



# Gardner Newsletter

A newsletter for the Gardner Family and Friends

## The Metcalfs and Gardners Mourn the Loss of Ruth Amy Metcalf—Eldest of The Original Gang of Ten

Volume 10, Issue 39

Summer, 2007

Family and friends of Ruth Amy Metcalf gathered together at the East Charleston Church of the Nazarene on August 18, 2007 to mourn her passing.

Here is Ruth's obituary published by Pearons Funeral Home in Lyndonville, Vermont where people visited Ruth the previous Friday.

**Ruth Amy Metcalf**  
*(December 4, 1913—  
August 5, 2007)*

“Beloved wife and mother, Ruth Amy Metcalf, age 93, of Westerville, Ohio, went to

be with the Lord August 5, 2007 at Mt. Carmel East Hospital.

She was a member of the Shepherd Church of the Nazarene of Gahanna, Ohio.

Preceded in death by her husband, Henry D. Metcalf, parents Will and Olive Gardner, and sisters, Elinor Cove, Nita Ames, Elizabeth Johnson; and brothers Adelbert and Earl Gardner.

Survivors include her three children, Richard L. Metcalf, Ruth Anne Metcalf, and Geri Rosser, sisters Beulah Griffes, Lois Cardwell; broth-



RUTH AMY METCALF

ers Raymond and Clayton Gardner, and grandchildren Andy and Arthur Metcalf.”

When Aunt Ruth reached 90 years of age in 2003, her friend, Alice Burnham, wrote a poem about her. What better tribute to a life well lived than to have some-

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## Fighting Pancho Villa: Letters Home

In the last issue of The Gardner Newsletter, we published some letters from Earl Lang, Grandpa Gardner's half brother, while he was serving in France during World War I. When Earl joined the Vermont National Guard in 1916 he was first sent to Eagle Pass, Texas to participate in the

U.S. effort to crush the Pancho Villa uprising.

**Company D, 1<sup>st</sup> Vermont Infantry, Eagle Pass, TX, July 12, 1916**

Dear Father and Mother, *(Bert and Amy Lang)*

Just a line to say that we move tonight. We don't know where

we are going, but have an idea we will go across the border to block a raid planned by a bunch of Villa's bandits. I understand that Washington has been notified that they were going to make a raid on a place called Big Bend. Of course, we don't know anything for sure, - just that the first battalion of our regiment moves tonight. That's Companies A, B, C and D. I guess it is not over fifty miles from here

if that is the place. It is quite evident that it was a surprise to all of our officers because they just bought a lot of lumber to make a floor in our kitchen tent.

Have you got any of my pictures? If you have, will you send one to Beatrice? I don't know if you knew it, but I gave her my ring to keep until I come back. I thought

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# Remembering Ruth Amy Metcalf . . . .

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one write a poem about it! It seems most appropriate to publish the poem here.

## An Ode to Ruth

By Alice B. Burnham  
December 17, 2003

A very special lady that I was privileged to know  
Came to our local church  
More than a decade ago --

Born in the Northeast Kingdom  
In East Charleston on a farm,  
The oldest of ten siblings;  
God sheltered her from harm.

In spite of a distance to school  
She aimed to get more knowledge -  
Moved about to complete High School  
And even went to college.

Teaching school became her life:  
Successful and influential  
However, after a very few years  
God's plans were consequential.

He gave to her a Godly man,  
Who taught and preached God's Word.  
Three children blessed this union  
As Ruthie served the Lord.

She sang and played the piano  
In services at the church.  
She loved to read and study -  
And often did research.

A lady of integrity; truly a friend to all,  
A dedicated Mother, and a devoted wife.

--

As we review her virtues we learn  
We've been truly blessed by her life!

\* \* \* \*

Uncle Clayton has a great early remembrance of Aunt Ruth, his older sister.

## A Memory of Ruth:

When I was about 10, I was taking my Saturday night bath in a round washtub that was placed near the furnace register.

"This register was in the small living room and Mama had asked everyone to stay away so that I might have some privacy. It was winter time and the only really warm place was near that register.

Ruth wanted the warmth of that register. So she pretended not to have heard Mama's request. She walked into that living room saying 'Don't worry, I won't look'.

So she took a chair on the other side of the room, read a book, and did not look."

