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NEWSY TIDINGS FROM OUR BOYS

Sergeant McCready Biddle, son of Mr. and Mrs. Able Biddle, of Crumpton, returned to the home of his parents, minus the second finger on his right hand on Monday. Sergeant Biddle lost his finger last fall, when in battle. His own rifle exploded taking away the member. He frequently wrote his parents, with his left hand, stating that his right hand was in bad shape, but not until he reached home last Monday did they learn the extent of the injury. Sergeant Biddle went to France with the 313th Infantry last July.

A Welcome Home reception to the returned soldiers and Red Cross nurses of Betterton was given at the school house on Tuesday evening by the Epworth League of the Betterton M. E. Church. About two hundred and fifty people were present. The room was decorated with American, French and English flags, the Service, Red Cross and Liberty Loan banners, cut flowers and plants. Seats were reserved for the families of all of the boys in the service and for men in uniform. Seated on the platform were the guests of honor: Scott Stokes, Carvel Warram, Howard Brice and Wm. Owens and Miss Carrie Karas. The following program was rendered: instrumental music, Mrs. Charles Brice; Star Spangled Banner; prayer, Rev. A. W. Goodhand; solo and chorus, Mrs. Shallcross, address, Mrs. Harvey Moore, president of Epworth League; chorus, "Home Again;" address, Rev. A. W. Goodhand; song, Red, White and Blue; address, Dr. S. S. Hepburn; duet, Misses Myrtle Pinder and Alta Price; remarks by soldiers and nurse; song, Maryland, My Maryland; address, Reese Young; song, America. A special tribute was paid to the gold stars in the service flag. After the program ice cream and cake were served to all present.

Messrs. Editors:

Thinking that the many relatives and friends that I have in Kent would wish to learn the fate of my loved nephew Edward Comegys who was reported missing last September, I write this letter hoping that you will give it a place in the News.

Before enlisting in the National Guard of the District of Columbia he was emplayed in the Copyright Division of the Library of Congress. He served on the Mexican border in 1916 and later resumed his work at the Library but soon resigned to attend the Officers' Training Camp at Fort Myer, Va.

Later volunteering for air service he was sent to the Royal Flying School at Toronto, Canada. He attended the University of Toronto and other camps in the Dominion after completing the course and receiving his commission as 1st Lieutenant he was sent to Fort Worth, Texas, where he served as instructor until ordered overseas in January, 1918. After a period of advance a training in England and France he was made a member of the 11th Aero Squadron.

After he was reported missing no further news came till Christmas morning the War Department sent a notice to his father stating that he had died in a prison camp November 4th. Later a letter came from France written by the Captain of the 11th Aero Squadron. The letter stated that on the 18th of September a bombing raid set out from the field at Amanty Meuse, France.

It was at the height of the Mihiel drive and the mission was most urgent. When near their objective they were attacked by fifteen Hun planes. They shot down five of our planes. Lieut. Comegys was one of those shot down and it was later learned that he and his observer, 2nd Lieut. Carter, were both killed. Last week Edward's parents received a letter written by the father of one of the young lieutenants lost in the same air raid. In the letter the father tells of the finding of the grave by another of his sons, Corporal Stephenson. For months the parents knew nothing of their sons fate, only that he was missing. Finally through some influence they had the War Department send the other son with an Army Officer to make a search.

After five days they located the grave. The battle took place near Conflans, Lorraine. The account was given by the French peasants who witnessed the battle.

The Squadron was attacked by a superior force and one by one the planes fell. Six of these boys were killed and others taken prisoner. Four fell close together and they were buried in one grave, side by side. The French said that three of these men including Lieut. Comegys, were killed instantly. Lieut Arthur R. Carter lived long enough to write his name on a scrap of paper which was found clutched in his hand. The French buried them; then did a beautiful thing. They took up a collection of 500 Francs in the nearby villages, with which to buy crosses for this grave and that of three French aviators who were killed the next day.

Corporal Stephenson said that the grave had been beautifully kept and some kind of a green vine planted upon it. Not having any flag the Major's wife had taken red and blue neckties of her husband and with white ribbon made the colors to ties on the wreaths.

Corporal Stephenson wrote his father that he had ordered a stone with the four names upon it, placed upon the grave. A photograph of the grave and a blue print of the stone has been sent to each family.

I was so touched when I read that account that my heart went out in deep gratitude to those poor people who had done such a kind and loving act for the brave American boys. Then I recalled the fact that I had in my trunk a new $5 bill sent to me by Edward at Christmas, 1917, and I said mentally "The proper thing to do with that precious note which I have valued as a keep sake will be to send it to France. So, although I had never gone out in the street since the painful accident I met with some time ago, I determined to go up to the office of the committee in charge of the "Fund for Devastated France" and leaning upon the arm of a friend who kindly accompanied me, I entered the headquarters at 916 North Charles street. Mr. Williams, the gentleman whom I wished to see was not there. I found him at his office in the Fidelity Building, and gave him that precious note which had rested in my trunk for more than two years. It had never been taken from the envelope in which it came, until the day I gave it to Mr. Williams.

