



Reed and Hyde Families Papers.

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"Scenie" - sister
Mary Reed Nydo
(I think)

8-9-17 To 11-23-18

France

Eileen McCormack

Robert W. Rowen
Great Neck, New York

September 22, 1948.

Mr. Reed W. Hyde,
84 Mountain Avenue,
Summit, New Jersey.

Dear Reed:

I am attaching some letters from Aunt Jane when she was overseas. These were among some of Uncle Arthur's papers and I thought that the family might like to read them before they are sent on to Jane Hyde Hoyt. I think she is the logical one to keep them as this was most intimately concerned with her life at that time.

Would you please pass this along to Howard, Arthur, Louise and then Jane in that order so that they will arrive at Jane's for permanent possession.

Aunt Jane was a very wonderful woman, and we are all lucky to have had her while we were growing up.

Affectionately,

Bob

rwr:mam
enclosure.

To be returned to
Arthur S. Dwight
Great Neck, L. I., N. Y.

CABLEGRAM.

COPY

New York, N. Y.
August 20, 1917.

Miss Jane Hyde,
St. Andrews, N. B.

Mrs. Arthur Dwight arrived Bordeaux
August 17.

(Signed)

Dwight & Lloyd Sintering Co

Copies of Letters to members of her Family
from Mrs. Arthur S. Dwight
while serving in France during the Great War
August 1917 to May 1919.
in French Red Cross and American Y. M. C. A.

At Sea.

August 9, 1917.

S. S. La Touraine

My dear Jane:

It might be a day or a week since the momentous moment in which we said farewell at the dock in New York. The hours slip by with a little roll to the boat, a soft breeze blowing, a bright sunlight overhead and the deepest of blue in the sea. Under such conditions only a few more determined ones have dared to be seasick or to express any apprehension on the subject of submarines. It is very hard indeed, to believe that evil exists from what one can see beneath the rim of a cap and above the rise and fall of the blue horizon line. As you see, I have not been ambitious in these two days and have succumbed entirely to the old charm of the ocean.

When you left, such a brave dear girl as you are, I came down below and hunted out my state room. It was piled high with flowers and candy and baskets of good things and I made a hasty search for cards so that I could send off a line of thanks before the boat should sail. I practiced my infantile French on the steward in charge of the library, and got possession of post cards and stamps and wrote one after another thinking each would be the last, but finally the supply was exhausted and still the boat did not go. Dinner came, an entertaining meal between two French gentlemen who considerably let me put in a word every time I could catch the drift of their somewhat rapid conversation, and then a walk on deck, where I had the luck to see a sight which filled me with mixed feelings of despair and hope. It was no more than the lowering into the hold of all my baggage. Just imagine, those barrels of jam, those hundreds of pounds of candy, dangling in the precarious fashion, tied loosely together with a rope and swinging gaily over the space between the dock and the ship. The hold luggage was the last to go, it seems, and soon after there were unmistakable signs that we were about to leave. Finally the gang plank was pulled up and the boat moved slowly, slowly out into mid-stream. I could not help but think of that other ship that you and I saw sail from the very next dock just a little time ago.

We travel without lights at night, the decks are dark and those withoutside cabins found their electric lights without any bulbs, the first night. I consider myself lucky to have an inside cabin, and besides one all to myself, but it has been very hot down below most of the time. Two of the ladies, besides many of the men sleep on deck, but to me a steamer chair is unbearable to sleep in. If as is the rumor we have to camp outside

the last night or two, I mean to take a blanket on the floor. Perhaps I will try it anyway, for they say the Northern Lights are beautiful and it would be good practice besides.

Madame Robert of whom Mrs. Eldridge wrote, is very nice indeed and has taken me in hand with French. She gives me a lesson every day and is very jolly and good-natured with everybody.

There is a large unit of bookkeepers going to the Red Cross. They were advertised for and have gone, not as volunteers exactly, but for a salary that just about will pay their living over there. Then there is a unit of Ambulance Service, two of them in fact, between whom there is evidently some rivalry in feeling, but all I can tell is that one wears khaki and the other waits its uniform on the other side. There is the usual quota of diplomats, and also of celebrities. Lardner of the Saturday Evening Post, how sad I am now that I neglected that paper heretofore; Monsieur and Mme. Huard she does not look like the author of that most charming book, but looks and the lady were ever deceiving; Mr. Medill McCormick and others whose claim to fame I may know more of as time goes on.

Two or three days have gone by and with the same unvarying soft air and cloudless sky. Evidently we have sailed far to the south, for at night there is much phosphorous in the water and many have seen flying fishes. Those who watch the compass say that the ship pursues a zig-zag course, but whenever I have looked at the North Star or the more prosaic instrument on the deck we seem to be still east, south-east.

Sunday was marked on the calendar today by a service held in the second-class cabin and conducted by the Y.M.C.A. of whom there is a small unit on board. A said-to-be classmate of President Wilson's gave a little talk about missionary work in Japan. He appears to have been a commissioner of a missionary or college kind, to many countries in the last thirty years and talks well. He is now en route to Serbia to report conditions there.

The boys in khaki find time hangs heavy on their hands these lovely peaceful days and one or two girls on board who are jolly and good-natured are a great solace to them. Also a French family of a mother and six children all under eleven years. They are going home to the father who is in the army and the mother is so lonely she can stand it no longer. They are not very clean but the little girls, five of them, are friendly and nice. The difference between the first and second class on this steamer is one mostly of meals and sleeping quarters, the decks are free to both.

This letter represents my first efforts in typewriting on the Corona as well as my only desire so far toward getting in touch with the many friends who have helped to make the voyage a pleasant one for me. One lovely steamer basket is to make its debut at tea time this afternoon. I find it is filled with a most charming assortment of tea things and the tea which the first day appeared attractive enough, is beginning to pall, beside which the sea appetite will make my cake much more popular now than the first day out.

I want to remark right here that I never dreamed there could be so many ways of making mistakes as one page of typewriting will develop.

(Signed) J.H.L.

Dearest Janie:

I practiced a little on you with the typewriter, and if there is anything of interest in it you can send it on. I do not like typewritten letters but I am sure it will be useful and I am anxious to get a little used to the machine.

The voyage is over now. We came safely into the river at three last night. It was a thrilling evening for the possibility of danger could not be overlooked. We all stayed on deck and enjoyed the experience and the first flash of the great light that marks the Bordeaux harbor was a sight few will forget. As we came nearer we could see a warship or two with flashlights to help guard the way and a little submarine chaser dashed quickly by near enough to speak to the men.

After midnight I brought up some dates and salted nuts from the generous basket the Raymonds sent, a huge one not emptied yet, and they were very comforting after the excitement of the night.

Today everything is bustle and confusion. The customs men are passing our things. I have sent a cable to Mr. Lloyd and tickets for Paris are bought. I shall stay tonight in Bordeaux, though most of the passengers go on, but I want to see the country and do not know of any reason for hurrying. Besides I may have to wait because of my heavy boxes. What could I not give to know how and where Uncle Arthur is, but I am going to be patient about that.

My dear sweet child Janie, it was hard to leave you on the dock. It seems a long time ago just now to me.

The mail is closing and we are arriving. Good-bye for today.

(Signed) Jane E. Wright

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(Signed) Jane E. Wright

A Bord de Touraine.
August 16, 1917.

Dear Seenie and All:

Just a few lines to let you know by hand that we have arrived safely in Bordeaux. Such an uneventful voyage, scarcely a ship in sight, the one that came near at all seemed to take us for a man of war and zig zagged as if to escape a possible torpedo from us. We passed her in the way they have nowadays without any sign of recognition.

I have been terribly lazy on board. My cabin is inside and very hot, so I never wake in the morning until they pound on my door for a bath at eight. At night I stay on deck until all hours. Last night it was three nearly, for I managed to bridge myself over the humps in the chair more comfortably than usual and went to sleep. The nights are beautiful for there are no lights at all, even side lights for safety being out, and flare of matches forbidden these last days, for we are in the danger zone. The captain and officers do not come down for meals, and there are five men at the gun fore and aft.

I never so much wanted to know the stars as on this trip and I think often of Annie's lessons about them, but while they stand out like pictures in the heavens I have to cling to the very old friends when it comes to knowing them by name.

Everyone on board is going over for work of some kind, except a few diplomats and official observers. There are no soldiers and one detects the growing sentiment that there are too many men these days going in the Red Cross and the Ambulance. I think, however, that the young men themselves will readjust to whatever conditions they find when they get there.

How much alike the sea and the great prairies and the great mountains are! I love them all and am glad of a chance to have a voyage again.

August 16, 1917.

I did not tell you how dear your letters were, all of them, Louis, Aunt Mina, Louise, Robert and Arthur, and yours with Howard's enclosed. I was to have sent the latter back for Annie to read, but in the hurry of getting off I saved all the letters for reading on board and so that came along by mistake.

They were all dear letters and I wish I could tell you all what I think of you but that would take too long this lazy day.

