

Rec'd 6/21-38
p.m.

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Hotel Graf Zeppelin Stuttgart

GEGENÜBER DEM HAUPTBAHNHOF
VORNEHMES CAFÉ - RESTAURANT 1M I. STOCK
LEITUNG: A. REICHERT · FERNSPRECHER 22 431/34

1938-06-11
S-5 P 1/4
June 11, 1938

ABSENDER IST NICHT DAS HOTEL

You would be astonished to see your late-rising son climbing out of bed at 7:15 every morning, but it happens

Dear Dad:-

Your letter of June 1 was delivered this morning. It is going to be pretty hard to get used to having the mail take ten days instead of the two that it has for so many years, but I suppose we can do it just as we can do everything else, if we try.

I have just been trying to think of what I ought to write about. Although it has been some time since I wrote directly to you, you have doubtless heard of the letters that I wrote to Janie and Grandpa. It is rather hard to find the energy to write much, as the pace at the office is pretty tough and lasts all days. Then, too, I have been lucky in being invited to various people's houses quite frequently. Hervé L'Heureux and Fran Spaulding, whom I mentioned before, have been particularly fine about that. I go to L'Heureux's almost every other day, and I would be afraid of wearing out my welcome if it were not for the warmth with which new invitations are always being given.

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I may have spoken to you about a girl named Eva Losch, a close friend of Ina Gotthelf's, who lives here in Stuttgart. Eva was a clerk at the German consulate in Boston for several years and became very fond of Boston and Cambridge, but had to return home because of her father's death and the illness of her mother. She is very homesick for the U.S. and was very glad to get American cigarettes again when I called on her last Sunday evening. We had a long and very pleasant chat over a bottle of wine, and she promised that when she comes back to town at the end of this month, she will have me come up and listen to her brother's radio, which gets America quite well. She has a whole raft of people coming to visit her from America this summer, and says she will be glad to have me help entertain them. Her father was a professor, and they have a fine house on one of the best residential streets in Stuttgart.

Speaking of radios, I have not taken mine out of the box, as the current at this hotel is 220 volts. I do not know whether they would let me use it even if the current were right; there is some kind of operating tax on radios, I think. The L'Heureux's have turned on their radio a couple of times when I have been there, but it is not very satisfactory. Each time the reception of the 5 P.M. ^{EST} newscast from W2XAF has been so poor as to be not worth listening to, and even London does not come in very well, due to the interference from German and Italian stations. As I do not know how long I will stay at the Zeppelin, it would not be worth the trouble to see about having the set rewired, and the cost would, in

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any case, probably be prohibitive. So for the time being, I remain radioless.

Yesterday evening I was invited to dinner with the consul general and his wife, and we had a very pleasant evening. Besides myself, there were also Dr. Link and his wife, whom I met on the boat coming over. They are a very fine couple, very natural and unsophisticated people; I have not seen much of them because they have been busy getting set up in an apartment. Mr. and Mrs. Honaker were very cordial, although the latter is inclined to be feather-brained and garrulous. I was introduced rather abruptly, on leaving, to a German social custom: the maid stood at the outer door of the apartment house as we left holding her hand out. I found it was customary to give 50 pfennigs to a mark (25¢) for the trouble she had been to to serve extra people for dinner. Unfortunately, I only found out the amount far too late, and so gave her quite a bit less than I should have (being, as you know, part Scotch and part Welsh). I can't quite get used to the idea of having so many little coins that are worth practically nothing. Although the pfennig is worth only about .25 of a cent, all the bills in restaurants are religiously figured out to the last pfennig and the exact change is usually given. On one of my first nights here I was given an Austrian groschen in change instead of a pfennig, with which it is roughly equivalent. I am keeping it as a curiosity, as I doubt whether they will circulate much longer.

Before this last sheet of paper runs out, I want to tell you a little about my work. I have been doing clerical work almost entirely, as the best way to learn the system. We have over 200 letters every day coming into the office, and you can imagine that it makes a lot of work connecting them up with previous correspondence, especially since the latter may be in any of several different files, depending on the status of the case in question. After the cases are assembled, an officer goes over them, deciding which ones are suitable for immigration and which not. Very few cases are complete the first time, and this necessitated correspondence both with the intending immigrant in Germany and his sponsors in the U.S. in English. As soon as we get in touch with an immigrant, we send him a questionnaire to determine his birthplace, as the quota runs by birth places, not by actual nationality. A person born in the parts of Germany which have been transferred to Poland is considered Polish for quota purposes, even though he may have moved before the end of the war. These questionnaires are given a number to show their rank, and carefully dated for priority. That is what I have been doing.

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The questionnaires are divided into two groups: those whose cases have been passed, and those not passed. The dossiers on the former are kept in a special place by date, so I go through the questionnaires and attach each one to the dossier to which it belongs. I have to be careful to see that no Polish quota or other people get on the German list. You would be surprised the number of Poles that turn up: never less than one or two cases a day. In addition, there are occasional Swiss, Czechs, Russians or Lithuanians. We have used up all our quota of Poles for the year, so that these people have a short wait. The Rumanian and Hungarian quotas are taken up for years in advance.

