

## Letters from the Field

Letters from Anne Morgan in France to her mother, Frances Tracy Morgan, in New York, 1917–19

The Morgan Library & Museum, gift of the estate of Anne Morgan, 1952

From the time she arrived in Blérancourt in 1917 to organize civilian relief efforts in the devastated regions of France, Anne Morgan wrote long letters home describing the extraordinary efforts that clearly fired her with a sense of purpose. “With all my heart I wish I had some kind of gift of giving the real picture of our field over here” she told her mother. Together with her friend and colleague Anne Murray Dike, Morgan assembled a small team of American volunteers dedicated to revitalizing everyday life in a region largely considered to be beyond redemption. Philippe Pétain, the French army’s commander-in-chief, arranged for the volunteer committee to establish headquarters in the seventeenth century Château de Blérancourt—less than forty miles from the front. The women lived in barracks, worked long hours, and enjoyed intense camaraderie. Morgan’s letters trace the relief effort from its earliest days, as volunteers established themselves in pre-fabricated barracks in the militarized zone, to the post-war period, during which a full range of medical, social, and educational relief programs were firmly in place.

### Letter from Anne Morgan to her mother, Frances Tracy Morgan La Villa Trianon, Versailles, 8 July 1917

Dearest Mother,

Your good letter of June 10 came last night and glad enough I was to have it. Now at last we are in communication, for you can answer my letter and one feels much closer. I am glad you don’t mind my machine [i.e., typewriter], for it is great fun to try and learn it and the speed improves every day a little. Your account of the wedding was delightful and I know how happy you must have been all through.

Over here we are full of business all day every day getting our work started at Blérancourt. Tomorrow we are actually starting off six strong to begin by unpacking our own beds and cooking utensils. While we are settling we must sleep at Compiègne about an hour away by motor and go over every day. At the moment there is only one little *pavillon* which is at all habitable; the other has no roof and of course we must put up some sort of *barraque* meant for our *dispensaire*, our *ouvroir*, and *magasin* [barracks for the dispensary, workshop, and store] and our extra sleeping quarters for the motor girls. The “grape arbour” is to be sent from Paris and we hope soon to put in a bathroom. Altogether it is all going to be more than interesting and worthwhile.

You understand we are in the *zone des armées* [war zone] and so working entirely with the military, but we have to keep in touch with civil, who will control us when the army advances. There is a very interesting point of view among French people that Americans do not seem to in the least understand, the desire not to let their own people feel that Americans are the only ones that are doing anything for them. The wonderful old feudal sense of responsibility back of it all is the strength of the relation between classes and should never die. I very much resent the failure of many of the American workers to understand this. As a matter of fact Anne Dike [Morgan’s friend and colleague] and I have met our chief opposition for our determination to work with and through French people. The very best person over here is Murphy himself; he is a perfect trump

and one of the nicest people I ever met as well as one of the finest. His attitude all the way through is true blue about everything, never one bit of self-seeking of any kind. How I wish the same could be said of everyone.

Well, the only way is to keep one's eye on the work all the time and realize how much there is to be done. Never can I get the picture of those villages out of my mind. The bravery of the people and the courage with which they come back to begin in the middle of their ruins what life they can with absolutely nothing. I am desperately anxious to meet the woman, Countess D'Evry, who was living in a cart in a stable yard so as to help the soldiers work in the gardens of her people and try and get them back, one by one. Meanwhile her own château was in ruins up on the hill.

We have a wonderful little French girl going up with us who can do everything with her hands. All winter she has been collecting old furniture from the Versailles garrets and after mending them has entirely equipped eighteen families of refugees here in the town. I found her last year and have been in touch with her ever since. Now she is crazy to get up into the country and work there on the spot, so she is as delighted to come as we are to have her. Added to this she can give her services which is a great advantage.

The money question is the hardest of all; fortunately we have enough on hand to make a good beginning and I feel sure the A. F. F. W. [American Fund for French Wounded] will be interested in our reports. Emma writes me asking me to come to her for a while in England, but it does not look now as if there was much get-away for a long time to come. Well, Dearest, this must be goodbye for the moment as there is much to do here in the house when we do get back. This week Elsie [de Wolfe] is here too so we are both trying to catch up with each other as well. Give my best love to Blythie as well as all the family.

always your devoted daughter,  
Anne

**Letter from Anne Morgan to her mother, Frances Tracy Morgan  
Blérancourt, 18 and 20 August 1917**

Dearest Mother,

Sundays are becoming as busy here as all other days with all kinds of visitors, so it is hard to get time to write as I want to. This week we also have Homer Folks' daughter [Gertrude] stopping with us so as to show her some of the interesting parts of this part of the world, so it has kept us very busy all day entertaining her.

We had a wonderful military Mass this morning with the most wonderful music. David of the opera is here and sings too beautifully for words, then there was a violin *obligato* which was very fine, and then the men all joined in a patriotic hymn, so it was a real concert, then tonight, there is a cinema of the big review that was held here the other day when [Commander-in-Chief Philippe] Pétain decorated one of the regimental flags. Some of them also went over to see some of the big Boche trenches which are ninety feet down and all cemented, real palaces, where a thousand men could be sheltered at the same time.

August 20<sup>th</sup>

As usual I was interrupted just there and in the meanwhile no end of water has run under the bridge, and we have been having a marvelous experience in every way. On Sunday Anne Dike

and I were taken off on a very mysterious trip that I can't write you about, but it was a wonderful chance that I will tell you all about when we get home. You can't imagine how interesting it is to be living in the middle of the army in this way; we are really getting to feel as if we belonged in it, and the Etat Major that is here now are the most wonderful people to cooperate with imaginable. The different officers in charge of the villages are in most cases devoted beyond words, and are accomplishing the impossible with the men who are really *en repos* between their days of service in the trenches. It is all so desperately worthwhile and human in its various problems and our place in it all seems to be growing more and more clear as we understand the question better and the people learn to know we are here to help them to help themselves.

This week we are starting in the school, Miss [Florence] Wright, Miss Toovey and Miss Hie[?] are starting with sewing and carpentry classes and the *Instituteur* [head teacher] is thrilled, as he has no means of doing it himself and yet realizes that the whole future is the question of the children in this country of the very old and the very young.

