

Linz, Austria,
16 July 1945.

Florence, Darling:

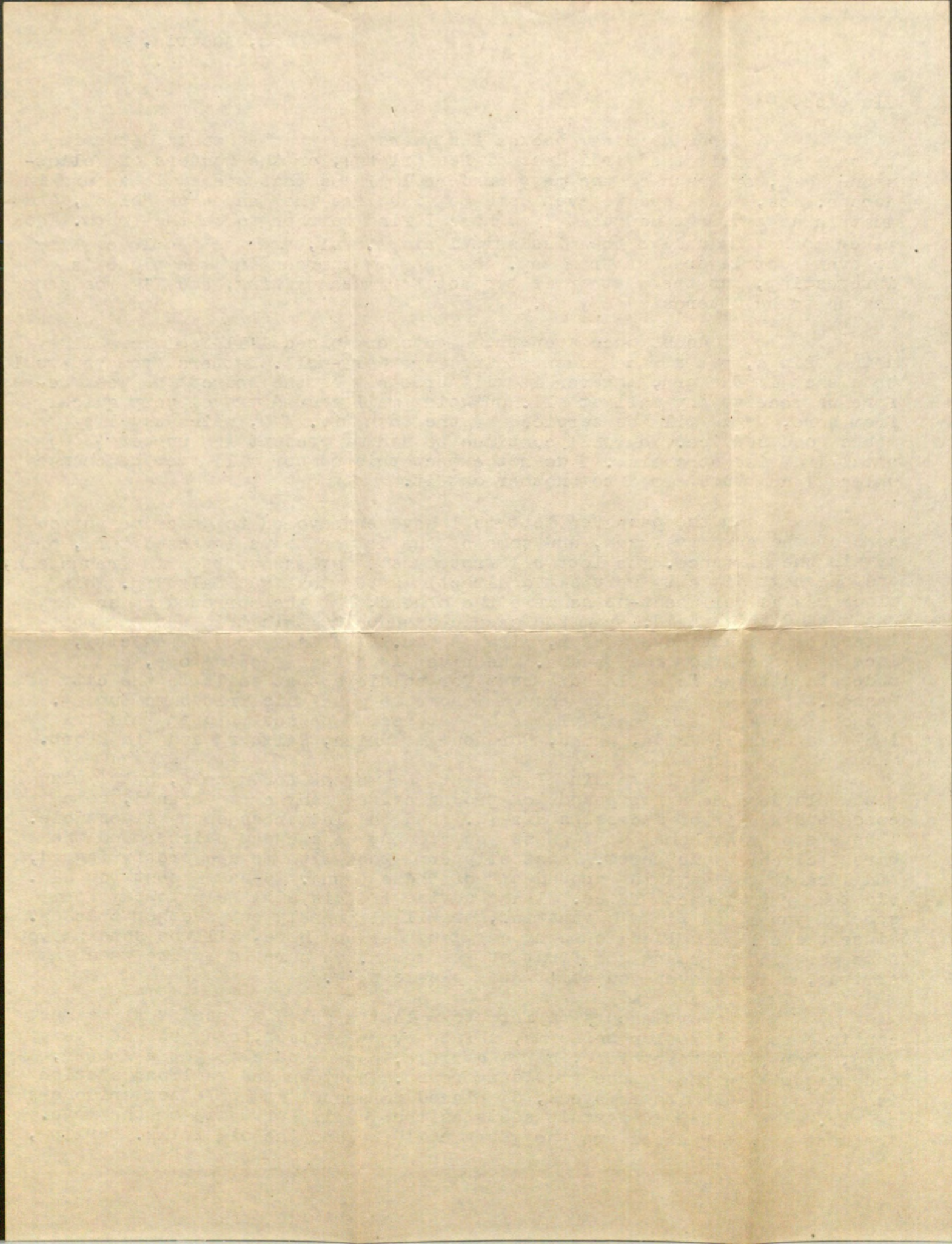
I remember way back a few years ago when we would determine to some day visit the Mardi Gras of New Orleans, or the wonders of Yellowstone Park, or dream of the many wonderful places that seemed to abound in Europe. Yes, I believe we even used to visualize the Danube as "blue", and Austria as gay, but now that I am here I find neither to be the truth. The river looks not unlike the Mississippi at St. Paul, and the people of Linz or even Austria are far from gay. The scenery surrounding the place is interesting, but the weather is too hot for much walking, and I'm too damn fed up to be interested anyway.

