in Wellington in the first days of May 1919, in time for spring work on the farm. The division existed for about twenty months. For roughly ten days of that — late September and early October 1918 — it was inside the furnace, and everything else in these letters is the long approach to that furnace and the long walk home from it.

The mechanics of getting home, when the turn finally came, reversed the machinery of 1918 almost step by step. From the embarkation center the units moved to Saint-Nazaire, where the records inspection and the delousing were performed one last time at the port; the westbound crossing ran ten to twelve days against the prevailing weather; and the debarkation camps fed the men onto long trains for the demobilization posts. At Fort D. A. Russell each man received his final pay, the sixty-dollar discharge bonus Congress had voted that February, and a travel allowance home; he kept his uniform and overcoat, and could keep his helmet and gas mask as souvenirs. The whole return, port to farm gate, took the better part of a month — and unlike the eastbound trip, nobody mobbed the trains. The country had moved on into the influenza's third wave and the strike troubles of 1919, and the late-sailing divisions came home quietly, to their own towns rather than to the nation.

PLATE XVII  
**The Le Mans Embarkation Center, Winter 1919**

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*“Disposition of kit in barracks” — Classification Camp, Embarkation Center, Le Mans, Sarthe. Blankets folded to a regulation edge, helmets and packs hung in order, boots dressed in a row: the army's passion for inspection-ready order, photographed 26 February 1919 — the very weeks Lenard was in these camps, keeping Company C's records straight and recovering from influenza a few kilometers away.*

U.S. National Archives, RG 111-SC, photograph 111-SC-52579; Sgt. F. T. Jones, Signal Corps, taken 26 February 1919. Public domain. [Bib. 30]

## IX. The Ledger — The Numbers Behind the Letters

Figures for the First World War vary by source and method; those below are widely used standard estimates, rounded, and are intended for orientation rather than citation. Where precision matters for the manuscript, the division history and the American Battle Monuments Commission summaries are the places to verify.

<b>Military dead, all nations, 1914–1918</b>	Roughly 9–10 million (total dead including civilians, roughly double that)
<b>Americans who served / reached France</b>	About 4.7 million served; about 2 million to France
<b>American battle deaths</b>	53,402
<b>American non-battle deaths (mostly disease, chiefly influenza-pneumonia)</b>	About 63,000
<b>American wounded</b>	About 204,000
<b>Meuse-Argonne Offensive (26 Sept – 11 Nov 1918)</b>	About 1.2 million Americans engaged; 26,277 killed; over 95,000 wounded — the deadliest battle in American history
<b>91st Division, Meuse-Argonne (official divisional figures)</b>	1,019 killed, 3,916 wounded — 4,935 total, about one-quarter of the division in 17 days (excludes attached artillery)
<b>362nd Infantry — Lenard's regiment (roll printed in the Romeo diary)</b>	240 killed in action, 64 died of wounds, 190 missing, 11 prisoners; at least 500 killed and wounded at Gesnes on 29 September alone
<b>91st Division, Flanders (Ypres-Lys, official)</b>	215 killed, 714 wounded — 929 total
<b>Passchendaele / Third Ypres, 1917 (the ground of Lenard's winter billets)</b>	Combined British and German casualties approaching 500,000
<b>Influenza pandemic, 1918–1919</b>	At least 50 million dead worldwide; about 675,000 Americans; about 45,000 American servicemen

Two cautions when using these figures. First, sources count differently — “casualties” sometimes means dead alone, sometimes dead and wounded, sometimes dead, wounded, missing, and captured together — so numbers from different books should never be set side by side without checking what is being counted. Second, official divisional figures were compiled while the units were still in motion and were revised for years afterward; the American Battle Monuments Commission volumes of the 1930s are the settled reference wherever a final number matters.

## X. What It Meant When the Americans Showed Up

Since this was one of the framing questions: the American contribution was less about battles won than about arithmetic made hopeless. By the spring of 1918 France and Britain were nearing the bottom of their manpower; Germany, reinforced from Russia, gambled everything on winning before the Americans could matter. The gamble failed by weeks. From July 1918 onward, a fresh American division — 27,000 men — was arriving roughly every few days, while Germany could replace almost no one. German commanders and diarists in the autumn of 1918 return constantly to the same theme: the Americans were inexperienced, prodigal with lives, tactically green — and endless. Lenard's boast on 11 November that the Germans were “sure scared of Yanks” is a private's version of what Ludendorff conceded in his memoirs: it was the certainty of unlimited American reinforcement, as much as any defeat in the field, that convinced Germany the war was lost. Every troop train the Chicago children mobbed was a unit of that certainty.

The AEF paid a steep tuition for its inexperience — the Meuse-Argonne casualty rates, Gesnes among them, reflect green divisions learning against the most experienced army on earth. But the strategic effect was decisive, and Lenard, a replacement corporal who spent perhaps a week under fire, was a true and necessary part of it. That is what “a small cog in the machine of war” actually means here: the machine's power was precisely that it had two million such cogs, and could get two million more.

The arithmetic can be put in one sentence: between March and November 1918 the German army suffered casualties on the order of a million and a half men and replaced almost none of them, while the American force in France grew from about three hundred thousand to about two million. Everything else — the collapse of Germany's allies through the autumn, the naval mutiny, the abdication — happened downstream of that sentence. And one timing detail belongs in this book above all others: it was on 29 September 1918, the very day the 362nd Infantry crossed the open ground into Gesnes, that Ludendorff told the Kaiser's government the war was lost and an armistice must be sought at once. The battle that destroyed Company C was not a sideshow of the war's ending. It was the ending, experienced from inside.

None of this arithmetic was visible to the man lying in a Belgian turnip field with one canteen of water. That is the permanent value of letters like these: the strategic history explains why the war ended in November 1918, but only the private record shows what the ending cost per man, per company, per county. The two kinds of account need each other. Without the arithmetic, Lenard's twenty old men are merely sad; without the twenty old men, the arithmetic is merely numbers.

## **XI. Coda — The Cog Comes Home**

Accompanies: the 1943 letter on his father's death and the 1949 campaign circular.

The archive's two postwar documents close the arc. The 1943 condolence letter reaches back past the World War entirely, to the family's first American ordeal: the emigrant company attacked west of Fort Laramie in September 1865 and a Mrs. Grundtvig carried off, never recovered — the pioneer-era trauma running beneath the family story, and a reminder that Lenard's generation was only the second to cross a continent under threat. The 1949 circular shows where the notebook's creed finally landed: the man who kept the roster at Saint-Cosme spent his later life keeping Wellington's books — board member, clerk, treasurer, board president, assistant auditor — and defending their accuracy in public with the same scrupulousness, down to check number 41. The habits are recognizably the same: the record must be right, the account must balance, the names must be entered correctly. He learned part of that in a personnel office in the Sarthe, entering the names of the dead of Company C, and he practiced it for the rest of his life in Carbon County.

Seen whole, the archive traces a single unbroken temperament through three very different worlds. The boy who recorded hay tonnage and derrick-raising in 1913, the corporal who kept a company's records straight in a French village in 1919, and the town officer who defended Wellington's books down to check number 41 in 1949 are recognizably the same man doing the same work: keeping the account honest in whatever ledger the times handed him. The war was the largest thing that ever happened to him, and his letters treat it, characteristically, as a job whose paperwork had to be right. That is what a small cog looks like from the inside — not smallness at all, but a man-sized fidelity to the work in front of him, maintained inside a machine too large for anyone to see whole.

One last fact deserves recording, because the whole book depends on it: someone kept these papers. Through moves, decades, and the ordinary attrition that destroys nearly all family correspondence, the farm diary, the letters, and the army notebook stayed together — almost certainly because the family that received the letters understood, as Lenard did, that a record is a thing you keep. The archive is itself the final entry in his ledger, and the fact that it survives to be read a century later is the last and best evidence of the household habit of care that runs through every page of it.

## Appendix — Image Sourcing Notes

Both source books cited throughout — *The Story of the 91st Division* (1919) and the *Diary of Pvt. Guiseppe L. Romeo* (Tacoma, 1919) — are now held in the archive as PDFs, and both are public domain: any photograph, map, or page in them may be cropped and used freely. The Romeo pamphlet's own plates ("Flanders Mud," the Ypres shell-burst photo, the ruined Cloth Hall, the camouflaged German observation post) are themselves candidates for the figure slots. Beyond the two books: (1) *The Story of the 91st Division* full scan is also at [archive.org](https://archive.org) — photographs, operational maps, and rosters specific to Lenard's division and regiment; (2) the U.S. Army Signal Corps photograph series, Record Group 111-SC at the National Archives ([catalog.archives.gov](https://catalog.archives.gov)), which covers every phase from Camp Lewis to Le Mans and is entirely public domain; (3) the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division for Camp Lewis panoramas and home-front material. For Flanders and Ypres, the Imperial War Museum and the Australian War Memorial hold the definitive 1918 photographs. For Carbon County home-front context — draft boards, casualty lists, quarantine notices — the [Newspapers.com](https://www.newspapers.com) runs of the *News-Advocate* and *Sun Advocate* for September 1917, July 1918, and October–November 1918 will yield the local mirror of every event in these letters, very likely including Lenard's own name in the draft calls and returning-soldier notices.

Three further collections are worth a targeted search as the project continues. The Utah Digital Newspapers archive ([digitalnewspapers.org](https://digitalnewspapers.org), hosted by the University of Utah) carries the Carbon County papers free of charge and full-text searchable — the fastest route to Lenard's draft call, his return notice, and the county's casualty and quarantine coverage. The Utah State Historical Society's photograph collections hold Carbon County town views, coal-camp scenes, and Great War send-off photographs that would anchor the home-front sections. And the Lewis Army Museum at Joint Base Lewis-McChord maintains the largest collection of Camp Lewis construction and training photographs outside the National Archives, including barracks interiors and mule-stable views that would pair directly with Lenard's first-night story.

# Bibliography and Image Credits

Entries below are grouped by type. Bracketed numbers in plate captions throughout this companion (“[Bib. N]”) refer to the numbered entries here. Public-domain determinations follow the conventions each repository states for its own holdings (pre-1929 U.S. publication, U.S. federal government work, or expired UK Crown copyright for photographs more than fifty years old at time of Crown-copyright reform). Several images reached this archive through Wikimedia Commons or Flickr Commons secondary uploads rather than directly from the holding institution; where that is the case it is noted, and anyone republishing beyond private research use should re-verify rights status directly with the institution before doing so.

## I. Primary and Published Textual Sources

- [1] The Story of the 91st Division, American Expeditionary Forces. San Francisco: [91st Division Publication Committee], 1919. Internet Archive, identifier [storyof91stdivisio0091st](#); local copy held in the archive. Public domain.
- [2] Romeo, Giuseppe L. Diary of Pvt. Giuseppe L. Romeo, Co. E, 361st Infantry. Tacoma, WA: [self-published], 1919. Internet Archive, identifier [diaryofpvtgiusepoorome](#); local copy held in the archive. Public domain.
- [3] Burton, ed. 600 Days' Service: A History of the 361st Infantry Regiment of the United States Army. [S.l.: s.n., 191-?]. Internet Archive, identifier [600daysservicehi00burt](#); local copy held in the archive. Companion regimental history to the 362nd's own record; not directly quoted above but the fullest printed account of Lenard's brigade-mate regiment. Public domain.
- [4] “[Obituary and family notices].” Vernal Express (Vernal, UT), 19 December 1946. Two scans held in the family archive; genealogical source for the Grundvig/Grundtvig family line, consulted for the Coda (Section XI) and the 1865 Fort Laramie reference.

## II. Archival and Museum Collections (repositories cited by plate)

- [5] U.S. National Archives and Records Administration. Record Group 111-SC, Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer — Signal Corps Photographs of American Military Activity. [catalog.archives.gov](#). Public domain (U.S. government work).
- [6] Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division. Panoramic Photographs Collection. [loc.gov/pictures/collection/pan](#). Public domain.
- [7] Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division. General photographic collections, cataloged by LCCN. [loc.gov](#). Public domain.
- [8] Digital Public Library of America. [dp.la](#). Aggregates digitized Signal Corps and other federal photographic holdings; underlying images are public domain.
- [9] Imperial War Museum. Collections database. [iwm.org.uk](#). UK Crown-copyright photographs of this era are in the public domain (fifty-year term from date of Crown-copyright reform); verify individual item rights notices before republication.
- [10] Australian War Memorial. Collections database. [awm.gov.au](#). Cited in the original figure-sourcing notes as an alternate repository for Flanders material; not directly drawn on for the images actually placed in this edition.
- [11] Rijksarchief in België / State Archives of Belgium. Photographic collection “Eerste Wereldoorlog” (First World War), Bestanddeelnr. 22035 series. Distributed via Wikimedia Commons.

[12] Wikimedia Commons. commons.wikimedia.org. Secondary host for several images below; original repository and photographer are given in each individual entry where known.