Yesterday at Querzy we found such a fine woman living with her father- and mother-in-law and an old man cousin, the three were ninety-two, eighty-eight and eighty, one of her sons was killed, one was a prisoner and one wounded, and the daughter-in-law and grandchild are with the Boche. The two old people were sleeping on the floor and only dreaming of getting back to their own village of Bichancourt, which we are going to arrange for them. None of them asked for anything and were only thrilled with the fact that they had fished out of the river the things they had hidden there in the way of kitchen utensils and wash pails when the Boche drove them from their own home.

You can see for yourself how interesting it all is and yet what a long drawn out piece of work it is going to be and how much planning and foresight it all needs. Your wonderful check arrived last night and has thrilled us all beyond words. Anne [Dike] and I have already spent it ten times over but have this morning decided to put it into stoves which are so desperately needed this winter in every home. You were an angel to send it and I never can tell you how much that kind of confidence in our work means to all of us. We are both so longing to have you here for a bit so you could see for yourself how it all is, if only the old submarines were out of the way I know you would adore having a few months in France under these conditions. Of course I don't mean out here in Blérancourt, but at Compiègne where you could be than comfortable. Miss Folks is so thrilled with her visit that she wants to come out and join us and work here which delights us under the conditions with all our R.C. [Red Cross] troubles. I think the last straw came yesterday when she went to the ambulance in the church at Trosly-Loire which is most picturesque and unusual.

Well, Dearest, I could go on writing indefinitely if only I had the time to, for every day brings more stories that would interest you, but it is so hard to steal the time.

Please give no end of love to every one and above all to Blythie and with no end for yourself.

Always your adoring daughter,  
Anne

**Fragment of a letter from Anne Morgan to her mother, Frances Tracy Morgan  
Blérancourt, [9 September 1917?]**

. . . arranged that these machines should be followed by rollers, harrows, and then by seeders, so that next year it will mean just so much more food for those that need it so sorely; indeed it is a

real satisfaction to know that already we have been able to accomplish just that much.

Besides this week we have begun to install our first houses, we have started our first classes, and we are feeling that at last the time has come when we can show real progress. How I wish I could give you a real picture of our life here, but it all sounds cold and dry when one puts it down in black and white. It is only when one is listening to all the stories at first hand that one realizes the tragedy of it all and how much they need our help just at this time.

We are waiting with joy to know when Mrs. Schelling is coming over, for if she is willing to come out into this country and not be in Paris it will be too wonderful for words. As things are in Paris at the Alcazar and with the eternal R.C. [Red Cross] situation it would not be at all interesting for her to be in our work at that end for there is nothing but pure office to do.

Today we have had a very unusual kind of a Sunday with almost no visits except our architect who has just come back from Vichy, and was thrilled to find out how far ahead the work has gone. Our head workman is a joy to us all and is a perfect type. Of course he is *réformé* and has been twice decorated, he is so thrilled with what we are trying to do both here and with the Smith [College Relief] Unit at Grécourt that he is going to stop on with us after our own houses are arranged, so that he can help in the mending of what can be restored without too much expenditure, and with helping to put up the movable houses with the Agent Voyer, as they call him. This man is an employee of the Préfet, and is another trump, with such a wonderful spirit. . .

**Letter from Anne Morgan to her mother, Frances Tracy Morgan  
Blérancourt, 13 January 1918**

Dearest Mother,

This will probably be my last letter that there is any chance of reaching you before I come myself. Now that I am back again here, it seems more and more difficult to think of getting away even for the six weeks, and yet I am sure that it is the only way to clear up our future work and find out just what the Committee expects and wants of us. As it is now we are living very much from hand to mouth, and yet there are an infinite amount of problems being put up to us all the time that demand a certain assurance of continuation and continued support.

You see the trouble is that our organization as a whole [the American Fund for French Wounded] considers our end of the work [the Civilian Division] as more or less of an extra, this means that all the detail is put up to Miss [Elizabeth] Perkins to do, and the Committee does not really take it over. All this has nothing to do with the great difficulty of raising any money of any kind just now, that we know, but the point is that over here every one seems to consider that civilian work is one of the most important parts of war work, particularly for America at the present moment, and at home they do not think of it that way, so some conclusion must be reached on the subject.

Besides this question of finances there are a number of things that must be cleared up with the home organization, and the only way is to do it with a personal interview, not only in New York but in some of the other cities.

With all my heart I wish I had some kind of gift of giving the real picture of our field over here, there are such an infinite amount of sides to it all, and the opportunities are so infinite. Yesterday I went off with Miss [Miriam] Blagden to see her village, as you know each of our group have their own village for which they are *marraine* [godmother], in this way no matter what kind of work

they are doing, office, automobile, *magasin*, or anything else, they each have some of the direct individual work to give them a deeper interest in it all.

This particular village is very interesting as it is not only near the line, but it is in such a position that because of military values it is not safe as yet to do any constructive work, or even to put up any barracks. There are about thirty people living in it, and they have the most splendid courage and determination to get back to their own. One old man, a mason, is living in a quarry with a woman refugee, her daughter, and little grand daughter, you can't think of worse conditions, but their courage never falters, and as a matter of fact this is the third group that this man has taken in and offered shelter till they could arrange for themselves. Two of his former lodgers are now living in the one room left of their own house, and were as happy as clams when we were able to bring them a decent stove yesterday. Both these men can work and are only asking for tools, which we are giving them while they are waiting for the formalities about their war indemnities.

Our school classes are now going famously; we are starting in now with an appeal to America for the school children to start in with a small fund for a library of both school books and a circulating library. There is an immense need of it as all the schools are very short and the authorities have not yet decided which department is responsible.

We are also in desperate need of a fund to buy garden tools, the army is growing us plants with seeds that the Red Cross gave us, but we must be able to supply a thousand families with spades, rakes, hoes and all the other things one needs for early planting. It is absurd to try and send them over when one can buy them here, but it will all mean just that much more food supply in the gardens here. Then we are starting in with children's gardens as well, so you see we have plenty of plans on foot. In a few weeks now we will have Dr. [Maude] Kelly with us, she has been doing splendid dispensary work for the Smith [College Relief] Unit, and we will be able to build up that end of the work here where there is no end of need for it. Then we are in hopes that the Red Cross will bring us a civilian hospital in this quarter very soon, that will mean splendid for there are no end of small surgical cases that should be attended to, and for which we have no adequate facilities.

