

U.S.M.S. "PHILADELPHIA"

Saturday July 17th

Dear Mother & Dad,

The whole week gone - where? It just washed away behind us and we loaf & read and talk & walk & eat & sleep and like the tale of the farmers up in Maine in the winter. Sometimes we set & think & sometimes we just set.

I've a nice lazy schedule - get up most anytime but never too late for 12.30 lunch & have read several of the commission reports for the Conference. We have had 4 morning sessions to review & discuss them so we won't be too far behind our British comrades in our preparation.

Have also read a book and a half of poems by Massfield & various Chinese poets, a French play and

various odds & ends of magazine
stuff. This is my first scribbling however
Somehow the fact that the mail doesn't
go out any time soon, does not act as
a speeder up of my lazy pen.

Oh did you ask about seasickness
well some folks have tried it out but it
hasn't touched me yet so I have hopes.
Of course we must still cross the Channel
as we touch at Cherbourg about dawn
on Monday morning & then go bobbing
across to Southampton. Had I known
that in the beginning, I'd be landing in
France for a bit. Many of our crowd
are doing that and they make me home-
sick to go along.

Found myself lined up on deck between
a Kansas farmer and a missionary
to Japan, a long lean man named Gilbert
Bowles and he has the most beautiful
expression I ever met. The Rhoads are
right in front of us on the same side
of the deck.

My cabin is fairly far down but a
deck above where Elisabeth traveled
and quite comfortable especially now

those first breathless hot days are past. Two of the men who are down on that deck have been sleeping up in chairs to keep cool and get some air.

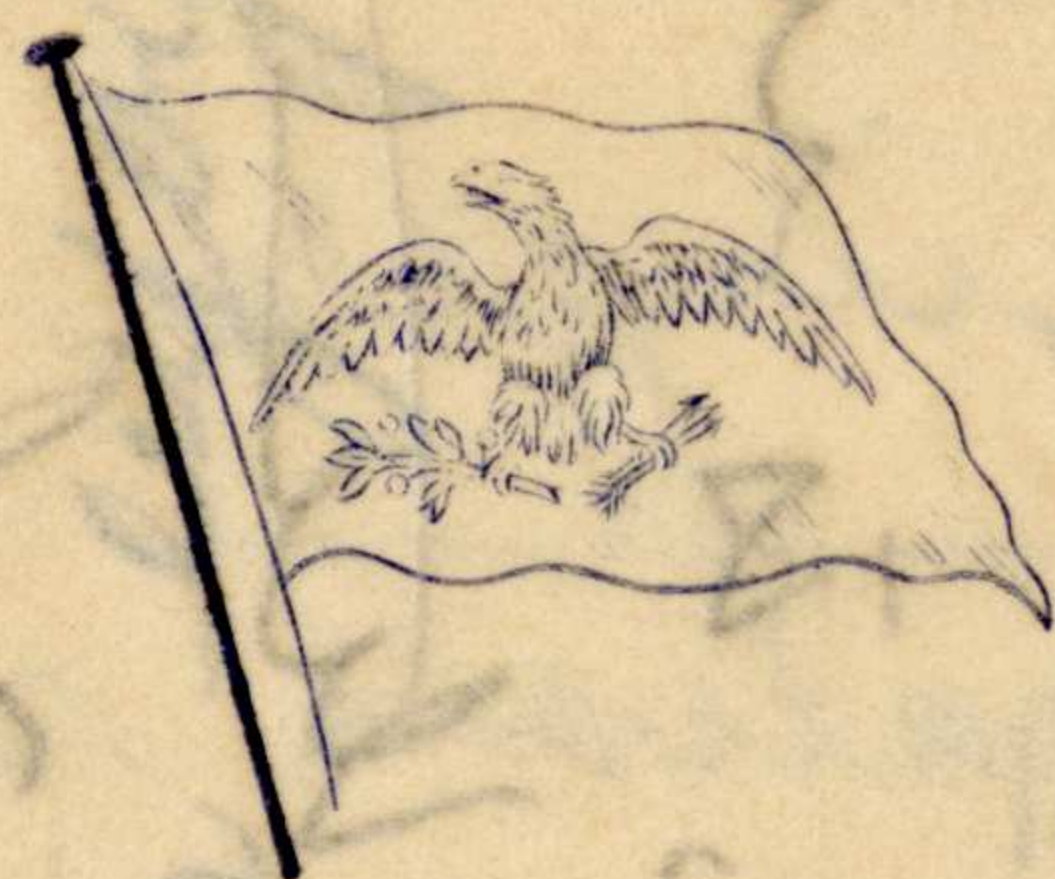
The Vans & my Newark family each sent me a basket of fruit, my club girls 2 lb. of chocolates, one heavy lover from Phila. sent roses and four or five other pals of mine sent me steamer letters - one even had the nerve to remind me of a vow some six months ago never to cross the Atlantic till a bridge was built. Eating my words has not made me sick anyway.