Love.

(Signed) Jennie.

Hot l Majestic, Paris France
August 23 1913.

Dearest Anne and ALL,-

I am sorry to inflict a twpewritten page upon the family but must take advantage of every moment to practice this interesting little machine.

I will go way back to our arrival in Bordeaux, where I found a very comfortable hotel and spent the night there in the faint hope that I might find a letter from Arthur in the morning. A visit to the ships office was dissapointing, however but I found there instead, five large bags belonging to two ladies who had gone up to Paris the night before and who must have been very much disconcerted at not getting possession of them I brought them along with my four and trusted to luck to see me through. It was a very beautiful ride of eight hours up through what must be one of the loveliest parts of France. Near Bordeaux it was all grapes and gardens, tomato vines tied to stakes and striped of leaves so th tomatoes looked like bunches of redballs fastened to the stakes, but most all all miles of grapes. Further this way there was a great broad valley as flat as the praires of Illinois, and here there were wheat fields, many large enough for a tractor to work to good advantage. We had glimpses of three or four of the Chateaux for which this region is famous, and at eight thirty when we arrived in Paris it was not yet quite dark. Here, however, my troubles began.

I soon got a porter with a little baggage wagon to carry my many traps to the door of the station, but with the limited French at my disposal I soon made out that he thought my chances for a cab were anything but good, and much depressed I gave him his fee and he departed. I importuned every cabby that hove i sight and learned the meaning of "égaré" in away not to be forgotten. I had two very good meals on the train and so was cheerful enough, but the hope o hotel and a bed seemed far off. Finally bribery won, and at tenthirty I arrived, more anxious for word from Arthur than anything else possible. Sure enough a telegram and two short letters. He had not heard from me since he left and had only one good little letter from Jane, bless her heart. I would like to detail to you the efforts I made covering nearly five days to let him know I was here, but it is enough that he does know now and I am thankful for that.

I had also quite a time finding the ladies whose baggage I did not want, but they turned up in answer to my telegram and we were mutually pleased at meeting again. Then you must not forget that besides this varied assortment of hand luggage, I was blessed with an assortment of barrels and cases that made the officials and porters ask innumerable questions that tried my powers in french beyond all words. The disposal of these

took me the better part of Sunday and Monday, but the jelly and jam is now safely in various hospitals and the candy and tobacco in which the Joliet friends had such a large part is on its way to the soldiers for whom it was intended. The whole lot weighed about eighteen hundred pounds and that is quite a load for one lone woman to bring to this country as personal luggage and I am more than glad, too, for as it turned out that is the only way I could have brought it at all. And every official was as kind as possible about it as soon as they knew that the hospitals and soldiers were the destination.

I had the pleasure last night of seeing one barrel and one case of jam unpacked and nothing at all was broken. The hay of the packing was given to the horses and the papers that were used as wrapping go to a machine that converts them into fuel for cooking. I was all last night at this place, as relief headquarters, and shall go there one night a week for the present. I wish I could tell you more about it but I am anxious that my letter should go through promptly and later may know better what kind of things I can write about.

The nicest thing that has happened so far was an accidental meeting with Captain Hudson whom Jane knows well. He of course inquired for me at Morgan Harjes & CO., but he asked if I had been in and they said "No" which was true but I had telegraphed my hotel from Bordeaux, only he did not put the question that way. However it was at Morgan Harjes that I met him a little later on that day. He came here for dinner and we had a good talk and he reported everybody well. Mr Carley had a fall and hurt his knee and is in the hospital but expects to be out again in a couple of weeks.

The weather is splendid though evidently the Parisians think it very hot. To me it is only what summer ought to be. I am wearing my white shoes and my old summer clothes for I fear the season for them will be gone very soon. One sees occasionally a light dress and hat but the streets are very quiet as to clothes as one would expect. In the subway the guards are women and they are very business like in appearance and efficient as well. Coming home this morning about eight, I got into a very fair sized rush hour crush and felt quite as if at home on Broadway.

The first two days I lived in taxis as the business in hand made it necessary, but since then I go armed with a book of street maps and I expect in time to be master of localities. This is no mean ambition in Paris for I venture to say that there are no two parallel streets in the city and the complex ways in which they run and are named is only to be equaled by the perfect system of marking on every corner.

I have written some notes today and sent out some letters of introduction looking towards getting started in some definite relief work, and also to getting a teacher of French, which is very important. In the meantime, I can

work in whatever comes to hand, for one feels that not a minute should be lost. I read the french paper through thoroughly. It was tantalizing at first but I am beginning to find that it does give the news and that is the main thing. The London Times every other day is my great self indulgence. There is so much to read in it that I ought not to spare the time just now at any rate.

By the time this reaches you it will be September and school will be commencing again and the dear ones from the will be home again. I know you will have a busy time and a happy one with so many young people together. There will be plenty of work to be done for those over here for they need all that our country can send them. Too much cannot be said in favor of socks and sweaters and I think if securely wrapped and sent parcel post to the individual soldier, they should come through all right. They told me at the American post office [for clearing soldiers mail only] that great quantities of mail comes addressed with a mans name only, or otherwise most insufficiently addressed. Would it not be a good idea to start a campaign in every unit that leaves home town to see that the families are properly instructed in this matter. There is another thing also and that is the dividing of a soldiers pay with his family. This has to be done through his company officer and printed forms must be duly signed and then the money is paid direct from Washington. It is very important that it should not be left until a man gets over here and what money he leaves for his wife will save just that much hardship at home. Unless the Red Cross or some organization takes it up the very people who most need to be instructed will fail, for so far as I know it is difficult to get that kind of instruction in the camps at home.

A typewritten page cannot carry all the love that I want to send to each and every one at home, but I am thinking of each one in turn as I write this and bless you all for being so near and dear to me. Do not worry if letters miscarry and you do not hear from me. It is one of the privations of war. No news is good news and pray God we will see a victorious end for the Allies soon.

Lovingly ,

Jennie R. Dwight.

Hotel Majestic.
August 29, 1917.

Dear Sennie and All:

I am hoping this letter can go by the boat sailing Saturday, but of that no one can tell, and we shall know better how to count on letters after we have had a little more experience with them.

It has been raining more or less for three days, showers here, but further north torrents and torrents of rain. For myself I could not complain for it is the first storm of any real kind that I have seen since leaving New York. Truly wonderful sunshine all the time.

Since writing home last on the twenty-third I have been busy enough. To begin with, after hearing from Arthur through Mr. Hudson I did not get a word from him for six days and naturally I was more anxious than I wanted to admit to myself. When a letter did come it had been six days in transit and that is the record time for any that I have received since. He is planning to come to Paris, a journey of about four hours, on Saturday, unless something prevents, which is of course probable. However, I am understanding conditions better now, and can wait very patiently indeed, though I cannot leave this Hotel until after he comes for I do not want to lose any of his precious time hunting me up and there is no telling whether he gets my letters or not.

I had the Dwight Lloyd business to attend to, and find the Corona a very great help in establishing my identity as a sure enough business woman; and when the date came for my interview with the company here I went around with my blue prints and photographs and all the French I could muster from a good coaching on technical terms. The gentlemen were courteous in the extreme and while I can't brag much about the French I was really very gratified to find I could tell them a good deal they wanted to know about sintering. They know only a type introduced here in Europe which does not begin to be as effective as the machine we use, and while they had ordered our machine out of faith and the most earnest desire to increase their output of ores, they did not know anything at all about its plan and theory, and that I could talk about an unlimited length of time. Between the exchange of letters and the call I was unable to make any definite engagements during

August 29, 1917.

last week but filled in the time as best I could. I am sorry to find them very short of surgical dressings here, owing to the great losses of Red Cross supplies on some of the ships and so I go there whenever I have a few spare hours.

This morning I went to the great Gare du Nord where all the trains arrive from the North of France. It had always been a huge station from the travel that comes that way, and now empties out its trainloads from the front on leave. I signed up for two days a week at the French canteen and take my first turn Friday night from nine to nine. Last night they served twelve hundred men, a fair average, they say. I am trying to get a varied experience in these first weeks for it will all help to train me and harden me up, somewhat slowly, and meanwhile I am on the lookout for what may be more permanent work.

I am very well and you must not worry. I do not mean to get sick over here, if ordinary common sense can prevent it. I found the need of some garments that were my life preservers in Mexico and ripped up my pongee dress and with very little work made two excellent pairs. It was always a foolish dress and I feel much happier with it in its present condition.

To night I go to the other Gare, where the wounded arrive. Last night it was very interesting. The poultices are so gentle and so appreciative they make your heart go right out to them when they are sick. Here the trains may come any time or not at all, as it happens, so generally there is a chance to sleep and some rather primitive beds are arranged in dormitory fashion for the ladies attending.

I cannot begin to know or to appreciate Paris as it is now. A new insight comes every time one goes out, and it is easy to believe that the world is made over for every person living here. But that is almost true at home. God keep you all, dear ones, and a kiss for everybodday, from your

Loving

(Signed) Jennie

Hotel Majestic, Paris.
September 1, 1917.

