

Cherished letters sent by WWI soldiers to Taylor County

BY VIRGINIA GRAVES
TAYLOR COUNTY ARCHIVE CENTER

The United States entered World War I on April 6, 1917, when Congress passed a declaration of war against Germany. President Woodrow Wilson had requested the declaration on April 2, citing Germany's unrestricted submarine warfare and its attempts to entice Mexico into an alliance against the U.S. By June 5, the draft began for men between the age of 21 and 30.

WWI letters sent home provide us, but more importantly, their family, glimpses into a soldiers' life and emotions. Letters home – to loved ones – were generally a soldier's attempt to maintain normalcy in this new world that was anything but normal ... and to reassure their family that they were OK.

Families often shared these letters with the *News Journal*, which in turn, shared them with their readers.

As we continue to honor our veterans, specifically in conjunction with Veterans Day this Tuesday, Nov. 11, Taylor Regional Archive Center would like to share a few snippets of some of the letters in our files.

Somewhere in France, Aug. 7, 1918: Dear Moma and Papa. Heavy hangs the dawn of another night. The rays of the golden sun are just passing from view. Very soon, a weary soldier must pillow his head for another night's rest. All is well with me, except the heavy load of loneliness that seems to crush me down. When I sit all alone as I am now, my mind drifts back to the time when I stood at mother's knee. I was just a tot. I did not realize what it was to be separated from the best and only friends on earth. Gilbert F. was here to see me last night. He is in the same camp with



Of the six letters from Taylor County World War I soldiers featured in this story, three were buried here: George Reeves Eggers, Brookside Cemetery; Halicy Caffee, Memorial Gardens; and Cleoda Davis, Palestine Cemetery.

me now. We will stay here four or five weeks and then go somewhere else ... I don't think it is very hard on me as I only weighed 138 pounds when I came over and now I weight 160. That seems awfully heavy for me but that is Uncle Sam's weight. I want you to keep writing. I will get the letters OK. Your son ... James E. Jones (son of William R. and Nannie Jones of Saloma)

Somewhere in France, September 1918: Dear Father, Received your and Lillie's letter this morning. Was glad to hear from home. How is mother and the rest? I wish I could tell you about things I have seen. I have seen a lot of things you are reading about and that is all I want to see. I'm ready to come home now. ... The Americans took 13,000 prisoners yesterday. I can tell you

a lot when I get back home. How are things on my place? How are the crops looking? It has been raining here two or three days. I will be muddy for a while. Bill Brockman is sitting here by me now. He looks fine. Give my love to all. Your son, Cleoda Davis (son of Rezin and Mary Etta Davis)

Somewhere in France, Oct. 1, 1918: Dear Wife, I arrived safely overseas and am in good health. Hope you and the baby are the same. It is a very pretty country over here and I have seen a great deal of it. I guess the baby is a great big fat thing by now. I would love to see him, but you can kiss him for me. Tell Eastin Sanders if he does not write me soon, I am going to shoot him with one of our cannons when I get home. Don't worry about me

for I am coming back, so be of good cheer and strong of heart and it will all come out well. News is scarce. I will tell you more when I get home. I remain your husband, Pvt. Jessie Marple (Son of William and Liza Marple)

Somewhere in France, Oct. 22, 1918: Dear Pearl, Your welcome letter was received today. I was so glad to hear from you. I got two letters from you this week, and you can bet I am pleased to get letters from you. I am close to a town and learned to talk French very well. I haven't seen any pretty French girls yet. Some people may think French girls are pretty, but I don't. Have you got those presents I sent yet? I have sent you two presents since I've been here. Tell all your people to write me. From your

true friend, Private Reeves Eggers. (Son of John and Nancy Eggers)

Somewhere in England, Dec. 19, 1918: Dear Father, I am in England in the hospital. I have been here for almost a month. Got a little wound in the leg but will soon be ready to go back over to France. Got hit the 29th of September in the St. Quantain drive when we first started it. Our division was honored for their bravery up there, but there were not many of the whole divisions left to tell the tale. Am glad I was one of the lucky ones. I don't think it will last much longer anyway. They won't fight a hand-to-hand fight so don't think it will take us long to get into Berlin. Will get there next summer anyway if they don't quit before then. I would like to see Berlin shot up like Albert and some other towns in France. Your Son, Hugh Smith. (Son of Ernest and Marth Smith)

