

Letters To Ethel

(PART 3)

ARMISTICE

TO

EPILOGUE

November 17, 1918

The American Legion report on B.D. Mill's service noted: "*Veteran received treatment for influenza from October 7 to November 17, 1918, but clinical records covering such treatment are not available.*" [241]

American Y.M.C.A. SOLDIERS MAIL [No cancellation]



American Y.M.C.A. SOLDIERS MAIL Envelope
Censor Stamped: "A.E.F. Passed As Censored _____"
Censor Stamp Overwritten: "L.B. Knob, 2nd Lt.."

Mills, Bevley D.
U.S. Army

Dec. 1, 1919

Miss Ethel Fly
Milan, Tennessee
U.S. of America



"12/1/1918

Somewhere in France

Miss Ethel Fly,

Dear Ethel,

Will try and rite just a few lines this after noon. I wonder what you are doing and what you think of me for not riting sooner, but I couldn't help it. Will try and rite more as the war is over and I am expecting to come home some time in to or three months. This is a terrible place I think. It isn't verry cold here, yet but it rains so much. Say, I sure would like to have been there thanksgiving. Gess you had some dinner. We had the same as we have ever[y] day and you can guess what it is. I sure would like to here from you and from home. When you see any of my folks, tell them I am well and will rite soon. Be good and rite often and all the news.

B.D.

Pvt. Bevley D. Mills

First Battalion 331st Inf.

A.P.C. 762 Amer. E.F."

By December of 1918, B.D. Mills had been transferred from the 57th Pioneer Infantry into the 331st Infantry Regiment. This letter was written on another variant of the Y.M.C.A. letterhead paper. Although the envelope was not MPES canceled, B.D. identified his location as "A.P.C' [Army Post Code] 762", which was the Le Mans area. [242] When the 82nd Division had been designated

the 2nd Depot Division, it's designated area around Lemans was divided into 5 administrative areas, with the 331st Infantry being assigned to La Suze-sur-Sarthe, located south-west of Le Mans. [243]

December 7, 1918

The American Legion report on B.D. Mill's service record noted: *"Sick report shows him [B.D.] reported sick December 7, 1918, taken sick December 6, in line of duty. Disposition: light duty."* [244]

December 12, 1918

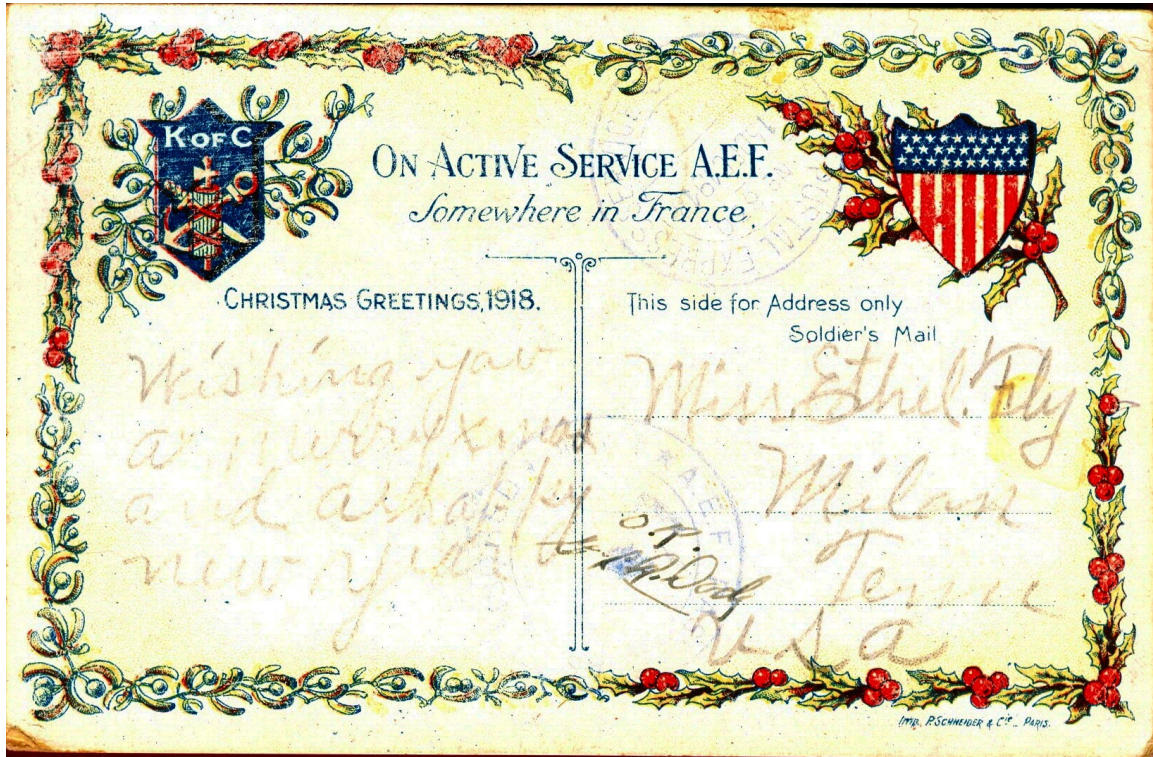
Lonnie Holt was transferred from the 330th Infantry to the 61st Guards Company, Army Service Corp (A.S.C.), which was organized in France during December 1918. [245,246] The American Expeditionary Forces (A.E.F.) was a formation of the U.S. Army which had organized in France earlier on July 5, 1917 under the command of General John F. Pershing. The logistical arm of the A.E.F. was the Service of Supply (S.O.S), which coordinated the movement of men and materials from the United States to France and provided rear area support for the front line combat organizations. [247] There were a large number of specialized and diversified units necessary to support the burgeoning U.S. Army in France which did not fit into any established branch of a peacetime army, so the A.S.C. was organized as part of the S.O.S. on August 22, 1918. The A.S.C would expand to include more than 400 organizations including administrative labor companies, laundry units, depot labor companies, cement mills companies, graves registration units and guard companies. [248] Specific information regarding the 61st Guards Company is scant, but the the Guard Companies of the A.S.C. are assumed to have provided general security, separate from Prisoner of War guard duties, within the S.O.S. area. [249] With the armistice in effect, the U.S. Army would begin the process of demobilization of it's forces and the return or disposal of equipment and supplies, but this process would take time, which required the guarding of supplies and facilities. A listing of the military post offices of the A.E.F. showed that later in March of 1919, the 61st Guards were stationed at A.P.O. 712, at Is-sur-Tille, Cote-d'or, the location of an advance supply depot and train regulating station on a main railroad junction situated behind what had been the Western front during the war. [250] Lonnie would remain assigned to the 61st Guards, A.S.C. until he returned back to the United States and was discharged from active military service. [251]

December 13, 1918

American Legion report on B.D. Service record: *"reported sick December 13, 1918, taken sick same date. In line of duty. Disposition: to duty. Diagnosis*

and treatment are not shown on the sick report. There is no other record of treatment in service." [252]

December 15, 1918 N8 8:30 POSTAL EXPRESS SERVICE



K of C ON ACTIVE SERVICE, A.E.F.
Somewhere in France
CHRISTMAS GREETINGS, 1918 Soldier's Mail Postcard
Censor Stamped: "MEP A.E.F. Passed As Censored _____"
Censor Stamp Overwritten: "Ok Lt. E.R. Dody"

<Address Side>

Miss Ethel Fly
Milan, Tenn USA
"Wishing you a Merry Xmas and a happy new year.

