

July 20.

THE FIRST WORLD  
WAR DIARY OF  
LUPTON KAYLOR

<sup>21</sup> Ruth came up  
to see me for  
a few days and  
was so glad to see  
<sup>22</sup> her again, and  
enjoyed every  
moment we  
were together.  
We spent one  
<sup>23</sup> evening in N.Y.  
The next morning  
she left for  
Washington.



Lewis Lupton Kaylor

# The War with Germany

**The First World War  
Diary of  
Lupton Kaylor**

transcribed by  
Alan Kaylor Cline



**L. L. Kaylor with an aerial camera in France. The facial hair was worn only briefly—although it led to a nickname of “Moustache”..**

## **Introduction**

These pages represent my attempt to transcribe my grandfather's handwritten record of his experiences as an aerial photographer during the First World War - the volumes he labeled "The War with Germany 1917". Those entries filled two pocket-sized notebooks. The first of these is stamped "The Soldiers' Diary and Note Book" and, in addition to the pages for entries, the book contains useful information on knot tying, semaphore codes, rudimentary French and the like. The second notebook simply had blank pages to be filled. Whether by luck or careful pacing, the last page of the second notebook was filled with the entry describing his discharge.

Although the first notebook was divided into a diary format (with four tiny 2 ½ inch lines allotted for each day), there are not daily entries. Our author seems to have written when motivated and covered as much at a time as he saw fit. This certainly has affected the material since the writings are limited to what inspired him positively or negatively. A traditional diary, on the other hand, might be filled with day after day of boring repetition.

What inspired him are generally those events that would inspire anyone: a first flight in an airplane, a meeting with his future bride, a visit to Paris, and an inspection by the American Commander in Chief. Added to this are the traditional concerns of soldiers: food, promotions, pay, M. P.'s, mindless instructions, and disorganization. Given his older than typical age for a private - 28 on entry - and his previous position as a professional photographer, it is likely he was more affected than many younger men by the Army's treatment. Lastly, it was unusual to him to be housed with blacks, and this certainly got his attention.

Lewis Lupton Kaylor was born in (aptly named) Pleasant Valley, Virginia, March 14, 1889. The town (about 100 miles southwest of Washington, D.C.) was - and is - little more than a mailstop. It was dominated by the mill once owned by his grandfather, and later by his father until its

destruction by fire. For the previous century, all of his ancestors had lived in Rockingham and Augusta Counties, within twenty miles of his birthplace. Nevertheless, his pursuit of photography as a profession had taken him beyond the reaches of the Shenandoah Valley to employment in Washington and Norfolk, Virginia. At the time of his drafting into the army, he owned his own studio in Waynesboro, Pennsylvania.

Much of what he wrote in his diary can stand without comment but perhaps a bit of forewarning is in order. His style displays few properly constructed sentences. Many sentence subjects (especially "I" and "it") are simply omitted. He writes short phrases but then connects them into very long sentences in a "stream of consciousness" fashion. The sentences were not organized into paragraphs. The grammar is often haphazard - it also does not indicate how he spoke or wrote years later when I knew him.

I have attempted to present the diary in its naked form with only a few of the most surprising usages or spellings indicated with the academically snobbish "sic". My only major alteration is to the commas he employed: they appear in such unlikely places that I felt readability was enhanced by the omission of many of them. I also added text to some of the most glaring omissions by use of [brackets] and have broken the material into paragraphs and have added headings. Where I could not decipher the handwriting I have left a dash — although some of those are footnoted with guesses.

Two words may need clarification. When he said "across" as in "...field conditions that would exist across" he meant "across the sea in Europe". The shortened form gives a clue to the mindset of the times. He also employs the word "united" in a manner that I found confusing. He uses it to mean "decided", "wanted", or "agreed to".

For this draft edition of his diary, I have included only a single photograph of our author. In the future I hope to

add both pictures *of* him and *by* him (including the composite aerial map of Call Field that took him so long to obtain). I would also like to add some of his correspondence, both with his family and with the War Department. In particular, his letters to the War Department chronicle his fruitless attempt to obtain a deferment - he was the major financial support for his mother and was forced to sell his entire studio with its equipment when he left for the army.

His post-war life was quite traditional. He returned to Waynesboro, reopened his studio, married Miss Smeltzer, and had three daughters. After moving to Harrisonburg, Virginia (a few miles from his birthplace), he continued a photographic profession that lasted until deterioration of his eyesight precluded such work. He died in Harrisonburg February 22, 1963.

A final word on his brush with greatness. Edward Steichen, one of the most famous photographers of the century, was my grandfather's Major in the Army Signal Corps' Aviation Section. Steichen already had an impressive career in photography when the government requested that he lead the photographic section. Steichen would return to military photography in the Second World War.

*Alan Kaylor Cline  
Silver Spring, Maryland  
July 23, 1997*

### **Introduction to the Second Draft**

Two years after I completed the first draft, my cousin Charles Elmer Earman III, visited Reims, France and reproduced an aerial photograph that our grandfather had taken of the Reims Cathedral eighty years earlier. He wrote of his experience taking the picture and this was published in the *Daily News-Record* of Harrisonburg, Virginia on July 23, 1999.

I have included that essay here as an appendix. It includes the photographs—the identical site with eighty intervening years. Since the essay includes more material on our grandfather's life, I have added some other photographs.

With respect to my transcription of the diary, it is unchanged from the first draft except I have added some photographs. I still have not included the correspondence — both personal and official—that I will before this task is completed.

*Alan Kaylor Cline  
Austin, Texas  
June 3, 2001*



## **The War with Germany 1917**

### **Entry**

[I] was drafted into service on September 19, 1917 from Waynesboro, Penna. to Camp Meade, Md. First was in the 4<sup>th</sup> Depot Battalion for four weeks. Did not like it so well, as the food was very bad & no comforts to the place.

From there was placed into Co. B., 316 Infantry. I did not seem to like it any better there, for the work was very hard, & becoming tiresome. While there I was a clerk in the canteen which was pleasant & it saved me a great deal of work by not doing any fatigue<sup>1</sup> or guard duty. The eats were much better here but nothing to brag about. I only had a few clothes at this time & it was getting cold, so I thought I was freezing at times. We had to drill many times in our shirt sleeves.

### **Fort Wood & New York City**

On Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> my transfer came - which I had signed up for before being sent to camp - to the Signal Corps Aviation Section as an aerial photographer, sending me to Fort Wood. N.Y. harbor. Well, things looked better there, for the eats were great & had nothing to do except some fatigue for over a week. The only drawback was that we had to sleep in tents during some awful cold weather &, being an island, we felt it more. Slept with our clothes on, & everything we could find to cover up with. Had no stoves or lights so that part of the place was not so good. I was fitted out fine.

The day I landed there, I was listed a casualty (or unassigned). Photo men came from all parts of the US until we had about 40 in number. While there, I spent four weeks seeing New York & had a time while there, for the people there are alive to the fact that we are at war, & are

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<sup>1</sup> Fatigue duty refers to menial tasks such as cleaning up.



trying to do their part in showing some attention to the boys.

Had planned to go home for X-mas & when I was about ready to go, orders came sending us photo men to Cornell University Ithaca, N.Y. for a course in aerial photography. This was on Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup> 1917. We were placed in U. S. School of Military Aeronautics which is an officers' training post & everything military to the word. This is a ground school for the cadets, or aviators.