My dear Reed:

I know you are interested in my progress on the Corona so will pardon a letter on it.

The most interesting thing I have to report is that I am expecting Uncle Arthur this afternoon and in consequence am in quite a flurry of excitement, somewhat held in check, however, by the fact that if he cannot come I shall not get word of the change of plan for three or four days at least. I am hoping at any rate.

It has been as cold as Greenland for a whole week, and rainy too. What that means to the boys at the front is hard to realize, the rain is worst of all in every way.

Last night I spent the night at the Gare du Nord, the big railway terminal where the trains from the north come in. There was a huge room with front end a bench and counter table seating perhaps fifty or seventy-five at a time. In the improvised kitchen near were two big kettles of soup, good too, baskets of bread and tables with chunks of bread with sausage in as a sandwich. I got there a little before nine, and almost immediately the place was full of soldiers and it went on with scarcely an empty seat until about one, when the trains stopped arriving, until daylight, when coffee and bread began. They had beer and so-called cider too, each about as intoxicating I think as circus lemonade, but much appreciated with a cigarette. I never spent a happier evening. Though often so tired they could hardly sit up they never failed to respond with a smile and "merci beaucoup." It was wonderful to me to see them. They were French mostly, of course, but some of every color under the sun, and some returning prisoners from Germany. I was almost too busy to listen anyway, but how I did wish that my ears were better tuned to their rapid-fire mode of talking. There was a long row of officers' beds on one side, relics possibly from some hotel, single ones of French walnut and all the rest of the place with ticks of straw on counters, and as we saw when at last the evening's work was done, every available spot on the floor with a "poillu" rolled up in his greatcoat, his knapsack and whatever other things he possessed tucked up beside him. There was an adjoining room fixed up as an emergency hospital and this morning early, a sad little group was taken in there, a woman with both legs amputated, another gone mad, three little children, one an idiot. Three others had been killed by the bomb that had all but killed the woman. They

September 1, 1917.

were from Belgium, with a nurse in charge. Bless the nurses, what a comfort they are in the world just now. I wish you could have seen the two older children drink hot coffee, not exactly the food prescribed in books, but it took a lot of the fear out of them and put something much better in.

Our nurse took me in with her the last few hours of the night, so I had quite a rest as I had not expected to be able to lie down at all. For such work we wear a coarse white dress, like a mother hubbard, and white apron with a white veil inside but a blue veil with white facing on the street. It is a great protection and one is treated with consideration everywhere in it. Then over the dress, on the street, you have to wear a blue coat, and as luck would have it, I bought one that does very well almost the last thing in New York. The regular nurses wear a uniform coat, so the ordinary people like myself are not in competition with them. I am so much interested in the two night places that I am working in now that if I do not take some work outside Paris I will fit in another night or two per week that way. There are fewer people to work at night so that one's help is appreciated. I tried to explain to the directress that I had been trained for such a place in serving at church dinners and suppers at home, but I doubt if she understood the variety of rush hour feeding that we used to enjoy under that name; but at any rate she seemed to think I knew how.

Paris is a picturesque place now with all the men on the street in uniform, and uniforms in such variety of color and kind that I have given up all hope of ever telling even a gendarme from a Cossack colonel. Jane used to be my help and standby and I am in complete despair without her. Then they wear so many medals and decorations, four is not uncommon by any means and one wonders how the manly bosom is to accomodate them all if time goes on. Ah, but to think what everyone of them stands for, you do not forget that for a minute and it is not always gay to see them, I am sorry to say.

I shall await the next mail from you with great interest for I hope to hear more of your plans, for the first of October is not so far away now that we begin the year with September. Give a great deal of love to Evelyn, dear. Not to be present at your wedding is one of the real privations.

Send this on to the family when you are through, for I never can tell what boat it will catch nor when there may be another.

Much love to you and do not forget that letters are more welcome than ever.

Loveingly

(Signed) Aunt Jane

Hotel Majestic,
Paris.
September 9, 1919.

My dear Alice and all:

Yours was the first letter I have received from Joliet since I left, and it came yesterday dated August 19, and I cannot tell you how good it was to hear all the home news. There was so much of interest in the letter I should like to talk about everything, but that is hardly possible if I want to write about anything else, and no doubt you are interested in what is going on here.

First please thank again all the friends who sent me money. I am more than ever glad of what I brought over. It has been greatly appreciated and things are so difficult to buy here and transportation getting so impossible that I think I was most fortunate. There are two very good works in which you might like to invest your fifty-five dollars. One is to 'adopt' a child in Paris, that is pay fifty dollars and a certain child is supported by that for one year, and the name and age, etc., are sent to you. The children are either orphaned or partly so by the war and the money is paid wholly by the society to mother or grandmother or whoever it will help toward the care of the child. I know the society and it is doing wonderful work.

The other is to let your money go toward the re-building of some home in devastated France. The poor refugees who come filtering in all the time from that land of desolation! They are in the most pitiful state but wonderful to relate they cling with the last bit of spirit and strength that is in them to the one hope, the one desire, to go back and find that spot which was once home to them and rebuild again its sacred walls. I cannot describe to you the tragedy of their condition, but the hope of France lies in that remaining spark of spirit that is in them and the help that can be given them to go back and make the land again a productive and fruitful region. There are already organizations attempting this in the region won back from the Germans, and one American lady had taken one village where with a little money here, a horse or a plow there, and materials to another she is showing the village people a way to help themselves.

September 9

Uncle Arthur, who is working in the region just behind the trenches which has been fought over inch by inch and is a veritable crater as a result of the battles on it, told me with tears in his eyes of what was once one of the loveliest cities in that part of France, now an absolute desert waste, not from the necessities of battle, which a man can understand, but simply from utter and ruthless destruction. You know Uncle Arthur, I have not often seen him weep from any cause. If you want to send the money let me know by letter and send it to Miss C. N. Stanley, 29 Broadway, New York. I can draw on it from here and will credit you in francs in exchange notes. I did not mean to infer that Uncle Arthur knew of this work, only that he had seen some of the devastated places.

Now I must tell you how happy I have been in having a visit of three days from Uncle Arthur. To see him looking so well and to hear all about the conditions of his daily life and to know the spirit and welfare of himself and of the regiment. It was all a wonderful comfort and satisfaction for me. One cannot be blind to the dangers and one does not try to that. The wonderful part is that their spirit is in the tremendous drama that is being played, that it is a man's work, a huge task, and the strength of the metal that is in them is put to the test. There are hard moments no doubt, and discouraging ones, but one must believe over here that American is in to win the war, and the allied world hangs on in grim earnest until our force grows strong enough to do it.

We had a beautiful time together. We shopped for the regiment, looking distractedly for engineering tools of which we knew neither names nor shops. One Sunday we hunted up La Perouse, do you remember, and had the best tasting stuff to eat that could be imagined. Paris has two meatless days a week and two without cake, and the bread is war bread of which one hears complaints, but I like it very well indeed. Uncle Arthur said at the front they get a much whiter kind of bread and I have heard the same from the French lines.

My work now is Monday and Friday nights at the Gare du Nord of which I think I wrote in a letter to Fred, which I asked him to send on, and Wednesday night at La Chapelle. This week Wednesday which was the day Uncle Arthur went back, I found when I reached the Gare at eight o'clock that they were expecting a train about three . . .

so we spread bread with some of my own raspberry jam, and

September 9, 1914⁷

it was good too, wrapped them in tissue paper and put sixteen in each basket. We made a few other preparations and then went to bed. There were eight of the ladies, one a countess, and American by birth, two Canadians, the rest French. The Directress, a French lady, arriving about two-thirty in a automobile. She started the work and had been there almost without a break for nearly three years, and in the beginning with almost no conveniences at all. It is well organized now and when the train arrived there were about thirty ambulance men in khaki who first lifted the wounded from the train, then they were carried on stretchers by a company of French ex-soldiers who brought them into the big hall and rested them on supports built in the floor for the purpose. Each lady had a group of sixteen and as they were brought in we had clean pillows, the kind you make in the Red Cross, which we put under each one's head or made him comfortable in any way we could. Then gave hot soup, the sandwiches, hot coffee and the cigarettes. Some could not eat and had to be fed. Some few could walk and there were comfortable chairs for them at our end of the hall. There is an officers room with special comforts, though we had only one officer that night.

You don't know what a happiness it was to do for the poor fellows. They had been thirty-six hours from Verdun and the hospital where they were had been shelled behind the lines, for which reason they had to be moved. They were bandaged and cared for wonderfully and just to think of the saving of life and suffering that all that bandaging means. I have blessed the Red Cross and the makers of bandages for giving to those men what we saw on all those at La Chapelle.

It was daylight when the last one was gone. I think there were a hundred and fifty though the room will hold four hundred and last year many more were coming than this year. The hospitals in Paris are wonderful but for some good reason they are not using them as much at present as they did a year ago when everything was filled to overflowing.

