

Feb. 7, 1919

Ettelbruck, Lux

Dear father & mother -

Well I rec. the letter of Jan 13 today. Havent much time and the room is very cold, but will write a little just the same.

Mother the two old - loving hearts at home can't look forward to my home coming with any more longing than I do myself. I feel I have so many more reasons for wanting to get back. In a way I feel my future depends on my immediate return to study & work. for I cant help but feel I've been thrown back 2 years now, even with all the benifit I may gain from my experiences over here.

I am sure glad you have had the opportunity to take down one of the stars. Here's hoping for a speedy removal of the other one. Won't it be great - when we can - together - take it down. It will mean as much to you no doubt as me - but I will explain then why I think it will mean more to me and I'll bet you will agree with me when I get thru with what I will have to say about it.

Well mother, it is not so cruel now to tell me about what you have to eat as it was before we got our new mess sergeant. For now we have all that we are supposed to get and have good eats, well cooked but - its not so much what you have to eat or how much or how well cooked it is - the one point of greatest importance is who you are with & where you are. And "there is no place like home - be it ever so humble." And we can play "Home sweet home" now and with a greater feeling of appreciation than we ever had before and I don't care what crowd of soldiers you play for, the refined as well as the unrefined fellows, they show their appreciation by cheering harder than any thing - most - we can play.

I'll tell you mother, there is much I'll have to say to you. there is much of importance I've learned and I'm sure you will recognize it if we are ever together very long.

I've been made to realize much - and out in some dangerous places, but what I'll have to talk of most will not be battle stories. For every thing that can be said has already made its appearance in print, things that have not been told, is the part that words cannot express. For that you have to experience and feel for your self or you will never know.

Was glad to hear again of Sis Fulton and I know how how she cares for her family and home for I've had a little experience in her home - and honestly I don't see how she has held up so long.

Was certainly to bad about Bro Boughard getting more serious a wound in ever day work than I rec. in all my experience fighting, where it was the sole aim of a class of people to put such as myself in a far worse condition than he is in, and did succeed in putting thousands there. Also, a person suffers more from a wound when the excitement of battle is not there to relieve you. I've seen men have thing done to them, & they not bat an eye - when at home you would put them under the influence of an anesthetic. That is when circumstances & places alter cases.

So you think I will get the idea you are going to the bad when I learn you are going to a show once in a while. Not so. I am so glad to hear you are doing so. For I have learned many things from pictures and have seen in my late "travels" some of the subjects and can now - more than ever before - appreciate the value of a good picture. I've seen many things in pictures I thot to be exaggerated and never give it much thot, but I'll know better how to judge from now on.

And any big production, is based on a subject of national importance & generally of national discussion so you are bound to learn something. You do not hesitate to read the papers on some of the main features of the present condition of things and the best film productions is a picturing of these very things. Only of course in the line of a story. yet this is present just the same. All these cheaper productions for entertainment can not be classed in this line of pictures. I always aimed to see all the best productions if possible - for they are really worth seeing.

I rec. a letter from Cecil today. She said she was feeling pretty bum just at that time - I can say as much for myself right now. Are having heavy snows and it is very cold. My cold is pretty bothersome.

I wrote to Uncle Alvin, sent some pictures of Vianden, Colmarberg, & our band.

Well life is getting more monotonous every day. We are not to be granted the privileges of a furlow any place. It gets so disgusting and you feel so ill tempered at times that your only relief is thru words - and believe me I can "cuss" as eloquent and fluently as any person you ever listened to. My soul may see the proverbial hell, but it hasn't any thing on this life. Hell has lost it's horrors and no one has the power of speech great enough to cause me to join church as an escape from such a place.

Will close for tonite & will admit I've chosen a poor subject to close a letter with, but will write again soon & to Dell & Guy too. Your loving son -

Paul B Hendrickson. Hdq. co 129 Inf. A.E.F.