

Somewhere in Germany  
24 April 1945  
Tuesday.

My Darling Wife,

Good evening, honey. I hope and pray that both you and Laura are well and ok and that everything at home is going ok. I am in a happy mood again for I got some mail today after twenty days with no letters.

I received four letters from you. They were dated Mar. 26, Mar 30, and two were dated Apr. 2. I also received the Easter cards from both you and Laura, and one from Relva. I also received two letters from Mother and one from Mrs. Fluter.

It is really nice to get some mail after so long a time. I guess you know what I mean, though, for you wrote about not getting any mail for a long period of time, and I know that you will notice a gap in my letters for the week I was on the trip to and from Paris recently. I hope that by now you have the souvenirs that I acquired for you in Paris even though you may not get the books I bought for Laura or the perfume for some time yet.

I really fully expected to spend fifty or sixty dollars in Paris, but spent only about thirty-five. The various souvenirs, books, and perfume accounted for twenty-five or more of the total and the remainder was spent for theater tickets and at Paris cafes. I do not think that I did so badly. If I had had more shopping time (most of my spare time was on Sunday), I would have bought something for Mother and Mother C. and something more for you, but it was just one of those things. Our trip was a business trip and we were fortunate to have off as much time as we did. I had a good time and Paris is really beautiful in the Spring, and her heart was young and gay as the saying goes.

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I hope that the hundred dollars that I wrote for has long since been on its way so that I can repay what I still owe on the money I borrowed for the Paris trip. As I mentioned before in one of my letters I do not intend to return what is left, after all, as I believe it a good idea to keep the extra money until I see what comes of the application I have in for appointment as a Warrant Officer.

I suppose that you are still curious about a number of things concerning my putting in an application, etc. Well, here goes, honey, for the full particulars:

First of all, I doubt if I would have put in an application on my own. I had not heard that applications were being accepted or that quotas were open, even. Captain Kuck told me of the whole deal when we were on the return trip from Paris. He had spent a half a day of the two days in Paris getting forms for me and for a couple of fellows in the finance section of Corps Headquarters to apply. He had not mentioned all this to me until we were on the way back from Paris. He told me that he and Lt Turner (my immediate superior & Officer in charge of Administration) were both well pleased with the way I had been performing the duties of Administration Supervisor during the time that Sgt Novack has been gone to the States, and that they wanted to recommend me for Warrant Officer. He told me that applications had to be in by the 15th and it was the 12th then. Well, Captain Kuck and I both were pretty busy getting the necessary forms, physical exam, etc. arranged for and taken care of before the deadline. I didn't do much work for two days after I got back to the unit for running around for physical and dental inspection, X-ray, blood test, etc. Everything was completed and sent in on the 15th. Probably the next thing I will

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hear in the matter will be when I am to appear before the Board of Officers for the exam. Wish me luck, honey. It would mean a nice raise in pay for me and more money that we could save for that future home we are dreaming of.

So near as I can figure it out, there is only about one chance in a hundred of Sgt Novack not coming back from the States. He probably got a fifteen day extension on his furlough and should be back at the unit about the end of May. So long as he is a member of the unit and is expected back his job is still filled and I could not get the promotion to his job as Administration Supervisor. I am acting as such now in his absence but as you well know one does not get paid extra for "acting ratings" or acting in a certain capacity. It is good experience for me, though. I would not have minded at all of getting the job if he did not come back, but in view of facts known now it seems definite that he will be back and I could never get a promotion where I am. So, the opportunity of applying for appointment as a Warrant Officer seems a golden one and a real break. I have everything to gain if I pass the exams and get an appointment. If I do not pass, I am still no worse off than I am, and I do like the job I have, so that is not so bad either. Even though I pass the exams it will not mean that I get an appointment right away. I might only find my name placed on an eligibility list for future vacancies and wait out an opening. It is still worth the chance to try.

