

PITNEY, HARDIN & SKINNER

JOHN O. H. PITNEY  
JOHN R. HARDIN  
ALFRED F. SKINNER  
WILLIAM L. MORGAN  
CORWIN HOWELL  
J. FREDERIC WHERRY  
WALDRON M. WARD  
EDWARD O. STANLEY, JR.  
J. HOWARD CONOVER  
CARL A. FEICK

*Briggs*

*Prudential Building*

*Newark, N.J.* November 15th,  
1917.

Mr. Ralph W. Voorhies,  
Alumni Secretary,  
Rutgers College,  
New Brunswick, N.J.

Dear Mr. Voorhies:

I have your letter of the 14th. It speaks of a copy of the Alumni address list as being sent under separate cover. I have not received it. Probably it will come along in short time.

I recall having seen in the paper some mention of a movement in New Brunswick to send to all Rutgers men who are "with the colors" a Christmas box. My son, Alfred Phillips Skinner, has been in the ambulance service in France since last February. He was with Section 5 of the Norton-Harjes Unit, attached to the French Army, and has recently been transferred to the United States Service, enlisting for the duration of the war, but the section has been retained as it was with the French Army. I know that it would be a great delight to him to have some remembrance from Rutgers, and hope that he may be included in the list of those to get the benefit of these boxes. His address is,

Alfred Phillips Skinner,  
#7 Rue Francois Premiere,  
Paris.

Formerly Section 5, Norton-Harjes Unit,  
now transferred to U.S. Service.

May I trouble you to bring this to the attention of who-ever has charge of the sending of these boxes.

Thanking you in advance I am

Very truly yours,

*Alfred F. Skinner*



1000 Fifth Avenue,

Thanking you in advance I am

opposite of the sending of these boxes.

May I trouble you to bring this to the attention of whoever has

now transferred to U.S. Service.

Formerly Section 5, Horton-Horley Unit.

Yours,

Alfred Phillips Shipley,  
of the Ypsicola Presbytery.

Dear Sister, Mr. Shipley,

That he may be included in the list of names to get the benefit of  
great relief to him. I have some recommendations that I propose, and hope  
expressed as it was with the French Army. I have that it would be a  
justification for the duration of the war, but the section has been re-  
and has recently been transferred to the United States Service, sec-  
Section 5 of the Horton-Horley Unit, attached to the French Army,  
in the hospital service in France since last September. He was with  
the company a United States Army. We can't Alfred Phillips Shipley, for from  
a movement in New Brunswick to send to all hospital men who are with  
I recall having seen in the paper some mention of  
I have not received it. Perhaps it will come along in due time.  
copy of the Annual conference list as being sent much earlier.

I have your letter of the 14th. It speaks of a

Dear Mr. Shipley:

New Brunswick, N. J.

United States

Alfred Phillips

Mr. Alfred W. Shipley,

Bergen. Hellmuth 440 May

1917.  
November 1917.



November 17th. 1917.

Judge Alfred F. Skinner,

Prudential Building,

Newark, N.J.

Dear Judge Skinner:-

Mr. Voorhees has given me your letter of November 15th concerning your son who is in the service. I am very sorry that I did not receive this word before the 15th. as it was necessary that our Xmas. boxes be mailed on that date. The War Service Bureau has sent forty boxes to our boys in France and had we known about Alfred, we most certainly would have included him in the list. I have, however, entered his name in the Service Bureau and I shall see that he received the weekly letter from the college, copies of the quarterly and the Targum and any other things we may send out to the Rutgers men who are now serving the Government. I am placing him upon the Honor Roll as a Private, Ambulance Corps, U.S.A. If this qualification is not right, I hope that you will advise me.

Very sincerely yours,



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CARL A. FEICK.

*Prudential Building*

*Newark, N.J.* November 20th,  
1917.

Mr. Earl Reed Silvers,  
War Service Bureau,  
Rutgers College,  
New Brunswick, N.J.

My dear Mr. Silvers:

I was just about to write asking why Alfred's name was not in the honor roll, having read the last Quarterly and noticing the absence of his name. Of course mistakes will happen anywhere, but I confess I am rather surprised that this did happen because he was among the very first ones to go, early in February, as a volunteer, and it was well known throughout the college that he had gone.

The classification which you name, I understand, is correct. He went first as a volunteer in the Horton-Harjes Ambulance Unit, later the American Red Cross Ambulance Service attached to the French Army, but recently that section was transferred to the United States Service and Alfred has enlisted for the duration of the war.

Very truly yours,

*Alfred F. Skinner*



November 21, 1917.

Judge Alfred F. Skinner,  
Prudential Building,  
Newark, N.J.

My dear Judge Skinner;-

I am sorry that we missed out on Alfred's name, but the very fact that he enlisted so early is probably the cause of the omission. As the boys began to leave college during May and June, we checked them one by one; and Alfred had, of course, gone before we did the checking. It is rather a big task the Service Bureau has undertaken, and I hope you will pardon our lapse. The Honor Roll will be issued in a reprint and will be revised for the next issue of the quarterly, and in both of these Alfred's name will appear.

Very sincerely yours,



December 17, 1917.

Judge Alfred F. Skinner,  
Prudential Building,  
Newark, N.J.

Dear Judge Skinner;-

I have just heard that your son, Alfred W., has  
been awarded the Cross of War. If such is the case, I would be grate-  
ful for any information you may give me.

Very truly yours,



December 18, 1917.

Judge Alfred F. Skinner,  
Prudential Building,  
Newark, N.J.

Dear Judge Skinner;-

Thank you for your letter of December 18th.  
It is good to hear of the honor your son has won, and I am sure  
that you must be mighty proud of him.

We are very anxious to print his picture in  
the January issue of the Quarterly, and if you can send me one, I  
shall see that it is returned unharmed. Also, any information you  
may give me about Alfred, with possibly a letter or two from which  
we may use extracts, will be appreciated.