<Message Side>

"Dear Ethel,
I wonder what you are doing for your self. Gess you are expecting a big time xmas. Don't gess I will not get home until new years, so you can look for me. Will rite again when I get back to the States.
Yours truly,
B.D."

Milan, Tenn. December 30, 1918



*Miss Ethel Fly
Milan, Tenn
R.F.D. #*

*"Dec. 30/18
Milan, Tenn
Dear Miss Ethel,
We haven't rec[eived] a letter from B.D. since Nov the 26 and we are real anxious to hear again. Have you gotten one since then? Our letter was dated Nov. 6 Will you please write me a note to tell me if you have heard and if he was well. We don't know wheather to write to the same address or not. Won't you please write me real soon for we are almost crazy to hear from him.
From B.D.'s sister,
Mrs. Charles Maynard
Milan, Tenn
c/o J.P. Mills R.F.D. #5"*

It is unclear if B.D was jsut writing more letters to Ethel than his other family members or just more of his letters were getting through to her than them.

December 31, 1918

Image #26: Newspaper clipping cut by Ethel Mills [253]

57th B.D.

15,000 MORE YANKS CHOSEN FOR RETURN

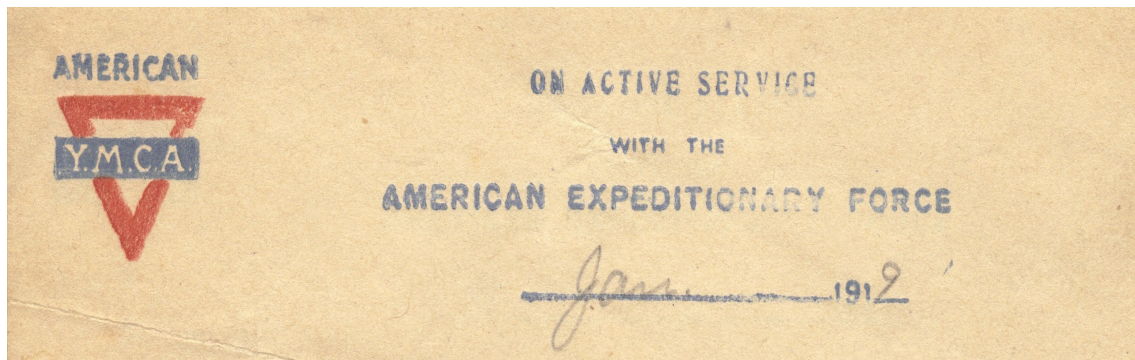
WASHINGTON, Dec. 31.—Gen. Pershing notified the war department today that additional units with a total strength of approximately 15,000 had been assigned by him for early convoy home. They include the 329th and 330th infantry of the 83d division with a strength of more than 50 officers and 3,400 men each and the Fourth regiment, air service, including about 16 aero squadrons.

The 54th field artillery and the 116th engineers also were among the units designated for early return.

Aero squadrons included are the 21st, 30th, 31st, 32d, 33d, 37th, 43d, 162d, 101st, 257th, 184th, 483d, 489th, 490th, 469th and 640th, and air service mechanics include the 17th, 18th and 19th companies. The organizations of the Fourth and 55th and 57th pioneer infantry and 164th field hospital also are designated, as is a casual company from the air service and one from the chemical warfare service.

After the signing of the Armistice of November 11th, the U.S. Army began planning the draw down of their forces overseas, with this announcement specifically mentioning both the 330th Infantry and the 57th Pioneer Infantry. Ethel annotated the clipping with "57th B.D.", an indication that she had not caught that B.D. had noted his new regiment as the 331st Infantry in his letter of December 1st. The 57th Pioneer Infantry was not the full regiment, which had been disbanded earlier on October 31st, but rather a small regimental cadre ordered organized later on December 8th by the S.O.S. Headquarters to gather the records of the regiment after realizing that the disbandment had been done in error. The 57th Pioneer Infantry cadre was composed of only Capt. Ernest W. Gibson and three non-commissioned sergeants, the only officer and enlisted men that were found remaining unassigned from the 57th Pioneer Infantry in the sector. [254]

[No Envelope]



"Jan. [blank], 1919

Chassigny, France

Dear Sister,

Will try and write a few lines tonight, hoping this may find you all o.k. I am getting along the best kind. Well, it is raining here tonight. We sure are having lots of bad weather; it rains some nearly every day. Wonder what you are doing these days, are your teaching this winter? We are having a very easy time now. We go out to drill every morning, but play games part of the time. Don't do any thing in the afternoon, only have about one hour football game. I just help eat a big supper. I and three of my friends had a French woman to cook us a good meal, had fried beef steak, potatoes, rice & lamb and lots of good wine to drink (my belly looks about like the full moon looks). Well, I would give any thing to see you all, but don't know when we will ever get to start home. Think I will be here for some time yet, but trust that the time will soon come when we can all meet again, for I am so anxious to get back to my Dear home once again. Martha, tell mama I said for her to go ahead and rent the place for [I] don't think I'll get home in time to make a crop, and if I should, we could make it some way, so if she has a chance to rent to some good man, I suspect it would be best to rent it. Dear sister, I hope none of you all won't take the influenza. Is it as bad there as has been [here]? When did you see my Dear little girlie? Would give the world to see her. Guess she is still pretty and sweet, isn't she? Sure would like to hear from you all, haven't heard for some time. Don't know what is wrong with the mail. Hardly get a letter now. Well, as it is getting late, will close for this time. With lots of love & kisses XXX for U. all. Good night, hope to see you all soon.

Your brother,

Aubrey"

Aubrey Elmer Fly was the only brother of Ethel and Martha Fly. He had registered for the 1st draft of June 5, 1917 and left by train from Trenton on December 8, 1917 for the Mobilization Camp located at Camp Gordon, Chamblee, GA. [255,256] As a member of Co. "M", 325th Infantry Regiment, 82nd Division,

he had departed from Hoboken, NJ aboard the *U.S.S. Karmala* on April 25, 1918. [257] After arrival in France, the regiment received additional training and went into combat in Toul sector from June 18th to August 10th. The regiment participated in the three day offensive to reduce the St. Mihiel salient starting on September 12th and from September 26th to October 9th the regiment waited to be committed to the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. On October 10th the regiment attacked and seized the Cornay Ridge, then continued the attack across the Aire River, remaining in combat until the Armistice of November 11th. [258] Aubrey wrote this letter on another variant of the Y.M.C.A. letterhead stationery from Chassigny, a small hamlet located within the Haute-Marne department of North-East France. [259] Note that Aubrey commented on both the poor weather conditions in France and the severity of the influenza outbreak there.

January 7, 1919 MILAN, TENN.



Miss Ethel Fly
Mila
R.F.D. #4

"Jan. 6, 1919
Milan, Tenn
Dear Miss Ethel,
How are you this cold weather? We are just fine. We rec[eived] a letter from B.D.

today & a card Saturday & that makes me feel good. Don't know wheather you have heard or not. Hope you have. Our letter was dated Dec. 1 and the card was not dated, but was postmarked the 16[th]. He said he was well and expecting to come home soon. He has changed his address. It is 1st Battalion, 331st Inf. A.P.O. 762, A.E.F. We are writing him tonight. I tried to call you this afternoon & couldn't get you. B.D. said he would let us know when he got back in the states. If he wires us, we will let you know. Please excuse my writing and any time you haven't had a letter & want to hear from B.D. through us, just write to me. I will be glad to let you know.

