

Adrian A. Parsons to Chet Parsons

May 9, 1918

Plainfield. 5-9-18

Dear Chip

I wish I could step over the distance between us, and have a pow wow with you all, and lend a hand occasionally. If I had any hair I expect it would stand on end under shell fire, suspect that was why it all fell off because it stood up so much when I was young. Was more than glad to get your letter alto it had been just a month on the road. I bet it makes you feel foolish to not be able to talk all kinds of lingo, but no one had dreamed that we would go abroad to find trouble, as we have generally been able to make enough at home, so we were unprepared on all lines –

We are in just as good health as when you left us. The Hoverizing doesn't hit us at all as our simple life was just what they are trying to get all the people onto – but it is changed considerably with the advent of Bert & Co and I think it was a good thing as it got us out of the old rut, and we had to adapt ourselves to the new conditions – as all old things are passing away and everything is to become new, but I don't believe it will be under this administration, but we are all "watchfully waiting" like the devil! If Horace had come to live with us the old regime would not have been changed and we would still be in the old rut. But he is now going in this week if Norman can't talk him into waiting until fall I think his argument is good as he would be sent over for the winter work – and if he waits till fall to enlist he would not be sent over till spring – and N. E. could rent only 35 a. for corn and he tried to get in the Marines but was too old. The land owners fear someone will make money off if them. Anderson is trying to put in 300 a. with one helper. the more we get the more is wanted, the Kaiser has no monopoly on greed. We are getting on well with the work and will get to planting next week. Will is much farther along than usual as he is getting a field ready now. Elmer has planted the field East of my window yesterday. but he has worked to wet all the time. Seed corn is very poor and I can't see a good prospect ahead.

[upside down in margin:] But the wheat is looking good. and if we have a big crop I am going to get an auto as it would be a source of pleasure even if not at all profitable, the money has to go all the same. Your Bonds have not been sent in yet. neither has mine but I just bought one in the last loan. We had to buy another horse or we could have done better. tell us as much as you can So long Dad.

[envelope:] Sergt. C. A. Parsons/482 Aero. Squadron/American Expeditionary
F[orce]/From A. A. Parsons/Plainfield/Ind.

[postmark:] Plainfield/May/10/4PM

Historical Notes:

Chester "Chet" Adrian Parsons (1887 – 1977) served during WWI in the American Expeditionary Force in France from April 1918 – April 1919. He exchanged letters with his father, Adrian A Parsons (1846 – 1929), a disabled Civil War veteran. These letters provide insight into life on the home front and his political views.

"Hoverizing" (Hooverizing) refers to Herbert Hoover, head of the Food Administration who encouraged voluntary food rationing to ensure a steady supply of food to the troops after Europe's food supplies had been decimated.

"Bert & Co" refers to Chet's brother Gilbert "Bert" Roland Parsons (1883 – 1959) and his wife, Laura Maude (Symmonds) Parsons (1885 – 1965), who began farming in partnership with Adrian when Chet left for service.

"Horace" is Horace Stanley Parsons (1898 – 1954), oldest son of Chet's brother Norman Edgar Parson (1873 – 1939) who farms in Guilford township.

"N. E." is Norman Edgar Parsons (see above)

"Anderson" may be Benjamin White Anderson (1862 – 1934) who, in 1920 census, lived with his wife, 22 year old stepson and 6 year old son. According to transfer records he amassed over 600 acres in Guildford township by 1923.

"Will" is Chet's brother William "Bud" Nelson Parsons (1878 – 1961) who lives with his family Washington Township.

"Elmer" may be Adrian Parson's neighbor, Elmer Francis Crews (1867 – 1934).

"Your bonds" refers to Liberty War Bonds issued by the U.S. Treasury to finance the war effort. Adrian and Chet apparently purchased bonds issued April 1918, the third issuance.