

Hamm, Germany
15 May 1945.

Florence, dearest:

One of the minor thrills I expect to enjoy when I become a civilian again is the experience of sealing the envelope of a letter after writing it. However the censorship of my letter has never affected my desire or willingness to tell you how much I love and adore the sweetest wife in the world. Each day new brings forth new rules, regulations and announcements for the army, and to-day was no exception. The censorship restrictions have been relaxed a bit on our letter-writing, and so I'll try to give you some details of the past eight months you have tried so often to guess. Well I add my loving and adoring you has never been a military secret, and I too have always known about your ecstatic emotions. One of these days I hope to be free again to whisper my feelings into your ears, but until then continue casting your eyes over my written efforts to be your devoted sweetheart, husband and lover.

Before I proceed to acquaint you with my travels I want you to know that I've received no mail for several days. This is due primarily to the moving of the post office, but there's hope for to-morrow. I have spent the past three hours replying to all my accumulated mail, and now I can concentrate on this letter to you.

I know you have tried often to guess at many of the places I've been to and from, but somehow you have not always placed the pin in the right spot, so I'll start at the beginning, way back in September. We left St. Paul on the twelfth, arriving in Camp Shanks, New York on the fifteenth. This is close to the Pine Forest Lodge we spent a holiday at the year before near West Point. It was impossible to phone you from there as the connections were cut as far as we were concerned. We were processed there for four days, and I guess three of them I worked on the average of twenty hours per day. Then on to a train at night, a hurried trip with duffle bag, record case, field pack, helmet, rifle, gas mask and heavy coat, and we arrived at Carlstadt St. ferry on the Jersey side. A ferry ride I'll never forget took us past my office building, the battery, Statue of Liberty, and to a pier somewhere in Staten Island. The blow of an army band

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Dear Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the above matter.

I am sorry to hear that you are not satisfied with the result of the examination of the papers.

I have been very busy lately, and have not had time to attend to this matter as soon as I wished.

I am, however, very anxious to do so, and will endeavor to complete the examination as soon as possible.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
J. H. [Name]

Red Cross ladies distributing coffee and doughnuts, and before we realized it we were climbing up the gang-plank of the good ship U.S.S. Uruguay, formerly a passenger liner. This was about midnight of the 19th, we stayed in port all night, sailing the next morning about 11 A.M. It seemed to me that I could see the outline of shore land as we pulled out, but then I believe my imagination was playing tag with reality.

You know about my arriving in Liverpool on October 1st, and my subsequent stay in England. We departed from England via Southampton and landed on Utah Beach in France. Utah Beach looks like Long Island, and the method of landing was something like this. Each man wore his helmet, full field pack, gas mask, and rifle, then proceeded to climb over the side of the ocean-going liner onto a ladder and thence into a landing barge. This is done at sea about a mile off-shore, and it's quite a thrill with the sea bouncing both ships about as you maneuver down the ladder. I have written you about my location in France, and the cities I visited or saw while there. We left France December 1st, arriving in Mechelen, Belgium on the 4th. This was a better deal than France. Mechelen is located midway between Antwerp and Brussels, and after a while we were able to visit these towns. I've been to Antwerp several times, but because of the robot bombs we avoided this place. However, Brussels was accessible in about 25 minutes on the electric train running between Antwerp and Brussels and stopping at Mechelen. So between my friends in Mechelen, and recreation facilities in Brussels I had no complaints about being stationed in Belgium. Incidentally the bracelet you have with your name inscribed on it was made from a buzz-bomb which was scheduled for Antwerp but shot down in Mechelen. So you have a real souvenir of the war. I also have a ring made of the same material.

Suddenly shortly following the crossing of the Rhine by the allied armies we packed up and set out for Germany. My Company arrived at the Rhine eight days after the armies had crossed it, and we could see fire still burning in Wesel. Among the towns and cities I've been in since arriving in Germany are, Krefeld, Munchen - Gladbach, Rhegdt, Wesel, Munster, and now we are stationed in Hamm. These places are

will heat up, and I have some some good shots of them if only I can get them developed. Now you know all the main details, but wait until my return and I'll give you the human interest stories attached to all of this.

It may be months before I know anything concerning my future disposition. Latest reports have it that most of the troops will be returned to the States regardless of what disposition is to be made of them. If they live up to the letter of the army discharge joint system I may be in the army longer than anticipated. However I am hopeful, very hopeful, that within the next few months there will be different regulations in addition to this system, and perhaps they'll include men over a specific age. Writing newspapers and our Congressman can do a lot of good, and I suggest you write and persuade all our friends and relatives to do likewise. You remember the "Lucille Hallop" method used for Billy. -

There may be other details you want cleared up before I return to your concerning arms, my darling, so please ask questions. If they require answers beyond the existing censorship regulations I'll not endeavor to reply, and will so advise. I continue to seek souvenirs here, here sent some to you, and have others to forward. Found a Nazi flag, have several Hitler Youth knives, and some medals. I can get a revolver but it is not permissible to forward them. If I think I can carry it home on my person I'll obtain one, but have no special desire for it. Also have a Nazi helmet and other insignias. You are probably wondering where to place all this junk, but hold it pending my return and we'll distribute most of the stuff to our patriotic friends who bought a bond during the war.

I'm fine and dandy, hope you and Jim are the same, and that everyone at home is well and in good spirits. Keep smiling, be of good cheer, and perhaps your faith that this is "our year" will bring me home a fine man. Kiss Jim for me, and I'll kiss you in mind with all my love and adoration,

As ever

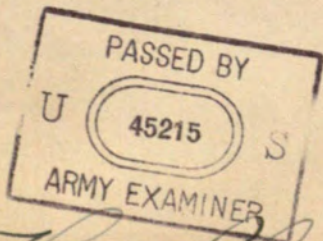
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