

**ENTENTE CORDIALE:  
FROM THE LETTERS OF  
LIEUTENANT HENRI G-**

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Entente Cordiale: From the Letters of Lieutenant Henri G- by Henri G.

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**HENRI G.**

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*[Handwritten signature]*

# Entente Cordiale

*from the letters of  
Lieutenant Henri G—*

BOSTON  
Geo. H. Ellis Co.  
1918



Aux armées,  
29th August, 1916.

*Cher Monsieur S—:*

My dear comrade Delberg gave me, before dying, the two amiable letters you had sent to him. Wounded myself, I was unable to reply to you at once, and it was not until I returned to the front for the fourth time, that I found my little belongings and your letters. My comrade died bravely, as every one does here, in the front of these *maudits* Boches, who keep us from having news of our dear families.

As I see that your kind heart offered a correspondent to my dear departed friend, I ask you, if it will not trouble you too much, to write to me. I also am from the invaded regions, and I have my wife and three dear little ones in the hands of our enemies; therefore you can believe that it is not always gay. It would thus be with pleasure that I could distract myself with an exchange of letters. I know that your great country has taken an interest in our just cause. Your political questions interest me, and that which the neutrals think of us and our allies. The news of your country life—the stories of your little hens, etc.—interest me also, and change my ideas in recalling my lost hearth.

I am grateful to you in advance for the trouble



which you will take, and I shall do my best to write you often. It will seem so good to read an agreeable word. In this hope and begging you to accept for yourself and your family my best wishes, I beg you, *Monsieur*, to believe in my *meilleurs sentiments*.

Henri G—

13th November, 1916.

*Cher Monsieur S—:*

It gives much pleasure to us combatants to know that over there across the sea, unknown friends are thinking of us, and it is a comfort to feel ourselves morally sustained in the great cause for which we fight. As you have had the goodness to ask me what I should like, I permit myself to ask you if it would be possible to send some illustrated magazines which would make known to me and my friends your lovely country. It would give great pleasure to my comrades and to me and will make the hours seem less long, for in the mud and the snow one has not always a smile.

17th November, 1916.

I was agreeably surprised to receive two days ago your long and detailed letter. I do not

know how to thank you sufficiently for the pleasure it gave me and the moral aid you have thus brought me. As you ask it, it will be very delightful for me to converse frequently with you, and as the mail between our two countries takes so long, I am going to permit myself to write you about every two weeks. I am going to ask you to excuse me from not writing you in pure French, because I am not as well educated as you. I have made above all commercial and mechanical studies.

As you have been good enough to accept my correspondence, it is of the most elementary politeness that I should introduce myself. I am thirty-one years old and was before the war agent for a large steel firm in Lille. I lived with my wife and my three little children in a small house in the suburbs of Lille, where I had my office, and I travelled in the north of France and parts of Belgium. On the 9th of October, 1914, my quarter was bombarded and burned by the Germans on their entry into the city. Since this date I am entirely ignorant of what has happened to my dear family. *C'est le plus triste.* The factories to which I was attached, being in the east of France in the invaded regions, have been completely destroyed. There remains for us nothing at all but the courage to put one's self back to work as soon as the war is over. In

spite of our modest salaries, which do not compare with those of your region, I had a position which permitted me to have a charming house, and I worked with pleasure to offer a good education to my little children. All that is now only a remembrance—the little house which I had had built is completely destroyed. I do not know whether my papers, securities, etc., have been stolen or burned. That is of small importance now. The hope of returning victorious keeps one alive. When one is young with a good will one can make again a little living.

For two weeks we have had snow and it has been below freezing, and there is a great deal of fog, which makes the service hard. In spite of the fact that the shelters are quite comfortable, and that our chiefs give us everything which can protect us from the rigors of winter, one has not always the heart to write, especially when thinking of the beloved beings in the invaded regions, who suffer more than martyrs because of the Boches. You have read of the new atrocities in Belgium. If we had lacked courage, which is not the case, reading of all these crimes would give us the necessary vigor not to feel our own sufferings.