

Feb 18 1919

Dear Bess:-

I wrote you day before yesterday but I'm very much fear you won't get it. The mail orderly doesn't know whether he got it or not and I can't find it.

I had just gotten some letters from you and naturally told you how glad I was. Also I told you that we are coming home right away. I know it officially now because General Pushing shook hands with me and told me so.

I also met the Prince of Wales and every other company and battery commander in the 35th Division.

We were inspected by Gen. Pushing the Prince of Wales and a whole troop of Generals, Colonels or Majors. Have been getting ready for the event since Friday. The General told me I had a

nice looking bunch of men and that he wanted me to take them home as clean morally, and physically as when they came over so that the home people could be as proud of them as he is. He gave us a little talk after we'd passed in review and told us we'd covered ourselves with glory in the Meuse Argonne drive and that no carping politician could take that satisfaction away from us. Also he said America won the war and that there was no argument to that. That the 35th was an immense cog in the wheel and he was proud of us because we did good work and because we came from his part of the country. I am mighty glad I belong to that Division. It seems that we cracked the hardest nut on the line. It is a saying that the 35th had more nerve and less brains than any that ever went over the top. I guess it's so.

Maybe you think it wasn't a

job to get a battery ready for that inspection. Every helmet had to be painted and stenciled on each side with a white cross in red and yellow, every overcoat had to be cleaned and have that same cross sewed on the sleeve. Then packs had to be made exactly alike. We had to take 131 men and of course about 179 of em can do things exactly as you tell em but the other two can spoil the whole show. I had to eliminate and have about six inspections before I could get everyone ready. We made it though and my battery got to stand in front of the whole regiment. I don't know if it was luck or if they looked the best. They looked pretty fine if I do say it as should it. The regiment was lined up in column of batteries, D, E, F, A, B, C, Hqs and Supply Co. So I was right out in

front. We went over in trucks  
and of course one of em got smashed  
and part of the men had to walk  
some distance and the same thing  
coming back but no one was  
hurt in any way. I was in charge  
of the Battalion going over and com-  
ing back. The new Colonel gave  
me a good calling down because I  
gave Colord Elliott a public sassing  
and I guess I deserved it but so  
did Elliott. The new Colonel is a  
Regular and he can't see this N. G.  
lack of cringing when a Colonel or a  
Lt. Col. comes around. I have an awful  
bad habit of using a very sharp  
tongue when one of em says something  
he has no business to me. It doesn't  
work in play soldiering. You have to  
say yes sir & to sir and blight sir even  
when you should punch his head. Hence  
my urgent desire to get back to the farm.  
There is one or two whom I want to  
meet when I get on my own and  
that better late or never.

Of course when the next real fight comes the civilians will come forward just as they did this time and win it in spite of the Regular Army. I have some fine statistics for home consumption just as soon as I get out.

I have an Iron Cross for Uncle Strother with a ribbon on it. It came from Coleridge and is a dandy. One of my men got it from a fellow on leave <sup>from</sup> there who purchased it from the owner. That of course is not as romantic as to pick it up off the Battlefield of Luden but all those up there were simply mucked and the ribbons rotten. This one is as good as new. I guess I'll have to saddle soap it a little to make it look as if it had been worn in battle.

Another thing please get ready to

March down the aisle with me  
just as soon as you decently  
can when I get back. I haven't  
any place to go but home and I'm  
busted financially but I love you  
as madly as a man can and I'll  
find all the other things. We'll be mar-  
ried any when you say at any time  
you mention and if you want  
only one person or the whole town  
I don't care as long as you make  
it quickly after my arrival. I have  
some army friends I'd like to ask and  
my own family and that's all I can  
stand and the army friends can go  
hang if you don't want 'em. I have  
enough money to buy a Ford and  
we can set sail in that and arrive  
in Happyland at once and quickly.

Don't fail to write just cause I'm  
starting home.

Yours always

Harry Truman

Harry.

Capt 129 Fa

Amer E.F.