

Letters to Home Corporal Aaron Yamin (306<sup>th</sup> Infantry)

**Postcard from Minnie yamen to son and brother; Dated 1918**

Dear son and brother,

<sup>1</sup>we all wish you lots of luck and keep up good work cheers for the coming new year.

Minnie

**Postcard from Harry to sister; Dated 1918**

To my little sister a picture of a little girl, almost as pretty as herself.

Harry

**Letter from Harry to Family; Dated Dec. 6, 1917**

Hello everybody!

Did you say I did not write to you this week? Of course I did every night. I sent you a picture, and I sent you, or rather <sup>2</sup>Barnett, my watch. I received your letter this morning and I'm answering it tonight that's pretty good.

They sure have got us working These days. but oh, you ought to see us eat. I had about a pound of roast beef for supper, and then they had to give us some beef Stew, they had leftover, from dinner.

There's a rumor going around, that we're going to Cuba, after the holiday. You shouldn't worry. It's nice and warm out there.

You ought to see the new recruits, that came out. Our Sergeants are taking care of them like children. They're pretty quiet. We don't kid them though.

Jack and I are going out for a walk now so goodnight.

Harry

**Letter from Harry to family; Dated Dec 19, 1917**

Dear folks,

what in the name of heaven is the matter with you? I did not get a letter from home yet I guess I'll finish this letter to Morrow, as I've got some washing.

This is tomorrow. It is now about 3:00 o'clock. The Lieutenant will be up any minute now. We have just come back. I've just fired a rifle for the first time in my life. I don't think i did so bad. Tomorrow we will go out again to shoot at 200 yards. Hope for the best.

We got our pay yesterday. I received the magnificent sum of \$3.50. Can you imagine how much money I have left? Did you all get your allotment yet. I'm anxious to know. Today I'll try back from the rifle range. you ought to see me shoot. We only fired ten shots lying down, at 100 yards. I got a score of 33 out of a possible 50.

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<sup>1</sup> All capitalization and punctuation are as seen in the original document. Errors are intentional.

<sup>2</sup> Corporal Yamin refers to his brother Ben as Barnett throughout, probably a nickname. It is repeated throughout letters

You know a bullseye counts for five, right outside counts for outside of that count three. I got 6 fours, 3 threes and missed it considering I never got to cancel my Liberty bond.

I guess that would be about all for today and yesterday. By the way, I've just been reading a book so you are not the only one who can read.

Love and regards to all from

Harry

### **Letter to Family From Harry; Dated Jan 19, 1918**

Dear folks,

<sup>3</sup>As the colored person who came up before the judge for about the 7th time, remarked "Well Judge, here I is again." That's me. I'm here again over Sunday.

Only Seven men out of the whole company going home. Needless to state I am not one of the Seven. It can't be helped. The Lieutenant promised me a pass for next week. I guess I cannot bank too much on that. This is Saturday morning. The place is pretty darned quiet. Blessings on the loving <sup>4</sup>blank blank.

Yesterday we were out at the rifle range. For the first time I was firing my own rifle. It's a little dandy. No kick at all. I made a score of 22 shooting at 200 yards. Not so very extra. I beat two of the lieutenants at that.

I'll explain how the score is kept. The bullseye is something like this (Picture of bulls eye) if you hit the black spot it counts for five. The first circle counts for four. The 2nd circle is 3. Outside the 2nd circle is 2. If you miss it counts for 0. I don't know why I'm explaining it I have to fill up the paper. well what else can I write.

I've had my share of blank squirmish drills last week 3 hours a day of running, dropping to the ground, and getting all tired out. There's no use explaining it. I've just been giving power to our Reporter Fits. he had my name in the Camp paper 2 weeks ago, and last week. This week he did not get any names in. He'd better get it in next week, or it will be the worse for him... Next time we work in the kitchen I'll make him work.

I guess that will be about all for today. Regards to your Packer, Bessie, old lady Gorge, and Ralph, and all your young lady friends.

Love and kisses to all Harry

PS a fellow is waiting for me to go out goodbye

Harry

### **Letter to Barnett from Harry; Dated Jan 20, 1918**

Dear Barnett,

greetings likewise congratulations. Heavy congratulations. I mean on the painless extraction of 2 bucks per week out of your beloved employers.

So you are now getting 18 simoleons per week. Well little brother, you sure are doing Noble. When I was your age.....and so on.

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<sup>3</sup> Yellow highlighter indicates pertinent information for possible research opportunities

<sup>4</sup> Red highlight with the word blank indicates censorship of text or illegible text

So Lily does not believe you well Minnie is blank the H GH where you get 60 per blank Is pretty wise for her years. Well I have nothing else to write about boy. If you want any news of the dizzy Armory, you had better read my letter to Minnie.

You will get the money the HS owes you, I think next week. It's about time. A fellow whose name begins with W got his, or rather his people got it last week. Outside of that, I was made acting Corporal last week. All week I've been criticized by the officers and men. If one of my men makes a mistake, i get the blame. I hope I never get to be Corporal. I'm still a private at present.

That's about enough for today. Good luck to you and hope you get another raise soon.

Harry

### **Letter to Minnie from Harry; Dated Jan 22, 1918**

Dear sister,

the end of a perfect day. Snowing lots of fun. It is just after retreat. We have retreat at 4:00 o'clock now, instead of five, as formally. That means we get an hour more for ourselves. Pretty great.

We were out drilling all morning in the snow. In the afternoon we went out and had a company picture taken. This ought to be swell. I don't know how the snow will take. I'm sitting in the very front now. On the ground. I'll tell everyone, i had my picture taken in Alaska. If they don't believe me let them buy a picture in find out.

Last night we had boxing at the YMCA Company B had four men boxing four men from company C. I did enough hollering for a dozen. Company B1 one of the bouts. We should have had one of the others, but the referee thought difference.

We had a good time anyhow. We kidded the life out of Co C. At the beginning only. We out shouted them anyhow. At the finish they thought they would show their curiosity by giving three cheers for company B. You ought to see me jump up and leave three browsing cheers for company C. We know we are better than they are.

You ask me if I need any money. If you have money to spare, please send me A couple of bucks. I sure do need it. I'll admit I'm about afraid to ask for it. I've taken too much already. The bad news for the last.

I guess that would be about enough for today. Sufficiency.

Your Brother,

Harry

PS love and kisses to all Harry

PS with this snow Can you imagine the Long Island P.P. God bless it... Harry

PPS tell Mama not to worry about my not coming home I'm in very good health.

**Joint letter to Brother and Sister from Harry; Dated Jan 21, 1918**

Dear Sister,

I have just received your letter of Sunday morning. I must say, though I'm getting a little anxious. I guess I'll write the rest of this letter to Barnett.

Harry

Dear Barnett,

I'm just writing a letter to the MP, Or and to try to make some arrangement satisfactory to them.

I also told them about my Liberty bond of mine. I did not tell them that I am trying to cancel it.

I think you will get the money this week. I'm leaving it all in your hands. For myself i'm a trifle anxious. I have just written a letter to them.

I stated that in all the time I'm in the army, U people have not received any money from the US.

I also told them that just as soon as you receive your first allotment, you will go up to their place in person.

Your brother, Harry

**Letter to Sister from Harry; Dated Feb 1, 1918**

Hello sis,

I received one letter from you today. None yesterday. Some days you don't feel like writing, I guess.

I gave my watch to the jeweler at 2nd Ave between 100 and 10 1st St on East side of the Ave. About four or five buildings from 101st St. Now, do you know where it is.

Congratulate Samuel, Leo, And Lillie on passing their exams, and being promoted. Lillian is quite a big girl now, my Lord.

I'm really trying to do my best in finding out about my allotment. I met a couple of others who did not receive theirs. The only thing to do is wait.

On Monday afternoon you all will have the pleasure of seeing the first draft regiment parade the 308<sup>th</sup> infantry.

We have been having regimental review every day now. Today the Brigadier general <sup>5</sup>whitterger reviewed us. There's rumors going around that we will parade on February 22nd there you'll see a good regiment.

I just received another of your letters. This one was written last night. The other one was written in the afternoon. So that makes it all right.

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<sup>5</sup> Names in red are partial or slightly illegible, what is seen is best approximation

I'll let you know tomorrow whether you should write to Washington. Go ahead and write. I don't think it will do any harm blank do contradict myself. But we have waited a long time and we need the money.

Bonnie, please send me some razor blades. I haven't got a one left. Well goodbye. I'll write a letter tomorrow morning. I will enclose one for Lily.

Your brother,  
Harry

**Letter to Sister and family from Harry and letter attached for younger sister; Dated Feb 4<sup>th</sup> (3<sup>rd</sup>), 1918**

Dear sister and all,

It's now Sunday afternoon. I think it is February 4th. I'm not sure, and I'm too lazy to look at the calendar.

I've had quite a busy morning. This morning or rather last night, our Lieutenant took a fit and ordered us to have a cloth rack made. Each man had to make his own, or rather each man had to have one for himself. It does not matter who makes it for them.

This morning right after breakfast, which consisted of **blank** and potatoes, fried, i went out looking for small trees to chop down. I went about a mile out into the forest **blank**. It was snowing. It is snowing yet. At last i found what I wanted. After i had chopped down a couple of trees, I turned my way home. Then my trouble began. I finished about 11:00 o'clock.

We made them all in the shape of a cross, fastened to the head of the bed. All you have to do is lay down, fold your arms, and have somebody place a candle at the head of your bed. Then they would all say "don't he look natural."

Then the fellow in charge of the kitchen squad, came up and told me a hard life story about his people coming out. The gist of the matter was that he wanted me to take his place.

I don't much like him, but I could not refuse. So here I am. In the kitchen again not much doing.

We had some dinner. Pork chops, mashed potatoes, Coco cake, and ice cream. Plenty of it too. I'm writing this letter with a borrowed fountain pen. I had better close now. So goodbye.  
Your beloved brother, Harry

dear little sister,

I was glad to hear you were promoted, and have got a nice teacher like miss Wolf. I hope you will be a good little girl, for your new teacher. Lots of kisses from your brother Harry

**Letter to Sister from Harry; dated Feb 4, 1918**

Dear sister,

I have just found out, that today is the 4th, not yesterday. So you need not worry. I have received 2 letters from my sister today. One you mailed yesterday which I received at noon. The other one you mailed Saturday which I received at 5:00 o'clock. I can hardly wait now. 2 fellows are acting crazy and are turning the place upside down. The place is in an uproar.

Those crosses we made yesterday are no good. We have to make others, By tomorrow night. I shouldn't worry.

We had another injection today. It was a preventative against pneumonia. Again I shouldn't worry.

By the way, you might want to know if we had liver steak for dinner today. And my laundry has just come back. Two suits laundered the money will be taken off my salary. I have a book to read so goodnight, Harry

### **Letter to Sister from Harry, Dated Feb 5<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear sister,

just received your letter sometime or other. I was glad to hear that you like my mug. I don't. You'll get that company picture Sometime when it's paid for.

Please have Ben send my out those razor blades. I have none at all. The question is, how will I shave? Echo answers. How?

It sure was some cold today. We were inside all day. But the getting up is the thing, with all the windows open.

Today we received overshoes. That is, some kind of rubber that fit over your own shoes, and over them completely. They are good. I haven't worn them yet.

I'm glad Lillie likes my letter. Someday I'll write her another. Did you see that 308<sup>th</sup> parade? What do you think of them? Personally, I think that the 306<sup>th</sup> is much better. Wait till you see our parade in the city.

That's all I know for tonight. That's all I can think of.

Harry

PS i found a couple of more fellows who did not get any allotment. If Barnett wants to he can write to mash. There's thousands doing it Harry

### **Letter to Minnie and Ben from Harry attacked letter to Lillie; Dated Feb 6<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Minnie and Ben,

again I take my borrowed fountain pen in hand to let you know that I received Minnie's letter and the package of razor blades from Ben. I thank you very heavy for both.

As a letter writer Ben is a good businessman. Four times, and he calls it a letter. Write a longer one next time. Thanks for the razor blades. It came just in time.

I'm glad you are dear Minnie like my picture. Personally, I think they expected to borrow money from you. That's why they were so enthusiastic. Besides, it's no compliment to be mistaken for you. No compliment for me, I mean. I don't mean it.

Yes, there were a couple of more pictures on that camera, which are being developed now. I'll send them by Saturday.

We did not get the big picture in yet. You know they were paid for them already, so they are taking their time, about delivering it. But we will get it sometime.

All morning, we were inside. At 1:00 o'clock we went out for a hike till 3:00 o'clock. A nice little walk. Just strolling along. Throwing snowballs at each other when the officer was not looking. Some poor boob hit the Lieutenant with a snowball. That stopped it.

I just noticed in the paper, where the assembly at Albany passed a resolution asking general Johnson to let our whole division parade in New York on Washington's Birthday. I'm hoping.

These coat racks we made, or our own inventions. The Colonel was up to see it. Then he ordered the whole regiment to make them. One for every man company B always on top.

I guess that's all. I'm writing a letter to Lily on the other side. Best regards to all, love and kisses

Harry

Dear little sister,

you are in the 2B now. a little girl in the two B is not supposed to cry. All little girls in the two B should eat what their mother gives them. Lots of kisses from your brother, Harry

### **Letter to family from Harry; Dated Feb 8<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dearest all,

Friday night I did not write last night. Guess why. You're wrong. I was not lazy. It was nice and warm, so of course I had to work in the kitchen. I sure did work period I was only a private, but the Corporal in charge and the rest of the men were taking orders for me.

I sure was tired at night. During the day I had too much to do to write. The cockeyed cooks found enough for me to do for all of us. We had a show going in there too before the old first platoon gang.

Tomorrow they like me again. They are sending me with a squad of them till the Knights of Columbus to clean up and to keep that joint clean all day. And that's some joint. I'm not even a Corporal. Oh well.

I did not get a letter from you for two days now. what is the matter? No use asking. I know. I'll probably get 2 or three at once. Perhaps you received your allotment by now. The Lord knows it's about time.

Regards and much love to all from Harry

### **Letter to older and younger sister form Harry; Dated Feb. 10,1918**

Dear sister,

just received a letter you mailed yesterday. That's pretty good. Just read that you did not write a letter for two days. In your own language I think you're a **blank** mean.

I think more of you than you do of me. I sent home last night my big picture. See if you can find me. I'll tell you where I am. Bottom row sitting down. 4th one counting from the right.

How do you like the snow? It was snowing like blazes that day. How much do you like my position of ease? Kind of nonchalant, leaning back. We look like a bunch of Cossacks in Alaska. Of course I know Cossacks don't normally hang out in Alaska. You will pardon my figure of speech.

As for that allotment I am losing patience myself. I will ask the Lieutenant permission in right to Washington myself period of course it will do no good. But I will do it.

As for my going home I expect to get home on Washington's Birthday. Not before. Already Sheldon was around this morning. He came around about 9:00 o'clock and hung around till two. He had dinner with me. I treat my friends to some dinner. Chicken, ice cream, cake, mashed potatoes, Lima beans and dressing. Ain't that some feed. I should **blank blank**.

Talk about hard work and rich fellows. All he does all week is shovel coal. 9 or 10 hours a day. At night they clean and scrub their barracks, or deliver potatoes.

Even Saturday and Sunday he has to work. Today he came around, so they would not fire him and put him to work. So you see I have an inch compared to him. He is in supply company. They have only 77 men in his company. Together we compose do a letter to MSO company.

I was just talking to a fellow whose name begins with a C. His people just received their allotment last week. That's all for today. Love and kisses to all from your loving Big Brother  
PS regards to all

dear little sister,

how do you like being a 2B Girl? Are you still a smart little girl? I heard you was a good girl now. You are eating what Mama did you. That's very nice. Lots of kisses from your brother Harry

### **Letter to Sister from Harry; Dated Feb 11, 1918**

Dear Sister,

Great news. Another needle. I'm so full of needles now, that I think I'll open a candy store. Lots more coming in the near future. I don't think there will be enough room in my arm. Oh well, I don't care period as long as it keeps one from feeling sick.

Sister mine. You say I'm not writing letters homes. I write 1 pretty nearly every day. I only missed one day last week. You missed about three period or at least two. I suppose you'll get all of mine at once. That's enough of that.

I have not returned from far out in the Woods. Cutting down trees. My dear children you ought to see the way I handle an axe. On a cross cut soul like a veteran. The monarchs of the forest fell before our deadly onslaught. For the first time I put on my overshoes. I surely needed them. It sure was muddy in slushy.

We did not kill ourselves working. you can imagine I was in charge. All you could hear out of me was rest. I had some going with our good workers. We rested more than we cut down more trees than any other gang around us.

The only thing is that two of my men went away into the Woods and fell asleep. They came back in an hour. The only thing I could do was to make them carry back a couple of logs By themselves. I forgave them. One of them had the presence of mind to bring along a couple of boxes of crackers we had a party then.

How did you like that picture? Ain't that a beauty? The captain and all. One of the lieutenants with snow on his nose.

