

# **SECTION THREE**

# **FRANCE AND GERMANY**

8-6-1945

France

Dear Mom & Pop,

Well folks, I'm now in France. I flew over from England yesterday in a C 47. It took about 2 ½ hours. It was the easiest ride I took so far. I don't expect to stay here long but just continue to write. My new address is on the envelope so please use it and tell everybody else my address. I won't write anymore until I reach my new unit so don't expect any more letters after this one.

I might say I'm now living a rough life. Living in a tent, sleeping on Army cots, dust a foot deep, insects running all around. German prisoners walking around, etc. All in all, it's one lousy place. The weather is the only half decent thing here. Hot all day, freezing all night, just like the desert in Utah. We wash in our helmets and outside latrines, etc.

Just came back from chow. I stood in line for one hour and a half. The line must have been at least a half a mile long. Boy, what a life.

By the way, the nearest town is St. Quintin, France\*. I believe it's about 55 miles from Paris but I'm not sure. Well, I guess this is just about all. Remember to continue to write. I'll write again when I get to my new unit. If I'm still here in a week I'll write again.

Take good care of yourselves and don't worry about me. Best regards to all.

Your son,  
Teddy

P.S. Please excuse pencil but that's all I have.

(New address)

1587 QM. BN (casual pool)

A.P.O. 149

c/o P.M., N.Y.C., N.Y.

P.P.S. I may end up in Germany or the Pacific. Who knows?

*\* Editor's note: This is believed to be Air Base A-71 in Clastres, France. A-71 was home to the 367th Frt. Group. During this time many air facilities in France were renovated for use by the U.S. Army Air Corp.*

8-11-1945

France

Hi Folks,

Well, here I am again. The only thing new is the good news about Japan. I doubt if that means I will be coming home soon. There's still the Army in Germany. The way I figure things out I'll be coming home in about a year. Maybe I'm wrong. I sure hope so.

By the way, I hope you are continuing writing to me. I sure miss the mail not coming. That's what's happens when you start shipping all over to different places. You will have to excuse the pencil again. I still haven't any ink.

We have had rain for the past two days and have been wading in mud up to our knees. Boy, what a life I have been living. For the past couple of nights I have been having some good dreams of home.

I really feel fine. In fact, in tip-top condition. Eating, sleeping and living out in the open air. Remember when I was in England I worked in the darkroom for eight hours a day and I really appreciate this fresh air.

Now that's enough about me. How's everything with all of you? Did Pop receive my cablegram in time for his birthday? Have you heard from Mildred lately? As you can guess I have fallen pretty hard for her and hope someday she will be part of the family. Remember a year and a half over seas makes a guy think of the future. I have a lot of plans made and I guess you have a rough idea what some of them are. Don't worry about me hurrying things. I have that all planned too.

You will have to inform the folks and friends about my whereabouts because I have only written to you and Mildred since I shipped out of England.

I guess this is just about all. I don't know when I'll write again but don't worry about me. I know I didn't write or say much but I know how you look forward to mail from me.

Take good care of yourselves. Best regards to all.

Your son,  
Teddy

8-16-1945

France

Dear Mom & Pop,

Well, I received your first class envelope with the Air Mail stationery today. The first mail I received in 12 days. I hope I get mail tomorrow.

I went to town the other night and also went swimming. The swimming hole is about 70 feet deep and is really clean water. I believe it comes from some kind of spring. This is the first time I have seen women in bathing suits in one hell of a long time, real French women too. To bad I can't speak French any to well.

As far as the town of St. Quentine is concerned it takes a half hour to get to by truck. All along the road to town one can see all kinds of German cars, equipment, etc. all shot up, this was some mess alongside of the roads. Some of the buildings you can see were shot at and bombed out. I think I'll take some pictures of this place tomorrow if it's nice. Living right out of our helmets is okay but it has its good and bad points. One thing is that I feel great and a little brown.

Right now I'm on that damn Army cot. The wind blowing through the tent and the boys talking about home. One fellow next to me is 39 years old and is on edge since they lowered the age for discharge. He has been overseas for six months and has 24 points. As far as I go everything is upside down about going home or getting to an outfit and doing some work instead of laying on our sacks (bed), eating and pulling a detail every now and then. In plain English we're not doing a damn thing (for the past 12 days). You might say I'm feeling a little low about the whole thing.

Well, I guess this is just about all for now but don't worry about me. I'm fine and have my eyes on the shipping list everyday hoping and praying to leave this place real soon.

Take good care of yourselves and best regards to all.

Your son,  
Teddy

8-17-1945  
France  
Hi Folks,

'Hurray.' I received three letters from you and a real swell one from Milly today. This is the first I received in quite some time. I'll answer some of your questions now.