I take a much appreciated bath when I get back in the morning, have coffee and bread and butter in my room and then often take a good nap so that I think I shall get along nicely if I keep it up, which I rather hope to do.

September 9, 1917.

Your father was so good to cable Uncle Arthur about my arrival. I was really afraid he would never get word thru me and I got quite worried, but now things go through in four or five days quite regularly.

Do you mean that Horace Smith is coming over here? I could not understand from what you said. If so please tell Mrs. Smith not to worry when she does not get word from him as soon as she thinks she ought. I think the censor works by sidetracking mails and cable for irregular and often very long times. I know of several cables that have arrived here after the people had crossed and arrived by ship - mine to Uncle Arthur among them - and all the letters from him are from four to eleven days and only about a hundred miles away. There is evidently no telling what to expect and probably that is exactly what the censor seeks to bring about. Letters coming this way fare better sometimes and then again not. It is part of the hardship of the war. My heart aches for the dear friends who have to send their loved ones over but it is truly the great emergency of the world. If we could see it as history will see it no doubt we should know better how much hangs on the work of these weeks and months in America.

I am writing a long letter because I am sending this my Mme. Robert who is a teacher of French in the Horace Mann school and came over on the boat with me. She comes every summer bringing what money and help that she can. She has three sons at the front and she loves her country but she has to go back to support them. The French soldiers get five cents a day beside their keep. Pretty hard! That is one reason why it is such a comfort to help in the service to the French soldiers. There is no feeling of charity in it but simply you are a part of the organization, that is looking after his needs, and they are so grateful and respond so quickly to every pleasant work.

I shall look for letters. Do you know anybody in the Chicago engineers? I think they are near where Uncle Arthur is.

Now I must close, with love and kisses to each and every one. I think of each one by name so as to have the comfort of feeling it a real visit. I like a letter that does not go via censor even if I have nothing to say that anyone cannot hear.

Ever your loving

Aunt Jane (Signed)

Hotel Majestic,
Paris, France,
October 7, 1917.

My dear Alice:

Your letter from Copenhoven came a day or two ago and made me feel quite as if I were with you for the moment. I am so glad that you all had such a happy visit there, and I know you were good for all the family.

I have also received two welcome letters from your mother, a fine one from Robert and one from Aunt Mina, all of which goes to show how good you all are to me, but you can't begin to know the comfort and pleasure that the letters bring. I am more than delighted at Robert's getting into the High School and am very sure he will do his very best to keep up. It is certainly a fine thing that he could skip and I feel very proud.

I sent all the letters on to Uncle Arthur and asked him to send a week-end cable with both our congratulations to Howard and an "all's well" added. Whether he did or not I don't know, but in any event we can't help but be very proud of Howard's record for it means hard work and is probably the biggest promotion he will ever get, though I imagine he will get many and will be a fine soldier and officer. He is the very type for one and I hope he gets the chance.

I hope Uncle Arthur will cable because there was a long time when no boat sailed and letters were greatly delayed. Perhaps it would be well to say now that on no account should you worry from lack of letters, there are too many ways in which they can go astray. Bad news travels much faster than good and you can know we are safe as you do not hear,

It is after dinner, Sunday night and I have been walking up and down the hotel corridor, my heavy coat on and have gotten nicely warmed up. It is raining hard outside and had been as cold as Greenland these last few days.

Just now five or six American officers have come in and registered and gone to their rooms. I looked at the register but did not know anyone though two were from Chicago. I am hoping greatly to see Horace Smith. Dear Mrs. Smith, what a heroine she is, and how many mothers are!

James Meissner was here last week and took dinner with me two or three times. You would be delighted to see how he has developed in his short experience here. He is now first lieutenant in the aviation and will soon be through his school practice and sent on out. Janie's friend, Wildy Mitchell has also been in Paris and I have seen him several times too. He has left the camion service and is about to enter the aviation school. He is a nice boy too.

I am still working three nights a week at the canteen, and four half days at surgical dressings. I don't get home from the Gare du Nord until ten o'clock in the morning and by the time I have had a bath and coffee and then to bed for two or three hours there is not much left of the day, as you can see. I am standing the night work alright and like it very much indeed. I met a nurse yesterday on "permission" from a hospital at the front, and she told me again what I have seen so often, that every little thing that is sent from home is such a cheer to the "Blesses", and of surgical dressings she says they never have enough. Your Red Cross work is worth everything.

Much love to each one in the two dear households.

(Signed) Aunt Jane.

October 18, 1917.
Reed's wedding day.

Hotel Majestic, Paris.

My dear Seenie and all at home:

I have been thinking of you all today and of the two dear children that ~~were~~ joining their lives together in the wedding at New Rochelle. They are a happy pair I am sure. I wanted to write you so that you would know that I am with you all in thought. We are a widely separated family on this occasion when we should all dearly love to be together with them, but "c' est la guerre," as the saying is, and we can be happy enough in their happiness.

You and Louis, dear father and mother, it is a great day to you to have an oldest son married!

I am going to send this off with only my love. There is nothing new, as far as I am concerned and I am well and very busy every day.

Love to each one,

Your loving

(Signed) Jennie.

Hotel Majestic Paris.
October 25, 1917.

Dearest Annie and All:

I do not get much time for writing letters, partly because I have filled up all my spare time with work and partly because it is too cold to sit and write just for the pleasure of it. There are two perfectly good heating apparatus at work in Paris at this time. One is walking and the other is hot water bottles in bed. You can see at a glance that the twenty four hours are thus divided into periods of bodily activity and mental unconsciousness, neither very helpful to the gentle art of writing letters. "On dit" that other heating begins on November 1, but the month without is no doubt an excellent preparation for the months to come. It has taught me to put on layers of clothes and if I was never glad to be thin before I should be now, for what a sight some of our fat friends would make in the number of garments which go far toward making the inside temperature bearable. Some places have open fires and are boasting loudly, but this is in reality a hotel de lux and its central heating is said to be a great attraction. They say we shall profit later by it, and I trust it may be so. To tell the truth I am getting on beautifully. I had a cold and got over it without even then knowing the delightful stone hot water bottles with which I have since made close acquaintance. And I have not missed a single night at my three night a week stations either.

Tuesday we had a busy time, the tables being full every minute until midnight when in came a troop of 50 or more of the biggest and blindest fellows you ever saw. They are Senegalese and wear red turbans and often bloomers too. They were very hungry and in the morning early after hot coffee and plenty of bread they stood around smoking big pipes and whistling cheerfully. They did not like to go outside and wait for they hate the cold.

Last night at Gare La Chapelle there was no train, so I curled up in the dormitory (where there is fire, by the way, for the whole place is heated due to the generosity of Mr. W. K. Vanderbilt and on account of bringing the wounded there the heat is started early) and I slept fine hours, think of that! I started home at eight in a brilliant sunshine and when I came out of the subway it was raining.

hard. An hour later, after a bath and coffee, I started out again to Surgical Dressings and to a brilliant, almost cloudless sky and a little softness that made one think longingly of April. Neither sun or softness lasted long but we have had much of April showers this month without the hint of Spring.

It is near five-thirty and time for my French lesson, and at seven dinner and off to the Gare du Nord again. That is always a busy and interesting place.

Time is up, so I must close. Much love to everyone in the dear household. Annie's letters with clippings with newspaper and Fred's letter came yesterday and all were greatly enjoyed and have gone on to Arthur. I hear from him very often. He has a delightful faculty of making interesting letters out of the daily happenings and never mentioning the one thing that we are all most interested to know and think of most continuously- the great events of every day toward the war.

Again love to each one

Lovingly

(Signed) Jennie.

Hotel Majestic,
Paris, France,
December 11, 1917.

Dearest Janie and All:

So many days go by and I do not get a chance to write half the letters I want, above all to you and the dear home people who are so good to write to me. Every mail, so far as I can tell, brings a home letter and I cannot tell you how welcome and good they are to me.

First I am cheered by the good news of Aunt Mina in your letter received just now of November 18. I think the wedding and all the young people have been good for her if only she can take things easy and not overdo. Do be careful dear Aunt Mina, extra careful for Arthur and for me.

I hope your young teacher friend's pupils will take a baby, a two year old little girl as you suggest. I am going to enclose in this the cover of the annual report of the society, which is long and in French. On second thought I will send you instead a pamphlet which tells the whole story. The work seems to be an excellent one, and they work it for Americans by our paying 15 francs a month, (about three dollars) per child. A year's subscription is the best way, and while there is no obligation for a longer period, they are usually kept on. I am subscribing one in the name of "Joliet Association" with Alice's money and the receipt will go direct to her. I do not know just how much she sent to Reed but think there was enough for a year anyway. If you live in Paris you are expected to see the child now and then and keep track of its welfare. The desire is to have the orphans brought up, as far as possible, in the life to which their father was accustomed and not to let so many children or more or less well-to-do parents grow up in utter poverty and ignorance.