There goes the high for eats - seems as if I just came out of that dining room too but I would hate to miss anything you know.

Sunday P. M.

We sighted land today soon after noon and came smoothly in past the Silly Islands, Sands End & Sigard Point and now can just occasionally see dim shadows of the English coast. We were quite excited over seeing real houses & green grass again. That is a rocky treacherous coast though and it is the region too where a great many of the torpedoed American boats lie sunk. But it will be good to live in a real house again after over a week of living on a shelf in a hall closet.

Haven't really seen a lot of my roommates - Helen Vail from California and an elderly Miss Alice Jackson from Swarthmore with a lively red headed adopted daughter of seventeen. They are usually asleep by the time I climb up to my bunk and they are up & out by the time I wake up. Once on deck I usually stay there for it has been



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wonderful - at first very warm -
too warm even for a suit, then
later much cooler. We were headed
for the Azores for several days
until beyond the ice berg zone, then
turned north east & it was cooler
at once.

So many up and out all the
time (like me) that the ship's doctor
declared we'd have to pray for a
storm or run short of food.

I'd like to stay right aboard
now and do the rest of the sailing
back & then have all the land fun together
for I do love it once I'm on my sea
legs.

It's a most cosmopolitan
crowd - everything but Turks - have
found none of those yet but there

are Japs going over to the Olympic
games at Antwerp, an Italian officer, a
French opera singer, an Austrian
artist, an Australian rancher & spinner
of wonderful yarns, a Polish girl going
home to Warsaw, sixteen yachts doing
six countries in a month, chaperoned
by three young schoolmasters, some
sisters from a hospital on Long Island
going to visit the Mother Mission in
France of which they are a branch -
but this could run on indefinitely.

Julia Eves & Ruth Vail are much
excited over getting over early in the
morning at Cherbourg & we all expect
to land either there or six hours
later in Southampton.

How I wish you were both
along for even Nanna would not
be ill I'm sure and it has been
such fun we all hate to leave it.
"Mother Sills" kept me up and going
quite without quailms and these
last two days I've felt even better

I ordinarily do on land and without taking any of the stuff either.

This afternoon we passed the Safajette headed for New York and sailing a lot more sedately than her wild career of December last. I really rather enjoyed looking at her again.

Mail sacks & trunks are being hoisted in great number and piled along the deck for they all go off in the early dawn on tenders and so do the passengers. Since our already crowded humping ground for this vessel is supposed to carry about 150 passengers and are told & has 375 - this does not include stowage

so chairs & people are so stuck one cannot walk with any pleasure except at night or early morning.

England is lovely from a distance anyway, a bit hazy but very soft colored and dreamy. It seems curious to be so uncertain of my plans beyond the next 2 days but it worries me not at all.

With heaps of love to you both and to the rest of my friends too. Thank goodness there is no anxiety about this voyage as there was over the Rochambeau & its dramatic rush to a safe landing.

Fully rigged sailing vessel with a crimson hull just passing - were seen many of them as well as S.S. & freighters - some every day.

