

Deer Godchild

Marguerite Bernard and Edith Serrell

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DEER GODCHILD

by

MARGUERITE BERNARD and EDITH SERRELL

Published for the Fatherless Children of France

1919

DEDICATED

TO OUR FRIEND

LOUISE HURLBUT MASON

INTRODUCTION

A young New-Yorker of twelve lately heard an appeal for the Fatherless Children of France, and his heart was touched. He had no money, but he resolved to give his spare time and his utmost energy to support a "kid in France." The French child needed ten cents worth of extra food each day, in order to grow up with strength and courage. The little American godfather earned those ten cents; he sold newspapers at the subway entrance, after school hours, and undertook an amazing variety of more or less lucrative odd jobs. Sometimes business was slow, and it was hard to keep up the game; but he did. He is still, in the true American expression "making good" for his dear godchild, and doing it with a broad and brotherly grin. He is James P. Jackson Jr. His letters to and from the kid in France are published just for fun--and yet in the hope of encouraging more "dear benefactors" to join our large family and help along, in the same spirit and with the same joy.

EDITH SERRELL.

Greenville Falls,
November 27, 1916.

Dear miss Secretary

How are you? It is al-rite about the french orfan and I wood like a boy between ten and twelve if it is the same to you. At fust dad sed I coodnt have him because there was plenty of rich godfathers who wood take him if I didn't, but mother told him of the apeel you made and that I was goin to raze the money myself, and he sed well I guess you are rite and if he can raze enuf money to raze a kid on he is well come to it, and she sed I guess that is the rite spirit. And so I am sending you 85cts. which is 70cts, fer the fust weak, and you can keep the change which is 15cts, fer the next weak, so I will only send 55cts, fer the fust weak after that. The 85cts. is my birthday money which was on thanksgiving day and I guess the folks will be glad to give me work when they no I am suporting a kid in france.

Hoping you are well and I am the same I will, close.

Yours truly,
James Prendergast Jackson Jr.

P.S. I shood like his name to be Bill or Pete in french and not one of those girly names if it is the same to you.

To Mr. James Prendergast Jackson Jr.
Dear Sir:

According to your instructions, we have assigned to you Andre Leblanc, aged 11, No. 18 rue d'Autancourt, Paris, as your godchild for one year. Thanking you for your interest in this worthy cause, we beg to remain

Very truly yours,
The Junior Committee for the Fatherless
Children of France.

Greenville Falls, N.Y.
Dec, 1st, 1916.

Deer godchild

How are you? I am very well and I have ganed 5 lbs. in one weak which makes me 85 lbs. which is thot very good in America. Have you had much snow? We have had it considerable hear which has spoylt the skating on Frost Lake which is beehind old Sam Bursars house who is our naybor. I am glad you have a short name, I had ruther be cald Andre than Nickulus, Cristuff or Jean-Marie, but I wood ruther you were cald Bill or Pete or Sniper, but you cant help being what they call you so never mind. I suported you this weak by selling 70 copies of the Greenville Mirror by hand. It is a good paper and shood be patronized. I wakt into Jim Parkers offis he is the editur and sed, Mister Parker, if you have a loose job and no man fer it I am the man you want, and he sed how old are you? and I sed 11. and he sed what you want a job fer? and I sed, O fer a kid I have in France and he sed since I was suportin you if I cood sell 70 copies of the Mirror he wood give me 35 cts. and Mother had give me 15 fer mindin the chickens when she went to Peeks-kill, so I new it would be al-rite, so I sed very well your on. So I took the mirrors and stood on the corner of School street, and bimeby the men begin to come home from the city, and some of them stopt to buy a Mirror and some did not, so I thot I wood make an appeel so I hollered, Buy a Mirror fer a kid in France, and waived it in there faces, and you shood have seen them buy! Enneway I guess the Mirror is a good ole paper, when all the men had come home I thot I wood take the papers to the folks that wernt on the street, like the schoolmaams and the sisters. Well most of them hot fine exsept miss Leigh the Sunday school teacher, and she sed the Mirror was a low down politishuns sheet and I sed buy it fer Lily Blanche her help, and she sed what are you so ankshus to sell papers fer? And I sed how do you expect me to suport a kid in France if you peeple wont help out? and she sed the Lord will provide, but I told her I wood ruther do it myself; and she said I guess He's doin it threw you, so at last she forkt up, and I went home at 6 o'clock, but I tell you I had a prety tuf day. Say how is your mussel? Have you enny brothers and sisters? I have five, they are Amanda aged 16, Cecilia aged 10, Myra-Louise aged 7, Molly aged 6, and Heloise aged 5. I come between the fust too. Dad wanted to call Heloise Omeega after Alfred and Omeega in the Bibel, but Mother sed that was foolish and I guess it was, cause there was no boy to be Alfred excep me, and I was alredy James, so he give it up. Sid Perkins is suportin a girl in France and hes aful rich, and dont have to work to keep her goin. Gee, Im glad your a boy, girls is al-rite in there line but I woodnt adop one fer love or money. Can you here the shootin from where you are? I have seen the new American submareen and it is a fine bus, I tell you if ever the Yankees come runnln over there you wont see Kaiser Bill fer dust. Do you like prisners base? What grade are you in? Well, hoping you are well and that some day we will meet somewhere in France, I will close.