I shall try again with the Red Cross here to stir on your application but hope you will pursue them at that end. Hundreds of young women are coming over. Some are finding that they came to work, and it is an evident surprise to them. Some will be sent back. Many are fine. Don't hesitate to push your case for you are the right kind. I say this believing honestly that there is just as much good work to be done in the United States, but you are the kind for work over here and if you want to do it I hope you will have the chance.

December 11, 1917.

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Tell Louise her French correspondent is a sailor lad who was in the Gare du Nord one night. There were three jolly youngsters, just ordinary un-educated boys, but pleasant faced and very desirous of someone to write to. I gave them Louise, Jane and Lorene's names and wrote you at the time about them. If any other girls want soldier boys to write to and their mothers do not object, I can supply them but they must not romance about it but just feel that they can do a lot of good and give the boys a little cheer in the midst of a hard life.

Uncle Arthur came finally as unexpectedly as he had been long expected. The great events not far from his location had kept him from day to day, so that when he did arrive I was in the midst of a day's surgical dressings and his coming caused quite a flutter on the floor where I was.

After a day or two Captain Stehli came down. He had been in the hospital a couple of weeks from an auto accident, but came down as soon as he was out and together he and Uncle Arthur had nearly a week's work. Between times we had lovely hours together, roaming about old Paris and shopping a little for things to take back to camp. Three nights I went to the Gare and Uncle Arthur came for me and brought me back again after the heaviest of the night's work was done and it was an exciting thing at twelve or one to find a taxi, and once we walked a mile or two in the dark, winding streets before we could persuade the very infrequent taxi that he wanted to go our way. That same night Captain Stehli was with us and we all stopped in at the British Canteen in the same Gare, where a friend, Dr. Conkling, was on duty. They have a nice cheerful place with all the cooking done by two ladies (the real thing) on gas stoves behind the high serving table, plenty of red curtains at the back and round tables and china. The British and Canadians pay (very moderate prices) and can have what they want. The Belgians are fed free but can also pay for things if they like. My friend Mrs. Cunliffe (Columbia) works there and it is very nice.

One night we decided on having a Christmas dinner, so with Captain Stehli, Captain Hudson and Lieutenant Dixon we all went to La Perunse and sat in the same corner which Alice will remember when fourteen years ago we discovered that place of good eating. There are many things we can't get now, but there is far from any need of going hungry. After a delightful dinner we all went to the theatre and voted the celebration a great success. Uncle Arthur left on Saturday morning and if it is lonely without him I certainly can't complain for it was such a nice visit in every way.

December 11, 1917

Don't imagine I am suffering with cold or anything. It was Arctic in October, but November was warm and December is also. Besides which there is heat enough in the buildings now so that one does not mind.

Love to all. I wonder if this will say happy New Year. May the year bring us victory and bring us peace. Much, much love to all. I am so glad Howard had a little extension to his happy time. There will be others I am sure. Love to the brides too - both brides for I love both of them.

(Signed) Aunt Jane

Hotel Majestic,
December 14, 1917.

My dear Robert:

I too had to shed a tear this morning when I read your's and Jane's letters telling how our dear doggie, Squire, had been killed. We all feel sad to loose him! How well I remember that first Christmas morning when he was brought in, sneezing and coughing, all legs and waggins tail, but perfectly ready to make friends. You did not know then what a jolly good friend he was going to be. Good things often come like that without one half knowing it at the time. I hope you will have another dog and am perfectly willing if Aunt Mary thinks best. I would suggest an Irish terrier or a Boston bull, or some dog like that, which is a good comrade for boys, then sometime when we are at home in the big yard we could have a collie puppy and raise him there. It is always wise to start with a puppy if you possibly can, though it is a great deal of trouble, for then a dog learns to mind right and that makes him happy and you too, as you well know, for Squire knew how to mind you so well. How good it is to remember what a lovely doggie he was and how at the very last he did just what you told him to. If I were you, I would not think of a new dog to "cheer you up" as you say in your letter for the cheer comes only from courage in your own heart to face a hard trouble bravely. You may think it comes from the dog, but it does not, but just from your own dear self, who I know will think of those around you and give the cheer of your heart to them. I hope Aunt Mary will be willing to have a dog for you. You will have some Christmas money and she can tell you how you can earn some money from me to pay for him. I should be so glad to know that you have one and as far as the kind is concerned, it was only a suggestion and makes no difference to me, except that a terrier would be very smart and faithful to you.

Now there is one thing I want to ask you to try and do for me and that is when you sometimes do not go to sleep quickly, to think of me over here. I am often working at night and I love to do it, but there is only one thing that makes me able to do it and that is because I can go to sleep when the chance comes, anywhere, in any kind of noise, or at any time of day or night. It is a great gift, without it I should have to give up what I long greatly to do. I shut the eyes of my mind to the worries that are not far away, to the sadness that is around, and for the work's sake, go to sleep. It soon gets to be a habit and I am quite proud to see that I can stand it, and shall be able to keep on indefinitely. This is what I want you

December 14, 1917.

to learn, for it comes by learning, so that in some great time of the future all your strength and endurance will be yours to command. Your will is like Squire's - ready to learn to obey if you make it. And you were a good master to Squire and made him happy all the days of his life.

My dear boy Robert, I am so proud of what you are doing there in Joliet, not only in school, which is fine, and in the Boy Scouts (and I see a good many French boys in costume) but also at home. Everywhere you are helping and I am so proud and happy. And speaking of the French boys, they need the Boy Scouts more than you can imagine. They do not know how to play and to have sports, as you know, at all, and perhaps if you can study French, it may be that you could come over and help teach them after the war. That is one of the great changes that must come, I think, to this country, that boys and girls can grow up to play and romp and learn all the splendid things that come with out of door life.

Love to you and to all, and thanks for your loving letter telling me all about Squire. Very few dogs have so happy a life or are so deserving of it. Perhaps sometime you could write about all the nice things that he did; about John and the kittens, and how Squire mothered the puppy in partnership with the broken-legged hen. It would be a happy memory of him and do him honor and no one could do it so well as you. Now good-bye for today, and love and kisses again. A whole bunch of lovely letters came today, Aunt Annie's, the enclosed from Fred Dwight and Harold, Evelyn and others. Thanks to all and to dear Aunt Mina whose note with yours pleased me greatly.

Loveingly

(Signed) Aunt Jane

Your letter goes to Uncle Arthur this afternoon.

A French Village
January 22, 1918.

dearest Aunt Sally and All:

I came out quite suddenly for the Y.M.C.A. though for a long time I have been hoping and waiting for the time when I should be free to leave Paris. It was most fortunate that Arthur should have arrived on the very day on which the Y.M.C.A. asked me if I would come here, so he relieved my anxiety as to how he would feel about it by turning in and helping to outfit me.

Paris is as always full of all the luxuries of life but some of the most ordinary necessities are very few and far between, and heavy shoes, rubber boots and such things are more rare by far than Louis XIV furniture and bronze clocks. I have a lovely bedding roll done up in a piece of pale green canvas that would do your heart good to see.

Two young Boston ladies and myself constitute the women workers of the "hut" here and we started yesterday with hot chocolate and will add to it coffee and other things as soon as conditions will permit. We have hopes of doughnuts on Sunday and a line of specialties on different days to include baking powder biscuits, hot dogs and other delicacies as we can invent or learn how to make them. The "hut" is full all hours of spare time and the enthu - - -

January 30, 1918.

It is almost an impossibility to write letters at all. I shall have to wait and try to tell all the lurid story. It is too bad, for first impressions will fade in spite of their colors. I can only say that we are at work from nine A. M. to nine P.M. with not a minute between except for meals. Some days one or two of us can get off a half hour to wash up, but dear me, I never expected to see so much dirt or to be so altogether impossibly dirty. We are all alike and happy as a busy life can make us.

Uncle Ross' dear letter of January 5 came today, I hate to think of you being cold over there. It is not right and somebody is to blame for the shortage. How people can have lived the ages they have here in cold and darkness I can't see. There is no chance of being comfortable even in this country in the winter, but you get used to it. It is picturesque though in the wildest extreme.

I must add a line to say that I have had two or three notes from Alfred, One with a cable which he asked me to send for him which here I cannot do. He seems well and happy and no doubt I will see him in this region sometime. I am going to tell him to try and arrange to leave when Arthur and I can get our next time. All the soldier-boys look well. The life agrees with them.

All the love in the world, to you dearest of dear people. Your letters are my joy and some day I can write again. Tell everybody to please wait and love me still. Will you telephone to Mr. Lloyd to send word or by Reid that I am well and happy in the work.

Lovingly

(Signed) Jane R Dwight.

"THE LOST LETTER"

In the Field, France
January 31, 1918.

Dearest Annie and All:

I came out here with two splendid young ladies* on January 19 and we started immediately on our part of the work of the canteen, which is, beside the usual things, the serving three times a day of chocolate, bouillon, or coffee with sandwiches whenever bread is available. Conditions are primitive in the extreme, the making of 200 cups at a time with no equipment at all except a tiny, low heating stove, on which three meals a day for from five to eight hungry secretaries beside ourselves have to be evolved.