Please don't think we are living entirely with our own problems up here, as a matter of fact that is just what this kind of work makes one disinclined to do, all these questions are so utterly interdependent, and will remain so, that one must keep in touch with a thousand questions that are apparently outside our own field. As to America it is more than infuriating to hear as little as we do, it was very nice to have a long talk the other day in Paris with Bert Borden, Mrs. Finley's brother, he is full of enthusiasm with all that he saw at home even way out in the West, but I was glad to have him feel that this is the place for every one that can to be. He is in the Y.M.C.A. but means to work at their French canteen work as he feels that is the best thing he can do for America. I hope to see him again. . . .

*[In March 1918, a new German offensive in the Aisne forced a second civilian evacuation. The American volunteers remained in the area to assist with the evacuation, tend to the needs of fleeing refugees, run a children's colony, and operate canteens and clothing distribution centers. The bulk of the reconstruction work accomplished over the previous months was obliterated. In late March, Anne Morgan and Anne Murray Dike reorganized the Civilian Division of the American Fund for French Wounded as an independent organization, the American Committee for Devastated France.]*

**Letter from Anne Morgan to her mother, Frances Tracy Morgan  
Vic-sur-Aisne, 19 May 1918**

Dearest Mother,

Your good letters of March 17, April 24 and 29, no 3, 4, and 5, all came in the same mail yesterday, you can see how very strangely the mails behave. I was uncommon glad to have them all and to know that everything was going so well with you all. Over here we are working ahead as well as we can, but of course the progress can only be very slow under these waiting war conditions, though the needs are, of course, greater than ever. Anne [Dike] is in Paris attending to some things down there, and thank goodness there are two days of holiday for the Whitsuntide, as she needs a rest like everything and has not had a day off since I sailed in January, not even since that terrific strain during the retreat.

Today Mr. [John Kendrick] Bangs come back to us for a few days so as to have his last impressions of the war zone before he sails to go back and talk for us in America. I was away in Paris when he was here before, so it is up to me this time, but from all accounts, nice as he is, I fancy that it is all so new to him that one has to pump a good deal to make the whole situation clear to him, for he has not been in Europe, even, since the war began. He has been having a splendid time talking to some of the American boys, and up here he went over to the Trans Section near us and had a splendid time with them.

We are going to take him over to Coyolles and show him the way that has grown already. How I wish you could see the kids there, there are 34 there now, looking like different youngsters since they came to [some text is missing here] first, Mlle. Charpentier, who has been with us all the way through and is a wonder, is doing a yeoman's work there, at the moment she has the whole thing on her hands, as we are vainly trying to hurry the *sauf conduites* [safe-conduct documents] for the *Instituteur* of Blérancourt, and a friend of hers, the widow of a *chasseur à pied* [light infantryman], who has always worked with children and will be just the kind of woman we need. Meanwhile she only has two refugees for maids and cooks and another little girl from the village to help her out, and she herself is doing all the teaching as well as the washing of those kids herself, using the older ones as monitors.

Our English gardener and the first of our American farmerettes are getting the children's gardens started, as well as the vegetable garden for the group, and the difficulties are endless. The proprietor is giving us four hectares and one of our Blérancourt *cultivateurs* [farmers] is working at that for potatoes and also some vegetables. He has started the *couveuse* [incubator], some of our cows and goats, chickens and rabbits have been taken down, and things are getting slowly into shape.

But oh the endless difficulties in the way are beyond words, for instance, we needed a pasture: first we had to find the place, then we had to ask the army for wire, then we had to go to a depot to fetch it, 7 thousand kilos, then we had to wait till the Red Cross could lend us a camion as our own Kelley was in the hospital. After we had gotten it over there a matter of twenty-five kilometers, we find the wrong type of wire had been sent, it all had to be sent back and the whole thing begun over. Then we want a big farm cart, we go over to the depot where the army has placed all the agricultural implements they had mended in the atelier at Blérancourt, they promise us the only one they have, we send over two of our horses with another refugee to take it all the way to Coyolles, another 28 kilometers, he finds after all the one they have belongs to some one else, he tries to send a military telephone message, waits two hours for an answer, receives none and decides to take the horses over alone, I never get the message and now we must bring the horses back to take a cart from some other place. I only tell you this to show you that nothing ever goes through as one expects it to.

It is all worth while all the same, and if you could see the letters we are getting from refugees asking us please to take their children back into the Aisne till they can come themselves you would see what it means. Today two parents are coming to spend two days with their kids and we are sending over from here to fetch them, and so it goes.

Well, Dear, I don't know if all this amuses you but we are so deep in it that it seems desperately interesting to us! In another two or three months when we have our farms at Troesne and Marizy all started, and our Hospital at Bochet full, our visiting nurse at Coyolles as well as the outside dispensaries under Dr. [Maude] Kelly in good shape, it will all be very wonderful.

Please give my very best love to all the family, particularly to Blythie, and think of me as loving you with all my heart and soul

always your adoring daughter,  
Anne

**Letter from Anne Morgan to her mother, Frances Tracy Morgan  
Blérancourt, 29 July 1918**

Dearest Mother,

I am more than sorry to have missed writing for so many days, but these last two weeks have been regular nightmares, in addition to having every minute filled, I have had to indulge in a few days of grip, which seemed to me no end unnecessary.

Anne [Dike] went down to Chartres this week to attend to that end of things, while I stayed on in Paris, and now this week end we have reversed things and I have come up here to see after the canteen end. It really is all going most wonderfully and the girls are all doing a yeoman's piece of work. When you realize that in four weeks they have served over two hundred thousand cups of drinks and given cigarettes to at least fifty thousand more men on the road that could not stop for the drink, you can have some kind of an idea of the way they are all doing. I do hope you will get the office to show you the photographs that [Harry B.] Lachman took up here at Changis only last week. That man is such an artist that it is a joy to have him help us in this way, and he is only too glad to do it. We are going to have the farm done this week with the forty odd refugees that are already working on it, and all the famous cows from Blérancourt that have had all the exercise in the last two offensives.

People at home seem to care more about photos than anything else, as nothing that one tells them is able to give them the real picture. Alas, so much that one sees leaves pictures on one mind that it would be a relief to be able to forget the front canteens, and what this recent battlefield means is a horror beyond words, not only the villages but the woods are literally shot to pieces and of course it will be some time yet before the Service d'étapes des Champs de Batailles can do the cleaning up which is such a ghastly job, even at the best.

*[By the summer of 1918, the United States was sending large numbers of troops into combat in France.]*

You must all be thrilled beyond words the way the American boys are doing their part, even over here it seems almost a miracle, and at home, so far away it must all seem too wonderful for words. The only ghastly part is that their splendid bravery is working out just the way the English

did in 1914, and the losses are terrific. Then too their resistance has not had the long preparation that the French have had, and they go down very quickly under their wounds.

