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LUTHER LUCKETT IS STILL IN FRANCE

A Former Reporter on the Sedalia
Capital Writes to Father,
Supt. T. R. Lockett.

BROTHER GILMORE ALSO U. S. A.

Luther Says He Expects to Be Out of
the Army By Next Spring—An-
other Soldier Writes to
Mother Here.

Luther J. Lockett, son of County Superintendent of Schools Thomas H. Lockett and who was formerly a reporter on the Sedalia Capital, now in the U. S. A. in France, writes the following excellent letter to his father, and a host of friends will read it with interest:

A. P. O. 761. Nov. 24, 1918.

Dear Dad and All:

Well, dad, they are giving us a chance to write a real letter today—Dad's Xmas Victory letter—and needless to say I am mightily pleased to have that chance.

To begin with, Merry Xmas to all of you. I wish Gilmore and I could be with you, but will be satisfied if we can see you in a couple of months, by the first of March—and I think we will. I expect to get out of the army by next spring—in fact, in time to get in on the big spring advertising drive. Of course, this is only my personal opinion but it is shared by practically all of the fellows over here.

I hope all of you have a fine Merry Xmas and that the New Year brings new happiness and prosperity to all of you.

As to what I am doing and where I have been, etc., I can tell you a great deal better than I can write, especially when my letters are liable to be censored.

We crossed the English Channel from Southampton to Cherbourg, France, on July 18 and then traveled in box cars across France for two days and one night and landed at Prozeaux la Fauche, where we trained until August 4th. Box car travel in France is far from the most delightful of experiences, as they use those dinky little narrow gauge box cars marked 42 Hommes, 8 Cheveaux (42 men or eight horses capacity) and that 42 men included packs and all.

Well, we lived on hard tack and corn wittle and not too much of that, as we had just landed from England where we marched to and from various "rest camps" (usually about five or six miles from a station, and we marched with full equipment, and about all they rested was a fellow's stomach) we were like a pack of hungry wolves for a week or two. Even hot corn wittle and coffee fasted mightly good for a while.

We trained pretty hard there, then went to Rangval and had an advance station at Raule Court, about a mile from Mont Sec. In the St. Mihiel sector near Toul. Things weren't very snappy there, but we heard occasional shells whine, saw a few airplane battles, a few balloons, burned and learned the sound of a Klaxon horn (which they use for the gas alarm).

We set up an ambulance dressing station at Bouillonville while the lines were just up on the hills above us and about three-quarters of a mile away.

I was working at the dressing station there and some of our ambulances were at the front. We were right close to Thiarcourt.

It was while I was at Bouillonville that I saw Gilmore. His battery was about half a mile from us. Artillery was all around us there.

From there we moved to Essey and established another dressing station. There we lived in old wine cellars, as it wasn't always healthy on top of the ground. Our division was then relieved and for one day we saw villages and towns that weren't in ruins. You have no idea how good they looked to us.

Then we came up near Mont Fancou and there we did excavation work working between the field and the hospitals. While located there Heinie got our range and shot up part of the hospital and made us hike for holes in the ground pretty often. The hospital moved, but we had a pretty good place and stayed there. When we heard a shell coming we would fall flat on the ground, and usually the next shell found us in the trench. There we had our first experience with air bombs. Luckily, none of us were injured there. At Bouillonville we had eight casualties, two killed and six wounded, and that was all we had. Near Mont Fancou I was put

on motors and then in a few days we were assigned to front line work.

I saw some pretty snappy action at both Beaufort and Beaulair after we made our last advance and had mud and rocks thrown all over the car at Beaulair by exploding Heinie shells. We established our base at Harriecourt and I was there when the armistice went into effect.

At present I am in Lunauville, on the Meuse river, right across from Stenay. We are moving toward Germany tomorrow following the German army.

The Eighty-ninth has made a name for itself over here, hasn't it? I'm glad to belong to it now.

Now then for a few incidentals. I have had cooties—in fact, still have them. I wish I could send a few to some slackers back in the states—'nuff said.

As for the shells, there are three kinds, incoming, outgoing and "duds." Incoming (if they are close) ring "Nearer My God to Thee" and a fellow hits the dirt if he hears them. Outgoing we called "Pershing's Peace Notes" and "duds" are shells that come in and fail to explode. We always cheered for that kind. Yes, and then there are gas as whiz-bangs. Gas shells wobble through the air and don't make much of a noise when they go off and "Whiz-bangs" are shells that sound "whiz-bang" (say them together and as fast as you can.) They are usually powder. Gas was the least of our worries. High explosive was the worst.

Well, dad, I think that's about all. I hope to see you soon and tell you the rest.

Lots of love to all. I'm feeling fine and hope all of you are. I haven't heard from Gilmore for a long time but have written him lately. Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year.

Lovingly, Pvt. L. J. LUCKETT,
Amb. Co. 355, 314 San Tr., A. E. F.