**L.L. Kaylor and  
friend from Chicago  
at Fort Wood, N.Y.**

### **The Program at Cornell University**

School started on Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> 1918. Mr. Hasslett, the British officer was in charge. In four weeks we, [the] first class, graduated & most of us (of 16) he placed in the school as instructors. This was fine except we were awful busy day & nights but things were looking bright for us, as we were permitted so many things. We had quarters to ourselves, & were given the respect of officers. The food here was par excellence & was prepared by the University, & [we] were allowed \$1.00 per day for each man.

After instructing about 9 weeks orders came from Wash. sending me to Call Field, Wichita Falls, Texas to take charge of a photo hut, on March 29 1918. I did not like this so much, for I thought I was to leave there for war duty as once before some instructors were sent across seas & Mr. Hasslett did not like to see the force broken up. They say in the office that there was just as much a chance to work up in the field as in school & thought I had a good thing of it by being sent to the field. They told me I was recommended for some time for Sargeant, but I never heard any thing about it.

## **Across Country by Train**

But it was not for me to decide where I was to go or do, so gladly said goodbye to the officers & pulled out west by the way of Chicago & stopped with my friend Frank Van — for three days & I had one fine time seeing the place, as we had these autos at our service at all times & we did use them too. Came thru St. Louis but only to change trains. Landed at Wichita Falls Texas just one week from the day I left Ithaca, N.Y.

## **Call Field, Wichita Falls, Texas**

The country there was beautiful & it was springtime so I enjoyed that part of it. But the sandstorms I did not like so much, & too the wind would get high at times, so that the fliers could not go up. It was great to see a hundred or more ships up in the air at once, & I decided that I was going up the first chance that came to me to go up. It was so appealing to see them sail so smoothly through the air. The noise at first was something awful but I soon did not mind that. I was placed in charge of the studio, & was promoted to Sargeant 1<sup>st</sup> Class, & had ten men under me. Lieut. Gape was my Officer in charge & [I] found him a fine man. The equipment of the studio was not near complete, neither the finishing of the interior & I had to do the best I could in getting things in shape to go to work. Had a great many changes made in the studio as it was not built right for the kind of work & picked up most everything I could use for to begin work.



**Call Field**

Both aerial cameras were on the bum & [I] overhauled them so Lieut. could go up & get some negatives. My first

development was very good, considering everything. The water was very bad & no safe lights to dev. by. The studio was to train photo men, [using] actual field conditions that would exist across [in Europe], & to school the flying cadets [in] the working of the aerial camera - also to make photo maps of this territory with [the] conjunction of photo detachment of Fort Sill Okla. & other posts.

This map work was very difficult in this country, as there are few landmarks to guide one & mostly sandy, bare country.



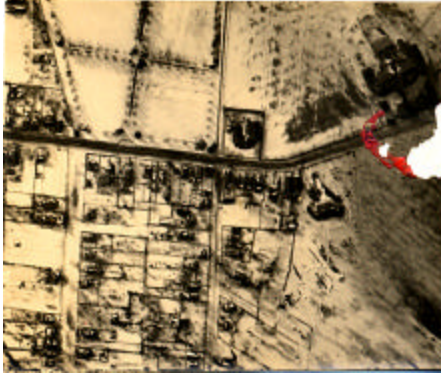
**Lewis Lupton Kaylor at Call Field, Texas in 1918. He wrote on the back "Do you notice anything in this picture?". This is a reference to the cameo ring he is wearing that had been a birthday gift from his mother. Presumably the picture was sent to his mother.**

### **First Flight**

On April 11<sup>th</sup> I had my first flight & found it very thrilling, but was not scared at no time (sic), but I was glad when we were on ground again & that night when in bed it scared me more than any other time. Lieut. gave me his flying

uniform which is complete. My pilot was a R.M.A. Officer, Reserved Military Aviator, & I felt safe in his hands, as he is an instructor in flying & knows the game, & too he had perfect control of the machine.

We climbed to the height of 6100 ft. which is a good height to photo from, & then he shut off the engine, so as to talk to me, as the whine of motors is terrible while running at full speed. Well, I took some short breaths at this for it seemed as if we were dropping downwards & too the plane had a different pick [pitch?] front end downwards but he turned around in his seat to talk to me & I soon saw there



was no danger in this condition.

I took 36 negatives & each time I shot he would do the same thing (shutting off the motor) so I soon got use to that. When I was through shooting at different objects we started the long, long way downwards, in a spiral dive, & I had some more thrills in this as it seems that the machine stands up on its sides, & the earth is many different positions, & one loses his balance, & looks as if the earth is on top of you. After

**Aerial Photograph over Call Field.**  
"This is the kind of work we make. Be careful who you these too (sic) as this is all secret about our work from start to finish. This picture taken 8000 feet above the ground and used as a map. This picture was taken using a lens captured from the Germans by our instructor Mr. Hasslett."

he came out of the round dive, we were getting close to ground again & he righted the plane, & made one steep straight glide for the landing field & one fairly drops & [it] is like going down in a swift elevator, taking your breath away, but when he was about twenty feet above ground he again straightened up the plane & we hit as gracefully as

a bird on the ground.

### **Back on Earth**

Well, as I said I was glad to get back safely to mother earth. The air up so high is very cold, & it seemed to be so close when I got back to ground. I had very good luck with my plates.

### **Back up Again**

On Saturday [the] 12<sup>th</sup> I went up again with the same driver to make a photo map of the field & only went up for this to [a] height of 3000 ft & had good success except the drifting of the plane, so I missed some section of the field. On Tuesday, [the] 15<sup>th</sup> I was given a new pilot: another RMA officer to make the field over & to go up [to] the standard height. We were just beginning to start take[ing] the pictures & made one cross positive, 6 plates, & had turned around to come back close to where we had gone when the engine began to get balky & he fooled with it a while & began shaking his head & said we would have to go down, so we made the spiral dive & landed in the middle of the field, & the trouble shooters (mechanics) came in a motorcycle & found we had no gas in our tank so it was too late to go up again. I was sorry we missed getting [up] that afternoon as the air was as clear as — & one could see everything so distinctly & no high wind to drift the plane.



**"We're Out to Snap the Kaiser" - Cartoon Postcard from the U. S. Aerial Photographers. "Oh! This is a great life, so thrilling and exciting, but we are the boys that can stand up to it (if we don't weaken)"**

### **... and Again**

The next morning [the] 16<sup>th</sup> we started again & had gotten up to about 2000 ft when the engine began to slow & the Lieut. shooked (sic) his head again, so I knew something was wrong, & said it was getting hot so we came down & pulled ourselves up to the hangers alright & the trouble shooters found all our water was lost & that [the] engine was burned up. On going up, just leaving the ground, I began to get wet from water coming in the foot holds of [the] fuselage & [the] camera was soaked wet & so was I. I thought something was wrong & I punched the pilot thus to look over the side & shouted ["water"] & also pointed & he looked & shook his head as if he knew about it & soon it stopped. Afterwards I asked him about it & he understood me to say ["watch for something below"] & he never saw any water at all.

### **Someone's to Blame**

After two mishaps I concluded the men in the hangers were not any to[o] careful for both times it was not his fault & too, someone got a talking to for things like that don't go. Of course there is no danger so much in running out of gas or engines stopping while up, that is if you are up over a good landing place but it is not a wise thing to do where there is so many planes up as you may have to use the engine in getting out of some other's plane.

