Wednesday Night  
September 20, 1944

My Darling;

I am just about ready for bed and it’s still a short while before the lights go out so I thought I’d spend a little time with you while I can. I will start numbering my letters starting tomorrow so that you can read them in their proper sequence. A lot of the letters fellows get here are all mixed up. They can tell because they are numbered and sometimes they will go along nice from 1 to 4, as in Roger Thomas’ case, and then 5 and 6 will be missing and they’ll get number 7. If you start numbering yours it will help too. Now I’ll have to work out a system so I’ll be able to remember which number the letter is supposed to be.

While I was at the library tonite [sic] I fooled around experimenting with a new way of sketching. It is cruder right now but time will take care of that. It is much faster and then I’ll be able to do finished drawings from these sketches and send them to you. That will be a lot better than just writing about things I see. I am quite sure that I’ll be able to send the drawings to you. Almost positive in fact.

One of the fellows just reminded me that when I get my A.P.O. number I’ll be able to send air mail letters for only six cents. You will too Darling. That will save a lot of money. It’s much better than having them eight cents. That’ll only be $1.80 a month for stamps. At times I think it’s well worth it too. Shucks, I’d spend six cents a day on my best girl any day. Guess that sort of marks you as my best girl Honey. You don’t mind do you?

The wind is winding something terrifically. I don’t know what the matter is. It rains a little bit this afternoon and now we have a lot of wind. Maybe the weather is going to give us a sendoff with a nice California shower. That’s all I’d need.

One of my pet peeves just came in. It is a little Jewish fellow named Isidore Cohen. He is just not like Saltzman in appearance and in actions. Maybe I don’t like him because he reminds me of Marvin but he acts like him too so my dislike is not only based on physical characteristics. I hope I shake him soon. He tried to talk the doctor into believing he had a hernia during our physical and became very annoyed when the doctor told him he had none. Now he’s trying to find a last minute excuse to get off the shipment. He doesn’t “want to go overseas” so he says. I don’t think any of us want to but at least we accept the fact that we have to gracefully. We had a couple of more successful fellows who also irritated me. They are a couple of regular army first sergeants who unearthed a multitude of ailments to tell the doctor about when they took their physicals and as a result are being taken off the shipment and held for observation here at the hospital. It’s bad enough here when a fellow does that who is not in the Army of his own choice but when some of these thirty year regular Army men do it, it really stinks. They chose the service as a career and when trouble breaks out the just welsh out.

I’ll have to use the mattress cover, which was given to me today, as a sheet because the mattress cover on the bed is not too clean. I did get a good mattress cover, although I’ll be damned if I can figure out why we have to bring a mattress cover with us. Another of the armies’ little mysteries.

Damn, but I wish I could be home in a nice warm bed with you right now Sweetheart. That’s where I belong instead of in a little, lonely bunk in an overcrowded barracks with a gang of very infantile characters surrounding me. I’ll swear that some of them have a mental age of two and are noisy in their ignorance. You can see, can’t you, that where I belong is with you and not away out here. When I do get back you’ll never see anything but me though. I’ll be a shadow for you and twice as hard to lose. I love you terrifically Sweet, and miss you just as much.
I’m awfully glad I’m going to marry you because there’s no one I’d rather marry. It seems to me that we’re ideal for one another Darling. You’ll make me a wonderful wife because I think you’re wonderfully prepared to be married. For one thing, you’re not the very ambitious type of woman who would try to reform me and keep trying to push me to attain new social heights (one of my greater fears was that I might some day marry this type of woman but that fear has vanished now that I know you and know that I’ll marry you.) and then you aren’t the type of woman to whom sexual relations are something to be tolerated. Then you have so many other qualities that will all go toward making you the nicest person and the best wife and mother in the world. Now do I explain why I love you so much. It isn’t just because you’re beautiful you see. It’s much more than that as I have explained. I’m awfully glad that you love me too because, although I don’t have a great multitude of virtues, I do have one virtue which I think will make ours the happiest marriage in the world and that is the desire to make you as happy as possible. I repeat. I love you! 5

Thursday

Well, Honey, I’m all packed, have done all my laundry and am now waiting to eat. Mail call is going to be held over until after we eat. I hope I get a letter from you today Sweetheart. I do want to hear from you as much as I can while I can. I still don’t like the idea of having to wait till I’m overseas before I can get mail from you. That’s a long time to go without hearing from you.

Visek, the fellow in the next bunk, just now told me that I could have sent the package to you faster and more economically by parcel post than I did by Railway Express. I wish that he had told me that sooner. Tonight I’m going to bowl with Visek. I might as well do that as anything else, especially since the alleys are so near. They’re less than a block away. Since Touma and Ludwig don’t want to bowl I decided to go with Visek. He was in the 36th Battalion with me at Camp Grant but I never bothered to get acquainted very well with him.

You know, I just thought of one good thing about going to the Pacific. When we defeat Japan we won’t need much of an army occupation because there isn’t much to occupy. Since this is so I will probably be sent home soon. All that we would occupy would be the islands of Japan, because all the other islands are owned by Allied Nations.

