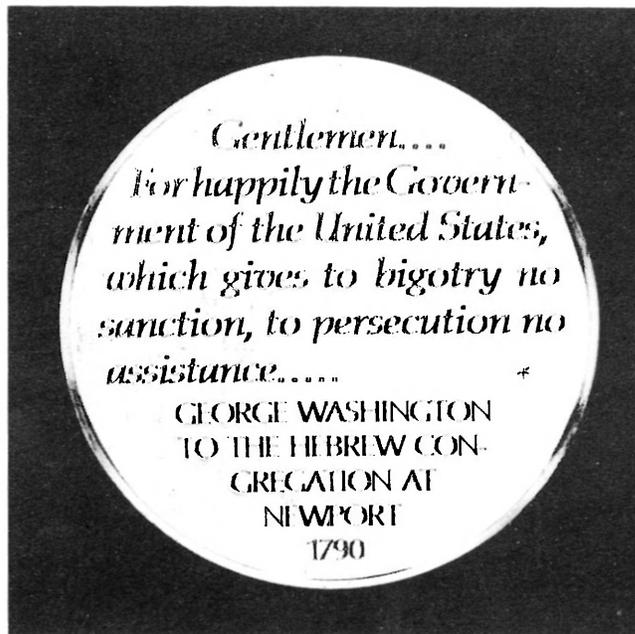


RHODE ISLAND
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VOLUME 6

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NUMBER 3



Reverse of the Touro Synagogue Medal
(See Front Cover)

FRONT COVER

Medal cast by The Franklin Mint for the Friends of Touro Synagogue National Historic Shrine Inc. of Newport, Rhode Island.

The medal is available to collectors in silver and bronze. A gold-plated presentation version has also been minted.

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MORE ON AARON LOPEZ

by SEEBERT J. GOLDOWSKY, M.D.

In his excellent biography "Lopez of Newport" Stanley F. Chyet describes the hoard of documents Aaron Lopez left behind, following his tragic and unexpected death, as an embarrassment of riches. Because of this wealth of documentation Lopez has been a favorite of historians. It is a phenomenon of history that the book is never closed. Through the alertness of Nathaniel Shipton, curator of manuscripts at the Rhode Island Historical Society, a series of letters and other papers relating to Lopez not previously catalogued have been brought to light. Yet, as often transpires when such a discovery is made, others like Kilroy of World War II were there before. These papers were not known to Chyet, or to Bruce Bigelow, who wrote a sketch of Lopez published in the *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes* of June 1956, or to Freda Egnal, who compiled the extensive "Bibliography of Materials Relating to the Jews of Rhode Island in Rhode Island Repositories", published in the November 1966 issue of these *Notes*. But some of them (possibly all) were known to Jacob Mark Jacobson, who in 1927 prepared for the American Jewish Historical Society an essay on "Jewish Merchants of Newport in Pre-Revolutionary Days." This was published more than thirty years posthumously in the *Notes* of November 1970. Jacobson identified five of these items (three papers and two account books) in the collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society and thirty letters in the then private Shepley Library, later taken over by the Rhode Island Historical Society. Yet 40 odd other items (whether or not he had in fact examined them) remain essentially new and lend a bit of excitement and a sense of discovery to this examination of the material.

While space does not permit a detailed analysis, one finds here and there an interesting or revealing glimpse of the past. The letters, all but one of which were written to Lopez, extend from August 1756, four years after his arrival in Newport, to April 26, 1782, only one month before his death in his fifty-second year. There is a hiatus from January of 1776 to February 1780, a period corresponding rather closely to that of the occupation of Newport, December 1776 to October 1779. There are extant of course Lopez papers covering his years in Boston and Leicester, Massachusetts, but chance and history have decreed that none would find their way into this collection.

The very first letter in the series, written on August 16, 1756 by

Henry Lloyd of Boston, acknowledges a shipment of 95 casks of spermaceti oil and comments on the great destruction and loss of life from the renowned earthquake in Lisbon, Portugal the previous year, which resulted in the widespread destruction of that city and a great flood in Setúbal.

The only letter in the hand of Aaron Lopez himself, dated January 17, 1760, was a brief communication to Joseph Bennet of Providence acknowledging the receipt of "Two Trunks of Goods", as he described them, and directing the shipment of another to his friend James Lucena—a rather inconsequential item in the sweep of history.

In a letter to Lopez dated June 16, 1760 Joseph & William Rotch of Nantucket advise of the shipment by sloop to Newport of 205 casks of head matter "one third on thy acct. & Two thirds on acct. of Collins & Rivera in very great haste the Vessel being just on sailing".

These early letters emphasize the importance of the products of the whale in the commerce of the time—spermacetic oil, a lubricant, and head matter, used in the manufacture of fine candles.

A very significant documentary fragment dated at Newport on September 10, 1761 reads: "they taking the Oaths of Allegiance, Supremacy and Abjuration and complying with the Rules usual in Such Cases", signed by Aaron Lopez and Isaac Elizer. This was an oath of loyalty to the King taken in the course of their application for naturalization. The application was denied by the court, ostensibly for political reasons and possibly because of prejudice. Lopez nevertheless was naturalized in Bristol County, Massachusetts in 1772 and Elizer in New York the following year.

The prose of occasional letters verged on the poetic, as did this one from Henry Cruger, Jr., his correspondent in Bristol, England: "The Wind seems tolerable fair, shall give Capt. Bowen his Dispatches in Order for him to go down this evening. he promised to sail by Break of Day tomorrow morning. heartily wish you a quick & happy Sight of him, which is all that I can recollect further to trouble you with, save to assure you I am with the most sincere Regard, Sir, your most Ob^t. Hble Serv^t."

Among the many business letters, invoices, and accounts is this revealing glimpse of skulduggery sent by his kin Abraham Lopez from Savanna la Mar, Jamaica (February 1, 1767): "Your Brigantine Charlotte arriv'd here on Wednesday Last from the Grenades [i.e. Granada

Islands] where the Captⁿ. has thought Proper to Remain & has detain'd the Freight Money & every thing else he could Lay his hands on & sent me the Empty Vessel by his Mate, Mr. Jonathan Wheeler; He was so great a Villain as to put up the Vessel there for Sale but his Mate prevented him from disposing of her by informing the Gentlemen there he was under some Apprehensions. Captⁿ. Brown from his Behaviour had no Intention of Accounting to his Owner for Either the Freight, Money or the Cargo, [or] the Vessel". The dastardly plot, however, was foiled.

His good friend and business associate Joshua Hart wrote to him from "Charles Town", South Carolina on March, 1770 concerning routine business matters. In the postscript he expressed: "My sincere wishes with those of my family to yourself & Kind Spouse & family", and added: "My kind love to Mr. Rivera, his Kind Spouse & Children & the Rest of his family . . . to the Widow & her Blessed Children. Mr. Abe M. Lopez, his worthy Spouse & Children, Mr. David Lopez, the Hasan,¹ & Please to Deliver the Inclosed Gidden² to him for Sepher Toras.³ The Reason of my not enlarging is on acct. of My Being hurried as I am sending My Brother home to holland. My love to the rest of yr. family." He surely touched all the bases.

Later, on August 30, 1770, Hart wrote: "Your esteemed favor of the 3^d July lays now before me, & note the Contents, particularly of the receival of the 11 Dollars, which being the Ball^{ce}. due to the Sedaka;⁴ & flatter myself that ere the ensuing Hollidays quite approaches that the Blessed Sinagogue is finished, & that every thing will be to your mutual Satisfactions. I am Sincerely glad to find you & your worthy family is in perfect health & permit me by via of my worthy & esteemed Friend Mr. Jacob Rivera to congratulate you on the safe delivery of your Dr. & worthy Spouse & that God by his Infinite Mercies may prolong your Days as to have the pleasure & Satisfaction of seeing her happy under the Hupah⁵ which is the Sincere Wishes of my Self my Wife, & Dr. Children." After conveying his best wishes to various members of the family and expressing the "hope that the Great God of Israel may write

¹Hebrew for Cantor. In this case Isaac Touro, who was also the spiritual leader of the synagogue.

²Hebrew for sinews, as used in stitching or repairing the parchment scrolls.

³Hebrew for the scrolls containing the Five Books of Moses (Pentateuch) written in Hebrew and kept in the Ark in front of the synagogue.

⁴Hebrew for "charity", literally "righteousness." Now more commonly translated "tzedakah." In the context of the letter it apparently means a pledge or fund.

⁵Marriage canopy, traditional at Jewish weddings.

you all in the Book of Life", he concludes: "I shall take it kind you'l kiss your Dr. Son Jacob for me as likewise y^r. Son Joshua; as likewise my best respects to Hasan Touro & that I wish him merry hollidays as likewise to all the Congregation. I strove to Ship your good Spouse a little of our country produce but our Committee would not admit of it."