Your affecshunate godfather,
James Prendergast Jackson Jr.

P.S. If ever we go to war, and I inlist and go to France I mite take
you back to New York on firflow.

16 Dec. 1916.
Dear Benefactor,

I thank you with the bottom of my heart for your kindness unto me. Maman and me have been so content to receive your letter and your donation generous! Your succour will sweeten the times difficult that we are traversing; and the silver^[1] you send will permit me to eat of the meat and be forceful to aid maman she has so much of labor and of pain! I will tell you, dear benefactor, that I am not the most robust But I take the oil of liver of cod-fish all the days for make myself high and good-carrying.^[2] Yes, dear benefactor, I will forget never what you do, and all the nights I make a prayer for you be happy in the life.

I cannot to read your letter very well alone, because I know not sufficient the English. But I have one aunt, she is dead, she know very well the English, and she teach me of it and my great sister also; she is a dactylographer,^[3] and she know the English very perfect, and she me aids so I do mistakes not at all. And I serve me of the dictionary also. Maman say your letters will make complete my education. But some words I comprehend not. What is, for example, the kid? I search and I see only it is the offspring of a goat. I am sure in the book is the mistake, for my dear godfather will not make the pain to me and my Maman in calling me the offspring of a goat.

Dear godfather, I am also surprise that you be so much heavy. I have 11 years like you, and I am only 39 kg heavy. But in Amerique, Maman tell me, all is big, big! It is droll, so big little boys. Sometimes I ask myself if you are veritably a little boy. Perhaps it is to make laugh you tell me you are one infant. Perhaps you are the old gentleman.

Tell me dear godfather, what is it the Sunday-school? In Paris we go not to school the Sunday. We rise more lately, and we dress more pretty than the days of week, and for breakfast we eat the cacao in lieu of soup of potato left of last night. And we go to the grand mass with Maman. Little brother Jean is one infant of choir at the church. He do nothing but balance and smoke the incense, and be pretty like one angel; because his hairs are like the gold, and his eyes like the heaven when the sun make shine. All at the beginning he was not content because the smoking make him to sneeze, and he did cry, and he wanted not to indorse^[4] the dress white, with lace; he say he resemble to a girl; and he believe all the world in the church was regarding him. But now he is habituated, and he become more sage. It is very necessary he become sage, because he is so devil. Yesterday, for example, Mr. le Cure give him a pretty card postal with the image of angels and tell him he must apply to resemble to them; and Jean responded, "no I want not to be the angel and have wings like one hen!" Mr. le Cure say it is Satan that commands the wicked words like that, and when he go to fall in temptation Jean must say, "Vade retro

Satanas," and that make Satan go behind. And Jean say, "yes but then Satan go at my back and push hard, so I fall!" It is very sad little Jean be so much bad.

I will tell you, dear benefactor, that I effort myself to work and be very sage so little brother take model on me. I go to catechism two times by week, and I am on the table of honor, and for Christmas Mr. le Cure give me a pretty shawl for hold my neck and shoulders warm when I go to school.

For Christmas Jean put his shoes in the chimney for the little Jesus fill them like all the years. But Maman say to him: "This year the little Jesus carry nothing, because with all the sous in the world he want to get our big victory so the dirty boches kill no more our dear Papas."

But, grace to you, the morning of Noel the shoes were all of same remplished. There was apples red and some chocolate and stockings with long legs. We make many of holes in our stockings and all the time there is no more cloth in places, so Maman cuts them down. So in the beginning they are long, then 1/2 long, then socks. It was socks all the winter, dear benefactor, but when your silver come, the legs come long again.

In the after-dinner Noel we make a promenade in the woods of Boulognes. Now it is the vacances[5] of Noel and I aid Maman, she make me some black aprons new for go to school, and I sit myself down on the side of her. She loves not that I play in the streets, because she desire that I be well elevated [6]. And it is much snow in Paris; it make so cold that I love not to go out.

Dear benefactor, you demand what grade I am. I comprehend not. Only the officers have grade. Are you an officer? I think yes, because you talk so much the submareens, etc.

I have nothing more to say at you, but Maman joins herself to me to pray you to agree, dear benefactor, the expression of our sentiments the most distinguished and respectful.

Your godchild,
A. Leblanc.

- [1] Silver (argent) money.
- [2] Good-carrying (bien portante) healthy.
- [3] Dactylographer (typist).
- [4] Indorse (endosser) to put on.
- [5] Vacances (vacances) vacations.
- [6] Well elevated (bien elevee) well bred.