Perhaps it would be comforting to the family if you sent your own personal remembrance of Ruth to Dick, Geri or Ruth Anne.



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you might miss it and not know where it was. I had a letter from Leon and he said he helped you move. Please write and tell me where you moved to and all about it. You may write to me at this same address and it will be forwarded to me. I will send you my new address as soon as I can after I get to our new location. We expect to be on the jump all night and have a lot to do now, so I will close. Remember me to all the folks there.

Lots of love, Earl

**P.S. Now don't worry a bit because there may be no trouble at all. It may be some time before I can write again, but will write when I have a chance.**

The following is a letter that Grandma Gardner wrote to Earl Lang while he was in Texas. It apparently accompanied a letter written by Grandpa Gardner to him.

August 7, 1916

Dear Earl,

As Will is writing a few lines to you, I guess I will put in a few too. Probably I will tell you the same things he does. It is quite warm here tonight, but I suppose it is warmer down there. I don't believe I would want any part of that country.

We were glad to get your letter and know you are well and wish the time would not be very long before we would see you back again safe and sound. I suppose the girls will be back soon, and I bet they will be glad too. I guess you all fare quite slim as far as the eats go. Would you get a little box of sweets if we

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## In Pursuit of Pancho Villa 1916-1917

By Joe Griffith

(Taken from the Worldwide Web)

*(Editor's Note: Although this is a very long article, it is extremely pertinent to the story of Earl Lang's service in the Vermont National Guard. Today, the story of Pancho Villa is largely overlooked and not even mentioned in many history books. This article rectifies that omission and places a historical perspective on Earl Lang's military service in Texas and on his subsequent deployment to France during World War I.)*

**D**oroteo Arango, alias Francisco "Pancho" Villa, was born in 1877 (1879 according to some sources) in San Juan del Rio, State of Durango, Mexico. During his lifetime, he was a ruthless killer (killing his first man at age sixteen), a notorious bandit (including cattle rustling and bank robbery), a revolutionary (a general commanding a division in the resistance against the 1913-14 Victoriano Huerta dictatorship), and despite his bloodthirsty nature, an enduring hero to the poor people of Mexico. In their minds, Villa was afraid of no one, not the Mexican government or the gringos from the United States. He was their one true friend and avenger for decades of Yankee oppression.

In late 1915 Pancho Villa had counted on American support to obtain the presidency of Mexico. Instead the U.S. Government recognized the new government of Venustiano Carranza. An irate Villa swore revenge against the United States and began by murdering Americans in hopes of provok-

ing President Woodrow Wilson's intervention into Mexico. Villa believed that American intervention would discredit the Carranza government with the people of Mexico and reaffirm his own popularity. Villa and his "pistoleros" launched raids along the U.S.- Mexico boundary to frighten the Americans living in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona border towns.

Concerned for the safety of Americans,



*Brigadier General John J. Pershing in 1917*

President Wilson ordered the War Department to begin deploying troops to Texas and New Mexico. In April, 1915, Brigadier General John J. Pershing and his 8th Infantry Brigade were sent to Fort Bliss, Texas with the mission of guarding the U.S.- Mexico border from Arizona to a bleak outpost in the Sierra Blanca mountains ninety miles southeast of El Paso. While the presence of American troops served to deter Villa on the north of the Rio Grande, the murder of U.S. citizens in Mexico continued.

One of the most heinous atrocities occurred January 11, 1916, when Villa's bandits stopped a train at Santa Ysabel. The bandits removed a group of 17 Texas businessmen (mining engineers) invited by the Mexican govern-

ment to reopen the Cusihiuriachic mines below Chihuahua City and executed them in cold blood. However, one of those shot feigned death and rolled down the side of the embankment and, crawling away into a patch of brown mesquite bushes, escaped. The train moved on, leaving the corpses at the mercy of the slayers, who stripped and mutilated them.

After the escapee arrived back at Chihuahua City, a special train sped to Santa Ysabel to reclaim the bodies. When the people of El Paso heard of the massacre, they went wild with anger. El Paso was immediately placed under martial law to prevent irate Texans from crossing into Mexico at Juarez to wreak vengeance on innocent Mexicans. Despite outrage in the United States and Washington over the Santa Ysabel massacre, President Wilson refused to intervene and send troops into Mexico.