Later, on March 10, 1775, in the shadow of war and occupation, Lopez again heard from his old friend Joshua Hart. Acknowledging a recent letter, he wrote that he was pleased to hear of "your worthy familys health, together with yours and theirs good wishes." He added: "please to return my respects to your brother Abraham and family, and please to signify to him that I shall wait until he can soply me with the annised water. I almost omitted wishing your good self and family a Chearfull Puriam⁶ with many Succeeding ones."

The last letter in the collection dated before the exodus from Newport and the occupation is written in archaic Portuguese by a scribe and signed in a beautiful hand by his friend and client, Jacob Samuel Jessurun of Surinam.* It appears to have a January 1776 date, very close to the time that Lopez left Newport. The last entry in his day book in Newport was in fact dated December 10, 1775.

Although the surrender of Yorktown would not occur for another year and a half, trading was resuming in earnest. The next letter following a hiatus of more than four years and dated February 19, 1780, is from his business correspondents Davis & Benson of Boston: "We have now the Pleasure to Inform You that we are this Day advised by express from Chatham of the safe arrival of the Snow⁷ Happy Return at that Place in 37 Days from the Cape. Cap^t. Davis writes us that his Cargo Consists of Mollasses, Sugar Brown & Powdered (best Quality) & Rum. The Snow sustained some Damage in going into the harbour, the carpenters are Employed in repairing her. Shall Expect her round this Port the first favourable wind. Permit us to Congratulate you On this Pleasing Event & to subscribe ourselves with Sentiments of Our Esteem. . . ." In a postscript he adds: "The Cap^t. & his Crew have suffered much on this Coast being forced by Contrary Winds three Times from [Lati^d. 41 to 38"—i.e. driven back all the way from Montauk Point, Long Island to Chesapeake Bay. The significance of this letter, of course, lies in its indication of the beginning of the renewal of the great mercantile career of Aaron Lopez.

⁶Purim, the Feast of Lots.

⁷A type of sailing vessel.

*See Appendix for text of this letter in modern Portuguese and English.

It is of further interest that the enterprise appears to represent a revival of the triangular trade, as the Cape referred to most likely is Cape Coast on the African Gold Coast, home of the famed Ashanti slaves.

It would be appropriate here to digress in order to take note of the one ship's log book in this collection. While the book is not large, it contains the records of five different vessels sailing under the ownership of Lopez and Rivera on eight separate voyages all under Captain Nathaniel Briggs as master. Three logs involved trading in the West Indies, while the remainder recorded voyages in the triangular slave trade. A typical voyage was that of the Brig Cleopatra lasting more than ten months from July 11, 1771 to May 20, 1772. The first entry, that of July 11, noted: "At Six in the Morning wayed anker and came to Sail from Rhode Island Bound for the Coast of Afraca in the Good Ship Cleopatra, Nath^l. Briggs Master. winds at N.E. at 11 AM Block Island Bore west. Dist. 3 Leag." She sailed south and east, arriving off the Gold Coast on September 19, 1771. She tarried there for four months, presumably selling her cargo, including of course rum, and purchasing a new one. At long last, an entry for January 18, 1772 reads: "At 11 AM wayed anker and came to Sail with the wind of[f] the Land Bound to the west Engis [Indies] in the Good Ship Cleopatra, N. Briggs Master with one hundred & Sixty Seven Slaves on Bord Sum of which is sick in the measesels. [measles]." We can imagine how the miserable living cargo suffered below deck when on January 27 the ship encountered a "hard Squal winds & Rain". The log on March 11 contains this laconic entry: "fine pleasant Breeses, clear Weather. at 3 A.M. lost antoney frenkling over Bord & drowned." On the same day she arrived at Barbados, where it can be presumed she off-loaded her human cargo (or as much of it as survived) and took on a new cargo of West Indian products, mainly molasses, no doubt. On May 4 she again weighed anchor, bound for her home port in Rhode Island, where she arrived on May 20, 1772.

Many other communications follow, teeming with details of trade and maritime affairs. In a letter dated July 13, 1780 son Joseph Lopez, who travelled to Boston from Leicester, Massachusetts to conduct business for his father, writes: "I have now the pleasure thank God to inform you of my arrival here last Monday at 1 OClock after as agreable a Journey as we could expect to enjoy in Such very warm weather, & altho' I was much fatigued, am now perfectly recruited. Indeed I often wished had availed of your advice in making use of your Sulky, as it

would have afforded me some Shelter from the Scorching Sun." This, no doubt, is the sulky in which his father was drowned a short two years later at Scott's Pond in Smithfield, Rhode Island. After discussing various business matters to which he had attended, including delivery of a complaint about the bad quality "attending" some brandy which his father had ordered from Boston, he continued: "Intelligence just from Providence of the arrival of the French Fleet [The arrival of the French fleet at Newport with Rochambeau aboard was an historic event in Rhode Island.] this afternoon we purpose to Sett off for Newport & have some thoughts if the weather continues warm to ride all night. I must beg your excuse for the incorrectness of this Scrawl—my time is Short, prevents copying it. Please to give my Duty to My Dear Mama—love to all my Sisters & Brothers." (Lopez had six children by his first wife and niece Abigail, born Anna, and ten by his second, Sarah Rivera. When he died, he left twelve children behind.) Joseph continued: "also my best Respects to Uncle Jacob & Tia Rivera. My Compliments to all the Families in general. I am with the greatest Respect, Your Dutiful Son."

A letter from Amsterdam in beautiful script and dated January 15, 1781 is an announcement from Sigourney, Ingraham, & Bromfield, Boston Brahmins all, announcing the establishment of a trading agency in Amsterdam. They are soliciting Lopez's business, evidence of the revival of involvement in world trade by the young nation, and at the same time an indication of the undiminished standing of Lopez in mercantile enterprise.

Much attention is devoted in the coming months to the reestablishing of old trading connections, new affiliations, the state of the market, prices of available merchandise, and the problems of fluctuating and unstable currency and exchange in the emerging new republic.

The following letter from Josiah Hewes of Philadelphia is typical of the correspondence of the period, and is of especial interest in its evidence of Lopez's continuing relationship with the Browns of Providence:

Philad^a. 26 June 1781

M^r Aaron Lopez

Dear Sir

by M^r. Samuel Myers, I was favoured with yours of the 21 ult^o., and note the Contents, and am well pleased we are so well Clear off the Contin^l. paper, on our Joint Acc^t. I Raley feared a Loss their.

Shall Debet your Acct. with 426 0/100 dollars as Directed and take it out of the Sales of the tea &c

the bill for 300 dollars or 566 I have forwarded to france and Sweden by order of Nicholas Brown, that you may settle that matter with him. Grand Informed him thereof.

Save the Letter I have now Answered, have not a line from you since the 9th may. that have not heard of the Receipt of mine of the 5th., 8th., 15th. & 20th. ult^o. Since the 20th. I have not had an oppertunity of writing you, the post that should have come in from the Eastward yesterday 4 weeks, was taken into york and since that, til yesterday no Rider could be had.

I note you had purchased tea at 8/ Lawfull and had Limited me 10/ to 12/6. I have not yet been able to get near that. Since my last and about 4 weeks past, tea began to rise, when large parcels Came in here from St. Thomas, which had been purchased at the St. Eustaha [Eustatius] Sales, and since that a considerable Quantity from france. these parcells ware Verely un Expected and keeps tea down at 7/ to 7/6 Specie, that I now fear it will be some time before it will get up to 10/. am told it has fel in Boston to 7/6. the total Stopage of the Continental money as I have fully informed you of, prevented my selling for paper, fearing it would share the same fate at Boston, which I find has come to pass, some time since I allso fear you have suffered. in my last Remittance for the two Bb^{ls}. pepper, notwithstanding the high price I obtained I thought myself verely Lucky, when I sold the S^d. two barrels not having the least Intimation of the Resolve of our Counsil which appeared so soon after. Raseing the money to 175 for 1 and which alarmed the whole City, being totally Ignorant of the Intent. hope the bill comes timely to hand to save you. Soon after the above Resolve continental was totally Rejected by the people here, and the State did not pass current. all people joined against the tender Laws, & took verely little but Specie. the assembly was caled last week, all the tender Laws Repealed. Some people deal in the State money from Choice at about 4 for 1. but Specie is the Chief Going. I have never since you Enclosed me the Invoice, of the one Chest tea, pepper, ginger, and coffee, heard father from it. haveing so many letters to answer by this post cannot be more full. hoping soon to hear from you am

Sincerely yours
Josiah Hewes

P.l. in specie

Bills of Exchange 5/6 for 5 livers [French *livres*]. European goods 3/ 3/6 & 3/9 p^r. Liver. Jamaica Rum 10/, windward 7/ to 7/6. Sugars 52/6 to 53/. havanah brown sugar 6^d p^r. box. whites 8^d. loaf sygar 1/6. coffee 11^d & 1/ Riseing. pepper 7/ to 7/6.

pymenta 1/3. Race Ginger 2/. Ground 3/ to 3/6 &c. flour 19/
s[ame] fine 23/ to 25/.