His name is listed as Alfred W. in the col-  
lege address list, which accounts for my mistake. We shall see  
that the error is corrected.

VERY SINCERELY YOURS,



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*Prudential Building*  
*Newark, N. J.* December 18th  
1917.

Mr. Earl Reed Silvers,  
Rutgers College,  
New Brunswick, N. J.

My dear Mr. Silvers:

We know very little of the award of the "Croix de Guerre." My son's letter dated November 21st simply told that he had been awarded the "Croix de Guerre," had received the medal but not the formal papers and would send a copy of them as soon as he got them. He is not of the voluble kind and does not like to talk about himself at any rate. He said nothing about what he had done to receive the decoration. A friend of ours, whose son is also in the Ambulance service, wrote home to his mother that Alfred had received the "Croix de Guerre," but he gave no particulars. From the fact that he spoke of having the medal November 21st, I infer that he must have had the award some time before, perhaps two or three weeks.

It may be of some interest to add that some weeks later, (about December 8th), the same decoration was conferred upon the entire unit to which Alfred belongs, Section 5. When awarded to a unit the individual members do not receive the medal, but get the right to wear the insignia of the decoration, a knot of ribbon. This is not to be confused with the individual award to Alfred, but is additional. The cable dispatches said that it was the first time that the cross had been awarded to a unit. It means that as a whole



P. H. & S.

Mr. E. R. S., --#2.

the section is distinguished above other sections for bravery and devotion to duty.

By the way, my son's name is Alfred P., not Alfred W.

Very truly yours,

Alfred F. Skinner



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*Prudential Building*

*Newark, N. J.* December 21st  
1917.

Mr. Earl Reed Silvers,  
Rutgers College,  
New Brunswick, N. J.

Dear Sir:

I am sending you under separate cover one of Alfred's  
photographs, and will hope to see it come back without damage.

Very truly yours,

*Alfred F. Skinner*



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*Prudential Building*

*Newark, N. J.* December 24th 1917.

Mr. Earl Reed Silvers,  
Rutgers College,  
New Brunswick, N. J.

My dear Mr. Silvers:

Your letter of the 18th asked for any information I might give about Alfred, and a letter or two from which to make extracts. I can give no information about his receiving the "Croix de Guerre." He simply wrote that he had received it, and would have copies made of the formal papers accompanying the award and send it on to us. We do not know what the decoration was for, but are satisfied to know that he has it.

In the way of general information I can say that he went over about the middle of February, shortly after the proclamation by Germany of the danger zone to neutral ships, but before war had been declared between Germany and this country. He became a member of the Ambulance Unit that had been established by Mr. Harjes, the Paris representative of J. P. Morgan & Co., a volunteer ambulance service connection with the French Army. Mr. Harjes organized this unit in the early stages of the war between France and Germany. Its members were young Americans who volunteered, and it had grown till it comprised several sections of the French Army Ambulance Service. Alfred became a member of Section 5. While every member of each section thinks that his is the best there is probably some justification for the statement that Section 5 is a "crack" section, for I have myself seen two official citations, one from the General commanding the Corps of which it was



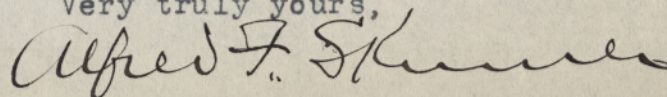
December 24th.

a part, and the other from General Petain, and it was there spoken of as one of the best, if not the best ambulance section in the French service. Moreover, the entire section has received the "Croix de Guerre." This does not bring to each member of the section the war cross, but gives him the right to wear the insignia of the decoration in the form of a small knot of ribbon on the left shoulder. It is of course not to be confused with the award to Alfred himself, which is individual and conferred at a different time.

The Harjes Unit was later consolidated with a similar unit established by Mr. Richard Norton, under American Red Cross management, and was thereafter known as the Norton-Harjes Unit. Still later, about the middle of September last, the entire Norton-Harjes Unit was transferred to the United States Ambulance Service. This could only apply to those members who accepted the transfer, and many of them did not, being unnecessarily irritated by the tactless way in which the United States Government handled this transfer. Alfred however, accepted the transfer, and enlisted for the duration of the war in the United States Service. It was expected that this would be followed by shift of the section to the American Expeditionary Forces. That however has not yet been done, and it has remained in the French Service up to our latest information.

We have a small snapshot picture taken of Alfred in his uniform standing alongside of his ambulance, and I think I can persuade Mrs. Skinner to part with it. Perhaps you would prefer such a picture because it is in uniform, notwithstanding the fact that it is a very much inferior as a photograph. I will try to get it to you this week.

Very truly yours,





December 26th. 1917.

Judge Alfred F. Skinner,

Prudential Building.

Newark, N.J.

Dear Judge Skinner:-

I thank you for your letter of December 24th containing information about Alfred. I am looking forward to receipt of his picture which is evidently being delayed in transport. We are sending the Quarterly to press this afternoon, but if you should hear anything further about the awarding of the War Cross, I would appreciate word from you as we can insert it in the final proof which will reach us about January 10th.

Very sincerely yours.



December 22, 1917.

Judge Alfred F. Skinner,  
Prudential Building,  
Newark, N. J.

Dear Judge Skinner:

I have received this morning the photograph of your son Alfred and I am looking forward to the receipt of the snapshot. We shall take very great of them both and shall make every effort to see that they are returned to you in good condition.

Thanking you for your interest, I am

Very sincerely yours,

Assistant to the President

ERS/MVH



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*Prudential Building*

*Newark, N. J.* December 27th  
1917.

Mr. Earl Reed Silvers,  
Rutgers College,  
New Brunswick, N. J.