Regards and love also kisses to all from Harry

PS they put me in charge of a squad but they don't give me any **blank**. All the same that's more than they would do for another company Harry

PS I am busted and I owe my life but you could not do any **blank blank blank**

**Letter to Sister from Harry; Dated "in the mud Tuesday evening"**

Dear little sister,

I have just arrived from the rifle range. Believe me Samuel was not so far out of the way when he said our company took a walk for a week. Believe my little darling I thought I'd never get back. some walk.

I did not do any shooting. None of the old timers did any shooting. The new men did the shooting. I was down in the rifle pit we were putting up the targets for the others to fire at. I can see Mama getting worried. We were down in a trench 7 feet deep. Wooden floor inside. It was nice and warm period we were having a good time daily. The new men, poor suckers had to lay in the snow 2 feet deep.

All we had to do was to give them their source, pushing their targets up and down. But in the coming back. The mud we had to walk through. The slush and water we had to Wade through. Oh joy.

We had some compensation our comedian was walking along singing and laughing making himself crazy. All of a sudden he fell in a hole covered with ice. He went down to his waist. He extricated himself amidst a shower of advice. You can imagine the advice. Telling him to swim. Also to wait till he got back before taking a bath. He got the place laughing with the story.

You were right. I did give some more of these pictures too develop. I'm waiting for my pay before getting them out. We might get it this week. Your brother

Harry

PS the fellow says "I felt myself going down. When it got to my middle I did not care. When it got to my hopes I said well Charles I've had enough."

**Letter to Sister and Family from Harry attached letter to Lillian; Dated Feb 13, 1918**

Dear sister and all,

Wednesday afternoon. At the present moment I am writing this letter I incidentally am eating Italian bread and olives which a nice little Italian had handed me. I sure am hungry.

You know you have to acquire a taste for olives strange to say I kind of like them try them someday and see if you can eat them. That finishes the olives.

I'm glad you think the picture is good. Also you and your friends show me with pleasure and delight. Thanking me darling and handsome. Tell your friends that they have covered my face with blushes. Even the floorwalker.

So you think we all look hungry. All I can say is there is only one picture I know of where the people look hungrier. It hangs on our wall, and there are only girls on their period now will you be good.

As for the rest period never in my brief but furious career have I seen so much mud. Mud, mud everywhere. Spring is here again. It's back to the old pick and shovel. We fold them. They sent about 50 of us to work away the face hospital that's about 3 miles. We took a slow walk over there. When we get got out there we found there's no work for us. So we took a slower walk back. The rest of the day we found work for ourselves.

Tonight we were out at retreat for the first time we blink overcoats. It was dandy. Only two companies out. About 50 men between them. The band was fine only the blank blank it. You know when you joint your blank blank blank blank Harry

Sister Lillian,

If you pushed Minnie out of the window, I don't want you to write me any more letters. Ask Minnie to excuse you. If she says she will excuse you, you can write me about it, and I'll answer it.

Harry

### **Letter to Sister and family from Harry; Dated Feb 14, 1918**

Dear sister and all,

All you can hear in this Barrack right now is "how did you make out?" We were out at the rifle range today. We have just returned.

But Oh my dear I am tired. It is now about 7 o'clock. We have just eaten our supper. You ought to see what I ate. Some supper.

we started on at 10:00 o'clock. We had dinner there. We had an overcoat, cartridge belts with 40 rounds of ammunition, rifle, poncho, and my canteen full of water. My dears we sure did sweat going out, or rather waiting out through the mud. It's about 3 or 4 miles. When we got there, I found out that I was in the pit detail. So it was me for the pit. I was in that cockeyed, lop sided trench till 4:00 o'clock. Listening to the bullets plunking, we're whizzing past as the case might be it was not so bad, but we were dying for a chance to shoot. But we did not. Curses. wait there are compensations. We do not have to learn the rifles. But oh, the coming back about 6:00 o'clock through the mud.

The captain telephone down to the pit "what kind of whiskey would you like?" We told him any kind. He has even beer that's enough.

Tell Mama not to worry. I have not advanced any at all. I am still a private. Thank the Lord. Tell Lillian I have forgiven her. I will write her letter in a day or two. Some parade we will have on the 22nd. Down 5th Ave. Full packs and everything.

Love to all

Harry

PS I have written a letter to Washington about allotment

Harry

### **Letter to family from Harry; Dated Feb 15, 1918**

Dear folks,

it is not midnight. I only wrote it down as midnight for effect. It is 2:00 o'clock in the morning. I am now guarding the correct to keep them from Catching Fire. Also to see that everybody is kept warm. There are three of us in the **blank** room. Two of us are writing letters the other is reading. The three of us are talking about the parade next Friday. More about the parade later on in the letter.

I was in fatigues today. We get it pretty often. We fixed all of the fires about four times. Brought up about a dozen cans of coal. Now we're through. Except that I've got to stay out from

12:30 to 6:00 o'clock. All the same, if I can in the city now I would not be able to look at a cool wagon. I'm all fed up on coal. That's alright I don't mind it. As well that as anything else.

You know we had some experience today. We received our packs yesterday. That is the thing in which we pack our belongings, when we go for a hike. We strap it on our backs. The darn things look like Chinese puzzles. It was funny to see all of us look at it. One said it goes one way the other had different opinions. We know how it goes now.

Today we had to pack everything up. Strap it on our backs and go out for a parade. We were received by General Johnson and Secretary of War Baker. The poor officers worked like blazes, helping us to adjust our packs. But when we marched past the receiving stand you ought to have seen our line. The general himself remark that it was a very good line. Company B and Co D were pronounced to be the best company in the regiment. That's going somewhere.

When we got back. The captain of course told us how good we are. Then he wanted to know the names of the men who would have no place to sleep while in the city. I was not one of them.

We will arrive in the city on Thursday afternoon, and leave our rifles in packs in some Armory, while we go home. The parade will be on Friday. We will not have to go back till Sunday night. Oh boy. That's enough about myself it is not so bad staying up all night. I am sorry **miss blank** is sick. I hope she is better by now.

Tell that clerk of yours that if I had his patience, and read my letter over after writing them, I might be able to spell as well as he does. now, will he be good. Regards to all your friends in the store. Likewise all our friends at home. I'll have to bid you good morning now. I'm through writing for the moment. Love and kisses to all take care of yourself and Lillian. Don't work too hard in the store. Ask Benny if he has forgotten to write your brother,

Harry

### **Letter to Sister and Family from Harry with attachment to Lilian; Dated Feb 17<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear sister and folks,

it is now Sunday. All is well visitors have not arrived yet. The place is as cheerful as the Morgue. The wind whistling outside. It's pretty chilly outside. I fooled them. I'm inside I think they overlook me this morning. They did not give me any work. The day is not over yet. I'm still hoping.

I have received your face in closing and below. I think you look very very nice. By the way, you can consider this letter as written to Minnie. Why that classic pose? In the picture, I mean. I am patiently waiting for the rest of the collection.

So you fell in love with a sailor. You like any uniform. No matter what kind of a uniform. Even a conductor. Or a street cleaner. Gosh I wish the visitors begin to arrive. I hope there are lots of pretty girls among them. Likewise, I hope one or two of them forgets the address of their friends whom they are visiting.

in answer to your inquiry I will state the officers have to walk through the mud just the same as us for privates. A taxi cab line has not been established as yet. they have nothing to Kerry. That's the only way they have it on us.

Here's something funny that happened this morning. A **fellow blank took** French leave. When he came back, he was declared a prisoner, as a matter of form. Everywhere he goes he has a guard with him today he finished breakfast while the guard was watching him. After he

finished the Sergeant told him he could go. He would not go till his guard had his breakfast. Then to make it easier for the guard. The prisoner held his rifle while the guard ate. They had us laughing.

How did you like my midnight letter. Was it not good? Yes? No? After I finished that letter the Corporal and myself started to match pennies. That almost put us to sleep. So we desisted. By the way Minnie ask your friend how the spelling is in the letter.

That will be about enough. All of you start praying that i get in to parade in the city. There will have to be some men left in camp. I hope I am not one of them. Goodbye, good luck, Harry

dear little sister,

I'm glad meeting you are good friends now. I'm glad you will never try to push many out of the window. I hope you will now be a good little girl. Lots of kisses from your brother Harry

Dear Minnie, how do you like me as a preacher to young children ?

### **Letter to Family and Minnie; dated Feb 18, 1918**

Dear folks, most especially Minnie,

it is just after retreat. For a change I got another needle. When I get home after this war, I will be lonesome without my needles. I'm so used to them, that I wake up in the middle of the night and cry for them. Not.

Likewise I received my pay today. Mine. I received \$8.25. I still owe myself a couple of dollars. In my usual condition. Busted. I'm used to it.

All we talk about here is that parade. When you meet everybody the first thing he says is, "do you expect to go in for that parade." Personally I think I have a good chance to get in. We expect to get in on Thursday afternoon. March direct to 19th Armory at 26th St Lex Ave. We have our rifles in packs there. Then we go home. Friday morning we meet at the same place. After creating a couple of hours more or less, we go back to the Armory, leave our junk, and go home till Monday morning as the captain told us. Personally, I think, we will come back on Sunday. Pray my children, pray, but oh will we sweat.

Your most beloved,  
Harry

### **Letter to Sister from Harry; dated Feb 20, 1918**

Dear sister,

Tuesday night. Raining pitchforks. It is as cheerful as the Grave. I'm on duty at the present moment. I was and I still am an orderly for today. You know errand boy. Ring the bell and I appear but it's an easy job.

There's plenty of variety in the army. One day carrying coal all day. Next day working out in the Woods or kitchen. Then again being an orderly. With a little drill sandwiched in between every day in the army is like Sunday on the farm. The sole topic of conversation still remains that parade. I wonder if I'm going in. I have a good chance. I'm hoping my dear I'm hoping. The fellows here think just because I'm orderly, I have a chance to look at the papers in

the office, so as I could tell them the ones who are going in on Thursday. I wish I could. The suspense is killing. Not that I care to parade, but to the going in I want.

About that \$8.00 you folks received. I'm tickled silly. You sure do need it. So do I. Save a couple of dollars in case I come home on Thursday. That picture you sent me is pretty good. You look awfully sweet. Who are the other two girls? You'll tell me when I get in.

Now I guess I'll take a look at the captain's fire. I sure am keeping that orderly room fire hot. You can guess the reason why.

Your brother,  
Harry

### **Letter to Family from Harry; dated Feb 27<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear folks,

Not a thing to write about. We had a pretty big day today. Our old friend the major had us out in the morning. He surely put us through some drill. Then our own friend the Lieutenant had his out in the afternoon. He put us through in a stiff drill. Tonight we're going to have a gas attack. We sleep with a gas mask next to us. I hope it will be early.

I hope to write a longer letter tomorrow goodbye Harry

### **Letter to Family from Harry; dated March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1918**

Dear folks,

I have just received your cakes, and I think that big cake is wonderful. It is great. The small cakes I have hardly tasted yet. I will, before the night is over.

I was too lazy yesterday to write home we were at the rifle range. I need to go to fire while we are there. But oh, the going out and coming back. Mud and slush and everything.

Today we had the honor of having two reviews. Three in the morning by the colored. That was for practice. The main one was in the afternoon by governor **Wittenrain**.

The main **blank** General Johnson, and the governor, and a million French, English, and American officers. Ladies reviewed us. We did not worry about it though. We knew we were great good. Almost. We have lots of time these days, watching the New men drill. They sure are funny in their civilian clothes. We forgot about the times we were just as bad. We used to salute just as shamefully. They will begin to be different just as soon as they get their uniform.

We turned in our ponchos today and received slickers instead. Ask Papa what a slicker is. I'm all out of new today.

So, goodnight,  
Harry

### **Letter to Family from Harry; dated Mar 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1918**

Dear all,

Sunday morning and all is well. It sure is windy today. The building shakes as if it would shake apart. I'm having a good time writing letters. The is the 5th and last.

**Artie Sheldon** was just here. His brother Ben is coming out two day. He will bring him up to my barracks to show him what a good company is like. I flatter myself.

I have nothing to write about. The poor New men are sure working hard. They are drilling Saturdays and Sundays. You know they're under quarantine till March 14th. We could not associate with them. We look down on them from our superior Heights.

I was at the movies last night. Saw the Vagabond Prince, with HB Warren. A pretty good picture. Can you imagine a gang of three thousand soldiers watching the picture. For instance, a wedding, the whole mob singing "here comes the bride" she's about to faint, the whole mob shouting "hold up Lord faint" he and she in a clinch, remarks, "hold it." He is brought before a jury. "Six notches in the guard house, for not shaving." He is in jail. She is resisting him. She overstayed her time period she is told to get out. The whole mob starts shouting outside. But Can you imagine when they had a party and open the keg of beer. You imagine it. Can you imagine at the Atlas with that mob. That's all I know.

So good bye,

Harry

### **Letter to Family and sister from Harry; dated 4<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear folks, or rather dear sister,

I have just received your yesterday's letter. Yes, the cakes were very good. I surely did appreciate them. <sup>6</sup>I cannot wait for my pipe till I get home. Don't let that worry you. So **Ella Kohin's** sister has a new piano. Well someday you will have one too. And a better one. I haven't got a darn thing to write about. No news at all. I don't know when I'll be home. I think it will be soon. Either this week or next week. If I have **blank**. Oh yes, I have some news. We went out to the range again today. For a change, we go out every other day now. You ought to see me shoot. I'm improving every day. That's enough for today have to clean my rifle, change my socks for new ones, take a bath and go to bed.

So goodnight, Harry

### **Letter to family from Harry; dated March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear folks,

I received two letters from you folks today. Monday and Tuesday letters. I'm sorry I did not write a letter last night, as i had to go on guard for 24 hours. I just got in from guarding camp my children I certainly am all in.

Right after supper I'm going to jump into bed. I think I will sleep all day and all night. We have to get up at the same time tomorrow. Harry Yamin

PS I think I might be home for Sunday. I might. But I can answer you I will not go to help buy you a sack, my dear. My time is too valuable. HY

### **Letter to family from Harry; dated March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Folks,

Another day finished; we did hardly anything all day. In the afternoon we did some open order skirmish drill. It was a joke. We had no ambition at all. Then we had a lot of ambition.

What can I write about? Nothing. I wrote you about the guard I was on for 24 hours. I don't know how I could write looking around me, or rather my corner. Some fellow is hollering, Jesus H Christ. He has given him a middle name. All his peace. The gang has gone. The supper Bell broke up the meeting. We have to eat at company a mess Hall now. The New men eat in our

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<sup>6</sup> A pipe is in the collection for Corporal Yamin

mess Hall now. You know the new men and the old timers are kept separated. We are not allowed to associate with each other period

This gang is congregating again. I was telling you about our guard. It was a dizzy guard. I had post #2 on 5th Ave from 3rd to 5th St around the war houses it was a good post. Some fellow had to guard the mules. The mule got loose and started to kick around the stable. The guard woke up the stable Sergeant. The Sergeant told him to tie him up. The guard looked at him and remarked "I'm not well enough acquainted with him."

I did not sleep all night, and I had to watch the prisoners all next day. I went to bed about 7:00 o'clock yesterday. I did not wake up till about 6:00 o'clock this morning.

Nothing to write about so I'll close: I'll probably be home, on Saturday.  
Goodnight, yours,  
Harry

### **Letter to Sister from Harry; dated Mar 14<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear sister,

Some wonderful day, it is not. Yes, it is not. We are having the time of our young life these days. It is retreat time now. It is raining a little, so we are upstairs now. I am writing this letter now.

Did you land a position yet? I hope you get a good one period gosh we do take things easy now. We do hardly anything all day. I guess we were making up for the hard days we passed through, in the joint.

We will probably get it a little harder now our Lieutenant came back from school in Oklahoma. He has been learning bayonet work. I suppose he will be hammering it into us. We just had to stand up while the band has played the "Star-Spangled Banner" our day's work is over now. We sure do have a wonderful band. They just marched past playing "My Little Irish Rose" an old song.

I'm sorry I could not write you a longer letter yesterday. I was in an awful hurry. I have nothing to write about right now. I guess I'll close now  
Love and kisses to all,  
Harry

### **Letter to family and younger sister from Harry; dated Mar 18<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear folks,

I have just returned from the rifle range. We have advanced now. Can you imagine me teaching the new men how to shoot? I can't imagine it myself.

Those fellows look up to us. When we go out with them, they look up to us they think we know it all. We let them think that though. I wish they would send us out every day under the same conditions. We, that is, US veterans, did nothing at all out there. You can't imagine what a nice day it is.

I started this letter yesterday. It is now just 24 hours later. Today was just a nice day as yesterday. Almost nicer. I was in the same place as yesterday. Doing just what I did yesterday. Taking a sun bath. I'm a sunburnt as an Indian. It sure is nice sitting out in the sun all day. The walk back was not so nice.

I just received your letter. So you don't like **blank** as much as you used to. Because the girls are strange to you. All I can say is you can try any other place you want to. You might better yourself. The girls you'll find are the same all over. Fellows are the same. When new people come to work in a place, the old timers want to show them how much they know. After a while you or all new people get to be old timers themselves. My dear, I speak from bitter experience. Sweet experience also. Once Upon a time I was a new timer. At present I am at old timer.

your loving brother,  
Harry

Dear little sister,

I heard you are a bad little girl. You cry all day, and you don't eat. If you don't stop crying, I'll never speak to you again. Harry

### **Letter to family from Harry; dated Mar 21<sup>st</sup>, 1918**

Dear Folks,

I did not write a letter yesterday, for two reasons. I was too lazy, and besides I had nothing to write about.

