

EVACUATION HOSPITAL "2 USA

Amer E F Coblenz, Germany.

31 January 1919.

My Dearest:-

There are a lot of new rumors in the air this morning about our departure, and if they are true or any where near true, we will be on the way before very long. However, as I have said before, I will believe that we are going to go only when we are on the train and really on the way. That may not be as long ahead of us as we think though, and I may be back with you in a comparatively short time. The report that we have now is a little more than a rumor, and there may really be something to it. I can't tell you how I hope so, although I am trying to be a little more contented with the lot that has befallen me, and regard this trip to Germany as an honor and a treat rather than a hardship. It surely has been a lot of hard work for me, but that has done me no harm.

I am going to try to come out of this army without a complaint. I know that there is going to be a lot of it from everyone, but I want to be different, and will forget as soon as I am able all the complaints that I feel I have a right to make. There have been many things that have seemed unfair to me, but all things considered the wonder is that we had an army at all, and if it was raised and trained a little different than I would have done it, it should satisfy everyone after all as it has accomplished what it was intended to accomplish, and what else is necessary? So I am going to be satisfied that I have done what the army required of me without any personal feelings at all as to whether I have been treated fairly or not. I am not going to be a kicker. It doesn't pay.

I stayed at home last night with Dempsey, and we had a quiet and interesting evening playing the piano and playing the solitaire game of Napoleon. That game has been a favorite with us ever since I taught it to the others. They all agree that it is the best game of Solitaire that has ever been invented, and we have a lot of fun playing it. We rarely lose a game, and I am now convinced that your father was right when he used to say that nearly every game could be won if you gave it sufficient time and thought. Do you remember how much interested Dave was

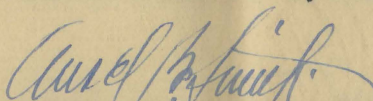
in it the night that I showed him the game at our house? I have often thought of it. I will be so glad to be back home again to be with the friends that I have not seen for so long, and of whom I think so much. It is hard to be away so long, but when it is all over I will be pleased with myself and with you. We will never regret it. I know that some of the men who entered the service will not suffer at all from the loss of business and income for they go right back on salaries, whereas I will have to start all over again, and build up my practice, but I will be very much surprised if it doesn't react very much in my favor in time. I am sure that it will not take long nor will it be hard to get the same amount of business that I had before I entered the service, and if that surmise proves to be true, what I have lost will not make any difference. I will only regret the years of companionship that I have missed with you and the babies, and that can't be helped. We will make up for it with a vengeance however if I am not mistaken. How about it Dear?

Tomorrow is the first day of February. It has been nearly two months since we arrived in Coblenz. It hardly seems that long, I guess because we have been so busy. When one is busy the time goes much faster. It surely will not be more than two months more when we will receive our orders to leave. I am reasonably certain of that. I can hardly wait for the welcome news to come. It will be the best news I have ever received except the news of the Armistice, for we must not forget that we all expected that this war would last for at least two or three years when I came over here. I tell you Dearest we have a lot to be thankful for after all, and we must not forget it when we are blue because I do not get my orders home.

Just one year ago last night we were in Paris, during the first air raid that had been conducted by the Germans against Paris for two years. It was a most exciting night and our most interesting and exciting view of real war up to that time. We had a lot of it after that however. A year ago today we were getting off the train in the mud at Bazoilles, a little town on the Marne near Neufchateau, and we sure had a great experience there. It was the first real hard work we did over on this side, and we learned to hate that place most cordially before we got away from

it. It waathere that we had all our experience building barracks and sewers, and water systems, and doing electric wiring. We were at it all during the months of February and March and up to the 11th of April on which date we left for Baccarrat. I have surely had a lot of experiences that will make good stories when I get home, and you know from past experience with my story telling that they will not suffer in the telling at all. I will endeavor to adhere strictly to facts however, and I am sure that even if I do not elaborate too much, some of the things that I can tell you will interest you.

Well Dear I must close now. I have a lot of work to do today, and it is now time to get at it. I will write again tomorrow Dear. I love you. Give my love and kisses to the babies and Glad. Tell them to be good children, and tell Glad to leave the Cheney's alone. They are not fit for her to associate with. I love you all so much. Goodbye Dear till tomorrow.

  
Ansel B. Smith Capt MC USA

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Amer E F Germany.