J H

An earlier letter from Hewes (May 22, 1781) contains a curious post-script: "N.B. Capt. Anthony is in town in good health, left his family well on Saturday last. thanks you for the trouble you have taken for his Sons Ears. he knows the Scunck Cabbage well."

Resumption of a former business connection is sought in a letter from Stephen Rapalje of New York dated October 22, 1781, and a new affiliation in another from Hiram Levy of Newport now trying his luck in Amsterdam (December 4, 1781). There is still another in elegant French and beautiful script from the house of Condet & Company of Courtrai in Flanders (now Belgium), bidding for an affiliation and mentioning "Mr. hiam levy de rhode island", perhaps a bit of name dropping. During the early months of 1782 there were three long business letters from Samson Marcus & Co. of Amsterdam, representing a considerable volume of business.

As evidence of the wide scope of the activities in which Lopez was engaged in the months just before his untimely death, the last two letters in this series serve as examples: one from a correspondent in Kingston, Jamaica (March 22, 1782) and another from Bilbao, Spain (May 22, 1782). Since in fact Aaron Lopez came to his unfortunate end on May 27, 1782, only five days after the latter was written, it is quite certain that he never had the opportunity to read it.

This brief essay reviews material that amounts to but a sample of available documents relating to this man of far-ranging enterprise. The particular significance of this material lies in the appreciable number of letters which derive from the last two years of his life, the period 1780-1782. These reveal with considerable clarity the beginning revival of his mercantile career. Despite his worldly outlook he maintained to the end an intimate and devoted relationship to his large family. One must reflect on what this able man in the prime of life might have accomplished in the exciting days of the infant Republic if he but had the opportunity to live out his expected span of years.

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 Sept. 18, Newport, account of wages, Ship America.
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- 1770: March, Barbados, Jones & Moe to A.L., statement of account.
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 Aug. 30, Charleston, S.C., Joshua Hart to A.L., a.l.
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 July 24, Providence, R.I., Jos. & Wm. Russell to A.L., a.l.
 July 27, Providence, R.I., Jos. & Wm. Russell to A.L., a.l.
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- 1775: Mar. 10, Charleston, S.C., Joshua Hart to A.L., a.l.
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APPENDIX

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Letter from Jacob Samuel Jessurun to Aaron Lopez and associates, January, 1776. Transcribed in modern Portuguese orthography and translated into English.

Translator's memo: The punctuation in Jessurun's Portuguese is essentially his. In the translation, the punctuation has been rearranged when needed to clarify Jessurun's prose.

MODERN PORTUGUESE VERSION

Caritativos e Benignos Senhores
Muito caritativós senhores:

Janeiro, 1776

Achando-me muito agradecido e obrigado aos grandes favores que tenho recebido de S. M., não me acho capaz com a pluma poder-lhes dar os devidos agradecimentos; pois seu capitão Math. Hathaway teve a bondade e caridade; certamente por haver-lhe S. M. assim dado ordens, de prolongar o tempo do pagamento do que tão legalmente lhes devo a S. M. por ainda o tempo de um ano, visto tem boa segurança de meus escravos, pelo montante; bem entendido pagando interesses acerca de 8% por ano, cujos porcentos lhe paguei, juntamente com a ténue soma de £ 240* em desconto do cabedal; pois lhe declaro a S. M. como Judeu que bastante trabalho me custou para poder vir a alcançar essa ténue soma, pela razão que das pessoas aos quais acreditei e que tenho que haver, como lhe é constável do capitão Hathaway e S. M. não ignoram que um homem que teve negócio tem seu dinheiro em poder de uns e outros, e como por pecados os tempos em esta colónia estão tão calamitosos que todos os principais plantadores pedem tempo para poder pagar; e somos obrigados os que temos que haver de eles a lhes consentir, e quando não o queremos consentir, a justiça nos obriga a dar-lhes tempo, tudo em consideração, para ver que com isso venham a estar em estado de pagar, pois o juiz próprio vê o calamitoso que está o tempo; S. M. podem estar certos de que faço e farei meu melhor afim de que com toda brevedade possível de cada voyage que vier a esta o capitão Hathaway, de pager-lhe alguma parte até com bem ficar liquidado, suplicando a S. M. tomem em consideração achar-me hoje favorecido com uma grande familia de

*Here the writer of the letter inserted something between the lines which I could not decipher. [transcription note]

10 filhos e filhas, eu e minha mulher, com uma mãe velha de 70 anos que fazem 13 em família que mantenho, isso em um tempo tão calamitoso como este que presentemente nos achamos; pois assaz haver sido razoável comigo de suas afortunadas e benignas obras de caridade. Juntamente ser seu capitão tão bom, certamente por as ordens que S. M. lhe deram; considerem S. M. que seria de mim e de minha pobre família o ficar deprivado de meus escravos que me ganham o diário mantimento com que se mantém minha família por ora até que possa receber as somas que tenho que haver de uns e outros, como S. M. se podem informar do capitão Hathaway a quem lhe é contável ser a pura e real verdade o que lhes notifico a S. M. em tudo por tudo, assim suplico, benignos senhores, caso possa ser, me favoreçam S. M. em me solazar [sic] de pagar interesses por o mencionado soma que tão legalmente lhes devo; pois sobre todas suas caritativas e benignas obras que com todos têm usado e até o presente estão usando espero seja esta obra de caridade a mais mínima que têm S. M. feito; como Judeus tementes a Deus e pais de filhos, pois S. M. podem considerar a dor que é a um pai quando um filho pede alimento e um pai não se acha com que lhe poder socorrer, assim espero em suas benignidades, tomarão em consideração minhas referidas razões e me assistirão em esta ocasião solazando-me [sic] de pagar ditos interesses, cousa que para S. M. é muito ténue e para mim de muito proveito por cuja meritória obra como por as demais ficarei rogando ao excelso divino, guarde, prospere e aumente a S. M. conforme de suas prezadas famílias; por os anos de seu desejo, como próprio se desejam e lhe auxilia este quem se preza ser devindo o mais humilde e certo servidor

q. S. M. b.

(ass) Jacob Samuel Jessurun

(For English translation see next page.)

ENGLISH VERSION

Kind and Good Sirs
Very kind sirs:

January, 1776

Finding myself very grateful and obliged for the great favors I have received from you, I am unable to thank you properly in writing. Your captain Mathew Hathaway had the goodness and the kindness, undoubtedly because you so ordered, to prolong the deadline for the payment of what I so legally owe you for the additional time of one year, with my slaves as security for that sum and at 8% per year interests which I have already paid, together with the slight sum of £240* to be discounted from the total. I swear to you as a Jew who has found it difficult to accumulate that small sum because of credit I gave to some people and who owe me, as capt. Hathaway knows and you will not deny, that a man in business has his money in the power of different individuals and, as payment for our sins, times in this colony are so calamitous that all the principal planters ask time to pay; and we who have to deal with them are obliged to consent. When we do not wish to consent, the law obliges us to give them time so that they might later be able to pay. This because the judge himself sees how calamitous these times are. You can be sure that I am doing and shall continue to do my best so that in as short a time as possible I shall be able to pay a part to capt. Hathaway every time he travels here so as to ultimately liquidate the debt. But I beg you to take note that at present I am favored with a large family of ten sons and daughters, myself and my wife, as well as an old mother of seventy, making a total of thirteen people I support. And this in such a calamitous time as the one in which we now live. You have been more than generous, kind and charitable to me, as has your capt. Hathaway also been, certainly on your instructions. Consider what would happen to me and my poor family if we were to be deprived of our slaves, which earn what keeps my family going until I receive what others owe me. This you can verify from capt. Hathaway, who knows it is nothing but the whole truth. Thus I beg you, if possible, to favor me by releasing me from the paying of interests, which I so legally owe you on the mentioned principal. Above all your charitable and good works, which you have dispensed to all and to the present they are using, I hope this work of charity will be the least you have practiced. As good Jews, God-fearing and fathers of children, you can well understand

*I have not tried to guess what an illegible insertion between the lines meant.
[translator's note]

the grief a father feels when he sees his child ask for food and he, the father, has none to give. Thus I trust in your kindness, that you will take into account my above stated reasons and help me on this occasion by releasing me from paying said interest, something insignificant for you, but of great importance for me. For this meritorious work, as well as for others, I shall pray to the great divinity that he keep you and permit you to prosper, and the same for your families, as long as you wish, and that the undersigned, who prides himself in your debt and your most humble and obedient servant, may be of help to him.