### **Still no Success**

The following day was too windy to fly & on the 18<sup>th</sup> went up again in a new machine & was not at ease at first until I found out what kind of ship she was, but she was alright & was faster than the other. So we soon got up to 6500 ft. & began shooting but the wind would drift us so that it was very hard to get just what we wanted. I was sure I had some good plates & a plenty to cover every portion of the field but to look at them when developed was heart sickening as the fellow I gave them to ruined them all by trying to dev. in ice cold dev. I was disgusted after trying



**Parade at Call Field, Texas. "74<sup>th</sup> Ariel Squadron leaving for the front. The first picture we were allowed to make inside the field and this is the second copy that has been sent out, so you see this is a rare picture. LLK". The band leading the parade has him with a saxophone on the right side of the second row.**

three times to get this work out & too it was a rush job but that's the way photo goes at times.

### **Finally Success**

The next time I was up I took two magazines of plates (36), covered the field twice in different directions & I obtained two complete maps & too they looked very nice when finished. I was beginning to tell about what I was getting in every picture I took, also to guide the pilot at a straight course & how much overlap to cover. This is very hard to do & it takes practice.

### **A Horror**

A few days later a squad of us were out drilling & we all saw a ship falling from a height of 1000 ft in flames about two miles from us. We were all so excited & too we were the only eye witnesses. After a while seemed a long before headquarters found out about it & sent aid. We were not allowed to go to the wreck. Against all orders to go near a wreck. Of course the men were burnt up as they inhaled flames & kills one very quickly. An officer & cadet were in the ship. No cause was given for the accident but we all thought it was from a dirty engine & ignited by backfiring of the engine. Some say too high oil pressure. As it was this ship came out of the hanger that the ships I ride in came from & with the bad luck I had before made some think a little. But they assured me that accidents of that kind seldom happen & is generally the fault of the pilot & not let things like that bluff me. So after a few days &



nothing more happened was ready to go up again.

### **“Promotion”**

I made several different mosaics of the field & city & had good success. On June the 15<sup>th</sup> after waiting some time for my promotion I was made a corporal. The boys all had the laugh on me for we all thought I could get something better but it was very hard to get that under the conditions we were in, as the section was not organized as yet. Later on the Lt. recommended me, also the other man was too, to a M.S.E. into Washington & [I] expected that any time.

My Lt. was sent across seas the latter part of June. I was given a temporary Lt. as to be responsible for all the property.<sup>2</sup> Things went along fine & got real busy working on the big Government map using the film automatic camera which gave us lots of trouble in the air, also developing in such bad conditions as the temperature often was 120 degrees in the shade.

But we got good results after we tried a few films. I made pictures of each officer on the post & all pleased very much. I fixed up a studio in a new building close to the hut & the light was very good.

### **On the Move Again**

On August 20<sup>th</sup> the orders came sending me & five others to Camp Merritt NJ & embarkation camp for overseas duty. This was a surprise to us for we thought we were forgotten in Washington. We left the field the next day & it was hard to leave my friends & men at the hut. Four of my best friends were left & they were blue because they could not go along at this time. Every one in the Army these days are crazy to get a chance to go across. On

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<sup>2</sup> Possibly this means that someone was temporarily appointed his supervisor but more likely it means he was acting as Lieutenant.

<sup>3</sup> Presumably he means “fight the Germans” as opposed to each other.

moving I was reduced again to Private as my promotion was made on the field & thus is no good when transferred. When we came through St. Louis where we spent twelve wonderful hours seeing the city in a large car furnished by a nice lady & canteen worker. On the train crossing through Texas we met up with boyfriends we knew from two other fields. It was a glorious meeting as neither expected seeing each other. I met my friend from home Wilbur Coffman who had been close to me in Texas. He went to Langley Field School of Photography & we were glad to get together & fight<sup>3</sup> together.

### **New York City**

We landed in Old N.Y. Friday morning the 24<sup>th</sup> & reported to camp the same afternoon. It was the queerest place of all camps. Nobody doing anything but thousands crossing & going every day. About 70,000 soldiers there every day. The camp is nice & comfortable with a number of "Y's"<sup>4</sup>



**Ruth May Smeltzer**



**Ruth in Washington, D.C.**

& hostess houses. Passes were only issued to 20% of the detachments, which made it every five days you could get a 24 hour pass. Not enough to go home on.

### **A Visitor**

Ruth<sup>5</sup> came up to see me for a few days & was so glad to see her again & enjoyed every moment we were together. We spent one evening in NY. The next morning she left for Washington. We

<sup>4</sup> Young Men's Christian Association.

<sup>5</sup> Ruth May Smeltzer, who was working in Washington, D.C. and whom he married 139 days after his discharge.

parted in the depot. I will not say just how hard this was for us but we did it with a smile, praying & trusting in the One above for his mercies & protection.

### **Embarkation**

I was outfitted completely with new equipment, with pack & rations. On Friday [the] 13<sup>th</sup> we got orders to pack up & we left camp at 3am Saturday morning hiking five miles over a big hill & down a bluff to a ferry, which took us to Hoboken. This trip was all we could stand for our load was heavy, but the cool early morning helped a great deal. We stood on the dock at the boat we were to get



on all day & were the last to get on & we had to take any old place that was left & we were put in among negroes which was the limit. Our captain is in charge tried to get us changed but nothing doing & we made the best of it. It was the worst mess I ever was in in my life. So crowded, & everything has lines & lines for eats, water & everything. The boat we sailed on was the Martha Washington & carries 4300 troops. The conditions were very bad, for it was overloaded. Having 500 more than it ever had on before.

September 15<sup>th</sup> on Sunday at 2 P.M. we sailed out of NY harbor for France. We all enjoyed the ride over to sea but the next morning when it began to get a little rough, & motion to the boat, about half of the fellows were sick & the place was a sight. I was near the point of being one of those as I felt it coming but somehow I managed to keep my mind off of thinking I was going to get sick, so I got back without feeding the fishes.

### **The Crossing**

There were nine transports, with four gun boats guarding

us in the convoy. When we left NY, flying machines & balloons escorted us out a great way. The first four days on the sea was ideal weather. The sea being so calm but awful wavy as we took the Southern route & at night we could barely stay down in the ship. Every morning we had fire drill & every man had to be at his place or boat with his rations & canteen filled with water & a life belt. The trip was getting on our nerves as they would run us some place or nother & lots of times no place to go & too often the guards would stop us from going where we were told to go.

If we could we would stay in bunks until inspection rather than be pushed around like cattle. It seemed that there was no place on the boat for a soldier. The food was awful bad & most of the time we could not eat it & we were so hungry that we didn't know what to do. When the canteen would open you could run get to the line & they would soon close the door. Could buy no fruit or such, the thing we wanted most.

### **Getting Close**

On entering the war zone 1200 miles out we had special orders to adhere to. One special was to wear our clothes on with rations, life belt at all times. Had to get up at 4 am every morning as that was the danger time, just at dawn. We were met by 11 fast submarine destroyers two days out & they would circle around us & we were waiting to see some fun but was disappointed as no submarines showed up on the trip. We heard there were fifteen waiting for us & that we went out of our course to avoid them. After sailing thirteen days we sighted land, much to our joy, for everyone was sick of the trip & treatment.

