

Letter, George Stoff to Florence Stoff, Somewhere in France, October 31, 1944  
[Transcriber: Kathryn Manning]

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[Envelope]

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New York, N.Y.

Mrs. Florence Stoff  
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[Letter]

Somewhere in France  
31 October 1944

Florence, darling,

You can notice by looking at the date above that to-day should have been a big day in the Army. Pay-day to me anywhere in the States used to mean that I could supply our home with the necessities and luxuries you and I thought were a fixture in our lives. Time and circumstances has attended matters somewhat, but dearest, despite everything I am partially content to know that you and Jim are being taken care of in exactly the same manner as though I were at home. It is always a comforting thought to know that of all the worries and problems you imagine these days, finances is not one of them.

To-day was one of those dreary, gloomy days which is even depressing when home. It was clearly drizzly, and cold all day; and even though it makes me feel more lonesome than usual, yet dreaming about you and our happiness keeps me hopeful. It's a wonderful feeling to be looking forward, most impatiently, to the moment when you and I belong to each other, rather than a portion of us in the army. Be of good cheer, don't worry too much, and tempus will fugit just as it always has and will.

No mail to-day, and this did not help to dispel the gloom. However tomorrow is another day, and who knows, perhaps even my packages will show up. I wrote Eleanor a V-Mail letter to-day, and have managed to write everyone in the family and our most intimate friends. One of these days I am going to forward you a package containing some souvenirs, coins and other novelties. I'll advise you when I forward it.

Have seen no newspapers yet, but our company radio has been installed, and it certainly was a good feeling to listen to American music, news broadcasts, and pick up foreign nations. It makes it a bit more cozy to relax evenings and listen to all kinds of music and entertainers. As of to-day all bars, cafes and restaurants are "off limits," which means that when we visit the nearby town, we are permitted to visit only the following points of interest. 1. Churches (partially demolished) 2. Piles of rubble 3. Street toilets 4. Barber Shop. There being no other points of interest or entertainment it is more advisable to remain in camp. One of these days the spinal service branch of the army will get around to supplying us with monies but until then "bull sessions" or gambling is the main source of relaxation after work.

I believe I have not yet described to you the set-up of a French street toilet. It consists of an iron fence so arranged to permit a man or woman to enter separately or together. No matter whichever entrance they choose to make they will meet immediately upon arriving inside. You see the place is large enough to allow only 2, 3, or 4 people to use it at one time. Once inside there are no seats, but fast-steps upon which a person's feet are placed, and then to the relief of one's biological urges. It may seem strange to us to see a man and woman using this place in full view of each other but that's the practice. You're right I have yet to experience this myself, but it sure gives me a laugh when I think of the sight. Need I add that if a man has an urge, and no "place" in sight, he administers to his urge by utilizing the nearest wall, this, too, may be done in full view of male and female pedestrians. Can you imagine attempting to install such a practice in Brooklyn? Next time I write I'll tell you about how many uses a steel helmet is put to by Uncle Sam's G I soldier.

I feel fine and dandy, becoming more and more accustomed to all this “chicken,” and ever longing for my adorable wife and boy. Am patiently awaiting some of the latest snapshots of yourself, Jim and the folks. I hope. Did you put the car up for the winter? Hope you and Jim are in good health and spirits, and as I write this my mind is directed to some of those swell times the three of us had back in St. Paul, particularly Jim’s antics in endeavoring to stay awake nights using every subterfuge. Does he still find an excuse or two for not cuddling into the “Arms of Morpheus” nightly?

Stay well, sweetheart, kiss Jim and the folks for me, and I’ll kiss you in mind with all my love. My very best to everyone.

As ever

George