My dear Mr. Silvers:

No doubt by this time you have received the photograph. I enclose now the snapshot showing Alfred alongside of his car, in uniform. Perhaps, because of its small size it may not serve your purpose, but being in uniform and showing him with his ambulance I thought it might be capable of enlargement and if so you might use it. You can make your selection but be sure to return both.

We have heard nothing further from Alfred.

I think I forgot to say in my former letter that I cannot give you Alfred's letters for publication. It is one of the unwritten laws of his section not to seek publicity.

Very truly yours,

*Alfred F. Skinner*



December 28, 1913.

Judge Alfred F. Skinner,  
Prudential Building,  
Newark, N. J.

Dear Judge Skinner:

I have received the snap shot of  
Alfred this morning and think that we can use it in the  
January issue of the Quarterly. It may be necessary for  
us to hold the photograph and snap shot for a week or more  
but we will make every effort to return them to you as  
promptly as possible.

Sincerely yours,

Assistant to the President

ERS/MVH



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CARL A. FEICK.

*Prudential Building*

*Newark, N. J.* February 21st  
1918.

Mr. Earl Reed Silvers,  
Rutgers College,  
New Brunswick, N. J.

My dear Mr. Silvers:

I acknowledge receipt of the snapshot and photograph of Alfred that were sent to you for use in the Quarterly. I am sure he will be very proud of his being so singled out for mention.

He sent on photographs taken in Paris, showing him in his full uniform with the "Croix du Guerre" on his coat, and it would have been fine if that photograph could have been used for the Quarterly article. Unfortunately it did not get to us in time or I would have sent one on to you.

Very truly yours,

*Alfred F. Skinner*



February 23rd. 1918.

Hon. Alfred F. Skinner,

Newark, N.J.

Dear Judge Skinner:-

Thank you for your letter of February 21st. I think it would be a fine thing to use a picture of Alfred in uniform with the cross of war in the April issue of the Quarterly. We already have had pictures of Roeder and Armstrong, with their decorations. I shall be in Newark either Tuesday afternoon or Wednesday morning and shall stop in at your office for it occurs to me that probably the New York Times would like to use it first and if that is acceptable to you, I shall take it to the Editor.

Very sincerely yours,



March 18, 1918.

Judge Alfred S. Skinner,  
Prudential Building,  
Newark, N. J.

Dear Judge Skinner:

The Editor of the Picture Section  
of the New York Times promised to use Alfred's  
picture and I have left it with him. I hope that it  
will appear within the next couple of weeks.

Very truly yours,

Director.

ERS/MVH



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CARL A. FEICK.

*Prudential Building*

*Newark, N. J.* March 19th 1918.

Mr. Earl Reed Silvers,  
Rutgers College,  
New Brunswick, N. J.

My dear Mr. Silvers:

I take for granted that you have arranged  
to get Alfred's picture back from the New York Times. When you  
are through with it will you be kind enough to give it to my  
brother, Mr. Frank H. Skinner, who is living at the Bayard,  
New Brunswick, N.J.

Very truly yours,

*Alfred F. Skinner*



March 20, 1918.

Judge Alfred E. Skinner,  
Prudential Building,  
Newark, N. J.

Dear Judge Skinner:

I have arranged with the New York  
Times to return Alfred's picture and shall see that  
it is sent to Mr. Frank H. Skinner in New Brunswick.

Very sincerely yours,

Director.

ERS/MVH



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CARL A. FEICK.

*Prudential Building*

*Newark, N. J.* May 6th 1918.

Mr. Earl Reed Silvers,  
Rutgers College,  
New Brunswick, N. J.

My dear Mr. Silvers:

I have a request from the American Rolling Mill Company for a photograph of Alfred, to be inserted in their company magazine. It seems that fourteen of their employees are a part of Section 646, (Alfred's section), and they devote a portion of their magazine each month to the news of that section. They are trying to get photographs of all the members of the section. I want to send Alfred's to them and will be obliged if you will get the one that you have back to me as soon as possible, that is as soon as you are finished with it.

Very truly yours,

*Alfred F. Skinner*



May 7, 1918.

Judge Alfred F. Skinner,  
Prudential Building,  
Newark, New Jersey.

Dear Sir:

Mr. Silvers is in South Jersey. He  
is expected to return on Saturday, however, and  
your letter will be brought to his attention at  
that time.

Very truly yours,

R

H



PITNEY, HARDIN & SKINNER

JOHN O. H. PITNEY  
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J. HOWARD CONOVER.  
CARL A. FEICK.

*Prudential Building*

*Newark, N. J.* May 8th 1918.

Mr. Earl Reed Silvers,  
Rutgers College,  
New Brunswick, N. J.

My dear Mr. Silvers:

I wrote a few days ago asking for the return of Alfred's photograph as soon as you got it back from the Times. I have a special call for one and have none left except the one in your hands. It has not appeared in the Times, although several weeks have passed, and to tell the truth, I cannot quite see why it should appear there. It does not seem to me to be of sufficient news interest. Alfred is only one of quite a few who have won the Croix du Guerre. Why should the Times single him out of all the rest? So with the Quarterly. It has already published another photograph and I cannot see any particular news value in a repetition of it.

I just want you to know that I will not be surprised if the suggested publication in either Times or Quarterly is not carried out, and will be glad to have the picture back as soon as possible.

Very truly yours,

*Alfred F. Skinner*



May 11,  
19 18.

Mr. Alfred F. Skinner,  
Prudential Building,  
Newark, N.J.

My dear Mr. Skinner:

Upon returning from a trip through South Jersey this morning I find your two letters about Alfred's photograph. I am sorry that I was not here to answer sooner. The Editor of the New York Times told me personally that he would be pleased to use the photograph in his photogravure section but that I would probably have to leave it with him for a considerable time. I dropped in to see him a short time ago and he advised me that possibly the picture could not be used because of the wealth of material on hand. I brought it back to New Brunswick with me intending to have a plate made for the Alumni Quarterly, but I was taken ill just at that time and could not get to New York. The picture, therefore, did not get in the Quarterly although I had every intention of using it. I had hoped to print pictures in uniform of all our men who have won the War Cross.