### **France**

On the 28<sup>th</sup> we landed in Brest, France & it did feel good to be on land again. We had to hike out to a rest camp some three miles & on our way we passed through part of the city which was a queer place to us, & all the children out

to meet us, & asking for many eats & cigarettes. They wore wooden shoes. But people seemed glad to see us. Some would holler "Hello" & sounded like a polly parrot. It was awful muddy & it rains every day this part of the year.

This camp was once Napoleon's Headquarters & an old fashion place too with its funny washing place cut out of stone. We had to do our own cooking & we did it well too. We were fortunate in getting what they call barracks which were very crude but were better than sleeping out in the wet. There were about 70,000 men there but would empty every week or so leaving for the front. While there we were on a detail every day downtown at the main "Y" to help to haul stuff which we all liked so much for we got to see the city of Brest & work light & things to eat were given us, also was fed at the "Y" restaurant & we were well taken care of.

### **Train to St. Maixent**

On October 5<sup>h</sup> at 3 am we left for St. Maixent some 200 miles South East from Brest. We were loaded in little boxcars which had horses in before. Well we did kick at first but we knew it was no use as others had traveled the same way, 40 of us in a car. *Hommes 40 chevaus 8* was on each car - meaning 40 men or 8 horses. Our train had 40 cars with two little engines which could hardly pull us.

Some negroes got in the passengers coaches, also officers had good cars. We had canned food, with plenty of bread. This was hard at first. One could not buy any things along the way. The train was so slow & would stop at every station as they run on a schedule on this country. Saw some grapes along the way, but had orders not to get any. The scenery was beautiful, as it is a beautiful country & I enjoyed it.

The railroad was fine, well built & good stations, but the cars & engines were the limit. Saw a great many American engines & cars along the way. Passed through

some large towns. We had a hard time trying to sleep in such a crowded place, & little we did do too. After two days & a night on the train we arrived in St. Maixent & of course it was raining & some hiking to do & too it was dark when we got off the train. The trip was a tiresome one, but we were getting use to such kind of living. Some were sick most all the time. There were forty-seven of us traveling together.

### **Soldiers from the Front**

The people along the way would always cheer us along, & could see French & American soldiers coming back from the front. At this time the peace proposals were taking place, & it was the talk everywhere. Found good eats & sleeping quarters. Only about 200 men stationed here. Two other barracks in the town. Get passes every night, but there is not much to see. The streets are so narrow that a horse & carriage can hardly get thru. Have no sidewalks. The stores are small, but very attractive & pretty.

### **The Firing Squad**

The second day I was put on a firing squad,<sup>6</sup> the first I ever was in or saw. We buried a comrade, which was a military funeral & very impressive. Fired 3 volleys over the grave. The "Y" secretary had charge at the grave. Officers & a company of soldiers attended. Next day was on police detail & to clean up the officers' barracks. The next day went on guard. Had a easy post watching a woodpile & keeping the kitchen fire going at night.

Wrote a good many letters & cards home. We received more clothes here. A nother suit, four suits of — clothes, leggins (sic), & the best [of] all, a barracks bag again. It was unhandy to keep all belongs in a pack roll, & too much to go in it, & heavy. We can ship our bag by baggage here

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<sup>6</sup> As becomes clear, the firing squad to which he refers is part of a burial ceremony rather than an execution.

often. Well after three weeks of general fatigue including everything in the Army, we received orders to leave for Tours, Headquarters of the Air Service in France.

### **Pay**

We were all glad to hear of us going again, but was sorry too in a way for it kept us from drawing our pay at the end of the month, & too we were due this, for two months pay. All were broke, except a few of us, because we prepared for such things. Some of the boys received some mail, that was forwarded from the States, & it was hard to see some so lucky, & others had to do without.

### **On to Tours**

On Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> we left for Tours some 100 miles north, 81 being in our party. We had a little better cars to ride in this time, but was still crowded. Had to lay over in Poitiers, a beautiful city, for a troop train, for 8 hours, during the night. Had good feed at the French Red Cross, & it was not too cold to sleep out doors. After being on the cars for 24 hrs we at last arrived in Tours, one of the big cities of France. The field was 4 ½ miles from the depot, & thought all the time we had to walk, but by luck they sent motor trucks after us, getting into camp late at night tired out.

They had supper waiting us so that fixed us up. Every thing was fixed up well at the field. New barracks with electric lights, & stoves. Good food, & it looked like home again by being out in the open, & hearing all the noise, & see the large airships sailing around. The field is the second largest field in the world. The country around was beautiful, & could see the most wonderful sunrises & sunsets, being autumn & everything golden. The weather was getting a little cool, with a slight bite to it. Had to get up at 4:45 am, the one thing I did not like but no fatigue of any kind so we feel better after hearing we would not have any.

### **Mail**

I received a letter from Aunt Fannie, dated Aug 30<sup>th</sup> forward from Camp Merritt, & it was good to see a letter again even if it was an old one. The first day I wrote five letters giving my address so I could get some mail. I had intended to cable as soon as I was assigned but found I could not do that, as the message must be very important before the censor will pass it.

### **The Army**

At this time everything looks as if the war was over, & sure glad of it, for I don't believe I will ever see any real action for our branch of the Army is so slow, & I am tired being sent around & around without being assigned to some organization. Being a casual for over a year was no joke, for no officer would do much for us fellows, because it did not concern him how we were or treated.

After fooling around several days, we started to school again to learn the late kind of work being done at the front. Gave us a lot of (Bull) about everything & we all being disgusted the way we were shoved around & not able to get any promotions. They asked us what we preferred to do after they gave us an outline of each branch of the work. So I thought I would take the easiest thing I could get. For it done no good if you worked your head off, for they had done it twice before & send me on somewheres else with no credit, or recommendations to the next place. Always on the bottom of the ladder.

### **A Job - Finally**

I asked & got the job of camera man, who worked out on the field taking charge of the aerial cameras the observers used in the planes. Was responsible for the exposures made. Worked three days at this & liked the work, & as usual orders came sending me & several others down town in Tours at Headquarters of the Air Service, also



Headquarters of the S.O.S.<sup>7</sup> to work in the photo laboratory. Some of the boys of my crowd went to the front but at this time, Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>, the Armistice was signed & the firing at the front had stopped so it was all off that I would see any action.

### **Armistice**

I was transferred to Beaumont Barracks at Tours on Nov 14<sup>th</sup> & found one of my old school mates in charge of the laboratory & that he had asked for me. So at last I thought I was fixed, & went to work at making positives & slides which was very tedious work, & it had to be right. He knew my capabilities on this work, so he turned it over to me & [I] turned out some fine work. Was making setups of the different battle fronts, also camps for the history of the war. Some very interesting pictures came there to [be] work[ed]on. Worked at night several times & Sundays too, for so much to do. Only had one Sunday off duty as yet while in France.

### **Promotion Again?**

Again it is told me that I had chance to get a 1<sup>st</sup> Class Sergeancy in the newly organized section, but I was superstitious at such, for now the war is over & no one cares a rap about anyone else. Every body is thinking when are they going to get to go home.

Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> 1918. By being assigned to 8<sup>h</sup> Photo Section I was made a 1<sup>st</sup> class private, for a section does not have privates in them therefore it had to be done. Was awful busy for so much work of every kind came thru the place.