Somewhere in France, Nov. 20, 1919, Dear Sister, I guess you've heard the good news by this time. Ha! I don't guess it will be long till I'll get to come home. That's all the boys talk about now is coming home. I would like to get home by Christmas but I don't know whether I will make it or not. You need not worry about me now for I am fat and fine. All the boys were giving the best they had when it ended. So it's all over now. When I get to New York, I'll let you know. I heard from Guy a few days ago and he was well. I am about two miles from Paris now. It is the most beautiful place you ever saw. Give my love to all. Your loving brother, Halicy Caffee (Son of William and Myrtle Caffee)

EARLY DAYS

TEN YEARS AGO November 2015

Local football teams completed regular-season play with road games. The Campbellsville Eagles lost at Kentucky Country Day 19-14 in Louisville while the Taylor County Cardinals hammered Thomas Nelson 55-20 in Bardstown. Campbellsville was set to begin Class A postseason action Friday at home vs. Fulton City. Taylor County Cardinals started Class 4A playoffs at Knox Central.

Richard and Sue Bohanon celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Sunday, Nov. 8. A golden celebration was in their honor at Campbellsville Church of the Nazarene and hosted by their children.

TWENTY YEARS AGO November 2005

Amber Vaughn and Jeffrey Eastridge, both freshman at Campbellsville High School, received free bowling certificates donated by Phillips Lanes for perfect attendance.

Elizabeth Ann Harrell and John Robert RoBards, both of Louisville, exchanged wedding vows Friday,

June 3, at the Olmsted in Louisville.

THIRTY YEARS AGO November 1995

Twenty-one Taylor County High School Chorus members participated in the Fourth District Chorus at Meade County High School in Brandenburg.

The CB (citizen band radio) Disaster Club had its annual auction Saturday, Nov. 11, to raise money for local programs.

Betty Wright was honored recently with a reception given by her family for her 80th birthday.

FORTY YEARS AGO November 1985

Mr. and Mrs. Everette Lee toured Savannah, Georgia, Walt Disney's Magic Kingdom and Cypress Gardens on a vacation trip.

Mr. and Mrs. Ray Blevins and Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Richerson attended the funeral of Alfred Faucett of Georgia, formerly of Campbellsville.

FIFTY YEARS AGO November 1975

National Business Woman's

Week was observed by the Taylor B&PW Club with the annual Prayer Breakfast.

The Black Awareness Club of Campbellsville High School was founded Sept. 17, 1975.

SIXTY YEARS AGO November 1965

Cost of a new courthouse and furnishings is estimated at \$470,278. Work is now underway and completion of the building is expected in 12 months.

Geneva Campbell, reference librarian at Campbellsville College, has been listed in the 1966-1967 edition of "Who's Who of American Women."

SEVENTY YEARS AGO November 1955

The civics class of Campbellsville High School recently sent a get-well card to President Dwight Eisenhower who has been hospitalized for the past two months with a heart ailment.

It was reported that John Herman Spurling, 71, a well-known stock dealer and trader for the past 50 years, died Tuesday, Oct. 27.

EIGHTY YEARS AGO November 1945

Mr. and Mrs. Ray Caldwell, Route 5, recently received a letter from their son, Sgt. Edwin Caldwell concerning the death of their son, Sgt. James Caldwell, who was killed early this year in Belgium.

Jimmie Carroll, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Ona Carroll of Louisville, formerly of this city, brought four carrier pigeons to the home of Cleveland Minor at Mannsville and released them. A note was fastened to their legs and James Clayton, a playmate of Jimmie's reported the birds were home by 10:30 a.m. The pigeons are raised by the boys as a hobby.

NINETY YEARS AGO November 1935

Helen Randel, lecturer and authority on health and health culture, visited the local schools and gave short talks to the student bodies.

The Turner-Holt Meter Company filed incorporation papers this week with a capital stock of \$10,000

Farmers in the state voted to prolong the Triple, a program of hog and corn control, through

next week. Throughout the state and United States the votes were cast in favor of the A.A.A. 394 voted yes in Taylor and 12 against it.

HUNDRED YEARS AGO November 1925

The Taylor County Hatchery is making rapid progress on its new building on Columbia Avenue and Short Street.

A.T. Harmon and Lizzie Cox were united in marriage in the store of Mrs. W.G. Gilpin by the Rev. S.A. Edwards.

Mr. and Mrs. Ollie Phillips, who have been visiting the latter's parents, Mr. and Mrs. T.C. Fawcett, returned to their home in Akron, Ohio.

HUNDRED TEN YEARS AGO November 1915

John Dallas Bailey died at the home of his brother, J. R. Bailey. He is survived by Laurence Bailey.

At a masked Halloween party, the young folks of the town observed the occasion in a sane way. Elizabeth Edwards and Lissa Hord were given prizes for their costume.

Kentucky ag dept. announces student contests

BY CKNJ STAFF

Kentucky students are invited to enter the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's annual Poster and Essay Contest.

