

[American Y.M.C.A.]

[On Active Service  
With the  
American Expeditionary Forces]

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London, England

Dear Mother:

This is Sunday evening. I am beginning my letter sort of late. This has been a busy Sunday. I guess I might as well give you a little idea of how we spent the day. Martin, by accident, met a man from the States a week ago last Saturday. He travels for some hosiery firm. I recall he sells the "Onyx" brand. He has been taking him out to theatres and dinners all week. He asked him to bring me along this morning, and we would attend church together. Now, I want to tell you in beginning that he spends more money than any man I ever happened to be with. You will say so when I finish. Martin tells me he receives a salary of about \$10000<sup>00</sup> and expenses, and is a single man. He reminds me very much of Laura Coen's husband. Well, we went to his hotel about 10:20 this morning. From there we took a taxi to church—to Westminster [*sic*] Chapel to hear Dr. Jowett. When others were dropping pennies and six-pence in the collection basket I saw him drop in a pound note (Rate of exchange about \$4<sup>65</sup> here now). He took us to dinner at one of the most expensive hotels. I think the dinner cost him about two pounds. We than [*sic*] took a taxi to the Royal Albert Hall to a concert by Clara Butt and Mr. Kennerley-Rumford and three massed bands. He paid twelve shillings each for tickets to the concert—about two pounds in all. After the concert we got a taxi and went to the aerodrome at Hendon to see Reid who land in Plymoth [*sic*] yesterday after his flight across the Atlantic in the N.C.4. We saw him and his crew. Hawker was there too. Hawker gave an exhibition in a monoplane. Hawker's wife was also there. We came back from there and he left us at our hotel and went on to church. His taxi bills amounted to something over a pound. He also paid a shilling each to get in at the aerodrome. I do not know whether I have missed any of his expenses, or not. I will leave it to you to figure up what he spent today to show us a good time. He seems to make soldiers a specialty. He was telling about being out to supper and a theatre with an Australian on Thursday evening. He says he often takes the "Blue Boys"—wounded British fellows—out. He said he imagined he had been out with about a hundred soldiers since he had been here in England. That seems to be his "pass-time." He travels over most of the globe and can speak almost any language. He has been in London since February, and leaves for the States tomorrow. A shame to lose a friend like that, isn't it?

I told Mary in a letter to her that I had taken my maiden trip in an airplane last Thursday. It was a ride which I enjoyed more than any other I ever took. But you can stand on the ground and get more thrills than when actually up in them. At least, it was that way with me. I guess I was expecting too much excitement. The first performances I ever saw were those by "Dutch" Thompson at the Washington Fair in 1917. At that time I never thought of having ridden in one in 1919, nor did I think then that I would see so many of them as I have seen during the last year. The novelty has all worn off. A person scarcely looks up when he hears one. The one I rode in did what I believe they call the "half roll." You do not stand directly upside-down, but you come so near it that you imagine you do. The one I was in also did what they call the "nose-dive." As

you sit in your seat you are facing the ground and going directly towards it to “beat the band.” Of course you usually change your course before you reach the ground, otherwise you would not be apt to fly again. I see there is no doubt but that the airplane has come to stay and will be one of the common modes of travel in the future. I noticed they were using two passenger planes out there today, ones where people went in and sat down on seats as in a car and looked out at windows. I do not know how many they would carry. They had many different styles there today—the same as automobiles when they first came out. This war has resulted in their march towards perfection faster than any other invention of the kind known to history.

I think I shall start to Scotland for four or five days on Tuesday. Then, I figure that will complete my long trips. This sight-seeing business [*sic*] is not as much fun as it sounds like, but I am making myself do it while I have such a fine opportunity to do it so cheaply. I am not figuring on getting back here on a trip again until I have spent a few years trying to make a little money, that may mean to settle down so that I shall never feel I have the time to spare again. I am anxious to get home and get busy. I would like it much better than this life. And, I believe it will not be many weeks until I shall be back.

I must close this letter. I would be ashamed to tell you the hour. Martin has been in bed half an hour.

Your loving son,  
Guy

Grafton Hotel,  
Tottenham Court Road,  
London, England