We have developed the resources by hook or crook and now possess a little brasier (!) which by three hour's vigorous stoking will boil the full quantity. The wood is all green except for broken boxes and the water is carried half a mile and is precious as gold. We now have a "femme de menage" who is a continuously working dishwasher and a boy "Andre" whose strong arm on water and wood is a blessing. The two girls are daunted by neither kitchen smoke nor any other difficulties and it is mostly due to their charm that bread, large cans for cooking and sundry aids come our way from up and down the line. We are in the canteen from nine A.M. to nine-thirty or ten P.M. and have - - -

* Miss Penelope Paulson and
Miss Heydreich (?)

On Active Service
With the
American Expeditionary Force
February 11, 1918

Dearest Annie and All:

I started a letter to you when I first came out from Paris on this "active service" but it seems to have lost itself and it has been impossible to write. I sent a scrappy letter to Aunt Sally and asked to have it sent to Reed so I hope you have gotten word at least that way. If I can get a cable to you I will, so that you will not worry. Letters arrive here after much delay and are welcome beyond words. I can appreciate all the soldiers' feelings as to home letters and also their difficulties in writing, though the "Y." furnishes them with the luxury of a place to sit down, warmth of a sort and light which can only be really appreciated by those who have had it not.

I am delighted with my chance to be in this work. We sell the things, make chocolate and coffee and bouillon and sandwiches, - 500 or 600 cups a day, and more except our equipment is limited.

Sudden changes are part of the life and Saturday on a half hour's notice I was moved to a camp where everything is new and food is in the extreme. There are not as yet a quarter as many "boys" but more are expected and the joy with which the "Y" is hailed is ample reward for being here. We have a hut in the yard of a church and across the way is a chateau situated in a three or four acre plot or park which was a famous hunting ground in Henry IV time. Some of the boys walked through yesterday, saw the pretty deer, only half afraid, the trout in the stream and I am sure the trees are beautiful. I mean to see it myself someday. There is a high wall all around but the chateau itself does not inspire one from the outside with a desire to live in it, but I am curious to see it just the same.

Yesterday the sun was out and there was a faint promise of Spring in the air. Where the road drops suddenly down into a flat place where a little river or canal runs under tall trees there were some high bushes like lilacs whose buds were really swelling. Coming over from the other camp was a charming auto ride of an hour and a half. The good road lined with tall trees, purple fields on either side the ground rolling a bit here and there and broken by a line of tall sugar loaf hills heavily covered with timber.

The fields were beautiful to look at and the curious thing that made the whole scene so unhomelike was the absolute lack of fences, no dividing lines, no cattle no pasture lines. The fences are reserved for the villages where they become stone walls and the cattle and chickens live in the houses with the inhabitants, doors open freely from one apartment to the other.

The news of Dr. Harwood's death has just reached me through yours and Mary's letters and I am so shocked and sad about it. I saw the dear man the last one of any of us and was so deeply impressed with his devotion and with the work he was doing. He was truly in the thick of the fight, fighting for life against the heaviest odds and no war hero deserves more praise for the sacrifice than he. Alas how sad for the family not to have the comfort of doing those last loved services. It is the terrible hardship of war, but one knows that he died in glorious service and no mere length of years can give that honor to a man.

Give my dear love to Fannie and the daughters. I wish I could write to them direct and will if possible but this is my only chance in many, many days.

Arthur and his regiment have moved, and while I get letters now and then from him he seems to be having bad luck, hearing anything at all from me. I trust mine will filter through after a while and we both agreed when we parted in Paris not to expect anything at all from the mails. I do not know where he is though I can guess within a hundred miles and now that I am moved he does not know where I am. Hide and seek is the game.

I expect to go back to Paris about April 1. Shall write some letters and then perhaps come out again if the work continues. Women in the field is an experiment. So far as I have seen it works well, very well, but everything will depend upon how many of the right kind are in it.

Love and kisses to all, every dearest one.

(Signed) Jennie

Somewhere in France.
February 20, 1918.

Dearest Annie and All:

I just have my little typewriter back again and think I can write a bit in the quite times at the canteen for I can stand up at the counter and so not loose sight of anyone who comes.

I have been moved twice since I came out here which accounts for the almost loss of my little machine, for one finds that baggage which is not attached to oneself is apt to remain "somewhere in France." This time I made use of a friendly motor side car going that way and managed to get it back.

There have been many changes which meant leaving some huts and building others, or taking over the building or putting up tents to be ready for the next large numbers coming is. In the interval I have had plenty to do as they have moved me where there were enough coming and going to keep a canteen busy.

Just now I stopped for a few chocolate drinkers and one boy said "You know its the Y that makes life worth living for us." I do not think things are as bad for the boys as his remark might indicate but a cup of hot chocolate on a cold morning is a pleasant thing, and it often happens that for some reason they have missed a meal or two, and that is a sad calamity to these hungry children.

I am billeted in a house facing on a triangular little place that lies just under a fine hill on which is an old chateau with its gardens dropping down to the river. At my end of the hill is a nice old church that seems to almost hang over the square and every quarter hour the bells ring in a very friendly way. When I go home at night along about nine o'clock after turning several corners down dark and crooked little streets, I come into a long irregular street with my church way up in the sky at the end of it, and with the moon and Orion overhead it is really lovely. As I turn the corner my footfalls echo loudly on the frozen ground and I wear the long cape of my uniform and feel a bit as a cavalier might on some romantic errand. There is often the sound of a voice and now and then a laugh that comes through the closed shutters, but not a ray of light. In other times than war it would be a charming country to see.

Alice's good letter of January 20 telling about the Elwood house fire just came to hand today. You did some quick work and I hope the loss was not so great as feared. It was good to hear all the home news. What a terribly severe winter it has been and how glad everyone will be when Spring comes. If a hard winter makes good crops we can expect great things next year, that is sure.

I am having bad times with my mail, which was to be expected. Much of it has been lost, at least temporarily. The hardest thing is not hearing from Arthur with any regularity. It is now nearly two weeks since his last letter and at that time he had not heard from me but once. Its funny because he is really so near, but as I said, it was to be expected.

I find that Horace Smith is not very far away and I am in hopes chance may bring him this way. It is only chance that will arrange it however, and that is the hard part of being in this work. We just have to do the thing nearest to hand, though that is interesting and absorbing enough surely.

I wrote you from my other post and hope the letter may reach you. There is nothing much we are allowed to write about but there was quite a time that I could not write at all and I did not want you to be worried about me. Here I have a very comfortable billet and for two or three nights have rejoiced in a fire, when I arrived home. It made it possible to sit up a little while at least. Ordinarily going to bed to keep warm is the obvious thing, but after all there is very little spare time anyway. Perhaps you would like to know how I dress for this Eskimo climate. Two full suits of woolen underwear is a good beginning, black woolen tights and a wool chemise, and the usual affairs make one very comfortable with a white shirtwaist and a wool skirt. I tried wool shirtwaists but one gets so very soiled in the canteen and a white silk waist lasts well and looks better. A heavy sweater is also an everyday necessity and a pair of socks under my wool stockings have kept me from any foot trouble whatever, a good record in this country. A couple of weeks ago we had real spring-like weather and I shed garments with great pleasure. Lately it has been winter again. The two young ladies that were with me used to wear two or three sweaters with a big white collar outside and they looked very well. Some times they wear one color outside and then again another so we feel that they are dressed as ladies should be. It is queer that in this work where long gingham aprons are provided as a uniform they seem about as unfit as they would on the porch

at home, though the work is certainly the dirtiest in the world.

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You can see from the above that I do not have great luck with letters. I did have in another particular however, which I will tell you about. A telegram came from Arthur, out of the blue, - asking me to come to Paris on business for him by way of N --. I got the necessary permission and sent an officially censored telegram to him saying when I would leave, and on Monday at seven A.M. I was on board the cars. I was not at all sure that one single word in his telegram was the right place so I did not know just where he and the regiment were and this N -- on the map was not very near where I had guessed him to be. Nevertheless I travelled with happy hopes and I was on the road with many changes until after half past twelve that night and only one small eating place along about three p.m.

It was a long journey for not so great a distance and when, having disembarked, and passed thru several gates and corridors and out onto the moonlighted station plaza I suddenly came upon Arthur himself you can guess how good it was to see him. Part of the day I had a much needed hair wash and looked up the Y.M.C.A. and Arthur and I walked about the quaint old place together. In the evening he had all his battalion officers together and while there were about sixteen to one, as to gentlemen and ladies, they all seemed to enjoy it and I immensely interested to see them together and realize what a change comes over a group of men after a six-month's campaign.

