

Florence, Sweetheart:

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Germany  
29 April 1945.

One gets a new insight on life and its manifestations as more and more of the incidental things of modern warfare unfold to the seeing eye. As I travel about from city to city I see many people of all ages and both sexes traveling (by foot or cycle) along the highways. They represent the masses who departed from their homes to avoid the onslaught of the advancing armies, and who now are endeavoring to return to the place they call home. There are also to be found working along, carrying a few worldly possessions on their backs, people who were forced to leave their native lands to work for the hated Nazi masters. They too wander along the highways to a place they once called home. Hoping that their loved ones are alive, intact, and have not given them or her up for dead. Yes, my dearest, patient sweetheart, there are millions and millions of men, women and children who daily pray to get home, without knowing what they will find when their weary legs finally lead them to that "Sanctum Sanctorum." I too live and work, think and dream, hope and pray, that someday next moon, my steps will be turned in the direction of my home, my loved ones, my paradise. And yet is it not my great fortune to know that when I do finally arrive there I will find love, happiness, my son, and all that goes to make for a full life awaiting me? Should I not be grateful that my small effort will enable us to live in peace for many, many years? No, the small people must take part in the building of the future peace of the world, and if a war was necessary to assure this I'm satisfied to have done my part. Now it begins to look as though the European phase is rapidly drawing to a close. How soon after victory is announced before I return to my loved ones is still a mystery, but I'm hopeful that our long patience will be rewarded quickly. Be of good cheer, my darling, we are still among the most fortunate people I know, and with a mutual love as we share, this separation will soon be a thing of the past.

I had not noticed this flaw in the paper, as my blatter covered it until I arrived down here. Mail call to-day was a mixture of good and bad news. Your 14 April letter arrived to-day with the four snaps enclosed. Jim certainly looks grand in that crew neck sweater and long pants. He seems tall and quite happy, but both of you appear as though you have been living on a diet of "K" rations for about three months. How about putting a couple of pounds on both yours and Jim's body? Snaps if you are glad, but not quite that same gleam in your eyes as I find in the snapshots taken way back in St. Paul. Jan looks like the typical son that I'd expect Bess and her husband to produce, all sweet and fatuous. Thanks so much for these photos, and I sure wish I could forward them I've taken in the past few weeks, but you must wait until I get them developed. Enclosed herewith is a negative of a picture one of the boys took of me the end of March in Belgium. He sent the photo to his wife among others but said I could keep the negative. How it pointed please, and let me know how it turned out. If any good get one for the folks, too.

Among other letters received to-day was one from the folks dated April 10th, and from Uncle Henry of April 12th. Jimmy Birdberg's dated 6 April,



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and Kay of April 2nd, so say nothing of a Lodge notice to attend the April 17th meeting. In pop's letter he mentioned that Uncle Harry advised him that Joe was forwarding a package to him containing some perfume for you. If he did it will arrive one of these days, and I'll thank you to advise the names of any and all others he sent you. Did you give Mrs. Pir a bottle as I suggested. I know you gave Frances the "chypre," did she like it? Uncle Harry's advised that Joe became a sergeant, but you advise that he is now in the infantry. Since both things could have taken place with him recently, I am assuming he became a sergeant before he departed for the infantry, because I know he could never become a sergeant there. He never had any training before. I sure feel sorry for the kid, because even though the war may end over here before he sees combat duty, there is always the possibility of a transfer to the Pacific theatre. Well, perhaps he'll get the chance to visit his brother there. With reference to the eleven dollars check I sent Uncle Harry, this money belongs to Joe. On his visit to me in Belgium he converted French francs into Belgian. When he left he had 500 francs (Belgian), and rather than bother re-converting it back into French francs he took my suggestion to forward it home for safekeeping with his dad. I tried to persuade him to forward money home in the form of a Class "E" allotment or bond purchases, but I don't know if he took my suggestion. In any event if he gets to Germany he'll not be able to spend a cent except for postage stamps.

Kay, Sam and Anita write of their visit to you upon your return from the Country. Kay continually raves about Jim and his duds, remarks that pop and Jim are pals, and that both of you looked pretty good. Since Kay is never the subtle one I guess she found you and Jim in pretty good health and spirits. She also managed to display plenty of excitement about the package of gifts and souvenirs I sent them. Anita is all agog about the bracelet, pin and shoes, and I guess Sam liked the Belgian lighter. Hope Bob does too. It's a pity we cannot buy a German souvenir, as I'd like to find some Dresden art for you, but who knows what the future holds in store. Gedberg's letter was the usual routine stuff, but he too is desirous of a release from this regimentation. This son is now 14 years old, and the younger one is getting big and chubby. No mention of his former wife, but he seems to be tearing off a piece of romance with several girls back at the fort. As usual he sends his best to you and Jim.

This is my second day here and I can faithfully say it's the "nuts." Just looking at the bath tub gives me a feeling of Culture and civilization at its finest. Although I soaked last night, and did practically nothing to-day, I am determined to go thru that procedure again to-night. Sleeping on a bed in a steam heated room last night was a bit stuffy, but since the place has a regulating system for the heat it will be a simple matter for me to simulate sleeping in a box car. This is also the finest chance I have ever had to live in a private house, and since we intend buying our own soon



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after my return it's a practical experience. I like it, but of course I realize I do not have to do any of the necessary chores at present. There's a GI movie in town, and if I can get someone to go with me later on I'll go to the show.

It is about 4 P.M. now and I've spent most of the afternoon listening the radio in the other room, or waiting letters in my room. Yesterday I heard a special program for the armed forces in which the leading artists were Kennedy Melchior, Judy Garland and Marjory Koff. It was a riot, and Kay's presence reminded me of some extra special evenings we spent in the theatre. I know I'll never forget his performances, but even more than that I'll always remember the joy and fun you and I shared being together those moments. There will be more of them soon, and even greater joys as we take Jim into our partnerships, and if time permits, and it will, there may be more partners.

The news continues highly optimistic, and although the Nazis are holding out in desperation, grasping for a last straw it begins to look as though they will have to take their bitter medicine, unconditional surrender. Perhaps the future German generations will recall these two words before they again embark on a world conquest.

I guess Frank and his family miss me these days, particularly on Sundays. They certainly were true blue with me, and I will be indebted to them for a long time. One of these days when I have little of interest to write about I'll devote several hours telling you all about them. Your packages were always a source of surprise and pleasure to them and me, and luckily for me your last bundle arrived. Continuing the candy and cookies has come in mighty handy. I acknowledged it the day it arrived (about 3 or 4 days ago). Since our arrival in Germany our PX rations have consisted only of four cigarettes weekly, whereas in Belgium we used to get cigarettes, candy, gum, soap and other necessities. I have everything in supply but candy and cookies, and now with this latest package I'm okay again. PX rations should be coming them in another week or so, and then things'll be normal again. Don't send anything until you get a request from me.

It may be that I missed relating something in the above paragraphs, but there's always tomorrow's letter if I have. Well I am fine and dandy, love you more than ever, and miss you terribly every moment, and twice as much on Sundays and week days. Keep smiling, kiss Jim and the folks for me, and all of you stay well. My very best to everyone, and all my love and adoration to you as ever.

George

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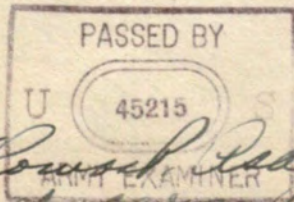


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