More later from London
Burlak

July 19th



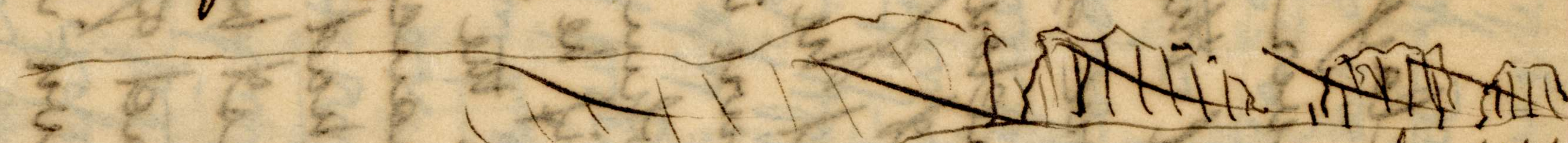
Pulling out of Southampton for London
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So much for that - Customs over
& we are off for London - I am chuckling
over a remark made on the boat by
one of our party who was in England
when war began in 1914 - never thought of
it till after I'd walked up to a ticket window
with a sign on - London 14s & knowing
it was several hours trip on a boat train
for the purpose just as we had traveled in
France, bought my ticket & gotten aboard.
Then I remembered Dr. Polley's quotation,
"Only Princes, fools & Americans ride 1st
class" nice to know that " " are classed
separately even if on the same level, but I was a
bit chagrined when I found it was a
1st & 3rd class train, ^{not just 1 class as I thought} & 3rd class is as good or
better than 2d class which was our usual
speed on the continent. Of course there was the
war time avoidance of fleas & their kind which
the officers carried 1st class & the poilus
carried in 3d class but I find Eng. leaves
out 2d class carriages altogether just as
we do.

Huh! Just noted a nice fat red bug
crawling across the collar of the man in

the corner facing me but luckily he
is not beside me so perhaps I am
safe. ^{Shows up the fallacy of safety in 1st class travel anyway} Dr. & Mrs. Rhoads & Estlin are in
the same compartment & mentioning
the Ackermans resident in London decided
there was no keeping New Hope out of
the place at all. They go on up to the
north in the morning & what I do
depends on my mail very largely.

The trip up to Southampton past the
lovely Isle of Wight on a soft colored
sunshiny day was a panorama that
won't fade out ever — oh I can't



begin to picture it but 3 sharp, high little
islets, called needles stood out in pale
grey with their white light house at the
end of the island ~~on~~ our right and on
ahead the bluffs crowned with tidy
houses & fields, ^{at woods} & coming down to the
waters edges almost at once, then the
stretch of translucent green river
with the soft blue of the more distant
shores & the glow of a red buoy close
ahead of us stand very clearly in my
picture gallery & the gulls that played
about ever since Sunday added much
to all the pictures.