There was very little chance for personal talk with each one, for which I was sorry. We made an evening of it and at two A.M. Arthur saw me off on my train here. I sat up in a compartment with five French officers and nearly died of heat and suffocation, for I had been living in the open and there was heat under the floor of the car. I slept off and on however, and every time I came to I would open the door into the corridor to let in a breath of air. Directly the deadly "current d'air" would waken the Frenchman nearest the door and he would shut it with a bang. With more diplomacy I always waited until he was asleep but we played that game the rest of the night and both managed to get some sleep between times, and I for one was happily surprised when at seven I found that we were near to Paris.

I put in the next two days as busy as could be with interviews and all sorts of things and intended to have gone back this morning at eight but could not possibly get through, so stayed the extra day and am now ready to leave in

the morning.very comfortably. I have a new suit of Y.M. C.A. uniform which I could not get before and have scoured Paris for waists that were plain and fit looking. I have consulted at "Y" headquarters on every known subject and have gotten through with Arthur's business fairly well. Now I go back again direct to my work. It is like dropping into a well for while many letters do arrive and are most welcome, I am never sure that any go out and it is besides, almost impossible to write. With the warmer no that difficulty may be bettered somewhat.

I hate to send such a scrappy letter but it is the only effort in letters that I have been able to accomplish for some time so please forgive it all and take the love that goes with it. Will you send it on for Mrs. Bellinger and Mrs. Raymond and I will write them direct as soon as I can.

I love you all.

(Signed) Jennie R. Dwight.

France, March 27, 1918.

Dearest Annie and All:

You have no idea how many and remarkable things have turned up lately, finishing up today with a perfectly splendid picture of Louis for which I hereby thank him with all my heart. A day or two ago were two wonderful birthday boxes, peppermints enough for the whole enthusiastic crowd and other goodies so nicely packed that there are still some pleasant surprises waiting for the right moment. The little blue sweater from Louise is as pretty as can be. Just before I went to Paris a big bundle came with three brown sweaters and comforts and all sorts of nice things meant for Christmas, I suspect. We ate all the eatables sometimes passing candy to homesick boys and sometimes to Y.M.C.A. men who are sometimes quite as homesick as soldiers. It was the love that came in everything and all the thoughts wrapped up that make it hard to tell you all how dear it was to receive the things so long and so far away from where you sent them.

Today I seem to feel farther away in both time and distance and I am giving myself the luxury of thinking how precious you all are and what I would give to be with you and to see you for just a little while. What a heartache all the world has for the separations and sorrow for its loved ones. God grant a better people and a better understanding to come after.

April 7, 1918.

I do not have much success with my letter writing, and am now going to close this hastily for the sake of getting it started and try again another time.

Arthur wrote that a Captain who had seen Horace Smith said he was not seriously hurt. I had a letter from Horace some time ago asking me not to write home, but your letter is just at hand saying that Mrs. Smith had heard from Washington. Horace wrote cheerfully that he felt entirely well but was still in a hospital. I have been hoping to hear from him where he was for I could probably go and see him if he were nearby, which is not unlikely. *A* It takes so long over here to get letters around.

Great events are happening of which you know almost as much as I. God give us all the strength and courage needed.

Arthur is well and so am I. Hastily and with a heart full of love,

(Signed) Jennie.

On Active Service
with the
American Expeditionary Force
April 8, 1918.

My dear Evelyn and Reed:

I wonder if a letter will seem a letter if written on a typewriter. I am having such bad luck with fountain pens. I have lost two and two exchanges on a new one do not seem to bring about legible hand-writing. Perhaps I should not blame the pen, but
- - - - -

Do you know that your Christmas box arrived only a little while ago, and as nice and good and welcome as if it had been packed a week ago. I ate up the goodies and revelled in real tooth-powder but saved one most attractive little jar for a "real spree." It came a few days ago when I answered a strangely received message from Uncle Arthur and took the first train to Paris with a little hand-bag and my can of jam. The train was hours late and without having gotten any word that I had even received his message there was Uncle Arthur to meet me. We had just six hours together and at nine in the morning he was off again and I took the next train back, thinking myself the luckiest person in the world to have such a chance. We had the jam with coffee for breakfast and talked of you two dears as we did of many others in those precious hours.

There have been changes out here where I am and for the moment I am not as busy as usual. It will commence again presently and in the meantime I have a breathing space. This morning I went with two of the secretaries on a rolling canteen which resembles an old-fashioned peddler in many striking respects. We autocol several miles stopping at various small groups of "boys". The general condition of whose pocket-book necessitated buying a few cigarettes from ourselves and passing them around. We met a pleasant lieutenant who offered to show us the sights of the town the main things being a fine remnant of a fine old Roman wall or gateway which was the entrance to an arena made in a natural amphitheatre in the hills. There was also an ancient church with its towers pierced for bells, but most curious of all was a purely modern manufacturing tiny stone built place in which two men were making tools by hand. The little forge was kept hot and bright by the cheerful

labor of a little black and white dog who ran about in a wheel barking happily at us, sticking his head through the wheel and bringing it in again just in time to save it as the supporting bar passed by. We had lunch at the mess shack with the lieutenant and came back after sweeping out and closing one or two huts, and we all agreed that "seeing France" was quite fun for a change.

I opened a little hut near here for just a short time and had a nice time of it. There were not a great many men but it was raining every day and one company had not even a shelter under which to eat, though generally they had good mess shacks. At any rate they enjoyed the little canteen and were quite as jolly a lot of fellows as I have seen. We had a lovely service Easter Sunday night with much singing and Monday were to wind up with a minstrel show but the powers called our end men so we had to be content with a much more prosaic entertainment.

Evelyn's letter telling about the potatoes had just come and I am glad to know that not everything was frozen in the cold winter. Letters are very welcome and bring home near. It is hard in these stirring times to think or write anything but the one subject that is forbidden but the truth is that you probably get quite as much real news as we do here and perhaps almost as quickly.

Much love to you both. If there is a chance that Reed will come over I think he should try for a commission and in some line where his experience will count. As far as I can tell work is being more and more specialized, and the man with training should do everything possible to get himself into the field where he will be of the most use.

The last mail also brought some lovely letters from Jane and one from Louise. I wonder if anything came of the cable Miss Ely promised to send to Mrs. Slade. I never knew if it was sent but I know there are not many as good as Jane, or HALF, over here and some are quite as young.

I have had to cut down my baggage to such an extent that I save no letters after reading them. This spoils the pleasure of reading them over when I am writing, and I know there are many things that I neglect on this account.

Once more, much love to you. I know you are all anxious at this time for the great things are in everybody's mind and heart. Most affectionately,

(Signed) Aunt Jane

France, June 18, 1918.

Dearest Annie and All:

I feel so sorry at not writing you more often for the dear letters from all of you come with their messages of love and cheer and I long to respond and do in thought continually, but letters are not so easy.

When I went up to Paris on the sudden telegram from Arthur, I thought surely I would write all my letters and have a long rest, but my hasty departure left things here so that I could hardly stay more than a week, and of that week Arthur was with me four precious days, two more going and coming and the remaining two were occupied chiefly in a frantic search for shoes with a few other errands and some sleep. To tell the truth I was recovering from a mild case of grip which had given me several most uncomfortable nights before I left. In Paris it manifested itself as the most abject case of tiredness I ever knew and I was quite ashamed of myself. It was not until I got back to Neufochateau that I realized what had happened to me and got some comfort out of the experience. The whole town had been sick! All our secretaries were wretched looking mortals, wobbly and pale. The soldier boys were white and peaked and not at all like the husky, healthy lads I had left. It was funny to see them. It was not a serious malady but sudden and weakening, variously known as three days fever, trench fever and (a very popular name) and others, but I suspect the grip simply appeared in its usual emphatic and original way and knocked out the crowd. Nearly everyone is well as far as I know.

Arthur and I had a good visit in spite of me and if it was hard to let him go again, that was no more than we had a right to expect. Of course I heard all the interesting things that I so longed to know about and even to know where he was made it easier for me. Very soon however, I got word that the regiment had moved again and only yesterday did I hear of his new location and could tell from the post office number that the regiment has gone far back to a part of France where bombing and machine guns are not. It is with a thankful heart I am living for I could not help being anxious.

The great battle goes on, the waves come up, and then slide back, but they do not break through the strong steady lines of the Allies. And how the spirit of our troops is being felt all along the line. It is a perfect wonder. We - a peace loving people - we who love our homes and our land, but we are going to be and are as good fighters as

June 18, 1918.

any and the Boche are already learning that the Americans are not to be beaten nor made afraid.

I must close in great haste. This is only a message of love. James Meissner is near here and I see him now and then.

Be on the lookout for movies. I am figuring in one saying good-bye from the hut to those sent home, some with Croix de guerre. They say it is a good movie. I have not seen it.

I have just heard that I am to go "up front." I am delighted to go. You must not worry. They are much too careful of the "Y" women and I am very glad of the chance. It is a temporary move and I may soon be back here. I am very well now, and will write you when I can. No news is always good news. Love to all.

Ever -

(Signed) Jennie.

I am finishing this in the canteen, hence its scragginess.