After the questionnaires are attached to the dossiers, I first give them their priority date with a rubber stamp and then number them with a numbering machine. Next the names are entered on a very large piece of paper, with their numbers, which constitutes the official waiting list. It has practically no significance, as the German quota is in no danger of being exhausted this year. However, it is quite possible that it may next year (commencing July 1), and besides, we are required by law to keep such a list. Finally, the questionnaires are filed by number and cards containing the vital information are filed alphabetically. The dossiers are filed by priority date, and it is a sweet job trying to keep everything straightened out. I usually make one or two bad blunders a day, but Mr. L'Heureux is very generous about the whole thing. Even those who have had considerable experience often make mistakes. Monday I am to be promoted to the examination of documents, of which I have already done a little.

She was not able to come back.

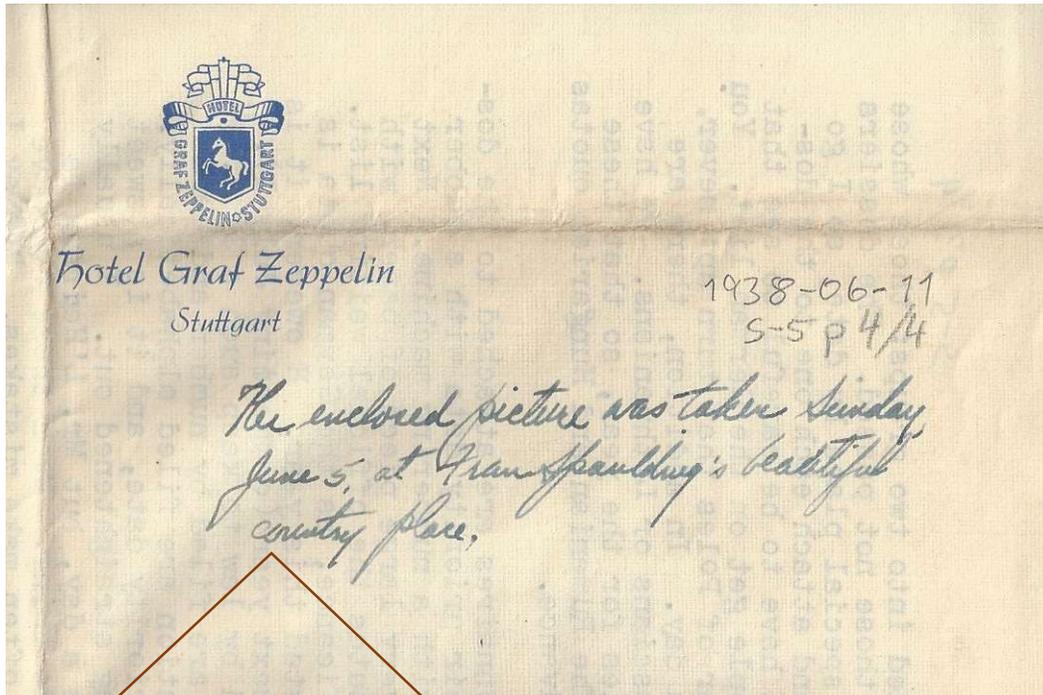
Mr. was not able to come back.

It has proved to be very lucky that I arrived when I did, as Mr. L'Heureux's secretary, who did all the work I have just described, had a nervous collapse, partly from overwork, the first day after he returned from Vienna. Thinking she would be back to work Tuesday of this week, he allowed one of the other clerks to extend the holidays into Tuesday. She went to Switzerland and got rheumatism in one of the lakes, and so was out until Friday. So we have been very short handed this week, and Hervé and I have done almost all the work connected with this stuff. He said yesterday, "When you figure up your salary and mine, and our appreciation, rent and cost of living allowances, this is a pretty damn expensive waiting list." In the meantime, the mailroom is in a jam; they are unable to keep up with the incoming mail, and certain more or less routine types of outgoing letters have also been dispensed with, but we will not be able to keep going until we have more clerical assistance. They have recently taken on a new clerk downstairs, and expect to have another upstairs in July. We are also taking on three more rooms, so more people will be able to work more efficiently. In a file room, there is a distinct limit to the number of people who can work at one time, and that is one of our present difficulties.

...use the sum in partial payment for my insurance, the bill for which should arrive about the same time as this letter. I will send you the difference in Nat. City Bank travelers checks. Love to all, Wm.

When I was in Paris I bought 100 marks in travelers checks (registered marks), and after arrival was advised not to use them. If I can do so legally, I intended to return them to Paris and have them send the dollars to you. I would take a heavy loss of them if I brought them into Germany, and I don't really need them anyway, so you can

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The enclosed picture was taken Sunday, June 5, at Fran Spaulding's beautiful country place.