It looks now as though we would soon have a lot of civilian work on our hands again as the army and the administration are both desperately anxious to help the people back in this region immediately and the crops have not been at all destroyed except in certain places and it is desperately important to make sure of the harvest within the next few weeks. As their houses are uninhabitable and what are standing have been utterly pillaged, we have been asked to pitch in at once and see what can be done.

Besides all this we have our farms to work ahead on and the children's center to get in shape, which will take a full month, and in no direction does there seem much chance of any holiday for the moment. Still it does seem so worthwhile that no one minds, and the life on the whole is so out-of-doors even Anne [Dike] who has the whole thing on her shoulders is looking wonderfully when she does not have to do too much motoring to get around to all our different centers.

I haven't thanked you yet for your good letter of June 27 as well as that of the 29<sup>th</sup> which came on my birthday. It is such a satisfaction to know that everything is all right with you, and that you are so well. I was rather worried that the heat wave caught you before you got to Bar Harbor, but it may not have been as bad as the paper said, anyway one likes to hope so.

We don't see anyone but our own group so I have no news to amuse you with, and we are in our work up to the hilt, morning noon and night, but the days fly past and one is never able to get half through.

Last week was a terror with one girl having broken her arm on a Ford, and the ambulance run into by a staff car which knocked out the girl and Dr. [Alice Weld] Tallant who has been in the hospital ever since. Still there were no broken bones, only a concussion, and tomorrow I am taking her down to Paris in our own car, and after a few weeks rest she will be all right again.

The Red Cross goes on being very nice to us, though they don't want us to say anything about it, anyway our work is growing so that their five thousand a month is only about one fifth of what we need, still our people are wizard about sending us money and we are keeping well ahead of the game.

This week we are sending over to America four essays that four of our [children wrote] about their own war experiences which are too charming for words, and at the same time desperately tragic. They are all so happy where they are now that they like to tell the story, but the Picart boy lost most of his fingers with some of those Boche fuses that he picked up in the street is so sweet in the way he is beginning to find himself in the new life. As to the little Chauny girl who tells the story of the way her mother and sister were killed, one would never believe her the same child as the one that came to us the day after the accident.

Well, Dearest, must leave you now and go off to bed as I am dead with sleep and must be off early in the morning. Give no end of love to every one and

believe me as always your adoring daughter,  
Anne

**Letter from Anne Morgan to her mother, Frances Tracy Morgan  
Blérancourt, 10 September 1918**



Dearest Mother,

Here we are again at Chateau-Thierry and there is no lack of things to do, I can assure you. Last week, as I wrote you, Anne [Dike] was ill with the prevailing disease, and I went down to Paris to attend to that end for a while. After she came down there and I was on the point of starting off to Boullay-Thierry and the farms, we both received a telephone call to come up here again as the Etat Major had something they wanted of us. We knew they were on the point of leaving so came right up. When we arrived we were told that General [Jean] Degoutte wanted to pay a formal call before leaving. He appeared, was most polite and asked us to dine with him that evening. It was very amusing for we told Captain de Lalande when he asked us, that of course we had meant to go right back to Paris that evening and that we had a great deal to do down there!

*[On September 3, General Degoutte decorated Anne Morgan and Anne Murray Dike with the Croix de Guerre avec Palme.]*

Lalande is the head of the bureau that all our work goes through, but needless to say the General was not present when we told him this. Well we had a very pleasant dinner, none of our own group was asked, and in all there were only eight of us. Everything went on as one would expect till the time came for coffee, then the General asked us to come out on the terrace; it seemed a trifle late and cold for al fresco coffee, but we followed him out at once. You can imagine our feelings when we saw in this dear little *jardin clos* [enclosed garden], the two lines of *chasseurs* [infantrymen] drawn up on the sides with the music at the further end. The whole ceremony is the very essence of France, the simplicity and symbolism of it makes one part of the very inner spirit and stirs one to the depths. With all one's heart and soul one longed to have all the people at home who are working as we are working, only far removed from the intense interest of actual presence, have the chance of seeing and feeling it all. However we were enormously pleased at the wording of the citation, as it included all the oeuvre, and will we feel sure please our own people at home.

Meanwhile the work is going ahead steadily and well, of course the problem is beyond words, and one never ceases to marvel at the courage of these people who are not only willing but determined to recreate some kind of a home for themselves among their own ruins. The army is doing marvels with the harvest, for in spite of shell holes and lack of animals and all kind of harvesting machinery, the tenth army alone has harvested twelve thousand hectares. We are now running a series of auto bazaars in the small villages which are far removed from all method of transportation and in desperate need of everything, in these we sell at very low prices, but ask enough to keep the self-respect of the people themselves and also make them appreciate more the things they get. In this way we soon find out the people who can not afford to buy what are evidently necessities, and these are always helped.

At the present moment it is idle to think of repairs to houses, the giving out of tar paper for roofs and oil paper for windows is being done through the army, but the worst of it is that many of what is left of the houses should be blown up or there will be very serious accidents as soon as the winter rains and frosts set in. Yesterday one of our doctors came back with a very amusing tale, that one of her patients to whom she had recommended strict quiet had been very apologetic, that after all she had not been able to stay very quiet because in the middle of the night she and all the family had had to move.

The medical work is the very most important of all these days, and it is wonderful the way both of our own doctors get their results. We now have at least eleven dispensaries that they go to twice a

week, and besides this any number of house-to-house visits. There were almost five hundred cases in three weeks. Each doctor has her own line of towns and her own nurse, so in all with the *chauffeuse* [woman driver] it means six people on this end of the work. Yesterday we got permission from General [Charles] Mangin to open up our Vic center again so soon now we will divide, and half of this territory between the Aisne and the Marne will be done from here and the other half from Vic. For the present there is no use doing anything further north, though I am sorry to say they are allowing the *cultivateurs* to return up as far as Audignicourt. Some of our old group took a Sunday joy ride up to Blérancourt this week, and the poor kids came back all broken up, poor children, they said now they realized more than ever what it meant when these people, only said *quelle misère*.

Of course all our own *barraques* were burnt by the French before they left, but the Boche have carried away bodily all the Administration ones that were last year's homes. However our old stone pavilions have not been all destroyed and next year we will be able to get back there again into our own territory and start a new center from there as nothing will ever be as close to not only ourselves but all the people we have been working among.

