

**LETTERS OF A
PLATTSBURG
PATRIOT**

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Letters of a Plattsburg Patriot by O. N. E.

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PLATTSBURG PATRIOT

BY
O. N. E.

[*John Bryson Barnes*]



WASHINGTON
THE UNITED STATES INFANTRY ASSOCIATION
1917

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**To the Plattsburg
Rookie who believes
in preparedness and
is willing to prove it.**



"ANY PREVIOUS MILITARY SERVICE?" SAYS THE CAP

Letters of a Plattsburg Patriot

Military Training Camp,
Plattsburg, New York.

June 6, 1916.

DEAR BILL:

I beg to announce to you that valor has put one over on several years of ripe discretion. The preparedness bug has nipped me and, as you lightly read this confession, I am doing my bit to put our puny military establishment on a stable basis.

No further active membership for me in the Old Guard of Club Warriors whose total labors for national defense have consisted of free advice and liberal contributions to the internal revenue on booze. I solicit no further correspondence on the subject, and will ask you to excuse, please, the bluntness of an old soldier.

Well, I arrived at 6 A.M. yesterday and am still going strong. I remember seeing, when a boy, a picture of a military camp. There were our brave boys in blue making chests at the sympathetic lady visitors; prancing horses waiting for the parade; gallant officers all in gold braid flitting about where they could do the most good; Old Glory waving defiantly from the top of the pole, while the band played and the green grass grew all around. This camp reminds me of that stirring scene—it's so different. I have a feeling that there is no such animal outside of story books.

There was no glad hand or Welcome-to-Our-City committee to meet me at the train, so I trailed along to Headquarters with a lot of other saviors of the country, paid my thirty dollars, and was herded over to my Company.

"Any previous military service?" says the Captain.

"No, not exactly—but I was a member of the Possum Scuffle Boys' Brigade in 18—."

"The sergeant will issue your equipment. Go in the fourth tent. Next!"

Didn't even ask my previous condition of servitude—and me a real Who's Who back home. I backed up feeling as though the umpire had called me out without seeing the play.

The Sergeant gave me a stony once-over, and a bundle and bag said to contain all the makings of a fierce campaign. Eight cots in the tent, a lantern, bucket and wash basin—no further signs of habitation except seven other lost, strayed or stolen-looking patriots doing upper berth stunts as they changed civilian dress for the gay and festive raiment of a rookie.

I felt lonely, but not alone.

A careful inventory of the bag of implements showed thirty-one different kinds, with not even a family resemblance to each other. I soon found that they were not a new kind of picture puzzle as nothing seemed to fit. I decided to treat them with dignified indifference until someone should give me the combination.



NOTHING SEEMED TO FIT!