Two months later, Villa decided to strike again. This time he would invade the United States. At 2:30 a.m., on the morning of March 9, 1916, he and 500 "Villistas" attacked the 13th U.S. Cavalry at Camp Furlong near Columbus, New Mexico. Despite prior knowledge that Villa and his men were pillaging, raping, and murdering their way toward the border, the cavalry was caught completely by surprise. One reason for the cavalry's sluggishness was because some of the troops had been drinking; but perhaps more importantly, all of the troops' rifles were chained and locked in gun racks. Still, the cavalry managed to get organized and fought off the "Villistas" killing many of them in the process. During their retreat, however, the "Villistas" stopped at Columbus, New Mexico for a looting and window-shooting spree that left several U.S. civilians dead. For three hours, bullets struck houses and shouts of "Viva Villa! Viva Mexico! Muerte a los

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Americanos!” (death to Americans) were heard in the streets. The town was set afire, though Villa’s men realized nothing beyond a few dollars and perhaps some merchandise from the burnt out stores. The terror continued until about 7 a.m.; and when Villa finally rode off, the smoke-filled streets of Columbus were littered with the dead and wounded. Fourteen American soldiers and ten civilians were killed in the raid.

Although Villa’s losses from his American incursion were high, he had achieved his aim of arousing the United States. Now, he and his men headed due south from Palomas seeking the safety of the mountains of the Sierra Madre. However, the 13th U.S. Cavalry was now in hot pursuit. Colonel Frank Tompkins had managed to gather 32 cavalrymen and was nipping at the heels of the fleeing Mexicans. His troops sighted Villa’s rear guard and killed over thirty men and horses. Colonel Tompkins kept up the chase for eight hours and killed a number of stragglers as well as more of Villa’s rear guard. Lacking supplies, Tompkins and his cavalrymen were forced to return to Camp Furlong. On their way back, they counted 75 to 100 “Villistas” killed during their hastily organized pursuit.

The populace of Columbus was in a state of hysteria. The American cavalry troops collected the bodies of the “Villistas” that had been shot in the streets and on the outskirts of town and piled them on funeral pyres and cremated them. For a day or more the fires smoldered and the odor of burning flesh permeated the air. Columbus lay virtually demolished, so completely burned and pillaged that it never recovered its former vitality. To prevent repetitions of the Columbus outrage, President Wilson called out 15,000 militia and stationed them

along the U.S. - Mexico border. Wilson also informed President Carranza that he intended to send a military expedition into northern Mexico to capture Pancho Villa, and Carranza reluctantly agreed. President Wilson then appointed Brigadier General John J. Pershing to lead 4,800 troops (mostly cavalry), supported by aircraft and motorized military vehicles (the first time either were used in U.S. warfare) on a punitive expedition into Mexico to capture Villa.

However, there was a catch to Per-



*The Curtiss J-2 “Jennie” aircraft  
“deathtrap.”*

shing’s mission orders from Wilson that would be decisive in the end. Pershing was to pursue and punish Villa, but not to upset the Carranza government by firing on any of his troops. The futility of Wilson’s orders was plain even before the expedition began, when the local Carranzista commander at nearby Palomas threatened to attack the Americans. Pershing was only able to stave off an incident by hiring the man as a guide for his troops. Carranza would take advantage of Wilson’s restrictions to make life miserable for the Punitive Expedition throughout their mission.

In 1916, the Signal Corps Aviation Service only had a few crude aircraft.

The 1st Aero Squadron which was assigned to support Pershing was equipped with six Curtiss JN-2 “Jennies” which had a reputation of being unstable deathtraps. In addition, the aerservice was handicapped by inexperienced pilots. Pershing was barely a month into the expedition when he lost all six of his aircraft. Two crashed within the first week of the expedition. Pershing’s expedition also provided an opportunity for one of the Army’s more headstrong members - George S. Patton - then a young lieutenant. Fearing he would be left behind on mundane border patrol with his unit, Patton pleaded with Pershing to take him along as a replacement for one of his two aides that was absent when the expedition was ordered into Mexico. Pershing agreed at the last moment and took him. The thirty year old Patton was convinced that he would now be able to fulfill his destiny as a great warrior.