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- [13] Dudley-Hasson Company (attrib.). “Camp Lewis, Tacoma, Wash.” Panoramic photograph, ca. 1917–18. Library of Congress, Panoramic Photographs Collection [5]. Plate I. Public domain.
- [14] U.S. Army Signal Corps. “Drills — Infantry — 361st Infantry, Camp Lewis, American Lake, Washington.” Photograph. NARA Identifier 31475884, Record Group 111-SC [5]. Plate II. Public domain.
- [15] “SS Empress of Russia, 1918” (detail). Photographer unidentified. Pre-1929 photograph, via Wikimedia Commons [12]; underlying Canadian Pacific / Imperial War Museum [9] holdings. Plate III. Presumed public domain by age.
- [16] U.S. Army Signal Corps. Photograph 111-SC-24644. NARA Identifier 55208897, Record Group 111-SC [5]. Plate IV. Public domain.
- [17] U.S. Army Signal Corps. “361st Inf. P.C. in Northern Part of Bois Communal de Cierges, 2 Kilos of Éclisfontaine, Meuse, France.” Photograph. Digital Public Library of America [8], item identifier 0798bo8o8b5fd3588b28bb2067923b62. Plate V. Public domain.
- [18] United States Military Academy, Department of History. “Sedan–Verdun and Vicinity: The Meuse–Argonne Offensive, September–November 1918.” Map, West Point Atlas of American Wars series. Plate VI. Public domain (U.S. government work).
- [19] “Area of the Franco-American Operations on the Argonne Front towards the Meuse.” Operational map; publisher and exact date not further identified in the local copy. Plate VII. Reproduced as an orientation map on the presumption of public domain by age and official origin — verify before any reuse beyond private research.
- [20] “Hannover CL.IIIa, Forest of Argonne, France, 1918” (restored). U.S. Army Air Service photograph, via Wikimedia Commons [12]. Plate VIII. Public domain.
- [21] “A Dead Gunner in a German Machine Gun Nest Killed during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive.” U.S. Signal Corps photograph, 1918, via Wikimedia Commons [12]. Plate IX. Public domain. Graphic content — a casualty photograph — included for historical accuracy against the letters' own restraint; discretion advised if reproducing for a general audience.
- [22] King, W. L. (Millersburg, Ohio), photographer, courtesy of the Military Intelligence Division, General Staff, U.S. Army. “No Man's Land, Flanders Field, France, 1919.” Panoramic photograph. Library of Congress, Panoramic Photographs Collection [6]. Plate X. Public domain.
- [23–24] Rijksarchief in België / State Archives of Belgium. “België, Ieper, oorlog, oorlogen, eerste wereldoorlog,” Bestanddeelnr. 22035-001 and 22035-011. Photographs, ca. 1918–19, via Wikimedia Commons [12]; institutional source [11]. Plates XI and XII.
- [25] “Gate to St. Martin's Cathedral, Ypres” (I0004762). Imperial War Museum collection [9], via Wikimedia Commons [12]. Plate XIII. UK Crown-copyright photographs of this era are in the public domain.
- [26] “American Soldiers Rejoice at the Armistice, 11th November 1918” (identifier 45780427912). U.S. National Archives, via Wikimedia Commons [12]. Plate XIV. Public domain.
- [27] “Peace Demonstration, 1918.” LCCN 2016844526. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division [7]. Plate XV. Public domain.
- [28] “Cheering Soldiers” (identifier 4688525688), via Wikimedia Commons [12]. Plate XVI. Public domain.

- [29] Studio portrait of Lenard Allen Grundvig in uniform and campaign hat, ca. 1917–18. Photographer unidentified. Original held in the Grundvig family archive (White Lady Archive, Lenard Allen Grundvig images). Envoi. The closing poem, headed “Officers of the 362 Reg. Off.,” is transcribed verbatim from his army notebook.
- [30] Jones, Sgt. F. T., U.S. Army Signal Corps. “Disposition of Kit in Barracks. Classification Camp, Embarkation Center, Le Mans, Sarthe, France.” Photograph 111-SC-52579, taken 26 February 1919, received 14 April 1919. U.S. National Archives, Record Group 111-SC [5]. Plate XVII. Public domain.

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Lenard A. Grundvig's letters, diary, notebook, and photographs are held in the Grundvig family archive and remain the property of the family; the transcriptions quoted here were prepared from the original manuscripts, and any reproduction of them beyond private family use is the family's decision to make. The public-domain photographs and maps reproduced as Plates I–XVII may be reused freely, subject to the per-item cautions noted above for images obtained through secondary hosts. The commentary text of this companion was prepared as a private study aid for the family and asserts no rights over the historical facts it reports.

Suggested citation for the underlying materials: Grundvig, Lenard Allen. Letters, farm diary, and army notebook, 1913–1919. Grundvig family archive, private collection. For the published sources, cite the editions given in Section I above; both 1919 volumes are freely accessible at [archive.org](https://www.archive.org) under the identifiers listed.

ENVOI

**Corporal Lenard Allen Grundvig**

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**Officers of the 362 Reg. Off.**

*Little you'd care what I laid at your feet,  
Ribbon or chest or shawl.  
What if I bring you nothing sweet,  
Nor maybe come home at all.  
Ah, but you'll know, brave heart, you'll know.  
Two things I have kept to send:  
Mine honor, for which you bade me go,  
And my love, my love to the end.*

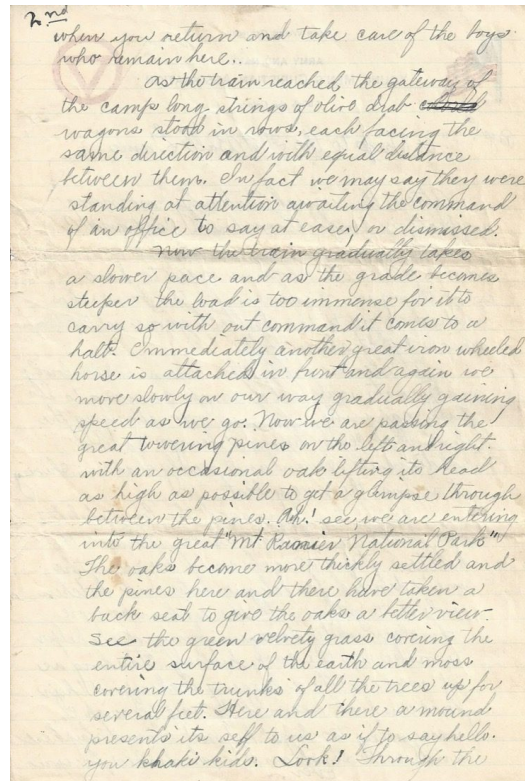
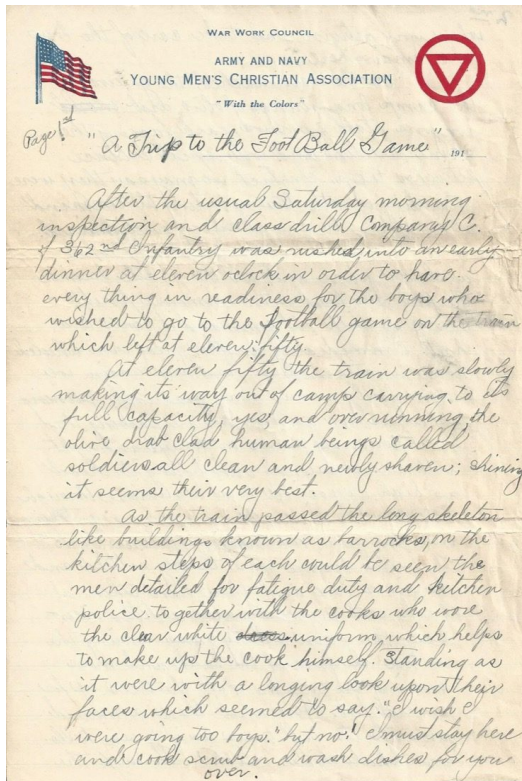
Copied into his army notebook, France, winter 1918–19. Photograph: WWI studio portrait, family archive [Bib. 29].

# The Originals — Facsimiles of the Overseas Papers, 1917–1919

What follows is the physical record itself: every surviving letter and paper of Lenard's war service, reproduced page by page in chronological order from the originals held in the family archive. They are presented as objects, not merely as texts — the Y.M.C.A. and Knights of Columbus stationery the welfare organizations handed out by the millions, the pencil that replaced ink as he moved closer to the front, the censor's stamps and the officers' initials in the corners, the creases where a letter was folded to fit a pocket for a hundred years. The transcriptions elsewhere in this project give the words; these pages give the hand, and the paper, and the distance the paper traveled. A century on, they are the testament of the time he spent over seas — carried in a pack across an ocean, a hospital, two battlefronts, and a Belgian winter, and carried home.

1917

## A Trip to the Football Game — narrative



3<sup>rd</sup>



WAR WORK COUNCIL  
ARMY AND NAVY  
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION  
"With the Colors"



scattered pines in the short distance here and there we get a glimpse of American Lake and the sparkling water seem to say, "Where are you going boys?" Are you having a good time? But we can only answer that we are trying to row since we are in the army we must make the best of things to be as happy as possible. But the fact that nature invites us to enjoy part of what she is holding out for us gives us inspiration and hope that we will some day be free from the chains of war and again take part with her in restoring earth back to a more stable and happy place for the abode of man. Ah! she (nature) whispers into our ears and says: "Shame on man to allow himself to become so heated and angry over any trivial offense as ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> continue slaughtering each other using means and resources I gave for your welfare, to flow up, destroy and blemish the surface of this red earth that has been so long beautifying. But I excuse and forgive you in majority for you are as sheep being pushed, crowded and jammed never realizing your true position over."

4<sup>th</sup>

"Men" nature whispers you will some day repent of these actions and learn that the things worth while are love, peace, and happiness. but not until a more perfect state of education exists through out the earth and men learn that the struggling pushing and crowding for power and fame are not the things worth while in life for if man could gain the power his ambition would get for him there is no letting when he would stop or how deep he would trample others under the sod and still lack true contentment and satisfaction distorted to make men happy.

Nature continues to stare us in the face with slight variations. now she presents herself with ~~leaves~~ <sup>leaves</sup> grown golden from autumn frosts and now beautiful flower beds covering acres of soil displaying flowers of every shape and hue. Occasionally we see an oak or maple sifting its golden leaves to mother earth again for a carpet during the cold spell she must soon encounter.

Attention! we have now passed through the National park and are entering the "Great Northern Pacific" car yards and foundry. Great masses of iron and steel are thrown up in heaps and hundreds of old locomotives stand dead awaiting the work of the man in blue jumps and overalls to remodel them and again bring them to life.

5<sup>th</sup>



WAR WORK COUNCIL  
ARMY AND NAVY  
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION  
"With the Colors"



As we pass the foundry we see scores of men in the doors watching with interest us as we pass. After all they are the truly happy men in life for on every face we see a smile and a look which says "boys we earn our way and then some." We are part of the backbone of this mighty nation."

Now we have passed these great yards and are making our way through the lowlands near the noted Budget Sound. Here and there we see shacks all moss covered with time and in the valleys of the roads the moss has taken entire possession. Here and there we see men women and children placing themselves in their doorways for a glimpse of the army laden train as it passes.

The train is now slowing down and we are nearing the gigantic "Northern Pacific" depot. Now we have stopped and our captain gives the command to dismount the train and we are all lined up in squad over.

6<sup>th</sup>

column and now our march to the grand Tacoma Stadium is commenced. We march up main street some distance in squad column then suddenly the command "Platoon left" is given and then in platoon formation we parade the streets. All traffic except our selves being stopped. On either side you see the interesting faces of men women and children smiling and clapping their hands as we pass. As we down the winding streets as we can see there is nothing ahead of us but marching troops. Ah! at last we have reached the grand Stadium and now in company formation we are lined up on the Stadium football grounds. Then after giving a few yells in behalf of our own football team the command "Take to the breakers" is given. Then you see the mass of men dash climb the steps of the Stadium like sheep going up a mountain side. Then in comes another regiment and they like voice line up and take to the breakers. Regiment after regiment does like voice until every available seat is taken.

Look there comes the Marine Corps with whom the fight is to be made. With cheer yells and band selection

7<sup>th</sup>

WAR WORK COUNCIL  
ARMY AND NAVY  
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION  
"With the Colors"

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from various bands including the Marine band the time is passed until it is time for the game. Ah! see, there comes the Marine football team now. See how cleverly they handle the ball. Watch them kick it. Oh! say! boys, some team. There comes the 91<sup>st</sup> division team on to the field. They also handle the ball very cleverly but, Oh they fumbled it. You can see in an instant that they have not had the practice the Marine boys have had.

Now they line up and the game starts. The 91<sup>st</sup> division's kick off. Say that was some kick wasn't it boys, but see how cleverly the Marine makes it and swiftly makes his way for the opposite goal but fortunately before he has gained much ground a ninety-first divisioner brings him to the ground with a bang. The fight is on in earnest. "Hold that line" "Hold that line" is the continual yell of the ninety-first division soldiers while the Marine soldiers are imploring these men to break through

7<sup>th</sup>

that line. The fourth down comes and the Marine team has not gained sufficient ground so they try a forward pass and loose the ball, the 91<sup>st</sup> division boys getting it. The yell now from the soldier boys is "go through em", "Go through em boys". They have stopped playing for an instant; we look around and out to our left we see the great steamers and gasoline launchies sailing about in Tacoma bay. That one zipping by is the Indianapolis just returning from Seattle.

Quah, the game is on again; it is a real battle indeed. Fight! Fight! Fight! but gradually through their clever team work the Marines score 7 points. See that mass of human beings piled up as wood. Gradually they jump up and on the bottom lies a man as if dead. The doctor rushes on the field and in a course of a minute or so the man is again on his feet ready to fight. Some pretty tough human beings don't you think boys?

In like manner the game continues until again the Marines score 6 more while we (the 91<sup>st</sup> division) have a large 0 as our score. Never the less we must stand back of our boys and help them fight it to a finish

7<sup>th</sup>

WAR WORK COUNCIL  
ARMY AND NAVY  
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION  
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As I left to the Foot Ball Game.

so we cheer, cheer cheer but to no success apparently for the time is up and the score is 13 to 0 in their favor. Well boys you fought hard for it and we were back of you but well have to give it to them this time was our try while the masses passed from the stadium. On floos we passed back into the business section of Tacoma. It was now almost 5 o'clock so we had supper in an up-to-date Cafeteria

After supper I went with some of the boys to locate a room for the night. After getting their rooms located I just then slipped away down to the magnificent northern Pacific depot and there spent my time reading and writing until the train left for the camp at 9:30 P.M. I reached camp and hit the hay at 11 o'clock and went to sleep with the satisfaction of having seen a big football game.

