

To Friends
By EPM
Memorial Day, 2009

Dear Bill,

The letters get further apart as I find myself dreaming of doing things more than actually getting them done. The days, they fly! But as we approach this day in May, I am sure you know that this letter is something you can be certain of; as I am certain of yours.

Remember when we thought time had stopped? The days and weeks of endless dirt and hunger and the lack of sleep that would surely have killed us had we not been young. But mostly, I cannot forget the pain and death that always hovered near, striking before we had time to fend it off. Losing men we never had the chance to know and carrying away friends who remain a part of us still.

Hanley was first. I don't know why we were caught so unaware, so shocked that one of us could die. It's not like we hadn't lost guys before but there was a core of men who'd been together since the beaches and losing one pierced the invincibility of our youth.

And again, it happened again as we ran from building to building in a village whose name I cannot remember. Littlejohn and the Sarge were on the left. You and I took the right side of the street. A single shot echoed through the quiet. The farm boy went straight down without a sound. He was gone before he hit the dirt. The thing I remember most from that day was the look on Doc's face—helpless, frustrated, defeated.

You are never really ready for the death of someone close to you especially when they are ripped away in the space of a breath. And that's what it felt like; the Sarge was with us than gone in an instant in time. Everything he was to us, everything we went through lingers with me even now. I am sure that you and Doc must feel the same way.

So, another day of remembrance approaches and I wonder if the world remembers the men who left their futures on battlefields far from home. I hope so, mon ami. I want to think what they did will never be forgotten.

*I remain your friend,
Paul*