Greenville Falls. N.Y.
Jan. 2, '17.

Deer Miss Secretary,

There is something off about my godchild, you no the one you give me to suport, well dad rored when he saw the letter but I think he is a

nut and mother sez he is two elevated fer me, so hoping you will get me a nuther one I will close hoping you are well.

Yours truly,
James P. Jackson Jr.

P.S. I will rite just the same to this one till you get me a nuther one.

Greenville Falls. N.Y.
Jan. 2, 1917.

Deer godchild

How are you? I got your letter al-rite and what I wood like to no is what in thunder is that goat stuff you are drivin at? I didnt call you no names excep dere godchild and kid and you are both, and a godchild is a godchild and sometimes a kid is a goat and sometimes a goat is a kid and if you dont stop your kiddin you'll get my goat see? Mebbe you didn't mene to be fresh and if you didnt will call it square and say no more about it, ennyway I guess you use that bloomin dickshunary two much. Dickshunaries is like girls and is al-rite in there line, but I aint got much use fer them and you had best chuck yours out the window. I guess 85lbs. is a good ole wait but 39 is something feerce, why even Heloise aged 5 ways 45 and she dont eat enny of that codfish liver, and say what does it test like ennyway? I bet it tests like ole get out. I told Mother you wade only 39 and she sed, my goodness he must have tuberculosees, and dad sed, no, he has not had enuf meat, but I sed no but he is going to have some now I am suporting him. What do you think? I got enuf money to suport you fer too weaks, and if you will cross your heart not to tell because I promist I woodnt and you must do the same, I will tell you how it hapened, well it was this way, I was readin the Motor Boys Under the Sea beehind the portyares and its great, when in walk Carl Odell the young feller across the way and Amanda aged 16, and they set down and didnt say much and bimby Carl he takes Amandas hand and sez, Amanda you no how tis with me? and she sez, why no how is it Carl? and he sez I love you, and she sez to Carl, this is so suddin, and he sez, little girl will you be my wife? and she sez, o Carl I dunno, and he sez, I demand an answer yes or no, and she sez well I dunno but as I will, and he sed, sweatheart what day shall it be? And I stept out and sed, Hold on, dont go and make it Tuesday becaus Amandas promist to go fishin and dad wont let me go to Frost Lake without her, caus its 16 feet deep, and you should have seen them jump. They was scart plump out of there wits, and Amanda she sez, If he tells dad I shall dye, and Carl he grabd me by one ear and sed, Jim, I give you the choyce of keepin quiet and gettin \$1.50 or squealin and being skinned alive, and I sed, Well I am suporting a kid, I mean a boy, in France so I will take the coin, so I crost my heart and sed hope to dye if I squeal and you must do the same, caus bimby if the Yanks come runnin over there you mite mete a frend of Carl Odells and hed tell a nuther frend, and bimby all the Yanks wood no it and it wood get back to Carl Odells ears. I bet that Jean is some brother, say hes al-rite, all excep his name, coodnt you make it Buster? Say what you want to go wearin a shawl fer, fust thing you no all the boys will call you girly, and I dont intend to have no godchild of mine cald that, no siree, not if I have to skin them alive

fer it. I no its hard when things are give to you not to wear them,
last yere the Sunday-school teacher give me a baby-blew tie and darn
if I didn't have to wear it every Sunday till Lady Evelin Jack Burtons
fathers best bull dog found it and et it. But you go eezy on that
shawl. Never you mind about Sunday-school, just you be glad you dont
have to go to it, though I dont no but goin to see that balancin stunt
of Jeans is just as bad. And dont you be askin two many questions
about me, mebbe Im an officer and mebbe Im not, and mebbe I no
something about submareens and mebbe I don't but I woodnt let it
sprize you if I come ridin in in one of those busses one of these
days, and if I do and I like you I mite even take you back with me
to New York, and then goodnite--you'll see some sites. Say whats that
dope on sage? Hoping you are well and will rite to me soon I will now
close hoping you are well.

Your affeckshunate godfather,
James P. Jackson Jr.

P.S. I made Carl Odell give me the money rite off becaus he is a Red
Indian fer cheatin. Did you get the Christmas presents I sent you?

18 rue d'Autancourt, Paris.
4 Jan. 1917.

Dear Godfather:

The big paquet from Amerique come late but I receive it to-day and I
thank you very much. You are very good to think so much of me and it
is very pretty, dear benefactor, There is one glove only, and I am
fearful that the other rested on the road[7]. But it makes nothing[8];
I have not business[9] of two, because one is enough big for my two
hands, and it is a muff very warm; but veritably, dear godfather, you
are big like giants, in Amerique! The little cage is very commodious
also, and very pretty. Jean believe it is a muzzle for dog, but no,
I comprehend it Is for suspend on the ceiling for to make pretty the
house, with plants green, climbing.