I am sorry that I kept the photograph so long and hope that you were not inconvenienced.

Very cordially yours,

KRS/W



PITNEY, HARDIN & SKINNER

JOHN O. H. PITNEY  
JOHN R. HARDIN  
ALFRED F. SKINNER  
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J. HOWARD CONOVER.  
CARLA A. FEICK.

*Prudential Building*

*Newark, N. J.*

June 10th 1918.

Mr. Earl Reed Silvers,  
Rutgers College,  
New Brunswick, N. J.

My dear Mr. Silvers:

I have been continuously in court in the trial of a succession of cases and correspondence has piled up on me; hence my delay in reply to your request for extracts from Alfred's letters. I am enclosing now a few. Probably they come too late and anyway there is not much in them of general interest. They are now limited to one sheet of paper, and this with the constant fear that the censor will hold the letter back because of some objectionable portions makes his letters very brief and bare. I have gone back through all the letters, not being sure whether you had any of it for the Quarterly before. Unfortunately I have not had all of his letters before me. Some have been passed on to other members of the family or to friends and have not yet come back.

The last letter that we got expressed his great regret that he had heeded my advice and staid in the ambulance service. When the American Volunteer Ambulance sections that were with the French Army were taken over by the United States Government he had the option of accepting or rejecting the transfer, and staid in the Ambulance Service at my request. Since then he had been trying to get transferred to marine aviation or land aviation or the heavy artillery, but without success, and says:

"I staid in the Ambulance Service because it was Dad's wish. You can tell how I feel about it when I say that



P. H. & S.

Mr. E. R. S., --#2.

June 10th.

if I had it to do over again and it was his last request  
I would not stay."

I can understand his eagerness to be in one of the fighting branches.

Very truly yours,

*Alfred F. Skinner*

P. S. I think you already have a copy of the citation accompanying  
the award of the Croix de Guerre and of the citation accompany-  
ing the award to the entire section of the Fouraguerre of the Croix  
de Guerre, but it can do no harm to enclose another copy.

*A. F. S.*



CITATIONS DE LA SECTION SANITAIRE AMERICAINE No. 5, "Harjes."

-----  
EXTRAIT DE L'ORDRE GENERAL No.83.  
-----

Le General Commandant le 11 eme armee cite a l'ordre de l'Armee.

LA SECTION SANITAIRE AMERICAINE No. 5 "Harjes."

"A assure pendant une periode de onze jours de combat, du 8 au 20 Mars, avec un mepris absolu du danger, les evacuations, dans une zone particulierement battue par l'artillerie ennemie.

De plus, tout son personnel a fait preuve d'un devouement et d'une endurance remarquables, en assurant, par un service moyen de 19 heures par jour, le maximum de rendement de cette unite.

LE GENERAL COMMANDANT, La 11 ARMEE.

Au Q. G. le 12 Avril 1917. Signe: Petain.

-----  
3 CORPS D'ARMEE.

EXTRAIT DE L'ORDRE GENERAL No. 213.  
-----

Etat Major  
1er Bureau.

Le General Commandant le 3 Corps d'Armee cite a l'ordre du 3 Corps d'Armee.

LA SECTION SANITAIRE AMERICAINE No. 5, "Harjes."

"Section Americaine tres courageuse et tres devouee. A assure dans un secteur tres dangereux et continuellement bombarde les evacuations des malades et blesses de la Division. A eu deux conducteurs gravement blesses et sept de ses voitures atteintes par des eclats d'obus. A de ja ete citee precedemment.

LE GENERAL COMMANDANT LE 3 C. A.

Au Q. G. le 28 Juin 1917. Signe: LEBRUN.

-----  
66 Division.

EXTRAIT DE L'ORDRE GENERAL NO.

Etat Major.

"Section dirigee par le Chef-Adjoint americain DRAKE, Thayer nouvellement affectee a la 66 Division. Elle a eu L'occasion de fonctionner pour la premiere fois a la Division pendant l'attaque du 30 Juillet et les contre attaques des jours suivants. Elle s'est fait immediatement remarquer en evacuant les blesses avec la maximum de rapidite par des routes soumises a un bombardement excessivement violent, donnant ainsi la preuve de qualites exceptionnelles de sang froid et de courage.

S'etait deja distinguee a VERDUN et pendant la bataille de l'AISNE.

Au P. C. le 19 Aout 1917.

LE GENERAL COMMANDANT LA 66 DIVISION.

Signe: G. BRISSAUD.

Copie Certifie Conforme  
delivre au Conducteur.  
Le S/ Lieutenant Cdt.



3rd Army Corps.

XTRACT FROM THE GENERAL ORDER No. 213.  
General Staff,  
1st Office.

The General Commanding the 3rd Army Corps cites to the  
order of the 3rd Army Corps:

THE AMERICAN SANITARY SECTION No. 5, "Harjes."

"American section very daring and devoted. Has insured in  
a very dangerous and constantly bombarded sector, the removal of  
the sick and wounded of the Division. Has had two drivers seriously  
wounded and seven of her machines hit by shell splinters. Has been  
cited before.

THE GENERAL COMMANDING THE 3rd. ARMY CORPS .

(Signed) LEBRUN.

General Staff,

28th of June 1917.

---

66 Division

General Staff.

EXTRACT FROM THE GENERAL ORDER:

Section directed by the American Chief DRAKE, Thayer,  
recently called to the 66th Division. Said Section had the opportu-  
nity to operate for the first time at the Division during the attack  
of July 30th, and counter-attacks of the following days. At once  
made itself conspicuous by removing the wounded with the utmost  
swiftness through roads under violent bombardment, thus giving  
proof of exceptional qualities of coolness and daring. Had al-  
ready distinguished itself at VERDUN and during the Battle of the  
AISNE."

