

In the Trenches: Andrew Carroll WWI - Letter November 4, 1818

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Andrew Daniel Carroll - Letters Home During World War I

The following excerpts of Andrew Carroll's letters home capture life on the front as well as home during World War I. From the letters and photographs, you will learn about the life of an Oswego County man and his experience during World War I.

Andrew Daniel Carrol was born on May 11, 1890 to James and Margaret Carroll who had seven other sons and two daughters. The family lived at 168 West 2nd Street in Fulton and were devout Irish-Catholics who were members of the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Fulton, NY and later the Holy Family Catholic Church.

Andrew enlisted in World War I on July 23, 1917 when he was 27 years old. He was first placed with the 74th Regiment from Buffalo and three months later was transferred to the 108th Machine Gun Company Infantry. At the outbreak of the war, Andrew's mother said that she would unfurl an American flag at the family's home fo reach son who entered the service. Three flags hung outside the Carroll home for the duration of the war. One was for Andrew who was the first in the family to enlist and the others were for his brothers, Edward and Maurice. Andrew fought in several major battles in Europe during the war and was discharged on March 31, 1919.

What makes Andrew an "uncommon common man" is the fact that while he was stationed in Europe he wrote many wonderfully detailed letters to his family in Fulton, NY. These descriptive and moving letters have been wisely preserved by his family. These letters describe one man's experiences on the French war front in World War I. One major battle that Andrew took part in was the Battle of the Hindenburg Line in September of 1918.

Andrew Carroll died from a heart attack on January 18, 1939 at age 48.

Note: This information is based on the work by Judith Wellman for the Oswego County Historical Society.

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A letter dated November 4, 1918 from Andrew to his Mother & Pop and all the rest.

November 4, 1918
1st Southern General Hospital
Edgbaston, Birmingham, Eng.

Dear Mother & Pop and all the rest,

I am still at the Hospital in Birmingham and doing good and I am enjoying myself every day, but I imagine I will be sent to our American Base in London soon. From there I will (in all probabilities) get a 14 day lead to visit or go anywhere I desire.

I have met a good many nice people here in England and one family in particular, they are nice to me. Another lad and myself have been at their home 4 times. They are of the best English families in England, and pretty well-to-do. I met them thru one of the head nurses, they have a very beautiful home. They used to live in America about 20 years ago. I never met such nice people in my life and I never was treated so good in my life, and I have a very urgent invitation to stay a their home while on my "leave." Gee mother, but they are grand people. They said that any time that I am in England on leave or other wise they want me to come there. I told them that I was going to write to you and tell you about them and I wish Mother that you would write them a nice little letter if you can spare the time.



1st Southern General Hospital, Edgbaston, Birmingham, England.
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They have their only 3 sons in the British Army. If you will write them
Mother, their address is: Mr. & Mrs. S. J. Barton
Hill View
King's Heath, Birmingham
England

If you can possibly write a short letter Mother, I would be awfully pleased.
There isn't anything too good for me with them.

I rec'd a bunch of letters the other day that were transferred from my
Company. There were about 8 from home, from Pop, Alice, David, Frank, Fred
& one from Mary, they were the ones written in Sept. I also rep'd about a dozen
from my "Gal." I rep'd 22 letters all i none smash and I can tell you all that I
enjoyed them very much and I had a great time reading them. I enjoyed each
and every letter thoroughly. Marguerite was loud in her talk of her visit home,
she enjoyed herself immensely.

I am awfully glad that you have at last rec'd my letters or some of them at
least. I was worried, wondering why no one was receiving my mail. Some of
them must have been lost enroute.

And I tell you all that I was certainly tickled when I read that you had rep'd a
couple of my letters. You should have had more long before that. There isn't a
day goes by that I do not think of all of you at home and I am awfully glad to
know that everyone is well and happy. I rep'd a letter from Maurice the other
day that was written Sept 27, over a month to reach me, can you beat it?

I wrote to both him and Edward directly after I reached the "lines" and I have
not heard from them since writing. I also wrote 2 long letters home after I
reached here, one was 27 pages and the other was 25 pages and I hope it reaches
you O.K. This is a great place here in England. This has got the front line
trenches beat by a mile. We get enough to eat plenty of rest & sleep etc. and
who could kick? Well, good bye Mother dear & all others

with love to all
ever your son
Andrew

Questions for further research and discussion:

- How does Andrew describe the family he is living with in England? How does he feel about them?
- How did he feel about receiving 22 letters from his family?