Villa had a nine days head start before Pershing’s Expedition crossed into Mexico at noon on March 15, 1916. By that time, Villa and his men were well hidden in the mountains. To cover the uncharted terrain, Pershing divided his force into East and West columns and proceeded methodically into the unfamiliar Mexican interior. Basically, the two American columns of the expedition got nowhere in their pursuit of Villa. Northern Mexico was a vast wasteland with few towns and dominated by the barren and rugged Sierra Madre Mountains with peaks averaging ten to twelve thousand feet and honeycombed with deep canyons providing excellent hiding places for Villa and his men. The few roads were little more than dirt trails, dusty in dry weather and muddy quagmires in the rain. Villa’s men were on their home ground while Pershing was moving into unfamiliar and largely unmapped territory depending on Mexican guides whose loyalty was always questionable.

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Pershing's soldiers, mostly raw recruits, encountered every imaginable mishap during their eleven months in Mexico. President Carranza had promised assistance, but when, for example, Pershing's men were on the verge of capturing Villa, the "Carranzistas" attacked them. Another time, Pershing's Indian scouts misinformed him about the location of Villa's lair. On other occasions, the scouts brought in blood-filled boots and bullet-riddled shirts as "proof" that he had been killed. Pershing's East column fanned out from Columbus through cactus and desert, pueblos and small settlements, Ascension and Corralitos. The West column meandered about among hills and plains to Culbertson's Ranch, one hundred miles west of El Paso, near the New Mexico - Arizona - Mexico border, and the Ojitos to the south. After some months, both columns converged at Casas Grandes only to split again a little later, with one heading south for Pearson, Cumbre, and Madera, and the other marching southeastwardly for Guerrero, Agua Caliente, Ojos Azules, and Carrizal.

At Colonia Dublan, Pershing established his permanent command post where he began to plan how he would snare Villa. Everywhere U.S. troops went, men, women, and children cheerfully provided them with misinformation about his (Villa's) whereabouts. As in past American invasions (e.g., the Mexican War of 1846-1848), the Pershing Expedition was a financial "boon" to Mexico. The American soldiers' wants were catered to and satisfied everywhere they went. Prices skyrocketed. If they so desired, soldiers could submerge themselves in Mexican beer. Cantinas were open all night. In many restaurants soldiers devoured "deer" meat that once ran in the streets barking. Life was hard only when the Americans marched or

rode along the dirt roads and were eating their dry ration crackers and looking for water. Dublan was transformed into an enormous military encampment complete with a railhead where tons of supplies were unloaded by a thousand civilian workers. The soldiers and civilians worked by day and brawled by night in the saloons and bordellos that had sprung up in the once sleepy town. Villa's men mingled with the populace at will by simply removing the cartridge belts they normally strapped across their chests.



*George S. Patton*

*General Patton in France in 1917.*

They even mixed with the Americans and attended Western "cowboy" movies with Pershing's officers.

In May, 1916, Lieutenant Patton saw combat for the first time. Based on information about the location of Julio Cardenas, one of Villa's most trusted subordinates and commander of his personal bodyguard; Patton, accompanied by ten soldiers from the 6th Infantry Regiment, and two civilian guides traveling in three Dodge open top touring automobiles, conducted a surprise raid on a ranch house at San Miguelito near Rubio. During the ensuing fire-fight, Patton and his men killed three men. One was identified as Cardenas. The other two dead Mexicans were an unnamed Villista captain

and a private. Patton's men tied the bodies to the hoods of the cars, while Patton put Cardenas' silver-studded saddle and sword into his vehicle. The spectacle of the three cars with the bodies tied on the hoods caused a great commotion along the road, but Patton and his party sped through the countryside to their headquarters at Dublan without incident. At around 4 p.m., Patton arrived at Dublan with the three bloody corpses strapped across the blistering-hot hoods of the automobiles. War correspondents crowded around to get a firsthand account of his adventure. The stories they filed made Patton a national hero for several weeks. His photograph appeared in newspapers around the United States.

