Brest, France — May 11, 1919

My dear Father and Mother,

This morning rec. your letter of Apr. 23. and was certainly glad for it as time is tedious, slow and very unimportant waiting around in this camp—wishing不但“ship to come in.” This is the great Mother’s Day and high tribute was paid to the mothers in America in our morning service, for which our band played. I am sending a little pamphlet given to us at the service and which I think is very good and not enough of it. I am glad I sent you the little essay, if you appreciate so much as you say and I think it luck that I should also hear from you about it on this day. Makes me think more of this day as another day than any thing else could have done. I hope I will be able to prove in actions in time to come what I tried so hard to express in words.

Ah—how I would like to have been with you when Reith was up. Maybe before long I can. But maybe then it will be too busy for them to get to come up very soon. But no matter just to place my feet inside our front door is all I ask. What comes after may take care of itself. I feel equal to what ever may be—but it seems I never will get there. Time goes fast but they seem to be sending us out in different order than when we came over—some were first to land—now we are almost last to leave. But one will start eventually and we think very soon, but there must be boats before we can sail and as far as some for us. We stay just that much longer on the sunny shores of beautiful France—where the rain is every day—nil. Spent a day visiting the city of Brest. Some very beautiful old places here I did not know of.
One old church looks to be of Greekasc architecht, very beautiful inside altho the exterior is old and rough. This is the best fortified city in France, and was a treat to ramble over those old walls and in the old barrack and dungeons, draw bridges and so on. Saw some subs coming into harbor, and a French cruiser in dry dock. The great Emperor, sister to the Jewubell is lying at anchor just out side the harbor walls. She is nine as monster. Many very fine looking women on the promenade along the bluff over looking the beautiful harbor. Spent the evening at a show in the company of a Y. lady.

We play most every evening until 12 or 1 for dances given by red cross girls for officers only. Let me take this opportunity to let you know that if you have any relative over here who is an officer, help the red cross for they are doing all they can for their comfort - entertainment. They so much as thank us.

Sometimes are together all the time. Have been since first we met. We strolled over the great camp parts at a time and maybe you don't think it was enormous one. Something new and see every time we take a walk. Just as for the first and only time works of the Jewish welfare and Salvation army.

I find I have underestimated the Y's efforts, because they were not able to serve us while occupied in the months of fighting when our own nations were very slow in getting to us because of the lack of system of the French railroads, and I must say your country defended or the system the French employ, we would not long be a nation, but several small ones. America is a wonderful place, all foreigners think it is at least and I know it as a positive fact. Will close, with love to all.

Some day we will talk instead of write. Can you imagine it? Paul B.
MOTHER'S DAY
1919
BREST - FRANCE
A. E. F.

« Hundreds of stars in the pretty sky;
Hundreds of shells on the shore together;
Hundreds of birds that go singing by;
Hundreds of bees in the sunny weather.

Hundreds of dew-drops to greet the dawn;
Hundreds of lambs in the purple clover;
Hundreds of butterflies out on the lawn;
But only one Mother the wide world over. »

« When I think of the heroism of the average mother I gather hope again for poor humanity, and this dark world looks brighter, this diseased world looks wholesome to me once more; because, whatever it is or is not full of, it is at least full of mothers. »

With love - Paul B.
* When all is said it is the mother, and the mother only, who is a better citizen than the soldier who fights for his country. The successful mother, the mother who does her part in rearing and training aright the boys and girls who are to be the men and women of the next generation, is of greater use to the community and occupies, if she only would realize it, a more honorable as well as a more important position than any successful man in it. The mother is the one supreme asset of national life. She is more important by far than the successful statesman, or business man, or artist, or scientist. *  

(Theodore Roosevelt).

 shamrock

* If I were angled on the highest hill,  
Mother o'mine, O mother o'mine!  
I know whose love would follow me still,  
Mother o'mine, O mother o'mine!  

If I were drowned in the deepest sea,  
Mother o'mine, O mother o'mine!  
I know whose tears would come down to me,  
Mother o'mine, O mother o'mine!  

If I were damned of body and soul,  
I know whose prayers would make me whole,  
Mother o'mine, O mother o'mine!  

(Rudyard Kipling).

 shamrock

* My mother looked upon my heart and found it brave and sweet, willing for the day's work and harboring no evil thing. *  

(Dr. Luke of the Labrador-Duncan).

TO MY SON

Do you know that your soul is of my soul such part  
That you seem to be fiber and core of my heart?  
None other can pain me as you, dear, can do;  
None other can please me or praise me as you.

Remember, the world will be quick with its blame,  
If shadow or stain ever darken your name;  
Like Mother, like son, is a saying so true,  
The world will judge largely of Mother by you.  

Be yours then the task, if task it shall be,  
To force the proud world to do homage to me;  
Be sure it will say when its verdict you've won,  
She reaped as she sowed, I.o, this is her son.  

O, love, come near;  
Look in my eyes and say I need not fear.  

(Ella Wheeler Wilcox).

 shamrock

MOTHER-MINE

For such as YOU, dear mother-mine,  
I want to keep the road  
Where worthy men, clear-eyed and frank,  
Live by their honor code.  
I know, in that great mother heart,  
There is a sacred shrine,  
Who 1. in all perfection live  
Your boy! Dear mother-mine!  
I must be strong, I must be clean,  
In mind and body, too  
My debt to all posterity,  
And women such as you.  

(Fairmont Snyder)
THE BRAVEST BATTLE

"The bravest battle that ever was fought,
Shall I tell you where and when?
On the maps of the world you'll find it not
T'was fought by the Mothers of men.

Nay, not with cannon or battle shot,
With sword or nobler pen,
Nay, not with eloquent word or thought
From mouths of wonderful men.

But deep in a walled-up woman's heart
A woman that would not yield,
But bravely, silently bore her part
Lo, there is the battlefield.

No marshalling troops, no bivouac song,
No banner to gleam and wave,
But Oh! these battles, they last so long
From babyhood to the grave."

(A toast to "The Bravest Battle"
given by Joquin Miller at a
Military banquet).