11 OCTOBER 1917  
Letter to the Family — Learning to Drill

WAR WORK COUNCIL  
ARMY AND NAVY  
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION  
"With the Colors"  
American Lake Wood  
Oct 11<sup>th</sup> 1917

Dear parents, Brothers, & Sisters  
I am well and getting along all right the terms most familiar to me, <sup>now</sup> ~~read~~ Column right, Column left, Squad right, Squad left, Company attention, about face, right face, left face, forward march. Then all night I hear 12, 34, 12, 34, one, two three four, but the call I understand best is "fall in for me" ha! ha!

How is mother, father, brothers and sisters getting. You know this place up here seems to be dismal to me on account of the continued cloudy weather than any other place I have ever been in.

I went down town, that is to DuPont the depot to go to Tacoma last night and was there only a few minutes but talk about people. They were stacked up by the hundreds. Worse than any street I ever saw in Salt Lake or any where else.

If I can get off Sunday I am

WAR WORK COUNCIL  
ARMY AND NAVY  
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION  
"With the Colors"  
1917

going over to Seattle or rather Bremerton and see Lark and get to see some battle ships and the navy yards. That perhaps will help the dullness of the situation.

Eight men is a squad.  
Seven squads is a Platoon.  
Two platoons is a company.  
Four companies is a Battalion.  
Three Battalions is a Regiment etc.

Am reading up on militarism. No that I am in it I may as well learn all that there is to it. I can also get all the good books I want at the Y.M.C.A. here free of charge.

On next sheet you will find a little rhyme found in a Tacoma paper. It's exactly right although now Uncle Sam has pulled us a quilt each so we sleep warm.

With love to all and  
tell me all the news.  
— Leonard

P.S. Dad is well and getting on ok but he said might try to get that his name goes in the list for exemption so he may be coming back here one of these days.

14 NOVEMBER 1917  
Letter to the Family — Camp Lewis Drill

WAR WORK COUNCIL  
ARMY AND NAVY  
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION  
"With the Colors"

Camp Lewis Nov 14<sup>th</sup> 1917

Dear parents, brothers and sisters,  
I am well and my health seems to get better every day for now I do not get the least bit tired from our usual drill. I am also feeling pretty well but as on guard duty to-day.

I have Wednesday after noon to myself as well as Saturday after noon and Sunday so I really drill only 5 days a week unless a mission or guard duty comes on one of these days. So far I have been on guard duty only once but was put on the out side of camp with a loaded gun and ordered to use it if necessary to fulfill orders. but such duty doesn't come very often.

I saw by the paper that it wasn't so that I've been ~~drill~~ had deserted. ha! ha! ha! Several of the boys up here have received letters inquiring about me. Asking if it was so that I had been caught deserting and court martialed and shot. You must have some noise down there. ha! ha! ha!

If any one asks you about me, say I have not as yet been shot and as yet have had no chance. I may be partially dead but not from the effects of a bullet. It also saw where ~~at~~ <sup>at</sup> W. ~~Carpenter~~ got what was due him in the "Sun" serves him right. only they ought to ~~eat~~ <sup>eat</sup> him from ~~Carson~~ <sup>Carson</sup> County.

Sunday I was out to the bay near by in Bridget Sound a distance of about 5 miles along the shore I caught Clams Oysters. Crabs and numerous sea shell fish. I know not what but it was great sport. The only misfortune I had was that I had to double time it back in order not to miss dinner.

I have written so much my hand seems so cold and stiff. I can hardly write so will close with including a trip to the football game Saturday 10<sup>th</sup>. I thought perhaps you might want to go along too, so I will let you.

We get paid to-morrow so will send some money in the next few days.

With love and best wishes.  
Edward.

24 DECEMBER 1917  
**Letter to Lester — Christmas at Camp**

Dear Brother Lester,  
 To morrow is Xmas and I owe you, Earl and Sam each an Xmas present but you will indeed have to excuse me for I have been so busy the last week I have scarcely had time for anything until yesterday they let the afternoon pass for three days but that was too late to send anything for Xmas. Besides as you perhaps know my cash does not hold out very far when they take out for \$10,000 insurance and then take a trip into town once a month to help drive away the monsters of camp. But I sincerely hope you had a merry Xmas and wish you a most happy and prosperous new year.  
 I am on fatigue duty tomorrow so I must rush back to camp yet to night to be there for work tomorrow afternoon.  
 I have been to 5 theaters

WAR WORK COUNCIL  
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 "With the Colors"

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and a museum display since I hit town yesterday. I've been through a lumber and planing mill and have been out eight seeing in general, but will be glad to get back to camp again I believe.  
 Well Lester how is everything getting along. Hope you are well and full of ginger. I wish you was here. It is what it takes these days to still though on a good high plain. There are only 5 or 6 men in our whole company who do not use tobacco and they are black boys.  
 Tell father that a Danish man from Montana came up to me the other day and asked me if my name was Grundvig. When I told him it was he asked if every relative of Grundvig the greatest of all great men ever known to Denmark. He says that this man Grundvig is pictured

WAR WORK COUNCIL  
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 "With the Colors"

1917

in the school as a very great man almost as an Abraham Lincoln in Denmark and that he was trying to work the farmers into a higher plane. He also stated that this man came to U.S. some years ago and he thinks is now in Wisconsin. This fellow's name is Peterson and he is as active as any man I have ever seen in circuses or any other place in my life. Why he doesn't seem to have a long in him. When we had our smoker he did stunts that made every one look in wonder. He says he wondered when he first heard my name if I were not related to this great man. But what could I say. You see here I am lost. Perhaps I am related to one of the greatest men that ever lived but no proof raised! So I must go on in wonder worrying about this great, great man. But I guess it is best not to look him up and see what right he has

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1917

to the name Grundvig for he might consider his name slandered if he should find he was related to any such name. Enough of this gab and foolishness on Xmas eve so I will wish you "Good Luck" and my own always be appreciative of all readings which are yours,  
 your lovingly,  
 Leonard

P.S. I received the first letter from Civilly the other day and he enclosed \$5.00 for an Xmas present. I am going to try to get him interested in getting something and have heart talks with him. He has the material for reaching a high mark if he will only use it and encouragement letters is the one thing that will make him feel better!

Love to all  
 Leonard

1918

## Two Censored A.E.F. Envelopes



SUMMER 1918

Letter to the Family — Somewhere in France: Farm Life

---

Somewhere in France.

Dear Mother, Father, bro. & sisters.

Just a few lines to let you know that I am real well and enjoying life real well under circumstances which are not very bad when we stop consider what the definition of war implies.

The summer is nearly done and we see people daily bringing in their harvests which makes one think of home and wonder how every thing is going there. The weather has been the best one could imagine since we hit France.

Occasionally we help a farmer (sometimes a man and some times a woman) unload a load of grain. They store it in barns which also contains their living room and all other possessions as I perhaps have said. All old country buildings are made of brick or stone and the walls

are usually of an immense thickness with but one or two windows to a building. Towns are only a short distance apart and no one lives out on their farms. All are grouped in villages.

I have some of the best friends one could ask for. John Colzani a boy from Helper is teaching us french. We have a class nearly every night. I have just finished my class now. There are only three or four of us and he is good enough to devote his time to us every evening. I have a newly made friend who is about my age and was when drafted State Quarantine officer of California and he was also a Horticulture Commissioner of Sutter County of California. As for as that goes nearly every one is a good friend to

me but you know you can accept and be more confidential to some than others and in the army one has the greatest chances imaginable to make friendships you would think to look at Knight the boy of whom I was talking that he was too young to hold any such positions as he claims to but he has cards to prove his avocation and is of a straight-forward and sincere sort.

We have been out practicing <sup>or manuevering</sup> battles to-day and expect to do so again to-morrow. We are gradually becoming more accustomed to our steel helmets and gas masks which at present are our worst worry if we have any but really I am so busy that I forget to worry which is I guess a very good

things

You must write when you have time mother  
but I realize that your time is pretty well taken during  
the summer months especially and your nerves are not  
as good as they once were but any time you get an  
idea that you should like to practice up on writing I  
will be indeed glad to receive a few lines from either  
you or father and I do appreciate the way the "girls"  
all of them write to me. It has been a long while since  
I received any mail at all but I perhaps will get some  
soon. Love to all and be of good cheer until we get done  
over here.

Your loving son and brother

censored  
W. H. Phillips  
2nd Lt 302nd  
Inf

Pvt Leonard A. Grundvig

Co C. 362nd Inf

Am P.O. # 4774

American Expeditionary Forces  
France

over.

When you write Lester tell him that Emil Christensen  
is with me in the company yet and wishes me to  
say that he is well and getting on all right. Lester may  
tell his folks if he gets to see them which he no doubt  
does

EARLY AUTUMN 1918

Letter to Mother — Somewhere in France: Camp Life

Dear mother,  
I am real well and enjoying army life as well as one possibly could. I am remaining in billets until 11:30 this morning at which time we will start on an assumed problem and stay out all night. I have just had a good sponge bath which is our substitute for a real bath when conditions will not permit us to take one. We have had real warm weather here for the past two weeks but yesterday it turned a little cooler. The leaves on the trees are all ready <sup>starting</sup> to turn a little yellow and I do not think it will be long until all will have the appearance of autumn.

Although I do not have much time to do or think I any thing but drills and problems, occasionally I do let my mind drift back to a small town in Utah and there dwell with the folks at home for a while. I think of you all real often or as often as occasion will permit and wonder how you are all getting along. I got a letter from Orville not so long ago and was surely glad to know all was going well.

The band is practicing while I am writing this just out of our dining room and it is rather hard to write and listen to music at the same time so if you find any rhythm in this you can blame the band.

I am sending you separately a small

while to go all the way across the sea and the U.S. too as well as France.

We get papers every day or so here and know partially what is really taking place in regards to the war yet I do not think we really know as much as you people at home.

O, yes I almost forgot to tell you that we had a traveling picture show in town the other night and it was almost as good as a circus to us ~~too~~ see it for we had not seen any thing of the sort for ages it seemed.

I see Dennis Edwell nearly every day. He is billeted in the same village with me. I heard that Helen Rich was not so far from us so I may also get some news my day. When I get so that I can't talk French well enough I'll write you a French letter. ha' ha! I'll bet you would have a word time reading it that I would writing it.



Love to all and my happiness and prosperity go with you.

Your loving son,  
Port Leonard A. Grunding.  
Co. B. 362 Inf.  
Am. P.O. #774.  
American Expeditionary Force

Enclosed  
1332  
12th 31. 1918

1 JULY 1918

### Letter to Mother — Troop Train East

 **ARMY AND NAVY  
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION  
"WITH THE COLORS"** 

Camp Merritt, N.J.  
July 1st, 1918.

Dear Mother and all,



Same as you know from  
Greg's and Lottis cards on the eastern  
coast of the United States instead of the western.  
Had a splendid trip from the very outset.  
We passed over more than 3,000 miles of  
railroad in a course of a little more than  
six days stopping each day and drilling each  
day for about an hour or the way. At  
every station we were greeted very warmly  
and at many places we were served with  
ice cream and cigarettes both of which all  
would have been better without. Gregs  
is the place for kids. When ever the troop  
train makes a stop while stretching around  
in the yards kids would flock around the  
train so thick and fast that it was almost  
impossible for 3 policemen to keep them back.  
Every window door street and open spot was  
massed with kids. Never saw such a sight

TO THE WRITER: SAVE BY WRITING ON BOTH SIDES OF THIS PAPER  
TO THE FOLK AT HOME: SAVE FOOD, BUY LIBERTY BONDS AND WAR SAVINGS STAMPS

or dreamed of seeing so many kids in such  
crowded places. We were only shoved through  
the railroad yards and did not get to  
see the real fine buildings and large  
places of the city. The lights went out  
last night before I had time to finish  
this letter so was compelled to leave it  
until this morning and fortunately  
I got hold of a fountain pen with which  
to finish it.

We came past New York and  
could see the large buildings on the distance  
but have not as yet been to the city but  
with good luck we will be there in 24  
hours past before we leave for some where  
over there. The 42 story building in  
Seattle Wash looked reasonably high to  
me but the Woolworth building in  
New York is 69 stories high so to the side  
of it I guess 42 stories will not look like so  
much.

I have not heard lately whether  
Lark Edwell was yet in New York but  
I'm going over and try to look him up  
any way. The weather through out our  
trip was great and nights here are  
cool also so we sleep like a  
log. I am writing real often mother

 **ARMY AND NAVY  
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION  
"WITH THE COLORS"** 

but I have a little spare time  
here now and I am sure you will  
be glad to hear from me. It is about  
dinner time so must close.



Love to all.

Your loving son  
Capt. Leonard W. Grundig  
Co. C. 362 Inf.  
A. E. F.

P.S. If ever you should have occasion  
to write to the War Risk Insurance Bureau  
in regards to my whereabouts always  
use my serial number which is (226009)  
Two million, two hundred sixty thousand  
nine. This is my army serial number  
and should always be used in connection  
with my name.

TO THE WRITER: SAVE BY WRITING ON BOTH SIDES OF THIS PAPER  
TO THE FOLK AT HOME: SAVE FOOD, BUY LIBERTY BONDS AND WAR SAVINGS STAMPS

From Leonard W. Grundig  
Co. C. 362 Inf.  
New York City

Mrs S A Grundig,  
Wellington,  
Carbon Co.,  
Utah.

15 SEPTEMBER 1918

Letter to Mother — Hospital and Pleurisy

Somewhere in France.  
Sept 15 - 18

Dear mother,

Just a few lines to say that I am feeling about well again and expect to again be on duty soon. I have been in the hospital two weeks from Pleurisy which is quite confining in its nature but not at all of the nature of most sickness. I think it caught it through exposure by getting to warm then lying in shade and cooling off to quick. However it is now much better and you must give it no worry for by the time you receive this I may be well have been entirely all right and on duty for some time. I did not mention it here because I supposed that I should only be detained a few days but it takes quite a while to overcome such and they will not let me go again until they are entirely well.

