

Verbundkatalog Kalliope

Mann, Klaus

Camp Ritchie

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S/Sgt Klaus Mann,
Company E, Btg. 109,
Camp Ritchie, Maryland

Déar Mr. Archibald MacLeish,

According to newspaper dispatches, American soldiers found recently a dusty box full of Arthur Rimbaud manuscripts - hitherto unknown - , somewhere in a native inn, in Abyssinia. Evidently, the newly discovered works must be from Rimbaud's African period - that is to say, from a date when his astounding literary career had already reached its end - or, to be more precise, when the poet had long ceased to publish. Now it seems to be proven - thanks to some observant U.S. soldier boys - that the erratic genius remained occupied with literary projects and activities, even while loathing and spurning all literary publicity. To me, this is startling news, and I am sure ten-thousands of Rimbaud-enthusiasts will feel the same way about it.

I believe indeed this poetic "trouvaille" could and should be exploited in the interest of our cultural propaganda - especially in France, but also in the German-speaking countries, where Rimbaud's influence has become increasingly significant during the past decades.

Have you received copies of these manuscripts? Or is there any way to find out where they are being kept, at this point, and how one could manage to get hold of them?

I am most eager to learn whatever you may know about this exciting matter. The Army has apparently decided to use me in some propaganda unit. Here is a really beautiful and original chance to impress on the intellectual élites of Europe our constructive and conserving attitude towards culture - in contrast to the destructive methods and principles of Nazi barbarism.

I hope to hear from you soon and am, with my best thanks in advance for your interest,

yours sincerely,