Pershing was pleased that someone had enlivened the hunt for Villa and actually taken out a key member of his band. He even permitted Patton to keep Cardenas' sword and silver saddle as trophies of his first fight. In June, Pershing was informed that Villa could be taken at the small village of Carrizal, northwest of his command center at Dublan. When the Pershing's troops assaulted the village on June 21, they quickly realized they had been hoodwinked for they found themselves fighting "Carranzistas," not Villistas. Scores of "Carranzistas" were killed or wounded. Villa was reported to have watched with much delight — from a safe distance — as his two enemies battled each other in total confusion. The unfortunate American attack on Mexican government troops became known as the "Carrizal Affair" and created such a row that war with Mexico seemed possible. The situation led President Wilson to call 75,000 National Guardsmen into Federal service to help police the U.S. - Mexico border. In fact, hostilities with Mexico probably would have erupted then and there, but for the bitter war raging in Europe. Wilson, anxious not to be-

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come involved in Mexico at a time when relations with Germany were deteriorating, agreed to submit Mexican complaints arising out of the punitive expedition to a joint commission for settlement. Sometime later the commission ruled that, among other things, the debacle at Carrizal was the fault of the American unit commander. For the remainder of 1916, the intensity of the hunt for Villa waned and was replaced by the tedious routine of life in a temporary bivouac. Boredom spawned drunken shoot-outs between troops and local Mexicans. In an attempt to keep his men busy, Pershing initiated a tough new training program that included cavalry maneuvers. It was clear by this time, however, that given President Wilson's restrictive orders and the growing intransigence of the Carranza regime that the Pershing led Mexican incursion was doomed to failure.

Meanwhile, back in the United States, National Guard units were being called out to secure the U.S. - Mexico border. Units of the Georgia National Guard were mobilized at Camp Harris, Macon, Georgia during July, 1916 and sent to Camp Cotton, Fort Bliss, near El Paso, Texas in October. Company H, 3rd Separate Infantry Battalion and 2nd Company, Coast Artillery were mustered into Federal service on August 10 and September 26 respectively, but remained at home station and were not sent to Texas. The aggregate strength of the Georgia units that were sent to Camp Cotton, Texas was 3,892. The units were mobilized on June 18, 1916 and mustered into Federal service, most between July 2-31 and one as late as September 26.

In January, 1917, the ill-fated attempt to capture Pancho Villa ended with the recall of the Punitive Expedition from Mexico. On January 27, the first of 10,690 men and 9,307 horses em-

barked for Columbus. It took over a week to assemble the full expeditionary force back at Fort Bliss, where, on February 7, 1917, with General Pershing at the head, they marched into El Paso to the acclaim of cheering crowds. That officially ended Pershing's campaign. The expedition had gone as far south as Parral, but Pershing had not captured Pancho Villa. Therefore, the expedition was only notable as the last U.S. Cavalry expedition in U.S. military history.

Although Villa had once been nicked in the knee cap by a Carranzistas bullet, he was now completely mended and feeling well. However, many of his best men had either died or deserted him. But, with the gringos gone, he was now free to continue his struggle with his arch foe Venustiano Carranza. Unabashed by his failure to capture Villa, General Pershing claimed the expedition was successful as a learning experience. However, in the minds of Mexicans, Pancho Villa was the clear winner. He had emerged triumphant from battle with the United States led by the great General Pershing. No doubt, in the eyes of the Mexican people, Pershing's withdrawal from Mexico added to Villa's myth of invincibility. But, a few years later, on Friday, July 20, 1923, Villa's luck ran out.

Accompanied by his entourage of Dorades ("Golden Ones"), which was what he called his bodyguards, Pancho Villa frequently made trips to Parral for banking and other errands. This day, Villa had picked up a consignment of gold with which to pay his Canutillo ranch staff and was driving through the city in his black 1919 Dodge roadster when a group of seven riflemen fired 150 shots in just two minutes into his car. In the fusillade of shots, 16 bullets lodged in his body and four more in his head. Villa was reported to have killed one of the assassins before he died. Truly, Pancho

Villa had lived by the gun and died by the gun. It was never determined who ordered the killing. However, the assassins were given light prison terms leading to general speculation that someone in the Mexican government must have given the order simply because Villa had become an embarrassment to post-revolutionary Mexico. But even in death, Pancho Villa was not at rest and still stirred controversy.

