Belgium
17 February 1945.

Florence, sweetheart:

In retrospect time seems to be passing ever so quickly, here it is the beginning of my 16th month in the army and it seems like several eternities, but looking back at the time I first fell in love with you, and it seems like only yesterday. Knowing you, adoring you, loving you all my conscious life has been the finest thing that ever happened to me. I realize our present separation is different for both of us, but many are the times during my army life that thoughts and memories of you, your smile, your ever present sense of humor, your courage and your good common sense, have made it possible for me to continue to be a good, soldiering soldier. Keep it up, my beloved, be firm, keep smiling, face adversity with courage and a hope that our future life together could be a fountain of joy and happiness for us and others. It cannot be otherwise for we love deeply and fervently.

To-day's mail call brought you Feb 1st V-Mail, 3 letters from Bob, the latest Feb 5th, and 1 from Don. All the news from home sounds optimistic, and the war reports also sound as though big news was in the offing. Bob seems as though he is getting a pretty good break in his latest assignment, and if his luck holds out a bit longer, perhaps he will avoid much of this war. I wrote him yesterday, and also sent him a V-Mail to-day. It is going to take a few days to catch up on my correspondence, but I'll not neglect your daily letter. Wrote Thelma an air mail letter to-day, and hope you get a chance to read it. Writing her was no simple matter, and I tried very hard to say the right thing in the right manner. I sure hope you and she are managing to overcome this feeling of grief.

Before I get back to relating the story of my trip to Paris I want to dwell on several personal matters. You mentioned that your weight was 106 pounds, which is not too bad, but I do wish you'd try to get back to a more normal weight for you. With the summer on its way you'll be sure to drop some pounds chasing Jim, so try to put it up now. Also hope you make some arrangement for a summer vacation for you and Jim, and spend anything you need to accomplish this. Your financial statement was an excellent report, and I was glad to read it. The stock market is doing all right for us, and I think Bill Del. Del will be a most profitable venture for us. Let Max sell any of our holdings whenever he thinks it advisable.

It is possible for me to get all the film I need for my camera so do not bother about that. Perhaps I can get some for you - choice size you use. Please do <u>not</u> give any of your aunts my address; not that I do not want to hear from them

or write them, but I have enough trouble trying to keep up with my present correspondence. I spend from 1 to 4 hours nightly writing letters, and just can't handle any more. Please explain this to them with my regrets. I was very much surprised to learn about Joe Gleichman's injuries. He must have been in rugged country, and someone stepped on the wrong bit of terrain. Give him my best and keep me posted on his injuries and convalescence.

Your mail is pretty much caught up now, and I trust mine is coming then in good order. Have the letters been following the numerical order in which they are written? Did you ever receive a letter some time in November in which I expressed my opinion of German Prisoners of War - here and in America? Did Jim's hearing set aware? Did you receive those wooden boxes I sent filled with gifts for you? Did the folks receive the package I sent them? I sent 2 packages to you via first class mail from Paris. Hope they arrive in good condition, or else they'll smell sweet.

Now getting back to my Paris trip. Having washed, shaved, showered and eaten lunch in the hotel I proceeded to look for Joe's headquarters. It took about 15 minutes to walk from our hotel to Champs Elysees where Joe works. This is probably the Fifth Ave of Paris, and everything about the avenue drips of class, beauty and style. All the finest shops line the street, and at one end is found the Arc de Triomphe and at the other the Place de la Concord. Some of the snapshots will easily demonstrate the beauty and art to be found at either end of this famous street. I think I'll be putting it mildly to say that Joe was the most surprised person in Paris to see me standing in his office, but certainly one of the happiest - so was I. He quickly managed to get the next day off, and then we took a ride in a jeep en route to another office to which Joe had to go.

Paris, my dearest, is a town of beautiful things and places. The women are well groomed, almost to a point of complete artificiality, and somehow the city influenced me the same way. Beautiful streets, avenues, statues, gardens but always the inevitable open-air "pissoir" to remind one by sight and smell of a biological urge. Style is half the life of the average Parisian, and the practice of cognetry and prostitution the other half. It's a grand place to go, and be from. I'm glad I was there, and I'll go again whenever the opportunity presents itself, but I look forward to the day when Jimmy's mother and father can do this together - and well.

Joe and I had cameras; he used one borrowed from his friend, a candid camera. I managed to take many photos with mine, and will send them to you in each letter. The

legend is on the back of each snap. Show them around but please preserve them for my return. I will endeavor to send Uncle Harry a set very soon.

Naturally one of my main reasons for visiting Paris was to buy my sweetheart some perfume and a "chapeau", but we are both in for a shock. France seems to be in the throes of a mild wave of inflation. Francs are fixed in French francs computed at the value of 2¢ per franc or $2.00 per 100 francs. But I think the French people evaluate their currency a great deal less. I soon discovered that any stylish hat ranged in price from 1200 to 3500 francs. Handkerchiefs are a mere 150 to 250 francs, an ordinary dress 4000 to 7500 francs; a fur jacket 50000 to 80000 francs. You can readily see that they can figure in astronomical figures. That eliminated the hat, but I took a snapshot of a hat shop window - do you think you can satisfy yourself with this substitute.

The perfume problem was slightly different. Prices ranged only from 350 francs to a 1000, but it was well nigh impossible to find any of the well-known brands such as Chanel, Ciro, Caron, Jean Patou, Guerlain or Worth. It seems the soldiers, the world's greatest tourists have bought out the supply. Joe and I visited every shop and factory shop, and did succeed to round up a few bottles of what should be excellent perfume. Joe's friend's girl is a perfume sales-girl, and she helped us very much. I purchased several bottles for you and a box of Caron's powder. Had my purchases wrapped in two packages by the Red Cross in Paris and mailed them first class. I have also arranged with Joe and this young lady that they will forward you several more bottles as soon as the supply comes thru, probably in a few weeks. I also checked with Stars and Stripes Shopping service about my mail order. They advised that package of perfume was sent to you - so please advise what you receive when it arrives. Hope you have fun with all this stuff.

Now I want you to do me a favor when this perfume arrives. Please give a bottle to Mrs. Pericus, and also a bottle to Frances. Do as you please with the balance, and I'll have you just as much as ever. From time to time I will manage to obtain the other brands here in Belgium, and if I stay over here several months more, you'll have enough for the rest of your natural life.

Stay well, enjoy the enclosed snaps, kiss Jim for me and keep me posted on all packages going your way. I adore you.

as ever,

George

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Co A 135 Ry OPN BN
APO 228 % POSTMASTER
New York

AIR-MAIL

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ARMY EXAMINER

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