Goobye, dear benefactor, I kiss you with the bottom of my heart

Your godchild all devoted,
A. Leblanc.

[7] Rested on the road (_reste en route_) went astray.

[8] It makes nothing (_cela ne fait rien_) it does not matter.

[9] I have not business (_le n'ai pas besoin_) I do not need.

Greenville Falls. N.Y.

Deer miss Secretary,

Pleese you must do sumthing quick about my orphan he is awful. I sent
a baseball glove and mask for Cristmas and he used them fer a muff
and to hang plants in, and he wares a shawl and sits on the table of

sumthing, and now he is kissing me with the bottom of his heart and that is the limit and he must cut it out because I wont stand fer that. Hoping you are well and you will answer soon in answer to my leter I will close.

Yours truly,
James P. Jackson Jr.

18 rue d'Autancourt, Paris
18 Jan, 1917.

Dear Benefactor:

I thank you for your pretty letter so interesting. My great sister Marie work very hard for to aid me read it, but it is very difficult to comprehend. It is because you talk the American and the dictionary talk only the English. I will try to learn the American if you will to me give the instructions. Dear godfather, you are not in anger against me? I make always attention to be polite and genteel, because already I love you from far. But Marie say there is the miss understand in our letters she cannot explicate. For three nights I sleep not well because I search to comprehend what is it that makes bad, then this morning I have it the idea brilliant; there is on the place des Clercs the dentist American. It is writ on his door, Dr. Yanket, and Maman go to sew on the dresses of Madame. She talk very well with two tongues, and Maman say she regard the letters then she laugh very strong. Then she say to Maman: "Console your infant, it may sleep on the two ears[10], because the godfather is one very genteel little boy." And then she write a little paper she desire me copy for you very careful. Here is it: "Jimmy, in Uncle Sam's name I am proud of you. You're the right sort keep it up and don't get cold feet. For that godchild of yours is very much all right, as you will very soon realize. But let me give you frankly just one piece of friendly advice; don't tell your kid to 'chuck the dictionary out of the window,' but rather get one yourself, and polish up your English. Your spelling and your vocabulary are, to use your own expression, 'something fierce;' how can you expect the poor little French child to understand your slang?"

There; I have made copy, and again I understand not very well. But I am sure it go to make all arrange. And I know that you are one little boy; I am so content!

Dear godfather, it is very droll the fashion you do to make silver in Amerique! But it is very dangerous, and never in Paris we do like that. I see in my book of images English how the terrible Red-skins scalp the enemy, "skin 'em alive," like you say, and I see the image of the chef. He have long hairs black, with plumes red and green; and chains brilliant suspended, and he carry in the middle one little apron of fur; and he have not knowledge of the bon Dieu. It is call: "trading with the Indians." Oh please, dear godfather, do not for me trading with the Indians! I will permit not that you risk to be skin alive. I make the promise like you say, and I make like you the sign of cross, but I hope not to die if I squeal; I cry not very often, but sometimes, and my poor Maman will be to much desolated if I die.

Goodbye dear godfather; believe at my sentiments the more affectuous,

Your godchild,
A. Leblanc.

[10] Sleep on two ears (_dormir sur les deux oreilles_)
to sleep like a top.

To Mr. James P. Jackson Jr.

Dear Sir:

I am much interested in the account of your correspondence with your French godchild, and I would advise you not to be discouraged if he does not seem, in every way, to be living up to your expectations. You must remember that these fatherless children have suffered more deeply and more courageously than you can possibly imagine. If his letters sound rather effeminate I hope you will in time realize that it is merely a difference of language and convention that gives you that impression. The French are a very affectionate and demonstrative people. You know that even their "Papa Joffre" kisses his brave soldiers on both cheeks when he decorates them.

You are doing splendid work for a boy of your age, and I hope you will not let small prejudices get in your way. Remember you are unusually fortunate to have a child who can write in English.

With my best wishes and congratulations, I remain cordially yours,

Secretary for the Junior Committee
of the Fatherless Children of France.

Greenville Falls, N.Y.
Feb. 3, 1917.

Dear godchild

How are you? Say will you do me a faver and cut out kissin me with the bottom of your heart? If you think you ot to do it you can kiss me on both cheeks if that is the custim I guess I can stand it but I had ruther you did not kiss me at all if it is the same to you as we shake hands in America. Say that missis Yankit is some woman beleeve me and you had better keep away from her, fust thing you no she'll be trying to make me go to school every day and buy a dicshunary. What she no about the American languidge ennyway? what she have to come buttin in with her too tongues between us? You are my godchild and I am your godfather and if there is ennything you dont understand I am the one to explane, and you tell that Yankit woman she had better be helpin her husband with his teeth and let us alone, and to put that in her pipe and smoke it. I am glad you like the Cristmas presents I sent you and if you want to string the mask from the ceilin you are well come to it, but it is ment to keep your nose from gettin smasht when a hard ball comes bingin through the air. Say, that must be some stunt sleepin on both ears, I have slep on my stummick an on my back an on