Esther Maynard

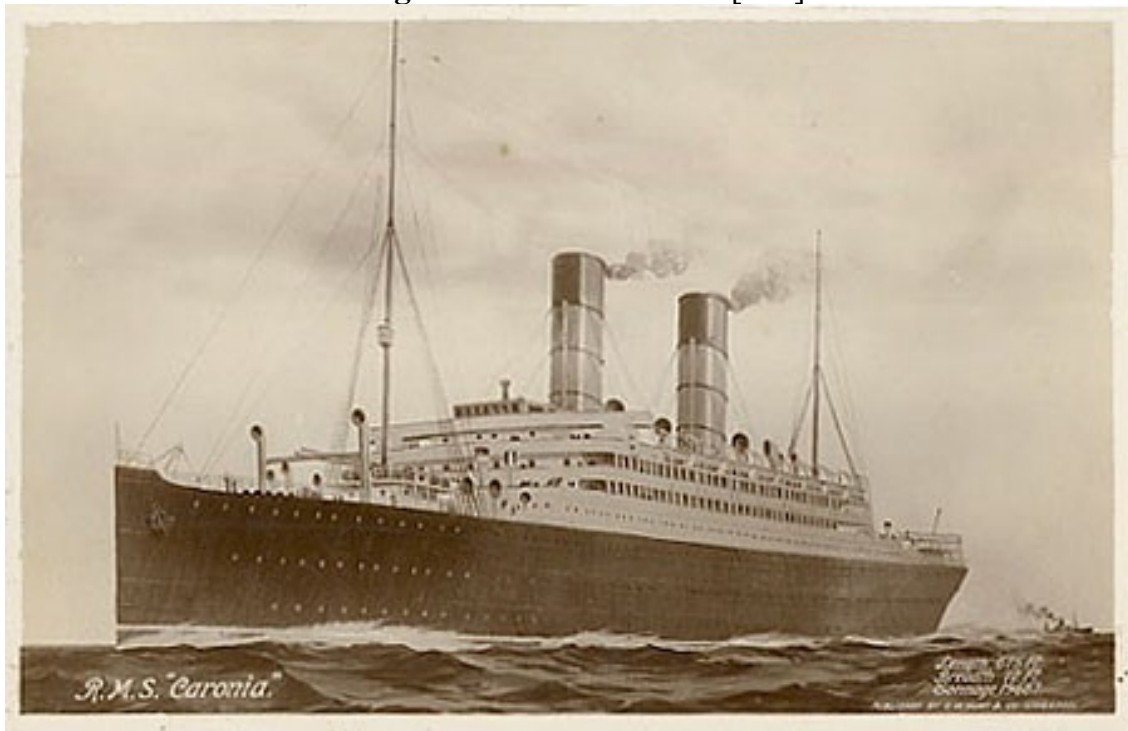
B.D. said he was in Nayen, but didn't guess he would stay there long. If you know where or what that is, you are ahead of us."

A.P.O. address 762 identified that B.D. was still in the area of Le Mans, France, with "Nayen" probably a misspelling by B.D. of the French pronunciation of the town of Nante located relatively near Le Mans. [260]

January 17, 1919

B.D. Mills, along with 2,305 officers and men of the 331st Infantry, boarded the *R.M.S. Caronia* at Brest, France for the return voyage to the United States. [261,262]

Image #27: *R.M.S. Caronia* [263]



The *R.M.S. Caronia* was a cruise liner operated by the Cunard line before the war which was converted into an armed merchantman at the outbreak of the war and then used as a troopship for the duration of the war. As a point of historical trivia, the *R.M.S. Caronia* was the first ship to warn the *R.M.S. Titanic* on April 14, 1912 of sea ice, reporting: "bergs, growlers and field ice". [264]

Image #28: January 27, 1919 Article in *The New York Times* [265]

SOLDIER RETURNS TO FIND WIFE DEAD

Another of 3,978 Troops on the
Caronia Drops Dead as
Ship Reaches Pier.

331ST INFANTRY HOME AGAIN

Officers Staff 27th Division Has
Many New Men Now from
Outside of New York.

Among the 3,978 troops standing on the deck of the transport *Caronia* when she was warped into her pier at the foot of West Fourteenth Street yesterday morning was Private Milton K. Dodd of Company E, 331st Infantry, whose home is in Brooklyn. The band played "Home, Sweet Home," and he saw his father and mother waiting on the pier, and he cheered with the hundreds of other soldiers standing by him. Dodd had left his young wife, Rose, with his parents, but he could not see her on the pier. When the gangway was lowered one of the debarkation officers sought out Private Dodd and brought him to his parents. After embracing them both, he inquired for his wife. For a minute there was no reply, and then the father broke the sad news that his wife had died of pneumonia on Nov. 28 and his son nearly collapsed. They had only been married a year, Mr. Dodd, 36, said, when the war called his son to the army and his wife became very despondent over his going away, and had a presentiment she would never see him again.

While this sad scene was being enacted on the pier, Private Joseph Craig of Alabama, also of the 331st Regiment, who was in good health and was looking over the rail, was attacked by heart disease and died in fifteen minutes.

The *Caronia* left Liverpool on Jan. 14 with ninety-two civilians and sixty wounded from the base hospitals, and then steamed to Brest, where 3,918 officers and men were embarked, including the entire 331st Infantry of sixty officers and 2,246 enlisted men, chiefly from Ohio and Western Pennsylvania, with replacement men from all parts of the United States. The regiment was in command of Colonel H. A. Hannigan, who formerly had the 34th Regiment. The 331st Regiment as a unit had not been in active service, but many of the officers and men had fought in other regiments.

The troops were taken in ferry boats from Pier 63 to Long Island City, where they were received by a big crowd of people, who cheered them as they entrained for Camp Mills.

Besides the 331st Regiment, there were three casual companies on board, aggregating 421 enlisted men, with six officers in charge, and fifty-two casual officers. There were forty-five enlisted men in the ship's hospital, and the ship also brought back thirty-four women army nurses.

Many Have Mumps and Measles.

The hospital cases were chiefly mumps and measles, which, the surgeons said, were both very prevalent in France, especially in the dugouts in the rear of the lines, as there was not much fresh air inside the dugouts, and that enabled the germs of the diseases to keep active. It might sound funny to people in America, they said, to hear about big, strong soldiers having mumps or measles, but it was no joke "over there."

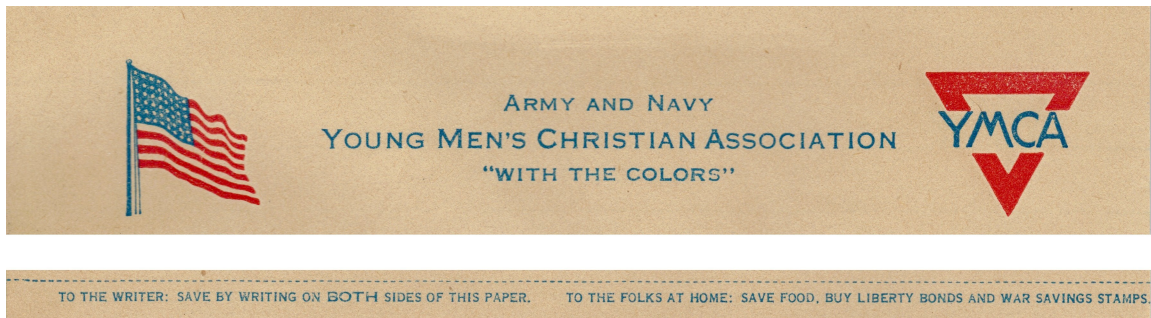
As seen in this article on the arrival of the 331st Infantry Regiment at New York, NY, the excitement of the the men's return was tempered by incidents of sadness and tragedy.