Please give no end of love to all the family, it will be a wonderful thing to see you again before long, now, but it is not possible to say when I will sail, but it will probably be about November second on the *Touraine*.

Always your devoted daughter,  
Anne

*[On 11 November 1918, the signing of the armistice signaled the end of the war.]*

**Letter from Anne Morgan to her mother, Frances Tracy Morgan  
Blérancourt, 10 March 1919**

Dearest Mother,

This week I have two good letters to thank you for, one of Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> and one of the 17<sup>th</sup>. Just as I get as far as that comes yours of the 12<sup>th</sup>, so you see the mail is as uncertain as ever.

However the main thing is that your letters do all sound much more cheerful, and it is a joy to see that you are better. Over here the days go rushing on with no chance of getting through more than one tenth of the things that are to be done. Of course we are very sad over the failure of our Drive in America, and above all for what our office tells us is the reason, in the widespread lack of sympathy which has grown up between France and America. There is so much at the back of that in the general political situation that it makes it all much worse, but one feels the trail of the serpent everywhere. It does seem to me that the only way to even things up in the next world is for [President Woodrow] Wilson and the Emperor to be given over to each other's exclusive companionship for a few cycles as a preliminary to any other punishment which is to be meted out to them both. One reads the papers day after day, and it seems incredible that so much should be said and so little worth while is done in any direction, the whole world seems to be crying out for real leadership and with the exception of [Georges] Clemenceau there seem to [be] none in any country. Of course our own charlatan, talking of the rights of the "people" and acting as the greatest dictator that ever usurped authority, is the most destructive force of all at the present moment.

[Henry Cabot] Lodge's speech in the Senate produced a great effect over here, and was published

quite fully in the *Figaro*, much more so than in the English and American papers, on the other hand Wilson's speech was published with the most insulting phrases printed in italics. Of course the whole situation is discouraging in the extreme and the general morale way below what it was during those hard days of July.

Well our work is a joy, but we are a little sad when we are told that we mustn't count on more than twenty thousand dollars a month. It is hard, for the need is now, our opportunity is tremendous, to be useful we must assume certain financial obligations for unless we start real execution before the summer, nothing will be done till next year, and it is impossible to see how these people can get through another winter. All they ask is to be helped to help themselves, even after the terrific struggle of the last four years.

Take the man up here who is the acting mayor Camelin, La Comblay. A man fifty-two years of age, he his wife and two daughters were all civil prisoners, which meant while slaves, all winter long, the girls broke stones and loaded them themselves into carts, for eight months their only food was beetroot that is given to cows, they slept at night on bare floor with one blanket apiece. At last this October they were liberated as they were in the Ardennes, but the only son was killed at the front just five days before. Poor old man, the only time he broke down was when he was telling this, and the visit to their ruins of this boy just before he was killed, he had heard nothing of his parents all the four years of war and he told his friends he wanted to see again the home which was the last memory of them he had. As soon as they had been liberated the old man left them all in Paris where he too could find work, just to assume at once the duties of Mayor at Camelin. With no one to help him he applied at once to the Préfecture for two communal horses with which he could go up to Chauny, some ten miles away, which is the food distribution center for the region. To get these horses he had to walk on foot for three days, sleeping in the fields and finally reached Laon. Then began his real work, every week he had to fetch all the food for his commune, family after family came back, now there are over one hundred and twenty-five individuals, all helpless, all discouraged, all needing help and all turning to him for instructions as to what step they should take to mend their houses, to clear their fields, to secure the bare necessities of life, and he more helpless than they. With it all his courage is indomitable, and it will mean much to the community that we are now there to help him. This week we are bringing to him the governmental official who has power to employ men to clean the fields which have no explosives, but which are choked with barbed wire and trenches, all the able men in the commune will be employed in this way, then we are going to give him what is more precious than diamonds, five thousand kilos of the potatoes that we saved last autumn, and he will plant one thousand for the American Committee and four thousand for the commune; in this way they will feel that at least something is being started.

This week we had made a very important appointment for him with a contractor from Paris who is a very good friend of ours, he didn't turn up, so we asked M. Duane to stop in and see him which he did, they had their talk, but La Comblay never told him that he had not kept his appointment because in the next room lay his mother-in-law who had just hung herself, the strain and the sorrow had gone on just too long. It was all so tragic, but he was so touched because we were able to send five miles in one direction for our own doctor, six in another for the *gendarme* [police] for the formalities, and then the next day we found a priest who was willing to come, for the funeral, and we were there to give him the kind of help he needed and the kind of sympathy he felt. Forgive such a long story; it is just to give you one picture of so many we are living among.

A joyous picture this week was the visit of Milham, brother-in-law of the man who was *chef de culture* of Blérancourt and has been with us as the head of one of our farms all the way through.

Milhem came to us as soon as he was repatriated in August and we placed on one of the small farms. He had come back to see his own farm at Audignicourt and found it so hopelessly destroyed that he made his *deuil* [said goodbye to it] and never wishes to see it again, on the other hand he found there all his buried treasure and now wishes to take over from us the farm on which he is working where his wife and his surviving children are happy in their own home, and where he can begin a new life on his own, always realizing that nothing will ever replace for him the traditions of the Aisne.

Our Vic center under Miss Parsons is doing the best kind of work, both she and her sister [Alice and Margaret] have done things in just the right way, and the whole morale of the group is what one longs to have all the others show, but alas, that is not the case. Our kids at Boullay-Thierry are getting on famously, many of the older ones are going to get their *certificat d'étude* [elementary school diploma] in July, which is a triumph for the teacher, Gaulier, who is a man in a thousand and devotes himself to the children from every point of view, and they are all as happy down there as the day is long.

Goodbye, Dearest Mother, please give no end of love to all the family and above all to Blythie. You do not say any more about your summer plans, are they still in the air?

Always your own devoted daughter  
Anne

**Letter from Anne Morgan to her mother, Frances Tracy Morgan  
Blérancourt, 6 April 1919**

Dearest Mother,

At last after having had rain almost [every] day for two months we have three of the most wonderful of spring days, and you can't imagine what joy it is to see things beginning to come out in the midst of all this desolation and destruction, the forest of Compiègne is one mass of primroses and jonquils till the whole is a yellow and green carpet.

We ourselves are more than excited for we are just beginning to plant our own vegetable garden on the piece of land we have rented to put up the American Woman's Hospital. It was a wonderful pasturage of five hectares so we will have room for the thirteen *barraques* that the Service de Santé has given for the hospital, and also room to pasture the cows for the village as well as all the [land] both we and the hospital need.

