

Hospital Center
A.P.O. 780. Mar 11/19.

Dear Dollie - I am now somewhat rested up from my trip to Paris and the front and will begin the letter, I promised, describing my trip.

Enclosed you find my travel orders and permits to go to Reims and Chateau Thierry and you will notice from the stamping that Uncle Sam does not lose track of us for very long at a time. Beside these we had four other cards that were issued and taken up. My leave was for three days outside of travel time but I gained one day thru a mistake in the Provost Marshall office at Paris. He made out my departure time at 8 P.M. when it should have been 8 A.M. the same day.

The first, third and fourth days were spent in Paris, and the second day at the front. Will tell you about this part of the trip first. We left Paris on a north bound train at 8 A.M. and went thru Chateau

Proprietor
No. 100, East 11th St.
New York
Dear Sirs - I have your order
received up from my shop to return
the front end and begin the
I promised, returning my wife
enclosed you find my
order and forward to your
and that they are your
price from the stamping that
I have done that has
for my shop at a time. I
have not found other
more and then up
I have for three days
of your time but I
say that a mistake
I have at Paris. He
may depart here at 8 PM
it is 8 PM here
I have
the front end for the
over spent my time and
I have at the front end
you will find the part of the
I have on a north
I have on a north

They arrived about 10 A.M. Here we thought there was a great deal of destruction. There was an occasional building down or a tree shot off, and shell holes here and there, and buildings with several dozen marks on the side from small missiles. But these were not even a small sample of what we were to see. The destruction increased with only an occasional area not damaged until we reached Reims. You can no more imagine the destruction here, than you can imagine what the Niagara Falls or Yellowstone Park is like without having seen them, or what a cyclone can do.

About 11.30 A.M. we arrived at Reims, which was a city about the size of Kansas City and has been one of the most beautiful cities of all France, located on the Vesle River and spreads over a fine rolling country. We were directed to what was once a beautiful hotel. All the windows were out and the roof was replaced by canvas and the walls were marked all over by small ^{missiles} ~~missiles~~ and there were great holes where the larger ones had struck. The Red Cross occupied what was the office and were serving coffee and bread. Most of the streets were impassable, but the debris had been removed from a few and we

we walked thru several miles of the ruins and did not see a house or building that was not badly damaged; and there were blocks after blocks that were only piles of stone. The entire city is uninhabitable. We did not see two hundred people all together, and most of them were German prisoners that were clearing up some of the streets or rather opening up a passage way as we do thru snowdrifts. The people had abandoned their houses, leaving even meals on the table not eaten, to say nothing of their personal effects. We found our way to the cathedral where most of the French Kings have been crowned. It is a wonderful structure and a great deal of it is still standing, but was hit hundreds of times. It does not appear that the Germans made a special target of it; because it is by far the most conspicuous object in the city and can be seen from all the surrounding country.

We next proceeded to the trenches, which are to the north of the city and come up almost to the city. The ground lies very much as it does east of Kirksville. I am sure I ~~never~~ ^{saw} more barbed wire here in a few hours than I ever saw in all my life before, and trenches every where. We stopped an army truck and they took us out about five miles and it was the same all the way. They were

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all sizes as to depth and length. Some were new and some were old having moss and grass growing all over ~~them~~ sides. Then there were immense dugouts. Some of them going down thirty or forty feet and having two entrances with steps to go up and down. Some had stoves in and all had telephone wires and some electric light-wires. Then there were rooms all made of cement walls below. Of course a trench that can be dug can be filled but if land were plentiful it could not be put back in farming condition for the price of the land. All the guns, large and small, had been taken away but the placements were there and in some areas, machine guns had been placed every three to six or eight feet; evidently as close as they could be operated. There were great piles of ammunition, hand grenades etc. left. Shell holes were everywhere the most of them were little fellows the size of a tub, but I was in some that were about eight feet deep and fifteen or twenty across the top. Time went entirely too fast and as it was getting near train time we walked most of the way back, and the same truck picked us up put us in Reims for the five o'clock train. It rained most of the

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time, so we were muddy, tired and hungry, but we had to make out on hardtack that we took along. There was nothing to be had but bread and coffee and we did not have time to get that. We got back to Paris about midnight.

