

11th November 1918

3 P.M.

Glory, Glory, Hallelujah!!! We haven't had the official news yet, but we're expecting it at any second for the 72 hours are up and there is a persistent rumor that the armistice is signed. Chaplain Gilbert passed a moment ago in a side car. He says they've had it officially at Contree-- An automobile has just dashed by, flying French and American flags--at St. Aignan they say there's to be a salute of every gun in France at 4 this afternoon. I guess its true this time although it seems incredible. Its just too big a thing to take in. Oh if only I could be in a dozen places at once. I wouldn't not be here for anything, but I would so love to be at home today, New York must be a sight! And Paris! And of wouldn't it be fun to be at the front. I imagine we're taking it more quietly here than almost anywhere. The non-fighting part of the army will get less thrilled than either the front liners or the non-combatants. We aren't a big enough crowd here, nor is St. Romain a big enough place, for much demonstration, yet we're too many for a really informal jollification.

I do wish the hut was up instead of just on the way. We're going to have a band concert tonight and I've thought of a way of getting around the rule against giving away things (I'll tell you later) so we'll have free chocolate, but the tent is so weeny that the band fills a third of it all by itself and we can't accommodate more than a couple of hundred besides, even counting those who listen through the windows.

Personally perhaps its just as well we can't get up more excitement. I'm dosing a headache on aspirin as it is, just from sheer excitement.

The one universal exclamation from the boys here at the suggestion of peace is always "Now we'll go home; toute suite". They are ready to fight for principle and they know pretty well what they're fighting for, but the instant the necessity ceases it isn't the triumph of principle thats in their minds its home. "The Statue of Liberty will have to turn her head if she ever wants to see me again, once I get back home" one boy said yesterday. "When I get back home" begins most sentences. "When I get back home, if supper isn't ready I'm not going to scold my wife, I'm just going to sit and wait, and if I don't get any supper I'm not going to care".

They don't begin to realize how long its going to take to get them there. I said today "Fellers, isn't there a difference between knowing you may get shot up, and knowing its only a question of time before you see your girl again, even though you stay right here for a while?" "I'll tell the world so" one man exclaimed, and the others all grinned agreement.

But its going to be a big problem how to keep them interested and contented until the last ship goes. Some job! And mostly up to the Y. For instance here, there is not a single place of amusement except the cafes and the Y. There must be thousands of camps and towns in just exactly that situation.

10:15 P.M. My word! such an evening! Such a day! At about four this afternoon I went to our Headquarters Office and they handed me the official communique - very short- "In accordance with the terms of the armistice hostilities ceased on the American front this morning at eleven o'clock" The eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month! Talk about lucky numbers!

There were a lot of officers gathered around and we had a little private joy, then I took the communique over to the tent. Ingham turned up quite unexpectedly at just that second and in two shakes of a lamb's tail we had the communique nailed to a board, raised high above the back of the counter, with the American, French and English flags hanging over it and place for two candles below. We kept it lighted all evening - like a shrine!