On Active Service
with The A.E.F.,
July 27, 1918.

Dearest Aunt Mina,

Your letter of June is just received, written as Mary and Arthur were starting north. Your letters get through very safely and are such a joy when they arrive.

Arthur is doing some work now in Marseilles. As it is along the line of metallurgy I hope he is enjoying himself. He was in Paris a week and telegraphed me numerous times to meet him, but I could not leave here, and besides the messages were much delayed so I fear for some days he was troubled about me. I am all right and enjoying the busy times here. Our troops are doing so magnificently that we are more proud and hopeful every day.

I hope many good young women will be coming over for the Y work by next winter. We need the very best kind, like Jane exactly, willing to sacrifice personal pleasure for the great good work they can do. It is hard work too, but one can keep well. Many girls are willing to face death, if need be, but the harder thing often is to be the cheerful, happy, impersonal friend to hundreds when there are so many openings for friendship between one or two. It takes the right kind of courage to meet that, and that is why I say only our best should come, like dear Jane. Alas that a blind organization holds to a rule about age and does not use its seven senses.

I did not hope to write a letter but a rainy day gives me an unusual opportunity.

Dearest Aunt Mina you always have the vision far ahead. Love and kisses to all.

Most lovingly

Jane R. Dwight

WE do want to come home, Arthur and I, and see you again in Joliet and our home too, and now I begin almost to dare to hope.

11th November, 1918.

Dearest Home People:

Thanks be to God who has given us the Victory! I want to write tonight for never can any day be like this day in history.

This beautiful city, badly scarred and stricken has given itself over to a delerium of joy! Vive la France, Vive la Amerique! One cannot think of anything else today. It is France that was dead and is alive again and it is America that is her saviour.

It is a wonderful day to live to see, it is a wonderful day that our splendid men have died to bring to the world. All the sorrow and devastation of France, all the sorrow of Great Britian, - it is our dear boys, our country, our people that have done this great deed for the world. This city has blossomed in flags, not big ones, but many of them; the French soldiers have sprung up like magic where there were none before; the streets have more people than we dreamed were here and the most beautiful public square blossomed at four-thirty this evening in splendid lights all around it. No one who does not know what pitch darkness is in city streets can imagine the comfort and friendliness of lights that gleam out from shop windows onto the sidewalk, from the square with its gorgeous lights and the buildings all around with their windows cheerfully ablaze. This city has for four years stumbled and scurried home in the inky darkness of the long winter nights, thankful for the cloud and fog and looking askance at the moon or stars that surely meant danger and too often destruction and death. That most beautiful city square has never been touched by a bomb, at least not to damage it, and it is strange for there are plenty of marks elsewhere of the ruthless war on cities.

I sent a cable to the New York office just to share the day with all at home, for I am sure they will forward it. Alfred Bellinger came over from a nearby walled city and we had a half hour of jubilation together. He had Arthur in his billet more or less for a couple of

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weeks just lately and I had four little visits from him myself, quite casual, as if we were accustomed to meeting every day. He brought a major with him and I happened to have some ladies to dinner, so we had quite a party. It is a queer war!

Finis la Guerre! - That is all for today.

Love to everyone -

Jennie (Signed)

Such a nice bunch of letters came in yesterday. I meant to write about them. Robert's long trousers, - Fred Dwight at Champaign - Arthur and all - dear Aunt Mina with faith and hope for us all - Howard coming over, where and how and when - I do not know how to address him.

Take my love for all.

FINI LA GUERRE!

Nancy
(by the grace of the censor)
France.
November 23, 1918.

Dear Ones All:

These are stirring times though you would think we had nothing to do since the blessed Armistice but be happy and praise the Lord! Just as I came to the office this noon there was a great number of small children crowding into the school yard opposite my billet. They were loaded down with bundles and boxes and herded in by sisters and police, and presently they were being anxiously and tearfully sorted out by mothers and fathers and sisters come to claim them. They were just back from down by the sea in Brittany where they were all sent last February when Nancy was all but taken by the Boche, and this is the first lot returned. Poor motley youngsters, their faces were red and swollen with the joy of the home-coming and if anybody could stand by dry-eyed and see it, that person has not passed by. The great old school building itself, covering with its high wall and garden all of two city blocks, is a fit background for such war reunions. The end where the children were is a complete wreck from the night air raid. Most of the windows are out, though a small number of high school lads come every morning to classes in one part of it. My billet across the street has many of its windows patched with oiled paper which serves better than you would think. Now the entrances to the school are gay with flags and soon the children will bring back life to the big, old desolate place. A block away begins the University buildings, over and over again a mark for the bombs. There has been no work there for nearly two years, but the damage, though extensive was superficial enough until three weeks ago when at six in the evening we had as bad a bombing as Nancy had ever been thru, and one whole end containing the medical library was destroyed and burned. It was weird experience and we knew that with the flames leaping up Nancy was a mark for every Boche plane that had a bomb left for dropping. No starlight night was ever safe in Nancy and we groped our way in the black darkness of the streets which are as black as midnight now at six o'clock. Flashlights are, or were, in general use, but if by chance it failed, we groped and stumbled surely enough. It was LIGHT that brought home the first night of the armistice, - the blessed friendly light of open shop windows, the

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splendid lamps that shone out in the city square. And then it was the quiet night. Not quiet from the hilarious people but quiet from the distant roar of the guns and the ever expectant intermittent whirr of the Boche planes.

We have had endless processions of French army going to occupy their lost countries. We have scarcely been able to keep our bed for the colonels and the generals and their suites that had to be taken care of. And the one-time residents are flocking back, a sad home-coming for there are many, many homes battered down and the old bombs are no respectors of persons, rich or poor. Every day a little shop will open its doors and every day more and more trucks are bringing supplies for sale. Another hotel has started its furnace and every day new street lamps blossom out.

Then a week ago today the British prisoners began coming in. Word was sent to the "Y" that 600 were in a big French barracks near the city. Luckily, to make a long story short, we were able to give them hot chocolate and bread within an hour and later all day and night served them from stoves and boilers which we set up at the barracks. Our own army doctor dosed out rum and worked like a slave, bless him, and meantime red tape unwound and French hospital and Red Cross doctors and British supplies rushed on fast trucks and 2000 suits of clean clothes and cooks and helpers and the machine began to run smoothly to feed and care for that small army of wretched and helpless human beings. The first thousand was the worst, why I do not know, but never could I believe that such wretchedness could exist and be alive. Turned loose in a forest inside the German lines, with a piece of black bread, and in winter, not knowing the way, they somehow tramped, dropping from fatigue and starvation, to this place. Probably more than a hundred died on the way. Some died in our barrack, and all were so emaciated, so covered with sores, and so pitifully patient. And it might have been anyone of our sons, and because they were British they were treated that way by the German army. It makes ones blood boil with indignation and horror. There are no horrors in death and battle ~~that~~ one might not face with understanding, but the sight of those British prisoners - there are no words that can describe the horror that one feels for the doing of that deed! *

We have word of other thousands arriving and have sent a unit and supplies to Metz to give them first aid in

* It was for her leading work in organizing the relief work for these British ex-prisoners at Nancy that Mrs. Dight was cited by the British Government for the Order of the British Empire. She received the notice of the citation but never received the decoration owing to stupid interference in Washington traceable to jealousy of the "Y".

November 23, 1918.

the way of hot chocolate and good honest bread, and organization is at work to meet what a week ago was an undreamed of emergency. How our own boys have fared I do not know. Some say that hatred of us is like the hatred of the British, at any rate, there seems a great difference in different prison camps, the Italians that came in here for instance, were well looking, the poor English lads had never seen a box from home.

One of the nice things that came the way of the "Y" was to bathe these prisoners. There is a big establishment here called the Nancy Thermal, which we control and the Army uses as a station for baths and clean clothes after the trenches and before going on leave. The "Y" runs it and has a canteen, movies and theatre in connection. It was by this that we could so quickly serve the first thousand and the next day they began bathing them and fitting them out in some sort of comfort.

Some of the divisions have gone as an army of occupation and a few favored women workers have gone with their Y units. The rest wait orders. We are trying to keep canteens on the principal road where troops are passing and are needing more workers than we have. Many have had to go on leave from the Grippe and we are of course developing quite a lot of sight-seers who want to see a trench where it is too late to talk about it, and incidentally there are the trophy hunters. I have not been able to have an eye for these things, it is not because I love you all the less, but just because I could not during all those sad busy times.

How easy it is to acquire the luxuries of life. This is my first letter using names of places and how nice and easy it is! We have lived very near to primitive man during the war, but I don't believe we have liked it nor will it be at all hard to change.

The great question naturally is, when do we go home? Some are making a mad rush. But I think most feel that the one great and overwhelming fact is that the war has ended. Gratitude for that, the peace of that thought, leaves not much room for impatience. There is work to do tomorrow and the next day and when there is a lift in the pressure of that there is happiness ahead.

God keep you all safe, and love to each one,
lovingly

Jane R. Dwight (Signed)