

(Letter written to Henry Kelly, Harry's father, by Captain Henry Worthington)

June 20, 1918

A.P.O. 787

My Dear Mr. Kelly,

For a long time I have wanted to write you just a word, in some manner to let you know just how much Harry has meant, not only to me but to all of us soldiers. And just before I left the hospital, Harry asked me to write you a line and gave me your address. He did not need to ask me to write at all.

By this time you know that your son's left leg was amputated above the knee. I am sorry he tried to evade the issue in his letters. Otherwise, he is perfectly sound and quite well. When I left he had started to walk on crutches and was getting around out doors famously.

I wish I could tell you exactly how I feel towards Kelly. He was a raw recruit when he joined my company. We were short of officers and he got his platoon at once, and turned it from the least good--I can't call any of them bad, we are too proud of our company--into the very best platoon in the company. Not only did he do that, but he proved his ability and courage when he took out patrols into the No Man's Land. I remember his first one, the men came back and they always wanted to go out with the Lieutenant again. Then when we did get into a little affair and Kelly was captured, wounded and escaped, he refused to allow Corporal Arvin to dress his leg--first aid--as long as the Hun was fooling around. This example stirred us to the utmost and I may say we fought like the devil to try to get even. I was not near him but I have my information from a good source. He did not think of Harry Kelly but of the men and the cause. He received a Croix de Guerre with a palm--he deserved the highest.

Then in the hospital he was splendid. He took his medicine like the man he is and never whimpered. Should any stranger ask him what happened, his only reply would be "A little hard luck". I do not believe the any one failed to remark on his courage and discipline. And when we go back up again, I know for sure that Kelly's cheerfulness in misfortune, his courage and his example will aid us all. "Remember Kelly" will make any outfit I am in command of fight like---Pardon--one can't very well express it in words.

I am mighty proud, sir, to have known your son.

Very truly yours,

Henry H. Worthington, Captain 9th Inf.