

Donna Waller
2nd Lt. Sig. C.
2nd Field Reg. S.C.
A.E.F. France



Mrs. Donna Waller,
506 W. 113th St.,
New York,
N.Y.
U.S.A.





On Active Service

WITH THE AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

191

Decoration Day.

Hello Kiddie,

I'm only sending a note because these last few days have been strenuous ones, and despite ten hours sleep today I'm wanting more. We've been through a battle - possibly you know that (?). - poor kid! I've lost an awful lot of sleep ^{and} of it, well for all that I'm still here, and I had a chance to do my bit.

Better come out and fight you in the open - you're too foxey with all this camouflage. You've heard 'em in the trenches - and you're calling me down for not letting you know. Well I haven't written 'em a whole lot about

bursting shells and fighting and such like
cause it would only give your vivid
imagination more food for thought - and
goodness knows you don't need it. "I'm
well now, that's all over, and I'm
safe back in the billet I'll just open my
heart, and bare the ugly truth, because
there is much to explain.

In the first place I helped draw up
the plans for the communications, and asked
to carry the line over with the Infantry.
Now I had no time to ask you whether
I could do it - and I wouldn't 'cause I'm
afraid you wouldn't let me - so I just
went and did it. The reason? - because this
is the first American offensive - and your
Dommie wasn't going to pass up such a
wonderful chance.

I planned my system, rehearsed my men
a few days - because it was complicated
so the shells wouldn't knock it out.
You've read all about the attack in small
details now doubt. We went with the first
wave, and I led with my cane in one hand
and a cigarette in the other. Everything went
beautifully - except my cigarette went out -
and before the majors got there we had a
phone for him. The best of it all was that
it was so complicated they couldn't
shoot it out for fifteen hours.

The captain came over then, and as our
job was finished we took to rounding up
prisoners, and brought back seventeen of them.
I brought back a helmet and a gas mask
which I'm going to send to you so you can

sell them for \$5500 or so. For myself
I kept a German army citation as a pocket-
piece.

Then we came home and listened to
a lot of hum about wonderful work, etc.
and today I was cited for a Croix de Guerre.
Isn't that great wow!! Ought to get it
tomorrow or next day, and won't I be proud!!
Then tonight the Major presented me with
a pair of field glasses that are beautiful -
see it's a good thing we didn't spend that
forty dollars.

Was pretty tired after that because it
went meant twenty four hours pretty hard
work. I got six hours sleep, and then
went out to relieve an officer who had
worked himself nearly to death, and had

On Active Service

WITH THE AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

191

forty slight hours more of
pretty hard work. everything's
quiet now, and tomorrow I
have to start on a line
about forty miles from
all the fun. Does that
make you happy?

well, kiddie mine, it's
midnight and I leave at
six so I'd better go to
bed. It'll take some time
to get over the excitement
and the loss of sleep and
food. But it's worth it
cause now you can tell
everybody that your hubbie
went over the top with the
first ~~american~~ wave of the
first american offensive - got
some prisoners, and a Croix -
de-guerre.

Do you love me after all

these admissions? would you be happier
if I were a school-teacher or a shirt
warmer - I dare you would not! - if for
nothing else than that I wouldn't be
happy myself.

Oh about that date for July 4th -
that still goes, you know.

Good night, my sweet wife. Did I tell
you that I had three letters the day
before the battle - and two today? Those
are the things that make the days bright
I just live along from letter to letter. I love
you a awful lot - and I'm wanting you all
de time - and some time soon (perhaps) I'll
be telling it to you my sweet wife -
V X X X X Yours Tom^x X X X V