Somewhere in Germany
21 April 1945.

Florence, darling:

I dosed it again. In my earnest desire not to give you any unnecessary cause for worry during these trying times I have deliberately avoided advising you that I am no longer located in Belgium. It may have occurred to you before this, but I preferred waiting until I knew more about my whereabouts before disclosing some of the facts to you. I also am aware of your continuing anxiety about me so I decided to wait until I received some recent mail from you, and until the news sounded extra special good. Well, my sweetheart, not only did the mail come than to-day, but the news that the Russian were within 4 miles of Berlin convinced me that a Saturday night could not be applied more advantageously than to write you a long letter. So with a date with you in mind, I'll endeavor to spend the next few hours thinking and writing words of love and adoration to the dearest sweetheart a fellow ever had.

About three weeks ago orders came thru for my company to move into Germany. As you know by now Railway Operating Battalions run and maintain railroads well in the rear of the front lines. With the Allied and Russian armies outside of Berlin you can readily appreciate how far removed we are from the scene of fighting. In any event this makes the fourth European country I have visited since my arrival in the ETO. The outfit is stationed in a town which was well publicized when the fighting took place there. Of course at present all is quiet and serene, but the populace no doubt have no love for us. They behave all right though, and the no-fraternization rule eliminates most of the possibility of any friction. Need I attempt to relate the condition

some of these towns have been battered into. Sections of France looked like a tornado had passed thru, but some of these German places look like the wrath of God had smitten them, and deservedly so. Some of the sections I have seen are surely beat up, and I hope it takes them six centuries to rebuild.

Before any of these near echelon troops come into a town, it is the practice of the Engineers to remove all land-mines and booby traps, so ease your mind about this. We have been here almost three weeks now, and as yet no accidents or excitement. Naturally I'll be very careful, and walk on my tippy-toes. I am back with the company at present but will probably be back in headquarters in a few days. It may interest you to know that I've seen the Rhine, but could not find "the Lorelei" who enticed sailors to destruction.

Fortunately for me, military necessity made it necessary for me to go back to Belgium. Such a trip is made in an army truck, and necessitates passing thru Germany, Holland and Belgium. I have made the trip twice, and each time visited Frank and his family. This week I spent two nights with them, and were they glad to see me. Prior to my original departure all three of them cried all day, making it almost an impossibility to eat dinner that Sunday. However I could not have it so, and made every endeavor to assure them I'd be back. I'm sure glad I was able to keep my promise. I've been back twice, but have no idea if I'll be able to make it again in the near future. There is much to relate in this letter so I'll write more about them in a subsequent letter. For your information his address is,

M. FRANS CORDEMANS,
NATTENHOF STRAAT, 31 9
MECHELEN,
PRO. ANTWERPEN
BELGIUM.

(Mechelen is the Flemish name for MALINES (French)

If postal authorities permit please write them a note of thanks for the hand carved mirror I sent you to-day.

It's exquisite, the like of which you seldom see. Also endeavor to forward some clothes for Hendrika, she's about Thelma's size. More about them soon.

We are not part of the Ninth army, but we are moving supplies and trains up the front to this valiant army. All the boys are proud to be doing a big job, and the results accomplished by all the American armies in the last three weeks justifies our pride. The news tonight continues most optimistic, with time the main factor at present. How can these stubborn Nazis hold out against the forces of free peace-loving people? It is the cumulative sacrifices you, I and millions like us are making that is beating this beast-like character into dust and rubble. May they never rise to disturb the peace of the world again.

Let's leave all this for a while, and discuss more vital statistics. Please note that my address is the same, but that I have a new APO number. I have no idea how long we will be using APO 350, but until advised that's my new address until further notice. Pass the change around to those who are interested. Secondly the mail arrived, but plenty. My count was 23 letters, 2 newspapers, Modern Digest (April) and a package from you containing Hendrika's shirt. Am going to try to mail it to her to-morrow. Among the letters were yours dated March 27th, 28th, 30th, 31st, April 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th. Also three from Bob, one from Eleanor, and even Billy Rahel came thru at long last. It will take several such letters to cover all you wrote me, but I'll make a beginning here. It's good to learn that my letters are coming thru in jig time, and as soon as this is adjusted I'm sure your letters will be delivered to me just as quickly.

I'm very happy to learn that most of the important packages have finally reached you. Jim's leading set, the Paris perfume and the registered bundle. I'm only sorry I did not know sooner that you wanted more of that Chinchilla Regal, as I was in Brussels the

other day and could have obtained them for you. I am not going to promise you but if possible I'll try to obtain some more for you. Hope you like some of the others, and think your selection for Francis perfect. Hope Mrs. Lincoln likes whichever you give her. As for obtaining more powder, well, the situation is the same for that. However advise the color and I'll keep it in mind. In any event if I don't get back to Belgium your source of supply of perfume is at an end temporarily. Joe was supposed to forward you several bottles but it's pretty hard to count on his moods.

I want to reply to Bob after this letter, and have to watch the "lights-out" time, so this will be the last page of this letter, but to-morrow it gives more. Next to dreaming about, missing and loving you, I find Jim closest to my thoughts. All the little stories, anecdotes and events you write about him keep me alive to the fact that I have two grand persons to love and adore, now and forever. All the letters I received to-day, assure and re-assure me that all goes well at home. I knew all the time you could and would hold up the home front in my absence, and I'm sure you'll continue to do so until my inevitable return. Knowing that you and Jim are in excellent health and spirits, having fun in the car, spending a little time in the country, makes me certain that all is under control with those who mean the whole universe to me.

All goes well with me, I feel great with so much mail to read, and be assured that this news will see its welcome end soon. Kiss Jimmy for me, also the folks. Give my best to everyone, especially Ben. I'm glad for him and Betty. Keep smiling, honey, stay well, and write those great long letters often.

as ever,

George

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