They’ve started serving now so I guess I will go eat and hurry out for that mail call. I do hope I get a letter today Sweet. You’ll keep on writing here after I leave won’t you? It shouldn’t be long before you get my new address, in fact I may even be able to write a letter to you tomorrow night sending you my address. I hope so. I copied down the address of all the people I am likely to correspond with and there were 26 of them. There were some I didn’t include on the list I sent to you. Would you add to that list:

Pfc. William J. Barnhart 17148684
166th General Hospital
APO #5934 c/o P.M. New York City

I almost forgot Bill until I went through my pockets and found his change of address card in one of them. I still haven’t gotten the one Bob mailed to me. I don’t know what the holdup is because he mailed it from

I ate, then went to mail call where I got the letter you wrote on Monday. It was a pretty long letter and very nice. I am sorry to hear that you will have to have your wisdom teeth taken out. That will be rough, but I’ll sympathise with you on October 7th at 9:30 A.M. It’s just as well to have them

Taken out now rather than later though. They did bother you an awful lot I know.
It’s too bad about Mrs Ericson. She does have more hard luck than anyone I’ve ever run across. There just doesn’t seem to be any end to it.

I am quite sure that you will take good care of our house when we are married. Of course you won’t spend all your spare time cleaning the house though, I’ll find other, more enjoyable, things for you to do, but we will take good care of our house no matter where it is or what. We can plan just what we want to have in the house we plan and then until we get the house we can buy up furniture we’ll need, etc. We want to get our own home just as soon as possible though because I don’t want to have it for our old age. I want our children to grow up in it so we’ll have to get it soon. We might even find a place that would live up to the general specifications and buy it and then make improvements as we go along. That would probably be the best idea because that way we’d be able to do a lot of planning and we could do a lot of the actual work ourselves. That will be a lot of fun. I’m so anxious to get started Darling. I’m looking forward to that very much.

Have you decided on a name for our third daughter in case we do have a third daughter. I know we won’t have because we’ve planned on having two boys and two girls; but just to be prepared for anything we might choose one now. I’m not very good on choosing names for girls as you might remember when we tried to select the names we did. Oh, well! You can’t be good at everything I always say.

It’ll be an awful lot of fun keeping house and having and raising our children. I feel very domestic and I like the feeling very much. Surprising? They should be very nice looking and very smart children don’t you think. Look at the parents they will have. Which one of us is going to be the disciplinarian, huh? We should both do that, I think. Jointly. I don’t want any of this running from a talking to by one parent to find consolation from the other. Of course we will have very good children who will never need disciplining, won’t we. To continue with the children, they will have to be kept quite clean most of the time. Of course I’m allowing for ordinary wear and tear and deterioration, but they should never get quite as dirty as some children I’ve seen who’ve just been allowed to stay dirty permanently.

They just came in here and announced that we’d have to get up at 5:30 tomorrow morning and bring our bags down to battalion headquarters. We are to leave here at 8:30 and the train will probably take off about 9:30. This means we should reach our destination early in the afternoon. This isn’t bad. I remember what a mess we had when we arrived in Camp Grant late at nite. [sic]

I had to go out and pick my handkerchiefs up. The wind had blown them all over. I did lose one of them but the other four were still around. The only dirty clothes I have now are my fatigues but I’ll be darned if I’ll wash them now. I’ll wait until I get to the next place where I will undoubtedly have some time to spare.

Ludwig got a letter from one of the fellows who left with Bob. He has an APO number and the letter he wrote was just a note I guess the censor must have put the fear of the lord into him.

While I was writing I fell asleep and just awoke feeling very lousy the way I do when I fall asleep during the day. I should have stood awake. The crap game woke me up. There’s a big game going on in the barracks and I guess everybody from upstairs is in it. The game gets rather noisy every once in a while.

It’s only 3:20 in the afternoon and already I’m as hungry as a bear. The odor of tonite’s [sic] meal is being blown in through the window and tantalizing me. I hope I can last out. Tonight and tomorrow morning are my last two meals here. On the boat we only will eat two meals a day. When we go on the boat we will be divided into two groups. One will remain below decks for twelve hours while the other is topside, then we change places for the next twelve hours. The ships are all supposed to have first class libraries for our use on the boat. It must still be monotonous as the devil, just the ocean to look at all
day long. I’ll be able to spend a lot of my time just thinking of you. Couldn’t I interest you in a South Seas cruise Darling. I’m sure they wouldn’t mind if you came along. Of course they might be suspicious when I never came up to eat. It would be wonderful to have you along though.

One of our local lads just defined a Wac as a soldier with added breastworks and a built in foxhole. Tch! Tch! Tch! The poor Wac, they do have so many jokes made about them. Colonel Hobby, it is rumored, once referred to them as her crack troops, at which, the rumor continues, her audience of male G.I.s was convulsed with laughter.

I just noticed that I never filled in page 8. I’ll go back and fill it in and I’ll bet that you will never be able to tell the difference until you read this, want to bet? There, I just finished it.

The crap game just broke up and now the less fortunate people are walking away mumbling. The winners are selling the watches they took as security when the losers ran out of money. There are a couple of nice watches offered for sale for ten dollars. I only wish that I had had the money to buy them. They went like hot cakes. I don’t know where some of the fellows get all the money to play but the same gang is at it day after day. Some days as much as $400 or $500 dollars is lost by one man. They must all be racketeers on the outside.

One of our more chickenish first sergeants is outlining his idea of running a company. It includes washing the whole barracks, including the rafters. He also would forget about passes, etc., and would in general be one of the most hated men around. He has succeeded quite ably in doing that right here where he doesn’t even have a regular position. It’s a very good thing he isn’t going overseas with most of these fellows.

Well, Sweetheart, I’ve written you quite a bit in this letter, I don’t know how much of it will be of much interest to you because I’ve just written so I could be with you longer. I hate to close this letter because I’m not sure just how much I’ll be able to write from now on. Just remember Darling that I love you more than anything else in the world and that the only thing I am looking forward to is being with you permanently and being married to you. I hope it isn’t long before this hope will be realized.

Darling, I love you forever.

Freddie