Dear Bess,

There just finished putting 1800 shells over on the Germans in the last five hours. They don’t seem to have had energy enough to come back yet. I don’t think they will. One of their aviators fell right behind my battery yesterday and sprained his ankle, hurt up the machine and got completely picked by the French and Americans in the neighborhood. They even tried to take their (two men two in the machine) coats.

One of our officers I am ashamed to say took the boots off of the one with the sprained ankle and kept them.

The French and Americans too far that matter are souvenir crazy. If a
guard had not been placed on the machine. I don't doubt that it would have been carried away bit by bit. What I started to say was that the German Lt. yelled 'Queer finish' as soon as he stepped from the machine. He then remarked that the war would be over in ten days. I don't know what he knew about it or what anyone else knows but I am sure that most Americans will be glad when it's over and they can get back to God's country again. It is a great thing to swell your chest out and fight for a principle but it gets mighty tiresome some times. I read a Frenchman remark that Germany was fighting for territory, England for the sea, France for patriotism and Americans for souveniers. Yesterday
made me think he was right.
I got a letter of Commendation, Capital C, from the Commanding General of the 35th Division. The Ordnance Repair Dept.

made a report to him that I had the best conditioned guns after the time that he had seen in France. The Gen. wrote me a letter about it. My chief mechanic is to blame not me. He knows more about guns than the French themselves.

As usual in such cases, the CO gets the credit. I think I shall put an endorsement on the letter stating the abilities of my chief mechanic, and stick it in the file anyway.
I am going to keep the original letter for my personal and private use. It will be nice to have some day if some low handed north end politician tries to remark that I wasn't in the war when I'm running for eastern judge or something. We have the papers and can shut him up. If we get home from this grant whole (I shall) I am going to be perfectly happy to follow a grind down a corn join the balance of my days — that is always providing of such an arrangement is also as pleasurable to you. I think the green pastures of Grand Old Missouri are the best looking of any that I have seen in this world yet and I've seen sexual hands. The outlook there now is
a rather heavy one. There are Frenchmen buried in my front yard and Huns in the back yard and folks litter up the landscape as far as you can see. Every time a Boche shell hits in a field it wrecks most of here it dips up a piece of someone. It is well I'm not troubled by spooks.

I walked out to the OP the other day (yesterday) to pick an adjusting point and I found two little flowers alongside the trench blooming right in the rock. I am enclosing them. The soisters would say that they came from the battle scarred field of Verdun. They
You can keep them or throw them away, but I thought they'd be something. One's a poppy, the other is a pink or something of the kind. A real soldier could write a column about the struggle of these pretty little flowers under the frowning brow of Don Quixote the un-conquerable.

Please keep writing for I look for letters eagerly and if I don't write them as often as I should.

I love you.

Harry."