

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

YMCA

Southampton, Engl.
Aug. 22, 1918.

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

My dear Mr. Silvers:-

I have received two of your letters since my arrival here on June 21st, and they were indeed welcome.

My trip over was really ~~very~~ delightful except for the annoyance, and attendant anxiety, of wearing constantly a life belt, which we had to wear at all times except when we slept. We came over alone & without escort, but expected to have destroyers pick us up off the Irish coast. For some reason they missed us and we had a rather anxious twelve hours as we steamed around in circles waiting for them. We were probably in the

most dangerous spot in the Atlantic — it was where the Justitia was sunk a few weeks later — and I can assure you that it was with a feeling of great relief that we welcomed four American destroyers at 8 o'clock that night. In the morning four British destroyers replaced them and with this escort and two hydroaeroplanes circling over us our procession to our harbor was quite a triumphal one.

I spent a week in London, but since then I have been going from camp to camp in what is known as the Winchester Area, trying to better the feeding conditions for our troops. The problem has been a hard one because of shortage of personnel and material, but I can now see progress and conditions are reasonably satisfactory. I expect to be here a couple of weeks longer when I will take up similar work in France.

If there is one fact that impresses us it is the gladness of the British to see us. Our welcome has been a very cordial one, from all classes of



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"Somewhere in France"
Oct 7, 1918.

To: War Service Bureau of Rutgers College.

Dear Silvers:-

Your letter (# 25) of Aug 23 1918 reached me two week ago just a few hours before my outfit started up for the front line. It is the first one of the letters that has gotten to me but I hope from now on I will get them regularly.

Since I have been in France I have not been able to get into touch with any Rutgers men, so cannot give you any news except about myself. I am glad to say that I am in the 8th Brig of the 4th Division which has already been cited twice by Commanding Officer at Genral Hdq. My company, (Co A - 12 M.G. Bn) has

in both of the actions for which the citations were given. We Machine Gun men are very proud of our branch of the service we are in.

Just now we are still in the front-line expecting to be relieved any day.

The shelling has been pretty heavy here for the last few days but most of us have become such good "Huckers" that we manage to get by somehow or other, although I often wonder how we do. I had a close call several days ago, a big H.E. (high explosive) landed less than 18 ft. from where I was lying with two Lieutenants; aside from the fact that I was a bit deaf for an hour or so it did no damage to speak of.

The envelope I am mailing this in is one that I got out of a Boche dug-out.

Here's hoping I will hear from dear Old Rutgers regularly —

Sergeant Alfred W. Thomas, 1913½
Co A — 12 M.G. Bn.
42nd Div.
American E. F.
France.

November 6, 1918.

Sergeant Alfred W. Thomas,
Company A,-12 M.G. Bn.
4th Division,
Am. Ex. Forces.

Dear Sergeant Thomas:-

I am glad to know that you are receiving the War Service Letters and that they have proved interesting. I appreciate your word of October 7th and hope that you continue to escape injury. Your experiences are most certainly worthwhile.

Very cordially yours,