I'll add my fourth overseas stripe in Dec. Remember each bar equals six months over seas. I'm glad to hear you think I have done a good job of taking care of myself. Thanks. There still is a chance of me going to the Pacific but again time will tell all. I can't wait until I get home and get some of that welcome from those gals you spoke about.

Don't worry about me and my goal. You see almost two years away from home sure makes a guy think. I really have done some thinking since I left the U.S.A.

See what you can do about visiting Mrs. Lindquist when the two girls leave. What do you say? It sure would help me a lot in the future. In Milly's letter she mentioned about you buying some saucers. Well, you really rate TOPS again with them and I'm right with you. Thanks for doing such things and helping me out. Thanks again for putting the card with 'Junior' on it by Pop's birthday cake. Things really popped over here just about that time.

Now about those Christmas packages you spoke about. I really don't want a thing. The way things are I may, and then may not, be home by then. Two things I would like is a wrist watch and a new and good pair of swimming trunks. One thing I want the most is to be home with you folks. So just forget about any packages for Christmas this year. Maybe I'm real low in morale now and I don't know what I'm writing but the War Dept. sure could use a good shake up and get us guys home this year. All we are doing is eating (poor chow) and sleeping.

I'll close now. Don't worry about me and take good care of yourselves. Best regards to all.

Your son,  
Teddy

8-21-1945

France 'Saint Quentin'

Hi Folks,

Received your Aug. 5 V-Mail, Aug. 6 & &, and 8 & 9 Air Mail letters today along with another letter from Milly. Altogether I received about a dozen letters so far. Of course since I moved everything is all crazy again.

A lot of the fellows I flew over here with from England are shipping out in a day or two to all parts of Europe. The other fellow that shipped with me from the lab is Hartel (Tech. Sgt.). By the way, he's shipping out in the next couple of days. I believe he's going to Germany from here (the 40th Air Depot).

Pop really is on the ball starting to work on his vacation. Those glass bricks really must look great. Just think, it will be a brand new home for me to go home to. I guess I won't know my own house when I see it again. All in all, I think it will be some time before I start to pack for the U.S.A.

By the way, I received two pairs of socks in a first class package yesterday. Thanks for sending them to me. I guess my next move will be Germany or maybe to a different base here in France or Belgium. Oh well, it will be something different anyway. My address now is only temporary but I don't know for how long.

I sent Pop's cablegram from England the day before I was notified I was shipping. I guess It arrived a little late but better late than never.

I'm glad to hear Dot Hoffman enjoyed my collection of pictures and Bobby helmet. I think I could tell her some good things about a lot of things that are going on over here (whistle).

Well, you might say everything in the world is at peace once again and it sure makes me feel great. You know each day that goes by means a day nearer to home. I may only be over here a year or more and then HOME, SCHOOL, and maybe, get engaged. Oh well, I have my eyes open for the future and that's what counts.

We're having quite a bit of rain here lately, mud and mud. Boy, what a dump. I sure will be glad to move out to new parts of Europe. As far as the women are concerned, well don't worry about it at all. I have my women at home and that's good enough for me. Now to save and look for what's ahead of me.

I'll close now. Take good care of yourselves and tell Pop to do a good job on the porch. Tell Gerry I'm sorry I can't write to her now but I'll try and make up for when I get to my permanent address or base.

Best regards to all

Your son,  
Teddy

8-30-1945  
Saint Quentin, France  
Hi Folks,

Well, I hit the jackpot today at mail call. I received your Aug. 10, 11 V-Mail letters and your Aug. 15, 16, 17 and 21st Air Mail letters. Your Aug. 21st letter was the first letter addressed to here at the 1587 QM. BN. (CP). I also received another letter from Mildred and things look pretty good for me.

I'm sure sorry to hear about Uncle Maurice's death but I have seen so much of it while I have been overseas it's just one of those things. It may sound hard to you to what I just wrote but we all have to go sometime and he went the right way, fast.

I figured you would really celebrate VJ Day in a big way and now we are all looking forward to see the good old U.S.A. To tell you the truth, I figured I may be home for Easter or June 1946. Don't count on anything but it looks and sounds good anyway.

By the sound of Milly's and your letter of VJ Day you both were too excited for words to express yourselves. I know just what it's like.

I though it was swell of Milly to phone you on VJ Day. I'm all the more sure I have the right girl picked out now then ever. Don't you think so? I know it will take a little while before I really get down to business but if she can wait a little while everything will be great (and I think she will). I really wrote Milly a pip of a letter tonight. Don't worry, I didn't write anything wrong. After all, I'm a little older now and looking out for the future, that's all.