It sure is nice and warm today. In fact a little too warm. We were switched about again today. I am now in the fourth platoon. The first time since I am out here that I am in any other than the first platoon.

Signs of spring make the young man's fancy lightly turned to thoughts of baseball. You ought to see the gang outside playing baseball.

This morning we had pictures taken. A company picture, And a platoon picture. You ought to see. We were all on the benches, sitting already, standing on top of the benches. The photographer said already, when the whole darn thing collapsed. We fixed it up and took the pictures.

It is now about 5:00 o'clock. We spent a strenuous afternoon I was interrupted in the midst of my letter. We spent about three hours at the bayonet course and I'm sure tired. When we came back, we had to move. It sure was some dizzy job. Only to another barrack.

I have not received a letter from you for two days now. What was the matter, the kids too lazy to go down and wait there or did they just forget? That's all for today. It's almost supper time now.

Goodnight,

Harry

### **Letter to Sister from Harry; Dated Mar 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1918**

Dear sister,

Yesterday I received your first letter in two days. It was written on Tuesday night, and mailed on Thursday. Some speed. I only wrote two letters this week this is the third. Our inspection is over now. Thank God. Saturday inspections make me dizzy.

You know we have a regular theater in our camp now. A stage and everything. Two nights ago I went over there. I saw our old friend, "Turn to the Right." The same company that played it in New York. It seemed like home. When I came out I was surprised to see the barracks and everything still there. I paid a quarter for my seat. I was supposed to sit all the way back. But

Jack happened to be usher that night, so I got all the way up front. There was some crowd there. It is some big place. Wooden benches instead of seats. But it certainly is appreciated in this camp.

As for the rest, I don't know anything more to write about. Write me about your job, and if you like the girls any better. Do I look like you? Perhaps you look like me. You ought to feel complimented. I'll see them when I come in next time.

In the meanwhile, you can write, and have the letters mailed the same day you write them. Not a week later.

Love and kisses to all. Regards to your friends, and your new place,

Harry

### **Letter to Family from Harry; dated Mar 27<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear folks,

I am out of luck again. Not for the first time either. I was all prepared for more than a week for the going home for Passover.

Today there came in a divisional order notifying us that there will be no more passes issued. They were very sorry, but it could not be helped. There will be a divisional inspection tomorrow. I don't think we will go for quite a while yet.

I just I called you up to let you know I am not coming home tonight. I told Mr. Cooper to let you know. He was pretty curious, and wanted to know what was the matter. I told him I could not stand and talk, as every minute cost me money. I told him I'm writing and to let you know all about it. As it cost me only \$0.50 for a couple of minutes.

That's all I can write tonight, as it is near mess time.

goodnight and have a happy Passover Seider,

Harry

**PS this is the first time in my life I missed a Seider**

### **Letter to Sister from Harry; dated Mar 28<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear sister,

So today is Passover. It does not seem so. Everything is just the same. There is matso on the table for every meal. The only ones to eat it are the gentiles. The matzos are Thrown on the table with the bread and everything else is exactly the same.

I hope you had a good Seider. How was the wine? Good, I hope. Last night when i found I could not go in, well, you can just imagine how I felt. Today I am over that feeling I reckon it's all the same in the long run.

Today there was a division inspection in the morning. An officer from division headquarters inspected all our belongings to see if there is anything short by any member of the company. That was the reason I think we could not go home.

Did Mr. Cooper deliver the message? I bet he is envious as blazes. Also, I bet there are all kinds of rumors going around the block about our leaving. Well whatever they are don't believe them. I'm still here, and I'm still able to stay here for quite some time. And after we leave here we're not going across yet we will go to another camp for quite awhile. The rumors say it will be

blank, New Jersey so tell Mama not to worry. I'm alright and I intend to stay alright so, don't worry.

Gosh there are a lot of visitors here in the middle of the week. I think that is senseless. They have no time to see their friends.

Goodbye for the day I am going to see "Here Comes the Bride",

Harry

PS don't forget to write often

### **Letter to Sister from Harry; dated April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1918**

Dear sister,

it is now Monday night. I have arrived in safety. Had a nice pleasant trip. A good snooze on the train.

I haven't not much time to write tonight, as I have to do some washing tonight one suit of underwear, and some towels and socks. It is now 8:00 o'clock. I just now wrote a letter to Morris Rosenberg about your coat. I don't know what he will answer me. Personally, I don't think they have very much. Did Benny send me that watch yet? I need it soon, and darn soon. Harry

### **Letter to Family from Harry; Dated April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1918**

Dear folks,

Just received your two letters. Monday, and Tuesday's. I did not get the watch yet. The Mail orderly has not assorted the packages yet. I expect it's in that lot.

Sorry, I could not write anymore, as it's raining and I want to go to a show. We have a free evening to ourselves. For a change. So tomorrow I will write you about a dance I attended last night. Some blank experience

Yours,

Harry

### **Letter to Family from Harry; Dated April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Folks,

Yesterday I wrote you a very short letter there was no need of that. I did not go to the show anyhow. I was too tired. You know two nights ago I got so dizzy tired of hanging around the barracks, that I ducked. We were ordered to hang around the barracks, and I and three more fellows put on our things and ducked. We sneaked through the military police, and went to blank to a dance. We thought we had about a mile to walk but it turned out to be about six miles. Walking through dark and lonely roads. The kind you read about in books.

blank is a very small place. But there is a dance Hall there. There are four girls that were passable, the rest were children of about forty-five. Farmers, and one little schoolteacher. The saloon was good, as far as I can judge. I can't dance, as you know. The music, oh the music. One old man playing the violin. He was awful. A kid of fourteen playing the piano. He was very good. The violin spoiled it though. And play the bass drum. He thought he was playing for a funeral.

I had a good time. We all came back in an automobile. We hired the car. \$0.75 a head I got into bed at 2:00 o'clock that's all.

I did not get that watch yet. Something must be done what is the matter with the post office. I hope to get it darn soon. Last night, the captain caught one of them told me what a good man I am and that he had sent my name up to the colonel, and the colonel head countersigned the paper and I am now a full-fledged Corporal. That includes the care of seven men, in the compensation of \$6 a month, so I am now a noncommissioned officer. <sup>7</sup>

Your brother,  
Harry

### **Letter to Family from Harry; Dated April 1918 “somewhere in the Atlantic”**

Dear folks,

By the time you receive this letter you have received a postal saying that I have arrived in safety. That may have stopped some of your worrying. This letter may stop the rest of it.

I have hardly anything to write about. We are still on the Atlantic. I never knew there was so much water in the world. It looked beautiful when I was seasick. I was some sick.

The fellows had some sympathy for me. All they were telling me was how nice pork tasted. There's one consolation. I was not the only one sick there were plenty more. We are having a nice trip. Alone most of the way. Up to the present, we have not cited any submarines. We are right in the danger zone now. None of us are worrying though. We are on a <sup>8</sup>blank now, or rather we were on it all the way across some class two up over company. A special train from camp. Riding censored across the ocean. It pays to be good.

The sailors on board this ship treated us fine. No kidding on anything like that. You can imagine they even did not kid us when we were sick. Censored section

We had two entertainments on the way over. A regular stage and regular actor, and everything. Singing, music, comedy, and everything, and our company did most of the entertaining. We were good.

That's about all I can think to write about. I'm feeling fine. We were about a day from land. I like the sea, but give me the land every time, write one good long letter telling me about New York and everything. Especially about yourselves.

Yours with love,

Harry

my address is Corporal Harry Yamin Co. B 306th Infantry AEF

### **Postcard to Louis Yamin from Harry; no date**

We have arrived safely. Harry Yamin

### **Postcard to Minnie Yamin from Harry; No date**

I have arrived safely overseas. Harry Yamin

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<sup>7</sup> Yamin is made officer not many advanced. He was advanced as a “green” officer like many others in WWI

<sup>8</sup> First actual censorship of his letters. Sections that were cut out are the ship's name which is the “Victoria” and location he landed which is a port in Liverpool, England on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1918. He was at sea for thirteen days.

**Letter to Family from Harry; Dated April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1918<sup>9</sup>**

Dear folks all,

I have received a few letters from home since last week and I did not have a chance to answer. Later in this history you will know the reason.

First of all I received a letter dated April 7<sup>th</sup>. Congratulating me on being awarded Corporal. I accept your congratulations with many thanks. Then I received one from Sam, telling me about Dave **blank** being drafted. I don't think I'll be able to look him up for quite a while.

Yesterday I received one from Ben telling me about my watch being sent back from Camp Upton. I don't think it worthy sending it. So he better keep it for himself. Pardon the sudden change from pen to pencil as my fountain pen has gone on strike.

Last Thursday we were told we were going to move the next day.<sup>10</sup> We stayed up or rather I stayed up till about 11:00 o'clock getting ready. Making up our packs and getting rid of our surplus junk.

We got out of bed about 4:00 o'clock the next morning we started for our little walk about 6:00 o'clock. We did not know where. Then we started back to our stables it was a pretty hard walk back. We made it. In two half days. We marched back into our town singing at the top of our voices. And you know my voice.

We were halfway back when I receive Ben's letter. It sure was welcome. If all I had to do was to ask for anything and they would allow you to send it to me, I'd already asked for some Fatima cigarettes consider it asked.

That will be about enough for today as the magazines say "to be continued."

Harry

**Letter to Sister and Family from Harry; dated April 25<sup>th</sup>, 1918 "somewhere in France"**

Dear sister and all,

At last I have arrived. The place we have been reading about for the last four years. As far as I have seen, I like the country. The people in it are fine. In the last three or four weeks I have seen more of the world than I expected to see in three lifetimes a <sup>11</sup>**censored** and France.

We are at present billeted in a farmhouse. Our whole platoon. It's also strange to us. I, for one am enjoying it. So tell Mama not to worry. We are a long come a long way from the trenches.

The country here reminds me in New York. It is so different. Especially 101<sup>st</sup> St. That's almost all I can write about myself. You ought to see me talk to a little bit of a girl in the house here. She can't talk a word of English, and you know my French. She was pretty I'll learn French if I have to study all night, and you know how I love the study.

Don't forget to write regular some fine day I'll be pleasantly surprised to get all your letters in a bunch. Are you still working at the same place? How is the city getting along without one? How are all the children? Especially Lily tell Ben to write me all the news and I have not seen a paper in a long long time I mean a New York paper. I just got my blue bag today. I found all those snapshots we took on the roof. It sure did remind me of home. It have to go a long way to New York.

Yours,

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<sup>9</sup> The 306<sup>th</sup> arrived at the port in Calais, France

<sup>10</sup> They are moving to the training camp in Bonningues, France to train with the British Army's 39<sup>th</sup> Division

<sup>11</sup> Here the letter is censored and what can be assumed is describing the part of Britain he marched across to get to the port of Calais, France, and the British Rest Camp at Bonningues, France for training.

Harry

### **Letter to Family from Harry; Dated May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1918**

Dear everybody,

I wonder if you received any of the two previous letters I shall probably have to keep on wondering for a long time.

Well, we have just finished another day. Marched over a large portion of sunny France. That's a joke. I'm here a week, and in that time I've only seen the sun once. Raining and cloudy every day. I theorize this is a very pretty country.

Yesterday I felt quite at home again. I was in the kitchen. Quite a different kitchen from Upton. This is a kitchen on wheels. No modern convenience here. Grab your food on the run, and try and find the softest spot on the ground to sit on. When you do find it, it's occupied by somebody else. So you have to stand up and eat.

This sure is some experience for me. You know I've always wanted to travel. I want has been gratified. A little more so, if you understand what I mean.

You remember when I was on guard at Camp Upton. I told you about it. Well, I was on guard again a couple of nights ago. I was Corporal of the guard this time. In any four hours of at night I took my blankets and laid myself under a tree and slept like a log. I think I could sleep on the soft side of a rock by now.

By the way lest you forget, this is my address. Corporal Harry Yamin Company B 306<sup>th</sup> Infantry American E.F. AEF . When you write to me put it all in. Otherwise I'll be out of luck. You can figure how long I've been away from camp. And all that time I have not heard anything from him. You can imagine how welcome a letter would be now.

I guess that will be about enough for me. For tonight anyhow. Alright again next week. You don't have to write weekly letters like me. Write several times a week. That means Minnie especially.

Love to all,

Harry

### **Letter to Sister from Harry; Dated May 6<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear sister,

No letters yet. I heard there are a lot of letters for us. We will probably get them in a day or two. As you used to say, "I will be tickled skinny," to get even one letter from home. Or even a newspaper. Gee a New York newspaper would be welcome.

As you will find out yesterday was Sunday I came back from a three day expedition, and found that our famous band had come in. They played for an hour during the afternoon. Gosh, it sounded fine. I felt as if we were home again. You ought to see the mob listening to the music. **Mostly Americans, English, French, Belgians, and a bunch of Chinese. You ought to see how the chinks enjoyed it.**

I said something about an expedition I was on. I was sent with Seven men and a cook, eight miles away, to make everything ready for a new company to come in. We were handling baggage most of the time. At the last minute we had to prepare a meal for company coming in. You ought to see us work . But it was funny. Can you imagine one cutting off beef for Stew? I did it. The beef was too hard, so we used an axe to soften it. When the company came in they got down on their knees and prayed for us. we were there three days. We worked hard but we had a pretty good time. While we were there we had occasion to go into a French Chateau, if that's the

way to spell it. The kind of summer home that you read about. It is the most beautiful place I ever saw. I think if I had a chance to live in a place like that now, I wouldn't care where I went to after I died.

That's about all I can write about myself. When I get Mail in from home I'll probably know what to ask you to write me. But don't forget to keep me writing. Get Benny, Sam, and Leo to write. I almost forgot the most important member of the family. I mean Lily. Get her to write also. The US Mail can stand it I guess.

Write all the news you can about yourselves. If I can borrow some writing paper, I'll probably write again before the end of the week. Now I'll go and try to get a haircut on trust of the Barber. We did not get paid yet.

Love to all,

Harry

### **Letter to family from Harry; Dated May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear everybody,

I'm writing this letter in the guardhouse. Don't get scared. As one of the guards not a prisoner. I did not have my shoes polished last night, so I was put on guard as punishment. So you see there trying to make a man out of me in the army. I don't know whether they will ever succeed, I've lost hope. Almost.

If you people think it's a cinch to write a letter, while twelve Husky guards sitting around arguing about everything on earth including war, politics, and the best cafe. Mostly the cafe. They don't whisper, it either. But I'll write this letter yet, but I pity the one who will have to censor it.

Now that I finished writing all that nonsense, I really don't know what else to write. I'm feeling fine. Never felt better in my life. The sun has just come out. It was a nasty night though foggy and dark.

Gee, I'd like a letter from home right now. I haven't heard anything from you folks, or anybody else in New York since I left home. We call camp Upton "home" now. But look, imagine how good I'll feel when I get my first letter from home. I will be so stuck up, I won't speak to anybody for a week.

Today is Sunday. Mother's Day. This is the second letter I've written you this week and the fourth or fifth I've sent you folks since I loved Upton. I suppose you remember my address. Here it is, to make sure. Corporal Harry Yamin Company B 306<sup>th</sup> infantry American E.F. AEF. I still remember the home address though. This is a lonely town though. Nothing doing at all. My mistake. Not a town, but a village. All lights must be out at 9:00 o'clock. And we must be in billets by then. You can't do anything then anyhow.

Now I'll write about a more personal matter. Gee, I'd like to see you all now. I will soon I guess. The place, or rather the farm where we lodge. The woman here has a son just about Leo's age. We are getting chummy. He is rather a nice kid. We get along fine together, outside of the fact that we can't talk to each other very well. As he can't talk English, and you all know my limitations in French.

I wonder what's going on at home now. What's playing at the Palace, I can imagine Mama must be talking about me every night. I hope you kids, especially Minnie and Barnett, try to keep her from worrying.

Do you remember the watch that Barnett sent me to camp, repaired? Well, I did not get it yet. I hope I do get it soon. I surely do need it now. I'll have to close now, as I need to bring my blankets back to my lodging. So, love and kisses to everybody,

Yours,  
Harry

### **Letter to Sister from Harry; Dated May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear sister,

I have just received the letter you mailed on Friday April 4<sup>th</sup>. You asked me if there is any chance of my coming home Saturday. No, I don't think I could. Not for a while. I also received a letter from Morris Rosenberg, telling me that you could come up on Saturday and pick out a suit for yourself. So if that does you any good.

To finish it off. I received a letter from my cousin Ben Yamin. He had enlisted at a stenographer. He is at camp Stewart Newport News. You can easily find out his address. I'll answer him tonight.

My dear. You can't imagine how welcome those letters were. They might be old, but they sure are welcome. now, I'm praying for more Mail. I did not get that watch yet. If I don't get it soon, and I get paid, I'll try to get permission to go to the nearest town and buy one. Watches are much cheaper here than in the US. At the present state of my finance, I would not be able to buy a minute hand.