How are all getting along?

I have a good friend in the hospital who gathers me a dish of fresh black berries nearly every day and with sugar and canned milk, rather pretty good. This afternoon a Frenchman came in and gave us a violin solo or in fact several selections which sounded all to gether good. I am in a ward which accomodates 36 patients and we have a reasonably jolly bunch.

I could tell you a lot of front or firing line news but you will get that as early as we get it here and perhaps I really more in detail so such would be ~~un~~ valuable to you. However the yanks are here in hundreds of thousands and are starting to make their determination (and the war as soon as possible) felt.

I hope you are all well and enjoying life best possible under circumstances

I think of you often mother

and wonder if your burden will ever be lighter. I will always feel to censor my self for starting up a business as I did then running of to war and leaving the burden of the thing all upon you folks at home and especially you. I hope it had turned out all right but I should have knowed better than to start in such a critical time I should have been more cautious. The expense however now I think seen of great benefit to me. If there is any business left to do when I return I shall be glad to help dispose of any financial emergencies and that done then I shall feel free to make my way in the world.

With love to all and may peace be with you.

Your loving son,  
W. Leonard A. Brundage  
Camp Hosp # 8  
Am. S.O. # 757  
American Expeditionary Forces  
France.

2 OCTOBER 1918  
Letter to Inga — Base Hospital

I. Mrs. G. D. [unclear] somewhere in France.  
L. M. C.  
Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup> 1918.

Dear sister Inga,  
I received your letter just about half an hour ago and your little scamp you have every body beaten when it comes to writing. I feel so good to receive such letters that I can hardly contain my self. If you do every thing see as well as you write you will surely be an appreciated person in this world.

At present I am feeling very well. It has taken a long time to entirely get rid of my pleurisy but at last I am (I am quite sure) entirely well. My appetite is that of a raven and I am getting fatter every day again and sleep like a log at night and too my complexion is again coming back. I would have written sooner but have been expecting to get out of the hospital any day and

II. I thought that I would wait until I became permanently established again but I will write again when I do that.

I was out for a walk the other day and visited an old fort which to me was very interesting. Hundreds of thousands of dollars are put into such and one without seeing such could not imagine the immensity of ~~it~~ it and the energy to keep it up especially in times of war. We spent our whole afternoon going through and around the fort and finally reached camp again about 8 o'clock P.M. It was my first large walk since I have been ill and I was ~~not~~ real tired but slept fine ~~through~~. Today the sun shines brightly and this afternoon it is almost warm which helps to straighten anyone out who has been feeling a little under the weather.

III. I received 4 letters all together today and they were surely welcomed with a welcome such as they had no anticipation of receiving. I bet and I am answering them so sudden that I fear it might make their heads swim but they have been traveling a long time and they ought to be prepared for such a shock, hadn't they? So well letters write.

I'd like to see you doing men's work in overalls. I'll bet you girls have a great deal of fun anyway and along with your fun are learning perhaps a lesson or lessons which may be of great value to you in the future.

I just received a letter from Dor and he seems to be doing nicely. Also a letter from Orville. Was glad to hear the good news from Earl and hope that the next letter you write may convey even better news still.

It's not right to write too long letters

From Pvt Leonard A Grundberg  
U S Army.  
Am. E. F.

Soldiers  
mail



Miss Inez Grundberg



Wellington  
Carbor Co.  
Utah

U.S.A.


9 NOVEMBER 1918  
Letter to Mother — First Days at the Front

Knights of Columbus  
OVERSEAS SERVICE

ON ACTIVE SERVICE WITH  
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

A.P.O. 776

DATE Nov 9 - 18  
Somewhere in Belgium.



Dear Mother,

It hasn't seems been some time since I received your letters, and Oneg's letters but owing to rucking conditions I have been unable to answer before and am writing this in a hurry and taking chances of getting it sent off soon. I am well and hope this finds you all as well. My pleasy is apperantly nothing of the past. I have been to the front once and just got an introduction to war with its destruction and have seen a little of the devastation heaped upon Belgium. I must retire right soon for lights are a luxury where you can have them and get be seen by the Boche and it is time for the <sup>fall</sup> in whose house I

am writing to go to bed. so "God night" and god cheer and may the spirit of god be always with you. all at all times

Your loving son,  
Lempf.  
corp Lemuel A. Grundvog  
Co. C - 302 Inf.  
A.E.F.  
A.P.O. 776

Censored by Lt. Louis O. Cope  
U.S. Army.

P.S. - The war no doubt will be over by or before the time you receive this so I may be home this winter or at any rate in the spring. at least we now expect as much.

11 NOVEMBER 1918  
**Letter to the Family — Armistice Day**

(1)

Knights of Columbus  
 OVERSEAS SERVICE

ON ACTIVE SERVICE WITH  
 AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

A.P.O. 776.

DATE Nov 11-18  
 Somewhere in Belgium

Dear Parents, Bros, & Sisters,

I received Sister Laura's letter to day, while drawing back from the front awaiting the results of peace negotiations. Hostilities ceased to day at 11 o'clock, making an odd number all the way round. 11<sup>th</sup> month, 11<sup>th</sup> day, 11<sup>th</sup> hour. So millions of soldiers and well as hundreds of millions of people at their homes, to day will be a day to be long remembered, and to the people of Germany as well as of the allies. But from all reports Germany is now in a depleted condition. I have seen German soldiers after they were dead with holes in their shoes allowing their bare feet to touch the ground, but their actions towards the Belgium nation and the world can never be forgotten or forgiven. To day through some parts

(2)

of Belgium which have been so totally devastated ~~that~~, it makes one feel that he could never forgive their deeds.

I wrote you a letter the other night but could find no envelope in which to mail it so will send you a double one to night.

I am well and husky and fat as ever if not more so. The Germans have caused so many turnips to be planted in Belgium that when advancing over the country one in many places finds it necessary to dig up turnips in digging a hole in which to sleep for the night, but if peace is come to earth again now we can abandon holes for good. U.S. can sure route the Dutch from their trucks war spare and is on the job for any of their trucks. They're sure a search of Yanks. But what I'd like to say is that in lying in holes all day and night with meals when luck come our way enough to get them to us, turnips help a great deal and when one has to make one centew of water last two or three

(3)

Knights of Columbus  
 OVERSEAS SERVICE

ON ACTIVE SERVICE WITH  
 AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

A.P.O.

DATE

day turnips again serve to help ones thirst. Its some different to fight where the country is in a normal condition that it is where nothing is visible but fragments of buildings and trees, <sup>and</sup> holes exposing you on all sides in no mans' land.

They say that we will be among the first to return home so I may be home before so very long yet do not depend too much on my return soon for we know nothing certain of our return yet.

To day is a most beautiful day and I am fortunate to be left in charge of our billet, for it gives me a little time to write.

I hope Sister is still at home, but if he is not I should like

(4)

very well if you would tell him to write or send me his address for I would imagine from past letters that he is in camp by this time.

To day is a most beautiful day with a heavy rain at all and place it seems has truly taken hold of the world. The atmosphere seems so clear and fresh too that one can truly appreciate it.

Hoping you are all well and getting along first class I am as ever

Your loving son & bro  
 Leonard

Camp Leonard A. Brundage  
 Co C. 562 Inf  
 Am.P.O. # 776  
 Am. S. F.

Commanded by *[Signature]*  
 1st U.S. Army

29 NOVEMBER 1918

Letter to his Sisters — Belgian Farm Life

Knights of Columbus  
OVERSEAS SERVICE

ON ACTIVE SERVICE WITH  
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

A.P.O. #776

DATE Nov 29-18  
Somewhere in Belgium.

(Mrs. & Sister)

Dear Sisters,

Your lovely letters come to night and I was surely glad to hear that all were as well as you are and that Lester and Daniel are still present to help with the farm.

I am real well and feel like a four year old as the room says, the only thing against our grain or corn is so much rain and dampness but we may not be here so very long so we can easily put up with a little inconvenience.

Thirteen of us are staying with a Belgian farmer who treats us very kind and makes us welcome as can be. We have become so accustomed to their ways of living and

customs that we do not note the difference from the way habits as much as we did at first.

The chief crop this year here is potatoes, turnips, carrots and rye, wheat and so to enrich as a rule to partially (at least) supply the family that is where the Germans have not taken it all.

We are again becoming better acquainted. You see we have had many men added to our company to take the place of men who through battle have been disabled or killed and we are just now becoming acquainted so we can work to gether again.

Our division was the good name or rather moved its good reputation and lived up to all expectations and reached as high a standard as any division in the A.E.F. It is now called the "Old Western Division". In spite of casualties and the clattering artillery fire of the enemy, they gained ground very rapidly and held every yard

Knights of Columbus  
OVERSEAS SERVICE

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A.P.O.

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They took whole division on both sides were forced back by the enemy. One afternoon they took a hill said to be impossible to take by military authorities looking quite heavily but they gained their objective and the Germans became greatly disheartened to see ~~the~~ the Yanks take positions they thought could never be taken and naturally their morale dropped real low and with rapid action of this sort on all fronts they were surely glad to have a chance to surrender which they did when the armistice was signed or partially did.

Oh yes, I get a can of milk occasionally now and

am getting fat so I can be just natural for me hahaha!

Had a pleasant Thanksgiving yesterday, that as pleasant as one could expect and I did think of you all at home and wonder just how and where you were spending Thanksgiving. Hope you had a happy one and wish you all a Merry Xmas and a happy new year and I will always remember how you girls have reminded me with nice letters to help me along.

I with love is all,  
your brother  
Senard  
Capt. Senard A Expeditionary  
Co. 302 Inf  
A.P.O. #776  
A.E.F.  
U.S. Army  
Staff Chamberlain

4 DECEMBER 1918  
Letter to his Parents — The War Itinerary

Membelbeke  
Belgium  
Dec. 4<sup>th</sup> 1918.  
From Camp Leonard Wood  
Co. C. 362 Inf.  
Am P. O. # 776  
American E. F.  
Dear Parents, Brothers & Sisters.  
A few lines to say I am  
well and in best of spirits. I wrote  
to you it seems not many days  
ago but since that there has been  
a modification of the censor rules  
and we are permitted to say more  
as to happenings and places we  
are and have been. I realize that  
it is useless to say or try to say  
what I have done or where I  
have been in any one or even  
several letters and besides it  
may not interest you to know

all such but I will try to briefly  
outline the territory or rather I  
mean the trip I have had.  
After leaving New York we meandered  
across the pond taking 14 days from  
the time we went on board until  
we got off. We kept on no straight  
course but sailed first one direction  
then another the purpose being I  
suppose to dodge subs. We landed  
in Liver Pools, from there took  
the train to South Hampton where  
we again took the boat to cross  
the English channel. We then landed  
in La Havre, France, took train  
through Rouen and by Paris to  
south eastern France. Montigny  
Le Roi is the name of the town  
in which our division had its  
head quarters. ~~close~~ to Chaumont.

From there ~~the American~~ division I  
went to the arragon front where  
was confined to the hospital there  
with my pleasure. After recovering  
I journeyed from "meuse" the  
closest railroad station to Montigny  
to "Longre", from Longre, "Es su. tile"  
a large railroad center I think  
the largest in the world, made  
such from the U.S. from "Es su tile"  
I went to "St. Diez" from St. Lieger  
to. Perigny a town on the Verdun  
front where I joined the company  
and came with them by train  
by way of Paris, Bolonges, Calais, and  
Dunkirk to Belgium. We walked  
through Ypres a city totally destroyed  
to Abuliers, then to various  
small towns and places and

were in Berre a city adjoining  
"Anderaarde" the morning the  
Armistice was signed. Later  
we walked to within 20 to  
25 miles of Brussels (the capital  
of Belgium) then we turned our  
steps back and we <sup>are</sup> hoping as  
well as thinking that they will  
lead us homeward.

Did I ever tell you  
that while we were traveling  
from "La Hayre" to Paris that  
we had a wreck. The train  
of box cars on which I was  
riding was struck by another  
heavy train in the rear as  
we were stopped and the  
cars it was reported were  
crushed and we had  
many soldiers who never saw

even much of France let alone  
the front. That seemed worse than  
war to us for we all seem so  
helpless.

I had a real good shower  
bath to day and our clothes were  
run through a cotic or insect  
destroyer and we all hope to  
be rid of them for good now.  
It is a wonder we have not had  
more of them than we have  
following up and sleeping in  
places and on straw where  
and in barns where the Bosh  
had been.

I am sending home a  
few little pieces of hand made  
lace just to show you how  
much pains the people take

with such things here and  
also to remember you on Xmas  
with a Souvenir from Belgium.  
The large fly is for mother, and  
one of each of the others for the  
girls. I am also sending some  
cards showing a town not far  
here which still show the type  
of the towns of Belgium in  
general.

I am at present sleeping  
on a real bed and we  
actually have chairs on  
which to sit ha! ha! seems  
like a dream.

Hoping you are all  
well and that you spend Xmas  
as happy as Thanksgiving <sup>any</sup> than  
ever before and that God is

again with you in a good  
healthy condition.

With love to all  
your loving Son & Bro.

Leonard  
Corp. Leonard A. Grundig

Censored by  
Capt. Leonard A. Grundig  
U.S. Army

15 DECEMBER 1918

Letter to his Brother — Belgium after the Armistice

From *John Leonard Drummond*  
 Co. 362 Inf  
 am 80, # 776  
 8, 776

**Knights of Columbus  
 OVERSEAS SERVICE**

**ON ACTIVE SERVICE WITH  
 AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES**

A.P.O. 776

DATE *Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> 18*

*Post Wiltrem, Belgium,*

Dear Brother,  
 your letter of recent date reached me last night. I was so glad that it does not take so long for mail to cross as when we first came over. I would like to hear from you as I always am and to know that you are getting on all right and are well.

