

France
18 February 1945
Sunday.

My Sweetheart,

Good evening, Shirley darling. I pray that all is well with you and Laura. I am feeling ok now. Yesterday I had two shots - regular semi-annual shots. Last night I had a restless sleep caused by fever from the shots. I didn't get up for Church this morning, even, as we had the day off and I didn't feel as well as I might have. I am almost normal again now except for the fact that I really had too much sleep.

Last night I received three letters from you written Jan. 31st, Feb 2nd, and Feb 4th. In one of them you told of a birthday party for one of the girls at Phil's, which you and two other girls left early. From little bits about your parties I gather that some of the recent ones have not been as good, clean wholesome fun as the original ones. Don't let your loneliness and desire for fun lead you into anything we might be sorry for, honey. Stay as sweet, as wonderful, as perfect for me as always, darling. Don't ever do anything that either you, Laura, or I would be ashamed of. I know that I can trust you, honey, and want you to know that I don't want ^{you} to change. Loneliness can do a lot sometimes toward weakening one's will power, but you have a strong will, darling, so use it. Remember always that I love you and am lonely too. But I will never let you down either, honey.

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While I was in England, there were times when the loneliness and longing almost got to be more than I could bear. I never had any desire to go out with another girl as the single fellows (and some of the married ones) did. On two occasions, though, a group of us went to a pub and I drank my share of the spirits and beer we were able to buy. The main result was an upset stomach and a hangover. I didn't get rid of the loneliness and I certainly did not feel proud of myself.

Then, after we came to France we were issued some captured liquor and I proceeded to sample it. Each of us had more than enough for one man and very few of us cared about saving any for another day. We had some time off, we sat around and talked, and the liquor disappeared. It was strong stuff and I got sick. The next day I was still high. Well, that was the last time I was drunk and that was in September. What is more, I have no intention of getting that way again. A glass or two of beer in a case or a glass of wine is enough. When our unit had a party recently, most of us drank a few beers and a glass or two of wine. But there were only about three or four that had too much, and I wasn't one of them.

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A lot of my ideas on life have changed since I left home. I suppose I have grown up in a lot of ways. At least I know what I want out of life, and am determined to get it, God willing, and if you agree. Most of the change in me has been within me. Physically I look about the same and still look like a kid. I have gained about twenty pounds but it doesn't show much. I am still thin, and could stand to gain another fifteen pounds.

But I got a wonderfully pleasant surprise today. I got the picture of you, which I suppose is the surprise valentine you sent me. You are more lovely than ever, darling! Oh, how I would like to hold you in my arms and tell you of the love that is in my heart. Those beautiful blue eyes are still as bewitching, as lovely, and as tender as I remember them. But you look mature - a lovely lady - a truly lovely mother. I cannot explain the pride in my heart as I show the picture to the boys and say "that is my wife."

Yes, Shirley, you have grown up. I know that you are fully capable of taking care of Laura and our affairs at home. I am proud of you. Still, maybe I always wanted to feel that you were dependent on me and wanted you always to be at home and not working - even though I realize that you are working now to make our
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future more secure. The War upset a lot of our plans just as it did those of millions of other families.

The War is going to break up a lot of families - by tragedy. Still others will be broken up due to changes in personality, likes, and dislikes. Divorces may bust up as many happy homes as casualties on the battlefield. Many of the War marriages that grew up out of a guttough love affair will go on the rocks. All of this unrest will be a by-product of War.

But, sweetheart, love like ours can never fail. We know each other almost as well as we know ourselves. Our longings, likes, dislikes, and dreams are one and the same. Our perfect courtship turned in to a perfect marriage. Laura made our life complete. She brought out something in our love that even we were not conscious of. Our life together was perfect. We had happiness such as few people ever achieve. The memory of the life we had together, the love I have for you, and the hopes & dreams I have for a future with you and Laura give me courage and life. I work, live, & dream only for the day when my prayers will be answered and I can be with you again, and can proudly say to anyone we meet, "This is my wife."

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This evening I got your letter of Jan. 17th, which had been returned to you for additional postage. Thanks a lot, honey, for the snapshots of Laura. The ones of you were not so good as those of Laura, but the large photograph of you more than makes up for what the snapshots lack.