Well, the sun is shining again. Yesterday it was pouring bricks. I suspect it will be raining again tomorrow. It seems it always rains in sunny France. Never mind, I'm storing up experiences I always remember my army life.

By the way, you asked me how the fountain pen you gave me is getting along. Is my lucky pen. It's working overtime. It's almost time for mess now. That's one thing. I don't want blank (torn here). My address is Corporal Harry Yamin Company B 306<sup>th</sup> infantry American E.F. A.E.F. Goodnight love and kisses to all,  
your brother,  
Harry

### **Letter to Family from Harry; Dated May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear folks,

It's about a week now since I received your last letter. I am out at sea. I don't know what to write. At least if I get a letter I can answer it. I started to write this letter last Saturday, and gave it up as a bad job. It is now Monday and still I don't know what to say. I'll do my level best.

To begin with, the band is playing on the square. If I did not have to put my blouse on, also belt, I would drop this letter and walk over to listen to them. They're playing, "For Me and Myself", and it sounds great. from a distance, anyhow.

We were paid a couple of days ago. For the first time in my life I've been paid in money that looks like wallpaper. I received as my monthly salary 102 francs. Sounds big does it not? Well it's just \$17.50 in American money.

All good things come close together. Just a couple of minutes, each one of us received five packages of Camel cigarettes from the sun tobacco fund. After smoking the chopped hay we get here, for a month, you folks will understand how much a good American cigarette is appreciated. I, for one guard them like the Apple of my eye. What kind of English is that?

You ought to have seen this place when the boys got paid. They started to buy up the town. There's only two things you can buy in this dizzy town. That is, beer and wine. Also eggs and French fry potatoes. I guess the town is pretty near cleaned out. Alas the boys.

That's as much as I can write today. I'll write once more when I receive a letter from you folks. My address is Corporal Harry Yamin Company B 306<sup>th</sup> infantry American E.F. AEF.

My regards to everybody and take good care of yourselves. Write one of how the MP matter is getting along. Also did you get any more allotments? That's all.

Harry

### **Letter to Minnie from Harry; dated May 31<sup>st</sup>, 1918**

Dear Minnie,

I was going to write this letter to Ben, but I changed my mind. You see, yesterday as you will probably deduce, was decoration day. We had a holiday, all day. We were told in the morning that General Pershing was coming around to inspect the billets. So, our holiday went up in smoke.

We were hustling and bustling, cleaning up, and slicking up. Then the general fooled us, and did not come. We had the day off, beginning two o'clock.

Another fellow and myself took a little walk of four miles, to a large town. It is quite a town. It has as much as six stores. It must have at least four-hundred inhabitants if you count horses, dogs, and chickens.

Well there, I saw some handkerchiefs, which I considered, not bad. Remembering I had a sister, who used to be nice to me, and write letters once in awhile, I went in and bought one for her. That's the reason I'm writing this letter to you instead of Ben.

I don't even know if you will ever get it. I don't know if you ever received any of my letters yet. If you do get it, all I want to say is, that you will probably be able to buy souvenirs like that in the states, but you always be able to say that this handkerchief comes direct from France.

I just received a letter from home this week. The first one an over a week. It was written, or rather type written by Ben. He asked me why I don't write. All that I seem to be doing is writing letters. I haven't received an answer to any of them yet. It kind of discourages a fellow writing letters, and sending them out, without knowing whether they ever reached their destination. So you can't blame me for writing only one or two letters a week. It's different with you people. You know your mail reaches me. For one thing, it's not censored.

While down at that town I spoke of, I saw a dandy wristwatch. I would have bought it, only it cost 65 francs. I only had 55, naturally I did not buy it.

Also, I lost your fountain pen. A **watermans ideal** cost \$4.75. I did not buy any.

We are kept pretty busy here every day. Working pretty hard but I am not losing any weight. Hard work never did **blank me**. Also look at that pleasure we have here. We come in from a hard day's work, and I order a cup of fresh milk for a nickel. Just from the cow. Ask Ben how they say milk in French. He ought to know.

Tomorrow, we are going for a three day hike. I am going to rest my feet today. We have lots of fun in store for us.

By the way general Pershing was here today while we were gone. One of the men saw him. He says he is one of the finest or rather the finest looking soldiers he ever saw. Regular man, In other words. I am sorry I did not have a chance to see him. Do you folks know my address here it is again Corporal Harry Yamin Company B 306<sup>th</sup> infantry American EF AEF.

That will be about enough for today. I'm all written dry.  
loving kisses to all,

Harry

**Letter to family from Harry; Dated June 4<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear folks,

Today is Tuesday. The army is good to us today. They are giving us a holiday, we were working Sunday, so they're giving us today off instead. I remember the time, where we would have worked Sunday and today also. How times have changed.

There is a baseball game on today. As it is better in the 1st and the 4th platoons, And I am in the second, naturally I will not go see it. I will write a few letters instead. When the second plays, I will be up there shouting myself hoarse.

The last letter I wrote you was sometime last week. Since then I did not receive any letters from home. The reason I am writing this letter is this.

Another fellow and myself were in a cafe this morning splitting a bottle of wine between us. Over the bottle we began to talk of home. Naturally of course. Talking Tuesday, I began to feel that I must write home hence this **blank**

We were talking about the friends we used to have, and what became of them. From there we went on to the shows we used to see. He happened to have been big on the vaudeville shows, like me. The bottle was gone before we knew it. Then we had to cease.

Listen Ben. I want you to do something for me. You know I never see any New York or any American paper, and I don't think you can send any to me. But what wouldn't prevent you from writing out clippings of anything you can think would interest me. You know pretty well what I like. You know, things about the stage, baseball, and any news about New York. I would not care how old it was. I sure would appreciate it.

For myself, I haven't got much to write about. Last Saturday we packed up our little old packs, and started out for young hike. It was not much of a hike, compared to the one before that. We went about eight miles, and then camp. The way we camped was this way. The whole battalion spread out our stuff. Then we put down our blankets, and overcoats lay down and slept fine. It was comfy there was no rain though.

We were at that spot two nights. Sunday we went out on the range, and did some skirmish work, and Monday we walked back, and today we have a holiday.

When we came back from that hike we found all of our bunks finished. you know we had to sleep on the floor, but we went into the words cut down wood and then we went out and got some **wire (don't ask how we got the wire)** and now we live in luxury.

Last night was the first night since I'm here that I slept on a bunk. About 12:00 o'clock I was awakened by somebody calling my name, and telling me to get my squad out, as we would have to go out for a hike. I had learned to expect anything in the army. After I had gotten dressed, or almost dressed, I heard them giggling. Then I got wise to myself. I gave them my blessings and started to climb back to bed, but someone had turned the bed upside down. I had a sweet time of it. Finally I got back again, and for a wonder they did not start in on me again. That was my initiation. And that's enough for today.

My address is still Corporal Harry Yamin company B 306th infantry American EF AEF love to all and don't forget to keep on writing hope Mama is not worrying much.

Harry

PS by the time you get this letter the kids will have gotten their vacation. I suppose Sam will try to get a job for the weeks. Let them write one all about it.

Harry

**Letter to Family from Harry; Dated Jun 8<sup>th</sup>, 1918 (Someplace unknown)**

Dearest all,

I'm writing this letter sitting in the hall of my little tent. You know the dog tent we carry on our backs. My partner is sitting or rather laying next to me (there is no room to sit down). The wind is howling and we expect our home to come tumbling down on our heads any minute. If that does not happen, we will probably be flooded out, as it threatens to rain any minute so we will be happy anyhow.

Later in the letter I will let you know as much as I can how I came to be out here instead of in our old barn.

I have just received five letters from home. Written on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 12, 13<sup>th</sup>, and 14<sup>th</sup>. Out of them one was written by Sam and Lillian. I almost got down on my knees and thanked the Lord. You know I have been for more than two weeks without a letter.

You say I can't imagine how Gray and careworn Mama looks since I am gone. Well I sure can imagine. That's the best thing I do is imagine. I would just about any give anything I now have, or expect to have, just to be home for one day, and I don't care who knows it. Just to try to keep Mama from worrying.

You can tell Mama for me not to worry, if that will do any good. I was never healthier in my life. Eating well, and sleeping well, not soft but sound. Here are some details of our little trip. You know, "the proven that be" have decided that we were long enough in one place. We agreed with them. So they decided to move us. The simplest way to move was to let us walk. We are doing it. Walking.

Seriously we had almost forty miles to go to get to a railroad to take us where we're going. The Lord only knows where that is. We have been going about three days, and have another day to go. I am in the position of not knowing where I am going to sleep or eat next day. I sure have advanced I expect we're going to an American camp. Thank God. We have been with the British until now.<sup>12</sup>

This is written to Minnie.

Dear sis, so you were delighted to get my first letter from on board ship. I never knew you were so fond of me. By this time, I hope you have received quite a few. Someday I will think Morris, for getting you a nice coat. David **blank** always was a crybaby. If he thinks where he is now is rough, what will he say when he gets over here. He is in heaven now, only the poor boob does not know it. Our cousin Ben is taking it much better.

For heaven sake Minnie don't let anybody kid you about your letters. They are fine. I don't mind your spelling. My spelling is not perfect by any means. Besides the letters sent from New York are not censored. So keep on writing every day. Don't forget that some fine day after I have finished a long hike, I will get a fun letter from home, that means you, well the hike will be as nothing compared to the pleasure I'll get.

On Mother's Day I wrote a letter home. That was fine of Leo saving up his car fare to school and buying roses for Mama. Tell him I'm proud of him. So you have bought yourself a new dress too. Wear your coat and dress in good health. I should think you would look stunning in either or both of them.

Today is Sunday. We are resting. We arranged a baseball game between our platoons and the first. We were being. Hard luck. We had to walk about two miles to find a field to play in. At

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<sup>12</sup> They have been training beside the British Army's 39<sup>th</sup> Division

one point we thought there would be no game period the team went into a saloon to get a drink. They came over after a while.

That will be about enough. I will write again when we get to the end of our journey, wherever that is. Love to all tell Mama not to worry. Kiss the kids for me.

Your brother,  
Harry

### **Letter to family from Harry; Dated Jun. 13<sup>th</sup>, 1918 (somewhere in south of France)**

Dear folks,

<sup>13</sup>My journey is finished. For a while, anyhow. I am now sitting in a French YMCA writing this letter.

Earlier in the day I mailed a letter home describing part of my trip as far as possible. Here is the rest of it. This letter might be the other one.

I wrote the other letter a week ago. One Sunday. That day we rested. I spent the day exploring the country on foot. For the morning saw a baseball game. In the afternoon just being around. The next day we started out again. With our dainty little packs on our backs. God bless the packs. We did not walk very far. About three miles. We could do it now standing on our heads.

After we got to our destination we embarked on board trains. You ought to see the peachy cattle car we had twenty-six of us in it. We slept fine at night. We had to cuddle up close, but we did not mind it.

Talk about your **cooks' lovers**. We were over sixty hours on that train. Traveled all the way from the North of France to the southern part of France. All we had to do was to let our feet hang out of the door and watch the country. There were no windows on our parlor car.

After traveling all that distance, we disembarked. Then we did some more walking. The next day we reached our permanent billet. We sleep in our little dog tents now. No more stable farms. Thank the Lord.

Now listen. For the first time since I am in France we are stationed near civilization. We were in the backwoods before. No town near. Now we are about a mile and a half from a swell little city. With real homes, stores. Even a drug store. You ought to see the meat I just bought. They don't soak you as they did in the other place. They are great to us here.

You can get white man's beer here. That is fit to drink. For the first time since I'm in France I saw some real French girls. There are times when I am sorry I could not speak French. The people around the country are different here they treat us right. In fact, I like this place.

Here's my address. Corporal Harry Yamin Company B 306<sup>th</sup> infantry AEF. You know in the other place we are under the control of the British. Now the British are alright. But American and British don't mix very well. We did not like to be under them. Especially we did not like there rations period now we are under American control again. We don't feel like Blank anymore we get along with the French fine.

Today we marched down from camp, with band and all. Some French field Marshall inspected us. We stood at "present arms" while they looked us over. The band played the French national air, (I can't spell it) they sure did play it fine. The people liked us and we like the people.

That will be about enough. I am sending this letter through censor. Write and let me know what they cut out.

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<sup>13</sup> The 77<sup>th</sup> was ordered to march to Rambervilliers to relieve the French 61<sup>st</sup> Division

I just heard there was a report in New York that the 77th division was wiped out. Don't believe any rumors. We have not been in action. We probably won't be for quite some time period we are all safe. I'll write some more soon.

Goodbye,

Harry

PS love and kisses to everybody regards to all your friends, and all of my friends

### **Letter to little sister and family with letter to Ben attached; dated Jun 16<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear little sister and all,

It is now Sunday night before mess. I'm not writing in my part of our little dog tent. I'm laying not sitting. There is no room to sit down. Also I am waiting anxiously for mess. So if I dropped his letter right in the middle of a sentence, you will know the reason why.

This morning when I woke up I found a letter from Maurice Rosenberg waiting for me. Make believe I was not tickled to death to get it. He sure did right a nice chatty letter, told me the news of the place. Who left and who was fired, and how the old man is getting along, they almost brought me home.

Well sis, what is happening back home? How is Jesse and company getting along? I mean your beloved bosses. Do you still like your job? You asked me if I had money. I had some up to a week or so before payday. I received a check for \$15 from my Liberty bond before I left Upton. At present I am a trifle flat, but we expect to be paid again tomorrow. So I'm alright, we will be. So don't worry. Are you folks getting your allotment alright? I hope you are. Ben writes that everything is OK.

You mentioned that **Rose blank** had bought me a couple of presents. I don't think you will be able to mail them. Thank her for me. It was very kind of her, and I appreciate it. You tell me to ask for anything I want. There is no use asking. We have to have the slip signed by all the officers in the regiment. I don't mean quite all. A few of them anyhow.

If it does you any good to know I smoke Fatimas if you can mail them. You might put in a couple of packages of Helma. All good smokes. It does me good to think about it, even if I know I will never get them.

By the time you get this letter, the kids will be having their vacation. What are they going to do all summer? Sam has got a year more in high school, if I have not forgotten. I bet he feels grown up. Are you folks thinking of moving to a better neighborhood yet? The one thing I would be glad to know, when it happens.

When you receive this letter the MP will be almost all paid out. Then you can think of it. By the way. Old man **shodovsky** has his own trouble too. His son Ben about 21 years old was afraid of being drafted, so he joined the Navy as a 2nd class Seaman. Evidently, he could not get a soft job. His nephew already is over here somewhere I don't know where.

Well that is about all for today goodbye, give my regards to all. Love and kisses to the kids,  
Harry

Dear Ben,

**This has got to go into this letter. If anybody ever tells you that Uncle Sam does not feed his men, you have my permission to tell him to go to hell.**

For about two months I was under the British. Including British rations. And all that time I did not get as much to eat as I did just now for my first meal of American rations. After that meal, I felt I had to write you about it. As I remembered what you used to say.

Harry

PS if you had eaten as much hardtack as I did you would appreciate the change to American bread

### **Letter to Family from Harry; dated Jun 21, 1918**

Dear folks,

Well, here I am again. Another letter. Nothing to do, so I am writing this little letter. We are in a different place again. Moved during the night. That is two nights ago. We used our legs again. Walked during the night. It sure was raining. Seemed as if the heavens had opened up. But by now we don't mind a little thing like rain.

We are billeted now in a little shack next to an old stable. There are twenty of us in two little rooms. We sure are snug and cozy. We have strong and everything. At night the rats come out and play with us. Hide and seek, mostly. We do all the seeking. We have not captured one yet.

No matter what happens and how uncomfortable we are, we still contrive to have a good time. An Italian lad with us had brought along a banjo. All the way from the states. At one place it was often from him. But a couple of days ago by accident he found a lad in a different outfit who had one he could not play.

So today it's raining like hell. We are inside. And he is playing all the old songs from New York. You can't imagine how good they sound out here. Especially with the singing and dancing going on around here. As one of the fellows says, "we might not get much money, but we have a good time."

well Ben, how goes it? Still working for New York merchandise. There must be lots doing in New York. I just learned that the lights were out in New York for 13 days. Gosh they must have a bunch of nuts running the town these days. What good would it do you. Never mind, they came to their senses.

I guess New York must be dead these days. Since we left the city. You know I'm having a hard time writing this letter. One fellow plane, some more singing, a couple cleaning machine guns, and talking at the same time. As you can deduce the place is kind of well filled.

Talking of machine guns I'm glad I'm a plain Rifleman. There's nothing like the old "Enfield" after all.

I guess that would be Almost enough for today. Don't forget to send some clippings of what's happening. We get the Paris edition of the New York Herald here. But you can imagine that it hasn't much new than it. My address is still Corporal Harry Yamin Company B 306th infantry AEF. It's funny the address is the same, but the place changes.

Regards to all take care of yourself,

Harry

PS if you should happen to pick up Colliers magazine of March 2nd you'll find a story in it. From baseball to **Blank**. The man who wrote it knows what he is writing about. He's got us down fine. Harry

**Letter to Ben and Family from Harry; Dated Jun 25<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Ben and Everybody,

I have decided to write this letter to you. I have not received any letters from you for a long time. In fact I have not received any Mail from home in over two weeks. I'd rather have one letter from home now, then state. That's going some. Seriously, I am anxious.