January 28, 1919 2PM HEMPSTEAD, N.Y. MILLS BRANCH



Y.M.C.A. "WITH THE COLORS" Envelope

*Miss Ethel Fly
Milan, Tenn*



"Jan. 25th, 1918

*Miss Ethel Fly,
Milan, Tenn*

Dear Ethel,

Will try and reate a few lines as I am back in Dad's country once ore. I am well and expecting to be home soon, but don't [k]no[w] just how soon that will be. I wish I could tell you how glad I was to get back on this side of the pond. It was a great day with me, but the greatest day will be when I get near Chappel hill. Gess you will hear of my landing be fore you get this, for I sent a telegram home yesterday, as soon as I landed. Well how is everybody? I hope it isn't cold down

there, it is nice wether here. I haven't time to rite much, it seems like it has been a year since I hear from you. Only got 5 or 6 letters while in France and just got one from home. Will write more next time. Don't gess I will be here more than two or 3 days. Don't [k]no[w] where I will go from here, so be good and I will be home soon.

As ever yours,

B.D.

Co. "C", 331st Inf., Camp Mills"

Camp Mills was located north of the town of Hempstead, NY on Long Island and had been an important camp for troops embarking to France during 1917 and 1918. With the ending of hostilities, it demobilized from service troops returning from overseas or transferred them on to other camps for demobilization.
[266]

January 31, 1919 11AM HEMPSTEAD, N.Y.

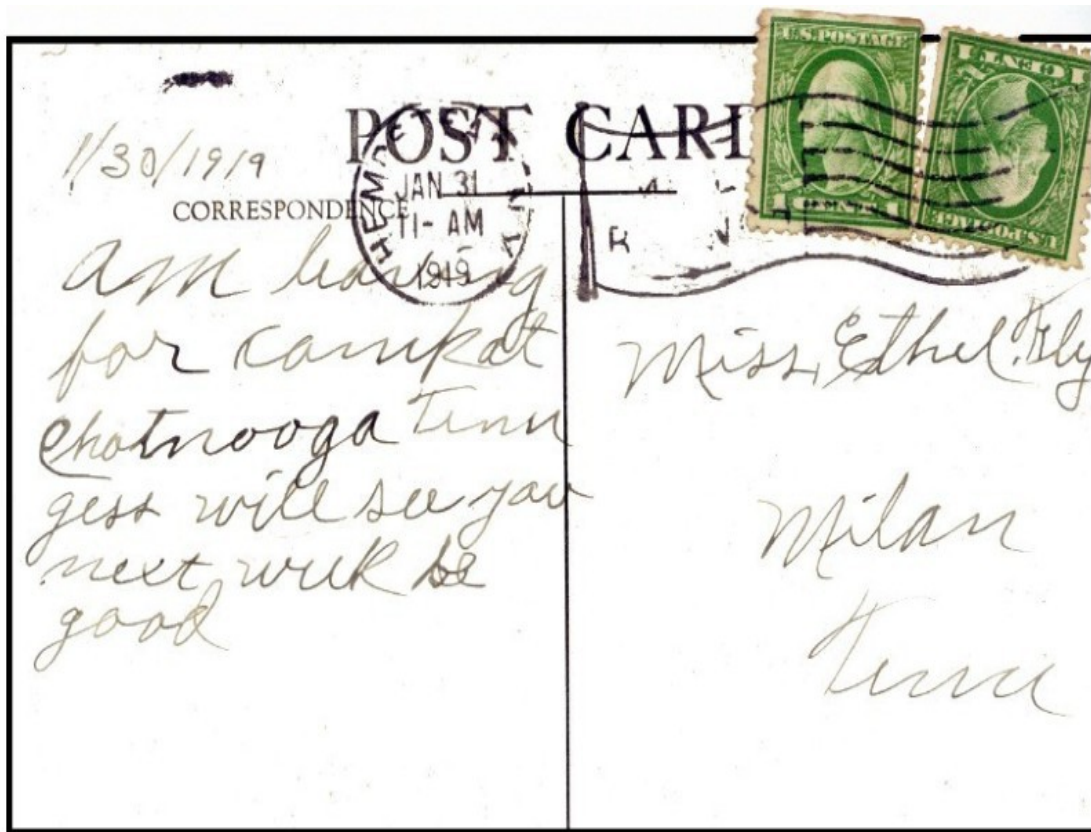


J.W.B. (Jewish Welfare Board) "HELLO- JUST GOT BACK" Postcard

<Message Side>

"B.D."

<Address side>



*"Miss Ethel Fly
Milan, Tenn
1/30/1919*

Am leaving for camp at Chatnooga Tenn. Gess will see you next week. Be good."

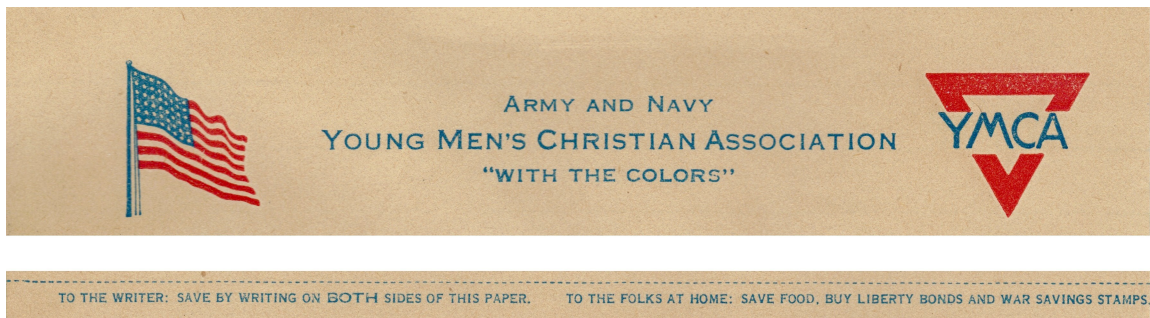
This postcard was furnished to returning troops by the Jewish Welfare Board, United States Army & Navy, organized earlier in 1917 to meet the social, cultural, intellectual, physical and spiritual needs of Jewish servicemen in the armed forces. [267] Now that B.D. was out of a conflict zone, he had to resume paying the postage on any postcards or letters mailed.