Laura is certainly growing. I am missing a lot and know it. Tell Laura that Daddy loves her and longs to be with her, too. My heart aches with longing for both of you.

But now, sweetheart, I must bid you goodbye now. It is getting late and I must sign off for now. I will add to this on the 20th and then mail it. Until then, darling, goodnight. I love you, Shirley.

Thanks a lot, sweetheart, for the picture. I treasure it already. Goodnight, darling.

Your loving husband,
Cliff

France
20 February 1945
Tuesday.

My Darling Wife,

Hello, honey. I have some time before show so will try to finish my lengthy blue mail letter and get it in the mail tomorrow.

I certainly like the picture of you, honey. And the snapshots of Laura are very good, too. I have the new picture of you and my two favorites of the latest snapshots of Laura up on the wall in the trailer over my desk and moved the color photo of the two of you down to my room.

Three and a half years now I have proudly called you my wife, and maybe you think I wasn't proud to show the new picture to all the boys in the unit. I took it around to all the rooms one by one and showed it off. Then I brought it down to the officer yesterday, showed it to our officers, and then hung it up over my desk where I can see it whenever I raise my eyes. It looks nice there.

You are very lovely, honey. More lovely than I remember you, and the picture of you in my mind was a truly beautiful one. You have grown from a young girl into a lovely lady. You were a sweet young girl, pleasant to look at, and very neat appearing, but I can honestly say that the change is to my liking.

Just don't change in your heart, honey. Always love me as I love you and our dreams will

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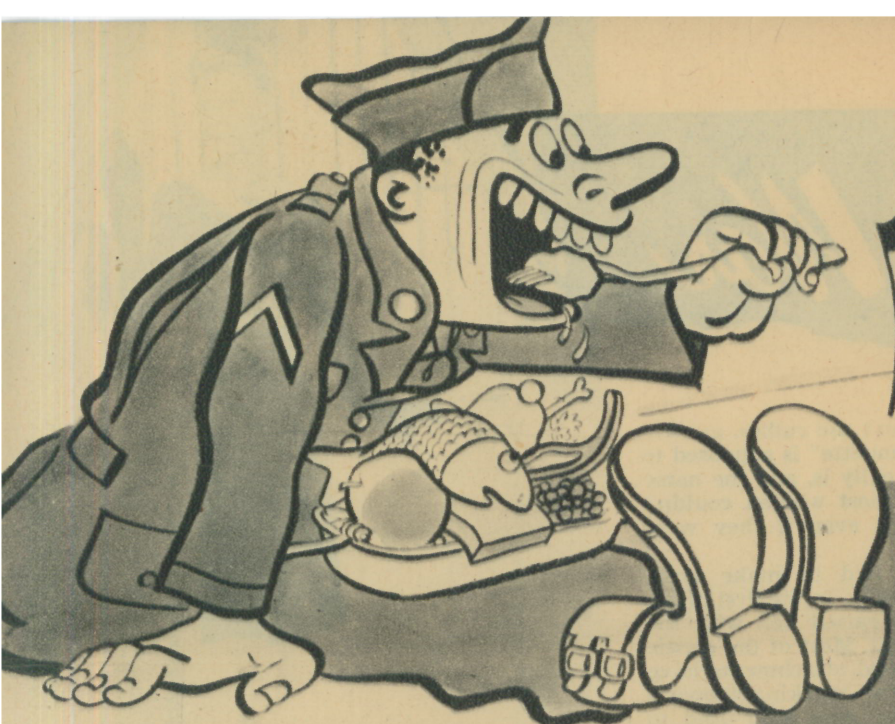
come true. They must come true.

Darling, I do love you so much. You brought real happiness into my life and gave me something to live for. My hopes, dreams, and prayers for the future center around you. I want only to have the chance to make you happy. If I succeed, then I will be happy too.

Remember always, Shirley, that I am thinking of you, praying for you, and that I am yours forever.

Take good care of yourself, honey, and of our sweet little daughter. Stay as sweet as you are, as wonderful, as lovely, and as perfect for me, and always be mine.