Tuesday, July 20th

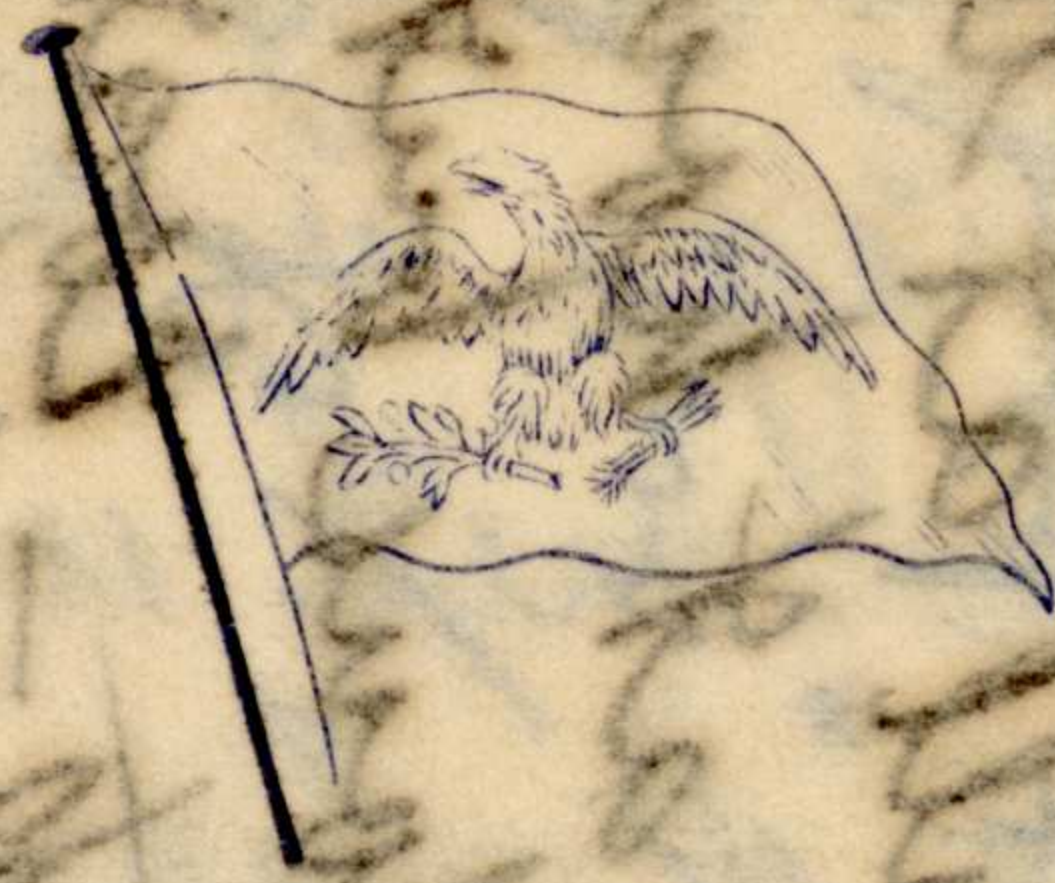
You are getting this in relays as it will serve the double purpose of a diary, which I never could do just for myself, and a letter at the same time. Well this is my first day in old London town and if you believe in love at first sight you'll know how I'm feeling about old London town. It has been another heavenly warm sunshiny day like most of those on the ocean and at breakfast a card from Sidney regretting that he is not here to show me about but has one more week of vacation down in Cornwall & much as I want to see him I'd hate to have him miss it, when he gets so little country. I warned him in advance what war there would be if he changed & sacrificed any of it because of my coming. Well I did too for from the looks of the mail I found at the Express Co. I'd not be popping over to France at once but stopping here for all the time perhaps for granny has had to go on to the alpes & I can't go on so far even to see her. She must be very careful all winter & will have to go down to the Riviera instead of back to Poland & that is a bitter pill to her ambitious soul. She is down in the very part of the alpes I liked so two years ago & I'd love to go over. That with the Riviera later ought to cure anyone of anything & with her sister along to look after her, she ought to come up soon.

Then my next letter from Margaret Hayland, my little English cleanflew roommate for a time at Grange. No chance of a jaunt anywhere with me as she is booked up with visiting until Sept. in Bucks & Kent but was stealing the day to run in & see me & could I meet her at the New Century Club at Hay Hill at 11⁰⁰ on the 20th? Thinking I arrived on the 18th. Well it was then 10.30 so I pocketed my other letters & ran & we had a lovely day together.

You know I never felt so at home in any city right away as I do here for when I hopped on a bus & went down to the Amer. Ex. office that first venture, here I buzzed past street after street that I've known more or less all my life Oxford St, Edgeware Road, Bishop's Road, Regent St, Piccadilly Circus, Haymarket, & even if I couldn't remember the definite associations everything is so packed with even the vaguely familiar.

Margaret & I did Lond St, Regent St, Liberty's & another shop, then lunched & talked indefinitely, went to a 4th service at Westminster, then had tea & more talk. We were visiting Webster & Carey were along as a sort of anniversary for it was just about a year ago the four of us went picnicking on their last day in France & laughed ourselves nearly ill!