February 4, 1919 8:30A Chattanooga, Tenn Forrest Branch



Y.M.C.A. "WITH THE COLORS" Envelope

*Miss Ethel Fly
Milan, Tenn*



"2/3/1919

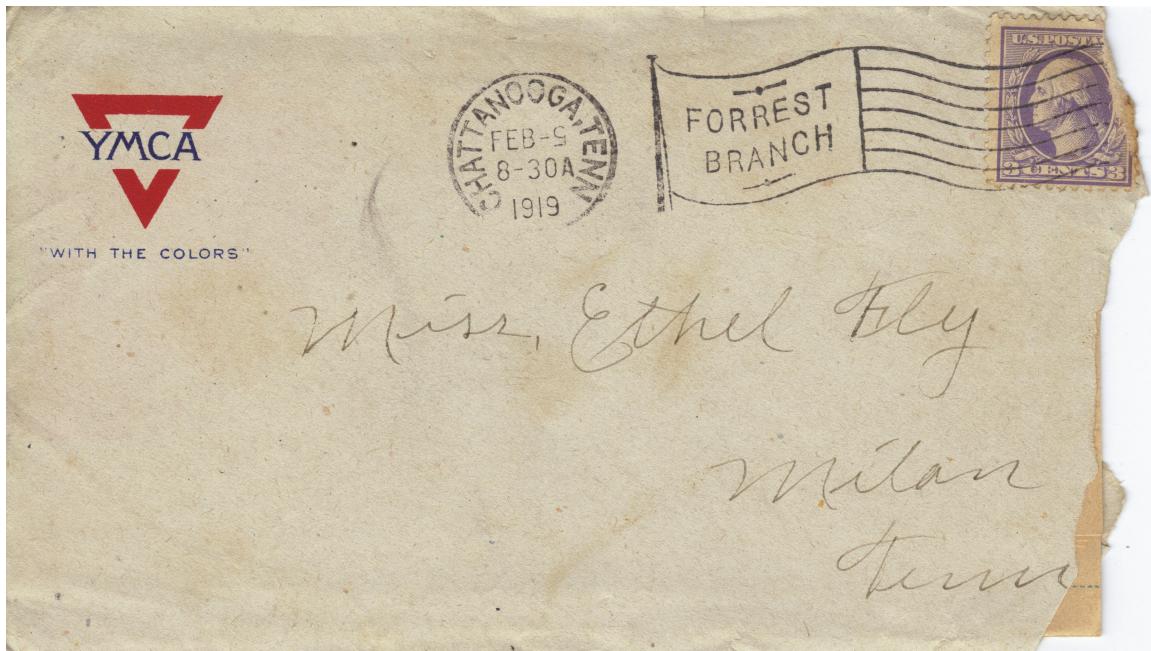
My dear Ethel,

Will try and write a little to night as I am in Ga and just want to write to you any way. Wish I could be where I was five months ago the 5th, but it imposible, but it wont be long until I will be home and be a free man once more and can go where I pleze with out a pass. Gess you no where I will go. I was exzamond this eve, gess I will get a discharge soon. You wouldn't no me, I am so fat I weigh 11 lb more than I did when I left home. Will tell you about getting your letter you wrote the 20th, it seemed like you thought I had quit you. You said you hadent heard from me

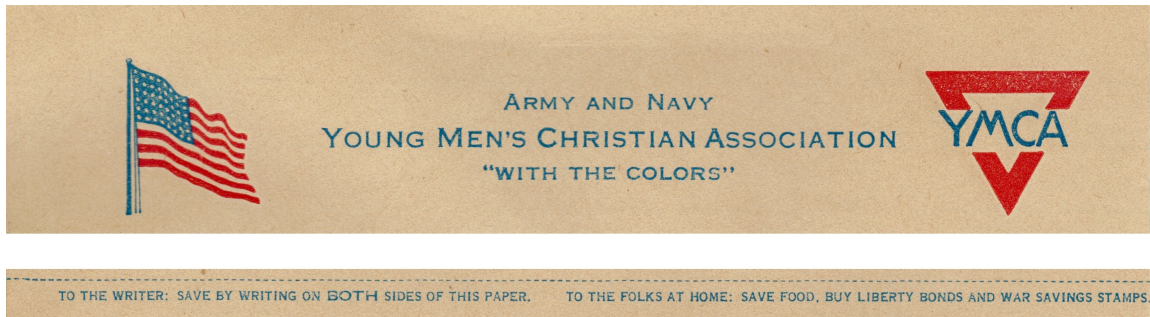
*in two weeks. I don't think that is bad. I didn't hear from you in about three months, but I didn't think that you had quit me. See, I have more confidence in you than you have in me. Gess I love you better than you do me is the reason. Am I right or am I not? I can all most hear you ans[wersing] that. Gess I had better tell you about seeing Cecil Colman. He is here waiting for a discharge. Well, I don't think you will ever see me with a uniform on unless you come to camp be fore I leave unless they give me anew suit and don't think they are going to do that. Gess I had better write home. See you come first and home second. Why shouldn't it be that way? They won't even rite and you will, so I gess I will ball them out when I get home. Good by with just as much love as 5 months ago, so be good.
Your,
B.D."*

Fort Oglethorpe was located in Georgia just south of Chattanooga across the Tennessee-Georgia state line and during the war encompassed three satellite camps all located near the Civil War battlefield at Chickamaugua: Camp Greenleaf, Camp Forrest and Camp Warden McLean, with Camp McLean being one of the few demobilization centers in Georgia. [268] Although located in Georgia, the camp's mail was apparently processed through the Forrest Branch of the U.S. Postal Service located in Chattanooga, TN.

February 5, 1919 8:30A Chattanooga, Tenn Forrest Branch



Y.M.C.A. "WITH THE COLORS" Envelope



"2/4/1919

Dear Ethel,

Heare I am again to night, couldn't help but write a little bit as I think where I was 5 months ago to night and how bad I hated to leave you, but it is all in the past and I will soon be back again with the same Ethel and won't haft to go to a war any more. I think that will be nice, don't you (I gess so)? Them 5 months has been long ones to me and I have been in some rough places. I have had to stay in places where I wouldn't put a hog of mine, but I lived through it and am here and feeling fine I am proud to say. Well, how is the partys? Gess you and Pug is taking them all in. I don't care, just so you don't marry him before I get back. I want to be at the wedding and dimmer or supper, which eve it may be. Gess that is enough of that. Will tell you some thing good. I expect to get home Sunday. Don't no for sure, so I want leave a date to night and haft to give you a lemon, but I may be there you need not be surprised if I do come with out a date. You can't tell about me what I will do. I will come if I can. Gees you no that with out me telling you. Gess I had better do home, it is about bedtime. So good night with lots of love.

Your,

B.D."

February 8, 1919

B.D. Mills was discharged from military service on this date, with the American Legion report on his service record later noting that: "No defects were noted or claimed at discharge." [269] One of the benefits that the government had provided its soldiers was War Risk Insurance, which had been enacted by Congress on October 6, 1917. It was a comprehensive program that provided for: (a) the support of the families of the men in service; (b) compensation for those killed, disabled, or enfeebled in service, together with provision for the re-education of the disabled; (c) voluntary insurance at low rates, administered by the government. At discharge, a soldier could convert this insurance into a government-backed policy that would remain in effect as long as the prescribed monthly premiums were paid. Image #27 is the War Risk Insurance policy information provided to B.D. that detailed the schedule of premiums that would be

due to keep the \$10,000 of insurance in effect until it had to be converted into some other type of insurance plan five years after the conclusion of the war. What is not shown is that B.D. neglected to assign a beneficiary for the policy's benefits, which by default, made him the beneficiary and if he died, only his legal heirs would be the beneficiaries of the policy, a legality that would be of significance later.

