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Wesley F. Diedrich First World War Correspondence #41

Wesley F. Diedrich

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Dear Folks,

Just a few lines to let you know that I am well and still fighting the mud and dodging aviation shells. There has been a tremendous bombardment of the German positions for the last twenty-four hours. The personnel are pouring in by the thousands. The bombardment is so intense that the concussion of the exploding shells on the whole body makes a person sick to the stomach. We are living in dug-outs about thirty feet under the ground. They are rather damp, they are adequate protection from shells.
I saw a very exciting air battle today between one of our planes and a Jerry. It lasted for about twenty minutes and then they would camouflage a large blue headquarters for two between the leaves as I am very short of them.

I see by your letter that I love Rupp is enjoying himself, but it is much harder for him to break into army life if he is drafted. I am sure I would not want the stamp of a draftsman on me. For my part I think he is yellow and he would be in the service long before now. I am sure I would not be in civil life for the world during these times, even though my life is a hard one. Rupp plenty danger to give it a spice of excitement.

Yours,
Dear Folks:-

Just a few lines to let you know that I am well & still fighting the mud & dodging Fritz’s shells. There has been a tremendous bombardment of the German position for the last twenty four hours & the prisoners are pouring in by the thousands. The bombardment is so intense that the concussion of the exploding shells jars the whole body & makes a person sick to his stomach.

We are living in dug outs about thirty feet under the ground & though they are rather damp they are an adequate protection from shells.
In my last letter I asked you to send me some magazines. When you do I wish you would camouflage a large blue handkerchief or two between the leaves as I am very short of them.

I see by your letter that L. Kiep is enjoying himself, but it will be that much harder for him to break into army life if he is drafted & I am sure I would not want the stamp of a drafty on me. For my part I think he is yellow or he would be in the service long before now. I am sure I would not be in civil life for the world during these times, even though this life is a hard one & has plenty danger to give it a spice of excitement.
I saw a very exciting air battle today between one of our planes and a “Jerry.” It lasted for about twenty minutes & they were the two most skillful fliers I have ever seen. It ended in the german plane falling to the ground in flames. The American flier circled for a few times over him & then went off to attack some other german planes that were over the line.

Well folks as there is no further news, I will close with love

“Wes”