

THE SALVATION ARMY

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HUNTING SOUVENIRS IS GREAT SPORT AT FRONT

When times get quiet on the American front in France—and there are few times that this happens—the American officers and soldiers put in a few pleasant hours hunting souvenirs in the devastated districts, at the same time keeping out of sight of German airplanes.

In a letter received from Lieut. Thomas P. Walker by his mother, Mrs. F. H. Walker, who is visiting in Reno, souvenir hunting is described. This is the way Lieut. Walker tells about the sport:

"Sunday I dedicated the afternoon to correspondence, having worked all morning. Then came the major—'Walker, let's go to C—' (the town we recently captured) 'and get some souvenirs.' Well, now a fellow can't always do that, and seemingly he can write letters at any time.

"Well, we went—a long hike through devious paths that afforded woods or earth banks, or sunken roads so Fritz couldn't see us—and we were there—where? The most desolate, harrowing mass of plaster, timbers and shell holes a fellow ever could see. There's hardly a stick above the level of the ground, and to make the picture more complete there were still a dozen dead Boches yet unburied.

"We were searching dugouts for souvenirs, and the amount we took was governed only by our ability to carry back along that long, long trail. For my share I have the following: A rifle, in excellent condition, and enough ammunition to make a good hunting trip for us; a brand new belt with a brass buckle (an officer's), with "Gott Mit Uns" on it. These are considered souvenirs par excellence. With the belt go the cartridge cases, bayonet, trench knife and extra gas mask can. Then I brought an entrenching shovel, a flashlight, a few coat buttons, some lapels giving regiment numbers, a few letters and pictures, and that's about all. These came from one of their dugouts that the infantry hadn't found yet. The few troops up there have searched all those places pretty well.

"The souvenir I prize most is one I had to buy from a Frenchman. His brother had taken it during a recent counter-attack. It's a German telephone and buzzer (for telegraphing) combined, and is a marvelous piece of work for compactness and workmanship. I'm having it fixed up for my own personal use, because they are very, very scarce articles—something that Fritz usually contrives to destroy when capture seems imminent."

In another letter Lieut. Walker tells about an aerial battle that he witnessed while waiting for Gen. Pershing to arrive at the camp to inspect the troops. He says:

"While we waited this a. m. three Fritz flyers thought they would get gay and see what was happening. Soon three Frenchmen were after them, and there followed the most exciting and interesting scrap I have seen yet. Air scraps are heaps of fun. In five minutes two planes were falling at the same time, and a mighty cheer went up. One was falling close, too—the pursuer had quit—when we saw it was a French machine. He just flopped through the air in the most helpless sort of fashion, until he was close to the ground, then off he shot at a tremendous speed. A beautiful trick, no? It was sure beautiful to watch. And Fritz saw him recover, too, and down he came like a plummet. He got a few more shots in but gave up and went home. He was so close we could see him using his gun and all his maneuvers.

"The other that fell was a Boche. Went to see him later. His machine

had caught fire in the air and all I saw was a mass of burnt timbers, tangled iron and scorched flesh. It isn't a pleasant sight, yet those are the things that bring victory closer. We learned later that the third machine had been brought down after he started home, but we were so busy watching the other two we missed it. A three-ringed circus is too much."

July 9, 1918

Halls Everybody -

were supposed to be
resting. That's why you don't
hear from me - no time to
write when we rest. But foolish
aside we are taking it very
easy - and just now I am
billeted in a huge farm
house - have a wonderful
bed - plenty of milk - awful
good eats - Beauvais - a
good sized city close - and
very little to do. Can't
beat that program can
you - and so there are
no guns about. At first
the silence was oppressive
seemed strange but now
the quiet and content
are wonderful.

The roads are great
too - as smooth as glass -
and run thru some very

beautiful country. Believe me I'm
making the old motorcycle do its
bit. It's truly a great life -
but no one will be very sor-
ry when it's over, provided I've
done a good job of it.

Mail is very scarce - we
seem to get it in large chunks,
at widely separated times. But
when it comes - Oh my!! a
batch of mail is a wonderful
stimulant sure enough.

I'm wondering how you all are
fixed up now. There seemed
so much uncertainty about
what you would do that I never
did get it straight. I presume
tho. that you went to Trisco
till Bert has to leave - and
next to going to N.Y. that's
the best you can do. But I'm
anxious to know just how
every thing works out - I feel
certain that ~~everything~~ all will
move along as slick as lightning
but I want you to keep me
posted right up to the minute.
And isn't it great that

Mother is to "Mother" the boys
at Elko. They couldn't find a
better Mother in the ward -
and I guess they know it well.
It won't be hard for you either,
and some interesting wars. I'd
say -

I'm sorry about the pencil.
I haven't a pen yet - expect
one from Paris tomorrow. Have
to go any how - 'cause here's
the end of the paper -
Best love to you all and write soon.
Dom x x x