

Tom P. Walker
2nd Lt. Sig. C.
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A. E. D. France.

Officer's mail.



5W

5-7-18

Mrs. Tom P. Walker,

506 W. 113 St.,

New York,
N.Y.

U.S.A.



7 May 1918.

Bon Jour Ma cheri,

Here it is a bright spring afternoon, with little to do but watch aeroplane scraps, and ^{the} a tired neck from doing that. When someone tells me that one is falling I'll jump up to see it.

It's wonderful sport. Kiddie. Here's a short picture. Fritz comes over with eight or ten of his best with good intentions of looking around and ~~the~~ taking our picture. Well pretty soon he finds himself in the midst of bursting shrapnel, and while we gaze on watching the smoke puffs, and breathing abs as one comes close. Then Jerry, having seen Fritz come over, appears on the scene, and the real fun commences. Imagine twenty playful birds circling around, dipping, stopping short almost, tearing off at all sorts of angles without the limit of the compass for their direction, and then it all the rat-a-tat-tat of machine guns. See it's great. A Jerry picks his Fritz. They manoeuvre for position then when Jerry has his prey properly placed (to complete the alliteration) he just swoops down like a U and peppers the life out of Fritz. It isn't the peppering that's so much fun - none of us have come to that - it's the manoeuvring and the beautiful exhibition of air skill. At that we

don't feel a bit sorry when Fritz comes wabbling down, and we realize that a great deal of Boche property is destroyed - perhaps valuable pictured miss their marks, and certainly a highly trained man to us is removed.

Then some of us get to look at the material gathered from the wreck - the new instruments to be examined - the photographs - and finally the personal effects of the pilot, and this observer, when a fellow looks at these - a diary perhaps - photographs of German soldiers & girls - a knife - some small change - just the things he carries himself - he thinks a minute, and then he realizes that with all these personalities, he was an enemy and deserved all he got.

yesterday I was all aflame over an invitation to make a flight, but it lasted but a short hour when the major warned me of an order from Gen. Pershing himself, that it was as much as a fellow's military life is worth to make a flight other than for business. I'm going to have business up some day →.

I'll have to tell you of our home here, because I have written it to Aunt Mary. you see, sweetheart, I don't like to give too much "military" information all at once, because the more you have to think of the more uncomfortable you will.

be. Isn't that true? Sure it is bless
your wonderful heart.
well the ^{mojos} and I have the
coziest little dugout you ever saw. It's a
big deep wine cellar very substantial, and
wonderfully arched, and it was built in
1773 according to the dating on the key-
stone. In the niche at one end we have
a table, a telephone, and an electric
light. Surprised? Then in the niche at
the other end is the stove, for it is
rather a damp place unless well dried
out. All the remainder except a narrow
carpeted path is taken up with two
huge French beds - heavy wood with box
springs - mattresses and everything. The
walls are hung with ~~the~~ new Liberty
Loan posters, with a few naughty
sketches from "La Vie Parisienne", and
on hooks are ranged our belts, pistols
etc.) And we have a cat too. Kettin
a baby, a lot. we found her here when
we came a half starved ball of fur. Now
she's a fat sleek Persian kitty - a devil
for fun, and as pretty as any blue ribbon
animal one could find. Put Kitty in front
of the fire and you have a picture of comfort
and coziness that even 506 W 113th St. would
not have if you were not there. XXXX
So much for the cave - we use it
for sleeping only - and during the day
when the occasion arises. Alptaris we

have the office, in the living room of
some madame who must be somewhat
of a scientist from the diplomas and
exhibits about. Poor soul is probably
some where ^{in the rear} worried to death about her
collections. I'll bet the one she prizes
most is that still born cat - now in
pickle - that has ~~four~~ ~~feet~~ - four ears -
eight legs and feet - and two tails.

Even if she does prize this ~~one~~ ^{greatly}
we prize more a wheezy discardy organ
with one pump pedal, and two stops that
work. You know already that the major
is quite a musician, so you can well
imagine that, I'm willing, we have
some glad old ~~concerts~~ ^{we are really}
quite famous for that now.

Now I'm wondering if all this descrip-
tion will make you think that I am in
horrible danger all the time. Or have you
painted my existence, so black that this
will make it brighter for you. I'll admit
I've camouflaged a wee bit - telling more
of the joys and comforts, than the dangers
(perhaps?), or the unpleasantness, but sweetheart
I wanted you to get used to my being here
before I gave you too much to think about.
And too it isn't my natural cheerfulness(?)
that puts all these blight things in -
That's the spirit of all of us. I'm really

enjoying the experience immensely. So are
we all. many many times there comes a
lump in my throat when I see these
boys going thru' hells of dangers and
discomfort to get thru' a job that had
to be done. a couple of nights ago 26 of
our Signal Corps boys were cited for
their conduct during a gas attack, and
three of them (two from my company) were
given Croix de Guerre the next day. Isn't
that glorious!!!

now I go - I've written to ~~my~~ Aunt
Mary, Bert, and your mother - and all long
letters, because this was a quiet day.
Just now a whole crowd came in for
the concert. Dr. Campbell, who was made
a captain yesterday, has his fiddle, and he's
some fiddler. He's the fellow who was
a friend of Fred Rufner in Ramsay. They're
raising the dickens now I'd better go -

I'm loving you kiddie, and wanting
you to be satisfied that I'm in excellent
health - very comfortable and not in danger.
Good night - my sweet wife - a million
kisses and hugs to you -

x x x x Loves Son x x x x
x x x x