

Camden St.

Bloomington.

3/2/18.

My Dear F. W.

Was very pleased to receive your cheerful  
humourousness of 9/19/11/17. also letters 113 & 114 from Father &  
Mother. Of course ~~never~~ I suppose you have been reading  
~~a lot of stale news from me, after receiving my cable show-~~  
ing the change of address. I am very much indebted to  
you for enclosing the missing portion of our family tree.

"Demmed interwesting!" — Where did you get hold of the rumour  
about us going to Italy. They only sent Tommie's down there after  
the Italian mess-up. I believe the "Deigos" had the "wind up"  
properly & if it had not been for the British troops, they would  
have collapsed altogether. I think that next time we have a  
war we'll have it on our own. All through the piece we  
have been carrying some — messing fools, & Fritz  
gets the benefit of it all. He could never break through  
on the Western Front. The Cambrai stunt was a mess-up,  
& could have ~~been~~ been avoided <sup>if</sup> the Fritz counter attack was  
expected.

Of course you can't help having casualties.  
There is so much gear, artillery, ammunition & (men, of course)  
concentrated behind the line that ~~the~~ Fritz can't help hitting  
something if he chuck's a shell over; & of course it is not our  
policy (as the offensive or attacking party) to build such

elaborate gas pits, pill-boxes & dugouts. as Fritz, we get a little benefit from his defences when we push him back a few inches. I was in one of his pill-boxes one day when he lobbed a small shell on top of it. It hardly made any impression on the concrete. Well, to get out of France for a bit. Fritz had two air-raids near here last week (Mon & Tues.) On Mon. one bomb blew the — out of "Kraus Bottomley's printing establishment with the result that "John Bull's" circulation was curtailed a trifle. You'd almost think that Fritz had got over with "John Bull" for "slinging off" at him & so dropped a "hot stone" (as the soldiers say) on his building. I think there were over 50 people killed there; so you can see that air-raids are particularly rotten. In France, on certain parts of the line; Ypres for instance - while the Paschendael stunt was on - Fritz used to come over every night & his planes would go back & forth with loads of bombs, half the night; but one expects it there; while over here it ~~is~~ makes you feel horrible to see the crowds of people taking cover. All the tubes stop running & the people ~~get~~ get down below. You see them in various stages of dress, some with camp stools, others with cushions, blankets etc. trying to make themselves comfortable. I sell 'ice digger' ~~the~~ half the mob over in Aussie don't know there is a war on. Let some of the crowd over here imagine their tin-pot little town, to be a village in France or Belgium. I mean one of those moth-eaten affairs I told you about once before, where the crowd had to leave suddenly & pick up what