It is great fun to be here at such a season as this because last year it was at this same moment they had to get out, and again in May we had to leave everything we had planted in April at Coyolles. As a matter of fact, the wonderful part is that in spite of having to leave the potatoes all summer with no attention when we got back in the autumn we were able to harvest at least many more kilos than we had planted, and now we are going to be able to give five thousand kilos to the little farmers of Camelin through the wonderful old mayor on the condition that each one will give us back one fifth of the crop next autumn. They all are delighted, for of course they cost them nothing. We are all getting the most impassioned farmers, and of course are working against all kinds of odds to help our five cooperatives plant at least one hundred and fifty hectares apiece this spring. It sounds nothing when you tell it, but if you knew what it means, first to get Boche to clear the explosives, then to get the horses, then feed them, then secure the seed and the agricultural instruments with no transportation you can imagine.

Meanwhile the first railway cars containing the *barraques* have begun to arrive, and more wonderful than all we now have become regular contractors, building up a regular *equipe* of workman who are only too anxious to work but can't secure any material or tools, we now have a regular atelier, with six or eight carpenters' benches, a forge, and now we are going to install an electric saw with the *groupe électrogène* [generator] that the army gave us. We are recuperating all kinds of good wood from the trenches, that can be used for a thousand things, our cement and plaster & tools we get from Paris, some tiles come from the government and some we buy, and then we can do some real repairs to the houses with out the horrible delays for these poor people who come back to houses that are uninhabitable but can be repaired without real reconstruction. Of course we work through and with all the government services most of which are on paper, and things are getting done.

*[On April 4, Pétain awarded the Croix de Guerre to five members of the Committee.]*

Of course our great excitement this week was when we finally got news that the decoration of the five girls had gone through at last. We went down to the G. Q. G., saw [Philippe] Pétain, who told us he would like to give them himself, and that he would come up and lunch with us first. As this center is anything but installed, as we are all living in this little four-room house with at least two in a room, with a stove in the kitchen hardly large enough for a family of five, you can imagine our native cook is a wonder when we had lunch for twenty-seven. All the groups came up from Vic and Soissons and as many from Paris as could get away, but we had to let most of them lunch at home.

It really was a beautiful sight as the five wonderful girls stood before the Marechal, and one can never forget the whole spirit of it all. Of course there was no *prise d'armes* [military parade], as there is no longer any army here, but the group of some fifty of our own uniforms gave the color of the blue against the old stone gate, and somehow America and France seemed very close as the village people all crowded about to have the first chance of congratulating the girls who have worked all these months with such a splendid spirit of patriotism.

Your last letter this week is of March 11<sup>th</sup>, and sounds very cheerful, thank goodness. As for the income tax situation, I am delightfully ignorant of the subject, but I suppose I will hear the worst only too soon, if the worst comes to the worst they will have to sell some of my old securities, or at any rate pawn them, for at a moment like this I had no intention of saving up. If you were over here you would feel the same way, I am sure.

As to my own plans, it is impossible to say just now when it will be possible to get away, as yet they have sent us very little good material from America, and yet this month or rather next we are losing some of our very best old workers. Both Mrs. [M. C.] Lehr and Miss Latrobe as well as Rose [Dolan] and Barbara [Allen] and Mrs. [Ella] Taylor will all leave before July, and Blaggie [Miriam Blagden] may have to leave in June; on the other hand the good news is that the two Parsons [Alice and Margaret] who are doing a splendid piece of work with the Vic group have decided they love it so they can't leave before August, instead of in May as they had expected, which is more than satisfactory.

All these changes and breaking in of new workers puts more and more up to Anne [Dike] and me and is a place where we are both needed, on the other hand if it turns out to be possible we would like both to go back together in the late summer and work out a regular joint campaign. If we were both there we could cover more sides of the American situation and get through more work for the organization than either of us could do alone. On the other hand much depends on what material they can send over in the way of workers, though it is to be hoped that by the summer

things will not be as complicated as they are now. At the moment there is not half a week that passes that we do not have some kind of official and government situation to meet that none of the others understand.

Well, dear, this must seem a very long letter and yet I have not told you half I wanted to, still you know that it carries no end of love to you and Blythie and all the family you are by way of seeing.

Always your devoted daughter,  
Anne

**Fragment of a letter from Anne Morgan to her mother, Frances Tracy Morgan  
Blérancourt, 30 April 1919**

. . . situation with our farmers of the north, here they only ask to be given the chance of starting work again, and the politicians are so occupied with these other questions that all their rights are woefully neglected.

It is hard at times to go on being optimistic when one sees what six months delay in the signing of peace has brought about, and at the same time to have the desperate need for immediate action one eyes.

Our own work grows more and more interesting, and more full of color. The other day our doctor at Blérancourt had a hurry call for a baby that she had heard nothing of at St. Paul [aux Bois], one of our most destroyed villages; there are about three hundred people back and practically not a house standing; the baby was born in a trench with a corrugated roof, five people living together and no light unless one left the door open, poor Dr. McLoughlin [Dr. Mary MacLachlan] said she had never thought to bring a baby into the world under such conditions. Fortunately her sense of humor runs strong, for when she asked who the father was, she was told he had died two years ago!

We are now starting in on the educational campaign of typhoid vaccination in all the villages, and it is a big job. The doctors are very depressed if they only get forty or fifty victims to a village for the first attack, but we think that is a wonderful success. The sanitary conditions are beyond words as there are still so many bodies of men and horses that are barely below the surface of the ground. We had proudly repaired a room to be used for the school at Camelin, when the Mayor came in and told us that in the brook just outside the door of the school house the head of a Boche had appeared in the water, as the brook had washed away the covering of soil that was over the body.

Tomorrow is our May Day festival at Boullay-Thierry and we are preparing a wonderful celebration. The weather is a trifle against us as it has been as cold as winter with rain almost every day. However the sun is now out, and it is so much warmer that we are no longer in agonies about the paper dresses that all our kids have had prepared. The Y.M.C.A. is sending us a jazz band, which with the ice cream that we are sending down in the morning by our own camion, will fill their hearts with joy. We are expecting Préfets, educational celebrities of all descriptions, and mean to have a real party.

Our tractors are the great excitement this week, for twenty five Fordsons are arriving for us at Soissons. They are the very first to be delivered in France except the two that Mr F. [Henry Ford] gave us as a present last year. The new agents are now getting more orders than our friend Leucheur will let them deliver for many a long day, for in the *concours* [competition] that was

held the other day at St. Germain they were the most successful of any mark. The government goes on promising state tractors in our region, but they do not materialize; the only ones that have appeared are two German Konninck that look like large spiders are not at all suitable for our region, so you can imagine what it means to have these actually on hand.