I haven't done any work since I arrived here but pulled guard detail a couple of days. That's all. All in all, I eat, sleep, and write letters all day. Remember I'm only here temporary but God knows how long I'll be here. I'm really

looking forward to ship to Germany soon. Boys are shipping out left and right everyday. Maybe I'll be one of them tomorrow. Who knows?

How was the Lindquists visit Saturday (Aug. 25)? I'm looking forward to hearing all about it. I sure hope it was good but I guess nothing could go wrong anyway.

Glad to hear Auntie's eye is much better. Tell her I was asking for her and wish her a quick recovery.

By the way, I have a little tan now and take a little sun bath each day when the sun is out.

I'll close now and feeling great, more so since I have heard from you and Milly regular.

Take good care of yourselves and best regards to all.

Your son,  
Teddy

9-4-1945

St. Quentin, France

Dear Mom & Pop,

Well, here I am again. Nothing new but I'll try and write a letter instead of a V-Mail today. A load of new fellows arrived here the other day and I came across a fellow I knew and worked with in the Engineers about a year ago. He has 118 points and is being processed and getting ready to go home the lucky guy.

I have a racket now. I'm the assistant row chief for our row of tents. I don't pull any more details such as guard, K.P. or area detail. All in all, I just lay around and look like I know something (ha, ha). Oh yes, I make out passes and give out mail for men whose last name start with the letter E, so you see I look important but don't do a darn thing.

No mail from you for the past couple of days but I guess I'll get some today or tomorrow (I hope).

I guess Gerry will start a new term soon. I sure wish I was going back to school. It sure sounds funny for me to say I wish I was going back to school but no kidding, I really mean it.

I broke my new French pipe (\$5.00) so I guess I'll have to start smoking one of the old ones again. As far as the old ones go I have to take the stem of one and match it up with a bowl to make a pipe. Oh well, better to have one than none. How about a new Yellow Bowl Pipe or maybe even two? Thanks.

How's everything at home going? Things are a little rough over here in France, I mean where I am here in 'St.

Quentin.' Did Pop finish putting in the glass brick? How about a picture of the house before and now? I would like to see how things are since the last time I was home (21 months ago). I'll continue this letter after mail call.

Just came back from night chow (supper). It wasn't too bad considering the number of men they feed.

No mail from you again today but did receive a letter from Mary and David. She says everything is fine so that's good to hear.

I'm getting paid my bonus of \$17.00 (850 francs) in a few days. The French government is paying all Americans this bonus if they are in France for ten days or longer. Being I wasn't paid for August this money will sure come in handy. It's not much but it helps anyway and that's something. As long as they are giving money out for nothing I'm going to be right there in line with the other boys.

I'll have 50 points instead of 42 when they add on to my record since May 12 to VJ Day. I also understand that men with 44 points and under are sure for the Army of Occupation so maybe I hit a good luck streak. Now don't ask me a lot of questions if I will be home soon etc. because I don't know and don't think the Army knows either.

I'll close now and hope it won't be long before I'll be seeing all of you. Best regards.

Your son,  
Teddy

9-6-1945  
France  
Dear Mom & Dad,

Well, here I go again. I'm shipping out of France tomorrow to LONDON, ENGLAND. I believe my new address is:

P.F.C. T.R. Oman 32890383  
U.S. Strategic Bomb Surv.  
A.P.O. 413, c/o P.M., N.Y.C., N.Y.

I guess it would be a good idea to write to it from now on. I'll send you a cablegram saying everything is alright. This will mean that I'm there at the new address. I don't know how long I'll be stationed there but it's better than this place here in France. I received my French bonus money today (\$17.00) so I'll hold onto it because I wasn't paid for last month. I'll write again from London, I hope.

Your son,  
Teddy

9-13-1945  
England  
Hi Folks,

Well, here I go again. I just finished wrapping the package with the perfume, pictures etc. I hope to send it off today.

Nothing much to write about except I really like the set up here. The nearest town is Kingston, about 15 miles from London. So you see it's only a hop, skip, and a jump to a large city. The camp itself is really a R.A.F. base and there's plenty of English women in uniform walking around here.

I'm working nights at the photo lab and really enjoy it a great deal. Right now I'm running the dryer each night. To tell you the truth, the set up is something like Polygraphic Lithograph. We're all working on bomb damage pictures. Boy, you should see some of the damage that the Air Force did in Germany. I sure hope I stay here for more than 30 days like my orders read. I sure would hate to go back to that hole in France.

By the way, please send me some Rum & Maple tobacco as soon as possible to this new address. I guess I have been smoking a pipe more than ever lately.

Well, I guess this is just about all for today. I really don't know when I will write again because either I sleep or go to town each day and then report to work.

I'll close now and hope I don't have to wait too long for mail from you. Take good care of yourself. Best regards to all.