So near as I can figure the whole setup out I will either be in the Army of Occupation or go to the CBI Theater with some possibility of a furlough to the States and shipment to the CBI. Any way I figure I anticipate being in this man's Army at least a year more and maybe a year and a half. If I can get an

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appointment as a Warrant Officer inside of the next six months I could really better myself for the other six months to a year that I anticipate being in the Army. What do you think?

Maybe you had better hopes for me being home sooner than I have. If so, I believe it is a product of the over-optimism that prevails in the good old USA. The Americans or "Yanks" do not want to face the real facts, I am afraid. Maybe it is just as well sometimes, but maybe we never would have been over here if we had had been awake to facts ten years ago. All of us back in the good old USA lived in a life of dreams and a "I don't care what happens to the rest of the world attitude." Well, the rest of the world got us mixed up in a job that is ending the dreams of millions of our carefree neighbors, <sup>that will never see the States again.</sup> And, honey, as much as everyone says our good Allies are real friends, etc., there are no people in the world like the "Yanks." They are a mixture of the peoples of the world but no other country has the same ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ type of people that can make work fun, or work so hard at play. They are crazy at one moment but sincere and practical the next -- truly unpredictable. GI Joes walk down the street out of step and have seemingly no military bearing about them. Some carry their rifles over one shoulder, some over the other, and some carry them hunting fashion. Yet, those same Joes are beating the militaristic Germans at their own profession. I could go on and on for hours, but that is not what you want to hear about.

In one of your letters you asked me to give a guess as to when I thought I would be home. That is a riddle that bigger, better informed men than I have spent months trying to figure out. I can guess just as everyone else is doing. But my guess is not anything like the one you mentioned made by Margaret Coatney's brother.

I really believe that if the War in Europe were to end tonight that it would be a number of months before any great number of men now in this theater would be rotated back to the States for a furlough or reassignment. It may be possible that I may be back to the States before the end of 1945, who knows, but I cannot see how I could expect to get out of the Army for another year or a year and a half. As I mentioned before, I rather expect that I may be in either the Army of Occupation or possibly get a furlough and go to CBI. I do not expect any reassignment to the States. Too many men have been overseas from six months to twenty months longer than I have and they would be the logical ones to be sent back to the states for reassignment there.

Sounds like you were doing quite a bit of work at the store about Easter time, judging by the letters I received tonight. I enjoyed the letter about Laura's Easter egg hunt. Wish that I might have been there to have seen all of the fun. Three Easters now I have been in the Army. I will long remember the new Easter outfit I was issued in 1943. Easter Sunday was the first time I dressed up in the new OD's.

A lot has happened since that Wednesday morning when I kissed you goodbye and walked blindly to the bus depot because the tears kept welling into my eyes try as hard as I could to keep them back. I didn't cry, but a big tear would somehow force its way into my eye and make it hard for me to see.

But I'll never forget the way you looked as you stood in the depot as my train pulled out when I left after the last furlough. That is a beautiful memory tucked away in my collection of beautiful memories connected with you. Some things that I miss were only trivial little things at the time, but are so important

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now that I cannot have you near me. There are so many things that make up real love like ours -- that make it lasting and true no matter how far apart we may be or no matter how long we may have to be apart.

Shirley, darling, my love for you will never weaken or grow old. My love has only grown more sincere as we grew up together and has grown stronger since we have been apart. My love for you is the only thing that makes my life worth living. My whole life is founded on our mutual hopes and dreams and prayers for our future and Laura's based on the happy months we had together.

I am yours -- completely, wholeheartedly, and honestly. My love for you is honest and sincere and I am proud to claim you as my wife -- proud that I am true to you and Laura and to the faith you have placed in me.

Always be mine, Shirley, and God willing, we will realize the fulfillment of our fondest dreams together. Always, stay as sweet, as lovely, and as perfect for me as you are, darling.

Goodnight, now, my sweetheart. Sweet dreams, and a kiss across the miles.

Your everloving husband,

*Cliff*