one ear, but not on both. Last nite we had welsh rabbit fer supper and I did not sleep enny way. It is a good thing I have that \$1.50 Carl Odell give me becaus I do not feel al-rite and Mother wont let me go out to work, but I guess I will get out soon again so dont worry about my suportin you. Say, thats al-rite about the Red Indians--corse they aint as numrous as they was once but there still plentiful in parts but dont let that worry you cause I been brot up with them and no how to handle them. Red Skins is like snakes and is al-rite if you keep your eye on them. Course I woodnt advise you to medal with them, but I guess I can look out for myself. Say, how is Jean and has he done enny more stunts? I have a sister Molly aged 6 and she is going to rite plays and say she turns out some great stuff. Yesterday she dresst Cecilia, you no the one aged 7, as a queen and Molly she was the subjeck boughed before her and sed, Your majesty to-day unto you a child is born, and Cecilia, I mean the queen sed, Bring it in, and Molly the subjeck brot in Snookie the cat only it was the child then and it was all rigged up in Heloises close, and bimeby Heloise who was a wicked king come runnin in to kidnap the baby and she sed, no I mean he sed because she was a king, That is my child! and the subjeck sed, It is not! and the king sed, It is too! and the sujeck sez as cool as a cucumber, Your majesty you are a lyre! and then they had the darndest fite over that baby you ever saw. Fust the king hit the subjeck bingo in the eye then the subjeck he pincht the babys tail, you no Snookies, and bimeby Mother come runnin in and stuck them all in bed, but it was a buly fite. I feel aful queer so guess I will close hoping you are better than I feel

Your affeckshunate godfather,
James P. Jackson Jr.

P.S. Do you like rabbit? I hate it!

P.S. Dont ferget to tell that Yanket woman to put what I told you in her pipe and smoke it.

18 rue d'Autancourt,
Paris,
18 Feb. 1917.

Dear Godfather:

How are you? I hope you are no more fatigued. Very sure I will send you the kiss cut out as you say if you prefer. And also I will shake your hand. I will do all things American and all things that make you pleasure. But, dear godfather, you demand that I tell to Madame Yanket to smoke the pipe and I like not to say that because she is one very great lady, very genteel. But Maman say that is only a fashion of talk American and I must not make attention to it.

Yes, dear godfather, I like rabbit. When we live in the country we have two, one white and one black, and at the end of time we have 26! But not Welsh rabbits; French. They make not sick like yours.

Dear benefactor, I will write you not very long this day, for my great brother Jules come tonight on permission of four days, and I am much occupied to aid Maman arrange all things clean and pretty. I will

relate on him in my letter of the week next.

I squeeze your hand, and envoy to you the kiss cut out with my heart.

Your godchild.
A. Leblanc.

Greenville Falls. N.Y.
Feb, 5, 1917.

Deer godchild

How are you? It waznt the rabit it is the hoopincoff, I guess I am goin to dye al-rite.

J.P.J.

18 rue d'Autancourt,
Paris,
Feb. 20, 1917.

Dear Godfather:

Your letter made me to cry. I will permit you not to die. When I get your letter I go and break my tire-lire. It is the little dog of porcelain with one hole in the stomach. Maman give it to me for my fete, the Ste. Andree, and she give me two sous for put in the hole all the Sundays, and it come out nevermore until it break, you comprehend? I guard^[11] the little dog under my pillow and it make bad in my heart to break it, but what will you? My dear godfather who is only one child like me, work strong like a man for make me happy and I would break not my tire-lire for to save him from the death? Oh yes, a thousand times yes! So I take it out in the court and open the stomach with one stone and I make to fall out 26 sous! And I go to the store of objects pious, and I demand one candle of 26 sous or two candles of 13 sous, but the lady say 13 is a number of unhappiness so she give me one of 25 sous, and one sou of paper of lace of gold to put around. And I go quick to the church, and put up the candle to the Ste. Vierge, and she will see it from the sky, and she will see you also in Amerique and make you not to die, M. le Cure see the little flag American that you send me and that I attach to the candle-stick and he caress my head and say: "What for is it?" So I tell him and he say I am very genteel. But all of a hit^[12] I melt in tears^[13], because I know I am not genteel, dear godfather! I am very, very bad and wicked; I tell not the truth and I conduct not myself well unto you. Perhaps you will pardon me never! I go to confession and M. le Cure say for my penitence I must also confess to you that I am one little girl! Oh dear godfather, be not too much in anger! I am so sad! I comprehend not how it arrived, but when you write to me and say you love not the little girls I was afraid and responded nothing. Dear godfather, I will tell you that when I was little I pray often the bon Dieu make me one boy, because you know, for Him nothing is impossible. But He wish I remain a girl, and now I have cheated and He punish me very strong

in make you so much fatigue you almost die. I cannot write more this day because I am too much sad. But if you die not please tell me soon because I am so much unquiet. I assure you I will nevermore be so villain.

