

ON ACTIVE SERVICE
WITH THE
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES.

LETTER OF DEE SUTHERLAND ENTITLED

"MY TRIP"

AND DATED (COMPLETED LETTER)

December 12th 1918

My Trip

Dear Folks,

We left Camp Dodge Aug 4th on the C M & St. Paul stopped at Marion for physical exercise. The next stop was at Savannah ILL. Where we again had exercise. The people (RedCross were very kind to us here: They treated us to candy gum and cigarettes. The next stop was at Chicago at 1130pm Sunday night. We were greeted by a big bunch of girls and boys: we pulled some of the girls into the cars and were going to take them along with us. The next stop was Monday Aug 5 at South Bend Ind. We took exercise here and marched through the streets greeted by a big crowd. Sandwiches were served by the Red Cross to us. We entrained at 9oo Am and crossed the NW corner of Ohio. The next stop was Vicksburg Mich. The Ladies

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gave us flowers and apples. Just outside vicksburg we stopped at a lake for a swim. Everybody stripped down to their birthday clothes although there were a number of people around. The Ladies especially became nervous and some went away. We stopped at Battle Creek Mich. Took a hike saw Kelloggs Corn flakes and many other big factories. Stopped at Port Huron Michigan monday night about 2 hrs.marched a little- were treated to cigarettes candy and ice cream by Red Cross. Sang some songs and seemed to make quite a hit with the people. We had a good time. We passed through the St. Claire Tunnel into

Canada. We reached Niagara Falls. I was then one of the train guards. Only a fog could be seen over the falls. We road along the Niagra river

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For a short distance and crossed the Erie Canal passed through Manchester New York stopped at Geneva and marched down to Lake Geneva and took a bath. Most of the boys were wet with swet This lake was very beautiful, marched back to the Depot and were served finely by the Red Cross. The scenery was sure beautiful around the City. The next stop was Sayre-Penn. We went to the park and sang_ I am now developing to be quite a singer. At Wilkes-Barre Penn. We stopped for 2hrs and went with the YMCA there. We marched back to the Depot and continued our journey. The next stop was Sugar Loaf Penn. This place was some place. I never saw so many affectionate girls in all my life. Some of the company almost deserted here.

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Our next stop was Jersey City Wed morning_ we got off the train on a ferry boat sailed up New York harbor and passed under the Brooklyn bridge to Long Island depot Here we took a trip to Camp Upton We reached Camp Upton Aug 8. We remained here until Aug 15. During our stay at NY I made a trip to NY City and had a fine time. Visiting the hotels, Cabarets and hotels. We left NY harbor and after laying in the harbor over night on Aug 16 started our trip across the ocean. The trip across the ocean was not very exciting: we had 2400 men on our boat the boat surely was packed: we had sub-marine drill every day. We went off the Canadian coast then across to Scotland when we went across the big graveyard where the Lusitania went down we were

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met by a squadron of English torpedo boats. Our ship was the flag ship During at the trip none of the men seemed to be at all afraid of sub-marines. We landed at Liverpool England and from there took a train late in the evening and on Aug 29* went to a rest camp near Winchester England (Camp Mourn Hill) we remained here until Aug 29* went to Southampton and Crossed the English Channel and landed at Cherbourg France. The boat we were in was a very speedy boat and seemed to skipped over the water: Large searchlights were shot all around the Ship we land in France Sep 1 and went to a rest camp. We remained here a few days and were then loaded onto box cars. The French box

are only one- half as large as ours and we were loaded with * *There seems to be some discrepancy here, he arrives and departs the same day.*

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35 to 40 men in a box car. On our trip we went through Caen France near Paris and reached our training station Sep 4 which was a small town near Dijon France. The French people were very kind to us in this little village. After training here until Sept 17 We took a 6 mile hike to the railroad- sleeping in a dog tent and during the night a big rain storm came up. We got up at one in the morning and went to the Depot took the train and went to Hericourt near (Belfort) got off the train about noon and went to a small town went to Luze France, there we went into billets which are old barns and house we trained here intensively until Oct 5. I was No. 1 on the machine gun here and No. 1 is the man who handles the gun in the Machine Gun outfit the No.1 is

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the guy who is supposed to die first, then No.2 takes his place and so on. We completed our training Oct 5 and were ready to go to the Front. We left Oct 5 at night (all marching is done at night) and went to *Gouvenaught?* Monday evening this place was in Alsace-Lorraine We saw a big aeroplane battle and here first heard the German aeroplane You can always tell them from the Allies plane by the noise of there motors. We reached the Hecken front at 8.00 on Oct 7th. We did a little drilling. I was one of ones first sent to the Front and was there during our company's stay. The second night I was on guard at the gun we were given one of worst bombardments that the Hecken section had received It seemed that my time to do guard duty was

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from 6 to 8 in the evening and 4 - 6 in the morning. These hours are the worst in the Artillery to get at the machine gunners. The Germans sent over high explosives and gas! We were compelled to wear our gas masks some of the time The shrapnel broke over our heads and small pieces hit our helmets. One large piece of shrapnel hit almost 10 feet from me. *It commenced raining when we at the front the 4 day* and we were compelled to stand in the wind and water in rubber boots- one very bad night I stood in the rain for 5 hours. As

the wind was this night in favor of the Germans we expected a big attack. They do not send over Gas when it is raining. For every gas shell they sent across the Americans sent 2 back at them. When we were not on guard we staid in dugouts. In the

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dugouts the fellows have bunks they are full of rats, but a fellow dosen't care for rats there is too much other things to think about. If there is not an attack during the day time there nothing doing. Most of the attacks are done at night or early in the morning. The French soldiers were very kind to us at the front and all the Americans soldiers consider them real men. We gave them cigarettes and they surely appreciate it . We left the front on Oct 20 and went into a rest camp near Belfort France we drilled and remained here until Oct 31. We then went to *Lipuix?* France making hike at night. We then went to an American Railroad and went to Toul from here we went to *Bouvron?* France Nov -8 this was near the big fighting. Lt.Moslier told me this day that our company

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was going into one of the biggest battles of the war. We loaded/ our carts Nov-10 and was waiting orders to go to the front but the orders never came because the Armistice was signed we could hear the big guns roaring up to the last minute. On Nov-29 we moved south east of Toul near Charoumont France where are now. We now are taking it easy drilling about 4 hours a day waiting our time to go home which I think will be January 1919. One day we get a report we are going to Germany then the next day that we are going home. The Salvation Army surely have lived up to there preaching over here and all the boys have a good word for them.

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They go right up to the trenches with the men. The YMCA has also done lots of good work.The government is surley doing all it can to make it pleasant for us before we return to the only real country there is. I am sending this letter to you and wish you would have Edna send a copy on the type-writer to Aunt Em Bob and Lial. Keep a copy until I return home. I have written this letter in haste there is - I expect - quite a few errors but guess you can translate it. I am feeling all right and in good health.

Your son

Sgt. Ernest D. Sutherland

My address

Co. B-338 MG BnAmer Ex Forces APO 795

Italic and red = Sentence does not make sense or the name of the City

Cannot be confirmed or located.

There are some spelling errors (road for rode)

(There for their) (staid for stayed)

In my humble opinion Davie, this is the best constructed narrative I have read from this period. I wonder if Dee went to College.

Tee.