Our outfit is now situated in a large deserted village. When I say deserted, I mean deserted. Not a civilian in sight. You ought to see the homes. They look like 7th Ave, after a subway cave in. Only 100% worse. The buildings spanked to pieces, walls and stairs crumbled. You ought to see the church. Every French village has to have a church. This one used to be a church. When Fritz got through playing with it, it ceased to be one.

my squad is billeted in an old busted up shack, that's falling to pieces. There is a squad on the floor above us. We are pretty comfortable, except when the boys upstairs, forget themselves, and tread a little too hard on the floor, that brings the ceiling down on our heads. Otherwise we are quite comfortable.

You know we're supposed to be in the frontline. two of our platoons are actually in the trenches. Our platoon is right back of the line. Doing all The Dirty work period cooking, in guard, in patrol, and so on.

It's a very quiet sector. In fact, we are in here for training. It's so quiet, that the French send their men down here for a rest.

During the day, there is nothing to do at all, but sleep. You know how much I could sleep in the daytime. I bummed a Saturday Evening Post off some medical men around here. It was pretty old that welcome. I finished it now and have arranged to exchange it for a New York Sun of ancient vintage with another fellow. Where he got it the Lord only knows. I'm not particular.

The only way we know we are at war here, is when the big guns keep banging away. Once in a while. At present they were very quiet. Also, we have to wear our gas masks at all times period several nights ago the big guns were banging away all night. We were up for an hour listening to the bang and whine and then we went to sleep again.

There is a certain allied aviator, or aviators, who goes up in his machine once in a while and has lots of fun with the Bosch. Fritz pings away at him, while he flies around very low. We watched the shrapnel bursting, but they don't come within a mile of him.

That's all I can write a present, except that we will be here only a couple of more days. Then we move back. I'm having the time of my life, I'm glad I'm here, but it will be glad to get back to good old New York. I'm never did appreciate the big town as much as I do now. Don't forget to write and keep me writing. Send some clippings too. Now I'm going to try to bum another Saturday Evening Post. I know they have another one, I'll have to get it by hook or by crook.

Goodbye, till my next letter,

Harry

PS love and kisses to all, especially Lillian.

Harry

PS there are a lot of French soldiers in this town. We get along fine together. Not like the English. Maybe it's because we don't understand what they are saying about us or vice versa. They sure are fine fellows. They know their business

Harry

**Letter to Sister from Harry; Dated Jun 29<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dearest of all Sisters,

I have just received five letters. All written by my little sister. They were dated May 30<sup>th</sup>, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6, and 8<sup>th</sup> and now one on the 7<sup>th</sup>. The last letter before that was dated May 15<sup>th</sup>. So evidently there are a few I did not receive I expect some more today.

I wrote you several times that no matter what rumors you hear don't believe it. Especially like the one you wrote me about. If anyone tells you anything as ridiculous as that give him, or her the biggest balling out they ever received in their lives.

If I were you, I'd see that wounded soldier, and ask him if he started that rumor in circulation. If he says he did, then you can call him a damned liar.

For God's sake, Minnie, persuade Mama to move out of that neighborhood. Had she not got enough trouble without listening to all the gossip going around. Maybe a few people would move into a neighborhood where we're not so well acquainted it wouldn't be so bad.

Anyhow, I never needed a doctor since I'm in the army, and I never intended to need one. "So there" as Lily says. I just received a letter from Spencer, and Albert Smith, to show what people think of me. I just received a big four-page typewritten letter from Mr. **Horowty** Manager of M S company giving me all the news of New York an MS & Company. It sure is a Peach of a letter.

So David Ginsberg has crossed the ocean. He is probably wishing he was back at Newport News. I'll tell you the army will make a man out of him though. I think the army will find it's a tough job. It almost made a man out of me. Thanks for the patriotic songs you sent me from your place. I'd like to hear you all singing every morning. I guess 34<sup>th</sup> St must be blocked.

Don't worry about my not receiving your letters I do eventually. Don't worry about your writing it looked like the finest in the world to me. Letters from him are not censored. So you need not worry. Well goodbye sis. I'll write again soon. In a day or two, love and kisses to all. Regards all friends,

Harry

PS I am going to hand this letter in to the **censored** Harry

PS see if you can send me some Evening Mails. Wrapped them up tight and mark the address plainly on it that's all I want.

**Letter to family from Harry; Dated July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1918**

Dear everybody,

Well here I am again. For no reason whatsoever, I have decided to write you folks another letter. I only wrote two days ago. What's the difference. I have some writing paper leftover. Also, today I have the time.

Well my dear, Experiences are crowding thick and fast on me. Last night we left the trenches about midnight and started walking. Gosh, it's great to walk at night. While waiting to leave the trenches I had my squad over a section of the trench. <sup>14</sup>We were sitting down watching the Sky. Do you remember the song we used to sing. We still sing it. "When the moon is shining Somewhere in France ". I never used to think that some time I would be sitting, somewhere in France, watching the moon, and thinking of that song. I'm sure getting sentimental.

All I did yesterday all day, was sit in a little wood. When I say sit, someone lay down. Rolling cigarettes and smoking them. It's a great life.

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<sup>14</sup> The 306<sup>th</sup> is protecting and holding the Baccarat Sector

I'm writing you all that stuff to show you folks that we are not in the real thing yet. We won't be for a long time period I'm as safe here as I would be at home. A little safer.

At the present moment I am in a regular little rest camp. Barracks and everything. Wooden beds no Springs, but after sleeping where I did, the bed is like heaven to me. I got in about three in the morning. I jumped into bed. I woke up at 10:00 o'clock. As we were walking last night, the festive aero plane was playing overhead. The playful machine guns were willing to play. The machine guns have as much chance of doing any damage as the Germans have of reaching New York.

Tomorrow we get paid. Also we take a bath. We need it. You never had "over the top". It describes about soldiers picking cuddys off themselves read the book, and then you'll know how we feel now.

You tell me to ask for something. It's too much trouble. Besides anything we need, we can buy here in canteens. Wherever we go American YMCA and canteens are with us. If you want to you can send me about 5 or \$10, if you can spare it. If you need the money to help move or anything, don't send it. If you do send it, you can either send a money order, or a registered letter. But I can get along without it.

How is the allotment coming along? Are you getting it regular or not? How is the MP? By the time you get this letter, I think it will be almost paid out. That will be some relief, i should say. So Rose Greenham's married sister, has moved up to blank I'm glad to hear it.

Nothing else to right now. Give my regards to everybody. Hope the kids have a nice vacation.

Loving kisses to all,

Harry

PS Lily's letter says, if she eats and stays a good girl I might come home soon, I hope so.

Harry

Ps the band is playing outside. Just like home.

### **Letter to family from Harry; Dated July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear folks,

The first 4th of July abroad, and the last I hope. You probably know I think I wrote you. I am now in a rest camp. A regular place.

Something doing every day. Entertainment every night. We have a regular YMCA. We have some fun Talent. Some of our entertainers were on the stage back home. As for the band, you know how good they are. We had two American girls sing for us one night. They sure could sing. It was game of them to come all the way to the danger zone to sing for us. You can imagine the reception they received. They sang for over an hour. The first American girls we saw in a long long time.

We beat Co. A in baseball eleven to four. Today we play Co C. We collected 1500 Franks to put in Open the game. Even I put up twenty francs. It will be some game.

Yesterday I bought myself a fountain pen. It writes pretty good. It costs eighteen francs. i am beginning to think in francs. I won't know what a good old American dollar looks like.

I did not buy a watch it costs too much. It does not pay to try and get anything from home. We have to have the Colonel's signature. Far be it from me to trouble the Colonel.

Yesterday I was in line for over an hour at the canteen and I bought 5 packages of cigarettes. <sup>15</sup>And not the kind I smoke. They are high price cigarettes. See where I have to fall back on Bull blank and an old pipe.

I guess that's about all I can write today. I received your song program from the store that's a fine collection of songs. I don't see "where the moon shining somewhere in France". Our beloved song.

Give my regards to everybody. Love and kisses to all.

Take care of yourselves,

Harry

### Letter to Sister and Family from Harry; Dated July 7<sup>th</sup>, 1918

Dear Sister and All,

I have just sat down and read all the letters I had with me, over again. You know up to several nights ago I had received the letters you wrote between May 30<sup>th</sup> and June 11<sup>th</sup>. Well, that night I received the Mail between May 21<sup>st</sup> and May 28<sup>th</sup>. I sat down and read them by candlelight until taps was sounded. Then all lights out. I finished them next morning. I had twelve letters. The Mail orderly told me to get a basket. Of course all of them were not yours. Most of them were though.

We lost that baseball game I wrote about last time period it sure was some game. Co. C had a much better picture. But we gave them a run for their money. There will be a game today between our battalion and the first battalion of another 305<sup>th</sup> some of our boys will be in it.

i saw jack a couple of Days ago. He had looked all over France for me. He was about five miles away from where I was. Since then he is moved away. Somewhere else. It's a funny world.

Evidently France does not Appreciate my well-known humor. When I said I had to cut the meat for the men with an axe because I had nothing else to cut it with. Blank Blank Blanks

Sam is some writer so is Leo. Especially Leo. Never mind Leo is alright. 90% is darned good. I should say. 100% for Lily is also very good. By the way what was Sam's mark it must have been something good. Sam must be An old timer by now. Last year in high school, if I remember rightly.

I notice where you say that they are all kidding you about your letter writing. Don't let them worry you. I think your letters are alright. You know I like simple and blank things, and no one else has them. Not even the censor.

We came back to the rest camp, and now we have squads right and left, and rifle inspections again. When I come back I will be dirty as blazes for about a week. Just to get even, that's some more humor.

I notice where Sam says he just came back from the library. Wish there was one here. I would be in heaven if we had some books here. If a man has a magazine here, he is envied by everyone in the company.

So you had a good time when you visited Rose Greenshaw married sister's house. I am glad of it. I wonder what's the next up where she lives. I enjoyed Ben's letter immensely. He writes me such happy letters. Only much too short. So he belongs to the Peace Corp. I am glad of it. The band is playing, and the game is about to commence. I can't miss the game. So Au-revoire till tomorrow.

Harry

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<sup>15</sup> The pipe he references here is believed to be the same one in the collection

PS that's French

**Letter to family from Harry with small letter to Lillie; Dated July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Folks,

This is next day just finished a pretty good day's work. Squad movement in the morning a lectured, and patrol work this afternoon. It was a good day.

The game was Tuesday ended in our favor. Now there is another game **blank blank**. I'll be out there as one watching. I really don't know what to write. I have a hunch I am writing too much. I wonder if much is being cut out of my letters I hope not, even though i don't write Cordant things.

Regards to all love and kisses to all,

Harry

dear little sister Lily,

I am glad to hear that you are a good little girl. I hope you will always be a good little girl and eat when Mama Ann many tell you too. Did you get promoted? I know you did.

Lots of kisses from your brother,

Harry

XXXXXXXXXX

**Letter to Minnie and family from Harry; dated July 12<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Minnie and all,

I have just received letters from you dated June 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 17, and one from ben dated June 15<sup>th</sup>. I will describe something about how I got them later on.

I sure am glad to hear about Sam getting a position in your place of business. By the way, is it a position or job? I hope he makes good. I am sure he will. So Leo is looking for a job also. He does not want to position? Only a job.

Evidently your store is very patriotic. Having seen every day and celebrations and everything. Who is this **Mr. R?** Evidently he's working like a Trojan. I notice where you said that captain Boyd was very bashful. It must be great to meet a bashful Englishman. I never have yet.

Have you just finished reading about your five day celebrations. It was wonderful. Evidently **Mr. R** must be a wonder. He seems to be running the whole thing. Did I ever tell you how we celebrated the 4<sup>th</sup> here goes.

In the afternoon we marched out to a clear field. Watching out for Fritz on the way. I mean aero planes. Our whole battalion was there. Also a company of French soldiers. And of course the band. We were all lined up into squares. At dinner Colonel made his speech to the Frenchmen, which had to be interpreted to him then their Colonel made a speech too, which he also had to be interpreted also. Then we ate and a baseball game, while the band was playing. I think you folks have a better time, after all. I believe tomorrow is a holiday also like French day.

So you went to Coney Island. My you were getting wild. Seeing all the wonderful things at the island. And believing them to. I sure would like to see the old place again.

Any wonders if I am learning the French language. Well ben dear I am not. Of course I can say a simple of words like "Vine Blanc" or "Vine rouge" and a couple of more words not all in the same style. Evidently I have not your ear for language.

Now a little bit about myself. I am back in my little old dog tent again. All by myself this time. I have no partner. I have a comfortable good place. This morning I was sleeping when they brought in the mail. I lay in my tent reading them. You know we have a different game now. We go out about 10:00 o'clock at night, walk a couple of miles, dig trenches in the dark till 2:00 o'clock. Then we come back, eat our breakfast and sleep most of the day. At last I have a night position.

Harry

PS love and kisses to all give my regards to all,

Harry

### **Letter to sister and family from Harry; dated July 12<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Sister and all,

I have just received your two letters dated June 23<sup>rd</sup>, and June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1918. There must have been some more written, but I guess to get the others in a day or so.

The last letter I wrote you, before this one was last Saturday, or it might have been Friday I'm sorry I did not write anymore during the week, but I was quite busy during this week. Mostly digging trenches. Thank the Lord it's during the daytime that we do. we had one night of digging. At night work never did appeal to me.

Then again. I had guard duty one day and night. So you see I was pretty busy. I am writing this little note of about eighty pages lying in my little dog tent, using my mask as a table. That's going some.

When we get used to place a little, we pack up during some night and move somewhere else. That keeps us out of mischief and at the same time force the Germans. That's what you call brain work.

We are in a dandy place now. Right in a word, our tents under trees, camouflaged with leaves. I found more variety of bugs around this place and I thought existed. Talk about the beauties of the Country Life. When you want to sit down, you find you are sitting in an anthill. There you find pink, red, yellow, blue, and green bugs come visiting you. To say nothing of flies tell mosquitoes. The country is a wonderful place.

Two days ago it was hot as blazes. At night i had both sides of the tent open, and all my stuff outside. During the night it started to rain. You ought to have seen me move. It was a picture.

Some Frenchman are stationed near us. You know French soldiers gets fire blank day. So to make some extra money some of them make up souvenirs for us. One of them is making it some pens and penholder for me, out of two empty cartridges, with my name and the date on it. I am sorry I could not send it home.

Everything is very quiet here. Nothing living at all, except an aero plane overhead. We have just heard of the big American and French victory in different front. The Kaiser will find out something about American once some time before this is through.

Ben, try and slip me through a Popular or Saturday Evening Post I might get it after a while. some fellows have gotten some nice magazines and newspapers.

Well goodbye folks. I'll write again in a day or two period let me know what's happening. Did Leo get a job? How is Sam in his new position? Did Lily pastor exams? These exams must have worried the kid considerably. Thanks Ben for the news about the Giants evidently our beloved Giants are going down bad. Well it's up to the Yankees to uphold the reputation of New York.

Love and kisses to all,  
Harry

### **Letter to Family from Harry; Dated July 19<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear everybody,

In a different town again. I am having quite a lovely time traveling around France. Fifty years around when I am old and gray (you know I am beginning to look overall already, so what will I look like by then), I will gather my children's children's children around me, and will tell them the adventures of my youth. They probably will call me an old liar. By that time I will not believe myself. But look at the fun I'll have.

Seriously, this is some experience I'm going through. I'll tell you as much as I can of my latest.

Monday, it was raining like hell, all day. We were cooped up in our little tent all day, trying to keep warm. Lucky for us we had our tent put up tight, and it did not leak. Some men had their tents down about their ears, and they had to go out and fix it. In the rain. That's what I call Lovely.

Here's another peculiarity of dog tents. When they are wet, and you touch them with your fingers or anything at all the water comes through. I take care not to touch mine.

Tuesday morning my tent was wet, and I was feeling well not cheerful, I was told to pack up all my things and report with a squad of mine men to the Sergeant Major. When you get an order in the army, you have to obey it. I cursed beautifully, but I took my gang and reported as ordered.

We were put on trucks and were shipped to town. There we were told we had to unload cars of ammunition. It reminded me of the Union, of beloved memory. Sometimes it pays to be a corporal. I did not have to work.

While we were working their own company moved out, on one of our little hikes. So at night we were put on the same motor trucks and brought to our destination. Ten miles away. You know we were awfully sorry we did not have to walk with our dainty little pack.

We were sleeping when our company pulled in about two o'clock in the morning. This morning we walked around the town, the new town we are in. It's a nice little city. An American canteen here with American cigarettes, but we have not been paid yet, so I am out of luck. Tonight we hike again.

We met some fellows of the first regiment that left NY you know the ones I mean. They are all right. A nice husky lot. I am writing this letter sitting in a blank building. A phonograph playing. It looks almost like home. Almost.