Now, as to this part of the trip I hardly know where to begin. The only time we lost was ^{getting} the proper number of stamps on our ^{travel} orders and passes. The remainder of the time we went so fast and saw so much that it is impossible to give a description that will convey it to you. Paris can not ~~now~~ be compared to our American cities, perhaps Washington except. Not that our cities are not wonderful for they are, but for their utility, productiveness and for capacity to handle people and business with speed. The Paris ideal is art; symmetry and beauty. As you know it is on the Seine River which divides the city. For a long time the Romans occupied the southern bank and the Franks the northern and two islands in the center where the oldest part of the city stands. The islands are ^{rounded} ~~surrounded~~ by a vertical wall from the water edge up to about three feet above the level of the streets and a wide walk is next to the wall, so that one may look over the wall into the water below. Both banks of

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the river are built up the same way, as you know the entire city ~~is~~ surrounded by a wall and a moat is outside of this. Since this is of little or no use now a drive way around the city is contemplated. It will follow the old wall. The majority of the streets are narrow and very irregular, similar to New York three or four streets may cross at one point and an area of an acre or so in the center is left and decorated with a monument or some other work of art; for instance "Place de la Bastille" is one. Here a great monument marks the site of the old Bastille prison. I staid at the Hotel De Louvre which faces the end of Rue de l'Opera (street of the Opera) and the Grand Opera building faces the other end. The street is about or less than one half mile in length, and is the Broadway of Paris. The Hotel is handled by the Red Cross to take care of American Army officers and the price is regulated about the same as a first class hotel in our cities.

Among the literally modern things I saw which will be of historical interest, is the building in which the Peace Conference sits. I was in the Palace at Versailles and in the Hall of Mirrors

in which Peace ⁽⁷⁾ will be signed, and
in which the treaty with Germany in
1871 was signed giving them Alsace and
Lorraine.

This Palace and grounds is a master
piece of the crafts of men; but it is one
of the extravagances that bankrupted
a nation, and indirectly one of the
causes of the French Revolution.

I am sending post card views of the
Palace and grounds. The trip here was
made with a Red Cross guide and took a
full half day.

Most of the morning of the same day was
spent at Notre Dame cathedral, which was
also a Red Cross trip. It is the fourth largest
church in the world and was more
than a hundred years in construction.
It was begun in the 12th century. Near it
is a smaller church that was hit by the
long range gun on Easter morn and
killed and wounded nearly two hundred
people at worship therein.

I was very much disappointed at being
unable to get a ticket to the Grand Opera,
but they were all gone. The building is
wonderful on the outside. It is a nation
al consideration, the government has
to appropriate something like a million
dollars a year for its upkeep. Here again
it is very unlike our American Theatres

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as there are no department stores, cigar,
or liquor stores in connection or under
it. The building is out-separate and
distinct from every other structure.

One has not been to Paris unless
they visit Napoleon's Tomb. This is on the
south bank of river and is in
connection with Invalides, which was
once a hospital for disabled soldiers. Now
it is a museum of war material
and war paintings. The vault is of
red granite and is seen from the
floor above; which resembles a circular
balcony with a marble railing around.
It is directly under a high circular dome
which admits the light. The architecture
is beautiful. In the court of the Invalides
was a large collection of aeroplanes, Zeppelins
and artillery of all sizes taken from
the Germans.

We spent part of our time at the Louvre
which is the Museum of fine arts. The
statuary was all in place, but all
paintings had been removed during
the bombardment. In the court of
this building is the statue of Lafayette
presented to France by the public
school children of America.

From the Louvre west for a distance of

about a half mile ⁹ is a succession of areas including the Garretta and Champ Elysee which form a beautiful park about the size of Tower Grove Park in St. Louis. At the west end is the arch of Triump which is a beautiful production. Both sides of the street from the Louvre to the Arch are lined with artillery captured from the Germans. We counted for a few blocks and estimated that there were about 2000 pieces from the 77 gm up in size. Think I got some good pictures of some groups and of the tanks.

A short way down is the Trocadero, a theatre erected at the end of the 1900 World Fair grounds and looking south across the river is seen Eiffel tower and the old Ferris wheel that so many rode on at Chicago Fair. We were past the tower but guards prevented pedestrians from walking on that side of the street. It is now an immense wireless station. We saw many more less important things which I will not take time to tell about now.

I have had quite a time getting this letter finished, as we have discharged and admitted about five hundred patients,

¹⁰
This week and have over four hun-
dred left: So we have been going some.
I am enjoying the best of health and
but do not know anything more
about coming home but am
hoping for next month

~~your~~ as ever

Ezra.

Lh'38'J'mm |

March 11, 1919

Mrs. Graham