Your adoring husband,
Cliff



Sgt Ralph Stein

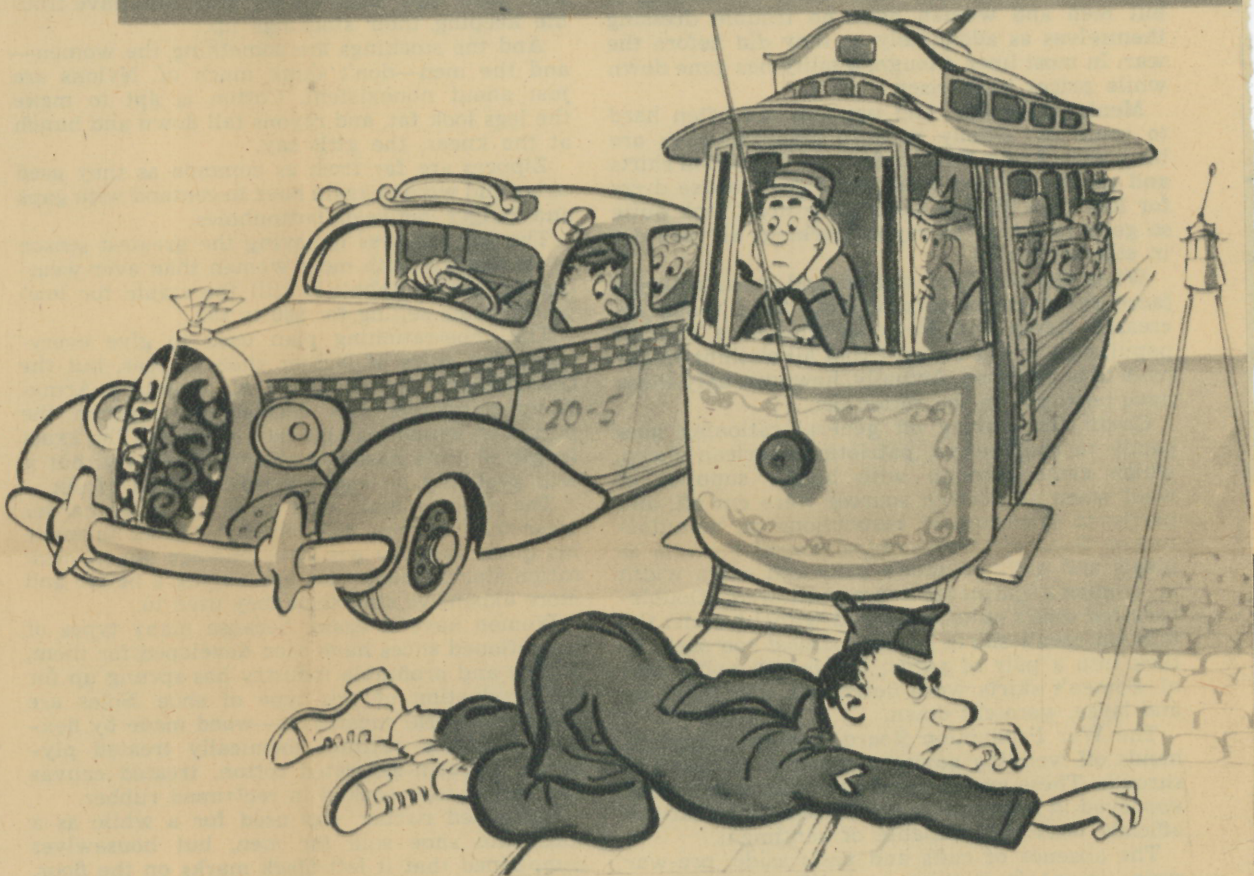
HOW TO ACT At Home

IN the Army you're here one day and gone the next, or sometimes the day before. Brooding on this and on the dreadful possibility that some GIs now leading a carefree existence in beautiful Germany, romantic Luzon or other garden spots may be moved eventually, according to the caprice of the War Department, to the wilds of America, Sgt. Barry Ziff, an old traveling man in the ETO, has compiled the following warnings against pitfalls. This America is a strange land, and a GI who has been serving happily in other climes needs special briefing for it. **YANK'S** Sgt. Ralph Stein has put Sgt. Ziff's words of wisdom into what is known in the trade, or the profession as some of us plumbers call it, as art work.

