

IN REPLY REFER TO

FILE NO.



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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Stuttgart, Germany
April 16, 1939

Dear Daddy:

Once again I must apologize for not having answered your letters more quickly. It has been three weeks since I wrote to you (or a little more) and two weeks since I wrote to Janie. Your letter of April 2 arrived yesterday, and I also have to acknowledge your letter of March 14th, which arrived March 27th.

I didn't get any letters written over Easter (last Sunday) because I took advantage of a several day vacation to go down to Zurich. I was very much surprised about a week and a half before Easter to find that the Consulate would be completely closed on Good Friday and Easter Monday, and that only a skeleton force would have to be there Saturday. After some hesitation as to whether or not I should form a part of the skeleton, it was decided I could go away too, so I had to jump into it with a telephone call to Zurich and a couple of telegrams to Geneva. The reason for the former was to get in touch with Kingsley Hamilton, who was assigned to Zurich last fall about the time Clark left to go back to the School. He said he would be glad to have me come and stay in his apartment over the holidays. I telegraphed to Geneva to get hold of Al Highley, the fellow I visited there in September. He replied he could come, and as a matter of fact, he arrived ahead of me, so that he and Hamilton both met me at the station when I came in Friday night.

I discovered that the train service at this time of year is not very good; there was a train at 7:50 A.M., which is a little early for your habitually late-rising son, and another about 5:00 P.M., which didn't get in until 11 at night. I finally unearthed an indirect train which left about 1:30 P.M. and went via Friedrichshaven, the place where the big zeppelins are built. Then I had to cross the Lake of Constance on a little steamer and take a train to Zurich on the other side. The trip, although somewhat out of my way, did not take much longer than the direct route, and proved to be very interesting and well worth while. Although it was raining when I left Stuttgart, it soon stopped, and by the time I got to Ulm it was quite fair. The trip across the lake was simply marvelous; the mountains in Switzerland come almost down to the lake, and the little villages along the Swiss side nestle on a small ledge of plain between the hills and the water. I landed at Romanshorn, a dull looking town in spite of its rather romantic name, and after about an hour's wait, continued to Zurich.

As I mentioned before, Highley and Hamilton were there

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to meet me, and with them were two girls, twin sisters named Bucher, who are Swiss-Americans. One works in the Consulate in Zurich and the other in a business in Geneva. The latter is a good friend of Highley's, and had come up with him from Geneva. We went out to dinner, and had a very good meal. I always enjoy the atmosphere so much when I get out of Germany. Of course it is all artificial and psychological, but one feels it anyway.

Saturday morning I stopped in to the Consulate, but didn't have much time to look around as it was already time to go to lunch. We have a lovely office there; a very modern, well equipped place which makes the Consulate in Stuttgart look like the dump it is. It is a rather large and important office, for as you may know, Zurich is the largest city in Switzerland and its most important commercial center. It is about the size of Columbus. They also handle immigration visas for the whole of Switzerland, and this takes up most of the time of two officers, including my friend Hamilton. In the afternoon Saturday I saw the very first movie in English that I have seen since I landed in Havre last May 25. Much as I enjoyed hearing it, it turned out to be simply lousy. It was entitled "Make Way for Tomorrow", and caused me to quote your oft-repeated remark to the effect that there is enough sadness in life without having to go to the movies to see it. In the evening we attended a night club, which was rather dull, perhaps because of the Easter season.

On Easter Sunday we took advantage of the fine weather and drove to Schaffhausen to see the more or less famous Falls of the Rhein. I saw them once before from the windows of a train, and so was not so disappointed as I might otherwise have been. Compared with any decent American waterfall, not to mention Niagara, it looks pretty puny, but we enjoyed the trip. After seeing the sights, we had beer in a cafe in the castle, overlooking a valley, which was very pleasant. I really enjoyed the company, because I speak better German than either of the others. Schaffhausen is located in a sort of pocket, almost completely surrounded by Germany, and we had to go way out of our way to avoid having to cross the frontier. Some of the boys didn't have their passports. In case of war, Schaffhausen would probably have to be abandoned immediately to the Germans. I will enclose of couple of picture post cards of the falls if the letter is not too heavy. *The cards are too big for the envelope, so I will just keep them.*

The following day we took another trip in Hamilton's car to Einsiedeln, a village in the mountains near Zurich where a famous Catholic shrine is located. We looked into the cathedral, which was a little ornate to suit my Presbyterian taste, and then had lunch in the open air on the terrass of a little restaurant just outside of Einsiedeln. The sun was so hot that we even took off our suit coats, and got our faces sunburned a little. We had to hurry back so that I would not miss the afternoon train back to Stuttgart.

Hamilton has a beautiful place in Zurich, a furnished apartment which he picked up from an English acquaintance who

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was leaving town. It is very nicely furnished, and is just the kind of a place I wish I had been able to find in Stuttgart. He has a fine RCA radio, one of the 12 tube jobs with eight tuning bands. It is really a marvelous radio. He could get the States beautifully; in fact, we were dancing to American dance music one evening. The principal short wave bands are spread out, so that foreign tuning is almost as simple as long wave. The list price is \$116, but Foreign Service Officers get a 40% discount. I think I shall buy one as soon as I get home. Then the government will have to pay for the transportation to my next post. If I bought it now I would have to pay the freight from the States here and from here home again when I come back.

In response to your numerous inquiries, it seems to be practically certain that I will not be called back to Washington before December or January. I am very much in hopes that I will be able to get back home for Christmas, but it wouldn't pay to count on it, as you can never tell. Clark didn't make it, but then he wasn't very anxious to get back. You can be sure that when I get my orders to leave, you'll hardly be able to see me for dust. However, I'm not so tired and disgusted as I was a few months ago. The work is much easier now, and we have worked out a new organization to cope with the situation. We have many more clerks now than we did, and of course this helps. I am really looking forward to the summer, and hope to see something more of Germany than I had opportunity to last summer. Now that I have the language better under control, I feel more like travelling around.

On receipt of your letter yesterday, I checked up and found that we have the Miss Long from Toledo whom you mentioned, and that she is a good friend of the Sherwoods. Since Janie wrote me in her letter the same thing you did about her coming over this summer, I didn't see any need of making a secret of it, and gave her the advice direct. I really don't know what to say. The atmosphere is very tense, and outside of Germany many, if not most people, would not be surprised if war broke out any time. Outside of the President's remark at Warm Springs, there is some reason to think that Washington expects something to happen, although of course no one can say whether war will result or not. I suggest waiting at least until the end of May before making any definite plans. I will write any indications I can pick up.

Thanks very much for sending off the things I asked for. I will let you know when they arrive. I am on my last package of Spuds. I ordered more from Louisville March 11, but so far have not heard anything from them. I hope my letter did not get lost. Sorry the new housekeeper did not turn out well, and hope the second one will be better. It's always tough to find good ones. Well, it's time for me to go to eat, so I will sign off. I hope you are all over your cold now; I am, and people say I look much better. I have gained 2 or 3 pounds in weight. Give my love to Dorothy, Betty, and Janie. I never did hear if Dorothy left her job at the gas office, and if so, what she is doing now.

Lots of love to all, *William*