P. C. the 19th of August 1917.

THE GENERAL COMMANDING THE 66th DIVISION.  
(Signed) G. Brissaud.

Certified copy given to  
the Driver S/Lieutenant Cdt.



66 Division  
Division de Chasseurs  
Etat Major  
1er Bureau  
No. 225/D-8.

EXTRAIT DE L'ORDRE GENERAL No. 685.

-----oOo-----

-----oOo-----

Est cite a l'ordre de la Division.

Le volontaire Americaine, SKINNER, Alfred, du  
20 Escadron du train, S S U 5.

"A donne depuis neuf mois, les meilleures preuves de courage et de devonement. A assure dans des circonstances difficiles et sous de violents bombardements les evacuations de blesses. L'est particulierement fait remarquer au cours des attaque du 23 Octobre."

Au Q. C. le 5 Novembre 1917.  
Le General. Commandement le 66 Division.

Signe: G. BRISSAUD.

Copie Certifie Conforme  
Le S/ Lieutenant Cdt la S S U 5.

-----

66 Division (de Chasseurs)  
Etat Major - General Staff.  
1st Office  
No. 225/D 8.

Extract of the General Order,  
No. 685.

Is cited in the Division Order.

Private (American) Skinner, Alfred,  
from the 20th train Unit S S U 5.

Has, for nine months given the best proofs of courage and devotedness. Has assured, in very hard circumstances and under violent bombardment the evacuating (or removing) of wounded. Has especially attracted notice during the attacks of October 23.

General Staff - November 5th 1917.  
The General commanding the 66th Division.

G. Brissaud.

Certified copy - The lieutenant commanding the S S U 5.



Extracts from letters  
of  
Alfred P. Skinner.

April 27th 1917.

I am dying for some good old American tobacco and cigarettes. We can't buy a grain of tobacco of any kind. Even the rotten old army tobacco is scarce, and both we and the soldiers are craving for something to smoke.

May 7th 1917.

I was aid on a Ford for about a month and now have a Ford of my own. More good news, this morning I was informed by the head of the section that as soon as Mr. Atwood returned from his permission he would be given my Ford and that I was to go on a Packard as an aid until May 21st, and at that time the original driver was leaving for his home and that I would receive the Packard as my own.

May 28th 1917.

I am in the best of health and enjoying every minute. We are in the most beautiful country I have ever seen? I have never seen anything to equal it in the U. S. A. x x x

I am now the driver of a big Packard.

June 3rd 1917.

Our cantonment, (the place where we sleep and eat) is eight kilometres (5 miles) behind the lines. The poste where we go on 24 hours service is right up at the lines only 400 metres behind. As I sit here writing the big French guns are making a continuous roar, two French aeroplanes are passing overhead and I can count twelve more in the distance. Shells are flying thick and fast overhead. I stop writing every few minutes to watch air duels between aeroplanes. They are very numerous. We are located in a woods out of sight of enemy planes. Last night at twelve o'clock I was awakened by the big guns and got up to witness a battle in the air. The planes dropped bombs in a field about 300 feet from my tent. It was a beautiful sight at night.

August 31st 1917.

Major Murphy of the U. S. Army came out to the section with Mr. Richard Norton and told us we had been militarized and must sign up for the end of the war within six weeks or get out. We would be attached to the U. S. Army and not to the French. That we would carry wounded Americans instead. He asked how many in the section would sign and not a one responded. They have all signed on for either aviation, hydro-aviation or are going home.

I consulted Mr. Jackson and told him you were unwilling I should go into aviation so he suggested I go back to the section for the remaining six weeks and wait to see what might turn up. I have filed an application for a commission in the Quartermasters Corps



#2.

of the U. S. Army and am waiting for results. Also an application for aviation but will not enter until I have your permission. I wish you would advise me quickly if you have anything important to say as I have very little time left to decide.

(His father cabled advising that he stay where he was and accept the transfer into the U. S. Army, and this advice was followed).

September 11th 1917.

Another branch of service, entirely new on this side of the water, except in England, is the hydro-aviation or marine aviation. I told Mr. Drake to tell you the full particulars and hope you will let me know as soon as possible your opinion. It is not as dangerous, by any means, as the land aviation. The work consists of spying submarines, coast guard duty and bombing naval bases. There are four men in my section who have left and joined this service. Clarence Bailey and Alexander Beck of Summit, and the two Van Vechten brothers from South Orange and a Mr. Toms are thinking seriously of joining it. Bailey has written his folks, they are also unwilling that he join aviation, but he hopes they will consent to the marine aviation. Both he and I wish you would run down to Summit some evening and talk it over with his parents. However, don't worry, I will not do the latter unless all my other plans fail and even then I will not enlist without giving it a good deal of consideration. x x x

P. S. Please think over the question of marine aviation very carefully before you say no.

(Cabled consent to marine aviation, but it was delayed in transmission and he had to come to a decision before it reached him).

October 31st 1917.

In my other letters I told you I had signed up in the Medical Corps of the U. S. Army for the duration of the war. The service is the same as before. Before we signed up, Colonel Kran, who is in charge of the entire Ambulance service of the U. S. Army over here, promised us that we would remain with the same division of the French Army, that the officers would be picked from the old men of the section who signed on, that we would still keep our Packards, and that the personnel of the section would remain the same. I wrote Mr. Jackson and explained the whole situation and also told him it was your wish that I remain where I was. He wrote and advised me to sign on as he thought there would be lots of opportunity for promotion and likewise he knew it would please you. I did; and the first thing I knew the U. S. Army sent out other officers thereby depriving us of the honor. Next they took our Packards away and sent out an entire new section of Fords. Then they took two of our mechanics and three other Frenchmen whom we had as help. That is the way they keep their promises. I regret very much that I signed on. There were only thirteen out of the forty men that signed, and I was one of the unlucky thirteen. The required number was filled in by fellows from other Norton-Harjes sections who also signed on.

