

~To the left is the sad letter addressed to the parents of Edwin Austin Abbey informing them of his death in battle. To the right is the letter Abbey intended his parents to read in the event of his death.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY

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IN THE FIELD, April 22, 1917.

W. B. ABBEY, ESQ.,

523 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

DEAR MR. ABBEY, —

I would like to write you concerning the death of your son in action on the morning of April 10th, about 9 o'clock. It is my duty to write even more, because I thought very highly of him as a gentleman and a friend. At the time of his death, he was in charge of one of our most dangerous posts. It was a strong point in front of our trench and a little distance over the crest of Vimy Ridge. It was necessary to hold it in order to deny to the enemy the approach up the hill to the crest. Because of the loss we had suffered in the post, it was almost decided to withdraw from the post during the day, but your son came and argued that he should continue to hold the post because of its importance. In this he showed his fine devotion to duty and disregard of danger. On his way out to the post he was shot and killed by an enemy sniper.

His grave is marked by the Graves Registration Committee, and later a suitable mark will be set up by the battalion.

The chaplain later read the service over his grave.

I would like to assure you of my genuine sympathy in your great loss. I feel a sense of personal loss myself, for one does n't often meet such fine fellows. In my brief experience with him, he had always shown himself a gallant soldier and a thorough gentleman.

Yours sincerely,

A. P. MENZIES,

Major 4th C.M.R.

[Found in soldier's kit, forwarded to his mother from Ottawa]

FRANCE, April 6, 1917.

Good Friday.

DEAREST MOTHER AND FATHER, —

We are going up to an attack in a short time, and I am going to leave this note to be sent to you in case, by God's will, this is to be my final work. I have made my Communion, and go with a light heart and a determination to do all that I possibly can to help in this fight against evil, for God and humanity. I do not think of death or expect it, but I am not afraid of it, and will give my life gladly if it is asked. It is my greatest comfort that I know that you too will gladly give all that is asked, and live on happily doing all that can be done, grateful to God for his acceptance of our sacrifice. To-day the news came to us here that the United States had joined the Allies, so I go with the happy consciousness that I am, and you are, fighting for our dear Flag, as thousands of Americans have before us, in the cause of Liberty. It may be comfort for you to know that I have a great company of comrades, men and officers all filled with determination and cheerful courage.

My dearest love to S—— and H—— and their dear children. My heart is full of gratitude for having such love as they have given me. My dearest love to all my friends, all who have loved me and whom I love.

Now, dearest mother, and dearest father, I will say good-bye for a time. You have given me my faith which makes this so easy for me, and a wonderful example and inspiration of courage and unselfishness. All my love, and God bless you both.

YOUR SON.

