

July 6 1917

Base Hospital 12
U. S. Army
A.P.O. 518 France

My dear Mrs Maitland:

Half an hour before dinner - as mess
dinner at that and if you know officers mess
in France as well as I do, you know that
is not much to brag about. But — a
large American mail came in tonight and
your letter was in it, dated registration day.
This is the first I have heard from the Mait-
land family and is the third letter I have
had from the States since I left. Cannot
do justice to it of course but will quind along
in a series of letters which may eventually
give you a few of the things I see.

Thanks for the news contained - send
any Tribunes you wish. Some of them
in the mess get Tribunes - but are
tight with them and I have not
subscribed for one all to myself -

Yesterday I did 10 operations in the
morning and at noon went to a near by
town the name of which is familiar
to the world over. Capt Dale, my best

friend - who wouldn't come without me and
without whom I wouldn't come - went with me
the 2 of us guests of Capt Maitland - a last
year friend. We had lunch at his mess
after a delightful motor (ambulance) ride
(Practically all ambulances are driven by
women here). The town is beautiful, clean
and contains many fine old homes, with
gardens and exquisite flowers. The mess
I mentioned is in an old chateau
- well built and surrounded by nice
grounds. We had good eats - I had
the honor of sitting next to rather a brilliant
woman from Boulogne - guest of a meal -
who is doing Y.M.C.A. work. She had
sparkling brown eyes and we had quite
a conversation. I merely mention that be-
cause it is such a rare event to see
a woman at an officers mess - or
to sit near one at a meal. Anyhow
after lunch we visited 2 large veterinary
camps in the near vicinity where they
keep about 5000 injured and sick

2

horses in the hospitals. Saw them die a
great many. It was funny - especially
the last bunch which was composed of
American mules and all of them lived up
to their inborn stubbornness. They all
got the dip however. Later we saw 3
operations by a master veterinary surgeon.
Horses chloroformed and beautifully cared
for. The whole process was new stuff
to me and now of course I find I have
missed my calling. This horse stuff
would just suit me - one would feel so
heroic - as to say. Those Vets must
laugh at our funny more delicate stuff
on man.

Today Queen Alexandra graced us
with a visit. Our senior officers met &
shook hands with her after introduction
so now you know that I am travelling
in the best of society. She looked very well
and is a wonderful graceful rather large
woman. Do I look set up?

You know we are living in tents but
hope to get huts before winter. Hope is

good because they may never materialize, but its
going to be terrible under canvas in the winter.
Our hospital is canvas - we have 3 huts for
very serious cases - the operating hut is
fairly permanent compared to a tent but
not heated. Last year I had steam heat in
my operating room.

I think I wrote you that I was in charge
of a surgical team to go to the Casualty Clearing
Station at the front. We are waiting orders at
any minute - may wait for months. I am
all outfitted, steel helmet, gas respirator
etc etc - until all I need is to pick up
the 2 days rations and climb into the
ambulance. My sleeping bag of course
goes with me. I am very anxious to get
the work near the battle line - would
so any thing to vary the base life of which
I am fed up of course. However may never
get there. The line is much occupied. If
I get any pictures - they are difficult to
obtain and I think there is a rule against
sending them out - will send you one but
doubt my ability. Your letters are 9 fourth
or third in interest of Soldiers - they are grateful
Sincerely Allgood & Mrs