Thursday, July 22^d



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Well yesterday it rained in true Sunday style but it didn't worry me one bit. I bought myself a modest little umbrella & expect to stay with it till Aug. 28th every day. My luck still holds even if Sidney is not back, & Grammie & Dorothy too far away & Alice back home for early this afternoon I hunted up Devonshire House - the 2^d one of that name proved to be right & when I ran that to earth I found Cabert one of our old commissary staff in the office & bagged on about a few more things till 3⁰⁰ when he could get off for a delayed luncheon & a chance to talk. On our way out we ran into Montford whom I thought not to see at all as he was due to have gone back to Poland again so we had a jolly party & Monty & I had another all evening despite the rain - that reminded us of a year ago when we did Paris so thoroughly over the 14th of July despite rain & a few other setbacks. My hat in wrong baggage is nothing to him for it was all stolen coming out of Poland in Feb. & with all his medical records, personal gifts, equipment, clothes etc it was dead serious for he had been away in the army 4 yrs & our mind 2 yrs so had nothing much at home

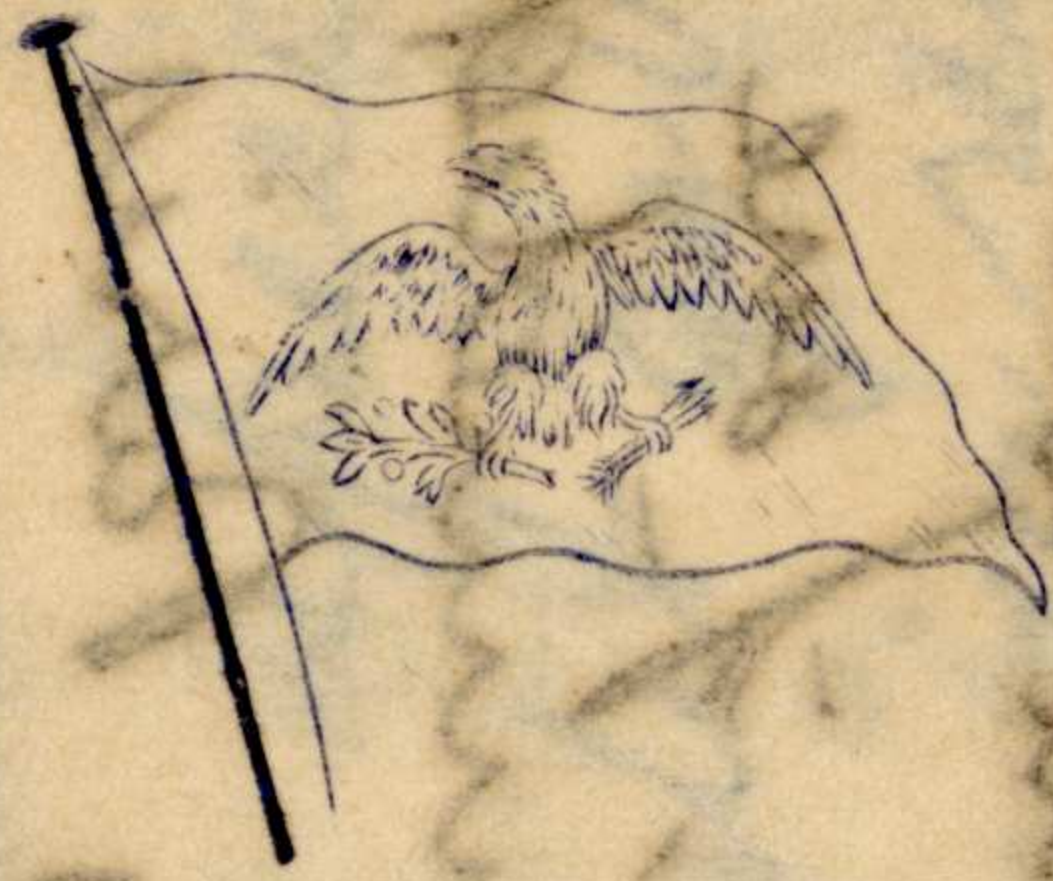
as he says, it was like entering life again -
a shuffling infant of 26 yrs. & may word. But
he has had a discouraging & bitter 4 months
of it on top of that siege in Poland & only the
morning before he met us had landed
the thing he wanted most with the
Imperial Relief Fund out in Poland again
but not with our unit at all & now it is
amazing to find several other things he
tried for something in on the same day &
one he almost took in desperation being
urged on him too. Well we did Poland for
& aft last night & how I wish there were
more like him going back there for it
is amazingly worth while.