I wish you good health

(signed) Jacob Samuel Jessurun

NOTE

Identification of the writer of this letter and its geographical source has been difficult. Pertinent information does not appear on the manuscript. The following is derived from internal evidence. In a personal communication to the author (SJG) Rabbi Malcolm H. Stern, genealogist of the American Jewish Archives, states:

"I have searched in vain for your Jacob Samuel Jessurun. The nearest that I can come to him is a man of the same name, probably the grandfather of Aaron Lopez's correspondent, whose son Abraham was married in Surinam, 12 Tishri 5487 (7 October 1726). (*PAJHS* v. 18, p. 200). I have eliminated Curaçao, Barbados, New York, Savannah, and Charleston. I think you would be safe in stating that this Jacob Samuel Jessurun seems to be part of a family known to have been in Surinam."



HARRY ADOLPH HOFFMAN*

This naughty, irrepressible, mischief loving rascal is none other than our dearly beloved Harry. We dare say no more because his parents might read this. A look at Harry's record card might cause one to think he is a grind, but we know better, and his teachers will testify that he does a little studying. Herr Harry is not athletically inclined, but we love him just the same. In passing, one might ask who starts the gab-fests in chemistry and takes such a fatherly interest in 1-A girls during study periods. Harry is headed for Kingston. "Lookout Kingston" say we.

*Ed. note—This was taken from the 1916 issue of the Tech Review, the year book of Providence Technical High School. Mention is made therein to Hoffman's plans to enroll at Rhode Island State College in the fall. Instead he matriculated at Brown University.

THE WAR DIARY OF HARRY A. HOFFMAN, 1918-1919

Edited and reviewed by Benton H. Rosen

Harry A. Hoffman, the son of Max D. and Esther Hoffman, was born in Providence on June 22, 1898. After graduating from Providence Technical High School in 1916, he enrolled in the engineering course at Brown University as a member of the Class of 1920. Shortly after the Declaration of War in 1917 he volunteered for service in the United States Army. Most of his duty was with Battery E, 44th Coast Artillery, a First Army unit.

His diary, a neatly written account, contained in a small leather-bound volume about 3 x 5 inches in size, covers the period from January 1, 1918 until his final entry on February 8, 1919. The material for the few weeks of 1919 was written on lined letter paper provided by the Knights of Columbus for the use of soldiers.

Hoffman made good use of a limited amount of writing space to convey the story of the horrors and miseries of the trench warfare of the First World War. Also, he rather vividly described the bitter winter cold which characterized part of his training period at Fort Wetherill, located in Jamestown, R. I.

After his discharge in 1919, Hoffman maintained an intense interest in veterans' affairs. This devotion to the welfare of veterans and their dependents endured for the rest of his life.

In 1931 he became Commander, Department of Rhode Island, Veterans of Foreign Wars (V.F.W.). During the years 1941-1950 he served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Widows and Orphans Home of the V.F.W., located in Eaton Rapids, Michigan. For the last two years of that period he was President of the body. A great deal of his spare time was devoted to the interests of the Jewish War Veterans of the United States as well.

Harry Hoffman died in 1972.

The text of the diary follows:

TRAINING CAMP

Jan. 1, 1918 To-day is the second day I've been back to camp and still feel blue after having such a short time with Marion.¹ Called up from camp to talk to her and say goodbye but she was gone!

¹This romance did not endure. Hoffman married Anna Jacobs of Providence in 1921.



PFC HARRY HOFFMAN

This afternoon we went on a long hike, arrived home almost starved and had tripe for supper—after such a day's work! I ate bread and butter.

Jan. 2 Went on another hike to-day. Walked six miles in two hours. My frozen ear is almost better.

Jan. 3 Was on guard to-day. It certainly was cold. We were one hour on guard and three off. This meant seven extra men in the guard house. In a room that can hold only 15 men comfortably we jammed 30. There were not enough cots to go around. Two men had to sleep on the same bed. The air was stifling. One fellow fainted and another took a fit. Outside it was terribly cold, and I had to keep running to stay warm.

Jan. 4 Came off guard and went to Newport. The water between the Torpedo Station and Newport was choked with ice. The ferry could just crawl through, pushing the huge cakes ahead. After a few trials she succeeded in docking. I hurried back to camp lest the ferries suspend their trips.

Jan. 5 Had an inspection to-day and my bed was passed without one bit of fault-finding. In the afternoon we hiked towards the north end of the island and covered about 10 miles. Was dead tired so I went to bed very early.

Jan. 6 Went on another hike to-day—this time to Beaver Tail Light, 8 miles from camp.

Jan. 7 Major Merchant to-day lectured to us on sex diseases. In the afternoon we received the first of a series of lectures on Coast Artillery. Examinations will be held soon for Gunners' ratings and we are preparing for them.

Jan. 8 We went on guard to-day. All last night it rained steadily and the ground was covered with a coating of ice. The walking was very dangerous. I had Number 1 post which is on a slight hill. I only fell seven times during the course of my watch.

Jan. 9 Came off guard to-day and heard the rumor that we were going to be paid to-day. It turned out to be only a rumor.

Jan. 11 We had a dull day to-day on the 12-inch guns. We cleaned up the breech block, and incidentally I learned the parts of the guns that had perplexed me. In the afternoon we went on a hike.

Jan. 12 Had an inspection to-day. This afternoon I went over to Newport and enrolled in the Mechanical Drawing class at the Art

Association. The lessons will cost 50¢ but Lieutenant Upham, who will instruct us, believes he can fix it so it will not cost us anything. If we wish to become Master Gunners some day, this course could prove to be a great help.

Jan. 13 To-day we were told to learn the International Code by Thursday (Jan. 17th). Everybody is studying "da da, dit dit da."

Jan. 14 Went to the doctor to-day and he gave me some pills to settle my stomach. I feel much better now.

Went over to Fort Adams this afternoon to see the film "The Training of a Soldier." It tried to show the right and wrong ways of executing the military commands.

Jan. 15 Rained severely all day and the cold caused a sheet of ice to cover the ground. Were paid this morning at 10 o'clock and got soaked waiting in line for it. This afternoon we practiced the International Code, and I was appointed to instruct ten men in the Semaphore Code.

Jan. 16 We had an infantry drill this morning under Lt. Smith and it was some drill! It was "pep" from beginning to end. Attended my first lesson at the Art Association to-day. I believe that I shall like it. The people are trying very hard to please us. Lt. Upham is our instructor. I am to take up the drawing necessary to become a Master Gunner. Went over to the YMCA this evening and heard a Mrs. Gould sing. She has a lovely voice and I enjoyed myself greatly.

Jan. 17 To-day was a red-letter day. This morning we had an infantry drill and received an awful bawling out from Lt. Smith. He is a hell of an officer. He thinks that if he hollers a little louder that he becomes clearer. He'll never make a drill master. This afternoon we had an artillery drill on the three inch guns. I was number 3. Received a package from home containing pancakes! Imagine that—real pancakes.

And to-night for supper we had ice cream and fruit cake. It was just like Old Home Week!

Jan. 19 Came off guard and went over to Newport to the drawing class. Did a little fundamental work to prove to Lt. Upham I could handle the subject. Then went to a chop suey joint for supper. At the Colonial Theatre I heard the fireman of the Lusitania speak.

Jan. 21 Wensley took us out on calisthenics this morning in zero weather without gloves and with guns! I almost froze my fingers off.

WINTER COMES

Jan. 22 Snowed all day, and we went on a hike in the afternoon in 6 inches of snow. We walked until I thought we would drop. Had gun drill to-day. Was hauled out at 9 o'clock to shovel off snow from the parapet.

Jan. 23 To-day our company went on guard, and I was a supernumerary. Went over to the drawing class. Learned over in Fort Adams that three German agents were captured with plans on them to blow up Rose's Island. There is enough powder there to blow up every one of the five forts to eternity. The shock would damage property way up to Providence.

Jan. 24 Was out shoveling snow all morning from the parapets and guns. Learned to-day that the 66th Artillery, which is to leave very soon for France, is to be recruited from the Bay Forts. There are two rumors about. The first—that the 30 oldest men in point of service shall be taken from each company. The second—that our company will be taken as a whole. We are in an uncertain state.

Jan. 25 Went on a 10 mile hike with the snow almost two feet thick. Asked to go home and got permission.

Jan. 26 Caught the 10 o'clock ferry and reached Providence by one o'clock. Just six months ago I left Providence for field service. It seems six years since I wore civilian dress. Went to the Emery (theater) and saw a fine show.

Jan. 28 Went on guard to-day and got No. 2 Post at the east end of the guard house. It was very cold, and the rain that was falling froze as soon as it touched an object. My poncho was one mess of ice.

Jan. 29 Came off guard to-day and did a week's washing. I have been issued another blanket, making four in all. I'm not cold any more during sleeping hours.