DON'T use a grenade to open doors. The natives have developed a primitive contrivance known as a knob which serves the purpose almost as well. It is neither so quick nor so efficient as a grenade, but it may be used over and over on the same door as even the best grenades may not.

DON'T tell the native girls what you are thinking about in the simple pidgin English which works so well in most countries. The native girls in the U. S. A. have developed a subtle sixth sense which enables them to grasp your expectations without the aid of speech, and a tribal taboo in most American cities bans the expressive words of your ordinary sentimental vocabulary.

DON'T crawl on your stomach when crossing an open field. If you find yourself doing this automatically and curious natives come up to gibe at you, tell them you have lost a dime (a unit of currency worth approximately half a bob



It is not necessary to crawl on your stomach when crossing an open space. The Americans think it strange.

or three piasters). When they fall for the gag and start crawling themselves, you can make your getaway without being noticed.

TRY to avoid the usual procedure of dumping all your food—ice cream, brussels sprouts, mutton, potatoes and jelly—onto one plate. The natives here have inadequately developed taste glands and serve each different food on a different plate. You needn't bother about having to wash all these dishes, for KPs in America are mostly recruited from a strange, almost-human species known as women.

WHEN you are about to leave a gathering of natives and find that your hat has disappeared, don't flourish your .45 and shout, "Nobody leaves this room till the sonofabitch who has my hat coughs it up!" You will find that they have hidden your hat but will return it to you when you are ready to leave. This is not mere prankishness but a well-established custom of the country. There are places known as joints, where once your hat is taken away, it will be given back only for a fee.

DON'T put on a coat and take a flashlight when you have to go to the latrine. The native huts are equipped with a separate room for this purpose, confusingly camouflaged with white enamel, chromium, brass and booby-trap rugs which slip out from under the unwary intruder.



A tribal taboo bans most of the expressive words of soldier sentiment.



Don't ever try to open doors with hand grenades.

Clothing and the War

People in the U. S. can still dress almost as they did in peacetime, but they pay more for what they get and quality has suffered.

By Sgt. BURGESS SCOTT
YANK Staff Writer

THE only people in the States who are really having a tough time getting clothing are much too young to give a damn about it. In children's and infants' wear there are shortages, but men and women have no trouble dressing themselves as adequately as they did before the war. In most lines, though, quality has gone down while prices have risen.

Men's underwear and pajamas are often hard to come by, chiefly because manufacturers are busy with Army-Navy orders for 60 million shirts and shorts. Women often can't get a house dress for less than \$5, and their gams don't look quite so good in cotton or rayon stockings as they did in silk and nylon.

When the war first started and manufacturers faced the problem of producing for a vastly increased Army and Navy as well as a civilian population, it was thought that all clothing might have to be rationed. Actually, however, only shoes have been put on the ration list.

Credit for staving off general rationing goes partly to cooperative, patriotic American sheep, which came through with bigger supplies of wool when all foreign sources were cut off, and partly to Government restrictions on manufacturers. Such cloth-consuming embellishments as pleats and cuffs on men's suits and extra width in women's garments were outlawed. Double-breasted men's suits were sold without vests; the tails on men's shirts became almost too short to tuck into a pair of pants; the length and width of women's skirts were decreased, and frills, by and large, were cut down.

The War Production Board, however, kept its hands off wedding gowns, maternity clothes and shrouds. These examples of nonintervention were approved in most native circles as a sign that our officials were still capable of sentiment.

The absence of cuffs and vests aside, pre-war styles in men's clothing are still obtainable. A man can get plaids, stripes, herringbones and all sorts of weaves in brown, blue, gray and all the various pastel shades. The best-selling suits and overcoats range from \$40 to \$50, which is a bit higher than the price of suits of comparable quality before the war. Both prices and shortages may increase during 1945 as a result of expected heavy Government orders for uniform cloth.