### **Flu at Home**

Received eleven letters from home & Ruth, & it surely made me feel good to hear again from the folks at home. It was a long time since I had heard & too was uneasy, for

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<sup>7</sup> Service of Supply.

the “flu” was so bad in the States & I [was] thinking of this. All had it, but not so bad, except Harry & he had Pneumonia.

### **Beaumont Barracks and Tours**

This post has the name of being the best camp in France, & I believe it too, for [I] have everything pretty nice. Fine large “Y” with plenty doing every night & can get hot chocolate every day, with sandwiches for 50¢ & 10¢. Sundays it is given free. Downtown the “Y” had another big “Y” with canteens, restaurant & library. Also [they] have a large theatre rented & have a free show every week, & it is always good. Just like a regular theatre with — programs & ushers. On Sundays when not working, get to go around a good deal, & see the interesting places around this old historic town. Also long hikes in the country to little villages. This time of the year is the rainy season, & rains every day but it is not so awful cold. Have stoves in our barracks with plenty of cover, but have to drill every morning without our overcoats & we get real cold at times.

### **Christmas, 1918**

X-mas time was merry in a way for the “Y” had a tree with old Santa & he brought along his wife, this time too. Had exercises with speeches & songs. Received three gift[s] of goodies & tobacco, cigarettes & chewing gum from the “Y”, K.C.<sup>8</sup> & Red Cross, which were furnished by the folks back home. This made it seem like Xmas in a way, but it brought memories of the ones at home, & the many happy times I had spent at home during Xmas seasons. This is the last X-mas I hope not to be at home, at this — & feel sure it will be too.

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<sup>8</sup> Possibly the Knights of Columbus

### **Socks**

The Red Cross gave us a pair of heavy knitted socks, with the goodies inside & it didn't take the people long before they knew what was in them & we had to share up lots of times. There were thousands of soldiers in town Xmas day & all got these socks, who put them around their necks, & at the sight of them the French people was laugh, as it seemed so funny to them, to give presents out in this form. & too, had a big time getting of presents for they would drive up a big motor truck filled up with socks, & begin to throw them off right & left. It was a scramble, & had lots of fun & it made the French people laugh a bit too. The first I had seen laughing, for they are a people of sorrow not soon forgetting their loss.

### **Kids**

The kids are the same I guess the world over, but it seems that chewing gum is something new to them, & find it so good that everyone asks you ["Please gum!"]. I gave — all — away to them & after giving a stick to a boy, he still wanted more, like most all of them but I could not get rid of him by the usual words "gum finis" & tried to tell me what he wanted it for, & after a while he offers to trade his old home made pocket knife for another stick of gum. Well, that got to me & knew he wanted it badly, for his sister I presume as they think of the rest of the family. After ask for cigarettes for their fathers. I gave him another stick & he was so happy & he shook my hand & he parlayed his lingo freely & was off his way.

### **1919**

New Years day was about the same as any other except had the evening off until twelve but there was nothing doing down town much. A few firecrackers & a little noise & a very few out on the streets. At midnight the whistles blew for a while which made a good deal of noise. Some of the boys left for home. About 200 - —, the first to leave.

## **The Pyrenees**

On Jan 30 my leave came through & four of us at the lab. went to Cauterets, Pyrenees Mt. down on the Spanish border. We are granted this leave every four months. There are about nineteen of these leave areas scattered over France, & are at famous resorts that have been closed during the war. The government contracts with the hotels & small boarding houses to feed & lodge so many men. The "Y" does the entertaining. The rest areas are very good for you feel in a way out of the Army & can sleep until you get enough which is something we don't often get.

## **M.P.'s**

We spent the night at Bordeaux having the next morning passed Dax, Pau, & Lourdes & each pretty towns. United to stop at Pau which is a very popular winter resort & a beautiful place, but the M.P.'s said no & put us back on the train. They always spoil everything for an enlisted man. Every town has its Amer. M.P.'s & no chance to drop off & see anything, & make things about as uncomfortable as possible.

## **The Mountains and Cauterets**

On reaching Lourdes we ran into snow as it is at the foothills of the mountains. We took an electric train from there which was an up to date affair. We changed again soon onto an electric narrow gauge road that climbs the mountains & soon we were going almost straight up, for five miles thru the beautiful gorges & canyons & some very dangerous looking places. This road was a wonderful piece of work & it took years to build.



At Caunterets the snow was two to three feet deep & the high hills on every side would glitter as the sun would shine on the white snow. Everything was beautiful. The scenery was some different than I ever saw & the air was great. Seventeen of us stopped at one place & we were well taken care of. The French cooking is mighty good, & we sure did eat. At breakfast they don't overfeed you but getting up late we could manage to make out until dinner, which was always good & all we united.

It was real cold & only one little fire in the sitting room & they would bring a few sticks of wood every twenty minutes. Wood is very scarce & they would not trust us with firing. Each had separate rooms with a genuine French bed, which is some bed. We slept with the doors wide open & the water would freeze two to three inches during the night, & we washed in it & it didn't take long to wake up after we did wash. Slept like a log, & never got cold, impossible in one of those beds.

### **Picture-taking then Rain**

In the afternoons we would hike on the mountains which had trails everywhere, & take pictures. I carried a 5 x 7 plate camera & had two good kodaks —. We got some beautiful pictures. Just in luck to get them at the proper time as the third day it began to get warm, & then started in raining so that all the sun was gone in places. This rain caused lots of damage down the valley as it washed the railroad & road away at fifteen places & it took them at least six weeks to repair the washouts. This caused us one day's delay getting out.

We united to hike to Spain but the snow was too deep. Went about half way & it was a beautiful trip. Had three hot sulphur baths which are famous & was used by the Romans. Had the old time bath house with large marble slab tubs about four feet deep & three feet wide in separate rooms. The water was too hot at first to get into, but after you did get in you felt you could stay for a week as it felt so good. It was strong sulphur & a little slimy.

We drank some of this water & I didn't care much for it as a beverage. They had a large swimming pool at — place & was going to try that but we left the day we planned to go for it.

The “Y” had something doing every night at the theatre & always good vaudeville. Had a military band every afternoon. Dances two nights a week. A French orchestra played in the —<sup>9</sup> canteen in afternoons & evenings.

### **Leaving Caunterets**

After being there eight days we had to walk down the gorge along with five hundred that was also held up on account of the slides for these days. We met as many coming up as they were held up at the bottom of the mountains. We enjoyed the walk down as we could see more this way, & too this particular morning was so beautiful. Saw hundreds of small streams falling down the steep mnts. Some of them was nothing but — — it reached the bottom of the falls.

### **... and on to Paris**



We went by way of Toubourne to Paris. Got on the train at 1 pm & arrived in Paris the next morning at 11am. It was a terrible long ride. Had third class car & was not the best to ride in. We could have ridden second class but the cars were filled when it came by. So much traveling on these roads, trains always full, & people standing. There are five French soldiers in the compartment with us & any of our party could parley a little so we got very chummy & exchanged things to eat & smoke.

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<sup>9</sup> Possibly “wet”.

On arriving in Paris we had a quick lunch & took a sightseeing trip by autos furnished by the "Y" to the best places of interest. We could stop & visit some of the place & the guide would tell us about the place of interest. Saw so many different things that I can not recall them. A few was the church that was bombarded on Easter Sunday killing ninety people. Stopped at the Notre Dame Cathedral & was shown thru it & explained this is considered the best piece of architecture of its kind in the world, & a great many art windows but some are still missing for they removed them during the war. Saw Napoleon's tomb which I think is the pretty (sic) buildings I ever saw.