Jan. 30 Was selected for old guard fatigue to-day. We had to dress in blue denims and gather up the cord wood that was piled on the dock. Got permission to go over to Newport and ducked unloading a barge of coal. Went to the drawing class.

Jan. 31 Had Muster Roll this morning. Then had a short infantry drill and bayonet exercise. This afternoon we had a drill with the semaphore flags. Heard to-day that the recruiting for the 66th Regiment begins Sunday. We'll know very soon now whether we go or not.

Feb. 4 Did old guard fatigue to-day. First shoveled some coal and then went to guard the prisoners. Was with them until Retreat. Were ordered to draw three days supply of water to use while the water main is fixed. All our canteens are filled and every utensil holds water.

Feb. 5 Pete Wilder, who went home yesterday, was found to have scarlet fever. In order to see whether there are any more cases, we are quarantined for 10 days. We cannot write letters and cannot use the phone. Windsor, however, remained outside the barracks and wrote a card to our homes to tell them what happened. We cannot leave camp, cannot even go on guard.

QUARANTINE

Feb. 6 This is the second day of the quarantine. This morning we took every cot out of the barracks into the street and let them air out until four o'clock in the afternoon. Then we scrubbed the entire barracks with kerosene and water, burning camphor in parts of the building. They allowed us to write one postal each which was fumigated before mailing. This afternoon we went on a short hike—came back starving. And the supper I ate was no sick man's supper either!

Feb. 7 Second day of the quarantine. Had a gun drill. I was in charge of the ammunition hoist detail. In the afternoon we had a hike. Was supposed to go on guard, but excused because of the quarantine. Was paid to-day.

Feb. 8 Gun drill on the 12's and 3's. In the afternoon we hiked 10 miles. Had an entertainment to-night in the mess hall, and boxing was the feature of the evening. Later we were served ice cream and cake.

Feb. 9 They asked for volunteers to-day to go with the 66th Regiment (8" howitzers). All men who have been in the service over six months cannot go. I cannot volunteer myself now. Everyone is excited. All around camp this afternoon are quiet; they are all deciding whether to go or not. To liven things up I dropped a stink bomb. It did!

Feb. 10 To-day was very quiet. Men battled with their thoughts. Should I go; should I stay? Oh why couldn't they order us across, instead of putting it up to us?

Feb. 11 The quarantine was lifted to-day. Went over to Fort Adams this morning—and by luck missed getting on guard.

Feb. 14 Was on old guard fatigue. Tommy Hawk and I were detailed to clean out the cellar in the officers' quarters. It was as interesting as an old garret; we had a wonderful time.

Feb. 15 Had a battalion drill to-day and our prince of lieutenants, one Mr. Wensley, made a fool of himself and the company. He was completely lost in the drill!

This afternoon we had an artillery drill which lasted until four o'clock. I was in the No. 9 position, chief of the hoist tackle detail. This evening we went to Fort Adams and saw more films on "The Training of a Soldier."

Feb. 16 Took Dave Litman's place in the tailor shop and acted as "dog robber"² in his place. All I had to do was make up the beds in the officers' quarters, sweep up, tend fires, etc. In addition I did a little pressing.

Feb. 17 Pressed my own uniform to-day and also that of Lt. McNair. Hung around the tailor shop offering free pressing jobs but got no bids.

Feb. 18 Litman came back this morning, so I lost my job. This afternoon we had a 12-inch gun drill. We fired the gun in 2 minutes 40 seconds. The last drill our best time was 4 minutes. We're improving.

Feb. 19 Had 12" and 3" gun drill this afternoon. Acted as gun pointer on the 3" guns. Had an infantry drill after the artillery.

Feb. 20 Was on guard to-day. When we went out at noon to-day, it was warm and beautiful as in summer, and at six o'clock the wind was howling. The temperature has dropped to a point below zero.

Feb. 21 Came off guard and stayed around the stove. It's very cold again. This afternoon the commanding officer walked through the barracks and nobody yelled out "Attention". He said: "Get on your job . . . somebody yell out 'Attention'". He was sore, and I believe we'll hear about this soon.

Feb. 22 We went on a short infantry hike, and then through a platoon movement. As to-day is a holiday we were not supposed to work. However, we had to go up to headquarters and scrub out every room. This was punishment for the incident with the commanding officer in the barracks yesterday.

Feb. 23 Was sent up on the big guns to clean away the snow. After inspection, about ten o'clock, the sergeant handed me a pass! Got to Providence and home about one o'clock.

Feb. 24 Took the 6:30 train back and got into camp at 10:45—tired as a dog. Can you imagine what happened then? Was told that I'd have to go on guard!

²Officers' orderly.

Feb. 25 Came off guard at noon dead tired and didn't do a thing the whole afternoon but sleep.

GUN DRILL

Feb. 27 Had a gun drill on Gun #2 and loaded it in the fastest time yet. We did it in one minute and 47 seconds. Then we had a short infantry drill. In the afternoon went on a hike to the north end of the island, covering 11½ miles. I'm dead tired. Went to bed at 6:30.

Feb. 28 Another gun drill to-day. We lowered the record of yesterday by 20 seconds.

Mar. 1 Went on guard to-day and made orderly. Had nothing to do but answer phone calls. Was through at 7 o'clock. Instead of walking post I got a good night's sleep.

Mar. 3 Hung around camp all day. Read a good book: "The Mask" by Arthur Hornblow. In the afternoon I took charge of the stoves. This kept me pretty busy. Went to bed at 11 o'clock.

Mar. 5 Was offered my five-day pass to-day and had to refuse it because I had no mazuma.³ I'll take it a little later.

Mar. 6 It rained to-day, and we had to shovel the water off the parapets so it wouldn't freeze there. Later went up to the guns for instruction. Had an infantry drill in the barracks. We made room by piling the cots in one corner.

Mar. 7 To-day they chose men to make up the 66th Regiment—eight inch howitzers. This regiment may not go over for two or three months yet. I was chosen to go with them.

Mar. 8 Snowed all night, and in the morning we had to shovel. Went on a hike in the afternoon, getting back about five o'clock. The Americans are now tasting the first bit of trench warfare, and from the reports received they are doing wonderfully well.

Mar. 10 Took a shower at 1:00 A.M. While trying to get in the kitchen window for some soap I fell into the swill barrel. I was some sight! Had to bale the parapet of the water that was covering it—almost a foot deep.

Mar. 11 Went on guard to-day. Was the Colonel's orderly. Got through at 7 o'clock.

Mar. 13 Learned to-day that the fellows going with the 66th Regiment are to be in Capt. Cannon's battery. Capt. Cannon is some boy!

³Yiddish for cash or money.

Camouflaged submarine came into the harbor at 5:22 P.M. Heard a rumor—we're going to be paid—sometime.

Mar. 14 Five men who were chosen to go with the 66th were turned down. We were given notice to be ready to leave within 24 hours time. All our personal belongings must be sent home.

The fellows who were successful applicants for the Officers' Training School at Ft. Monroe were announced to-day. They are to leave soon.

Mar. 15 Had artillery inspection this morning. In the afternoon we were assigned the job of pulling the guns down to the dock. The roads were muddy and the ropes were wet. It was a punk job.

Mar. 16 Am in the kitchen this week.

Mar. 19 Learned to-day that my name had been crossed off the list of the 66th at Adams. This means I cannot go. I will be staying back when the bunch goes. I don't want to—oh, I don't want to. I've not given up hope yet! I may be able to go yet. God—I hope so.

Mar. 20 Was told to-day that all hope for the 66th Regiment was not gone. The chance that I may go is pretty good. They called for replacement troops for the regiments that left Adams. These troops, as I understand it, are to be sent over immediately. I am thinking of volunteering. The other regiment has an advantage over the 66th because the men are all trained.

RUMOR OF MOVEMENT

Mar. 21 An order came over from Adams that 18 men were to be chosen to go along with the replacement troops. My name was on the official list from headquarters. All passes and furloughs are to be withheld. I lose my 5-day furlough. We expect to leave in a few days.

Mar. 22 Was examined to-day for the replacement troops and was passed all right. Learned that we would probably leave Wetherill Sunday morning, so I called up home and told Mother that I couldn't come home. Asked her to come down and see me Saturday.

Mar. 23 Had a battalion drill this morning for Governor Beekman. He told us of his experiences in France. Mother and Sidney arrived at camp at noon and stayed until 4 o'clock. All my old equipment was taken in and our new stuff is ready for us.

I sent home my books and other personal belongings with Mother. Gee, but I was proud of the way she acted down here. Although I could see she was suffering, she did not break down once. Well, I'm ready to go now.

Our identification tags were handed out.

Mar. 24 Went on guard to-day. Got my field equipment this afternoon, and immediately put on my trench shoes. To-night I am walking post. About 11 o'clock the New York boat sailed out of the harbor. I was to be on that boat going on my five-day furlough to New York—and Marion. Instead I am walking post, watching the ship as she fades away in the distance. Such is the way of fate.