Our first American Holstein cows are also arriving this week, the ones that Mrs. Hewitt put through for us; of course it was rather a sorrow when we heard that put of the hundred cows that had been promised only two bulls and two cows had gotten off by this ship. However we have made arrangements with the [André] Tardieu Mission who do everything they can for us, to send us a whole wagon out of this ship full, and we will give them ours in exchange when they arrive. It will be a busy week for livestock for we are also receiving a wagon of one thousand rabbits and two hundred chickens. . . .

**Letter from Anne Morgan to her mother, Frances Tracy Morgan  
Blérancourt, 9 June 1919**

Dearest Mother,

Here we are at Bois Joly, such a dear little inn, not far from Dreux, and a marvelous place to take a holiday. Yesterday was a bit hectic, for we had the First Communion at Boullay-Thierry, and it meant a long day. Juliet, Carrie, Junius and Laurie all came down, and I think thoroughly enjoyed it too. They went on to Chartres to spend the night and the holiday today, but both Anne [Dike] and I had a longing to get somewhere in the country where we could sleep indefinitely, and really rest.

The condition of things over here is worse than it has been at any time for the last five years, the Bolsheviks are doing the most impossible things in the way of propaganda, and of course behind it all are the Boche agents, they say there are only about fifty agitators that are stirring up the whole mud, but every one is more than uneasy, and the endless delays over the peace signatures have made it all so much easier for them to act. What is so sickening about it all is that it is not the men that have been fighting all these five years, and who have born all the agony so long, but all the industrials that have been working in the munitions plants in the interior, earning more than they ever thought of owning that all getting into line. Of course the C. G. T. [Confédération Générale du Travail] was always considered the reddest of the red, and now they are all more than alarmed over the situation. It all seems so more than sickening when one thinks of the splendid patriotism just a year ago, when the entire country faced the ghastly situation of the great German advance with an ideal that dominated egotism, and now these groups are formulating resolutions of protest against too severe terms for the Boche. The strikes in every case are political more than industrial, with the eight-hour law passed, and with wages going up and up, the cost of living is getting worse and worse, but, alas there is the same terrible lack of real leaders that one is feel[ing] everywhere in the world, and it is hard to see the outcome of it all for this desperately wounded country.

Meanwhile our wonderful farmers are still dominated by the same courage and determination, and it is them that one must look for the future.

Our fête yesterday was really a beautiful thing, we had about twenty-five of our children in the chapel which is more than lovely, the whole choir more like an Italian church in its coloring.

The whole body of the church was full of the parents who were so moved and so happy over it all. The day was divine so we had lunch for all the children and their families under the trees in

one of the great *allées*, at least a hundred and fifty people in all. All of us and the staff as well as the guests had ours later in the children's refectory. The Bangs were both there and he made such a charming little speech in honor of Anne [Dike] whose birthday it was. After lunch the children had a little performance for her themselves which was more than charming, and the whole day was a delight only of course we were all more than dead afterwards.

How one wishes it was possible to counteract this building up of misunderstandings between America and France, it is so vital for the future of the world that they and England should stand shoulder to shoulder, and all this superficial criticism on both sides seems such a disastrous thing. Perhaps that is the most satisfactory part of all our work, that up in our part of the world there is not a family that will not pass on the feeling of deep sympathy and understanding to their children, and we have been able to get that feeling across to thousands of American homes all over the country.

It seems impossible to make people understand the real situation over here by letters. I suppose it is the scale of it all that they fail to feel. In the background of their minds seem to lurk the memories of our big disasters, and they try to imagine those infinitely larger and greater, but they seem to always forget that in this case the entire country has lost its youth.

We are continually asked from our home office to give definite plans and figures, but how is that possible when even now seven months after the Armistice every government plan is changing from day to day and it is only this last week that the government has been giving out publicly the figures that show that no matter what indemnity Germany promises to pay eventually, France will have to carry the indebtedness for at least a generation and the world must come to her aid by giving her credit if all that she has to give the world is to be saved.

All this time, Dearest, I have not thanked you for your letter of this week, dated May 16, it was a joy to have the details of your birthday and to know how well things are going with you.

My own plans are still vague and will stay so till this passport question is settled, for we must get some more workers over to replace those that are leaving, before either Anne [Dike] or I can leave. Of course what we want is to go over ourselves together, as it would make the work ahead much easier if it is possible, if not Anne will go first and I will join her for some of the time, and she will leave me behind over there to finish the job at that end, and later I will come over to help again at this end. You see with a constantly changing *personelle* it is not only the breaking in of new workers that is difficult, but there is no one that is ready to carry on all the work as a whole, so it comes down to only Anne or me every time. I think that Juliet can explain this better than I can write it.

Goodbye, and no end of love to all the family, and above all to you and Blythie

Always yours devotedly,  
Anne

**Letter from Anne Morgan to her mother, Frances Tracy Morgan  
Blérancourt, June 1919**

Dearest Mother,

[Start of the letter is missing] I wish you could have seen the courage of them all last week over there at St. Aubin when the whole village had to be evacuated because of the explosion of the



munitions dump which has been left at the stat[ion?] ever since the armistice. The miracle was that though the whole village was riddled, no one was wounded, but it was heartbreaking to have to leave all their little possessions again. One dear old lady of over ninety just got into the camionette, and only said "I am sure that *les dames américaines* will take care of me." We put up as many as we could in the hospital, the great big aviation tent was filled, and the next day they were all allowed to go back and find their treasures, as of course they had to leave as they stood. Now alas they have decided to blow all that is left of the dump, so yesterday they were all sent up to Coucy le Château for a week till the job is over. Here there are a few big tents, and there they are all living. I can assure the war is far from over when you are all the time having such scenes as these.

This week we went to Anizy to see the arrival of our first load [of] chickens, eight hundred which cost us eighteen francs apiece. They had all been put into a ruined building, and all the inhabitants were hanging around on all sides, so eager to see which ones of these most of coveted treasures they could hope to possess. Everybody was smiling and happy, just to see them again, and to know that they could buy them for ten francs, surrounded the very name of America with a halo. It has been almost the same with the cows and the goats. These latter we give only 6 the families with the babies in connection with the intensive child welfare that Mrs. Thomson is doing, and doing beautifully.