I received your cable the other day giving your consent to join hydro-aviation, and when I go in Paris on furlough on Nov. 14



#3.

I will look around and see if I can get a transfer. However I would like to complete a year's service in this section and very likely will.

November 6th 1917.

You will have to be satisfied with this card for some time on account of having my right hand cut, and in a sling. Feeling fine and hope it will heal shortly. A friend is writing this for me.

November 21st 1917.

I sent you a postal several days ago telling you of the accident to my right hand. As you probably know by this time, it is forbidden in France to carry or burn any lights on the streets, except in villages where it is absolutely safe, because of the danger of air raids. Even the windows of the houses are completely barred so as not to even permit a single ray to be seen. I had been to the camion that contains the gasoline and oil and was carrying a bottle of kerosene back to the barracks for the lights. It was pitch dark on the street and I stumbled over a box which had been left near the curb stone. The bottle broke and cut my right hand. The cut was about three inches long and very deep. I had to carry my hand in a sling for eight days and could not use it for anything, nevertheless I did not let it hinder me in my work and continued the same as the other men. I was fortunate and did not have any tire trouble. I was also all alone on my car as my aid had left for Paris on permission. It is much better now and I hope to remove the bandage in a few days. Since then I have also been in the hospital. Myself and five others in the section were evacuated to the hospital with what the French call the "Gole." It is a skin disease, very contagious, and very serious if not attended to at once. It is a sort of rash which breaks out all over your body and if allowed to take its course without immediate treatment it develops into running sores which have a scar just like the smallpox scar; until recently in fact, just before an immediate cure was discovered for it, it was considered almost as dangerous as smallpox. The others noticed theirs a day before mine broke out and were in favor of waiting a few days before reporting it. I took no such chance, but reported it and demanded immediate treatment, the result was we were all sent to the hospital where we could be constantly watched and taken care of in the proper way. We were at the hospital three days and have now been back five or six days and are just as healthy as ever. We also had to have all our blankets and uniforms disinfected. They put them through a very rough process and the result was every man's uniform was ruined. A good many had the buttons torn off the cloth; some changed color here and there, so that we look like so many spotted beauties. We are walking around in these rags waiting for the army to give us new ones.

In the meantime I might as well tell you I have given up all idea of working for a commission in the army as a profession. The reasons I cannot tell you in black and white at present.

Now that I have told you the unpleasant things I have some good news. I have been awarded the "Croix de Guerre," (War Cross) by the General of our division.. I have received the medal but not the papers. As soon as they go through the proper hands I will send you a copy of them. I am very proud of this and hope you will be also. The



#4.

first opportunity I have I will have my picture taken in Paris and will send you each one for Xmas. It is impossible for me to send any presents while in the army, but I hope to get the pictures through.

December 20th 1917.

I am enclosing copies of the citations, but am keeping the originals myself. Ask Mlle. LeFebure to translate them. We have just received another citation and have been decorated with the fourraguerre, the greatest honor yet conferred upon any American section. Will send you a copy when I get one.

December 28th 1917.

I received two copies of the "Targum" the other day and enjoyed them immensely.

January 6th 1918.

I am glad you are so proud of the "Croix de Guerre." I also see you have noticed the last grand decoration of the section, namely, the "Fourraguerre." I have written so many letters to you lately that I must make this a short one. I started this letter over an hour ago but was interrupted by the old lady of the house where I am writing. She has been telling me for over an hour how miserably she was treated by the Germans when they occupied this town. How they would hold her pinned against the wall at the point of a bayonet until the tears ran down the dear old lady's face from pain. I must refrain from telling you as we must be so careful what we say in our letters. x x x

I wish you would buy the December number of "Current History" and read on page 411 and the following pages the account of the attack on October 23rd and you will have an idea of what we had to contend with for five entire months. It was right there that I received my decoration.

January 31st 1918.

In regard to our service we are in the U. S. Army Ambulance service with the French Army. We receive the pay of a private in the U. S. Army. It is impossible for me to state what division we are with, but if you receive the copies of the citations I sent you you will have all the necessary information. The S S U means: Section Sanitaire Etats (United States) Unis, and the B. C M means: Bureau Correspondence Militaire. The A E F stands for American Expeditionary Force. You inquired why I had to buy my uniform. At that time we had not been issued anything by the U. S. Army. We are beginning to receive some of the equipment now. As to souvenirs have most of them in Paris, insured in the American Express Co. I have not collected duplicates as we are only allowed one duffle bag which is necessary for clothes. From now on I will collect some to send to you. I would not think of risking my originals in the mail. Even the few things you asked for, as each one carries a history with it.

February 4th 1918.

Glad to hear you have received the pictures. The full medal



#5.

of the cross is only usually worn on furloughs, dress parades or inspections. When on active service the bar is worn, because it is less expensive and not so liable to be lost. The stars have different meanings. A bronze star is a regimental citation, a silver star is a citation by a division, a gold star a citation by an army corps, a palm a citation by an army. In the picture I was wearing one of my friend's "Croix de Guerres" which had a bronze star upon it, which was not exactly correct for me to do, as I have a silver star. At the time the picture was taken we had not received the decoration of the Fourraguerre. The fourraguerre is a cord in the color of the Croix de Guerre, (green and red), worn around the left shoulder. It has a sort of a gold tassel on the end. I will send you a snapshot with it on as soon as possible.

March 11th 1918.