Mar. 25 Came off guard at noon and immediately packed my roll. We expect orders to leave at any moment. Stenciled all my equipment:

Harry A. Hoffman
C.A. Repl. Tr.

Lay in bed the greater part of the afternoon as I slept but little during the night.

Mar. 26 Went on a hike in my trench shoes. They feel all right. Just eight months ago to-day we left Providence for Fort Wetherill, and during that time many things have happened—many joys, many disappointments. Yet, I'm glad to be leaving—I'm glad to get out.

Mar. 27 We were told to make up our packs at 8 o'clock. We all thought we were going away. It was just another hike—this time with packs.

Had a physical exam to-day. We'll have one every day until we go.

Mar. 28 Had another physical exam. Went on a fifteen mile hike, and when I got back was dead tired. Haven't heard yet when we leave. Took Litman's place at the Officers' Building as dog robber. Had to make up the beds and build the fires.

Mar. 29 Had a complete inspection of our field equipment. My gun was condemned.

Mar. 30 Still waiting for word to leave. In the afternoon we burned the grass off the baseball field, and then had a game.

To-night we advanced the clocks one hour.

Mar. 31 Were wakened up by the bugle at 4:30 A.M. with the sound of fire call. The Search-Light House burned down, and we had to put it out. This took about an hour.

Had a muster call this morning at 7 o'clock. We replacement troops don't get paid here again, so the muster didn't mean much to us.

GUNNERS EXAM

Apr. 2 Took the 2nd class gunners exams this morning and passed it easily. Came off guard at noon and decided to take the 1st class gunners exam.

Apr. 3 Was on old guard fatigue to-day. Took the 1st class gunners exam and I am told that I passed. This means three more dollars a month. Also, I graduate from the buck private class. In the afternoon burned the grass around the cantonment.

Apr. 6 Most all of the boys went home to-day, and as usual the replacement boys stayed here. Some of the men went A.W.O.L. I was called up in the office and questioned and cross-examined by the "top".⁴ He didn't get anything out of me.

Apr. 8 My tooth bothers me a bit, so I decided to go to the dentist this morning. The boys of the 66th Regiment are packing to leave for Adams. We of the replacement group stick around. God! don't keep us here.

Apr. 9 Went on "stoves" at 2:30 A.M. There were only two men available for fatigue this morning. Everyone else was on some sort of detail. We cleaned up the place alone. This afternoon Sergt. Doty took us to Jamestown for some sort of outing. We had ice cream and pie, and shot some pool. Came back around 4:00 o'clock.

Apr. 10 Was relieved from guard at 2:00 A.M. and was tired. Slept until 11:30, when I was awoken by my father who visited me. He brought me the things I wrote for. Learned to-night that the danger signal had been sighted out to sea at 4:00 A.M. All the guns were manned. I slept through it all. Was a false alarm.

Apr. 14 Washed all my clothes. Sat around the barracks all afternoon playing cards and feeling lonesome. Packed my roll and got my clothes in order.

Apr. 15 Busily packing to go this morning. Left Wetherill for Adams at 12:45. Had an inspection and physical examination. Laid out our stuff on the parade ground. Entrained at Newport. Went through Providence at 9:45 P.M. There the Red Cross gave us doughnuts, coffee, and cigarettes at the station. God Bless the Red Cross!

Apr. 16 Didn't sleep much last night. Train making for New York State and then south to New Jersey. We have travelled on four different

⁴First sergeant.

railroads—N.Y. N.H. & H., Central New England, New York Central, and Erie. We are making the round-about trip to keep our destination a secret. At Suffern, N.Y. some women met us at the train with cigarettes, cookies, fruit, etc. They certainly were nice girls. Three cheers for Suffern! Same kind of reception at Monsey and Spring Valley. Arrived at Camp Merritt at 2:10 A.M. Was assigned to Barrack 2-F-12. The quarters are fine. It is a gigantic and wonderful place. Right after assignment to barracks, we had another inspection.

Apr. 17 Answered roll call this morning at 5:45 A.M. and then beat it! The only time I'm in the barracks is when meals are served and for roll calls. The other times I am exploring. Learned that I can get into New York in 35 minutes. But no passes yet. Went to the YMCA to-night and saw the "Prudential Minstrels" from New York. They were very good.

Apr. 18 Rained all morning—nothing doing in Camp. Rumor says passes are to be given. Wow—2 o'clock passes were actually given. Had a fine time in New York, best evening I have had in the last four months.

Apr. 20 Came off guard at 4:00 P.M. Went to the movie theatre and saw a perfectly rotten picture. During the performance a regiment of infantry was told to report immediately to their barracks—to go. That's just the way we'll go when the time comes. May it come quickly!

OVERSEAS

There are no entries in the Hoffman war diary from April 21 through June 30. During part of this period he was en route to France via ship.

July 1 Had an air raid over Brest last night. Five bombs were dropped, three pretty near our guns. Anti-aircraft guns, by their violent fire, drove the raiders away. Shrapnel was falling on the roof of the barn in which we were sleeping.

Got orders to leave. Where? No one knows. Italy is the probable destination. Worked like Trojans loading cars. Left at 6:00 P.M. and rode all night long in freight cars.

July 2 Arrived in Gitre en Argonne at 6:00 A.M. This is our destination. Spent the day unloading our guns and equipment—we are quartered in French barracks. Our camp is just behind the front. We may go up in a few days. Our sector is half way between Rheims and Verdun.

July 3 Orders came to pack up and move. Left Givry at 7:00 P.M.

in motor trucks and got to Lavale at mid-night. We immediately set out to dig platforms for the guns.

July 4 Passed a very quiet "Fourth" in the morning. The boys worked all morning on the platforms and snatched a few moments of sleep in the afternoon. At 8:00 P.M. the fireworks began. The French gassed the whole sector, throwing over the barrage for an hour. Our guns came in around midnight and it was almost three o'clock before we were finished.

July 5 Guns and positions were straightened up to-day. We have commenced plotting on the 1st and 2nd trenches of the Boches. More projectiles arrived (1600 in all), and we await the word to fire.

The French raid last night netted no other gain than one machine gun. They lost two men killed and five wounded. I saw the dead and spoke with the wounded. One of them said that the Germans fought like demons. The French wanted to get information from prisoners—this was their objective.

July 6 Still cleaning up guns and washing projectiles. Took a walk over the hills as far as the second line trenches. From the hill I was able to look directly into German territory. More projectiles came in tonight, making 2500 in all. We're certainly going to enjoy ourselves when we get started.

July 7 Worked all day in the BC⁵ station, figuring data on our targets. We have eight of them—trenches, dugouts, observations, etc. We are making hourly observations in case an order to fire comes.

July 8 The day has been fearfully hot, and some of the boys have been digging dugouts. The guns were inspected by the French colonel in command of our battery. We were instructed late last night about a possible German advance. We must advance in front of the guns, and as infantry cover the retreat of the guns.

July 10 Just another day. The projectiles are fuzed and on the tray. All we need is the order to fire.

July 11 The expected drive of the Germans seems to have been cancelled. Nothing is happening and the famous "Blue Devils", that regiment of Chasseurs à Pied, who were brought from Belgium to take part in this defense, are to be moved. They are a wonderful bunch of scrappers. Almost every one has a decoration, and the regiment has been

⁵Battery command.

cited many times. Their distinguishing uniform is hidden by their overcoats, which they wear continually. They want to surprise the Germans.

July 12 Still nothing happens. Maybe this is because the wind has been in our favor. The Boches could not use gas now. They almost always begin their attack with gas, and until the wind gives them a chance they'll have to wait.

July 13 Whoopee! Got my first letter to-day. This letter was mailed on May 17th. It took a little less than two months to find me.

July 14 To-day has been a Red-Letter Day. This morning on the bulletin board I noticed that I had been promoted to Private, First Class! This afternoon I got three more letters. We turned in a little early, expecting something might take place. 11:30 P.M.—Call to Arms! Man the Guns!

GERMAN COUNTEROFFENSIVE

July 15 The long-expected German drive has started; they were now advancing. At midnight we opened fire, and about the same time they opened fire on us. We were firing at the greatest speed on the points where the Germans were pressing the hardest. At one o'clock we got gas. Mustard gas! With masks on we continued to fire changing targets almost constantly. We succeeded in stopping their advance a bit. We fired all night long, by 6 A.M. we had fired 1,000 rounds. We kept on firing until 7 P.M. Then we halted and were told to snatch a few hours rest.

July 16 Woke up this morning at 4:30 with the alarm of gas! They were sending more gas. We opened fire again and fired moderately until noon. Fired a bit more from two to four. Then we laid off. Then I realized how much high explosive and shrapnel had been dropping around us. The shots fell all around the battery. Five men were hit, but none seriously—one of them was Mistowsky⁶ from my own town.

