

Letter, Harry S. Truman to Bess Wallace

May 5, 1918

Dear Bess:

This is the end of the most strenuous week I ever spent in my life. Day before yesterday was a banner day too for the week because I got three letters from you dated Mar[ch] 26, 27, 28, also got two from home, one from Mary Colgan, one from Myra and one from Ethel. I claim that was a day. Probably won't get any more for another six weeks. They were all sent on from the port of embarkation, and in all probability came over on the boat with us, and have been touring France right along with us all the time. I can't understand why you didn't hear from me at Camp Merritt because I wrote nearly every day. The last letter I sent from the pier by a boy who was passing and he probably didn't mail it.

I had a grand dream night before last (the night after your letters came). Thought I was in K.C. at a show of some kind with you. I sure did hate it when the confounded church bell next door woke me at 5:30 A.M. and I found I was 4000 miles from where I wished I was. When I came home I'll be a surveyor a mathematician a mechanical draftsman a horse doctor a crack shot and a tough citizen if they keep me here long. We have periods of lectures and exams and everything just like West Point. The day begins at 7 A.M. and ends at 9:30 P.M. with an hour and a half of study. There is hardly time to get from one class to another and they sure give us thunder if we are late. Had a stem winding examination on Friday. I don't know if I passed or not but hope I did.

We have had several sunny days this week and I am beginning to think that there is a really sunny France. This place is an ideal oneto study, nothing to bother but clocks and church bells and mocking birds. I suppose we'll get used to them. We live in a chateau that would make some American millionaire green with envy to own if he could get it. We have our private park all enclosed with a high stone wall where we have O'Grady exercise every day from 11:30 to 12. These exercises almost kill some of us old men. The muscles of one of my arms and one of my legs are so sore I can hardly move them. They make us run races, have tugs of war carry a man on our backs and run races and do all sorts of worthy things. We'll be able to whip a bunch of wild cats when we are through.

It would surprise you to see what a grand glorious feeling it puts into a man over here to get a letter. Some of our dignified Majors & Captains simply go wild when they get one. Every one who hasn't a wife has a girl back home and it sure does put the pep into a man when those letters come. I certainly appreciate your standing in the P.O. to get a letter off to me and when I come home I'll show you how much I appreciate it. Nellie Post must be a card. I am going to try to send you a cable to day. I understand we can send them from a nearby town if I can get permission to go over there. They wouldn't let me send one when I landed.

Remember that I think of you always and when this war for Democracy is over and the great American army marches down the streets of Washington I am hoping you [&] I will be there to

see the performance together. Every American believes that when we are ready the Germans will be whipped in short order.

Please write as often as you can because you've no idea how good your letters make me feel and how much better I can work

Yours always

Harry

129th F.A.

via N.Y. A.E.F. France