

SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE
17 NOVEMBER 1944.

Florence, Dearest:

It seems only yesterday that I kissed you, Jim and my mom and bid you all a fond adieu prior to my leaving for my hitch in the army; and yet here it is just a year to-day and I am still absent from your caressing arms. I know how much it has meant to me to be away from home and all that means so much to me, and I can readily imagine what all this has meant to you. Yet it is only one year out of our lives and perhaps all or part of another, but this much we know that when it is all over, and I come home we have much, ever so much to live for. Being in love is a privilege that does not always come easy, and perhaps this is our time of stress. If this is so then, my darling, visualize how happy our future together will be. You, Jim and me, and if destiny does play fair with us there will be others. So honey, don't let this get you down, stay well, be of good cheer, and time will pass quickly. Jim is temporarily taking my place so let him do all he can to relieve the tension of the times, and before you realize it the old man will be home to take charge.

Tonight is my turn to act as Charge of Quarters so I am making use of the evening writing letters. Have received no letters from anyone in the last 3 days, but I have not seen the mail clerk to-night so there is the possibility that some mail is awaiting me. In yesterday's V-Mail letter to you I wrote you about the package I received from the folks. It was the first bundle from the states since I arrived over here and believe you me sweetheart, it sure felt good to be able to eat some nuts and candy from home. Included in the package were several newspapers and I really got a kick out of reading the latest stock quotations. Please do not permit the folks forward any more packages to me until after the Xmas rush. I wrote the folks the same thing so explain what I mean.

I am patiently awaiting the arrival of your letter acknowledging the receipt of my past letters. I have been writing you more frequently in the past two weeks, and I hope my letters are coming thru on good schedule. Wrote Harry Abrams a reply to his letter, one to the folks, and another to Jules. I may write several others after I finish this one but usually I write yours last so as not to have to rush it. Before I overlook it I wish you would include a padlock with 2 keys, 2 celluloid calendars (Flatbush Savings Bank), a mechanical pencil (cheap), several cans of sardines, black olives, chocolate cookies and some chewy candy such as gum drops. Suggest you do not send this before the 15th of Dec. If Charlie Kellner has any samples send some of his products along. Perhaps you had better see him before you do anything. However if his wife is very ill I prefer you do not bother him.

Children around these parts are beginning to learn to speak English a little better. At present their vocabulary consists of swearing like troops and being able to ask for candy, gum or food. Since all children remind me of our own Jimmy I manage to dispose of more of my candy rations than I eat, But I seem to be getting more pleasure out of it this way. Since the other boys are also beginning to receive bundles from home I do not want for sweets. For instance yesterday one of the boys

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received a package of cookies baked by Barricini. It was my good fortune to get several of these and so to-day I had them with the sliced pine-apples on my lunch. Lucky for me there were no kiddies around while I was eating them.

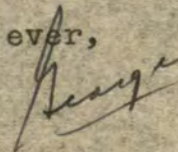
Among other things I do while acting as C Q I manage to wash some clothes. The process is something like this. A five gallon tin can is filled with water used only for washing; this is heated on the stove in my office while I type some letters. As soon as the water becomes plenty hot for washing the unmentionables I immerse all of the items into the water together with a chunk of good G I soap. I then proceed to stir the contents of the can with a stick for a while to loosen any affixed dirt; ten minutes of this and the clothes are ready for washing. Rub, twist bang and plenty of suds helps to transform the dirty clothes into what seems clean items. If another can is available, which is usually not the case, the clothes are rinsed in that, however the helmet is always a good substitute. Since I never let my soiled clothes accumulate I usually have only a few pieces to wash. To-night one of the captains looked on as I went thru this chore, and we kidded back and forth about my wife being out to play bridge and I washing and watching junior. Some joke, but my dearest, a sense of humor is very vital during these times and I want both you and myself to maintain ours. Sure is pretty lucky for me that I had some experience washing clothes from Jim's diapers.....

Above paragraph mentions that some water is used for washing only, and that comes about this way. This part of the country, it seems, has very little drinking water. As a matter of fact all the water the soldier drinks has been treated with a purifying agent; thus the water used for washing comes out of wells or is piped from rivers. I don't know the source of the natives water, but since every Frenchman carries a bottle of Cider everywhere he goes, I imagine they don't drink water. At the moment we only have to travel about five miles daily to pick up the necessary water supply for the battalion; this is done by truck but each man has to go after his own washing water. Fortunately I only have to walk about two blocks to get my water, see what I mean.

Now my adorable wife, I hope that all is well and under control in your domain. I know the coming holiday season will be a bit lonely for you but do your best to make Jimmy and Joel happy, and I feel sure you will not be too lonesome. I join you in hoping that we will be together before another Xmas rolls around, and then we will jointly enjoy all future holidays in grand style.

Give my very best to everyone, kiss Jimmy and my folks for me and I'll kiss you in mind with all my love. Remember me to Kessler, Brown and Pincus, and please wish everyone a Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year for me. Until to-morrow you find me adoring you

As ever,



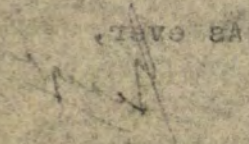
received a package of clothes packed by Bartelme. It was my good fortune to get several of these and so today I had them with the sliced apples on my lunch. Lucky for me there were no kiddies around while I was eating them.

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Give my very best to everyone, Miss Jimmy and my folks for me, and tell them you in mind with all my love, remember me to Heather, Brown and Francis, and please say everyone a Merry Xmas and a happy New Year for me. Until to-morrow you find me wishing you.

As ever,


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