Image #27: War Risk Insurance Information Provided B.D. Mills [270]

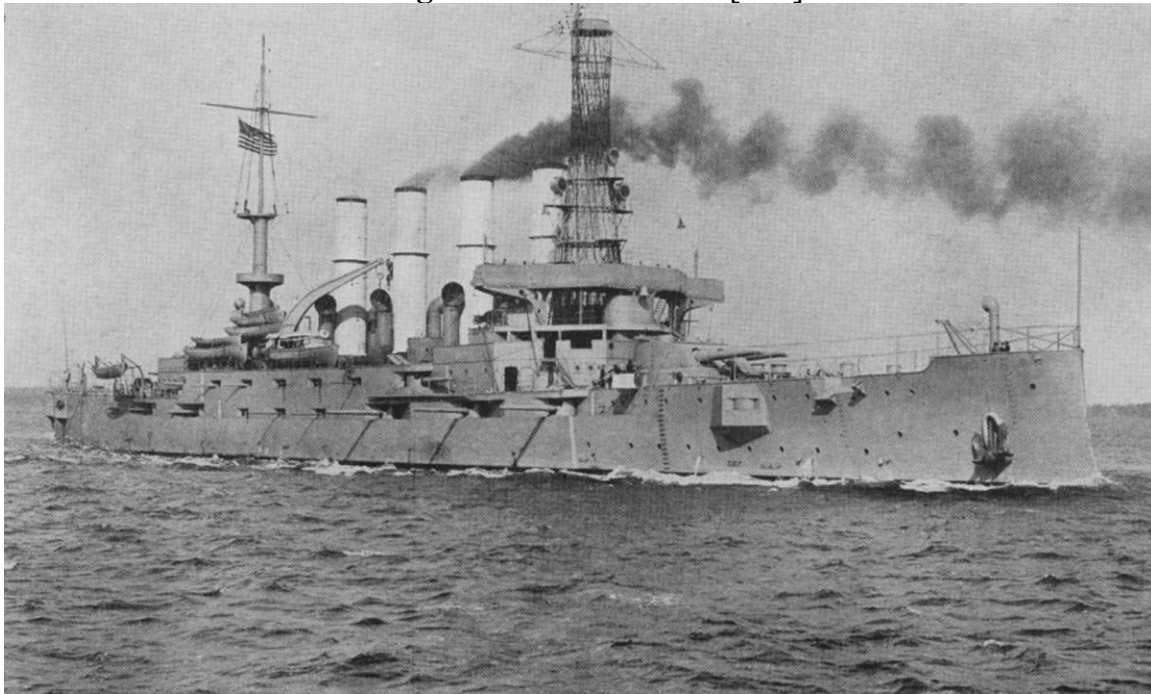
A copy of this memorandum of information will be furnished to each officer and enlisted man separated from service in The United States Army.	
Information Relative to Compensation and Continuance of War Risk Insurance	
FURNISHED TO	
Mills Beuley	4250893
(Surname)	(Army serial No.)
WAR RISK INSURANCE.	
All correspondence relating to War Risk Insurance should be addressed to "Bureau of War Risk Insurance, Treasury Department, Washington, D. C.," and always contain the following information:	
Your first name, middle name, and last name, in full.	
Your grade and organization at time of discharge.	
Your Army serial number.	
The date of your discharge or separation from the service.	
Your present address.	
1. The United States will pay compensation for death or disability resulting from injury suffered or disease contracted in the line of duty by an officer or enlisted man when employed in active service, except where injury or disease has been caused by his own willful misconduct. Furthermore, dismissal or dishonorable discharge from the service terminates all rights to any compensation.	
2. In case a man should discover after and within one year after separation from the service that he has sustained an injury or contracted disease in the line of duty when employed in active service which may result in death or disability, but which did not disable him and of which he had no knowledge at the time of separation from the service, he should communicate the fact immediately to the Compensation Section of the Bureau of War Risk Insurance, giving his full name, Army serial number if an enlisted man, rank or grade, and organization; the date of his discharge or separation from the service; and, if possible, the date of his injury or disability. He should at the same time request to be furnished a certificate to the fact that at the time of his separation from the service he was suffering from a wound, injury, or disease which is likely to result in death or disability. This certificate must be obtained within one year from the date of separation from the service, and in order to obtain it the man must submit to a medical examination by a physician designated by the Bureau of War Risk Insurance.	
3. No compensation shall be payable for death or disability which does not occur prior to or within one year from date of separation from the service.	
4. No compensation is payable for disability unless claim is filed within five years after the date of separation from the service.	
5. In order to procure compensation for disability the claimant shall submit to examination by a medical officer of the United States. If he refuses to submit to such examination, his right to compensation ceases.	
6. Compensation is entirely separate and distinct from War Risk Insurance and should not be confused therewith.	
1. If you desire to continue your War Risk Insurance it will be necessary for you to make payments of the monthly premiums directly to the Disbursing Clerk, Bureau of War Risk Insurance, Treasury Department, Washington, D. C. Check or money order should be made payable to the Treasurer of the United States.	
2. Your premium on \$10,000 insurance will be \$6.76 per month until July 1, 1919, after which date it will be as follows:	
From July 1, 1919, to July 1, 1920, \$6.80 per month.	
From July 1, 1920, to July 1, 1921, \$6.80 per month.	
From July 1, 1921, to July 1, 1922, \$6.80 per month.	
From July 1, 1922, to July 1, 1923, \$7.00 per month.	
From July 1, 1923, to July 1, 1924, \$7.10 per month.	
3. Should your address or that of a beneficiary change at any time you should advise the Bureau of War Risk Insurance, Treasury Department, Washington, D. C., immediately.	
4. Within five years after the termination of the war, as declared by proclamation of the President, you must apply to the Bureau of War Risk Insurance, Treasury Department, Washington, D. C., for the conversion of your present policy into some other form of insurance. Your present policy will lapse unless converted within that time.	
5. You may change your beneficiary at any time provided the new beneficiary is within the permitted class. Those who may be designated are: A spouse, child, grandchild, parent, brother, or sister.	
[OVER]	
03-6025	

COMPENSATION.	
All correspondence relating to compensation should be addressed to "Compensation Section, Bureau of War Risk Insurance, Treasury Department, Washington, D. C.," and always contain the following information:	
Your first name, middle name, and last name, in full.	
Your grade and organization at time of discharge.	
Your Army serial number.	
The date of your discharge or separation from the service.	
Your present address.	
1. The United States will pay compensation for death or disability resulting from injury suffered or disease contracted in the line of duty by an officer or enlisted man when employed in active service, except where injury or disease has been caused by his own willful misconduct. Furthermore, dismissal or dishonorable discharge from the service terminates all rights to any compensation.	
2. In case a man should discover after and within one year after separation from the service that he has sustained an injury or contracted disease in the line of duty when employed in active service which may result in death or disability, but which did not disable him and of which he had no knowledge at the time of separation from the service, he should communicate the fact immediately to the Compensation Section of the Bureau of War Risk Insurance, giving his full name, Army serial number if an enlisted man, rank or grade, and organization; the date of his discharge or separation from the service; and, if possible, the date of his injury or disability. He should at the same time request to be furnished a certificate to the fact that at the time of his separation from the service he was suffering from a wound, injury, or disease which is likely to result in death or disability. This certificate must be obtained within one year from the date of separation from the service, and in order to obtain it the man must submit to a medical examination by a physician designated by the Bureau of War Risk Insurance.	
3. No compensation shall be payable for death or disability which does not occur prior to or within one year from date of separation from the service.	
4. No compensation is payable for disability unless claim is filed within five years after the date of separation from the service.	
5. In order to procure compensation for disability the claimant shall submit to examination by a medical officer of the United States. If he refuses to submit to such examination, his right to compensation ceases.	
6. Compensation is entirely separate and distinct from War Risk Insurance and should not be confused therewith.	
Watt Stewart	
2nd. Lieut. 89th. Inf.	
Demob. Pers. Adj.	
Cas. Det.	
Commanding	
9t Ogleshaup 4a	
(Place)	
FEB 8 1919	
(Date)	
03-6025	