Your son,  
Teddy

P.S. Let's know when you receive the package.

9-16-1945  
Sunday  
Hi Folks,

Well, here I am again. I'm spending my weekends up in Chester. It's a five hour ride from London. The main reason I come up to here is that I have a swell home here. In fact, the girls in the family spend time in the States (Long

Island) and are going back soon. They all treat me like a son. I believe they have a son in the service over here in the English forces. I guess I'll spend all of my weekends up here as long as I stay in England (I don't really know for how long).

I'll close now. Take good care of yourselves and best regards to all.

Your son,  
Teddy

9-17-1945  
Bushy Park, England\*  
Hi Folks,

Well, here I go again. I wrote a V-Mail from the Chester Red Cross club yesterday and decided I should write a decent letter to you today.

Just to start things off, I'm enclosing a fifty dollar money order for my account in the bank. I'll send some more next month, it may be another fifty. This should bring my account up to \$280. Am I right? How am I doing? I sure hope I have a decent amount of money in the bank by the time I get home.

Now a little about my social life in the town of Chester. The family I spoke about in my V-Mail of yesterday is named Ferguson. A girl I have been going out with is named Hilbre Ferguson. She is 19 and was educated in the States. In fact, she spent quite a bit of time on Long Island around East Islip. She has only been here in England for a year so you see she's more of a Yankee girl than a Limey. A funny thing, they have money too. They have their own horses and riding stable and you can see they are well-to-do people.

I really made a great hit with all of the family and I know you will be glad to hear I really made myself well liked in England. I believe Hilbre's mother wants to write to you and say what a great son you have. But all-in-all I'm really not serious with Hilbre but it's really the other way around. I don't know Mom but you see the love bird hits other people too, in fact, quite a bit. Hilbre and myself had quite a talk over the weekend and to tell you the truth I don't think I have changed her mind at all about me. I'm not bragging about myself but this world is really a funny thing. All-in-all there's nothing to worry about. Hilbre's one swell gal and she's just not one of those many bums over here. In fact, I think I'm doing pretty good in getting in to the higher well-to-do folks over here. Another thing I must mention is that in peacetime they had seven servants in the house and since the war they had to do everything themselves. I believe the whole family is going back to the States just as soon as time permits.

I really made a big hit with Mr. & Mrs Ferguson. For example I helped Mrs. Ferguson in the kitchen and Mr. Ferguson in the garden. Both of them had many Yanks before me come to their house but none like me. So Mom, you really have a son to be proud of. Like I said before, I'm not bragging, just giving you the straight facts. Mom, I think your son has gone a little into the society angle over here for the past six to eight months. I just can't express myself in words how they all treat me like a son.

I'm enclosing a picture that may give you a rough idea of what I have been writing about. Hilbre's sister is the only one missing of the family in the picture. All in all, Mom, I think you son has really done very well and I owe it to you for the right bringing up, believe me. A good example is when I eat they really line up the silverware. Remember how I always made wisecracks when we went visiting and they lined the silverware up? Well, you should really see how much of a gentleman I am (ha, ha) now. I offer my services after we eat but Mrs. Ferguson just won't let me help her. But yesterday she finally broke down and Hilbre and I washed up after the meal. They all think it's great and I guess nobody else has ever done that before and I have gone over in a big way.

Well, I guess I have written enough about myself now and will now continue on with some other subject. But don't worry about a thing. Everything is well in hand. I guess you really won't know me when I get home by the sound of this letter and my social life but always remember I'm really all out for my folks more than anything else.

I'm now in the photostat dept. of the photo lab here in England. I really enjoy my work more now than ever and trying to learn something new each day. There's quite a bit that I can learn in the photo line over here and I'm taking full advantage of it too.

I almost forgot to tell you that Hilbre took me to a formal dance last Saturday and we both walked off with a prize. So you see that son of yours is really stepping out while he can over here.

I'll close now. I think I did damn well tonight with this letter. I hope it has made up for all the days you have done without mail from me. I haven't received any mail from anyone since I arrived back here in England. I guess in a few days I should receive some.

I'll close now and hope you enjoyed this letter as much as I enjoyed writing it. Take good care of yourselves and best regards to all.

Your son,  
Teddy

P.S. How about sending me some Rum & Maple and a good pipe as soon as possible? Thanks.

*\* Editor's note: Bushy Park, located 15 miles WSW of London, is an English Royal Park (the second largest at 1100 acres) and since 1900 the home of the National Physical Laboratory. From 1951 to 1962 it was also the home location of London Central High School. In 1942 part of the park become the site of a large U.S. base called Camp Griffiss. The base become the headquarters for the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) which planed the invasion of mainland Europe. During the mid 1950's it was an RAF base.*