### **Le Pantheon de la Guerre**

Saw the great war painting that was completed since the Armistice. This is the world's largest & finest painting with over 6,000 individual faces & almost all posed from life or late photos when at the front. Le Pantheon de la Guerre is the name of this painting & it is in a build (sic) especially for it. It is in a circle, 360 ft in circumference & 60 ft high. Each Allie



**Chateau-Thierry - site of major battle June-July, 1918.**

(sic) is represented by its most noted men of the war. Our own government is very well pictured. The "Y" has a lecturer stationed there & he gives the story that is most interesting. People will come miles & miles to see this master piece. Seventeen noted artists worked on this canvas & was the idea of two celebrated artists.

### **Dames**

We were driven thru a great many beautiful spots & completed our trip at the "Y" which has supper time. After supper we walked out on a fashionable street & took a good look at the swell dames. & was well repaid too, for there are some there & they know how to dress & use the powder puff. You could think you were in another country by being in Paris, for they are on the go, & all dressed up. Street cars, & taxis, omnibus, autos, which go to make up a city. The subways are the largest in the world, but I don't think they are as nice as our own in the States, as the cars & stations cannot compare. Paris to my thinking [is] the prettiest place I have seen & wish I could spend a few weeks & see it thoroughly. Didn't have much time to buy any souvenirs, & only bought a few.

### **Back to Tours**

Had [to] run to catch our train which left at 8. Arrived at Tours at midnight, tired & sleepy. Next day was back at our old work, but had lots to tell the other boys. On March 15<sup>th</sup> we moved the laboratory out to the 2<sup>d</sup> A.F.C. as the French took over the post & all had to get out. I hated to leave the place, for it was nice & handy to get down town whenever we united to. Could go out until 10 p.m. without a pass. The only place I have ever been where this was done. Could get a late pass two nights a week.

Took us three days to get fixed up again in our new lab. & I was given a lorey outside the lab to work in. Making positives, slides & enlarged negatives as they had no room & too, united to be alone on this work. I fixed up the lorey fine & liked my work & gained some very valuable experience. The field was almost dead as no flying made for most all the planes were shipped away & lots of men had gone home. & awful dull around.

Pictures at the "Y" very now & then, & generally old ones at that. The Red Cross had eats every night. The "Y" & Red Cross would go together & give dances every two weeks in the "Y" but I didn't dance, for didn't even feel like



it.

### **General Pershing**

One morning we were gotten up at 4 am & hurried around to get things in shape so we could leave at six o'clock to hike down town, a distance of five miles, to be present at the inspection of the headquarters of the S.O.S. by our C. in C.<sup>10</sup> General Pershing. It was awful muddy & we looked a sight when we got there at 7:45. We were soon marched into the post & lined up with thousands other, & waited, waited in the rain until after 11, & was never given a rest. It was awful tiresome. It took him three quarters of an hour to look us all over, after which he gave us a talk & gave his thanks for the work done in the S.O.S. (Service of Supply) that made it possible for the victory, & that we were always on the job.

The General is a fine looking soldier & was glad to have the chance of seeing him. We were marched back to the field which seemed twenty miles, & was given our dinner at 1:30 & then after noon off.

### **Recording the War History**

Work was awful heavy & had to work on Sundays & at night to keep up, but had another promise that we would go home soon, & it began to look as if we were getting to the end, or so that we could leave off & go home, & the rest could be finished in the States. Made thousands of pictures for records & history, along with a aerial movie of all camps in France & lots of the trenches & front lines, also ground photos of the camps & docks.

There were 150 photo men on this field working in two laboratories & filing dept. We had our own mess, as we were always attached to some squadron before, & never liked it as much as our own, as we [are] fine cooks, & made up a mess fund, so that we had a little

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<sup>10</sup> Commander in Chief.

extras & was well prepared so that we enjoyed our meals.

### **Once Again a Corporal**

On March 1<sup>st</sup> was made a corporal as one of the old men was transferred to a squadron & that left a vacancy so I got it. The best they could do. Will have to be satisfied with this I guess, for sure been out of luck for getting any more —<sup>11</sup> out of it. Most all the photo men are corporals. The Sgts are hand-shakers & do the book work & keep track of things. A very few of the men that came over with me have been made corporals, as all have been like myself



assigned to full organized sections, that have their full non-com list made, & wait until someone leaves to get any thing. On some times they bust [a] fellow & you may have a chance.

Four squadrons left for home & the place is sure dead now, but we were told that we leave on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March too, so we will work up to 10 pm every night & Sundays to get thru. That sounds good to all of us for we have had enough of this army life, & good & tired of it all. So many unpleasant things connected that it is a bore to a fellow & so many unnecessary things done that it gets disgusting, & see how some things are pulled off. So many are going home, that it makes us all the more homesick, & want to get home (Tuit suite<sup>12</sup>).

### **Speaking French**

Have not had much French. Only the common phrases

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<sup>11</sup> Possibly “money”.

<sup>12</sup> Possibly his rendition of the French *tout de suite*, meaning “immediately”.

that the boys use every day. Could soon pick it up if I was associated with the people for some time, but as it is I hear some & understand it, but I soon forget as time go by. Some of the boys speak French very good for the time they have been over. The French girls that work around at the "Y", Red Cross, & officers mess soon get to talking English so that we don't learn anything from them.

Get mail now from home in two weeks time & that is pretty good, & sure has improved since last Fall. At last we were told we were going home along the first of the month & would have to work hard & late to catch up with our work, so we worked until 12 p.m. every day & Sunday doing lots of things that could have been undone & so much personnel work. We worked hard as the thoughts of home & that we would soon be traveling that way was good.

### **Inspections and a Farewell Party**

After finishing up the work & cleaned up the place that it looked like new, we were given a day to get our own things in shape & to see that we had all of our equipment which meant several inspections, for to get through the base ports without any hold up was hard & it depended largely on whether you had all your stuff even down to two pairs of shoe strings as they look for all the small things.

The Major<sup>13</sup> gave some of us fellows a big surprise at the last for he arranged for a lot of new promotions & I was a lucky one in my section along with several others to get a boost. I was made a Sgt. & the man's place I took was made a M.S.E. The boys of the lab along with the Major & Lt. had a farewell supper down town which was enjoyed by all. Each gave a little talk & some was feeling very happy over the vouvray<sup>14</sup> & Vin blanc that was consumed.

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<sup>13</sup> Edward Steichen, one of the century's most famous photographers.

<sup>14</sup> *Vouvray*.

### **Starting Home**

After a few days of delays — we left the field on April 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday morning early. The Red Cross girls gave us our breakfast as our kitchen was torn up. Had a long hike to the railroad about 7 miles & after starting an auto came up, & took our packs which was a great relief as they were so heavy. We were placed on a troop train that came through Tours. A solid American train with the Rainbow Div troops on it coming from Germany.

The trip to Brest was not bad as we had plenty of room to lie down in the cars which are large & had straw & not so crowded. Would stop quite often at special places where the Red Cross would give us hot coffee & we had sandwiches [to] eat that would be given out at that time. Took us about 30 hours to make the trip, arriving at midnight at Brest & was given a hot supper there at the large troop kitchen where they feed 15,000 men in one hour.