July 17 Fired to-day again on the lines. At noon when leaving the dugout I suddenly felt faint and stumbled over. I was stifled and could not breathe. I was gassed! Putting on my mask just in time, I had no other effect from it. Very lucky.

July 18 At 2 A.M. a terrific electrical storm broke out. The tornado-like wind caved in the shelter, scattering it all over the place while

⁶This was Private Samuel Mistowsky. The Providence Journal Almanac of 1920 indicates that he was a recipient of the French Croix de Guerre.

the torrents gushed down, soaking my bed blankets, me, everything. I held on for dear life to the gas mask—my dearest friend. At four A.M. we had a call to arms and fired until about seven A.M.

We are on the extreme right flank of the fifty mile front of the German drive. On our front the "Dutchies" made very little progress, and the French and Americans are holding the rest of the line intact. Rumor has it the Allies are taking thousands of prisoners.

July 19 Fired by observation (airplane) and scored a direct hit on the fifth shot. The boys are tickled about that.

July 20 Fired again to-day by airplane observation. We did very well. Didn't feel well at all this afternoon. I think I'm getting the grippe.

July 21 I was right. Woke up this morning feeling badly. Reported to sick call and was ordered to the hospital. Had quite a high fever and the chills.

July 22 Am a little better this morning. At 10:30 P.M. the Germans flew over in a squad of machines and attempted to bomb the place. They missed widely.

July 23 Left the hospital to-day and am feeling much better now. We received 700 more projectiles to-day. It has been raining all day, and the mud is the color of dirty milk and so sticky that you can't scrape it from your shoes.

July 24 Received a nice letter from home to-day, and it certainly did cheer me up. We fired again this afternoon and did fine work.

The outfit received orders to move. The guns and platforms were taken out late in the evening, and we expect to follow them to-morrow.

There was quite a bombardment here last night. The shells were dropping within a few meters of the place where I was sleeping.

Entries for July 25 and 26 were done in pencil. All comments are very blurred and impossible to read.

July 27 Last night the French pulled off a surprise attack on this front and captured 1800 prisoners. The bombardment was terrific. This evening we laid out the new gun positions and worked darn near all night doing it. I am dead tired.

July 28 Was awakened this morning by the usual reveille—that of a heavy barrage. The Germans sent over a sneezing gas, and the men didn't put on their masks. Effect of this gas was a tickling sensation in the nose and an urge to sneeze.

July 29 The usual barrage went over at five A.M. Learned that the French along this front advanced a few kilometers, capturing 400 prisoners and a number of guns. When I returned from our reserve camp after taking a bath, I saw them bringing back eight captured German field pieces and numerous other items. The guns were 155's.

July 30 The "Dutchies" sure must have control of the air here. Ever since we have been here they are always flying overhead, and they come very close to the ground. Our anti-aircraft guns often do not fire at them. Their machine guns play all over the lot. We are told that most of our aircraft are operating over Rheims where they have more important work to do.

July 31 The Second Battalion which has its guns to the left of us got gassed last night. A gas shell hit a dugout, killing a sergeant, and the men who ran to his aid did not put on their gas masks. As a result three officers and eight soldiers were gassed.

Aug. 1 To-day has been quiet. What do you think of this! Some of the comforts of home while in the Army. We have electric lights in the dugout now. They are connected to a storage battery.

NEWS OF CHATEAU-THIERRY

Aug. 4 A new Battery of French guns has come to work with us, and they sure have nothing but praise for the work of the Americans on the Chateau-Thierry front.

Aug. 5 We had a little rain to-day, and as a result had a little rest from Boche airplanes. The French on this front made a surprise attack and forced the Germans back 3 kilometers, capturing a town north of Rheims and relieving the stress on that old city.

Aug. 6 The Franco-American forces around the Soissons-Rheims salient have made notable advances. The line now has a distant bend the other way. The French repelled an attack last night directly in front of our guns.

Aug. 9 More gas this morning at 4 A.M. The gas did not reach this position in strong concentration, and in an hour we were permitted to remove masks.

Aug. 10 Got about four hours' sleep last night thanks to gas alarms and orders to fire. We were up and firing at 4 A.M., helping the French put over a little barrage.

Managed to go into the camp we have behind the lines for a bath. This is my first in almost three weeks.

Aug. 11 All my clothes are lily white now after three hours of diligent scrubbing. To-day is Sunday and for my Sunday reading I managed to get ahold of a Philadelphia Ledger, dated May 5th. It proved very interesting indeed.

Aug. 12 The French during the night carried out several "Coup de mains" with the result that our lines were advanced one kilometer. Since the advance on the Rheims-Soissons front the Germans don't seem so anxious to drive on our front. They are falling back to prepared positions to defend themselves against an Allied attack.

A German plane flying over our lines dropped a large balloon full of propaganda inside.

Aug. 13 The French threw over a terrific barrage last night. About ten A.M. a German plane over our lines was shot down by anti-aircraft guns. The observer jumped from the machine, but his parachute failed to open and he crashed to his death. The pilot stuck to his plane, and although the plane was entirely wrecked he was not killed. The French took him prisoner.

Aug. 14 Got word to move, the guns were taken out and by one A.M. we were on our way. Our first stop was at Eshalons where our camp was. We do not know where we are going. Rumors say Russia or Italy, but I believe we'll land somewhere between Fismes and Rheims. Our barracks bags are to be taken away and stored until winter.

Aug. 15 Having a rest now in Camp de Eshalons before we go to our new positions. Nothing to do but stand inspection.

UNDER FIRE

Aug. 18 "Fritzie" has found out where the camp is and he is working that "surprise fire" game, throwing over shells for a few minutes—then a pause and more shells. This was done during the day, and when night began we all turned in thinking all was over. At eleven they began firing again, and we were obliged to take shelter in a trench.

Aug. 19 New bombardment to-day, and we were all ordered to scatter from camp to sleep. I made my bed in an open field near a tall hay stack about a kilometer from camp. At midnight they bombarded again. Then to cap it all it started to rain about two A.M. I gathered up my bed and came back to the barracks.

Aug. 20 Left Camp de Echelons to-day to go to some camp where we wouldn't be shelled so much. Reached Cuperly about six o'clock and had a fine billet. This is some town. Many civilians still live here. It is harvest time, and everyone is busy reaping the wheat. Slept like a top with no gas or bombardment.

Aug. 21 Were paid to-day. I drew 135 francs 35 centimes. All day long the boys were playing cards and quite a few hundred francs changed hands. Went this evening over to the Franco-American YMCA. There's certainly a lot doing here.

Aug. 22 Received a pass to Chalons to-day. Went all around the town and saw many interesting sights. Went to the YMCA and bought a razor. Had dinner at a swell restaurant, and it sure was great. When I left I got on a truck that took the wrong road. Had to walk almost 30 kilometers.

Aug. 23 Took a swim to-day in an old mill stream. Had a few games of cards and broke even. To-day it is four months since we left the States.

Aug. 24 Had an infantry drill, and so near the front. The officers are determined to get us shot for Boche airplanes are always overhead.

Aug. 26 There was work to be done to-day. Everyone was taken out to the ammunition dump to load projectiles. We handled 2,800 in four hours. When we got back we made up our packs to leave.

Aug. 27 Loaded the train to-day—had fifty cars. Left at midnight and rode all night. We passed through the prettiest part of northern France. The country is very hilly, and every inch is covered with rich growth.

ST. MIHIEL SECTOR

Aug. 28 Reached Toul at 3 o'clock in the afternoon and detrained. The motor train was ready at six, and we passed through the town. This is *some* town and full of Americans. If I can get a pass, this is where I'm going. Reached a small village at nine o'clock and unloaded. Found a place to bunk in, and it wasn't long before I forgot everything.

Aug. 29 The town is full of cafés, and "bier" and "vins" are plentiful. We are in the midst of the grape country.

Aug. 30 The name of this town is Mont le Vignoble. Went up to the forts on the hill nearest us. The hill is just covered with gun positions.

Sept. 1 Got orders to move to-day at 8 o'clock. It was drizzling and cold. Sitting on top of the truck was no fun. The night was pitch black, and the driver had a hard time trying to stay on the road. We arrived at Lagney at midnight and I was lucky to get a billet.

Sept. 2 Slept late to-day and spent the time washing my clothes and cleaning up. The front is about 15 kilometers from here, and we expect to go up soon.

Sept. 3 Took a long walk to the top of the neighboring hill. This is where Fort de Lucey is situated. It is the last of a string of forts extending from Verdun to Toul. The place is strongly fortified with many batteries of 6-inch guns. The barbed wire is very thick.