We have been moving from town to town in Belgium since the armistice was signed and it seems that we may some day reach a port where we will sail for home as we are a great deal nearer the coast than when I last wrote. yet we can never tell and I suppose it is not the

# 2

progress on coming home too soon for we may be stopped upon it.

"Ypres" the city where such a great battle was fought on this front is not very far from here and it is now only a mass of ruins. I am enclosing a postcard with a picture upon it of the town before it was so mutilated.

Our last hike consisted of about 24 kilometers so the Belgians here say; from *Stogleda* to *Colineton* making by road measures a *hike*.

It sure was a healthy little hike, but we were used to thinking that there is no limit to how far we could make in a day.

I have not heard from home for a while but expect to hear from them any time now. We have been in this place for about a week now but expect to move again soon. When I cannot say but I hope it is direct for the boat. ha! ha! Will surely appreciate home when I do get there.

# 3

**Knights of Columbus  
 OVERSEAS SERVICE**

**ON ACTIVE SERVICE WITH  
 AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES**

A.P.O.

DATE

It was fortunate enough to get hold of a pen so as to finish up with it.

Oh, yes, I must tell you about running over to *Hamouth* *Palm* *see how the other day*. He was transferred back to his old outfit from the cavalry company and it was just fortunate that he was. He was surely glad to get back he says and I do not know that I can blame him. He did not get to see the front line even though he had been over here since *May* *1918*.

To day is Sunday and I do not know what I can say that would interest you. Of course I could tell you experiences and etc but you will hear about them

# 4

later at least hope so and good and plenty. Every one will have narrow escape stored to tell that is every one who was on the front. However I might outline the territory I have covered by giving names of places as I remember them. After leaving Liverpool, England where we landed we crossed England to South Hampton, then crossed the English Channel to La Havre, France. From there we went by *Breux* and near Paris into Southern France to a town called *Namur* *St. Martin* where we remained *weeks* *or more*. It was there that I was seized by *Plague* and taken to a camp hospital near *Montigny* not so far from *Chamont* (the head quarters of the American Expeditionary forces). After recovering I went by *Amiens* to *Co-su-tile* (a large railroad center and casual camp), then to *Faucher* *St. Dizier*, then to *Revin* where I again got with my company just as they were pulling back from the Argonne front. There was only about 20 old men left

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Knights of Columbus  
OVERSEAS SERVICE



ON ACTIVE SERVICE WITH  
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

A. P. O. \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

in the company and they were  
in very poor condition. Our coat  
fit and had loose so heavy that  
it seemed that all were either  
killed or wounded. I thought  
it unfortunate that I was unable  
to be with them when I heard they  
were going to the front but after  
seeing the things after they came  
back it may be fortunate. At any  
rate I joined them at Reims  
and we came straight to Belgium  
along the north western coast of  
France and in course of only  
a few days or a week we were  
again in action on "Flanders  
front." After the armistice was  
signed we advanced almost  
to Brussels then returned  
stopping as a rule for two or three

19 DECEMBER 1918

Letter to the Family — Oostvleteren, Belgium

Oostvleteren, Belgium.  
Dec. 19, 1918.  
From Corporal Leonard A. Brundage,  
Co. B. 362 Inf.  
Am P.O. #776.  
American E. F.  
Dear Parents, Brothers & Sisters,  
It has been some time since I heard from home but trust that I will soon hear how all are. I am well and enjoying life best possible from day to day under the circumstances. Each day makes one wish more and more that he were home but as we all know it takes time to transport so many men and complete the peace negotiations under way, we can await as patiently as possible the happy day when we start.  
At present I am helping in the personnel office but know not how long this will last, but I had

as leave drill for I do enjoy morning exercises and fresh air.

Xmas is here and we are having rain almost daily. As yet we have had very little cold weather, but perhaps I had ~~not~~ better hold on too soon as the saying is, for we have plenty of time yet to get it. However I think in the section we are now billeted the climate is a great deal like that of Camp Lewis in Washington.

I am enclosing two postcards showing ruins in places and I just wish to say that they are very typical of ruined towns and cities we have seen by the hundreds it seems. Pictures can at least give you an idea of how fine building look

after thousands of those shells have been planted in and around them.


To write lengthy letters as is my tendency, ~~to do~~ is a bad habit when time is scarce, but that is just the time I can write long ones. It seems like when I have plenty of time I am either in the wrong humor or something else prevents me from writing what I should like to say, but I will perhaps be able to do better next time.

Hoping all are well and happy and that I am soon where I can see you I am,

Your loving son,  
Leonard.

Examined by H. Casswell  
Lieut. 362nd Inf.

10 JANUARY 1919  
**Letter to Mother — Near Le Mans**

AMERICAN  
  
 ON ACTIVE SERVICE  
 WITH THE  
 AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

January 10<sup>th</sup> 1918.

From Corp. Lenard A. Lundberg  
 Co. "C" - 362<sup>nd</sup> Inf.  
 American P.O. # 776  
 American C. & F.

Dear Mother,

Just a few lines to night to say that I am feeling top notch. I am well as well can be and feel just like I should like to step in to night and see how you are all getting along. It is not very cold here yet and I do not think I will get any colder. It has been so long since I have seen snow on the ground that I have forgotten how it looks.


(We are now located in a small town south-west of Paris near "Le Mans". We came here from Oostmsteren, Belgium about a week ago and are now preparing for our trip overseas.

How soon we will embark we do not yet know but we must get rid of our coats and get more clothing yet before we leave.

I spent a reasonable time and thought of you all some. Only hope you are all well and spend as happy time as I. The only thing with me that is hard to get accustomed to is so much cloudy and stormy weather. It will surely seem good to get back to the clear blue sky and bright sunshine of Utah.

I have not seen "Paris" yet but if I get the opportunity I will surely take advantage of it while I am so close. About all the country we have seen in France is small towns or cities, partially or completely blown up, and to see "Paris" would surely be a treat.

I saw in the "Stars and Stripes" (a paper published here for the soldiers) that President Wilson ate Xmas dinner in "Montigny Le Roi" where I spent my time in the shop.

AMERICAN  
  
 ON ACTIVE SERVICE  
 WITH THE  
 AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

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I sent Lettie and Inez each a copy which they no doubt have received and will try to remember Laura and Ruby gather something else.

I saw Dennis Tidwell the other day and got Hank's address from him as if Lettie has not already got his address for me, <sup>she</sup> will not need to bother.

Hope you are all well and enjoying life as much as possible. Give my regards to Grandfather and all the folks.

as ever,  
 Lenard A. Lundberg  
 Corp. Chamberlain  
 Co. C. 362<sup>nd</sup> Infantry.  
 American C. & F. # 776  
 American C. & F.

16 JANUARY 1919  
Letter to his Parents — Saint-Cosme-de-Vair

Saint-Cosme-de-Vair, France  
January 16<sup>th</sup> 1919

Dear Father and Mother,  
your lovely Christmas package reached a day or two ago and I was delighted to receive as much. Both the knife and the pencil come in handy and the mentholatum will surely come in handy. While as for the candy, you can easily guess what happened to it. I gave some of the boyer some of it and they said to tell you it sure tasted good to them, as they had not tasted honey candy for ages.

I am feeling real well to night and am rearing to move, but we may, according to current rumors, remain here until the 20<sup>th</sup> of Feb.

I received a letter from Grandmother the other day and she appeared to be quite well but was a little lonesome, I think. I also received a letter from Bob and according to his letter he will in all probability be home by this time. I haven't seen Kenneth for a week or more but he was well and hearty the last time I saw him.

While running over a paper from home (by home I mean the U.S.A.) I ran across a statement from a letter written by an officer of this regiment which might be of interest to you if you have not seen it. While we were on the "Flanders" front in Belgium I saw an official "communique" which stated that a German officer had been captured with papers on him stating that any German soldier who took prisoner any man of the 91<sup>st</sup> division would be granted an 18 days leave of absence. I may have told you this, but do not remember and I have to have something to make up a letter. As for news I might say that I was in "Montigny le Desir" (the town where president Wilson ate his Xmas dinner) for about 6 weeks. I had no idea while I was there that president Wilson would eat Xmas dinner there.

Best wishes to all and tell the girls not to give up writing, even though I do not address all letters to them for I realize how hard it is for you and mother to write so expect them to answer. over

With love to all and may you enjoy a clearer, brighter year of 1919 than you have ever known.

your loving son,  
Senard.

Examined by  
H. G. Groll  
St. 362 Inf.

Corp. Senard A. Grundy  
Co. "C." 362 Inf.  
Am. P.O. # 776.  
American E.F.

16 FEBRUARY 1919  
Letter to his Sister — Le Mans

ON ACTIVE SERVICE  
WITH THE  
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

AMERICAN RED CROSS

NAME Corp. Edward A. Brundage  
Co. C. 362d Infantry  
Am. E. F. A. E. O. 776

H. Cosme - St. Nair, France  
February 16<sup>th</sup> 1919.

Dear Sister,  
Your letter received a short time ago and I was surely glad to hear from you and to know that you are all well. Was also glad to hear that Dow was home. Wonder how he likes home life in comparison with the camps?  
I filled out a card to-day and sent it to you or home rather stating that I am well as can be, if not "weller". Every soldier is required to fill out such a card and send home.  
It has been nice and warm here the past two or three days after about two weeks of real hard

freezing and snow not enough to cover the ground entirely.  
I was to Le Mans on pass for two days and quite enjoyed my trip. While there the Y.M.C.A. man, there, took us for a tour of the city and lectured to us on events and places, there, which record a great deal of ancient, medieval as well as modern history. The town dates back as far if not farther than 52 B.C. and used to be a strong hold due to the fact that it is situated upon a hill in the forks of the Sarthe and Roin rivers. It was at one time called the city of 50 towers for the reason that it had 50 towers in the walls surrounding it. Among the interesting things of the city to-day are; the large Cathedral, the Queen's palace, and the birthplace of "Richard the Lion Hearted." The old city is undermined by a net work of underground passages, through which

ON ACTIVE SERVICE  
WITH THE  
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

AMERICAN RED CROSS

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 19

the people used to pass for water to the rivers. Sarthe and Roin during war, or a siege of the city. Through the hill supporting the city is a tunnel built in recent years and lately named the "Rue Wilbur Wright," and at the east end of this street or tunnel a statue is being erected in honor of this American who did his great work helping to perfect the aeroplane in France.  
It's about time for supper so "good night."  
your loving bro.  
Edward.  
Censored by \_\_\_\_\_  
St. 362d Inf.

February 16<sup>th</sup> 1919  
(Date.)

Dear father:

I am now stationed at St Cosme-De-Vair, France  
(Name of place.)

with Co. C. 362d Inf 91st Div A.E.F., A.P.O. 776.  
(Organization.)

and am in perfect health.  
(State of health.)

Leonard A. Grundvig  
(Name of soldier.)

NOTE—This card is furnished to enable each soldier to notify his family as to his present location, organization and condition of health under the provisions of G. O. No. 15, c. s., G. O. Q. A. E. F.

Leonard A. Grundvig  
(Name.)  
Co. C. 362d Inf  
(Organization.)  
A.P.O. 776

No Stamp  
Required if  
Name and  
Organization  
is Placed in  
Upper Left  
Corner.

U.S. ARMY POST OFFICE  
FEB 19  
11 139PM  
M.P.E.S. 1919

Mr. S. A. Grundvig  
(Name.)

(Street and number.)

Wellington  
(City.)

Utah  
(State.)

U.S.A.

Censored by  
Sent 362<sup>d</sup> Inf  
4265



## **The Letters — A Reading Edition, 1917–1919**

For ease of reading, the overseas papers reproduced in facsimile above are transcribed here in the same chronological order, from the smooth-reading renderings prepared for this project. Uncertain words have been resolved to their most likely reading and ordinary misspellings and punctuation quietly normalized so the letters read as they were meant to be heard; nothing has been added, and Lenard's own phrasings — including his phonetic French — are kept exactly. For the word-for-word archival record, with every strike-through and uncertainty marked, see the high-fidelity transcripts in the archive. The letterheads he wrote on are noted at the head of each letter as he used them.

## A Trip to the Football Game — narrative

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### A Trip to the Foot Ball Game

After the usual Saturday morning inspection and close drill, Company C of the 362nd Infantry was rushed into an early dinner at eleven o'clock in order to have everything in readiness for the boys who wished to go to the football game on the train, which left at eleven fifty.

At eleven fifty the train was slowly making its way out of camp, carrying to its full capacity, yes and overrunning, the olive-drab-clad human beings called soldiers, all clean and newly shaven, shining, it seems, their very best.

As the train passed the long, skeleton-like buildings known as barracks, on the kitchen steps of each could be seen the men detailed for fatigue duty and kitchen police, together with the cooks who wore the clean white uniform which helps to make up the cook himself. Standing as it were with a longing look upon their faces which seemed to say, "I wish I were going too, boys," but no! I must stay here and cook, scrub, and wash dishes for you when you return and take care of the boys who remain here.

As the train reached the gateways of the camp, long strings of olive-drab wagons stood in rows, each facing the same direction and with equal distance between them. In fact, we may say they were standing at attention awaiting the command of an officer to say "at ease" or "dismissed."

Now the train gradually takes a slower pace, and as the grade becomes steeper the load is too immense for it to carry, so without command it comes to a halt. Immediately another great iron-wheeled horse is attached in front, and again we move slowly on our way, gradually gaining speed as we go. Now we are passing the great towering pines on the left and right, with an occasional oak lifting its head as high as possible to get a glimpse through between the pines. Ah, see, we are entering into the great "Mt. Rainier National Park."