This afternoon we had our splendid Corpus Christi fête, and you can't imagine what it meant to the morale of all the villages in the region, in this part of the world it was one of the most important of the church festivals, even since the separation of church and state, but of course this was the first since 1914.

For two weeks every girl and woman in the village that was not too busy in the field has been sewing on the dresses for the children in the procession, every little girl in white with a daisy wreath on her head, carrying her little basket of flower petals. It was tragic to see the long procession with the children in the middle, and outside, the long line of woman, almost without exception with crape veils.

We built up the altar against the green among the ruins of the château, and there must have been five or six hundred people.

The Ks of C. [Knights of Columbus] were charming and sent us up a big camion of dolls, chocolates, and cigarettes for distribution, and the men that came with them were so enchanted that they are longing to bring us up everything they have on stock. I must say they do seem to have the right kind of workers in that organization, of course they are just rough and strong, but there is none of the nonsense of the Ys about them, and they are just the right type to work among the boys and have the right kind of influence on the rank and file.

After it was all over and all evening the whole village was singing the children full of joy were playing everywhere, and there was a real atmosphere of festa.

What meant so much was the way the people threw themselves into all the preparation. The leader is one of the finest women in this region. She lost her girl of sixteen during the war, a girl that all the village loved, her own dream had been to make Blérancourt live again and now she only lives to carry on the same message, though she has also lost her husband, her oldest son, and now the other boy, the only one that is at an age to begin to carry some of the load has just been called with his class as a soldier.

Those are some of the stories that one is confronted with when they say the French are now at the point when they must be left to their own salvation.

Well, dearest, I must leave you now. The Bangs [John Kendrick and his wife, Mary], who to our delight are both over here together, are going off on a trip through the British lines, and they are taking Perkie [Elizabeth Perkins of the American Committee] with them to see what the whole picture is like. So there is much to attend to to get them off. Please gave no end of love to Blythie, and with all there is in the world for you,

Always your devoted daughter,  
Anne

**Letter from Anne Morgan to her mother, Frances Tracy Morgan  
Blérancourt, 9 July 1919**

Dearest Mother,

Your good letter of June 19<sup>th</sup> came this week, and it was a joy to have it. As to the leaving of our workers, perhaps the best possible answer to Frances Hoppin is the fact that some of the best ones are so filled with the vital and immediate need of our work that after all they cannot make up their minds to leave for more than a short visit to America. At Laon, for instance, [Muriel] Valentine who has been with us for over a year and who is the joint head of the section there, is going home the first of October to return the end of November, and Eames, her partner, is going in December to return in January. Even the Parsons, now that the time for their leaving is so close, are beginning to waver and are considering staying through the winter.

This week I happened into Mr. Nelson one day in Paris, it seems he has been over with the Ys for a number of months and had only seen the interior. As he was sailing in two days we bundled him off to Vic for twenty-four hours and from what the Parsons said I think he got a good deal out of it. Of course it was too short a visit to really see through into what we are already doing and still more, trying to do, but I am sure he can help us no end when he goes back to Ohio. Anyway he sailed the next day, so it was his last impression and was a good one.

This week I had such a good two days at Laon with the group up there, their Canton of Anizy is more than interesting, but more tragic than words can say. The whole region is desperately destroyed and yet the people are coming back in just the same way, only the tragedy is that in most cases the gardens even have not been cleared and there has been no chance to plant their gardens for the summer and above all, next winter. The Première Urgence is doing better work in the canton than here in Coucy, so there are a few *barraques* going up, but they are few and far between and could hardly be considered winterproof.

We found one delightful woman there who recognized me at once from Blérancourt in 1917, for she and her husband had been here at that time, they are living in one of the shelters made out of the German corrugated iron, but in the middle was a wonderful bed which she had bought at Laon. As the poor soul had found that a cave had been built just where she had buried all her treasure when she was repatriated, she had reduced her needs to the minimum, but her courage was too splendid, and her chief joy was the fact that in spite of the fact that they had only asked for authorization to get back to Blérancourt, not knowing that her own ruins were habitable or not, the train had stopped at Anizy, so they just got off and stayed there because it was their home before, though not one stone was left.

Our doctors are doing first rate work in the Canton, and now we have a little house for them, where they can live and have a small dispensary and reach all the villages much more easily. The medical and the child welfare work at Vic are making the most enormous progress. Of course we have the most tremendous enthusiast in Mrs. Thomson in the latter work she is more or less of a maniac, but the result is A.1. A madder person I never saw when she went to see Miss Lilian Wald, thinking that she would have some help from her expert advice, instead of which Miss Wald hardly listened to her, and only said that the German babies were in great need and the future generation might be very seriously affected. Of course we told her this was very good news, so there may have been a slight coolness, only don't talk to me about the people who called themselves pacifists being anything but pure Boche.

Jenny will be very happy soon now, as Annie is as sure as you are that she must go home, but I do believe that if things go all right she will come back and work with us later on. She could not get permission to come here as she had to report twice every day for home orders, this was a disappointment for I am sure if she had really seen the work she would have been much more anxious to come next autumn.

My own plans are still vague, Miss Perkins and the Bangs have made us feel that if the work is to go on we must come back to make not only the general public understand why, but even our own Committee needs convincing. The R. C. [Red Cross] propaganda as shown by Frances has indeed gone very far, and the attitude of the financial group that France is richer than ever seems to me more than hard to refute as the public seems to want to feel that way about it. It is so easy to make statements if no one contradicts them, but why does no one ask questions?

I heard Mr. [Edward] Stettinius quoted as saying that many manufactures in the south had doubled their output, but no one was able to say with what labor considering all the men that are able-bodied between the ages of twenty and forty-five had been mobilized, that no machines of any kind have been produced in France except war munitions, and that it is still almost impossible to find manufactured articles of most things on the market. For instance this week we have been able to buy no forks, knives or spoons, and there are many things of the same kind.

Well, Dearest, I am sure that you don't need any persuading, so there is no use boring you any further, but one does get pretty mad right through.

Next week we are to have the wonder of wonders in the fête de la Victoire, all the members of the different units are all coming down and the excitement is intense. The celebration of the fourth was one of the most splendid things and that was only a sample of the real thing which comes off on the fourteenth. We are having the most impossible time trying to get seats for everyone, it may turn out to be hopeless, but we are pulling all kinds of wires.

Good night and good bye dearest Mother, I am falling to sleep but this carries no end of love from

your devoted daughter,  
Anne