Today I went to Amer. Ex. for mail again.
& told them to send it out here, & there came
into Peg Comstock a girl who lived at
Greenwich House one winter & whom we
just missed that day at Mount Holyoke,
perhaps you remember. We both thought
each other in the U. S. & she is back to
finish some work at the British Museum
that she did not complete when studying
here last winter & goes on - she & Miss Hughes
to Norway next week & then home but
we are having tea together tomorrow
& expect to catch up on a lot of things.
This afternoon the Jacksons took me to

see Barrie's play "Mary Rose" at the Royal Haymarket Theatre and it was very weird but charming just as Barrie usually is. I told you or no maybe I didn't, that they are delayed in their plans of going on to Scotland & seemed so worried & lost as to what to do in London that I told them to come on out here, telephoned ahead & personally conducted the party even if she had been in London before & I hadn't. It was funny how easy it all came to me from working with the Britisters to know one looks up "registered luggage" instead of checked baggage & "booking office" for tickets, etc. And the tea habit always did fit me pretty well - we had it every day on shipboard, in baskets on the train at Southampton station, on trays at the theatre between acts and my word one needs it too for such cold wet days as seem their habit here.

Saturday, July 24th

I seem to get a whack at this about every 2 days. yesterday I spent shopping again - having great fun getting together my winter wardrobe but it eats up money most as fast as at home so it will be a very modest one - so far it has covered a pair of gaiters, at less than \$1.00 + 4 prs. woolen hose at just a bit over a dollar ~~the~~ kind that cost over \$2.00 2 yrs ago at home + this was a bargain even for London. Dress & coat, I have bought too but am not much pleased as they seem neither specially cheap nor wonderfully suitable but they will at least clothe me decently & surely for less money than at home. I thought I could be this time trust myself to shop alone but begin to think I never can, on top clothes like dresses & coats - coat rack & top coat these are + all right but they don't feel like me. Still I never seem to like new clothes any more - maybe I'll grow to - if not, I'll try to sell out again. Tea & a bit of the British Museum with Peg was great fun and I thought our Metropolitan was wonderful as could



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be but I can't touch this.

Manger, our old chef d'equipe is an architect and lives right round the corner from me - just got my note that I'd really arrived & came round last night with lots of gossip & full of plans for his cycling holiday over in France - goes to-morrow - now why in the dickens was it I a boy? - I'd go with him - still that isn't the real reason either I guess, not all of it anyway for much as I like & Manger he isn't really one of my bestest pals - a 2 weeks cycle trip rather demands that.

This afternoon thanks to Montford, I got in on a garden party - Reminon of Missionites & just before it I got drawn into the wedding feast in progress at Devonshire House - Calvert was one of the performers (not one of the principals) & took me in for eats before we dashed off to the Reminon. He showed me a bit more of London on the way out and I nearly lost my head & my heart

both over the wonderful black horses of
the famous Horse Guard in front of
Whitehall - looks like comic opera stuff
but I liked them lots - hope they always
keep them on for the scarlet & white
uniforms on the big six footers & the
shiny trimmings on them & their beautiful
inky streets brighten up many a dull day
for anyone who goes near. How I'd
hate to be one though - still maybe a city
decoration isn't a useless life for lots of
us can't even be decorative.

Then we had a bout with the
English language you'll love like I did.
Calvert was laughing over our American secretary
just arrived the way they'd had to educate
him at the office to say "braces" instead
of "suspenders" as suspenders were a
delicate subject one did not mention - meaning
in Eng. hose supporters only. Bye & bye ^{Calvert}
made some move to carry more of
my impedimenta & said "But you
haven't your 'gamp' have you". Knew
he couldn't mean gimp, as my dress
was of no immodest cut & I knew
the occasion did not demand high
neck so says I, "now what sort of
English slang is that?" "Why, gamp or
'broolly' means umbrella." "Ha! ha!" says

I, "now that squares up Mr. V's remark about his suspenders. Don't you ever ask any Amer. girl where is her gamp or you'll get in slutch!" I explained why & we both howled.