The theme of the 2026 contest is "Bluegrass Roots, Agriculture Strong" encouraging contestants to illustrate in words, original artwork or photographs how Kentucky's heritage is reflective in its agriculture.

"Kentucky's history is deeply rooted in agriculture. Residents can be proud of the work farmers and producers do every day to honor that history and plan for the future," Commissioner Jonathan Shell said in a release announcing

the contest. "By showcasing that love for our heritage in written words and beautiful art, Kentucky students can show their appreciation for what Kentucky farmers have built in our communities."

Students in kindergarten through 12th grade may submit a poster, an essay of 500 words or less, or a digital entry, which may be photos or original digital artwork. Each entry must include the actual written theme and be postmarked by Friday, March 20.

Winners will be notified by Friday, April 17. Winners in the poster and essay competitions will be selected in each grade. One statewide winner will be selected for

digital artwork.

Each winner will receive a \$100 award from Kentucky Agriculture and Environment in the Classroom and will be recognized at the 2026 Poster and Essay Contest Awards Ceremony next year.

Winning entries will be displayed in Commissioner Shell's Frankfort office and at the 2026 Kentucky State Fair in August in Louisville.

For more information, including complete contest rules and an entry form, go to kyagr.com/marketing/

poster-essay-contest.html or contact Bethany Mattingly, director of KDA's Agriculture Education and Outreach Division, at Bethany.Mattingly@ky.gov or 502-782-4125.

LEGAL NOTICE

The City of Campbellsville has filed legal action to foreclose against property located at 316 Pittman Ave., Campbellsville, Kentuc ky. If you have any legal interest in the property as an owner, lienholder, occupant, or if you believe you may hold a potential interest, please contact attorney Mackenzie Smith at 270-465-4455 or via email mackenzie@bn-claw.net on or before October 29th, 2025. If you do not assert your interest in a timely manner it may be foreclosed.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission Member
Nomination Meeting

A meeting to nominate candidates for the 4th District representative on the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission will be held Nov. 20 at Rough River State Resort Park, 450 Lodge Road, Falls of Rough, Ky. The meeting will start at 7:30 p.m. (Central time). Doors open at 6 p.m.

The commission provides oversight of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources and guides development of the state's regulations on hunting, fishing, boating and related matters.

Resident hunters or anglers of the 4th District who, for the past 2 consecutive years, have held a Kentucky hunting or fishing license or hunted or fished in Kentucky while license-exempt under KRS 150.170, may participate in the nomination meeting. The 4th Wildlife District includes Adair, Barren, Cumberland, Edmonson, Grayson, Green, Hardin, Hart, Larue, Marion, Metcalfe, Monroe, Nelson, Taylor and Washington counties.

Nominees must: be a current resident of the district; not be a convicted felon; have held hunting and fishing licenses for at least the previous 5 consecutive years or hunted and fished in Kentucky while license-exempt under KRS 150.170; and be well informed about wildlife conservation and restoration. The names of nominees chosen at the meeting will be submitted to the governor, who will appoint one of the nominees, subject to Kentucky Senate confirmation.

YOUR CUSTOMER JUST READ THIS AD.

ADVERTISE WITH US.

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HOUSING

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR:

- Campbellsville Public Housing
- Section 8

Federally subsidized, eligible applicants pay 30% of adjusted income

Housing Counseling Available

For details call: (270) 465-3576 or pickup application packet at 400 Ingram Ave.

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

LEGAL

PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the Comprehensive Agency Plan of the Campbellsville Housing Authority is on display for the next 45 days beginning Friday, October 17, 2025 and ending on Monday, December 1, 2025. The Plan can be reviewed, by appointment, at the Campbellsville Housing Authority located at 400 Ingram Ave, Campbellsville, KY 42718 during normal business hours. Any comments must be made in writing to:

Campbellsville Housing & Redevelopment Authority
P. O. Box 597
Campbellsville, KY 42719

Notice is hereby given that the Campbellsville Housing Authority will hold a public hearing on Friday, December 5, 2025 at 2:00 P.M. at the Campbellsville Housing Authority, 400 Ingram Ave., Campbellsville, KY 42718. Any person unable to attend the public hearing in person may contact the Campbellsville Housing Authority for other options. The purpose of the hearing is to discuss the Comprehensive Agency Plan.

CENTRAL KENTUCKY
News-Journal

CLASSIFIED DEADLINE

FRIDAY - 4:00 PM

Contact Customer Service at
270-465-8111, Option 1 or
classifieds@cknj.com
Monday-Friday 8AM-4PM

*Holidays advance deadline by 24 hours.