Your godchild repentant,

Andree Leblanc.

P.S. Maman say the Comite Americain put me like one boy. It is the two "e" that make one girl.

P.P.S. I search what is the hoopincoff, but I find it not. Surely it is the very dangerous malady, but if you die, you go to Paradise; M. le Cure promise me.

[11] I guard (_je garde_) I keep.

[12] All of a hit (_tout d'un coup_) suddenly.

[13] Melt in tears (_fondre en larmes_) burst into tears.

Greenville Falls. N.Y.
Deer miss Secretary,

The boy you give me is a girl What are you going to do about it?

Yours respekfully,
James P. Jackson Jr.

Dear Mr. Jackson

In reply to your letter, we would state that the mistake was due to the handwriting of the child's mother, making the name appear to be spelt with one "e" instead of two, and thus making it a boy's name.

We will endeavor, as soon as possible, to repair our error, as it was never our intention to deceive you.

Very truly yours.
Junior Committee of the Fatherless
Children of France.

Greenville Falls. N.Y.
Deer Miss Secretary,

I didnt say you were deceivin, I just want to tell you the boy you give me was a girl so you wood not make that mistake agen. It is the limit when you have told the fellers you had a boy, to go and get a girl, and when I shod the letter to dad he sed by jove youre in a fine posishun you are and I sed how is that, and he sed fust thing you no you will get yourself talkt about, ritin to a girl in France and that would be fine woodnt it?

Respectfully yours,
J.P. Jackson Jr.

Greenville Falls, N.Y.
March 7, 1917.

Deer godchild,

I received your letter and I did not dye. Of corse you cant help bein a girl insted of a boy and thats al-rite because Heloise and Myra-Louise and Nelly the girl next dore and pretty nerely every body wood ruther be a boy than a girl, but you were the limit to fib about it and you have put me in a aful queer posishun, so no more fer this time.

Your godfather,
J.P. Jackson Jr.

P.S. I will suport you just the same so do not worry.

Paris,
21 March 1917.

Dear Mr. James,

I have your letter, and I perceive that you are very much offended. One time more I demand pardon; but I cannot be like you want, and by consequence I can never more call myself your dear godchild; if you love me not, and I am offensive, I have not business of you and your silver. Please give it to one unhappy little boy. It is worth better that I have hunger, it is worth better that I be made dead by the boches, than to be like one little mendicant. I demand to Maman if it is not true, and she say yes.

I thank you for all the pain you did take for me and I forget never. When I become grand I will render to you all you pay for me.

Goodbye monsieur James. Receive the expression of my best salutations,

Andree Leblanc.

Greenville Falls, N.Y.
April 2, 1917.

Deer godchild,

Say what is the matter with you ennyway and why don't you want me to support you enny longer? I am your godfather and you are my godchild and it is a legal afare, dad sez, and if ennybody sez ennything about

it they will have to deal with me, see? Ennyway mebbe I was kinder cranky about it, and you kinder fibbd, so lets say we had a scrap and shake on it and let it go at that. Lots of the fellers hear have scraps with the girls, and last weak Dinky Odell who is Carl Odells yungist brother had one with Heloise because he hollerd, Heloise go wash your feet, the bord of helths across the street, at her and she cried, but he sent her a peach of a poim to make up, and hear it is, "If you dont like me enny more, then I shall inlist and go to war!" I guess Dinky is goin to be a poit al-rite. You no I mite go to war two, lots of the fellers hear are inlistin in forrin regimunts, theres Carl Odell who has joind the Canadian Royal Fling Corpse, and Hanky Jones is goin to drive a truck in France and I guess he will be some driver al-rite because he has druv the new automobile hearse fer too years now, and say he goes like the dickuns. Corse I aint sayin Im goin to inlist rite away but I got some ideas in mind and Im thinking of raisin a regiment of boy scouts or Red Indians, I guess the Red skins wood be the best, and say woodnt Kaiser Bill look chepe if he saw a bunch of Red Skins beatin it after him? I bet hed run to beat the band, and I bet theyd catch him, and if they did, goodnite fer Kaiser Bill. Say they woodnt do a thing to him exept mebbe scalp him or skin him alive, and woodnt he look chepe then? Red Skins is auful feerce when they get goin, and I dont rekon ennybody cood stop them once they got started. We had an auful scare last nite I had been suportin you all day by choppin wood and I was dead beet but all of a suddin I was woke up by dad and he was yellin Murder! Murder! and Amanda and Cecilia and Mother who had her hare in curl papers rushd in, and there was dad having a buly fite in bed, and he was punchin the pilo, and yellin Murder! Murder! and we was all scart to go neer him because he wood punch us like the pilo, so Mother took a pitcher of cold water and throo it in his face, and that woke him up and he was mad as time, and sed, what you tryin to do, drown me? And then he laft and told us his dreame and it was this way, Max Dinkelheim, the shoomaker was a German spy and he was trying to sell hot dogs with boms in them and no one new there was boms in them exept dad. And he sed, you dirty Fritz cut that out, and Max he grabd dad by the hare and dad he yankd Max by the ear, and they was havin a buly fite when out come five more germans and begun to paist dad on the head, and corse he coodnt manige the 6 of them so he was yelling Murder! Murder! And then he got the pitcher of water and that was all. I bet dad cood have lickd the stuffin out of Max Dinkelheim al-rite, and I bet we are goin to have war this weak and if we do, dad sez the Kaiser will find out he has bit off more than he can chew, and you had better make up with me because I think you are al-rite, and if we have war I mite be in a posishun to help you. Thank you fer burning that candle fer me, we have been burning some sulfur ones fer Heloise and Molly and they seem to be gettin along nicely. Dont fergit when you rite to say if you are not mad at me enny more.

