



Historic Bakersfield & Kern County, California

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Bakersfield Boys in France, 1918

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The letter below appeared in the January 9, 1918 Bakersfield Californian. It was written by Frederick Q. Tredway, 25, who was raised in Bakersfield and graduated about 1910 from Kern County Union High School. Details in the letter show an interesting, personal view of the conflict.

Between 1919 and 1921 Tredway was City Editor of the Bakersfield Californian, but he spent the rest of his career as a publicist for the Southern Pacific Railroad. A review Tredway's life appeared in the September 22, 1960 Bakersfield Californian.

With Our Soldiers and Sailors

TREDWAY PRIVILEGED TO USE BLUE ENVELOPE

Fred Tredway has written home a most interesting letter. It was mailed in a blue envelope, which is significant of the fact that he had been privileged to write with an unrestrained pen. In so far as his immediate officers were concerned, a letter enclosed in a blue envelope is sent to the base censor for censorship; thus the boys feel free to express sentiments which they would not do if their own officers were to read the letters.

Taking extracts from some of the less intimate portions of this letter, Tredway writes: "I am now a supply sergeant for my own company and also an acting first sergeant for a camp of men about a mile from the main camp, so my hands are full.

The truck drivers, of which Roland Curran is one, go all over France—to Paris, to the front, and even to the coast. It is a good job. Some of the drivers get sergeant's pay, and all are due corporal's pay, with corporal rating. They have hardly any responsibility or any worries. I, on the other hand, have worked harder and have worried more during the past five months than I ever did in any work in civilian life. I understand that I have been recommended for a first-class sergeantcy—that is as high as any noncommissioned officer in the squadron as yet—but I don't know whether it will be O.K.'d by the higher powers.

"News from the front seems to be very good, doesn't it? I think you receive more and better news than we do here. That is, more authentic. Of course, you hear more rumors, too, that have no foundation. The nearer one gets to the front, the less real news one gets. That's not saying that I am anywhere near the front. I am as safe here as I would be in Bakersfield. It looks as though I am going through this war and never hear a gun fired. Some real news—see past? Three other men and I in our tent have been amusing ourselves for the past few nights figuring out how long the war will last and what we will do when we strike the good old U. S. It will be great to get home. Food fixed in a civilized way—dainty things, and real home stuff. We are getting good eats, so it isn't so much the food I am hungry for, although Heaven only knows I could go through some chicken, ham and eggs, good old roast with real gravy, berries or other fruit, and creamed, served in nothing flat; but it is the linen, the nice silver and glass, etc., that I miss. In fact, I'm hungry for them.

"I am going to make an effort to obtain a leave in the near future. Don't know whether I shall be able to get it, and don't know where I shall be able to go. I shall hit Paris if there is any possible way. You know Paris is closed to American troops. The ban was lifted for awhile, but has been put on again, I understand. It would be hard lines to come to France and spend all the time in some little place where the biggest buildings are the barns. However, it is said that one manages to get to Paris somehow, sooner or later. I suppose I have all sorts of friends and acquaintances in Paris at this minute, but there is no way to find out just where they are. They might be six miles away and I not know it, for the censorship regulations are in vogue between points in France, as well as between France and the U. S.

"I have had no chance to practice speaking French, but I intend to work hard on my French in odd moments, and if I ever do get where I can 'parley' with the inhabitants, it will undoubtedly come in to good advantage.

"One catches here a glimpse of the big things going on. Many troop

Sergt. H. La Mar Former Fellows Man



Sergeant H. La Mar of Fellows is shown here. He is the son of Mrs. H. O. Scuttenhelm of Taft and is well known on the West Side. Sergeant La Mar entered the service on October 5, 1917, and is with the Three Hundred and Sixty-fourth regiment, Ninety-first division. There was once a little boy who ran

LOU VANCE HOME ON 30-DAY FURLOUGH

Lou Vance, who is with the heavy artillery at Camp Kearny, is in Tebachiapi on 30 days' furlough. He will look after some business matters while at home. The bronchos that are used to haul the heavy guns into place are a source of amusement to Lou, as he watches the tenderfeet try to control them.

LETTER FROM OLDHAM RELIEVES HIS FRIENDS

Claud Oldham writes home saying that he is well and happy and is getting along nicely. Some time has elapsed since any word has been received from Oldham and his friends were worried lest something had happened to him.

IS ON A SUBMARINE IN PACIFIC OCEAN

Harold Johnson is now on a submarine and is on his way across the Pacific ocean. After being stationed at the navy base at San Pedro for almost a year, this transfer comes as a great joy to John-

BERT GARDNER EXPECTS SOON TO GO OVERSEAS

Bert Gardner writes that he expects to be put in quarantine any day preparatory for going overseas. He is stationed at the naval base in San Diego.

big things going on. Many troop trains loaded with Yanks pass through. At times great long truck trains, wagon trains and foot troops go through. A steady stream for half a day, sometimes. The United States is surely doing things over here, and I think the Yanks are showing the English and French a thing or two.

"It has been raining all day, off and on, and the earth here seems to make a mud of the texture and consistency of that in Waco, Texas. It sticks closer than a brother. I wonder, by the way, what kind of a honeymoon Bill Tupman and Alma had at Waco. They say, however, that they have greatly improved the Waco camp, so things are probably much different than when I was there.

"I saw in a Californian that was sent to Roy Newell that Egie Ashmun is coming over here with the Red Cross. I heard about Egie, also, through Miss Rachel Pinkerton, who has been over here for a long time with the Red Cross."

THE SOLDIER BOYS THANK THE RED CROSS

Walter I. Hull writes from France saying that if the American women could only know how much the boys appreciate the work of the Red Cross, these women would feel that their efforts really meant more than they realized, and that they were fully repaid for their work, for the Red Cross supplies the boys with the little necessities and comforts which it would be impossible for Uncle Sam to furnish. Without these knitted garments of the Red Cross, the boys would feel the cold even worse than they do. Hull is driving a truck, and is stationed in a little town in France, near the coast.

FORMER HIGH-SCHOOL PROFESSOR ENTERS ARMY

W. M. Mills, who will be remembered as a professor of chemistry at the Kern County High school, has signed up with an engineering corps and expects to leave shortly for France. Since leaving Bakersfield Professor Mills has been teaching in Los Angeles.

BARTON CAMPBELL IS MADE CORPORAL

Barton Campbell has been made a corporal. He has been here in Bakersfield on a furlough for a few days. For the last five months he has been stationed at Camp Kearny.

RETURNS TO CAMP

Erie Williams has returned to his company at the naval base after a furlough of several days at the home of relatives in the Old River District.