Three years after he was buried in the Cemeterio Municipal at Parral, it was alleged that an ex-Villista officer, Captain Emil L. Holmdahl, had opened the tomb and removed Villa's head to sell to an eccentric Chicago millionaire who collected the skulls of historic figures. Despite the rumors of a headless Villa, his sons prevented examination of the remains to see if the head was still attached. Three years later, the Federal government ordered Villa's body, reported to be headless, moved to Mexico City to be interred in the Tomb of Illustrious Men. However, local residents of Parral insist to this day that their mayor had Villa's body shifted in the graveyard a meter or so to the right of the marked grave and replaced with another body to prevent any more of Villa's remains from being taken. It was the headless decoy body, they insist, that was later taken to Mexico City.

Whether Villa's body is still in the ground at Parral or not, his tall, stately tombstone remains in place and people still come to place flowers on the grave. So, even in death, Pancho Villa remains elusive. On April 6, 1917, the United States declared war on Germany. Pershing received orders to organize a division with himself in command and to take the formation to France as the first American unit to fight alongside the Allies. He submitted a list of officers whom he wanted on his staff and included Lieutenant

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Patton's name. However, several days later, Pershing was appointed the commander-in-chief of the American Expeditionary Force, which included all troops to be sent to France. Therefore, with a small headquarters party, Pershing went overseas at once as a symbol of reassurance and promise to the war-weary Allies, who had fought immense battles of attrition for the past three years.

Although the Americans entrance into the war was a great psychological boost to them, the United States was unprepared to join in the massive clash of arms on the Western Front. Positioning units along the Mexican border and pursuing Villa had been a small start toward mobilization, but now the U.S. Army had to raise, equip, and train a much larger force. The War Department planned to ship Pershing 2,000,000 partially trained troops. He was tasked to bring them to combat readiness over there.

As for the Georgia units that had gone to the Mexican Border, some were retained in Federal Service; others returned to Georgia. Nevertheless, on July 3, 1917, the entire National Guard of the United States was mobilized for World War I. In August, 1917, the Georgia National Guard units were reorganized with most of the units being

assigned to the 31st Infantry Division with the exception of the Coast Artillery units which were assigned to Savannah Coastal Defense. However, there was one special new battalion to be organized from Georgia. Requests from National Guard officers and Governors for early acceptance of their state units to go to war against Germany poured into the War Department. The clamor became so general and so insistent that the Secretary of War conceived the idea of forming a composite Division to include troops from every State in the Union. That was the origin of the famous 42d (Rainbow) Division, which was later to distinguish itself in many important engagements of World War I. In August, 1917, companies B, C, and F of the 2nd Georgia Infantry were reorganized as the 151st Machine Gun Battalion and assigned to the 42d Division. When the 42d Infantry Division arrived in France in November, 1917, there were National Guard units from 26 States and from the District of Columbia in its ranks.

Almost a year later, on September 16, 1918, the 31st Infantry Division consisting of National Guard units from Georgia, Alabama, and Florida departed for France and joined the American Expeditionary Force on October 3 1918.

As for the legend or myth of Poncho Villa today, conservative Mexicans may insist he was nothing more than a self-serving bloodthirsty bandit. However,

to most Mexicans his memory has been embellished through songs and stories and he is now generally remembered as a Mexican "Robin Hood" figure. Of all the Mexican revolutionary leaders, he is probably the best known and remembered for his victories in the constitutional revolution and for being the only foreign military leader to have "successfully" invaded continental U.S. territory.

As for Americans, the massive mobilization of U.S. forces in 1916 and the pursuit of Pancho Villa in Mexico are scarcely noted in our history books and thus, not read about in school. However, it is important to Georgians because it was the first mobilization and deployment of National Guard Units for Federal service and an end to the old militia system of recruiting volunteer units of rank amateurs for Federal service as it was done for the Mexican War of 1846-1848. It was also the forerunner of the total force policy so important to our defense preparedness today. If alive today, Pancho Villa would probably claim credit for teaching General Pershing and the gringos from the north how to organize for a fight.



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should send it to you? I didn't know whether it would reach you or not. I wish I could send you some stuff from the garden. We have a fine garden.

We drove to Holland yesterday and took Bert Wallace and his folks up to his brother's house. It was a great ride. Has anyone told you that Ed Moore has a Ford? It was new when he got it this spring, but now it is banged up worse than ours. The windshield is broken. The tail light is gone. The top is off and there is a big dent in the back of the

body, but nobody's neck is broken yet. Ed drives pretty fast. Lettie drives too and she drives at a good clip.

