

Base Ordnance Depot #1,
U.S.A.P.O. #701,
American Ex. Forces,
France.

December 5, 1918.

Dear cousin Will:

I received your letter of November twelfth night before last. It came just at a time when I was well prepared to read it. As I had a class in English at the Y.M.C.A. that evening, I did not wait at the office until the mail came in. I had finished my class, gone to the barracks and laid down on my bunk, and was reading Bob Ingersol's speech that caused the nomination of James G. Blaine when one of the fellows brought me your letter. One reason why it came at a very opportune time, was because I had just finished reading his speech on "Why I am a Republican". The reasons he gave for being a Republican were the same reasons I had always had for being a Democrat. This is why it did me good to get a letter from a real Greene County Democrat at that time.

Well, both men and material are beginning to turn back to the States, and it is good to see them starting. An artillery regiment started back a few mornings ago that had been here only about three or four weeks. The band was playing "Home Sweet Home" as they started down the street, and it never sounded half so good to me before. A few batteries have already come in on their way back. It is making a busy time with us as we are unloading so much material now – both heavy and light. I have scarcely had my head out of the car record books this week. We are handling a lot of Howitzers and tractors. I would like to pick my father out a nice little caterpillar tractor for farm use. Those machines can travel anywhere one of our gray mules could walk, I believe. I wonder whether the Government will not sell some of them to the farmers when they are taken back to the States. They are plowing ditches to drain the water off the road in front of the office now with one of the large ones. Deep mud seems to be no hindrance to its speed.

Yes, you do not need to caution me or very few other fellows on this side to "come back as soon as possible!" We are all waiting for peace to be signed, then just as fast as Uncle Sam will furnish boats and let us go we will be going back to the States. I do not expect to be one of the first to go back. We are just now beginning to work in earnest. The only difference is that it will be passing thru here in the other direction, and in not quite such good condition and as well packed as when we handled it before.

There, I was interrupted and almost two hours have elapsed. Evening mess is over, car reports finished, and nothing to do but walk about three-quarters of a mile to the barracks and sleep until morning – the same thing every day. However, I may go to the Y.M.C.A. as someone told me Margaret Wilson is to sing there this evening. We have Movies or some other form of entertainment there every evening – most of them are good.

I enjoy the work I am doing here at the Depot. It is very interesting work and gives me a good business experience – something, I never had very much of. If I had the same work in civilian life in the States I would not care how long it might last. Of course, I mean with little increase in salary. As a financial proposition, Morgan beat me out in choosing a branch of the service. I had a slight increase in rank and money a few days ago – a promotion to a First Class Private. I had been expecting more, and was somewhat disappointed in receiving it. I had been told that I was holding down a job for which the person usually had the rank of sergeant. But, those disappointments come in the Army the same as in

civilian life.

I have not had any mail for a few days with the exception of your letter. I sort of lose enthusiasm in writing when I am not receiving. I have had mail from home mailed almost a week later than your letter. I received it three or four days before I received the letter from you.

I was mighty sorry to hear of several deaths of persons from that community – both the ones occurring over here and the ones from influenza there.

I was wondering myself about that “Super-Six”. I have been trying to decide whether she was going with the car or the fellow. She often mentions the car without even referring to the fellow.

Sorry not to be able to go hunting with you and Uncle Mike. I will go with you next time.

You spoke of the big time you had when you heard the news of the signing of the armistice. I will never forget the forenoon after the signing. Whistles and bells! Four engines went by the warehouse at a snail’s pace, emitting steam from every valve and screaming until your ear-drums tickled. Then, just simply to try to realize that such a war could be over and that we might soon have peace again, were things that made you wonder whether it might not be some dream. It seemed almost impossible for a nation to be a World Power one day and doing the biddings of those nations she defied the next. Such seems to have been Germany's lot.

We are having plenty of rain but no cold weather. We had three or four days cold enough to freeze ice, but outside of that it has been very moderate. I never saw so much mud before, though. We have the advantage of having rubber boots that come to our hips. Sometimes we need them that high. A little Swedish fellow who does the outside work of checking cars went in over the top of his a few days ago. I guess he stepped into a hole. The fellows accused him of falling into a latrine.

I hope the influenza is better by this time. I have been hoping to hear of its being under control.

There is not much to this letter, but quite a lot of it. Will close and get up the the [*sic*] barracks.

As ever,
Guy [signed]

O.K.

1st Lieut., U.S.A.