June 25, 1919

Lonnie Dan Holt departed from Brest France aboard the *U.S.S. Seattle*. He and the other soldiers from the 61st Guards Co., A.S.C. were attached to Le Mans Casual Company #1265. Casual Companies were temporary administrative units used by the military for personnel being discharged, awaiting assignment, or for other reasons why they might not be assigned to a permanent unit. [271] The *U.S.S. Seattle* was a Tennessee-class Armored Cruiser originally named the *U.S.S. Washington* when it was launched in 1903. After the Armistice on November 11, the ship had been fitted with extra accommodations to enable her to function as a troop transport with this cruise being the ship's last transport of troops before being reassigned to other duties. [272]

Image #28: U.S.S. Seattle [273]



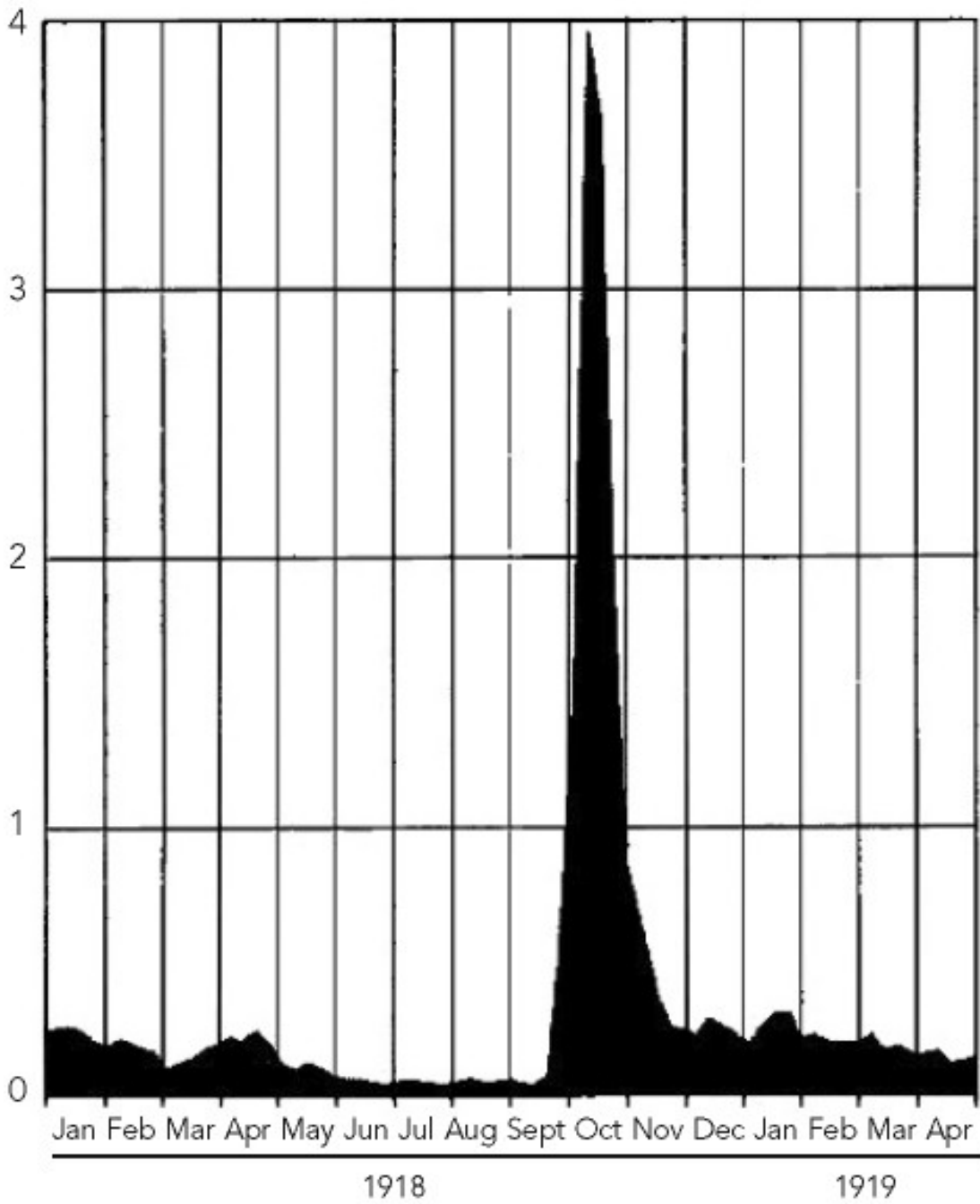
July 4, 1919

Lonnie Holt arrived at Hoboken, NJ and was transported to Camp Merritt, NJ. [274] He was shortly afterwards discharged from military service.

Final Note

From July 1917 to June 1919, the A.E.F. reported a total of 78,555 deaths with 18,855 or 24% of those deaths being attributed to either pneumonia or influenza. [275] The sheer impact that influenza had amongst the troops during the war is dramatically visualized in the graph seen in image #29.

Image #29: Deaths Per 1000 Soldiers Each Week 1918-1919 in U.S. Army [276]



Souvenirs From France

Image #30: Flower embroidered French Postcard [277]



A postcard with a cloth insert embroidered with flowers purchased by B.D Mills in France and addressed to Ethel, but never mailed. Images #32 and #34 are handkerchiefs bought by B.D. as gifts for Ethel.

Image #31: Handkerchief with Flower Print [278]



Image 32: Closeup of Handkerchief's Edge Flower Pattern



Image 33: "Souvenir de France" Embroidered Handkerchief [279]



Image #34: Close up of embroidered Cross of Lorraine & "Souvenir de France"



Image #35: "Nouvelle Carte De France" (New Map of France) [280]



Image #36: Close up of "Nouvelle Carte De France" (New Map of France) legend



This 85.6 cm x 103.6 cm (33 11/16 in x 40 25/32 in) road map for motorists and cyclists was printed circa 1912-1918 and was purchased in France by Lonnie Holt.

Epilogue

Due to incomplete records, the actual death toll related to the Spanish Flu amongst the soldiers of the 57th Pioneer Infantry cannot be exactly determined. Records from the 1st Regiment Vermont National Guard show that 23 of its soldiers were listed as members of the 57th Pioneer Infantry at the time of their deaths from disease between October 5-15, 1918. American Legion records indicate that 249 men from Tennessee died as members of the 57th Pioneer Infantry, cause and dates not given. Considering that this regiment never served in battle, but suffered the single largest death toll amongst any of the Tennessee associated organizations, this emphasizes the toll caused by the Spanish Flu. The American Battle Monuments Commission responsible for maintaining overseas military cemeteries has records showing that 58 members of the Pioneer Infantry remain buried in France. No records were kept on the number of soldiers later returned to the U.S. for internment at the request of their families. The tally of deaths onboard the Leviathan and those later in hospitals totaled more than 254 soldiers. Three of those who died were men from Gibson County, Tennessee and were soldiers in Co. "C", 57th Pioneer infantry along with B.D. Mills and Lonnie Holt and had also been amongst the 54 men who entrained at Trenton on September 5, 1918.

