

Letter. George Stoff to Florence Stoff, Salzburg, Austria, August 20, 1945, Letter 2 [Transcriber: Kathryn Manning]

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AMERICAN RED CROSS

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Salzburg, Austria
Monday, 20 August 45

Florence, Sweetheart,

My only regret is that I am drinking up all this scenery, atmosphere, and musical moments without you at my side. I know were it possible for you to share yesterday and today with me, it would have been one of the highlights of our life. It has been my lot to have many pleasant and unpleasant moments in Europe, but I can truthfully admit that my visit to Salzburg has been one of the most pleasant times since I came into the army. This city is so steeped in culture, tradition, scenery and landmarks, not to overlook history that I meander about in awe. Added to this are the [Ravine?] of music and entertainment I thrilled to yesterday, and the anticipation of enjoying tonight's performance.

As I outlined in last night's letter I attended a performance of the Vienna Choir Boys. It was the only one they gave during this festival, and was attended by a packed theatre. Unfortunately the theatres are not too large, but the interior is more exquisite than any I have seen anywhere. The seats were more comfortable than most theatres back home though. To add to the excitement and

glamor of the evening there was a motley group of army officers in attendance. Among others General Clark of the U S Army, General [Kansin?] of the Russian army, the British General [McCready?], each in the generals [L their stalk?]. Despite my being in the army almost 21 months it was my first sight of the generals who led us to victory. However, I'm sure they enjoyed themselves no more than I did, and perhaps some of them even wished to hold their sweetheart's hand as the choir-boys eloquently sang their songs.

Enclosed herewith is the program of the evening and the stub of my ticket. Please save both for me. I'll not try to describe the program in detail. But the 1 part opera was a thriller. Strangely enough the song selections included in the [eneanis?] supplied some of the best musical moments of the evening. They [rendered?] the "Blue Danube Waltz", and it was no effort at all to imagine myself trying to waltz with my only sweetheart and wife. Another [eniase?] number was "My Bonnie lies over the Ocean" sung in English, but the climax and concluding number was "Yankee Doodle Dandy" sung in German. For over two hours my heart was filled with thoughts of you framed in the melodic voices of youth. It was a happy feeling, darling, and I left the theatre walking on my tippy-toes. The boys 22 in number, range in age from about 8 to 16 years. They are well trained, have very fine voices, and are excellent musicians. They will someday, no doubt, visit New York, and then you too will share this lovely evening with me, hand in hand.

Upon my return to [Scekeichen?] following the recital I found your air mail letter dated Aug. 8th and 9th awaiting me. Also one from Uncle Harry and a letter from Frank in [Malenis?]. Jim's enclosed snaps were the best yet, and the little rascal looks older than he really is. He seems to be growing taller, though not heavier, and still has that gleam in his eyes. It was easy to read your optimism between the lines, and happy am I that our fondest hopes have been finally substantiated. Peace, home soon, and the resumption on a bigger and scale of our life of happiness, joy and love. – If only [tempus inaned fugit?] more rapidly for the next 3 or 4 months. – Patience, ever Patience!

One of the more pleasing [lenis?] in your letters was the announcement that many of my recent and old letters are reaching you. I am particularly happy

that you find so much joy in my written efforts, because I take a keen delight in writing to you. Also pleased that those stamps have begun to reach you in good order. I described in yesterday's letter that many of them are well priced right here in [Leniz?] and Salzburg, and should be worth more in the States. However I'll take care if that little detail after I return. Herb wrote me the other day requesting me to obtain some Austrian stamps for him, which I am at present doing. If you receive a check from him you'll know what it represents. Have done nothing, with the sheets you sent me, but will advise. I'm glad you are purchasing sheets of those Communications for us, and I'm a wee bit neglectful for having liquidated so many sheets 3 or 4 years ago. However, I still have a few chance ones left.

I am glad you get some pleasure out of reading Frank's letters, as well as his son's. your advice that it is now possible to send packages to Belgium was most pleasing. Frank has 7 of these Transportation [Carpa?] Carvings for me, which I want to distribute to some good guys. However, even though they cost him money I'm sure he wouldn't accept any from me. In [ofpenenation?], and taken payment for these, will you please try to send him as soon as possible a package of [fsudstufte?] and delicacies such as: Csesa, chocolate pudding, salmon, tuna fish, rice, cookies, smoked cheese, jam and anything edible I haven't mentioned. Upon your return home please forward a package of serviceable cloths fro his wife Get, such as sweaters, dresses, mufflers, gloves, and such. If I have any old sweaters and mufflers at home, which Frank Sr and Jr can have please include them. It will be a cold winter, and I'm sure they will have difficulty to obtain these niceties. I would also appreciate your sending them a Xmas package containing a large fruit cake, nuts, candy, and a tin of sliced bacon. I know I'm giving you bean camp work, but when I get back I'll relieve you of all these minor details. Thanks so much . If you have or can acquire serviceable clothing for children I know they can be put to excellent use.

Thanks so much for your prompt attention to my requests of stamps and package. I have already returned the stamps, as you know, and will advise when the bundle reaches me. Al those items came in handy sooner or later, and I'll tell

you all about them when I am home again caressing yo in my arms, as I whisper "I love you" into your ears.

I have been in Salzburg since 11 this morning, and it is now 4 PM. The sun was in al its glory when I left [Seekinchen?], but has been hiding behind clouds ever since I arrived here. However, undaunted, I took a roll of film inserted it into my K-ration camera, and snapped pictures. Will let you know in 10 days what the results are like.

Have had no word from Bob since his letter of August 2nd reached me. I'm hopeful that he was still stationed in the States when the Japs surrendered. If so, his charmed life as you term it so aptly, may continue to find a way out for him. I hope so. Capt. Howard received notice that he was to be discharged, and I believe will leave for the States in ten days or two weeks. Thank Goodness! If Capt. Asay will permit me I'm going to try to file my application under the "38 year" rule as soon as possible. The worst they can do is reject it until I reach my 38th birthday. However the army is full of strange happenings, events and quirks. I'll be sure to admire if anything develops as the result of this maneuver.

I feel great, hopeful, and enthusiastic about the prospect of this being 'our year', Kiss Jim for me, keep smiling, and give my best to everyone. I'll kiss you in mind with all my love and adoration,

As ever,

George