In regard to the citation, I thought Mlle. LeFevre would make that clear in her translation. The clause "Extrait de l'ordre General No. --" (of the division) will be made clear by inserting the words which I have included in the parenthesis. The citation and decoration are all included in one ceremony. The section is lined up in military formation and reviewed by the general of the division. He then reads aloud the citation and walks forward and pins the medal on your breast, kisses you on both cheeks, in the original French custom, and then congratulates you. After the section has been dismissed champagne is usually opened. All the sections that were previously with the French Army have been permitted to remain. They are supposed to remain with the French Army for the duration of the war, whether they will nor not no-one can tell. x x x

When in Paris the last time I had a meal at the University Union. This is probably what you mean by the University Bureau. I know of no other. By the way, all enlisted men in the U. S. Army must hereafter go to the one place designated by recent orders for their permission. No more permissions for Paris or England. Only the one place somewhere in Southern France.



April 29, 1918.

S S U 646,  
B C M, Paris A. E. F.

Dear Family:

Received letter from Mother #8 dated March 24, one from Father #26, dated Mar. 22, and two from Mary, March 3 and 25.

In regard to a trsnefer like Bailey, I could have done so at the same time he did, but if you remember it was your wish that I remain here and it was also Mr. Jackson's advice, which you advised me to take. Much to my regret you now realize what this service is like and want me to transfer. Although not impossible it is extremely difficult when once enlisted in one branch of service to transfer to another. I consider it one of the biggest mistakes I ever made when I enlisted in this service. It is entirely different from the old "Volunteer" system and has depreciated one hundred per cent. Were I to have the choice over again and should it still be your last and only request, I am certain I would refuse. You know I always try to do as you want me to do and when I refuse it is something extraordinary. This will give you an idea of how much I am in love with what I am doing.

Marine aviation I have given up entirely, but aviation no. I have been trying for the past four months to get transferred. I filed my application, sent it through the necessary red tape to headquarters, it was returned rejected. They have too many at present and not the facilities for training them, therefore I must wait. In the meantime I will file an application for heavy artillery, if that fails also I will repeat, sending one application after another, hoping finally to be accepted.

I knew the Lieut. Briggs K. Adams whom you spoke of, and read the account of his death in the Paris Edition of the N. Y. Herald. I have never come across the Jim Dennis father spoke of. I got a letter from Edna yesterday and answered immediately. Sorry I cannot get into Paris to see her. I also wrote Mr. Jackson.

We have been told it is necessary to have a written order signed by the commanding officer in order to have any packages sent. I am enclosing an order which you can give to some tobacco firm which will allow them to send me cigarettes and tobacco regularly, upon presentation of the order to the Postmaster General. I will send other orders for clothes &c. when I need them.

Love to all,

Alfred.



June 12,  
1918.

Mr. Alfred F. Skinner,  
2 Highland Ave.,  
Madison, N.J.

My dear Mr. Skinner:

Thank you very much for your letter of June 10th and for the most interesting extracts from Alfred's letters. They arrived too late to use in the July issue of the Quarterly but I shall save them for our October issue. The citations are very much appreciated. Sometime I hope to print a complete record for publication of the Rutgers men in service, and this data will be most valuable. Ob Armstrong '17, had quite a talk with me about the ambulance service and expressed surprise that Alfred should continue in the work. He said that many things in connection with it were very unsatisfactory.

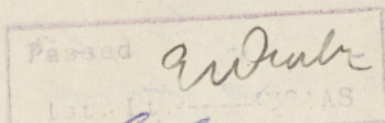
Very sincerely yours,

ERS/W



S. S. W. 646  
B. C. W. Paris  
A. C. F.

Sept. 6<sup>th</sup> 1910.



My dear Mr. Silvers:

I have been trying ever since I came over here to locate H. P. Talman. I have written to friends, to his home, to several addresses given me by his friends, and have asked my family; but no one has been able to give me the correct address. I am hoping that you have it and will be so kind as to send it to me at your first opportunity.

I have received and enjoyed immensely the copies of the circular letters which



you have sent, thanks to  
your untiring effort to keep us  
informed and in touch with  
the college activities. In the  
two years that I have been in  
France I have not met a  
single Rutgers man, but I am  
not giving up hopes, and when  
I do, I am sure they will all  
be brim-full of gratitude  
for the news that they have  
received from time to time.

I would send you some  
souvenirs, but it is forbidden  
in our section, nevertheless you  
probably have sufficient with-  
out any small donations.

Kindly excuse the pencil but  
ink is scarce at the front at  
present.

Sincerely,

Alfred P. Skinner



September 27  
1918.

Alfred P. Skinner  
S.S.N. 646  
12 C.M. Paris,  
American E.F.

Dear Mr. Skinner:

Only recently we have been able to get into touch with H. P. Galman. His address at present is: Coast Artillery Training Corps, Fortress Monroe, Va. I do not know, however, whether or not this will be of help to you as I understand he graduates from the training school this month and will be sent somewhere else. If we get into touch with him we shall advise you at once. Possibly a letter sent to Fortress Monroe will be forwarded. It was good to have your note of September 6 and to read your good word about the War Service letters.

Good luck to you in the big service you are doing.

Cordially yours,

G



October 30, 1918

Judge Alfred P. Skinner,  
Prudential Building,  
Newark, N.J.

Dear Judge Skinner:

I am sorry that it is impossible for you to attend the meeting of the Council on Wednesday evening. Even though it is impossible for you to attend meetings we are very anxious to have you continue as a member of the Council. Will you not reconsider your resignation?

Very sincerely yours,

ERS/HWG



October 4  
1 9 1 8

Alfred P. Skinner  
S.S.N. 646  
13 C.M. Paris  
Ave. E. F.

Dear Mr. Skinner:

Talman was in town Saturday and  
I was able to find out his new address. It is  
as follows: Lieut. Howard P. Talman, Coast  
Defenses, of San Juan, Porto Rico. I hope that  
you can now get in touch with him.

Cordially yours,

FRS/G



PITNEY, HARDIN & SKINNER

JOHN O. H. PITNEY  
JOHN R. HARDIN  
ALFRED F. SKINNER  
WILLIAM L. MORGAN  
CORWIN HOWELL  
J. FREDERIC WHERRY  
WALDRON M. WARD  
EDWARD O. STANLEY, JR.  
J. HOWARD CONOVER  
CARL A. FEICK

*Prudential Building*  
*Newark, N. J.* Oct. 26th 1918.