INDIANA M. COMEGYS.

Baltimore, April 22nd, 1919.

The following letter is from Clarence Parsons to his uncle, Henry K. Miller:

Villotte Meuse, France, Mar. 26, 1919.

Dear Uncle Henry:

Just a line to let you know I am well and still getting along nicely. It wont be long now before I can tell you all the news and of my adventures and experiences by word of mouth because my Division is scheduled to return to the States in June. I think the last letter I wrote you was in Lavallel. We have been in this town now about three weeks and I understand we are again to move soon. It has been ever thus since we have been over here. We hardly get settled before orders come to move. But such is life in the army and we are used to almost any circumstances which are apt to come up. I hardly think I need to describe this town to you as my previous description of these French hamlets holds good as they are all the same. Just a group of stone buildings nestling about a church. This church is always present as every little village has its house of worship no matter how small.

Well, Uncle Henry, there are some mighty pretty women over here especially these of the rural districts of France. We read about the beautiful butterflies of Paris and other cities and they certainly are dandy and stunning, but here the girls have nice, natural, rosy cheeks and buxam figures. They all wear wooden shoes and these make them look crude and somewhat clumsy but when they are dolled up for Sunday they sure look good to me.

The weather is getting a little warmer and it seems that spring is here but the rain does not let up. There is hardly a day passes that it don't rain and it has done so for the last few months. There wasn't very much snow and ice during the winter but just rain and wind. However, during the summer they get hardly any rain at all, and as summer is almost here I suppose we can expect the rain to let up. Well I must close for this time. Give my best regards to all and tell them I shall soon be with you all again. Yours as ever,

CLARENCE.

Maxwell Blakeney writes to his friend, Wm. S. Moffett from Recey-Sur-Ource, Cote 'd Or, France, Mar. 25, 1919, as follows:

Dear Simon:

Just a few lines to say I am still in this land with no prospects of leaving, latest reports are we will soon start for Germany (some luck). I guess by the time you receive this you will be started on your work at Tolchester, old boy, you have no idea how I have missed my rides on whirl pool dip, but am still living in hopes of getting back sometime.

I didn't hardly think when I left you last July that I would be in France in August, but after I got back they seemed to hurry things up a little, at any rate we made good time.

Simon I would like to have you over here to see some of the sights, but wouldn't like to think you had to stay am afraid you would'nt like it. I have charge of 20 Packard trucks now, and believe me am pretty busy, had a fleet of heavy aviation trucks before I got these, but they were comparatively new, not quite so much work, but these I think must have seen service at the front and are pretty well worn, but I manage to keep them on the move. They have to be good to stand this mountainous country. How is the little Ford making out? If I ever do get home and work on them again they will seem like babies, I guess, but would rather have them than these brutes. If I start all 20 of these at once they sound like artillery.

Write real soon and tell me some news, I haven't heard from you lately. Best regards to wife and family and all inquiring friends.

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Mammoth Shows Are Now Combined And Announce Exhibitions At Early Date.

The world's biggest amusement institution, Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Shows Combined, is to exhibit afternoon and night at Baltimore, Wednesday and Thursday, May 14 and 15.

The consolidation of the "World's Greatest Shows" and the "Greatest Show on Earth" in one circus of colossal size, constitutes the amusement surprise of the country. Nothing to approach this gigantic, new circus has ever before toured America. It has been formed by merging the pick and the cream of all that was biggest and best in the two famous shows. It would be folly to attempt to enumerate its many wonders. Some idea of the enormous scale upon which features are presented may be had when it is stated that a quarter of a million pounds of elephants take part in a single act. In other words—six times as many of the big-earned giants than have ever before been seen in one main-tent exhibition. All else to be seen is in proportion. The arenic performers. There are three hours of novelties and big sensational acts. The managerie is far and away the most colossal ever traveled. For instance—a herd of eight giraffes are exhibited in place of the two or three shown in the past. The great tournament which opens the main-tent program, is the most magnificent thing in pageantry yet produced in America. Hundreds upon hundreds of gorgeously costumed characters and beautiful horses take part in it. The morning street parade is the longest and most brilliant ever given anywhere. It is a stupendous, supercircus that baffles description. The circus will be in Wilmington, Friday, City.

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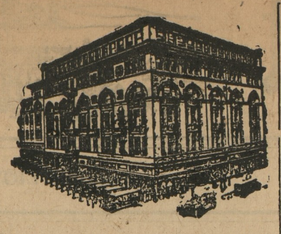

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