The oaks become more thickly settled, and the pines here and there have taken a back seat to give the oaks a better view. See the green, velvety grass covering the entire surface of the earth, and moss covering the trunks of all the trees up for several feet. Here and there a mound presents itself to us as if to say, "Hello, you khaki kids." Look! Through the scattered pines in the short distance, here and there we get a glimpse of American Lake, and the sparkling waters seem to say, "Where are you going, boys? Are you having a good time?"

But we can only answer that we are trying to, for since we are in the army we must make the best of it and be as happy as possible. But the fact that nature invites us to enjoy part of what she is holding out for us gives us inspiration and hope that we will

someday be free from the chains of war and again take part with her in restoring earth back to a more peaceful and happy place for the abode of man.

Ah, she (nature) whispers into our ears and says, "Shame on man to allow himself to become so heated and angry over any trivial offense as to commence slaughtering each other. Using means and resources I gave for your welfare to blow up, destroy, and deface the surface of this old earth that I have been so long beautifying. But I excuse and forgive you in majority, for you are as sheep being pushed, crowded, and jammed, never realizing your true position.

"Men," nature whispers, "you will someday repent of these actions and learn that the things worthwhile are love, peace, and happiness. But not until a more perfect state of education exists throughout the earth, and men learn that the struggling, pushing, and crowding for power and fame are not the things worthwhile in life. For if man could gain the power his ambition would get for him, there is no telling how deeply he would trample others under the sod and still lack true contentment and satisfaction destined to make men happy."

Nature continues to stare us in the face with slight variations. Now she presents herself with leaves grown golden from autumn frosts, and now beautiful flower beds covering acres of soil, displaying flowers of every shape and hue. Occasionally we see an oak or maple sifting its golden leaves to mother earth again for a carpet during the cold spell she must soon encounter.

Attention! We have now passed through the National Park and are entering the "Great Northern Pacific" car yards and foundry. Great masses of iron and steel are thrown up in heaps, and hundreds of old locomotives stand dead awaiting the work of the man in blue jumper and overalls to remodel them and again bring them to life.

As we pass the foundry we see scores of men in the doors watching with interest us as we pass. After all, they are the truly happy men in life, for on every face we see a smile and a look which says, "Boys, we earn our way and then some. We are part of the backbone of this mighty nation."

Now we have passed these great yards and are making our way through the lowlands near the noted Puget Sound. Here and there we see shacks all moss-covered with time, and in the valleys of the roofs the moss has taken entire possession. Here and there we see men, women, and children placing themselves in their doorways for a glimpse of the army-laden train as it passes.

The train is now slowing down, and we are nearing the gigantic "Northern Pacific" depot. Now we have stopped, and our captain gives the command to dismount the train, and we are all lined up in squad column, and now our march to the grand Tacoma Stadium is commenced.

We march up Main Street some distance in squad column, then suddenly the command “platoons left” is given, and then in platoon formation we parade the streets, all traffic except ourselves being stopped. On either side you see the interesting faces of men, women, and children smiling and clapping their hands as we pass. As far down the winding streets as we can see, there is nothing ahead of us but marching troops. Ah, at last we have reached the grand stadium, and now in company formation we are lined up on the stadium football grounds. Then, after giving a few yells in behalf of our own football team, the command “take to the bleachers” is given. Then you see the mass of olive drab climb the steps of the stadium like sheep or goats going up a mountainside. Then in comes another regiment, and they likewise line up and take to the bleachers. Regiment after regiment does likewise until nearly every available seat is taken.

Look! There comes the Marine Corps, with whom the fight is to be made. With cheers, yells, and band selections from various bands, including the Marine band, the time is passed until it is time for the game. Ah, see, there comes the Marine football team now. See how cleverly they handle the ball. Watch them kick it! Oh, say, boys, some team!

There comes the 91st Division team onto the field. They also handle the ball very cleverly but—oh! they fumbled it. You can see in an instant that they have not had the practice the Marine boys have had.

Now they line up and the game starts. The 91st Division kicks off. Say, that was some kick, wasn't it, boys, but see how cleverly the Marine nails it and swiftly makes his way for the opposite goal. But fortunately, before he has gained much ground, a ninety-first divisioner brings him to the ground with a bang. The fight is on in earnest. “Hold that line! Hold that line!” is the continual yell of the ninety-first division soldiers, while the Marine soldiers are imploring their men to break through.

The fourth down comes and the Marine team has not gained sufficient ground, so they try a forward pass and lose the ball, the 91st Division boys getting it. The yell now from the soldier boys is “Go through 'em! Go through 'em, boys!”

They have stopped playing for an instant; we look around, and out to our left we see the great steamers and gasoline launches sailing about in Tacoma Bay. That one slipping by is the Indianapolis, just returning from Seattle.

Hush, the game is on again. It is a real battle indeed. Fight! Fight! Fight! But gradually, through their clever team work, the Marines score 7 points. See that mass of human beings piled up as wood. Gradually they unpile, and on the bottom lies a man as if dead. The doctor rushes onto the field, and in the course of a minute or so the man is again on his feet ready to fight. Some pretty tough human beings, don't you think, boys?

In like manner the game continues until again the Marines score 6 more, while we (the 91st divisioners) have a large 0 as our score. Nevertheless, we must stand back of our boys and help them fight it to a finish. So we cheer, cheer, cheer, but to no success apparently, for the time is up and the score is 13 to 0 in their favor. "Well, boys, you fought hard for it, and we were back of you, but we'll have to give it to them this time," was our cry while the masses passed from the stadium.

In flocks we passed back into the business section of Tacoma. It was now almost 5 o'clock, so we had supper in an up-to-date cafeteria.

After supper I went with some of the boys to locate a room for the night. After getting their room located, I quietly slipped away down to the magnificent Northern Pacific depot and there spent my time reading and writing until the train left for the camp at 9:30 P.M. I reached camp and hit the hay at 11 o'clock and went to sleep with the satisfaction of having seen a big football game.

11 OCTOBER 1917  
**Letter to the Family — Learning to Drill**

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*War Work Council  
Army and Navy Young Men's Christian Association  
"With the Colors"  
American Lake, Wash.  
Oct 11th, 1917*

Dear parents, Brothers & Sisters,

I am well and getting along all right. The terms most familiar to me now are: column right, column left, squads right, squads left, company attention, about face, right face, left face, forward march. Then all night I hear 1, 2, 3, 4; 1, 2, 3, 4; one, two, three, four, but the call I understand best is "fall in for mess." Ha! Ha!

How are mother, father, brothers and sisters getting? You know, this place up here seems more dismal to me on account of the continual cloudy weather than any other place I have ever been in.

I went downtown, that is to say went to the depot to go to Tacoma last night, and was there only a few minutes, but talk about people! They were stacked up by the hundreds, worse than any street I ever saw in Salt Lake or anywhere else.

If I can get off Sunday I am going over to Seattle, or rather Bremerton, and see Lark, and get to see some battle ships and the navy yards. That perhaps will help the dullness of the situation.

Eight men is a squad.  
Seven squads is a platoon.  
Two platoons is a company.  
Four companies is a battalion.  
Three battalions is a regiment, etc.

Am reading up on militarism now that I am in it. I may as well learn all that there is to it. I can also get all the good books I want at the Y.M.C.A. here free of charge.

On next sheet you will find a little rhyme found in a Tacoma paper. It's exactly right, although now Uncle Sam has issued us a quilt each so we sleep warm.

With love to all, and tell me all the news,  
—Lenard

P.S. Don is well and getting on ok, but he said night before last that his name was in the list for exemption, so he may be coming back home one of these days.

14 NOVEMBER 1917  
**Letter to the Family – Camp Lewis Drill**

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*War Work Council  
Army and Navy Young Men's Christian Association  
"With the Colors"  
Camp Lewis, Nov 14th, 1917*

Dear parents, brothers and sisters,

I am well and my health seems to get better every day, for now I do not get the least bit tired from our usual drill. Don is also feeling pretty well but is on guard duty today.

I have Wednesday afternoon to myself as well as Saturday afternoon and Sunday, so I really drill only 5 days a week unless my turn for guard duty comes on one of these days. So far I have been on guard duty only once, but was put on the outside of camp with a loaded gun and ordered to use it if necessary to fulfill orders, but such duty doesn't come very often.

I saw by the paper that it wasn't so that Don Grundvig had deserted. Ha! Ha! Ha! Several of the boys up here have received letters inquiring about me, asking if it was so that I had been caught deserting and court martialed and shot. You must have some noise down there. Ha! Ha! Ha!

If anyone asks you about me, say I have not as yet been shot, and as yet have had no chance. I may be partially dead, but not from the effects of a bullet.

I also saw where W. Cooper got what was due him in the "Sun." Serves him right; only they ought to oust him from Carbon County.

Sunday I was out to the bay nearby in Puget Sound, a distance of about 5 miles. Along the shore I caught clams, oysters, crabs and numerous sea shell fish, I know not what, but it was great sport. The only misfortune I had was that I had to double-time it back in order not to miss dinner.

I have written so much my hand seems so cold and stiff I can hardly write, so will close, with including a trip to the football game Saturday the 10th. I thought perhaps you might want to go along too, so I will let you.

We get paid tomorrow so will send some money in the next few days.

With love and best wishes,  
Lenard

24 DECEMBER 1917  
**Letter to Lester — Christmas at Camp**

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*[Y.M.C.A. War Work Council — Army and Navy stationery, dated 191\_ (completed  
“1917”)]*

Dear Brother Lester,

Tomorrow is Xmas and I owe you, Earl and Law each an Xmas present, but you will indeed have to excuse me, for I have been so busy the last week I have scarcely had time for anything until yesterday, when they let us off on pass for three days; but that was too late to send anything for Xmas. Besides, as you perhaps know, my cash does not hold out very far when they take out for \$10,000 insurance, and then I take a trip into town once a month to help drive away the monotony of camp. But I sincerely hope you had a merry Xmas, and I wish you a most happy and prosperous new year.

I am on fatigue duty tomorrow, so I must rush back to camp yet tonight to be there for work tomorrow afternoon.

I have been to 5 theaters and a museum display since I hit town yesterday. Have been through a lumber and planing mill and have been out sightseeing in general; but I will be glad to get back to camp again, I believe.

Well, Lester, how is everything getting along? Hope you are well and full of ginger, ha ha. But I guess you know what it takes these days to pull through on a good high plain. There are only 5 or six men in our whole company who do not use tobacco, and they are Utah boys.

Tell father that a Danish man from Montana came up to me the other day and asked me if my name was Grundvig. When I told him it was, he asked if I were a relative of Grundvig, the greatest of all great reformers ever known to Denmark. He says that this man Grundvig is pictured in the schools as a very great man, almost as an "Abraham Lincoln" in Denmark, and that he was trying to work the farmers into a higher plane. He also stated that this man came to U.S. some years ago and he thinks is now in Wisconsin. This fellow's name is Peterson, and he is as active as any man I ever saw in caucuses or anywhere else in my life. Why, he doesn't seem to have it in him — I know. When we had our smoker he did stunts that made everyone look in wonder. He says he wondered, when he first heard my name, if I were not related to this great man. But what could I say? You see, here I am lost. Perhaps I am related to one of the greatest men that ever lived, but no proof have I! So I must go on in wonder, worrying about this great, great man. But I guess it is best not to look him up and see what right he has to the name Grundvig, for he might consider his name slandered if he should find he was related to any such as we.

Enough of this gab and foolishness on Xmas eve, so I will wish you "Good Luck," and may you always be appreciative of all blessings which are yours.

Your Loving Bro.  
Lenard

P.S. I received the best letter from Orville the other day, and he enclosed \$5.00 for an Xmas present. I am going to try to get him interested in better writing and have heart talks with him. He has the material for reaching a high mark if he will only use it, and encouragement, I believe, is the one thing that will make him feel better!

Love to all,  
Lenard

S U M M E R 1 9 1 8

## Letter to the Family – Somewhere in France: Farm Life

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Somewhere in France

Dear Mother, Father, brothers & sisters.

Just a few lines to let you know that I am real well and enjoying life real well under circumstances which are not very bad when we stop to consider what the definition of war implies.

The summer is nearly done and we see people daily bringing in their harvests, which makes one think of home and wonder how every thing is going there. The weather has been the best one could imagine since we hit France. Occasionally we help a farmer (sometimes a man and sometimes a woman) unload a load of grain. They store it in barns which also contain their living room and all other possessions, as I perhaps have said. All old-country buildings are made of brick or stone, and the walls are usually of an immense thickness, with but one or two windows to a building. Towns are only a short distance apart and no one lives out on their farms. All are grouped in villages.

I have some of the best friends one could ask for. John Colgani, a boy from Helper, is teaching us French. We have a class nearly every night. I have just finished my class now. There are only three or four of us, and he is good enough to devote his time to us every evening. I have a newly made friend who is about my age and was, when drafted, State Quarantine officer of California, and he was also a Horticulture Commissioner of Sutter County of California. As far as that goes, nearly every one is a good friend to me, but you know you can accept one to be more confidential to some than others, and in the army one has the greatest chance imaginable to make friendships.

You would think, to look at Knight (the boy of whom I was talking), that he was too young to hold any such position as he claims to, but he has cards to prove his avocation and is of a straight-forward and sincere sort.

We have been out practicing battles (or maneuvering) to-day and expect to do so again to-morrow. We are gradually becoming more accustomed to our steel helmets and gas masks, which at present are our worst worry, if we have any; but really I am so busy that I forget to worry, which is, I guess, a very good thing.

You must write when you have time, mother, but I realize that your time is pretty well taken during the summer months especially, and your nerves are not as good as they once were; but any time you get an idea that you should like to practice up on writing, I will be indeed glad to receive a few lines from either you or father, and I do appreciate the way the "girls," all of them, write to me. It has been a long while since I received any mail at all, but I perhaps will get some soon. Love to all, and be of good cheer until we get done over here.