Sept. 4 Received orders to move the guns this morning. Left the billets at 9:30 and arrived at the new position at 11 o'clock. We are situated to the right of Roulecourt. There are no dugouts, no shelters for one can dig but a few feet before hitting water. This is marshy country. If "Fritzie" finds our position we must lie on our bellies and trust to luck. Had a gas alarm late to-night. Wore the mask one-half hour.

RAIN!

Sept. 5 Rained all day, and I was camped out in the woods in my pup tent. Although my bedding and clothes were damp in the morning I was comparatively dry. Learned to-day that our guns are not in a very effective position, so we are to move again.

Sept. 6 Rained again to-day. I believe the rainy season has now commenced. They say there will be no let-up until Spring. God help us.

Received some mail for the first time in three weeks. Got nine letters.

Sept. 7 More rain! My feet haven't been dry since I got here. My clothes are wet, and the mud is terrible. It completely covers my shoes and half my leggings. My trousers, coat, everything is mud-spattered.

Sept. 8 Still raining! I have given up all hopes of getting dry. Drinking water is scarce here, and there is no place to wash. Isn't that the irony of Fate? Raining every day and yet not enough water to drink!

Sept. 9 And yet it rains! Finished digging the dugout and I am a mass of mud from head to foot. My feet are beginning to get raw because of the constant wetness. I haven't a dry stitch to wear. The water soaks through the raincoat. It's worse than nothing.

Sept. 10 God! won't it ever stop raining? Sometimes it clears up

for a half hour. Then some heavy, low storm clouds sweep over, and the rain falls again.

We built the metal and shrapnel proof material into the dugout, and were given orders to rush the work as there was something in the wind.

Sept. 11 Rained again to-day, and we finished the dugout. Moved the material in just when orders came advising "Big doings" this evening. With rain falling in torrents, and soaked to the skin, we awaited orders to "open up" on the Boches.

Sept. 12 At one A.M. we received orders to go ahead. Hell broke loose! In a night where one could not see even the pathways, our big guns acting in unison with the other guns of the sector belched out their rain of death. We fired steadily until five o'clock. Then in the pouring rain the infantry went over the top. Their objective was one kilometer in every 40 minutes. We kept raising our barrage as our doughboys advanced. We fired steadily again until noon.

AMERICANS ADVANCE

Sept. 13 Learned to-day that the Americans advanced 8 kilometers and captured 8,000 prisoners on our front. Along the line on the left and right of us the gains in some places were greater. We captured Montan, the German stronghold just opposite us. Heard the Americans are pretty close to Metz. All day long men and guns are advancing toward the new lines. Entire battalions of German prisoners are being sent to the rear.

Sept. 14 To-day the boys all went over the ground captured. Souvenirs were lying around by the hundreds—rifles, bayonets, helmets, other equipment. Some of the boys brought back rifles and helmets, but as we can't send them home I wouldn't carry them around with me.

The dugouts that the German officers occupied were sure swell affairs. All concrete, carpeted, with electric lights and telephone. Beds, tables, and chairs—all stolen from French homes in the occupied territory.

Sept. 15 Was in Roulecourt to-day to take a bath and investigate for cooties. Didn't find any—for this I am grateful. The Salvation Army, with almost 40 girls, were in the village helping the wounded and feeding the boys out of the trenches. Movies were being taken of their work behind the lines. I was snapped in two or three of the scenes.

Sept. 16 The guns are up, and we await orders to move. The Americans captured 150 square miles of territory and 2,000 prisoners. The Saint Mihiel salient has been wiped out. Did nothing to-day but write letters.

Sept. 17 Heard a rumor that Austria-Hungary wants peace.

Sept. 22 Left our positions to-day, that is, the guns left and all but four men who were to act as a salvage detail to pick up any battery property that might have been left behind. I was on this detail. The truck that was to have come back for us didn't, but instead 32 trucks of the ammunition train. We spent the night loading projectiles, the four of us, and twelve other men sent to help. Loaded 640 projectiles.

Sept. 23 Slept last night on a board with only one blanket. Between loading projectiles and sleeping in such a "soft" bed my bones are aching. We are enduring a real "hobo" life, cooking our meals in old tin cans. Shot up about 400 rounds of Boche ammunition in the guns that we found left by the enemy. Made some pretty fair hits.

Sept. 24 The new positions are in the woods at Vigneulles. The Boches kept us awake all night, some of his shots coming pretty close. Our guns were ready by noon, and we opened up. Fired by observation balloon.

Sept. 25 Worked all day digging a dugout. The region we are in is very low and marshy, and before one goes very deep he strikes water. So our dugouts are really mere shelters from shrapnel splinters. Got paid at 8 o'clock. I drew 170 francs and 65 centimes.

At eleven o'clock got a call to arms. The Boches were supposed to attack at mid-night. We opened fire on them at 11:30 on a town supposed to contain German infantry. It seemed as if every gun on the Allied side opened fire with us.

Sept. 26 All night long we rained shells in the town, and that place is now finished. The town lies just behind the Hindenburg Line and three roads lead into it from the German rear. By firing into the town we kept reserves from coming up. Our fire ceased about 4:00 P.M.

Sept. 28 At one A.M. we got a call to arms. We opened fire at 1:30, continuing to 5:30, pounding steadily on Lachausse, a town behind the Hindenburg Line.

Sept. 29 Carried lumber and beams for our dugout to-day. Went

down to a machine shop where the Germans were and found a stove and coal. Also, lots of lumber.

We fired on a crossroad where German troops were passing. Our observation said one shell landed in their midst killing 40.

The Boches also drew blood. He hit #4 gun of F Battery, killing eight men and seriously wounding 4. This battery is moving its position.

Sept. 30 Moved into the B.C. dugout to-day. It's quite a place—splinter proof at least. Rained all day and the ground is one immense quagmire.

The eight fellows who were killed yesterday at F Battery have been buried—in the hole they were digging their dugout in.

Oct. 1 Passed the day fixing things up in the B.C. It's getting pretty cold now, and about time we put up our little stove.

Heard to-day that Bulgaria has signed peace terms. There is a rumor that Austria has ordered Germany to remove her troops from the country. If this is so, it won't be a very long time before peace is declared.

Oct. 2 Managed to get a bath to-day, but had to go eight kilometers. I looked thoroughly through my underwear, and didn't find one! Hurrah. Didn't sleep very well last night. Boche was shelling and landing pretty close. They were gas shells, and I expected any minute to hear the gas alarm. The alarm was given in the outfit next to us, but thanks to the wind the gas did not reach us. Am still sleeping in the open as our dugouts are not quite finished. The nights are damn cold.

Oct. 4 The British, French, and Americans are continuing their advances, the British taking St. Quentin and the French Cambrai.

Went over to the positions left by the 42nd Division and got a lot of furniture for our dugout.

Had hot biscuits for supper. Boy! they were good. Managed to get seconds.

Oct. 5 Read a Saturday Evening Post that I found around the position. Reading matter is sure scarce around here. Any printed matter is eagerly grabbed up.

There was no firing to-day, and last night was a great deal quieter than it has been for some time. I slept like a log. Had doughnuts for supper and they sure were great.

Oct. 6 Read in the Stars and Stripes that thousands of men would be commissioned from the ranks of the AEF. One of the requirements: two recommendations be sent with the application. I wrote to Prof. Randall at Brown and Mr. John P. Smith.

RUMORS OF PEACE

Oct. 7 Germany has asked for peace! She wishes that an armistice be granted while negotiations are being made.

Just got into bed last night when we got a call to arms. We commenced firing at 9 o'clock and continued for two hours. It was a harrasing fire on La Chausse and Hadonville.

Oct. 9 Heard something wonderful to-day. Austria has unconditionally surrendered and that Turkey will follow suit. This means that peace is not very far off. Some of the men are betting we'll be back in the States by March.

Moved into the dugout to-day, and with a fire burning it sure was comfortable.

Oct. 10 As yet the news of Austria's surrender is not official. I think it's just another rumor, but I'm hoping for the best.

Oct. 11 There are to be examinations for entrance into West Point for our three battalions. I am going to try for it—may be the chance of a lifetime!

Oct. 12 Wrote a few letters to-day. Spent most of the time answering Mother's letter which came in record time (18 days). Hauled some Dutchie coal about 3 kilometers for our little stove, and learned after we got it here we would be moving to-morrow. Isn't that enough to make me cuss!

Oct. 13 Peace can't be far off now. It is officially announced that Germany had accepted President Wilson's peace conditions and is willing to withdraw from all invaded territory, but they ask for an armistice. This is about the last big issue on which the belligerents disagree.

Oct. 14 Learned to-day that I was made corporal—just three months after my promotion to private, first class. Gee, I'm proud of it. I am the youngest non-com in the battery.

Oct. 15 Wilson has given the Kaiser five days in which to commence evacuating from invaded territory. If Germany does not begin by then, all peace negotiations will be off.