I don't know what the Moores are going to do now that Mrs. Moore has gone. She wanted one of the girls to stay home and keep house for Edwin and their father, but I don't believe they will.

Write when you can. We are always glad to hear from you.

With love, Olive

Here is a letter from Earl Lang addressed to Grandpa and Grandma Gardner dated September 12, 1916 while Earl was still in Eagle Pass, Texas. If you refer to the timeline printed in our last issue, you will see that Earl was promoted to Private First Class on July 1, 1916.

Company D, 1st Vermont Infantry, Eagle Pass, TX, September 12, 1916

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Michael Gibbs and his Brussels Griffon, Sara.



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*Hi, My name is Michael Gibbs. I'm the grandson of Earl Gardner, one of the sons of Jean Gonzalo, and nephew of Paul, who so kindly does this newsletter for the family. This is a recent picture of me and my new dog, Sara. She is a six month old Brussels Griffon. This dog was originally imported from the U.K. where it was imported from Brussels, hence the name. She has a smooth coat and will weigh between 10-12 pounds when fully grown. They are not a delicate toy breed. They have sturdy legs and are very muscular. They are typically one person dogs; but if socialized well as a puppy, they love everybody. Not typically a barking dog, they will let you know when someone is at your front door. They are great apartment dogs because they do not require a great deal of exercise, although they love long walks. They have few medical problems. They do, however, get overheated easily because of their short noses. They are best known for their "monkey faces" and wide set eyes with almost human-like expressions. In general, the griffon is a happy, affectionate, and adaptable little dog who always loves his master or mistress most. Of all the dogs I've owned, this is by far the sweetest. I can't walk down the street without people telling me how cute she is. And I agree! So, Sara is my pet. I think everyone should write Paul and tell the newsletter about his or her pet. I'm sure we'd all like to see a picture. Thanks for your time,*

**Michael Gibbs**

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Dear Will and Olive,

Just a line this morning to say that I am all right again. I am not doing much today as we have our carpenter work practically done and today is election day. I just went down and voted. Something to talk about, - voting in Texas. Our company started in shooting on the range yesterday. No special duty men have shot yet, but I expect that we will shoot soon. I shot a course with the .22 caliber rifle a few days ago, and I got 130 out of a possible 150. Of course, I had just been sick and was rather shaky, but I qualified to use the big rifle, caliber .30. To qualify you have to make a score of 90 out of a possible 150.

There has been a great deal of talk and speculation in regard to the time we shall start for home. I thought last week that we might break camp last Sunday; but the way things look now, we may be here all winter. It almost makes me homesick to see the troop trains leaving while we have to stay.

We are scheduled for a three day hike this week. We leave Thursday morning and hike to Leyman's ranch, a distance of about twenty miles, and then pitch tents and rest Friday. Then march back on Saturday.

I wish that I could be home in time to go hunting this fall. I think I shall get me a new rifle this fall if I come home. If you want to buy mine, make me an offer; and, if not, sell it for what you think it is worth. Is it spotted very badly? I kind of hate to part with it because I have killed eleven deer with it and it never failed me once. I have often thought about the time when you and I were hunting in the Cole place swamps and the old gun did double duty digging beet greens. That was certainly some lucky shot alright.

Did I tell you that I have been made a first class private? That pays me \$3.00 more per month. My duties are just the same as before, but you get that rank by always performing your duties faithfully and keeping your clothes and equipment in good shape and coming up to the standard at dill. There can only be 21 in the company, so you see I feel pretty good because there are some fellows that have been in the service for three years that have never been a first class private.

I worked nearly all night two nights before inspection helping the company clerk get the books ready for inspection. I did this of my

own accord, in addition to my carpenter work during the day.

I sent home for a half dozen Conklin fountain pens. The night they came, I sold them all in about 10 minutes. I have sent for two dozen more and I am taking orders for them. I now have orders for six more and I haven't been out of my own street yet.

How is Olive? I'm sure she'll be all right without an operation. I suppose that the girls are growing like little weeds, aren't they? "Ruth, remember me?" How I wish that I could see you all again, but it helps some to be able to write and receive letters from you. So don't forget to write real often. The knife is a dandy. Thank you.

With lots of love to you all and wishing you the best of health and happiness, your loving brother, Earl.

*See you in the*

*Fall for our*

*holiday issue!*