You ought to see the revolver they handed me. It a dainty little thing. I never handled one in my life. Every corporal gets one. I got mine slung on my belt. I take it off when I go out. Some fellows I think sleep with them on.

That's enough for today. I did not get any mail from you folks this week. I expect some on Sunday. I wonder if the censor cuts out anything in my letters. I try to be careful but let me know if he cuts anything out.

Well good bye till my next letter, which will be soon. Give my regards to everybody.  
Love and kisses to all,  
Harry

PS Monday night, I was over to see a moving picture at the YMCA. They had a Kay Bee picture. They're off. Also an old "Universal Weekly" They showed the Liberty Loan parade in NY.

Gosh, it looked good to see old NY again. Even in the movies. You ought to hear some of the remarks passed around the hall. Not polite, but funny. As for the main picture. In NY it would not be considered anything special. Here it is considered splendid. It is a racing story. The fellows were telling each other to lay their frames down on the hero's horse. Also their ha'penny.

In finishing scene were telling the blank to keep their distance. In fact we had a good time. It does not take much to keep us happy. Next night there was supposed to be another picture, but we had left town.

Harry

### **Letter to Sister and Family from Harry; Dated July 24<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Sister and all,

How are you all? I have not received a letter in over a week. I suppose when I do get Mail, I'll get about a dozen at once, and I'll feel awfully good, but at the same time right now I feel as if I was 50,000,000 miles from home. That's the way you feel when you get no Mail for a long time.

How does Sam like his new position? How is Leo getting along? Also Lillian and the rest of you? You know there is a lot of fun and asking questions by long distance. Especially as I know that by the time I received an answer to this letter, salmon Leo and really will be back in school, and vacation with EA thing of the past period still you get some satisfaction in asking questions like these.

As for myself I am writing this letter, sitting in a dugout, writing by candlelight. It is daytime now but it is dark down here. This is kind of a swell place, with a wooden floor in a bunk and everything. Most of the newcomers in the platoon are asleep down here at present. Golly how some of them do snore. It is remarkable.

I'm awake now because I had a vacation last night, so I could sleep. The rest of the bunch were up all night. All in guard, and patrol. And things like that. I have a feeling I'll probably be on guard tonight. You know where you are in the trenches you sleep all day and are up all night. But as I remarked before, it is so quiet here that we have not seen a Bosch yet. My ink is running out I think so don't be surprised if I switch to pencil any minute.

Right next to where we are there pass is one of the finest roads in France. I think it is one of the finest. Stretching for miles, well paved, with huge trees, hundreds of years old on both sides. You walk along the road for miles and you won't see a person, or even a little dog. You can just about imagine what it must have been before the war. I don't know why I'm writing this to you. But I was just stuck with the desolation of it. Forgive me.

I have just seen an English paper a couple of days old, I noticed what the American and French are doing to the Brits. Gosh how surprised old Bill must be right now.

I wonder if you folks get all my Mail. I hope you do. There is a fellow here who receives 600 cigarettes from home. His father managed to have the order okayed in New York by some officer. The lucky bum.

That's about all I can write today. Some more to follow.

Love and kisses to all. Regards to all,

Harry

### **Letter to Family from Harry; dated July 29<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Folks,

Saturday had come around again. It looks just the same as any other day. Gosh any day in the States and just plain Saturday over here.

It's raining and windy and dreary. There's a bunch of us sitting here in the dugout arguing. I'm writing this letter I don't seem to feel like anything today.

I haven't received my Mail from home yet. I should expect to get some batch when I do get some. I wish it was today. The trenches are wonderful today mud and slime, slippery and all. I don't know what the trouble is, I'm feeling kind of blue today. You can imagine when I don't feel like kidding. Otherwise I'm perfectly alright. Healthy and strong. You would not recognize me now. **Blurred section** I'm almost slim now. Just as graceful as I always used to be. My feedback is the same. I don't know what else to write. We have three more days to put in this place. They will have more soon pace. That will be about all for today. Keep on writing letters to me. I don't know whether you were writing or not. I'll know when I received the Mail loving kisses to all,  
Harry

**Letter to Sister from Harry letter to younger sister attached; Dated July 29<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Sister,

I have just received your letter from you, most highly beloved. Dated from June 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, July 1<sup>st</sup>, second, Also I received a letter from your friend Sally Barker, which I shall take great pleasure in answering.

Don't mind the writing, and I just filled my "French masterpiece" with ink, and the poor fountain pen is not used to it yet. I also received two notes from two girlfriends of yours from the store. I shall answer them also. I see where I have a busy afternoon before me. I don't mind. I'm glad you liked the handkerchief I sent from a town so far distant and so long ago that I forgot that such a place exists.

I can promise that the first fair size town I stopped at in my travels, I shall send you 1 in Lillian one also, as there will be no jealousy, on her part. It was good of you not to tell the end that the handkerchief was yours.

I also notice where you took a Lillian and Leo to the pardon Opera House. Evidently you must have been flush. It was good of you. I would have liked to have seen Lily's face. I think it was worth what you said, just have seen the kid. By the way, you must be awfully popular where you work period your friend Sally says that you are the Belle of the **Openheine Collins**. I salute you.

I hope you enjoyed the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. If you see a chance to have a good time period go do it. You deserve a darn site more good times than you are getting period again I say go for it. At the present time I am sitting in a YMCA Hut back in a village back of the line. A little bit of cottage with a **blank** taking up most of it, and a small table with a couple of inches where we can write. It seems like a Palace to me.

I just pulled into this place at 3:00 AM. I brought my squad, as an advance body for the rest of the platoon. We got a dandy place to sleep in a barn with beds in it. I sure did sleep.

Our outfit is being relieved by a different outfit, and we are all darn glad of it. I have a hunch we're going to see more of France soon. I guess this will just about finished for today. I will write again soon. Now that I have a chance I will keep on writing.

I did not received pins \$5 yet by expected in a day or two. Thanks been very much loving kisses to all,  
Harry

dear little sister,

I'm very glad you were promoted. I know you will be just as good a girl in your new class as you were in your old class.

lots and lots of kisses from your brother,

Harry

**Letter to family from Harry; Dated July 30<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear folks,

Here I am writing again. I wrote a letter yesterday, but in a different place. I am writing in a swell YMCA. A nice big place, with a piano and plenty of tables for writing letters. I am still writing with my French masterpiece.

Some fellow is playing the piano, and I feel perfectly at home. I don't know what he's playing, and I don't care. A couple of us have been sitting here all morning eating crackers, and they had just made cocoa. You were allowed to buy two packs of cigarettes in this place, which is more than you can buy anywhere else.

A woman's running this YMCA. You can always tell where a woman has charged of a place like this. It's cleaner and more homelike than any place I'd ever stuck. She sure does work hard. Not a minute rest all morning. She had promised us fudge this afternoon. I shall be here. The piano player is playing "Where Do We Go From Here" which I think is appropriate for us. We are on our way, but we don't know where we're going. Personally, I don't care. I've gotten so, that I can make myself at home anywhere. We had hoboed over most of French already, so a little more won't matter.

You can't imagine how different I am now from what I used to be. Once Upon a time I needed a bed, before I could sleep. Now a bed is considered a luxury. I can lay down on the soft side of a rock and go to sleep.

We stayed in the last town a whole day, and in the evening, we packed up our house, and belongings and were on our way.

We promenaded for about eight kilos, and here we are in a new barn with plenty of hay to sleep on. What else can a fellow want?

Yesterday I answered a couple of letters of some of your friends. Miss Sallie Barker, Miss Fay Gussman, and Miss Grace Schiffer. They write fine letters. You can tell them so. Not that I am any judge, but they were just to my taste. Let them keep it up. I'll promise to answer every one of them, the first chance I get after I receive them.

No more today as the fellows want to inspect the town, and I am with them. Love and kisses and regards and everything else you can think of,  
Harry

**Letter to Mother from Harry; dated July 31<sup>st</sup>, 1918**

Dear Mom,

I was looking all over this country trying to find something that you can use, and still be pretty.

I could not find anything useful, so I got something ornamental only.

Your loving son,

Harry

**Letter to Sister from Harry; dated Aug 1<sup>st</sup>, 1918**

Dear Sister,

I will now sit down and write you a young book of about four pages. I have at present, and the YMCA is closed.

To begin with, I want to get something off my mind. Seeing as you liked the handkerchief I sent you, so much and as it is now Lillie's, I decided to send you something a little better. So yesterday, I mailed you a little scarf. I bought it around here. I hope you will like it.

I don't know what can use it for, unless you have an evening dress right now. When you for to a ball, or the theatre, you might use it for a dish rag. I'm sorry I could not find anything nicer to send you. That will have to do.

We have been in this town for two whole days now. Quite a long time. We will probably move soon.

I bought Mama a handkerchief, which I sent her yesterday. I was in a town yesterday and I did not have anybody to censor it so I gave it to Spencer's bother to mail it, and his Lieutenant censored it. That's off my mind.

I had a good day yesterday. I met Spencer's brother in town. I did not even know he was in the army. He is working in the post office, as a corporal. Corporals are getting quite common these days. I reckon I'll finish as a private, so as not to be so common.

Coming back, I found where Artie Sheldon hangs out. We sure were glad to see each other. We had a long talk. Compared experiences He came over through a different way. He is still wrestling mules in the supply company. He claims he has a good job. Probably he has. I don't know.

For the rest, I am having the best vacation I ever had in the army. Nothing to do all day. Wish they would send one ahead of the company every day.

This is the first town I ever struck where they had all the beer you want. **Blank** finish in this town, as they have two breweries right in this town.

That will be about enough for today. I'll write again soon.

Your brother,

Harry

PS In my last letter, I mentioned Miss Grace Schiffer. My mistake apologize for me. It was Miss Dorothy Schiffer. I don't know where I got the Grace.

PS. I received Ben's first five dollars. Thank you very much

**Letter to Ben from Harry; dated Aug 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1918**

Dear Ben,

I have just received a letter of yours, Mail June 29th. I also received two letters of Minnie's mailed June 21st and June 22<sup>nd</sup> and last week I received Mail up to July 3rd. You see the post office is slightly upset.

Yes, I receive Mail now. Of course slightly upset, but we get it. So that's alright.

Thanks very much for these songs, and clippings. Especially the clippings. Yes, the Maple Leaf forever has been Canada's national song for years and years. Now we have marched over half France too long long trail. But don't think I don't appreciate it. I do.

I see Ben where you **blank** me for sending home a souvenir. Ben dear, if you had been away from my little town for over a month, and then came back to a little place with real people,

and real stores. Why you would want to buy something. Then when you remember what Minnie and the rest have done for me, naturally your thought would turn that way. I won't apologize.

Let Lillian keep the handkerchief. Keep on telling her it's for her. I sent Minnie something a little better. also tell really that the first time we hit a large sized town I'll send her something pretty.

We're liable to hit a town soon, as we're traveling. We don't know where we're going. But we are on our way. That's us. We are not worrying. We're seemingly country. This division has sure seen some traveling. We have now come in contact with, English, Canadians, Australians, French, New Zealand, Portuguese, and at present we are with Italian soldiers. We have just met a few that's going some.

Congratulations on your advancing salary. You are now quite an important person. Keep it up boy, you were doing fine. Also congratulate Sam on his big salary. He must be all swelled up. Never mind he is alright.

Take care of yourselves and good luck to all,

Harry

PS I'm glad that MP has been settled. Now you folks don't have to worry about that

PS. when we go in and ask for lac the natives don't know what we mean, but when we ask for Dolay they hand us milk. Water (pronunciation not spelling) is Do loo. I don't know the spelling all find out

### **Letter to Sister from Harry; dated Aug 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1918**

Dear Sister,

Just received two letters of yours, both written the same day. One in the morning, and one at night. June 21st. I sure was glad to get them.

You must be having splendid times at your place of business. You're singing every morning. Now Sam can join in with his splendid voice. I wonder if he is properly gratified to you for getting him his job. I don't think he is. Make him. Still we keep on traveling. We loved a perfectly splendid little town, to come to this joint. I don't know why. This place has sharpened banged up once. I suppose in 1914. You can't buy anything here. Still it might have been worse.

Good luck to us. There is a rainbow in the Sky. That is a sign of good luck. So they say. You will be getting me all swelled up by telling me in every letter how much you will miss me. I can say one thing, not as much as I miss you all. So we are about even.

Barnett has been telling me that souvenirs are unnecessary. Maybe he is right, I'll just send Lily something else the first chance I get, and then I guess I'll cut it out.

No more for today. The Lord only knows where I'll Mail this letter. At present I have no envelope. I'll have to borrow one.

Your brother,

Harry

PS in Ben's letter I left out Chinese, and Algerians. And maybe a few more.

**Letter to Sister and all from Harry; dated Aug 11<sup>th</sup>, 1918<sup>16</sup>**

Dear Sister and All,

How do you? Gosh, I'm happy I received about fifteen letters from home. Not all of them from you. About ten of them from you. Of course, I did not get any for about two weeks previous. But look how good I felt when I got these.

Here's something you will not believe. Prepared for a shock. Ready. Old man **Chidslovsky** has sent me a money order for \$10. What is there about me?

Seriously, I did not want to take it at first thinking he might figure it afterwards as in activity. Then I changed my mind. He did not say anything except spend it in good health. When I get back to a rescue and brag and spend some money, it will come in handy.

I did not get that registered letter of yours with the five or \$10 in it. Where in the name of heaven did you have to send it. You say you figure every cent before you have a good time. And then you send me money. Don't do it again.

The world must be coming to an end. Barnett Yamin is going to see it regular show like my time. Has he deserted the star? How can Fox get along without him?

Distance lends enchantment. I was not considered perfect when I was home common now you all seem to think me wonderful. Get that out of your head. I'm just the same. No different whatsoever. To prove it, at the first big town we stopped at, I will have my picture taken, and send it home.

You know we expect to go back. To a town or big city for a real rest. The fact is God in the powers that be are good to us we might each of us get a Seven-day furlough. We are long overdue. Can you picture me living in a hotel. In a regular The Top. gosh I'm proud of my company. I'm prouder of the second platoon. I don't think there is another bunch of men in the division like them. Even commanding officers are also proud of us.

**Word has just come down that we don't go up to the front for a long long time. We are all happy. We will surely get along guys.**

That will be about enough for today. Alright some more tomorrow. Love and kisses to all, regards to everybody regards to Blanche with dimples, and Florrie and the rest,  
harry

PS how did Sam like to go back to school?

**Letter to family from Harry; dated Aug 13<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Folks,

I suppose you would be a little worried. Not receiving any Mail from me for some time period the Lord only knows when I will be able to Mail this letter.

We have been moving. In fact we are still moving. So we have no place to Mail a letter. Also, I have not received a letter in over two weeks. So you can imagine how I feel. Or rather how I would feel if I received a letter right now.

For the last two weeks, all we have been doing is being on the move. For twenty-four hours we were in the cattle car. Thirty four in the car. You ought to have seen us sleep. I never thought I could twist myself into the shape of a pretzel, and sleep. I did. (notice I'm taking a chance writing on both sides of the paper) As I said before, I could do things since I joined the army, I never imagined I could do in civilian life.

When we detrained, we camped in a place for two days. Then we embarked on a truck driven **by China man. Some ride. At the end of the journey I looked like a miller. Dust.**

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<sup>16</sup> 306<sup>th</sup> moved to the Vesle Sector to relieve US 4<sup>th</sup> Division and French 62<sup>nd</sup> Division

The chink driver evidently thought I was one of them. He started talking Chinese to me. I tried to look as intelligent as possible. After he finished his sentence, I would look at him and say "Oui" "Ask Oui" or if I did not like what he said I would shake my head and say "no ". The chink seemed satisfied. You ought to have heard the gang of ruffians laugh. Never mind I had a good time.

Since then we have been bumming around. Hiking at night. Sleeping in the Woods. Serenaded by airplanes. Day time we dig a little hole and make a fire and boil some coffee. When we're not drilling.

That will be about all. Don't worry if you don't get any letters from me for about a couple of weeks, or even a month. I'm quite safe, but it takes time for Mail to get out of here. Love and kisses to all,

Harry

### Letter to Sister from Harry; dated Aug. 18<sup>th</sup>, 1918

Dear Sister,

<sup>17</sup>For the first time in over three weeks I received Mail today. One letter from you dated July 16<sup>th</sup> one from been dated July 27<sup>th</sup>. The last letter I received previous to that was July 3<sup>rd</sup>. So I suspect the post office owes me quite a bit of Mail. I suppose I'll receive them all in time.

I have no kick coming. Some of the fellows received no Mail at all. You know it is quite some job bringing the Mail up to us. The Bosch artillery has no respected offer any kind of transport, whether there is supply or Mail or anything else. Pardon me I overlooked one letter I received from you Mail July 28<sup>th</sup>. I hope miss Harris and the rest of these raincoat men get at least 20 years apiece. As you say it always seems as if the Jewish people do these kinds of things. Or at least the Jewish people are the ones who were caught.

Gosh Sam must be important now. Walking on night. I wonder how he likes the idea of going back to school. I have a slight hunch that he is not in love with the idea. Not with 12 Berry a week at stake. Seems sort of a shame they refused you and Sally's an advance. Don't worry you will get your money. If not at DC and company it will be somewhere else.

