

Letter, George Stoff to Florence Stoff, Somewhere in France, October 22, 1944 [Transcriber: Kathryn Manning]

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[Envelope]

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APO 5942 c/o Postmaster  
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[Letter]

Somewhere in France  
22 October 1944

Florence Sweetheart:

Yesterday was one of the best days since I left the States, and darling I have only you to thank for it. We had our first mail call that amounted to anything, and I received six letters from you and one from the folks. Your letters were dated 9/21; 9/22; 10/2; 10/3; 10/4; and 10/5. The letter from the folks was dated Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>. It was a good feeling to be able to read and re-read words and experiences of thought, courage and hope written by the best sweetheart a GI could ever hope to have. I am awfully happy to learn that you are all well and carrying on so capably. I know you are doing the best you possibly can, and I also realize that you will refrain from attempting to worry me, but I am not surprised, only keep me posted as to any

serious developments. There are more letters floating around here and I hope to receive them soon. There are many questions I have to ask but I'm sure the other letters contain the answers. However, be sure to advise me if you are under Dr. Dickinson's care at present.

Your descriptions of Jim certainly warm the cockles of my heart, and I sure am proud of the fact that he tries so hard to remember me and events connected with his stay with us in St-Paul. I am so anxious to read about his birthday party, and I hope this letter describing it arrives soon. I am so sorry I was unable to be with you and him on such an important occasion, but there will be others and I'll be with you then. He must have done you proud and I can just picture him being the center of attraction. Please send me one or two snapshots of you and him taken since his second birthday.

Your remarks about Eleanor's dates sounds interesting and I hope it takes this time. She deserves a break and I'm pulling for her to get it this time for keeps. None of your letters mention anything about Joel, and I'm hopeful that all is well with him. Please give me the score on him. Glad Don is home, and I'll write him in a day or so. The weather has been a bit sloppy, and not conducive to letter writing. I sent the folks a V-Mail letter yesterday. Be sure you acknowledge each of my letters by date.

There are many queries you put to me in your letters but I think all of them have answered in my recent correspondence. I realize how dreadful it has been for all of you to sit anxiously at home waiting word from the prodigal son and sweetheart, but now that you know the score just be patient, full of hope and I'm sure to be home soon.

Now, my beloved, there is so much, so very much to relate about this military experience of mine that I must express my thoughts. Needless to add I cannot tell you where I am or what we are doing, But suffice it to say that the section of the country we are working in has seen the war at its worst, and I hope will see no more of this ruthless destruction. Attempting to describe what one sees is to only add heartaches to your lonesome heart, It does not seem possible that man's inhumanity against man should be so great, so violent, so destructive, so relentless, even more devastating than the great "survival of the fittest." It has made me despondent to see the havoc that has been caused despite the efficacy of prayer exercised by these humble French peasants. How odd of God in his supposed wisdom and paternalism to allow such wanton murder, starvation, and disease to run rampant. If ever there was a chance to make a believer of me I'm sure that all hope is gone now. Perhaps, if ever I get into a foxhole I'll become converted, but I'll never be able to reconcile how a good God could put me into the foxhole. You ,my darling, it is most difficult to reconcile our separation as an act of God. It is almost inconceivable that people would do such things to one another but I have seen it with my own eyes, and I've seen too much. I prefer not writing about these experiences so please let them rest in my mind until I return, and then I'll tell you all about the grim realities of war.

I scarcely know what to suggest your sending me. We get plenty to eat, and sometimes some candy. The package containing the arches and belt has not yet arrived, but it should catch up soon. If possible though forward me the following: a map of France and

Germany; box of Kleenex, bar of Lux, bar of Swan, Licorice sticks, and some snapshots of you and Jim. Do not send too much of anything as it's a long trip, and then things get lost or way laid.

We are getting down to serious work, and I'll try awfully hard to write often. Stay well, don't worry, kiss Jim and the folks for me and I'll kiss you in mind. Please don't grieve about your G.I. George because I know our future life will be fuller and happier when we start again after the war. The contents of your letters are filled with courage and I trust this is true of their essence. My very best to El and her "date" and to all our good friends. Keep the folks in high spirits, and if the war news continues as well as it is rumored perhaps there will be an end to all this "chicken" soon.

With all my love and devotion, you find me adoring you.

As ever,

George