### **The Final Wait at Brest**

We then started for the coast which is all uphill & about 3 ½ miles & of course it began raining as it rains every night at Brest. We arrived there at 2:30 am wet & tired out. Only had two blankets on a wire bed that night but we slept pretty good. Next day we got plenty of cover.

We found Brest a wonderful camp with every kind of comfort that goes with a camp. The camp was very large holding about 70,000 men. Was fed at the new kitchen where they feed 10,000 men in one hour & a quarter at each of the troop kitchens. Had plenty of amusements at the “Y’s” which were about a dozen in the camp. We had all kinds of inspections every day which kept us close to the barracks as we would be left behind if we missed any little formation so we hung around as none wanted to stay a day longer in France than was necessary.

After spending seven long tiresome days we received

orders to sail for the US on the Battleship South Carolina & got up early packed things & cleaned up our barracks at 4 am & soon started on the hike down to the docks. We marched down the streets of Brest without making a sound, being afraid that they would hold us up for they were doing that regularly, as they needed men for duty at the ports & the smallest offense would get the whole company in a bad fix & would punish the co by holding them for two to three months work. So we didn't say a word go[ing] out that morning. Saying good by to France in our minds. The people knew we were leaving & would say good by as we passed along.

### **False Alarm**

We stopped in the large sheds on the US docks & was fed by the Red Cross also given a pair of socks filled up with goodies. The men of other companies began to march thru the shed to small boats to carry them out in the harbor to the large ocean vessels but we did not move & we at once suspected something wrong which was right. Our orders were wrong & said we could not go out that day. Well we got some sore & said lots of things, but we being use to disappointments took the best side of it. We were hauled back to camp in autos & was told we would take the first boat out for N.Y. so as to ease our troubles a bit.

### **The Pretoria**

In three days we again had orders to sail & this time we did get away, & it was a great day for us. April 17<sup>th</sup> we left old France behind & our faces set for the good old U.S.A. We sailed on a German boat that had been taken over by the U.S. only a few weeks. "The Pretoria". It had be[en] painted & fixed up some for the first trip as a troop ship, & would be fixed up at Boston for hauling a great many more than she did at her first voyage. The [ac]commodations were very good not crowded, good beds & eats were fine. Plenty of amusements & we enjoyed our trip very much. Good sea all the way. Some difference than when I went over.

### **Reception at Boston**

We landed at Boston April 28<sup>th</sup> & was given a great welcome at the harbor. They met us, & gave us lots of things to eat. Would come close up to the big boat & thro the stuff up to us. Had bands & all the whistles were blowing so that one could not understand the meaning of it all. We did not holler much as we had a deeper feeling & it seems to bring to us just what we went thru & how lucky we were to be coming back home.

Some women on the small boats were crying & that was very touching to us soldiers who had not seen anything like that for a long while. The docks were packed with people all waving & hollering. We soon we[re] unloaded in the big docks feed (sic) & given more stuff, & furnished telegrams, the best thing we wanted at that time.

Was put on a train that was in the shed & soon on our way to Camp Devens. The people would cheer us all along the way. Seemed so glad to see us, & we just as glad to see our people again & to be home safely.

### **Camp Devens**

As soon as we arrived at the camp we were put through the delouzer(sic) & our uniforms looked a sight for the creases were awful. We slept in tents with our three blankets the first night & almost froze as it was cold of nights. We were moved next day up into the camp into good old time barracks with lots of room & good cots with springs - something we had not seen since leaving the states. Some of the boys were discharged in three days, the ones that lived in New England States & New York state. The rest of us had to be transferred to the Camp Depot Brigade to wait transportation to camps that was nearest to our homes or the place of our enlistment.

### **Camp Dix**

I stayed there for nine days before being sent to Camp Dix

N.J. That was the longest time in my army life. We had to set around expecting orders any minute to get us away. When the orders came, we had about an hour to pack up & get away. Said good by to the boys that was waiting to go West & other camps. There were 110 men on our train. Men from all branches of the army. We stopped at New Haven Conn. for the evening to change trains & was entertained by the K.C. Club which was a great treat. Gave us supper, movies, dancing, & bowling. Left at 12 pm coming thru N.Y. at 2 am but did not stop long & did not get out of the train. Arrived at Camp Dix 6:30 am & at once we turned in all our equipment. This was a happy time for us soldiers to get rid of the heavy packs.



**Lupton and Ruth after his return.**

**Discharged May 9<sup>th</sup> 1919.**

## Chronology of Military Service

Camp Meade, Maryland.....September 20, 1917  
Fort Wood, New York Harbor, New York.....November 20, 1917  
Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.....December 22, 1917  
Call Field, Wichita Falls, Texas.....April 5, 1918  
Camp Merrit, New Jersey.....August 24, 1918  
Pontanzan Camp, Brest, France.....September 28, 1918  
Presbytere Barracks, St. Maixent, France.....October 5, 1918  
Second AIC Photographic Section #7, Tours, France  
.....November 2, 1918  
Beaumont Barracks, Tours, France.....November 13, 1918  
Second AIC Photographic Section #8, Tours, France  
.....February 15, 1919  
Pontanzan Camp, Brest, France.....April 7, 1919  
Camp Deven, Ayer, Massachusetts.....April 28, 1919  
Camp Dix, New Jersey.....May 9, 1919



**REIMS REVISITED**  
**by Charles E. (Chess) Earman III**

Last year, my mother gave me a copy of a diary my maternal grandfather, Lupton Kaylor, had written during his service with the U.S army during World War I. My cousin, Alan Cline had translated it from longhand.



**Pleasant Valley Virginia Residence of Peter C. and Lucy M. Kaylor—1889. L. L. Kaylor is the baby held by his mother.**

He was born in Pleasant Valley, VA in 1889. Lupton (or Daddy Kay as I knew him) had been trained as a photographer, and had his own studio in Waynesboro, PA when he was drafted at age 28. The army, breaking their usual pattern of putting a square peg in a round hole, utilized his expertise as an aerial photographer to document airfields, battle sites and battle damage.

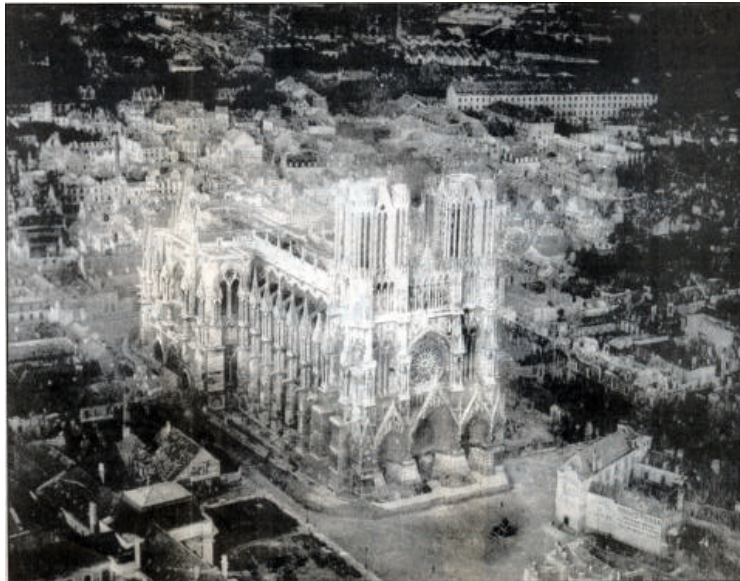
The diary chronicled his entire time with the army, various duty stations in the USA and France, training, transportation, the lunacy of daily army life, and the cities he visited while on leave.