The greatest shortage right now is in cotton goods. Not long ago the Office of Civilian Requirements asked 4,499 housewives (nobody seems to know why the agency didn't query just one more housewife in order to get a nice, easy round number) what clothing was hardest to buy. The most consistent shortages were reported in house dresses, sheets, underwear—particularly children's—and diapers. A recent Government order for 90 million yards of herringbone twill can be cited as a probable cause of the scarcity. To help correct it, the Government is working on a plan under which a larger percentage of available cloth will be earmarked for production of scarce lower-cost items.

With women's underwear of the serviceable run-of-the-mill variety hard to get, the department stores report a run on black sheer negligee with a lot of lace. Most of these exciting articles seem to be bought by overseas veterans, the girls in the stores say. There's not too much even of the fancy stuff around, however, because the makers of sheer stuff and lace are turning out parachutes, camouflage nets and mosquito bars.

The designers of women's outer garments are producing something they call the new "pencil

silhouette" because they can't use ruffles, gathers and pleats. The "pencil silhouette" is supposed to show off a woman as she really is, and the name isn't well chosen because most women couldn't look anything like a pencil even if they were foolish enough to want to.

Women generally have had to make great changes in their dressing habits. In the first place, the shortage of rubber has raised hell with the girdle, or foundation garment. Most of the elastic is gone from the girdle, metal attachments have been removed and all but two stocking supports have been taken away. The girls who used to have trouble only in keeping their girdle down over their hips, shall we say, now also have trouble keeping their stockings up.

And the stockings are something the women—and the men—don't think much of. Nylons are just about nonexistent. Cotton is apt to make the legs look fat, and rayons fall down and bunch at the knees, the girls say.

Zippers are far from as common as they used to be, and women again have to contend with gaps and bulges between buttonholes.

The fur business is having the greatest season in its history, with more women than ever wearing fur coats. Rabbit is still the staple for low-priced coats selling for \$60 to \$90.

The shoe-rationing plan used to give everybody two pairs of leather shoes a year, but the Government, as the result of mounting Army-Navy purchases, has decided to lengthen the period in which a single pair must do. The exact length of time hasn't been announced yet, but it will probably be eight months instead of six.

The average man, who gives his shoes harder wear than women, has found it harder to make his quota last. To get more mileage out of each ration stamp, many men are buying a better and more expensive shoe than they used to.

Women have it easier because many types of nonrationed shoes have been developed for them. A new and profitable industry has sprung up for the production of this type of shoe. Soles are made of several substitutes—wood made by flexible crisscross cutting, chemically treated plywood, glycerin-saturated cotton, treated canvas and coiled rope soaked in reclaimed rubber.

Reclaimed rubber was used for a while as a substitute shoe sole for men, but housewives complained that it left black marks on the floor. Designers are now introducing wider toes in both men's and women's shoes, because war work has broadened the American foot.

Children's shoes are scarce, because manufacturers can make more money with less trouble by producing shoes for adults. The small fry seem to be getting the worst of things.

Men have some trouble getting socks—or at least socks they want to wear. Hosiery knitters are working overtime filling military requirements, and the loud socks once popular with younger men are getting scarcer. (So, incidentally, are younger men in a position to wear loud socks.) The imported Argyls, fancy wool, French listle and English rib socks have disappeared.

THE stylists, designers and manufacturers are staying up nights planning for the returning servicemen. Some believe that brown and blue clothes will be hard to sell after the war because no soldier will want anything brown and no sailor will want anything blue; others say these colors will be as popular as ever because they flatter most men.

Shirt-and-slack combinations, based on the Army's summer uniform, are becoming well liked for civilian wear, and the Army's new battle jacket, modeled after the British battle dress, has been copied for civilian sports jackets.

The hat makers hope the Army and Navy will have done away with their biggest problem—the habit young men used to have of going bareheaded. They think that after several years in organizations where hats are compulsory, a man will bring the headgear habit back to civilian life.



Skirts go up and necklines down for evening wear.



Men's shirt tails are being worn high this season.



Shortened pajama arms and legs help to save cloth.

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