Your affeckshunate godfather,
James P. Jackson Jr.

P.S. Hows your big brother been makin out?

P.P.S. Thank you very much fer bustin that dog fer me. I have a pig with a hole in it and if I ern enuf money next weak I will send it to you.

P.P.P.S. Who is that Mr. le Cure you talk so much about?

18 rue d'Autancourt.
April 16.

Dear Monsieur James:

When I go to school the week past I see the flag of Amerique floating well high! And all the world is content because you come to aid us terminate by a peace victorious this war so terrible, and be like one brother for the triumph of the Justice, and the Liberty, and the Humanity. That is what the mistress of school explicate to us, and we love and honor the Amerique like the great sister Republique, and then she tell us get up and learn chant the song of the Banner of Stars. Perhaps you have hear it? It begin: "_Oh, dites, voyez-vous aux lueurs du matin_" etc. The mistress write it all on the tables black,[14] and we copy in lieu of the exercise of grammar, and it make us all joyful. But all that make me think so much of you, that I cannot empeche[15] myself even if you are no more my godfather, to pin the little flag American that you give me, on my heart, that save you from the death by the hoopincoff when I attach it to the candle of the Ste. Vierge. And then, pending the recreation of mid-day, I go home and the factor bring your letter! And when I return at school I effort myself so strong to read your letter, that I cannot make like it must[16] my chart geographic. But I promise Isabelle Gaveau, the little girl of the merchant of shoes, that if she will to aid me, I will lend her my pretty handkerchief new, for go to church the morning of Easter. So we be all content and I have very much the time to reflect and respond at your letter.

Dear Monsieur James, I comprehend that you want I continue be your dear godchild. I demand to Maman what I do, and she say: "Take the silver, and make no more infantile foolishness. Only one onion cost five sous now, and the life is very hard, but Amerique have the great heart to help us and give us the hand, and we work all the two for the Patrie." So, dear godfather, we be not mad at ourselves any more, and I promise I make no more the fib, and you make no more the cranky, is it not? I must to make many progress in American for when you come I reckon you come like the dickuns, like yellin thunder, with the skin'em alive Red-skins and the hot dogs!

Dear benefactor, what is it the hot dogs? My great sister say it is a species of machine-gun American.

It is very funny your Papa make the wicked dream! You have the very beautiful family. Me too. Great brother Jules is already the corporal and he is like the Chevalier Bayard without fear and without reproach. One day, he tell me, a great _eclat d'obus_ take off his hat, and he pick it off the ground and say: "Ho Fritz! I wanted not be so polite and salute you!" And my great brother tell me many things important on the war. But I write them not, because the censure would scold me; perhaps put me in prison.

Pending his permission of four days, he teach little Jean the chants of the regiment. Some are not for the little infants, Maman says, so he whistle them. But Jean love the military chants much more than the ones of latin he learn to sing in the church, and I hope he mix them not. Dear godfather, tomorrow is Easter and I am making an egg for

you. It is a surprise so I tell you not what is in it.

Your affeckshunate godchild,
Andree Leblanc.

[14] Tables black (_tableaux noirs_) black boards.

[15] Empeche myself (_m'empecher_) I cannot help.

[16] Like it must (_comme il faut_) nicely.

May 5, 1917.
Greenville Falls, N.Y.