**The Kaylor Studio in Waynesboro, Pennsylvania**  
My mother also gave me a photograph Daddy Kay took of the cathedral in Reims, France in 1919. The photo had a surrealistic aura to it. The town looked dark and decimated with 80% of the city destroyed by the German

bombardment. The cathedral had also been burned out internally, but seemed to glow as if illuminated under a spotlight.

I decided I wanted to retake the photo of the cathedral. I've always been interested in photography, even to the point of wanting to do it full time. My wife Diane is a travel agent and we have enjoyed the luxury of traveling throughout the world. We had not been to France for many years so it seemed like a natural to take on this mis-

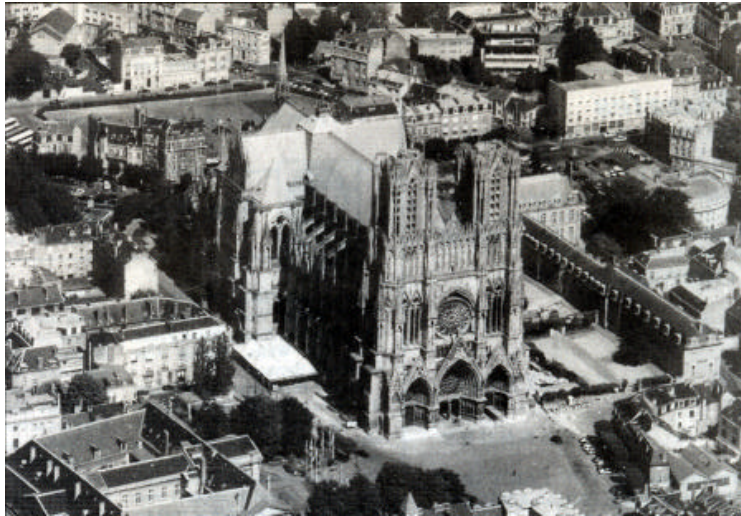


sion. We booked a week in Paris with a one day side trip by train to Reims. It took Daddy Kay 13 days to get to France, it took us 8 hours.

On May 26, 1999 we left Paris on the train for a pleasant 90 minute trip through the French countryside and arrived in Reims in time for lunch. Reims is a gorgeous city of about 200,000 people. It is hard to imagine the destruction they endured for a few years during World War I. The town has been reconstructed in such a way that the centuries old buildings look essentially unscathed. Paris seemed noisier with its wide boulevards and heavy traffic. Reims

was a respite from the hustle and bustle. The French pronounce Reims as if it was spelled REMPH or RENTZ with the heavy accent on the final letters. If you say you want a ticket to Reims pronouncing it like it looks (REEMS) the agent will look at you totally bewildered.

We must have been the only business they had that day because the entire staff was buzzing around the helicopter, checking this and that. I guess since the flight had been booked months earlier, with the help of my bilingual sister



Ann, they thought it was something special. The pilot spoke no English, which made me feel as if I spoke no French. Another member of the staff spoke fluent English and anticipated our communication problems so he volunteered to ride along, which was great for us. Like I said, I think it was a slow day.

Within minutes we were hovering over the cathedral, trying to recreate the picture in my viewfinder that Daddy Kay had taken 80 years earlier. My pilot couldn't get quite as low as I desired due to flight restrictions. He also had a hard time trying to hover in the particular spot I wanted due to a strong tail wind that was pushing us forward, or his tail around.

I couldn't help but think about the contrasts between my flight and Daddy Kay's - He was in a biplane made of canvas and wood, holding a 40 pound camera. I was in an ultra-modern \$2,000,000 helicopter with fairly modern camera equipment. He was leaning out of an open cockpit. I was shooting through plexiglass. He was working, I was playing. He wrote in his diary the noise in the plane was so loud, the pilot had to cut the engine off in order to communicate with the photographer. This was, after all, aviation in its infancy. He documented in his diary other flights that had crashed due to engine failure. The helicopter trip seemed to be over in 5 minutes to me, more like an eternity to my wife.

Before long, a taxi whisked us back to the center of town and deposited us at the base of the cathedral. I had no idea how tall that building was! At 275 feet, it's so tall I had trouble getting it all in a picture from the ground! In contrast, the Rockingham county court house is 110 feet tall.

Construction of the Reims cathedral was started in the year 1211. There had been other older church structures on the same site since the 5th century that had burned. Reims cathedral had been the coronation site for most of the kings of France for centuries and was a more important city than Paris in French history.

All things considered, with all my advantages, I felt Daddy Kay's picture was better. He had a better angle and his lighting was superior. I had not noticed until after I saw the building from the air that it had no roof in his picture.

Lupton Kaylor returned from the war in May 1919 to resume his career as a professional photographer. He soon married Ruth Smelser and in 1926 moved to Harrisonburg to work with, and ultimately purchase the Dean photography studio. Lupton and Ruth had three children, Elaine, Jane (my mother) and Susan. Chances are, if you have a family photo from the late 20's, 30's or 40's they were

made by either the Dean-Kaylor studio, or the Kaylor studio.

Daddy Kay was forced into retirement in 1951 due to his failing eyesight and arthritis. He sold his business to Charles & Polly Frye, and ultimately died in 1963.

Through his diary, I learned a little about the life of my grandfather that I knew little about before. He died when I was barely 14.

We shared a love for photography, we shared airspace over Reims and the grandeur of one cathedral, older than dirt, many miles from home. I've always felt like photography is in my genes. I wish I could show him my pictures now.

People have photographs made of their dearest moments: births, family, friends, weddings, graduations. It preserves practically forever a point in time, to be remembered and cherished by generations current, and yet unborn.

My grandfather was in the memories business. Daddy Kay was a photographer!

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## A Gallery of Related Photographs



**Kaylor Family 1889: Peter Cline Kaylor and Lucy Byerly Kaylor with children Willie Roller Kaylor (age 6), Nellie Irene Kaylor (age 2), and Lewis Lupton Kaylor.**

**Kaylor Family 1896: Lucy Byerly Kaylor with children Willie Roller Kaylor (age 13), Nellie Irene Kaylor (age 10), and Lewis Lupton Kaylor (age 7) and Edith Alice Kaylor (age 3).**





**Lupton as a young man. (It is possible that he took this photograph of himself - the squeeze bulb trigger for the camera may be in his unshown hand left hand.)**



**Lewis Lupton Kaylor with portable camera on hip, circa 1917.**

**Ruth circa 1919 - at age  
about 25**



**Lupton and Ruth  
circa 1920**





**Harrisonburg Municipal Band—Armistice Day (November 11) 1927 by Dean's Studio. Lupton with trombone at left of second row from top.**



**Lupton with unidentified companions. (Notice LLK and two others are carrying cameras.)**



**The Kaylor Family in 1929. Ruth is holding Margaret Susan (born 1928). To the right stand Ethel Jane (born 1922) and Helen Elaine (born 1921).**



**The Kaylor Home on Park Place in Harrisonburg, Virginia—1930**

**Lupton in 1936**



**Lupton and Ruth in 1943**