Your loving son and brother,  
Pvt. Lenard A. Grundvig  
Co. C, 362 Inf.  
Am. P.O. #777  
American Expeditionary Forces  
France

*[over]*

When you write Lester, tell him that Emil Christensen is with me in the company yet and wishes me to say that he is well and getting on all right. Lester may tell his folks, if he gets to see them, which he no doubt does.

EARLY AUTUMN 1918

**Letter to Mother — Somewhere in France: Camp Life**

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Somewhere in France.

Dear mother,

I am real well and enjoying army life as well as one possibly could believe. I am remaining in billets until 11:30 this morning, at which time we will start on an assumed problem and stay out all night. I have just had a good sponge bath, which is our substitute for a real bath when conditions will not permit us to take such. We have had real warm weather here for the past two weeks, but yesterday it turned a little cooler. The leaves on the trees are already starting to turn a little yellow, and I do not think it will be long until all will have the appearance of autumn.

Although I do not have much time to do or think of anything but drills and problems, occasionally I do let my mind drift back to a small town in Utah and there dwell with the folks at home for a while. I think of you all real often, or as often as occasion will permit, and wonder how you are all getting along. I got a letter from Orville not so long ago and was surely glad to know all was going well.

The band is practicing while I am writing this, just out of our dining room, and it is rather hard to write and listen to music at the same time, so if you find any rhythm in this you can blame the band. I am sending you separately a small while to go all the way across the sea and the U.S. too, as well as France.

We get papers every day or so here and know partially what is really taking place in regards to the war, yet I do not think we really know as much as you people at home.

O, yes, I almost forgot to tell you that we had a traveling picture show in town the other night, and it was almost as good as a circus to us to see it, for we had not seen anything of the sort for ages, it seemed.

I see Dennis Kidwell nearly every day. He is billeted in the same village with me. I heard that Calvin Rich was not so far from us, so I may also get to see him any day. When I get so that I can't talk French well enough, I'll write you a French letter. Ha! Ha! I'll bet you would have a worse time reading it than I would writing it.

Love to all, and my happiness and prosperity be with you.

Your loving son,  
Pvt Lenard O Grundvig  
Co. C 362 Inf  
Am. P.O. #776  
American Expeditionary Forces

*[Censored — B B Hammond, 1st Lt. 362 Inf.]*

1 JULY 1918

**Letter to Mother — Troop Train East**

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*Camp Merritt, N.J.  
July 1st, 1918.*

Dear Mother and all.

I am, as you know from Inge's and Lottie's cards, on the eastern coast of the United States instead of the western. I had a splendid trip from the very outset. We passed over more than 3000 miles of railroad in the course of a little more than six days, stopping each day and drilling each day for about an hour on the way. At every station we were greeted very warmly, and at many places we were served with ice cream and cigarettes, both of which all would have been better off without. Chicago is the place for kids. Whenever the troop train would stop while switching around in the yards, kids would flock around the train so thick and fast that it was almost impossible for 3 policemen to keep them back. Every window, door step, and open spot was massed with kids. Never saw such a sight, or dreamed of seeing so many kids in such crowded places. We were only shoved through the railroad yards and did not get to see the real fine buildings and large places of the city. The lights went out last night before I had time to finish this letter, so I was compelled to leave it until this morning, and fortunately I got hold of a fountain pen with which to finish it.

We came past New York and could see the large buildings in the distance, but have not as yet been to the city; but with good luck we will be there on a 24 hours pass before we leave for somewhere over there. The 42 story building in Seattle, Wash. looked reasonably high to me, but the Woolworth building in New York is 69 stories high, so to the side of it I guess 42 stories will not look like so much.

I have not heard lately whether Lars Tidwell was yet in New York, but I'm going over and try to look him up anyway. The weather throughout our trip was great, and nights here are cool also, so one sleeps like a log. I am writing real often, mother, but I have a little spare time here now and I am sure you will be glad to hear from me. It is about dinner time so must close.

Love to all.  
Your loving son,  
Pvt. Lenard A. Grundvig  
Co. C. 362 Inf.  
A. E. F.

P.S. If ever you should have occasion to write to the "War Risk Insurance Bureau" in regards to my whereabouts, always use my army serial number, which is (2260009) Two million, two hundred sixty thousand nine. This is my army serial number and should always be used in connection with my name.

15 SEPTEMBER 1918

**Letter to Mother — Hospital and Pleurisy**

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*Somewhere in France*  
*Sept 15 — 18*

Dear Mother:

Just a few lines to say that I am feeling about well again and expect to again be on duty soon. I have been in the hospital two weeks from pleurisy, which is quite confining in its nature but not at all of the nature of most sickness. I think I caught it through exposure by getting too warm, then lying in shade and cooling off too quick. However, it is now much better, and you must give it no worry, for by the time you receive this I may well have been entirely all right and on duty for some time. I did not mention it before because I supposed that I should only be detained a few days, but it takes quite a while to overcome such, and they will not let one go again until they are entirely well.

How are all getting along? I have a good friend in the hospital who gathers me a dish of fresh blackberries nearly every day, and with sugar and canned milk they taste pretty good. This afternoon a Frenchman came in and gave us a violin solo, or in fact several selections, which sounded altogether good. I am in a ward which accommodates 36 patients, and we have a reasonably jolly bunch.

I could tell you a lot of front or firing line news, but you will get that as early as we get it here, and perhaps really more in detail, so such would be of no value to you. However, the Yanks are here in hundreds of thousands and are starting to make their determination (to end the war as soon as possible) felt.

I hope you are all well and enjoying life best possible under circumstances. Think of you often, mother, and wonder if your burden will ever be lighter. I will always feel to censor myself for starting up a business as I did, then running off to war and leaving the burden of the thing all upon your folks at home, and especially you. I hope it has turned out all right, but I should have known better than to start in such a critical time. I should have been more cautious. The experience, however, has, I think, been of great benefit to me. If there is any clearing left to do when I return, I shall be glad to help dispose of any financial encumbrances, and that done, then I shall feel free to make my way in the world.

With love to all, and may peace be with you.

Your loving son,  
Pvt Lenard A Grundvig  
Camp Hosp # 8  
Am P.O. # 757  
American Expeditionary Forces  
France.

2 OCTOBER 1918

**Letter to Inga — Base Hospital**

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*Somewhere in France.  
Oct 2nd 1918.*

*[Censor's endorsement at top, in another hand: Mr C. J. Wheeler [...] Lt M C]*

Dear sister Inga,

I received your letter just about half an hour ago, and you little scamp, you have everybody beaten when it comes to writing. I feel so good to receive such letters that I can hardly contain myself. If you do everything else as well as you write, you will surely be an appreciated person in this world.

At present I am feeling very well. It has taken a long time to entirely get rid of my pleurisy, but at last I am (I am quite sure) entirely well. My appetite is that of a raven, and I am getting fatter every day again, and sleep like a log at night, and too, my complexion is again coming back. I would have written sooner but have been expecting to get out of the hospital any day, and I thought that I would wait until I became permanently established again, but I will write again when I do that.

I was out for a walk the other day and visited an old fort, which to me was very interesting. Hundreds of thousands of dollars are put into such, and one without seeing such could not imagine the immensity of [...] it, and the energy required to keep it up, especially in time of war. We spent one afternoon going through and around the fort and finally reached camp again about 5 o'clock P.M. It was my first large walk since I have been ill, and I was real tired but slept fine. To day the sun shines brightly, and this afternoon it is almost warm, which helps to straighten anyone out who has been feeling a little under the weather.

I received 4 letters altogether to day, and they were surely welcomed with a welcome such as they had no anticipation of receiving, I bet, and I am answering them so sudden that I fear it might make their heads swim; but they have been traveling a long time and they ought to be prepared for such a shock, hadn't they? So, well letters write.

I'd like to see you doing men's work in overalls. I'll bet you girls have a great deal of fun anyway, and along with your fun are learning perhaps a lesson or lessons which may be of great value to you in the future.

I just received a letter from Dan and he seems to be doing nicely, also a letter from Orville. Was glad to hear the good news from Earl and hope that the next letter you write may convey even better news still.

It's not right to write too long letters.

[Envelope]

From Pvt Lenard W Grundvig, U S Army, Am. E.F.

Miss Ines Grundvig, Wellington, Carbon Co., Utah, U.S.A.

9 NOVEMBER 1918  
**Letter to Mother — First Days at the Front**

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*Knights of Columbus  
Overseas Service  
On Active Service with American Expeditionary Forces  
A.P.O. 776  
Nov 9 – 18  
Somewhere in Belgium*

Dear Mother,

It has, it seems, been some time since I received yours, Sister's, and Chas's letters, but owing to rushing conditions I have been unable to answer before, and am writing this in a hurry and taking chances of getting it sent off soon.

I am real well and hope this finds you all as well. My pleurisy is apparently a thing of the past. I have been to the front once and just got an introduction to war with its destruction, and have seen a little of the devastation heaped upon Belgium. I must retire right soon, for lights are a luxury where you can have them and I have got to be seen by the Boshe, and it is tough for the Belgium people in whose house I am writing to go to bed. So "Good night" and good cheer, and may the spirit of God be always with you all at all times.

Your Loving Son,  
Lenard

Corp Lenard A Grundvig  
Co. C. 362 Eng  
A.E.F.  
A.P.O. 776

Censored by Lt. Louis V Coe, U.S. Army.

P.S. The war no doubt will be over by or before time you receive this, so I may be home this winter or at any rate in the spring. At least we now expect as much.

11 NOVEMBER 1918  
**Letter to the Family – Armistice Day**

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*Knights of Columbus  
Overseas Service  
On Active Service with American Expeditionary Forces  
A.P.O. 776.*

*Date Nov 11 - 18  
Somewhere in Belgium*

Dear Parents, Bro's & Sister,

I received sister Laura's letter today while drawing back from the front awaiting the results of peace negotiations. Hostilities ceased today at 11 o'clock, making an odd number all the way round: 11th month, 11th day, 11th hour. So to millions of soldiers, as well as hundreds of millions of people at their homes, today will be a day to be long remembered, and to the people of Germany as well as of the allies. But from all reports Germany is surely in a deplorable condition. I have seen German soldiers after they were dead with holes in their shoes allowing their bare feet to touch the ground, but their actions towards the Belgium nation and the world can never be forgotten or forgiven. To pass through some parts of Belgium which have been so totally devastated, it makes one feel that he could never forgive their deeds.

I wrote you a letter the other night but could find no envelope in which to mail it, so will send you a double one tonight.

I am real well and husky and fat as ever, if not more so. The Germans have caused so many turnips to be planted in Belgium that when advancing over the country one in many places finds it necessary to dig up turnips in digging a hole in which to sleep for the night. But if peace has come to earth again, now we can abandon holes for good. The U.S. can sure route the Dutch from their trench warfare and is on the job for any of their tricks. They're sure scared of Yanks. But what I started out to say is that in lying out in holes all day and night, with meals when luck came our way enough to get them to us, turnips help a great deal; and when one has to make one canteen of water last two or three days, turnips again serve to help one's thirst. It is some different to fight where the country is in a normal condition than it is where nothing is visible but fragments of buildings and trees, shell holes confronting you on all sides in no man's land.

They say that we will be among the first to return home, so I may be home before so very long. Yet do not depend too much on my return soon, for we know nothing certain of our return yet. Today is a most beautiful day and I am fortunate to be left in charge of our billet, for it gives me a little time to write.

I hope Lester is still at home, but if he is not I should like very well if you would tell him to write or send me his address, for I would imagine from past letters that he is in camp by this time.

Today is a most beautiful day without any rain at all, and peace, it seems, has truly taken hold of the world. The atmosphere seems so clear and fresh, too, that one can truly appreciate it.

Hoping you are all well and getting along first class,

I am as ever  
your loving son & bro,  
Lenard

Corp. Lenard A Grundvig  
Co. C, 362 Inf.  
am. C.O. #776  
A.E.F.

*[Censor's endorsement, in a different hand: Censored by Lt. Louis V. Cope, 1st Lt., U.S. Army]*

29 NOVEMBER 1918

**Letter to his Sisters — Belgian Farm Life**

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*Somewhere in Belgium*  
*Nov. 29 — 18*

Dear Sisters (Ing & Lottie),

Your lovely letters came tonight and I was surely glad to hear that all were as well as you are and that Lester and Manuel are still present to help with the farm.

I am real well and feel like a four year old, as the coon says. The only thing against our garden or concern is so much rain and dampness, but we may not be here so very long, so we can easily put up with a little inconvenience.

Thirteen of us are staying with a Belgium farmer who treats us very courteous and makes us welcome as can be. We have become so accustomed to their ways of living and customs that we do not note the difference from our habits as much as we did at first.

The chief crop this year here is potatoes, turnips, carrots, and rye, wheat, and oats — enough as a rule to partially (at least) supply the family that is here. The Germans have not taken it all.

We are again becoming better acquainted. You see, we have had many men added to our company to take the place of men who through battle have been disabled or killed, and we are just now becoming acquainted so we can work together again.

Our division won its good name, or rather proved its good reputation, and lived up to all expectations and reached as high a standard as any division in the A.E.F. It is now called the "all western division." In spite of casualties and the shattering artillery fire of the enemy, they gained ground very rapidly and held every yard they took, while divisions on both sides were forced back by the enemy. One afternoon they took a hill said to be impossible to take by military authorities, losing quite heavily, but they gained their objective, and the Germans became greatly disheartened to see the Yanks take positions they thought would never be taken. Naturally their morale dropped real low, and with repeated actions of this sort on all fronts they were surely glad to have a chance to surrender, which they did when the armistice was signed, or partially did.

Oh yes, I get a canteen of milk occasionally now and am getting fat as can be — just natural for me, haha!