Mr. Earl Reed Silvers,  
Acting Field Secretary,  
Association of the Alumni,  
Rutgers College,  
New Brunswick, N. J.

My dear Mr. Silvers:

It is impossible for me to attend an evening meeting of the Council at New Brunswick. Altogether I have been unable to do justice to my responsibilities as a member of the Council and would like to be relieved of the feeling of default by having somebody who can attend substituted for me. Will you please present my resignation with the explanation that I think the Association is doing splendid work and regret that I cannot take active part in it.

Very truly yours,

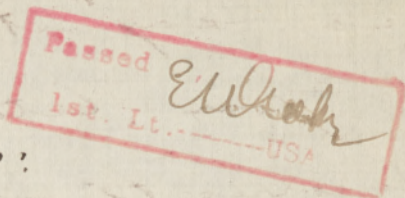
*Alfred F. Skinner*

AFS/U.



S-S-U-646  
B-C-U-Paris-A.C.F.

November 4<sup>th</sup> 1918.



Dear Mr. Silvers:

Recently received your letter of Oct. 4<sup>th</sup> containing H. P. Salmons' address. Also letter # XXVIII, Oct. 14<sup>th</sup>. I thank you very much for both. I was extremely glad to get Salmons' address as I have used every address imaginable trying to get in touch with him.

Your other letter was full of interesting news from beginning to end. The way the football team whipped Ursinus, appears to be the beginning of a very promising season. Until I received your letter, I had no idea that nine veterans were on hand.

What seems to be the general opinion in regard to the outcome of the war? I can not express the general opinion over here; on



account of restrictions, however,  
I can say it is very favorable.

Your letter arrived O.K. although  
incorrectly addressed. The correct  
address is: S-S-U-646-Par B-C-M  
Paris - Amer. E.F. - France.

Sorry I cannot write more  
but time will not permit.

Respectfully,

Alfred P. Skinner.



May 31, 1919.

Mr. Alfred W. Skinner,  
2 Highland Avenue,  
Madison, N. J.

My dear Mr. Skinner:-

Dr. Demarest has suggested that I write you, asking if you will be one of our Alumni to give a five minute speech at the War Service Dinner, in the Ballantine Gymnasium, Monday evening, June 9th. We are anxious to have several of our men who have seen active service tell very briefly about their experience.

I shall be grateful for your early word.

Very sincerely yours,

Assistant to the President.

ERS/b



PITNEY, HARDIN & SKINNER

JOHN O. H. PITNEY  
JOHN R. HARDIN  
ALFRED F. SKINNER  
WILLIAM L. MORGAN  
CORWIN HOWELL  
J. FREDERIC WHERRY  
WALDRON M. WARD  
EDWARD O. STANLEY, JR.  
J. HOWARD CONOVER.  
CARL A. FEICK.

*Prudential Building*

*Newark, N. J.* May 9th 1919.

Dr. W. H. S. Demarest,  
Pres. Rutgers College,  
New Brunswick, N. J.

My dear Will:

I am sorrowing over the discovery that I will not be able to attend commencement exercises this year. My daughter graduates from Burnham School at Northampton, Massachusetts. Their commencement does not come each year on the same date, but rambles around a little to suit the convenience of the distinguished guest who is to deliver the address. This year it is going to fall on June 10th. Of course, Mrs. Skinner and I want to go, and have promised my daughter that we would be there. Even though you are a bachelor you will understand my feeling.

I had my heart set on being at the Rutgers Commencement this year, and of accompanying Alfred. He got back a week ago last Sunday. His two years and three months with the French Army have been a wonderful experience, and he comes back huskier in body, matured in mind and character, altogether a very gratifying development.

His unit, Section 646, is the most highly decorated unit in the A. E. F., having received as a unit the Croix de Guerre six times, entitling it to wear the Fouragere of that decoration, and recently it was awarded the Medaille Militaire which entitles its members to wear the Fouragere of that decoration. While attached



May 9th.

to the 66th Division Chasseurs Alpine, (popularly known as the "Blue Devils") its service received commendation of the General commanding the division and the compliment of an award of honorary membership in the division, entitling the members of the unit to wear the Beret or cap that is distinctive of the division. Section 646 is the only one in the A. E. F. to receive the Medalle Militaire, so that Alfred is one of thirty five, the only ones in the A. E. F. to be entitled to wear the Fouragere. All this, with his individual decoration and the improvement in manhood that he shows, makes me very proud of him, as you will have seen as you read.

I wish the Rutgers boys who went into the service were going to be asked to wear their uniforms at commencement. I think it would give a fine touch of the spirit of Victory. Perhaps you have that in mind, and at some time during the commencement festivities to have them grouped and photographed, (assuming that enough come back to make a respectable showing). ~~Perhaps you have some such plan.~~

Yours sincerely,

Alfred F. Skinner

AFS-U.



June 5<sup>th</sup> 1919

Chi Phi

My dear Mr. Silvers:

Just received your  
letter of May 31<sup>st</sup>:

I expect to attend the  
War Service Dinner on  
June 9<sup>th</sup>. After dinner  
speaking is not my  
specialty, but I  
told Dr. Dewardest I



21. (17)

... would give a short  
... talk if he so wishes.

If convenient, I would  
... rather you select someone  
... else to fill my place  
... in regard to the speech.

If not, I will be  
... very glad to give a  
... short talk.

However, may I ask  
... one favor? If at the  
... dinner the men are to  
... be grouped by classes;



may I take my place  
with the class of 1918. It  
is the class in which  
I entered and made most  
of my friends.

I shall be grateful  
for this favor.

Very sincerely yours,

Alfred P. Skinner