

AMERICAN CONSULATE
Milan, Italy
August 17, 1940

Dear Dad:-

Your letter of August 5th arrived August 13th, and, as usual, I was very glad to hear that everything is going well. You have another letter from me on the way, written August 10th, which I sent by pouch because I wanted to put in more details and more weight than airmail allows. In it are two checks, one for Janie, and the other to cover the insurance, which I now suppose you have already paid out of the money which Sarah repaid on behalf of Betty. I hope you understood that the \$65 included the \$30 I gave Betty for her incidental expenses, and therefore, if she had \$23 left, you should subtract that from the \$65. I want to thank Sarah very much for paying it, but I really feel that she shouldn't have done it since the big end of the expense was not for Betty personally but in cables which I sent to Curt at his request (£178.95) and gifts for the relatives in Germany (£156.95). There was also sixty lire for a scarf for Mary, £100 which I gave Betty here, £102.50 for her railway ticket for here to Genoa and the transportation of her trunk from Alzay to Genoa. These, together with some incidentals, came to £699.98, or \$35.

Now that you have the money, however, may I request you to use it to pay for the pictures which we ordered from Harris & Ewing? You will also need to use the \$18 check which is on the way. The reason I am asking you to do this instead of doing it myself is that I carelessly allowed my supply of check blanks to run out. In a recent letter to Janie I asked her to ask Carl Ankele to send me a new block right away. Will you ask her if she has done this? They would be too heavy for air mail, and should be sent by pouch. I might add that the pouch service has now been regularized, and the couriers are coming every two weeks. You can therefore count on about a month or five weeks for letters to reach me by this means. The regular mail is coming in too, but it is still unreliable, and I would prefer not to have letters sent that way, at least if they are at all important. Please let me know how this works out. In the event that you have already deposited the money in the bank, I am sure Carl Ankele will pay the bill to Harris and Ewing out of my account if you show him this letter as authorization.

I am glad to hear that Aunt Mary's ankle is better, and I hope she will soon be completely recovered. It is nice that she and Leonard could take Uncle Jesse and the girls on the trip to Michigan. I wonder what those girls thought about the wicked world outside of Adamstown? Where is grandpa now? If you let me know, I will write to him. If he is at Uncle Harold's, you had better send me the address, as I am afraid I have lost it. It really is a job writing to all the folks whom I would like to write to. I sent Aunt Vonie and Ninnie a letter in the pouch today, but of course it will not reach them for about six weeks.

You have probably read in the papers that we have been having our sleep disturbed a little at night recently. It is really nothing to complain of, however, as we have been left alone since the middle of June. Planes came over Tuesday and Thursday night, and each time a few light bombs were dropped. Tuesday night I hadn't quite gone to sleep yet, and so I was awake for about an hour listening to all the banging. On Thursday night, I didn't even wake up and was very surprised to hear in the morning that anything had happened. Nothing fell at all near my place. In most cases it was clear that military objectives - i.e., factories and railways - were aimed at, but from all I can learn the batting average was 000. In any case, the type of bomb used was so light

that it seems likely to me that they simply want to remind the Italians that the war is still going on rather than to do any serious damage. It is a long way from here to England, and the planes, which must cross the Alps, cannot carry very heavy loads of bombs. While they may be back again once or twice while the moon is bright, I doubt whether the raids will become a regular thing. Possibly this winter, if the war is still going on, they may pound Italy a little harder. When the nights are longer, it will be easier and less risky to make the trip. On the other hand, they probably would not attempt to cross the Alps unless the weather were very good.

I should be glad to hear from time to time how the election campaign is going. I am glad that Willkie received the Republican nomination, as he would certainly bring more energy and intelligence to the job than any other of the Republican contenders. I am especially glad that Dewey and Taft were defeated, as I have no confidence in them. They have probably been all right in their present jobs, but I can't see either of them in the presidency. Whoever wins, I feel confident that the country will be in good hands. It is especially gratifying that both candidates apparently agree on foreign policy and that they seem to be cooperating to this end. These are dangerous times; while I certainly disapprove of foolish hysteria, I hope the country will not allow itself to become apathetic again. Nothing could be more disastrous. I would rather see the people a little too worried than not worried enough. Anyone who sees safety in sweet innocence at this time is forgetting that wolves have been eating lambs since long before history existed.

I hope that you are still all well, and I do wish I could go with you to the farm on Sunday and spend the afternoon in the orchard. Give my love to Sarah, Janie and all the family.

With all good wishes,
William

OCM

Rec'd 8/27-40

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