I had a pleasant Thanksgiving yesterday — that is, as pleasant as one could expect — and I did think of you all at home and wonder just how and where you were spending Thanksgiving. Hope you had a happy one, and wish you all a Merry Xmas and a happy New Year. And I will always remember how you girls have remembered me with nice letters to help me along.

With love to all,

your brother

Lenard

Corp. Lenard A. Grundvig  
Co. C, 362 Inf.  
A.P.O. 776  
A.E.F.

4 D E C E M B E R 1 9 1 8  
**Letter to his Parents — The War Itinerary**

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*Meulbeke, Belgium*  
*December 4th, 1918*

*From Corp. Lenard A. Grundvig*  
*Co. B, 362nd Inf.*  
*A.P.O. #776*  
*American E.F.*

Dear Parents, Brothers & Sisters,

A few lines to say I am well and in the best of spirits. I wrote to you, it seems, not many days ago, but since then there has been a modification of the censor rules, and we are permitted to say more as to the happenings and the places we are and have been. I realize that it is useless to try to say what I have done or where I have been in any one — or even several — letters, and besides, it may not interest you to know all such. But I will try to briefly outline the territory, or rather the trips, I have had.

After leaving New York we meandered across the pond, taking 14 days from the time we went on board until we got off. We kept to no straight course but sailed first one direction, then another, the purpose being, I suppose, to dodge subs. We landed in Liverpool; from there we took the train to Southampton, where we again took the boat to cross the English Channel. We then landed in Le Havre, France, and took the train through Rouen and by Paris to southeastern France. Montigny La Roi is the name of the town in which our division had its headquarters, close to Chaumont.

From there the division went to the Argonne front while I was confined to the hospital with pleurisy. After recovering, I journeyed from “Meuse” — the closest railroad station to Montigny — to “Longre,” and from Longre to “Is su tile,” a large railroad center, I think the largest in the world. From “Is su tile” I went to “St. Diezier,” and from St. Diezier to Revigny, a town on the Verdun front, where I rejoined the company and came with them by train by way of Paris, Bolonge, Calais, and Dunkirk to Belgium. We walked through Ypres — a city totally destroyed — to Roubers, then to various small towns and places, and were in Berre, a city adjoining “Oudenaarde,” the morning the Armistice was signed. Later we walked to within 20 to 25 miles of Brussels (the capital of Belgium); then we turned our steps back, and we are hoping, as well as thinking, that they will lead us homeward.

Did I ever tell you that while we were traveling from “Le Havre” to Paris we had a wreck? The train of box cars on which I was riding was struck by another heavy train in the rear as we were stopped, and 6 cars, it was reported, were crushed. We had many soldiers who never saw even much of France, let alone the front. That seemed worse than war to us, for we all seem so helpless.

I had a real good shower bath today, and our clothes were run through a cootie, or insect, destroyer — and we all hope to be rid of them for good now. It is a wonder we have not had more of them than we have, following up and sleeping in places, and on straw, and in barns where the Boche had been.

I am sending home a few little pieces of handmade lace, just to show you how much pains the people take with such things here, and also to remember your Christmas with a souvenir from Belgium. The large fly is for Mother, and one of each of the others for the girls. I am also sending some cards showing a town not far from here, which will show the type of the towns of Belgium in general.

I am at present sleeping on a real bed, and we actually have chairs on which to sit — ha! ha! Seems like a dream.

Hoping you are all well, and that you spent a happier Thanksgiving than ever before, and that Earl is again with you in a good, healthy condition.

With love to all,

Your loving Son & Bro.,  
Lenard  
Corp. Lenard A. Grundvig

*[Written diagonally across the last page in a different hand — the unit censor's endorsement: “Censored by [signature illegible], Capt., 362nd Inf., U.S. Army.”]*

15 DECEMBER 1918

**Letter to his Brother — Belgium after the Armistice**

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*Knights of Columbus — Overseas Service  
On Active Service with American Expeditionary Forces  
A.P.O. 776*

*Oostvleteren, Belgium  
Dec. 15th, 1918*

Dear Brother,

Your letter of recent date reached me last night. It now seems that it does not take so long for mail to cross as when we first came over. I was glad to hear from you, as I always am, and to know that you are getting on all right and are well.

We have been moving from town to town in Belgium since the Armistice was signed, and it seems that we may some day reach a port where we will sail for home, as we are a great deal nearer the coast than when I last wrote. Yet one can never tell, and I suppose it is not good to figure on coming home too soon, for we may be disappointed about it.

“Ypres,” the city where such a great battle was fought on this front, is not very far from here, and it is now only a mass of ruins. I am enclosing a postal with a picture upon it of the town before it was so mutilated.

Our last hike consisted of about 34 kilometers, as the Belgians here say, from Hooglede to Oostvleteren, making day marches. One [...] about 21 miles, and it sure was a healthy little hike, but we are used to hiking, so that there is no limit to how far we could make in a day.

I have not heard from home for a while but expect to hear from them any time now. We have been in this place for about a week now but expect to move again soon. Where, I cannot say, but I hope it is direct for the boat. Ha! Ha! We will surely appreciate home when I get there.

I was fortunate enough to get hold of a pen, so I am finishing with it.

Oh, yes, I must tell you about running on to Kenneth Palmer over here the other day. He was transferred back to his old outfit from the casual company, and it was just fortunate that he was. He was surely glad to get back, he says, and I do not know that I can blame him. He did not get to see the front lines, even though he has been over here since “May,” I think.

Today is Sunday, and I do not know what I can say that would interest you. Of course I could tell you experiences and etc., but you will hear about them later, at least I hope so, and good and plenty. Every one will have narrow escape stories to tell — that is, every one who was on the front. However, I might outline the territory I have covered by giving names of places as I remember them.

After leaving Liverpool, England, where we landed, we crossed England to Southampton, then crossed the English Channel to Le Havre, France. From there we went by Rouen and near Paris into Southern France to a town called “Dammartin,” where we remained several weeks or more. It was there that I was seized by pleurisy and taken to a camp hospital near “Montigny,” not so far from “Chaumont” (the headquarters of the American Expeditionary Forces). After recovering, I went by “Langres” to “Cle-su-tile” (a large railroad center and casual camp), then to “St. Dizier,” then to “Revigny,” where I again got with my company just as they were pulling back from the “Argonne front.” There was only about 20 old men left in the company, and they were in very poor condition. Our outfit suffered losses so heavy that it seemed that all were either killed or wounded. I thought it unfortunate that I was unable to be with them when I heard they were going to the front, but after seeing things after they came back, I may be fortunate. At any rate, I joined them at Revigny, and we came straight to Belgium along the north western coast of France, and in course of only a few days or a week we were again in action on the “Flanders front.” After the armistice was signed, we advanced almost to Brussels, then returned, stopping as a rule for two or three [...]

19 DECEMBER 1918

**Letter to the Family — Oostvleteren, Belgium**

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*Oostvletern, Belgium.*

*Dec. 19, 1918.*

*From Corp. Lenard A. Grundvig,*

*Co. B, 362 Inf.*

*Am. P.O. # 776.*

*American E. F.*

Dear Parents, Brothers & Sisters,

It has been some time since I heard from home but trust that I will soon hear how all are. I am well and enjoying life best possible from day to day under the circumstances. Each day makes one wish more and more that he were home, but as we all know it takes time to transport so many men and complete the peace negotiations under way; we can await as patiently as possible the happy day when we start.

At present I am helping in the personnel office but know not how long this will last, but I had as leave drill, for I do enjoy morning exercises and fresh air.

Xmas is here and we are having rain almost daily. As yet we have had very little cold weather, but perhaps I had better not holler too soon, as the saying is, for we have plenty of time yet to get it. However, I think in the section we are now billeted the climate is a great deal like that of Camp Lewis in Washington.

I am enclosing two postals showing ruins in places, and I just wish to say that they are very typical of ruined towns and cities we have seen by the hundreds, it seems. Pictures can at least give you an idea of how fine buildings look after thousands of those shells have been planted in and around them.

To write lengthy letters, as is my tendency to do, is a bad habit when time is scarce, but that is just the time I can write long ones. It seems like when I have plenty of time I am either in the wrong humor or something else prevents me from writing what I should like to say, but I will perhaps be able to do better next time.

Hoping all are well and happy, and that I am soon where I can see you, I am,

Your loving son & bro.

Lenard.

[Censor's endorsement, in a different hand:] Examined by [J. H. Caswell?], Lieut.  
62nd Eng.

10 JANUARY 1919  
**Letter to Mother — Near Le Mans**

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January 10th 1918.

From Corp. Lenard A Grundvig  
Co. "C" - 362nd Inf.  
American P.O. #776.  
American E.F.

Dear Mother,

Just a few lines tonight to say that I am feeling top notch. I am as well as well can be, and feel just like I should like to step in tonight and see how you are all getting along. It is not very cold here yet and I do not think it will get any colder. It has been so long since I have seen snow on the ground that I have forgotten how it looks.

We are now located in a small town southwest of "Paris," near "Le Mans." We came here from Oostvleteren, Belgium about a week ago and are now preparing for our trip overseas. How soon we will embark we do not yet know, but we must get rid of our cooties and get more clothing yet before we leave.

I spent a reasonable Xmas and thought of you all at home. Only hope you are all well and spent as happy an Xmas as I. The only thing with me that is hard to get accustomed to is so much cloudy and stormy weather. It will surely seem good to get back to the clear blue sky and bright sunshine of Utah.

I have not seen "Paris" yet, but if I get the opportunity I will surely take advantage of it while I am so close. About all the country we have seen in France is small towns or cities, partially or completely blown up, and to see "Paris" would surely be a treat.

I saw in the "Stars and Stripes" (a paper published here for the soldiers) that President Wilson ate Xmas dinner in "Montigny Le Roi," where I spent my time in the Hosp.

I sent Lottie and Inez each a cap, which they no doubt have received, and will try to remember Laura and Ruby with something also. I saw Dennis Tidwell the other day and got Lark's address from him, so if Lottie has not already got his address for me she will not need to bother.

Hoping you are all well and enjoying life as much as possible. Give my regards to Grandfather and all the folks.

As ever,  
Corp. Lenard A Grundvig  
Co. C. 362 Infantry  
American P.O. 776  
American E.F.

16 JANUARY 1919  
**Letter to his Parents — Saint-Cosme-de-Vair**

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*Saint-Cosme-de-Vair, France  
January 16th 1919.*

Dear Father and Mother,

Your lovely Christmas package reached a day or two ago and I was delighted to receive as much. Both the knife and the pencil come in handy and the mentholatum will surely come in handy. While as for the candy, you can easily guess what happened to it. I gave some of the boys some of it and they said to tell you it sure tasted good to them, as they had not tasted honey candy for ages.

I am feeling real well tonight and am rearing to move, but we may, according to current rumors, remain here until the 20th of Feb.

I received a letter from Grandmother the other day and she appeared to be quite well but was a little lonesome, I think. I also received a letter from Don, and according to his letter he will in all probability be home by this time. I haven't seen Kenneth for a week or more, but he was well and hearty the last time I saw him.

In running over a paper from home (by home I mean the U.S.A.) I ran across a statement from a letter written by an officer of this regiment which might be of interest to you if you have not seen it. While we were on the Flanders front in Belgium I saw an official "communique" which stated that a German officer had been captured with papers on him stating that any German soldier who took prisoner any man of the 91st Division would be granted an 18 days' leave of absence. I may have told you this, but do not remember, and I have to have something to make up a letter. As for news, I might say that I was in "Montigny Le Roi" (the town where President Wilson ate his Xmas dinner) for about 6 weeks. I had no idea while I was there that President Wilson would eat Xmas dinner there.

Best wishes to all, and tell the girls not to give up writing, even though I do not address all letters to them, for I realize how hard it is for you and mother to write, so expect them to answer.

With love to all, and may you enjoy a clearer, brighter year of 1919 than you have ever known.

Your loving son,  
Lenard.

Corp. Lenard A. Grundvig  
Co. "C" 362 Inf.  
Am F.O. #776.  
American E.F.

16 FEBRUARY 1919  
**Letter to his Sister — Le Mans**

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*American Red Cross — On Active Service with the American Expeditionary Force  
Corp. Lenard A. Grundvig, Co. C. 362d Infantry, Am. E.F. A.P.O 776  
St. Cosme-De-Vair, France  
February 16th, 1919*

Dear Sister,

Your letter received a short time ago and I was surely glad to hear from you and to know that you are all well. Was also glad to hear that Don was home. Wonder how he likes home life in comparison with the camps?

I filled out a card to-day and sent it to you, or home rather, stating that I am well as can be, if not “weller.” Every soldier is required to fill out such a card and send home.

It has been nice and warm here the past two or three days, after about two weeks of real hard freezing and snow — not enough to cover the ground entirely.

I was to Le Mans on pass for two days and quite enjoyed my trip. While there the Y.M.C.A. man there took us for a tour of the city and lectured to us on events and places there, which record a great deal of ancient, medieval, as well as modern history. The town dates back as far if not farther than 52 B.C. and used to be a stronghold due to the fact that it is situated upon a hill in the forks of the Sarthe and Rein rivers. It was at one time called the city of 50 Towers, for the reason that it had 50 towers in the walls surrounding it. Among the interesting things of the city to-day are the large Cathedral, the Queen’s palace, and the birthplace of “Richard the Lion Hearted.” The old city is undermined by a network of underground passages, through which the people used to pass for water to the rivers Sarthe and Rein during war, or a siege of the city. Through the hill supporting the city is a tunnel built in recent years and lately named the “Rue Wilbur Wright,” and at the east end of this street or tunnel a statue is being erected in honor of this American who did his great work helping to perfect the aeroplane in France.

Its about time for supper, so “good night.”

Your loving bro.  
Lenard.

Censored by  
Lieut. 362d Inf.