The Remunion was at Marjorie Fry's & after the morning's rain it was clear and warm & heavenly out in a charming garden with proper walks & flower beds & fountains - several old Missions I knew & Katharine Glancy I was specially glad to see as she was the Irish girl I hoped might go on to Ireland with me & somehow my letter had never reached her. Lack of reply meant to me she had gone out to India with her brother as she was to do last summer. But here she was & going to Ireland next week - on a sad errand however - to close & sell the estate of relatives who have lost everything as most of her people over there have done so of course on a heartbreaking errand like that she can't dump a stranger upon them & I don't fancy the crossing of the Irish sea twice for no real business, enough to bat around a few days there alone. So we'll have a day together as she comes thru in two or three weeks on her way to France.

Too late after the party to do anything but a bus ride & a closer look at Parliament House & a walk along the embankment. Parliament House & Tower are very very fine & it is all the more remarkable because they were built during a period of so predominantly ugly styles in architecture. Walking along the embankment by the Thames, if one did not look at ugly buildings on the other side, reminded us strongly of the Seine. London is not so fine as Paris but reminds me more strongly of it than of any other city I know. Oh there was one great bed of blooming fuchsias of many different colors up in St. James Park too that you would have loved. Also the starring of tiny white daisies on the close clipped turf at the end of the Parliament Houses by



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the bridge. Except for N. Glancy the Reunion was a disappointment for there were only about 20 there & Monty thought there would be a hundred or so - else we'd have gone out to the aero derby probably. That sounds exciting but still I'm glad I saw those few people too.

Wednesday July 28th

Well these last three days are keeping up the record on rain - hasn't missed a day since I came except that first one and cold! - well it reminds me of my initiation in France - also shows me plainly why the English are such an outdoors people - the only way one can exist happily. Yesterday despite the rain I was quite warm & comfortable with winter togs on tramping about Windsor & Eaton. That glorious old castle & battlements crowning

the hill have it all over Versailles
in location at least though otherwise
they are too different to draw comparisons.
I loved it out there despite the
rain - Bucks + Berks through which
we wandered are not so different
from ours tho flatter.

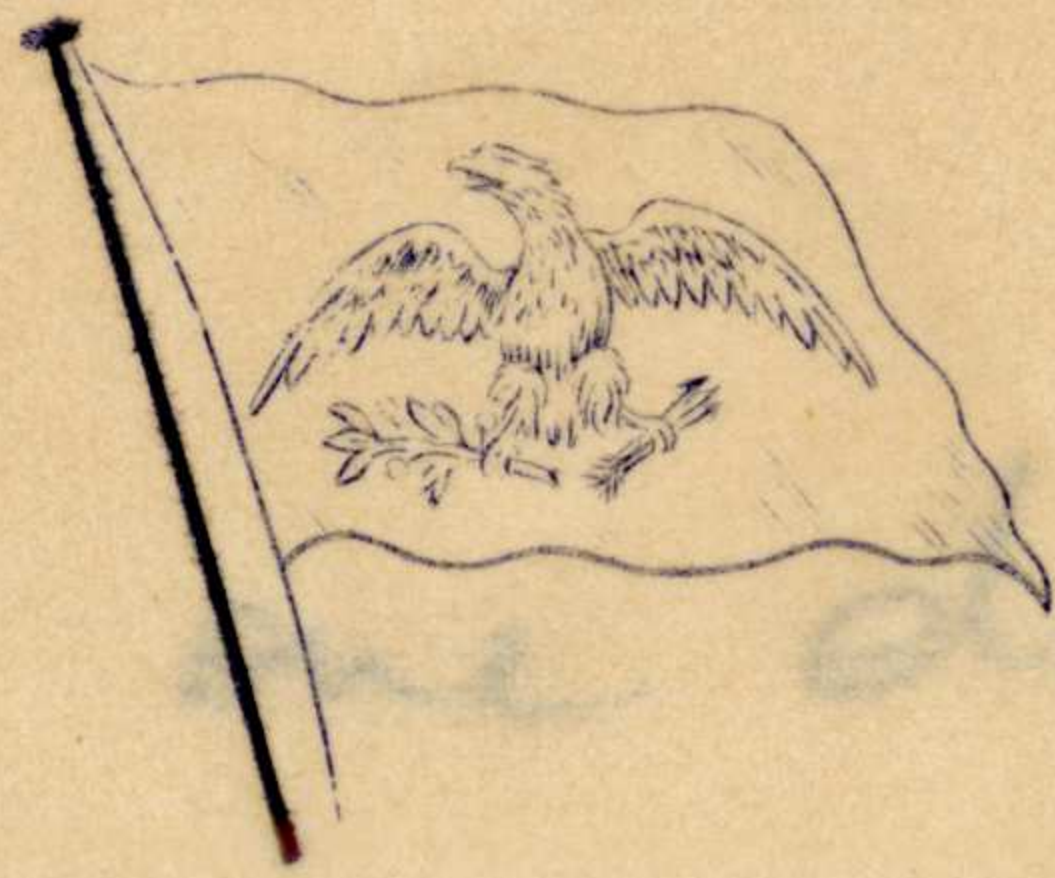
My luck has turned - none of the
folk I wanted to go bathing with can
get off of the ones who can, I would not
like it with, so I am going away on
Co op a bit better than I might have
done.