Today was sort of an eventful day. Besides getting about four letters, I received a package of 20 Nebo. that will be about all for today I'll try to have some kind of an order signed by Lieutenant for a watch, or rather the watch and some cigarettes. You cannot get to a decent watch here. There is nothing like an old Ingersoll. Don't look for the order in this envelope too hard. I'll try my best. In case you want to know I smoke Fatimas.

Harry

### Letter to Ben from Harry; dated Aug 18<sup>th</sup>, 1918

Dear Ben,

Just received a letter from you dated July 27<sup>th</sup>. There were a bunch of clippings and close. Boy, the clippings were well welcome. Almost as welcome as your letter. You sure do write businesslike letters. These clippings sure do bring me back to New York.

To think that things in New York are going along as usual, while we were about 4000 miles from anywhere, eating when we can, and ducking German shrapnel. God. Damn these Dutch.

You ought to see the beautiful little home I dug for myself, and you ought to see the great diving act I do when the big ones come over, as they do after suffered. It's quite safe though if

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<sup>17</sup> 306<sup>th</sup> is merging with the Oisne-Aisne Campaign

you stick in your hole. Don't forget to keep on with the clippings or newspapers or if possible magazines. I'd give anything for a Popular magazine.

About that MP matter. I surely am glad that it is settled. You can frame the note or throw it out. I don't care.

By the way a Sergeant went back to the states sometime ago. He happened to be a friend of mine. I asked him to tell telephone or look you up if possible. He might not have done so. He must be very busy. If you want to look him up. His address is either Sergeant or Lieutenant Jack stubble. 999 Green Ave blank New York

Each man in the company got a package if anybody would have told any of us a year ago that someday a package of cigarettes would be a treat us, we would have given him or her, the Merry "haha." But now we almost jump with joy when we get any kind of cigarette. Times sure do change. We are thankful for anything here.

That will be about enough for today. Some more when I get some of the back Mail from you, or rather I will write in a day or two anyhow.

Love and kisses to all and take care of yourself. Don't let the heat disturb you,

Your brother, Harry

PSI thank you very very much for the <sup>18</sup>little note book you sent me. It sure will come in handy

### **Letter to Minnie, Ben, and Family from Harry; dated Aug 19<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Minnie and Ben and All,

Today has been quite an eventful day. I received about 11 letters in one morning 3 from Ben one from miss Fay and the rest from my younger sister. I will not give the date of every letter, as it would take up too much space.

I apologize to miss Fay. Some time ago I received a letter note from the young lady which I answered. I could not make out the name, and when I answered the letter I addressed it to miss Fay gussman. Again I apologize And I promise to make it right just as soon as I could. You know it is pretty hard writing letters without writing paper, until we get back for a rest I will have to keep on borrowing of more fortunate ones, who happen to have some.

These clippings of ben's sure are welcome. We are having quite a party. After one is finished somebody else grabs them. Even the Lieutenant read them.

Thanks for the three snapshots you sent me. That group of three of you is surely nice. Everyone of you, yourself, Sally, and Florence. Sure looked great to me. The other two of yourself are very good also. Keep up the good work.

You do me too much on our part to think that your friends like my letters. I hereby give you permission to let any of your friends read any letter of mine you can lend them. If they can stand it, I certainly can.

There must certainly be wild times in New York. To think of 101st St giving a block dance. Will wonders ever cease. It sure must have been wonderful. I wish I could have seen it. You must have been in your glory.

I sympathize with you. I know what it means to be well sunburned. I've been there. Though the pain is gone still sympathy is sweet. I don't think you got much from Ben or the rest of the family.

I wish you luck with the wireless job. I don't think you will like it as well as you would Department store life. But it is up to you to do what you think best.

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<sup>18</sup> The notebook mentioned here is believed to be in collection

I have just finished my dinner, so, much refreshed I returned to the task of writing. In yesterday's letter to Ben I said something to the effect that we eat when we can. Don't mind that. There might have been a time when rations were short when we move. But just as soon as we settle down, and our rations start coming up, we make up for former shortages. I had some dinner today.

Ben mentioned something to the effect if I need any money to let you know, and you'll send it. At the present moment money is of absolutely no use to me. We have no place to spend it. When we get out of here will probably make up for it. I still have my last month's pay coming to me. So I reckon I'll make out alright. If I'll be a little short on borrow some. Don't worry on that score.

As to myself, I don't know what to write. Needless to say I'm well, and I'm heeding your advice in every letter, to take care of myself. I'm following that advice religiously.

I really have nothing else to write about today. That's like blank is to leave any paper blank. I'll try to fill it up in spite of it all. Of course, can't right where we are now. This much I'll say. We are in a part of France that you had been reading about, not too long ago. The Woods where we are **blank** has seen quite some fighting. **The Germans are a long distance away, we find some reminders of the fights here once in awhile. Some of the reminders are rather grisly. Some of them are rather pathetic. We found a letter written by a German girl to her sweetheart.**

That's really all I can write. Give my regards to everybody. Take care of yourself. Love and kisses to all,  
your brother,  
Harry

PS here's something funny when we were with the English, a fellow from the 308<sup>th</sup> wrote home like this, "they feed us so much cheese that I have to keep my mouth closed at night to keep the rats out. "

### **Letter to Harry from Lillie; not dated**

Dear Harry,

I wish you come home I miss you so much everyday. I think of you and say to Mama do you wish that Harry comes home? Mama says that if you come home she will buy everything as long as you come home. everybody wants you to come home and you do want to come home and see Mama and everybody lots of love and kisses,  
from Lillie XXXXXX

### **Letter to Harry from Lillie; not dated**

Dear Harry,

I am in the best of health and wish to hear the same from you. Every day I am thinking of you and I am going to try to eat and be fat and nice and have red cheeks so Mamma will like me and so will everybody like me.

Your sister,

Lillie Yamin

PS Take good care of yourself lots of love and kisses from all. Do you know that I am in the three A and got an A on my report card? Wish every day for you to come home

Your little sister,

Lillie XXX

**Letter to Ben from Harry; dated Aug 21<sup>st</sup>, 1918**

Dear Ben,

A thought has just struck me, and I hate to put it down on paper and send it to you. Here it is.

I've been after my commanding officer for in order to let you people send me a watch, and some cigarettes. It can't be done. It has to go up to the Colonel, and for it to be from me to trouble the Colonel, for anything so unimportant (in his estimation of cigarettes.)

I found out that you could go up to Wanamaker's in order anything you want, and in the course of time (very long time) they would send it to me through their Paris store.

So if you could go up, and make inquiries about sending me about 500 Fatima cigarettes, an Ingersoll watch, and perhaps several bars of very hard chocolate.

That stuff would be worth more to me than money. These days money is of no use to me at all. If I had 1000 francs I could not spend Cent. In An almost happy state of affairs outside of that I'm perfectly alright.

Regards to all and take care of yourself,  
Harry

**Letter to Minnie from Harry; dated Aug 25<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Minnie,

Much to all our joy, we are out of the lines. We left the lines last night, and we're now due for a nice long rest. God knows we need it. A little longer and all of us would have gone nuts. Well it's all over now, for a long time.

The first thing that has happened and we reached a nice quiet place, was when I received three letters from you. One of them contains some pictures you had taken at Central Park. Gosh, Lily sure looks like a little doll. She sure must be getting prettier everyday as you said in one of your letters. I showed her pictures too some of my friends. One of the fellows said, "I bet she's a regular little devil." I leave it to you to say whether he is right. Personally I think he is. The devil was the nearest thing to an Angel that I know of.

I also received two Colliers magazines. The mystery is, who sent them to me. I'll probably solve the mystery someday. The point is that if someone can send Colliers, perhaps ben can get a couple of popular through. When Ben has nothing to do might call up St Smith, the publishers. They might get some through.

You know, I don't want to make a nuisance of myself, but next to cigarettes, something to read would be most appreciated by me. Perhaps a little more. Try it.

Oh yes, we got paid today. Still get 106 Francs a month. That makes a little over 78 in real money. What good the money is to me, is more than I know. Nothing to buy, and no place to buy it. There's a dandy little crap game going on. I never knew how to shoot crap, but still the game reminds me of the good old days of camp Upton, where the fellows got paid one day, and had to borrow money for car fare home the next day. The way you hear them talk. You know, "who has change of 100." You would think they meant regular money, instead of Frank's. That was some paragraph I just finished.

Our commanding officer has managed to get some regular Fatima cigarettes. He bought them for the fellows, and then gave the men a chance to buy them. Just one pack to a man. Needless to say he had plenty of customers. I was there with my half a frame clutched firmly in

my right hand. I defy anyone to Get Me Out of that line. You know I don't think anymore of Fatimas then I would have a nice big hunk of Apple pie right now.

You want to know whether I think your letter writing is improving any. You know what I wrote a half dozen times, in my opinion your letter writing does not need any improvement. I think they're perfect. Let the rest of the family say what they want to. if Ben or Sam or Leo can do any better, let them go ahead. You keep on in your own way.

What else can I write about. You ought to see the country, or rather the part of the country we are in now. They sure did knock the holy stuffing out of the towns around here. The Germans and French, but especially the Americans. You know when the Germans were in a town, the French would try to capture the town with infantry. They would say "save the town." The American say "to hell with the town." Then the artillery would proceed to play "hail Columbia" with that town. That is the proper way, in my humble judgment. It saves the infantry.

There sure has been a lot of fighting around here. But the Germans have left this part of the country. They are in a hurry, with our boys helping them along. Fritz is miles away by now. They will be going again right soon.

Gee, I haven't seen a woman, girl, or child now and weeks. Not even a man dressed in civilian I will not feel as if I am in a civilization till I see a woman or child. You know I missed them. That's all I can think of to write about myself. Oh yes. You know many, the Mail happens to be delayed once in a while. When we move from one place to another period so don't worry when you don't receive any Mail for me for a week or so. For instance, for the last couple of weeks it's been hard to get envelopes. Somehow or other we could not get any. So, as I said if you don't get a letter for a week or so, don't worry and don't let Mama worry. I'm quite safe, and intend to stay so. No Bosch will ever get me. I have too much self respect to let friends get the best of me. Besides we have moved a long way from the line. That's all.

I have just received another letter from you, dated July 24th. The post office works backwards here. I hope blank blank does not feel bad after that batch. It saved her a trip to Coney Island. Besides not at the pleasure she gave the onlookers. Never mind I sure do sympathize with her.

There is a fellow trying to get one of my Fatimas. Fat chance. So they have opened the blank Ave subway without waiting for one I expected to see that. It's getting dark now I'll write another letter tomorrow

Love,  
Harry

### **Letter to Family from Harry; dated Aug 27<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear folks,

Tomorrow has come, and I'm writing again, for no reason whatsoever. I have absolutely nothing to write about. I'm enclosing this part of the letter in the same envelope teacher will make a long letter. Lieutenant Will sure bless me.

As I wrote in the last letter I had always set my mind on being there for the opening of the new subway. I'm mad. I have a good notion not to ride on it when I get back. To get even. Add that, I see how I'll change my mind.

I wonder if they had fixed up Lexington Ave and Broadway. As I remember, these two avenues used to look like one of the towns around here after the French, Americans, and Germans have finished playing with it. Harlem sure is getting swell.

Did I ever tell you that I received the three pictures you sent me. They sure are nice. You're right to tell Florence to put her stockings on. I forgot there ever was such a place as Coney Island, and Central Park. Thanks for reminding me.

We had a lovely night. The last one. We had no tent or blankets, I went to sleep on the ground, and was comfortable. Covered myself with my overcoat, and put my short coat and blouse around my feet. We had all kinds of styles around here. Well it started raining during the night. I just put my overcoat around my head, and said "let 'er rain". That's what we care for the elements around here.

My side partner had just come in, and we had received our stuff, so we have our tents pitched, so we snap our fingers at the elements.

I welcome this partner with open arms. Somewhere in this travel he had managed to discover a couple of boxes of sardines, and other things to eat. Leave it to Company B. I had wandered into a YMCA and asked for writing paper. He gave me 2 sheets into envelopes. Then he asked me to put a big batch of it on the table. Evidently he did not know Company B. We have sure taking ways. So I have plenty of envelopes, and tomorrow I'll write another history. History of nothing. I had better clothes for as I have about 16 letters to write.

I sure do hope you get advanced. You deserve it. Tell your manager, I advise him to give it to you. Otherwise he might use one of his most trusted help.

Love and kisses to all. Send me any other little snapshot you take. Give my regards to your apartment girls,  
You are brother,  
Harry

### **Letter to family; dated Aug 28<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear folks,

Here I am again. After only two days I'm sending you another letter. That only shows that I write when I have a chance.

I haven't got much time to write it in, because there is a formation soon. Pardon the dirt on the paper. I'm saving up for Uncle Sam. No use throwing away is she of paper just because it happens to be dirty. Also, I have no ink. **Ink is a scarce here as in Irishman in a synagogue. We're way back the line, doing squad North, and South. Pretty busy all day. Still it's better than ducking messages of affection from the Germans.**

They brought us into a Woods about a million miles from a town, and said to us "here, have a good time." the funny part of it is, that all of us have money and no place to spend it. Ouch world.

You ought to see our place, where we sleep. Five of us have put our tents together, and have a big family tent. It's swell.

I have no more news to write about myself, so now we will go to you folks. Congratulate Papa on his advance in salary. It comes in handy I imagine. Now all you have to do is get an advance, and you will be even with them.

You say you and Lily Visited Rosie Greenshaw's sister in the Bronx. Also that Lily invited them but was too game to admit it. Then you say will not move till I come home. Why? In the name of all that's beautiful, why? Don't you do anything without me? You can move Uptown or to Brooklyn without me. The MP matter is out of your minds now. Besides look at the enjoyment I'll get coming back to a decent neighborhood. You and Ben can take care of it.

You to furnish to taste and Ben the hard business sense. I guess that will be enough for today. It's almost formation time. I'm tired, I just had my hair manicured. The first time in months. Give my regards to everybody and take care of yourselves. Love and kisses to all,  
Harry

### **Letter to Family from Harry; dated Aug 29<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear folks,

Another day has passed, since I wrote the last letter. Still in the same place. We have quite an easy day today. Only about one hour of squad East and West. We had the morning off. He ought to have seen all the clothes I washed. In fact I had a general cleaning out. The Lord knows I needed it.

Last night the YMCA man gave us a lecture. He sure could speak. He told us how wonderful we are. How proud we ought to be. On account of being Americans. We almost believed him. He told us also how proud the people back home are of us. Then he told us some jokes. They were a drill old, but they were good. Or at least they sounded good to us.

I really don't know what else to write about. I guess I'll have to close till tomorrow. By then I might have thought of something else to write about.

Regards to everybody love and kisses to all,  
Harry

### **Letter to Sister and family; dated Sept 2<sup>nd</sup> 1918**

Dear Sister and folks,

I received four letters from you, and one from Ben. I was very glad to get them. Sorry I could not answer them at once, but I was on the move. As usual. Join the army and see the world.

I sure do hope that the bill in Congress for the new draft does not pass. If it does, the wisest thing been you could do, would be to enlist in the Navy as a Yeoman. If not as Yeoman, then get in the Navy anyhow. If they are taking enlistment.

Yes, Mama has darn site more than her share of trouble. But listen Minnie that can't last forever. Better days are coming and coming soon. The way we were handing it to the Germans, the war can't last much longer. So cheer up.

Yes, I have given up my pet idea of moving. Especially now, when momma is worried about Ben. As I said before better days are on the way.

Here's something funny. I received a letter from somebody in the MSN company he said "when you see the signature on this letter, you will faint with surprise." I looked at the bottom of the letter come on and he had forgot to sign it. Can you imagine my expression? I have an idea it was Jack Sheldon. I believe Albert Smith has been put in the 4th class. On account of support of his mother.

I have only seen Jack once in this country. Last night my company was moving, and Jack's company was moving. We passed each other in the dark, about a quarter of a mile apart. Just too far apart to talk to each other. That is tough, but it is the army.

I have just received a letter from **David Ginzberg**. He does not say much, but only that he was an action. I don't think it was much action. His address is Co D 108th infantry AEF.

I saw already Sheldon only once in this country I don't think he is far from where I am, but I can't place him. He is probably doing the same. Trying to locate me.

There is no way of sending me any money. There is no place to spend it here, and I would not know what to buy now. I have been away from civilization so long.

Just as soon as we go in for a rest to some town, I will try and have my picture taken, and send it to you. At present I can't. **The only town around here are deserted ruins.** Cigarettes are worth more than money to me. We do get cigarettes once in a while. Bull Durham we get quite often, so I am not as bad off as I sound.

I received two Colliers magazines. That made me think we are not so far from home. Did you see my letter asking for the popular magazine? If you subscribe to it, I think they might get it through. I hope I am not making a nuisance of myself asking too much.

On one of your letters you say enclosed you will find a few lines from a few of my girlfriends, and inside was one note from **miss Faye blank.** I'd like to meet that young lady. She wrote a nice letter. I'll answer it tomorrow.

That will be about enough for tonight. I haven't got my tent fixed yet.