No doubt once everything gets organized I'll feel more like doing things, but at the moment things are pell-mell. Letters from you would be a shot in the arm, however it will probably be the end of the week before we receive any mail at all. Outgoing mail should travel very quickly from here, as we will be serviced by the 65th Div. APO, which usually means good service. You will continue to use my present APO number (350) until I advise otherwise. I do not expect this number will ever be changed unless I am transferred to another outfit.

In the past few letters I have endeavored to describe to you some of the scenery I saw, and some of the larger towns I passed thru, or saw in the distance. The letter I wrote yesterday was written in Traunstein, and the next big city we visited directly after that was Salzburg. This place was as well beat-up as were the others, but the surrounding scenery was out of this world. From the scenic standpoint this trip was the most interesting I have ever taken, without you. Linz is a good sized city, located directly on the Danube. The river is a fast flowing one, and I understand there is a pleasure boat for soldiers that sails to the city of Passau. If we are here long enough I hope to make this trip some Sunday. A short resume of the main places of interest I passed thru on this trip includes Kassel, Fulda, Hanau, Nurenburm Munich, Salzburg and Frankfurt.

There is nothing I need at the moment for myself, but I wish you would send me a few pounds of ground coffee (any cheap brand), some cocoa and a pair of mocassins size 8. Send the latter as soon as possible. I have a pair at home but I guess you can buy me a cheap pair around the borsht circuit somewheres. Those slippers I took with me are pretty ragged, and I can't get anything around any of these towns. To-day I sent you \$40. via the Army Finance Office. Please advise if this will help to pay for some of yours and Jimmy's vacation, or will it merely buy another chicken? Since there is no place to spend any dough around here, I'll be sending you some more dough around the first of the month. Be sure to advise when any arrives, and whatever you don't need please bank.

A short excursion into town last night disclosed that we must continue to wear woolen uniforms, salute every officer, stay out of every shop, store, and beer place, carry a rifle, have a pass to get a shower, and not swim in the Danube (too dangerous). The town and railroad station is just swarming with refugees, displaced personnel and released prisoners of war. As a matter of fact it seems as though all Europe is on the move. The most gripping cases are the young children and the old folks. Darling,



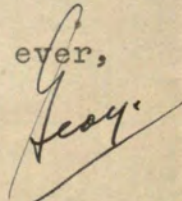
if my coming over here helped in any small measure to prevent just such a thing ever happening to you, Jimmy and kinfolk, then my efforts have not been in vain. I'll tell you all about these things when I get home, as I feel too close to the facts to give them anything but a prejudiced story.

It's been almost a week since I last heard from you, but I have every hope that all goes well my two most favorite pin-ups. There's no point in telling you how much I miss both of you, and how anxious I am to get started on our post-war plans, and nothing else seems to matter these days. I manage to keep preoccupied daily, and now that there is a GI movie in town and a Red Cross Dugout which runs out of doughnuts too early, I guess even the evenings will go more quickly. I do hope you are managing to find an opportunity to get out to a show or ride evenings, but I suppose you know by now that I am of the old school of husbands, who prefer their wives not to go out with men while the husband is in the army. There seems to be quite a controversy on this subject in the States so I decided to let you know where I stand on the matter. Sweethearts like us need no such cautioning words, and I did not write them with that thought in mind.

Frank Bell, Ray and I have just decided to go down to the river after 5 O'clock and soak our hot feet in the "blue" Danube. After which we intend going to the only movie in town. This place gets the latest features from the States, so I guess it'll be a pretty good deal. The enclosed article is interesting to both of us, and gives you an inkling of what the future holds in store. Still feel that those letters you are sending to the various politicians and other sources of interest will help immeasurably. Don't forget our Congressman and Senator, we wouldn't want them to miss the credit for all their good work on this score. An order came thru to-day instructing us to ship our 40 year old men back to France for shipment home. It's getting closer, honey, and I know our patience will be rewarded before the year ends. This is our year.

I am writing this during the afternoon because it is too warm to work, especially after spending 4 days traveling. To-morrow's another day, and I'll amnage to do my share of the work. Stay well, sweetheart, have fun, and kiss Jimmy for me. I'll kiss you in mind with all my love and devotion. My very best to everyone,

As ever,

A handwritten signature, likely "Ray", written in dark ink. The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial 'R' and a trailing flourish.



[Handwritten signature]

~~CIL GEO STOFF 42050100~~
~~CO A 735TH RY OPN BN~~
~~APO 350 % Postmaster~~
~~New York.~~



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