Oh but it was nice to get my first
U.S.A. mail yesterday morning too, just
before going off to Windsor - really about
the nicest day I've had. Another old Miss went
came over for dinner & then we cleared out
for a tramp & talk for the atmosphere of Miss
house is deadly. I like Miss Biddle a
lot - but deliver me from the cold clammy
small hotel any where - especially in
London - most convenient to eat & sleep
in but not to really live in, thank you.

Today & tomorrow & what I dig up on Co op will largely determine the rest of my schedule, probably a week end down in the country where they are renovating & restarting an old meeting house. "The Blue Idol" sounds like a public house "pub" (tavern) doesn't it. Then next week I'll probably go over to Siverpool & Manchester & old Chester to see Joan Howson, Betsy Ross & Christine Milne who are running a place for 500 ^{or 2} austrian children in Siverpool, but can get off for a day, up in the Lake Country or down in Wales or maybe both among them.

Oh I nearly forgot a session with Clayton the other day, just out from Poland recently & returning to it on Friday. That unit has grown a lot - some 80 in number now - work in typhus fighting, also a lot on relief & agriculture down in the devastated area which is worse than France.

Just now relief is terribly busy in Warsaw for 150,000 refugees have streamed in from the grodno sector but everyone seems hopeful the war will stop now. Poland has been chased back into the area agreed on by the Peace Treaty & gr. Britain is ready to step on Russia if she comes into Poland though it was quite all right for Poland to invade Russia. We'll hope it means the end of those activities anyway. First consignment of relief stuff really gotten through into Russia - to Moscow by our unit & notice to see about getting other workers out - I am sorely tempted



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to volunteer but reckon I won't -
not just yet at least.

Yesterday we ran by a perfectly
gorgeous nursery with all sorts
of gay blossoms I could not recog-
nize at all & the train would not
linger for me to investigate either.

It was dreadful to see wheat
fields laid so flat by storm that
gathering it seems well nigh out of
the question & it makes me fearful
lest you are getting the same
thing at home.

Must go hunt up more co of
information now. Hope later to
stalk the Ackermans again - looked

for them one day as they are
within walking distance of us
but found #90 was not extant
on that particular street - down to
#92 was S.W., then came a block
or two of another name & most of
the intervening numbers but no #90
& then their street began again with
#58. as I had forgotten to bring
along the phone number there was
no other clue but I hope to try
again by phone at least.

How are bank & roof & farm & garden
& canny, etc - all coming on, I wonder.
Wish I could see for myself.

With much love

Bulah