Lonnie Holt and B.D. Mills returned to Gibson County and married the daughters of Thomas Hale and Sarah Elizabeth West Fly. Lonnie married Martha Elizabeth Fly on January 17, 1920 and returned to farming while supplementing his income with stints as a school teacher and as a rural mail carrier in Gibson County, a job he was able to keep during the Great Depression. He was able to secure this job with the postal service due to his status as a veteran and his experience with military mail service, with the influence of his Uncle Andrew David Holt, Postmaster at Milan probably not hurting either. He weathered the turmoil of the years of the great Depression and went on to become a successful farmer. He would lead a full and productive life as the father of seven children, one of whom was my father, Bevely Dan Holt, named in part after Bevely David Mills.

Unlike Lonnie's postwar experience, B.D. Mills's life after the war was more poignant. B.D. Mills married Annie Ethel Fly on July 12, 1919 at her father's home, but their joy was tempered by the fact that upon his return from the war, B.D. was in poor health. He was able to farm his crops during the summer of 1919, but was unable to complete a full work day and could only finish his crop with the assistance of hired help. Realizing that he was incapable of doing any kind of farm work, he enrolled during the spring of 1920 in the Sweeny Automobile School of St. Louis, Missouri to learn automobile repair work. After completion of his training, he opened a repair shop in partnership with his cousin, J.P. Repogle, but was unable to do any heavy work and came home in the evenings completely exhausted. He gave up the automobile repair work later that

September and during the winter of 1921, he tried a few hours of farm work, but any exertion would cause him to suffer from the rigors (severe chills) followed by a high fever. In February of 1921, he was examined at a Veterans Administration (VA) clinic at Jackson, TN and diagnosed with an advanced stage of pulmonary tuberculosis. After it was determined that his tuberculosis was service related, B.D. was sent in 1922 for treatment at a veteran's tuberculosis sanatorium located in Ocoee, North Carolina, but the severe damage he had suffered to his lungs was irreversible. He returned home to Gibson County, but was never able to gainfully work again with Ethel supporting the family through her work as an elementary school teacher. B.D. and Ethel would have one daughter, Sarah Frances, but she died on the same day she was born on April, 8, 1921. B.D. died from tuberculosis at home on August 21, 1924 at the age of 33.

While B.D. Mills was in the Army, he had carried a War Risk Life Insurance policy for a face amount of \$10,000, with himself named as beneficiary. After his discharge, he had let the policy lapse for nonpayment of premiums, as he could not afford the premiums on his and Ethel's limited incomes. After his death, his parents filed a claim for benefits under the policy, basing their claim on the fact that B.D.'s death has been service related. The VA denied his parent's claim, contending that he had acquired his tuberculosis after his discharge from the Army, so there was no payment due under the terms of the policy. His parents and Ethel then jointly filed a lawsuit against the VA and won a judgment in their favor in Federal Court at Jackson, Tennessee based on the fact that his tuberculosis had been determined to be service related. The VA subsequently appealed this judgment to the 6th District Court of Appeals in Cincinnati, Ohio and had the earlier judgment overturned based on technicalities, but not on the merit of the lawsuit. As the beneficiary of his own life insurance policy, only B.D.'s heirs could make a claim for any insurance policy benefits. Since B.D. was married at the time of his death, his parents were therefore no longer considered his legal heirs, so they had no legal basis for making the original claim. As his widow, Ethel was B.D.'s sole heir and administratrix of his estate, but despite being a party to the lawsuit against the VA, she had never filed an actual claim against the policy during the time frame allowed to make such claims against the policy. Ethel would continue to file multiple administrative appeals within the VA system in an attempt to receive the benefits of that policy up to at least 1943, even enlisting the assistance the American Legion's Ex-service Man's Bureau, but all to no avail. While Ethel Fly Mills never remarried and always mourned her beloved B.D., she became a much loved surrogate mother and grandmother to the children and grandchildren of her sister, Martha "Mattie" Fly Holt.

A review of B.D. Mills' medical case history shows that he had not fully recuperated from the effects of typhoid fever by the time he was drafted into the Army and sent to Camp Wadsworth. His already taxed immune system was further pummeled by his exposure to the Spanish Flu virus, but despite suffering from influenza, he did not succumb to its fatal respiratory syndrome nor the

secondary pneumonia that killed so many of the flu victims. Unfortunately, B.D. was exposed to the wet and cold weather conditions of France and combined with his already debilitated physical condition, this made him susceptible to infection from tuberculosis, the disease that ultimately killed him.

Many veterans of World War 1 came home from the war reluctant to talk about their wartime experiences and Lonnie Holt apparently shared that sentiment. Besides what Lonnie had commented on regarding his marksmanship during training and being seasick on the voyage to France there are two stories of which I am aware of, one of which Lonnie actually typed up himself.

WOODLAND FARMS

L. D. HOLT, OPERATOR
BOX 387 - - PHONE 284
MILAN, TENN.

During world-war I, it was common practice with the A.E.F. in France to billet, or house, army personnel in what ever shelter was available. This included everything from pup-tent to chauteau. My story is-We were assigned to to the second floor of a barn building. Entrance was gained by climbing an outside ladder to a small door in the gable. On reaching this door the first thing that attracted my attention was a hole which in the floor which evidently had been made by some men falling through the floor. We were quartered here several days. Each time I entered or left this building I would think "Well, Here is where some soldier has fallen through the floor".

After returning home from the war I met up with a boyhood friend who was still proudly wearing his uniform. On his blouse was a chevron which proclaimed that he had been wounded in the "Armed Services of His Country". This aroused my interest. I inquired what engagements he was in and the extent of his wounds. He hesitated to discuss the matter. Through curiosity I pressed my questions. Finally he told me "Well, It was like this. I was staying in one of them darn French barns. I fell through the floor and broke my arm." On further questioning I found that several months later and four thousand miles from home I had been stepping over the very hole that my friend had made. Just to think "A slip of the foot and I too might be wearing this distinctive decoration of meritorious service to my Country.

Lonnie D. Holt, Milan, Tennessee.

This story was typed on Woodland Farms letterhead paper and by the three digit telephone number, dates its typing to sometime during the early to mid-1950's. Lonnie Holt submitted this story to *Reader's Digest Magazine* in an unsuccessful attempt to have the magazine reproduce it in their "Humor in Uniform" column.

The other story also involved a barn (unsure if it was the same or different barn from the 1st story), which was recalled by his son David Harrison Holt: "*The winter weather in France was very poor, being cold and rainy. Although he was*

billeted in a farmer's barn, it was still cold and wet. The soldiers discovered that the farmer had stashed potatoes in their barn and with Army fare being limited, they took advantage of the situation and made a fire and cooked the potatoes. Army policy at that time was to not take food from the local civilian population, so Danda and the other soldiers were subsequently arrested and placed in the brig. The soldiers found themselves in a warm and dry brig, while their guards were having to stand watch outside in the cold and rain. The arrested soldiers ribbed the guards so much about this situation, that they finally just let them out."

While Lonnie was spared the horrors of combat in the trenches of France and only had to tolerate miserable living conditions as a soldier while there in France, his reluctance to talk about his Army experience was no doubt influenced by the nightmarish events both he and B.D. Mills experienced aboard the *U.S.S. Leviathan*. Lonnie and B.D. both survived the war, but B.D. died a casualty of the war none the less.

END

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