More tomorrow,

yours,

Harry

PS I just mailed to Ben a copy of Stars and Stripes. Our official newspaper. Published in Paris. I hope you like it

### **Letter to family from Harry; Dated Sept 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1918**

Dear folks,

**Another day has passed, another day digging gone by. I did not do much digging. Being Corporal has advantages. Not many but a few. As a matter of fact the rest of the boys did not do a lot of work. Being all the way back, is not the same as being up at the front and digging for shelters.**

Gosh I had my tent pitched in everything fine, when, bang, my tent mat was sent away, and I have a half a tent on my hands. I'll have to hunt for a new partner now but we can't help ourselves.

What else can I write about? There are rumors galore. We expect to go back for a long rest. We might even be able to get a bath, where we're going. I don't know what a good bath feels like. If we go near town, I'll probably be able to take pictures and send them to you. You seem to want it very much. I don't know why.

I just received a note from Spencer's brother, who is working in the post office. He just writes a few words. Not saying much.

My old partner is away at school, and I miss him very much. Especially his singing. He sure does harmonize fine. When I start singing he puts a blanket over my face. I usually take the hint.

There are a bunch of corporals have been made. I still retain my old job. I am a veteran now. An old timer, so to speak. Wait till we get back to a real rest camp. I imagine there will be a bunch of new men, in a lot of change in this company.

Pretty near five months we are over here. In fact it is five months. Imagine it almost six months this since I saw you folks last. Are you folks much changed? I hope not. Hope I find you the same when I get back. I like to have almost forgot. Yesterday was Labor Day. Every day is Labor Day in the army. Today the company received from the YMCA two boxes of caramels for each man. We paid half a franc apiece for them. We sure were glad to get them.

That's about all I can think of just now. So I will have to bid you goodnight. Take good care of yourselves and give my regards to everybody. Don't forget the fifteen year old Packer of yours. The one who got away with a three o'clock pass. I can appreciate a thing like that.

Love and kisses to all,

Harry

PS did you folks get my souvenirs yet? The scarf and handkerchief I sent you

Harry

### **Letter to Family from Harry; dated Sept 12, 1918**

Dear folks,

Another day has passed and another letter on the way. Not a darn thing to do. We are all packed up waiting to move any minute. Don't know where we're going but we are on the way. And a good place I think it will be.

The gang is laying around playing cards. Sound stiff game it is. I'm glad I don't know anything About parachuted it's been raining for the last couple of days. Reminds me of the good old days up North. The sun has just come out, and it looks as if it might turn nice after a while. I don't guess we'll move today **blank** out six o'clock. Rifles must be polished and everything. Wagons and trucks coming in every minute. Trucks mostly. I wonder if they are going to take our sector. I hope they are.

I see that the new draft bill has passed I wonder what Ben is going to do, let me know at once. That's useless, I know you will you will anyhow. Have not received and answered a letter from our cousin Ben down at Newport News. He asked for news of good old France. Say Ben. Will you send me clippings about the 77th division I'd like to know what New York thinks of us. We think of ourselves. In fact we think we are very good. In one of Ben's letters I found his old registration card. I'm sending it back in this letter.

That's enough for today as I have to clean my rifle.

Many many kisses, and much regards from,

Harry

### **Letter to Sister from Harry; dated Sept 15<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Sis,

Sunday. The days come and they go, and I don't know which is which. I just found out the day, and date. I also think today is Yom Kipper. I'm not doing much fasting. Nor feasting either.

**Roshashona** has gone by. General Pershing's order was All men were allowed a pass to town, if it does not intervene with your military duties. As it happens, we were in a town nearby, but there was not a whole building left in the place. So what's the use.

At present we are in a wood. Having a great time. Found an old stove and have started a fire. Then we commandeered some bread (don't ask where) also some fat. Dip the bread in the fat and toast it till it's nice and brown, and put a little sugar on it. Try it but use white bread. It's fine. Al Shire has been elected cook. He reminds me of the times you used to cook **lotkes**.

Guess after I finish this letter I'll go down and see if I could find a spring and take a bath. Three of us slept in the same tent last night. A tent made for two. Warfield, Toon, and myself. Toon happened to be our Sergeant and is going to read and censor this letter. I've got to treat him with respect.

Last night the three of us argued about everything under the sun. Including vaudeville, and books. Then all night we argued about the covers. The blankets were made for two, and three were under them. We had a perfectly good time.

I wonder what old boy Bill thinks of the American army. I think we are showing him a thing or two. Capturing their men by thousands. I'd like to be in New York after each and every victory news comes in. I think the city must go wild.

Warfield just looked at this letter and wants me to tell you that I treat him with respect also. He's just been made sergeant also. In fact, I'm the only common corporal in the tent. Still it makes no difference, we have been palling around together for quite a while, so I don't mind their lowering themselves and becoming sergeants.

As for the rest we are going somewhere. Don't know where but we know it's for a long rest. It's good to be out of range of the old whizz bangs.

Love and kisses to all. Kiss Lillie about a dozen times for me. Give my regards to all your friends, especially Blanche with the dimples, and Florrie.

Your brother,

Harry.

### **Letter to family from Harry with a second attached written three days later; dated Sept 16<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Folks,

In yesterday's letter I said that it was Yom Kippur. My error today is Yom Kippur. I'm not doing a lot of fasting today.

Last night we had a service in the Catholic Church. In the deserted village nearby. It is good to be reminded once in a while that you were still a Jew. The Jewish rabbi of the division conducted the service.

He read part of the service out of the Bible. Then he made a speech, telling us to be true to our faith, true to ourselves. Then he said a prayer for his, and for those who did. Marcy Weinberg, the assistant leader of our band played "Kolnidro" On his clarinet. He played it wonderful. Then we dispersed quietly, for another year.

It almost reminded me of the days we used to go to the synagogue on the West side. This was so different. We had to go down to service, with our arms. Some with rifle. I went with a revolver. The services were held in a church. After the service the rabbi got into a Ford and drove down to another regiment. Wineberg had to go down to the band and play for a show. I went back to my tent. I felt too pious to go and see the show. I Went back and made the bed for the three of us. Lighted a candle and read the stars and stripes till the other two came back.

I have just received the \$5 you sent me on August 8th it will come in handy, as we are going to a big town for a rest. If our dreams come true, we might get a Seven day furlough period so I'll need that money. But don't send me anymore money. I won't need it by the time we leave this place we should expect to go to.

As I'm writing this letter on an improvised table, well on the other end of the same table, blank is studying bugs, in the interest of science. How can I write. We have discovered more variety of bugs in this place, then I thought existed in the whole world. All sizes, all shapes, colors, and shades, none of them could beat the old cooties. All you could see as a fellow is reading their shirts. Picking them off. On for a good gasoline bath. There is one thing we can say

since we left the lines. Yesterday and today we have been able to buy plenty of cigarettes. All we could in fact. For months we might not have a cigarette to our name. Then the scene changes and we get plenty. In other words it's either a feast or famine.

The YMCA man has just sold us a quarter bar of chocolate, and a half dozen biscuits. That's all we could get. Not much, but my dear, it tasted fine. That's the benefit of army life. The least little thing seems good to us. I have made up my mind to finish these eight pages. I don't know what I'll put in it.

What's Ben doing these days? The new draft law has been passed. I sure do hope he does not get into the army. With his qualifications, he ought to be able to get something better than his brother has got. The army is alright, and a fine Corporal might get a lot of credit when he gets back, but if I had it to do all over again, I jump into the Navy at the first crack. My idea is that they have a cinch compared to us.

I have just discovered a new variety of beetle. I have never seen it before. When else can I write about now I'm about all written dry.

I write you many, that one of our boys is **blank** for a DSC Distinguished Service Cross. A Jewish lad by the name of **blank**. He looks like a kid but has two kids home. I can't say how he distinguished himself, but he did. Co. B always on top.

The Mail is like everything in the army. You might not get any for over a week or two, and then you get a dozen. I have not received any for a week. We are on the moon.

Love and kisses to everybody,

Harry

PS now I have to go scouting for an envelope.

Dear Folks,

<sup>19</sup>Change of scene. Three days have passed since the above was written. We are now in a field miles and miles away from the place where I end the above immortal lines. That night, as the movie say, we embarked on a motor lorries or trucks and we traveled for a full night, and the greater part of the next day. The lorries were meant to hold about fifteen men comfortably so naturally we were put twenty four in each one. It sure was one trip. It is raining blue blazes. I am in the tent riding this. Or field is laying next to me riding also. Toon is out looking for lamb chops. He thinks he knows a place where he can get some.

We are in a little village. You can imagine how good it was to see women and children and stores again after this strain of the last couple of months. You ought to have seen our fellows when we hit this place. They went out for a wild time. Started to buy out the town. And drink. You ought to have seen the bunch. Even went out with a bunch scouting for beer. None in the town, but we found some. I did not get drunk though. I'll bet you folks think that we're all an awful lot of bums. We're not. When a bunch of young fellows are kept away from civilization as long as we have why when they get back they have to do something. So you and your friends don't judge us too harshly. I am still a high-minded young man. Three cheers.

Most highly beloved, our hopes of a Seven-day furlough have gone glimmering for a while. We will get a rest but no furlough.

Sister Minnie, Don't kid yourself. I might get 100 letters from some other folks, but the letters I get from home are the ones I am always on the lookout for. And if you keep on telling me that you will cut down on my letters, I will be sure. So cut out that stuff Minnie dear.

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<sup>19</sup> 306<sup>th</sup> moves to Foret-d Argonne Sector to prepare for the Meuse Argonne Offensive and merge with that campaign

Two of Dave's friends have just come in, and the tent is definitely crowded. Besides I have no more paper. I'll fill up this page. Here's a little bad news. I wonder if I wrote you about it. You have a picture home of Jack, myself, in a pal of mine, Al Miller. Al had his hand almost blown off. You can imagine how I felt when I heard it. One of the best fellows in the company.

Give my regards to everybody. Love, and lots, and lots of kisses to you, and the rest of the family.

Harry

PS keep on writing, and forget about that stuff of getting somebody else to write for you. I'd like others to write, but you keep on writing

### **Partial letter pages 3, 4, 5; no date**

...We were going, and we did not care very much.

Well my children, it was some walk. You know in the city if we walked five miles, we go around talking about it for weeks afterward. That day we walked over 20 miles. It seemed like fifty-two to us.

It sure was hot. The sun blazing over us, as we plotted on. At first we did not mind the walk. That is, when we started out. After, the first rest we began to mind it very much. To make a short story long, before we had finished the first half a day the packs weighed a ton, and the shoes a half a ton piece someone dropped out, but they joined us later on, when we stopped for dinner. Our kitchen was with us you know. We stopped for dinner for a couple of hours. Then continued on. The afternoon was just as bad.

About 5:00 o'clock we were told where we were going. We were to have a mini war. We were to hold a trench, and some British troops would try to capture it. About 2:00 o'clock we arrived at our trench. Maybe I was not tired, I just sat down, leaned my back on the softest rock I could find in fell asleep. We were there a couple of days.

The days were swell laying in the parapet all day. Internet put me in charge of a small section of the trench. I felt like a general. There was nothing to do at all. In all the time we were there we did not see an enemy.

One night about 1:00 o'clock we saw a German air raid. It was the greatest song I ever saw. About a dozen searching lights playing up at the Sky. Once in a while a couple of searchlights would pick one of the airships out, but only to lose it again.

All that time guns were firing up at them. You could hear them Bang away at them. I would like to tell you how it came out. Between you and me, I fell asleep in the middle of the excitement.

### **Letter to Mother from Harry with letter to Lillian attached; dated Sept 25<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Mom,

<sup>20</sup>I have just received your letter and was glad to get it. I was sorry not to be able to read it. But I got somebody to read it for me. Also, I'm sorry not to be able to write you in Jewish, but Minnie will read it to you.

Dear mom, I surely am glad that you liked the handkerchief I sent you. If I could get something else, I'd send you, but I can't at present.

You are not praying for my return more than I am to get back and see you all again. Above all mom, don't worry about me. I was always able to take care of myself. I don't think this world will last much longer. In fact I don't think Ben will even be called.

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<sup>20</sup> Written day before the Meuse Argonne attack was made and drop pack orders were given on this day to prepare

Regards to Papa and the kids. Lots and lots of kisses,  
Harry

Dear Lillian,

How are you? I hope you were a good little girl. I hope you eat what momma gives you. I am thinking of you everyday.

Lots and lots of kisses, your brother,

Harry

### **Letter to Ben from Harry; dated Sept 25<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Ben,

I have just received 2 letters from you, with enclosed clippings. Thanks old man. They are good. It feels good to read of the shows in old New York. I missed them. I haven't heard from New York for about 2 weeks previous. I'm glad to hear that Jack Stubble wrote to you, I hope you thanked him kindly. We're having a **noncom** meeting at present so

Take care of yourself,

Harry

### **Letter to Sister from Harry; dated Sept 25<sup>th</sup>, 1918**

Dear Sister,

I've just received a batch of Mail. I'm just sitting down and answering them all. First and foremost, of course come yours. Because you see sister mine, I might get 100 letters from different people, but the ones I look forward to, and read first of all, and then read over and over again, are the letters of a poor misguided Corporal sister, by the name of Minnie Yamin.

I started to write a couple of hours ago, but my friend to me soon had just received some pictures from home, and if there is one thing under the sun I do like, is to look at pictures from the old USA. I'm glad to hear that you received the scarf I sent you. It's called a scarf, and not a shawl. You need not worry about what it costs. I can assure you, that it costs about 1/10 of what it would cost in New York. Another thing my dear. There is not another thing in this sunny land of France, I'd rather spend money for then little presents for you and the rest of the folks at home. Also, I can assure you that if I ever get into a decent little town again, with some decent stores, I'll send you and Mama, and Lily some more souvenirs and I defy you to stop me. That just let you know where I stand. It is seldom you find a sister who will sit down and write a letter every day, no matter how tired she is.

So old boy Jack Stubble has written a Postal to you, saying I'm alright. I sure am glad to hear that he remembered me enough to write to you. You wanted to invite him to the house but you did not think it alright. You need not have worried. It would have been perfectly alright. I've known Jack a long time, and he **blank blank blank**. He probably would not have gone up, as he only had a short time in the city. He was sent back as an instructor, and is coming back with a different outfit.

I'm writing a short note to **miss blank** comma thanking her for her Kindness to you folks, and for her prayers for me. I hope **Mr. blank** from Canada had a good time in New York.

Well unfold again. We thought we were going for a rest. **We were on the way already, and the orders were changed, and here we are. In the lines again.** Gee but this is quite a line. Nothing doing at all. It's like rest cure. We were making all kinds of plans, but they were changed all of a sudden. I am beginning to realize more and more that I am in the army. Never

mind someday all for them and be able to go home. I've just received some letters from some friends of yours Florence Gordon Sally and Dorothy. I am going to answer them.

Did I say sunny France? It's been raining for the last month. This place where I am writing looks like a library. Three of us writing in one little dugout.

You say you received one letter for me that was too sad, and another one that was cheerful. Don't mind the sad one. Once in a while a fellow gets kind of blue when he starts thinking. But that passes, after a while. Usually I'm cheerful as I can be. Ask Dave Warfield. He might tell you. That's about all I can write about now some more soon,  
Your brother,  
Harry

### **Postcard from Minnie to Harry; no date assumed returned**

Front:

BEST WISHES

We simply wait from day to day to hear the latest news, We hope you'll win a victory and never have the blues.

Back (personal note):

Our best wishes for your safe return.

All,

Minnie

### **Letter to Harry from cousin Isidor Yamin; dated Oct 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1918**

Dearest cousin,

Received your letter this morning was very glad to hear from you. I am in good health hope you are the same. I also received your blank with the song. But I am very sorry I Can't Sing, I lost my voice looking at the good looking girls. Sergeant young he is an old fellow and I want to have some fun with him. He is 45 years of age we are still under our canteen. Done when I get off. Well I lament much news at present will write to you more in the next letter. Will you blank everything in New York city tell some nice girlfriend to write to me. I am like to have a girlfriend to keep company. Now don't get jealous. Tell some girlfriend to write to a good looking soldier my blank he likes to get a girlfriend. Now don't you write to him because I will be jealous. His name private **Jay Blank** Co L 22nd infantry Fort Jay New York.

Tell him who gave the address. He is letter looking And I am the same built to look like brothers. He will close Fort the president hoping to see you soon. Would like to give a kiss but it is too far away. Don't get mad. Because I said that.

From your cousin,

Isidor Yamin

Co L 22nd US infantry

**Notebook from Brother Ben that was in Harry's possession**

**PG 1:**

Rife Inspection auto “ “

Carriers and Maga

Fromblone

Res Rations

100 Amm.

1 Bandalier

Blank blank inspect,

Every man a panel of some sand. Each gang leader a wise caller combat pack with Res Rations

blank line blurred

**PG 2**

Every man to get rid of all personal effects

every man blank too blank

Rifleman 4

**PG 3**

2nd Gang

Mamello

Brosky

Maier

Jannacillo

Clare

Clark

Cook

Bonnano 8

Shire 10

Resnick 5

Ike 5

Toon 27

Sergeant Al Miller

American Red Cross Hospital no. 1