Deer godchild,

Gee whiz but Kaiser Bill is in fer it! Gee whiz, you ot to see how Uncle Sam is fixin up fer him! Jo Kelly and Walter Daly and lot of the felers are going in fer aviashun and Bill Wilson's scout-master and organizin a crack bunch of boy scouts and we have a home Deefence and dad has got a uniform and a wooden gun and he sez it is a pretty good bunch of felers, but he cood do more with them if he was captin insted of mister Larkin, who is a good feler but a bum eaptin. I aint sayin much but I got a few idees and I woodnt let it sprize you if I was to invent something one of these days, but I cant tell you what it is becaus the censer wood cut it out. I got your egg and I thank you fer it, but say it got me in dutch al-right, it was this way, the postman brot the packidge just as I was going to school and I didn't have time to open it so I took it along and we was havin some speshul exercises fer a kernel Dudley who was to talk on, Do your bit to help win the war, and Bug Hadley was recitin the getsyberg adress and I opened the packidge and their was your egg all smasht up. I guess them cardboard eggs aint very strong, or mebbe the censer didn't handel it gently, ennyhow it was smasht and the curl inside it was there alrite only it was kind of mixt up with the cream candy and I was unmixin them when Lily Graham who set beehind me whisperd to Erny Dinkelheim, who is Max Dinkelheims youngist son, Jimmy Jacksons girl in France has sent him a curl! and Erny started to laff and say, O you Curly--Curly Jackson! and I sed, You shut up! and he sed, O pooh-pooh--pooh-pooh--and I sed, Dont you pooh-pooh me! and he sed, Who will I pooh-pooh then? and I sed, Pooh-pooh the Kaiser, and he sed, The Kaiser wont let me pooh-pooh him and you leave him alone! And I sed, The Kaiser is bughouse, and Erny he made a grab at me and landed me one on the chin, and I paisted him one on the eye and Bug Hadley he stopt sayin the getsyberg adress, and miss Davis she was jumpin up and down hollerin O boys, O boys, stop them, stop them! and kernel Dudley he hopt off the stand and pulld us apart, and miss Davis was fer puttin us on the platfurm with our arms on each others shoulders, but the kernel sed, No, it is that other boys falt, send him home. So they sent Erny home and he was mad as time. Then the kernel give his talk and sed how the girls cood help by making the bandiges and how the boys cood find out who was fer the government and who wasnt. I bet Erny and his father isnt, and I am going to keep my eye on them. Then we sang the french nashunal anthem and it is a fine him, and it goes this way in English: Ye sons of France awake to glory, the day of victory has come, your childrens wives, and sires horny, behold there tears--and thats as far as Ive lernt, we have got to lern all of it, and their is a buly part that goes, March on. Yesterday the fife and drum corpse plaid it and

the Star Spangled Banner and some of the boys lafft becaus the fifes sort of sqweekt. I dont see how ennybody can lafft when they play the Star Spangled Banner. Did you get my pig? I suported you this weak by polishin 10 door handels at 7 cents each, some of them was already polisht but the folks was real nice about it and let me give them an extry polish. Say why dont you tell me who that Mr. le Cure is? I have askt you too times now, and say if I was you I woodnt say, come like the dickens or skin them alive or enny of that kind of talk. It is al-rite fer boys who are used to ruffin it, but it is not nice fer girls so if I was you I wood go easy on it, and hot dogs aint machine guns, they are sausidges that are made from those low-down german dogs that heve short legs, but say they test buly in a roll. The vilets and pollywogs have come and I wood send you some but I guess they wood dry up before you got them. Ennyway you neednt worry much about the war now that Uncle Sam is in it we will lick the stuffin out of him together, I mean out of Kaiser Bill.

Your affeckshunate godfather,
James P. Jackson Jr.

P.S. Bug Hadley sez it is lucky fer him Erny and I had that fite, because he had fergot what come after, and dedicatid to the proposishun.

June 3, 1917.
18 rue d'Autancourt, Paris.

Dear Godfather:

It is great damage that the pretty egg of Easter I sent you be smasht up! But I regret yet more that to receive my paquet make you dispute yourself in dutch, like you say, with the little villain in school. All the same I am content you landed him one in the eye (I comprehend not what you want say by that, but I am sure the little boche comprehend) and you are one valiant patriot.

Dear godfather, why say you the girls must go easy to learn the American? I effort myself to be instructed with the words in your letters the dictionary contains not but if they are nothing but for little boys I pray you to tell me the pretty words for the little girls. I am sure my dear godfather serves himself not of villain talk. Jean was put in penitence yesterday because he say one word that is for Poilus only, and Maman turn him against the wall in the corner with the hands behind; and do you know what he do when we regard him not? He lick the paper on the wall and make it to come off. So Maman give him the spank. Dear godfather, I am happy to make you a little pleasure in sending you my portrait. I think it is well succeeded and very resembling, and will you have the obligeance to envoy to me the one of you?

Dear godfather, I make to you a list of words American I comprehend not, and I hope you will have the obligeance to explicate them to me. What is, for example, gee whiz, felers, boy scouts, bum, home defence, kernel, getysberg adress, mebbe, pooh-pooh, bug-house, the dickens, pollywogs, and lick the stuffin out? I effort myself very strong to find them, but it is not worth the pain to search any longer in the

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