

June 1, 1940
Paris

Dear Poppa,

No letters have come from you or any one for two weeks, which amazes and saddens us. It would be the result of fewer boats, perhaps. But what has happened to the Clipper¹ mail? Ah well, we'll probably get a letter to-day or Monday.

Your last letter asked for a Polonius²-discussion of finances. Now here it is: Previously, due to getting only 3000 francs per month, we were lucky to be able to make ends meet. Igitur³, no savings and no American debts paid. We just got out of that situation in time, because it was daily becoming more difficult to live on, or try to live on, 3000 fr. per month, the cost of living having mounted steeply. Eh ben!⁴ As our French Friends say. the four thousand francs you sent tided us over & enabled us to purchase a few much-needed garments, as well as liquidating several debts. Now we enter on another phase, the dollar-pay era. A notice was sent round recently at the Embassy to the effect that it would be possible to have part or all one's salary paid to individuals or a bank account in the U.S. The dollar is still exchanged for 43.00 francs here, while in New York it has reached fr. 60.00, I am told at the U.P. Half again as much gained by exchanging over there, and no telling how far it will mount. In addition, Jimmie has a \$60 debt he wants to pay to his mama, who will pay it to the creditor. In addition to *that*, we should like to save dollars rather than francs, naturally. James wanted to send the money to his mama, who he said would take delight in all the horrible details, but I bethought me how you spoke of a cache of \$150 somewhere in your bank under my name, and so thought it would be better to group the whole together. When it was too late, I began to realize what a lot of trouble the matter would be for you, especially if the bank won't arrange the various payments by themselves. Too late, because the enclosed orange paper had already been written up & sent. As you see, ~~\$72~~ 77.20⁵ dollars a month has been allotted. We keep the rent allowance for rent & "in case". What we would like the bank to do is this: Take out ten dollars monthly (to be sent to mama, 1520 Osceola Street, Jacksonville, Fla.) plus ~~\$.32~~ .623 monthly for stamps, sending the remainder to us, half at the first of the month, half at the 15th, by clipper, and in francs. That leaves us bi-weekly amounts of \$29.48 (about \$33.00), or aprox ~~3000~~ 1500 frs. at 50.

We spend a good 100 francs a day on food, transportation, entertainment etc., so we will use the rent allowance 21,000 per year for non-daily expenses. In this way we will pay our 60

¹ **Clipper:** Air Mail, referring to the "Boeing 314 Clipper ... a long-range flying boat produced by the Boeing Airplane Company between 1938 and 1941. One of the largest aircraft of the time, it ... achieve[d] the range necessary for flights across the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Twelve Clippers were built; nine were brought into service for Pan Am[erican World Airlines] and later transferred to the U.S. military. The remaining three were sold to British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) by Pan Am and delivered in early 1941." (From https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boeing_314_Clipper, accessed 2016-11-06) In 1943, William and Philinda returned from Nigeria, where they had been married, in one of the three "clippers" sold to BOAC, according to William.

² **Polonius:** "a character in William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. He is chief counselor of the king, and the father of Laertes and Ophelia. Generally regarded as wrong in every judgment he makes over the course of the play, Polonius is described by William Hazlitt as a 'sincere' father, but also 'a busy-body, [who] is accordingly officious, garrulous, and impertinent. In Act II Hamlet refers to Polonius as a 'tedious old fool'". (From <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polonius>, accessed 2016-11-06)

³ **Igitur:** Latin 'therefore'

⁴ **Eh ben:** the more usual French phrase is *Eh bien*, the sense of which, in this context, is "Oh, whatever!"

⁵ Corrections in red pencil, probably made by Jimmie.

dollar debt, gain in the exchange, and get used to saving, or rather just not having, \$10 monthly. When the six months are up, if all goes well, we can begin to save the \$10's. The hitch is that it is a great deal of trouble for you in any case, and if the bank doesn't want to go through the labor, sheer horror! If the bank *will* do it for a sum, the sum should, of course, be deducted from our bi-weekly pay. I hope I haven't made any stupendous errors in calculation. There *you* have the situation, and if all goes well, *we* have an incipient bank account.

Everyone is in a quandary as to what to do, plans are made & unmade daily. If the situation gets hot, the Embassy will move with the gov't, of course. The papers announced yesterday that we could expect Italy to come in on the other side any day now, which makes no one very happy. Mrs. Gannett is going home on the *Washington*, as is the mother of a good journalistic friend of ours, "Wads" Kay, who went to Michigan. Paris is just the same as ever, except that the bistrotts [*sic*] close at 10:30 rather than 11:00.

Our garden is flourishing, and has to be watered twice daily. For the first time, I wish it would rain a bit more. Never satisfied. The radishes have appeared above ground, and the sweet peas are beginning to look like flowers, much to our delight. The bushes are fat.

This is strawberry shortcake season! Fannie Farmer has the recipe!

The allotment of Pay No. 1 should reach you in late July, I am told. Plenty of time for discussion.

Much love,

Me

P.S. Yep, I knew it! That allotment that comes to you late in July will be for the month of June. When the one after that comes, I know not. But we will have to live before that, so would you please send 3000 francs from the famous \$150 dollars pretty soon now, and just deposit the June-coming-in-July money when it arrives (except, of course, for \$10.~~62~~32). Complicated, but I hope you get it.

P.P.S. Just remembered to tell you I get \$80 monthly from the Embassy if I am evacuated.

June 1, 1940.

Paris

Dear Poppy,

No letters have come from you or anyone for two weeks, which amazes and saddens us. It would be the result of slower boats, perhaps. But what has happened to the Clipper mail? Ah well, we'll probably get a letter to-day or Monday.

Your last letter asked for a Polonius-discussion of finances. Now here it is: Previously, due to getting only 3000 francs per month, we were lucky to be able to make ends meet. In fact, no savings and no American debts paid. We just got out of that situation in time, because it was daily becoming more difficult to live on, or try to live on, 3000 fr. per month, the cost of living having mounted steeply. Eh ben! As our French friends say, the four thousand francs you sent tided us over & enabled us to purchase a few much-needed garments, as well as liquidating several debts. Now we enter on another phase, the dollar-pay era. A notice was sent round recently at the Embassy to the effect that it would be possible to have part or all one's salary paid to individuals or a bank account in the U.S. The dollar is still exchanged for 43.00 francs here, while in New York

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to realize what a lot of trouble the matter would be
for you, especially if the bank won't arrange the various
payments by themselves. Too late, because the enclosed
orange paper had already been written up & sent.
As you see, \$17.70 a month has been allotted.
We keep the rent allowance for rent "in case". What
we would like the bank to do is this: Take out
ten dollars monthly (to be sent to mama, 1520 Osceola
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of the month, half at the 15th, by clipper, and in francs.
That leaves us bi-weekly amounts of \$29.48, or approx \$500.00 at 50.

We spend a good 100 francs a day on food, transportation, entertainment etc., so we will use the rent allowance 21,000 per year for non-daily expenses. In this way we will pay our 60 dollar debt, gain in the exchange, and get used to saving, or rather just not having, \$10 monthly. When the six months are up, if all goes well, we can begin to save the \$10's. The hitch is that it is a great deal of trouble for you in any case, and if the bank doesn't want to go through the labor, sheer horror! If the bank will do it for a sum, the sum should of course, be deducted from our bi-weekly pay. I hope I haven't made any stupendous errors in calculation. There you have the situation, and if all goes well, we have an incipient bank account.

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(F-56)