

Somewhere in Northern Ireland

Feb. 4 - 1944.

My dearest sweetheart, Bern:-

For the past few hours, I've felt as though I were back home. I had a collection of Post-Gazettes all piled in the corner, waiting for an evening when I'd have the urge to read them. To-night I got the urge. I had saved practically all of December's issues, and a few of early January. I set them all in front of me in order and started to page through them. It was too much of a job to go through each paper, so I stuck to the front page and the magazine sections (funnies, to you). It took me almost 3 hours, but having finished, I feel as though I've taken a flying trip back home. And in the midst of reading, what should I hear sung on the radio - "Embraceable You". I got out your picture (our picture) and took a good look at you - and there you were, almost real, looking at me, sitting in my hut somewhere in Ireland. I could have kissed you right in the V of your open blouse. (Incidentally it occurred to me you ought to wear square or V-shaped blouses always, rather than round-necks you sometimes wear)

I've been wondering if you ever cancelled my subscription to the Post Gazette. Even though I just spent a pleasant few hours rummaging through these Dec. copies, I've decided I'd rather do without. Here's why: - The issues are always a month to 6 weeks old when they get here. They don't come regularly, nor in sequence - perhaps none for 2 weeks, then a half dozen will come along, of any old date. I put them aside in order waiting til all the back issues come in, and then I read them as I did tonight. Though perhaps without basis, newspapers are resented rather than appreciated here. We hear so much of all the valuable space needed for mail - and then these big bulky things come along. In one issue I found an article on how serious the paper shortage had become. I guess I had about a dozen Post-Gazettes & P.M.'s that day - Seemed so stupid to be sending me the paper to be telling me that. The Army, I know, means well. But what the boys appreciate, is not newspapers & magazines, but personal mail. You should see how contemptuous they are of newspapers, when sackloads of mail come in, and 2/3^{rds} of it proves to be newspapers. We get our daily news in The Stars & Stripes and on the radio. As for news of home, all we want is news of our home - that's

what is most important to us, and that's why personal mail means so much. To know that all's well, that you're missed, that someone thinks you're somebody, that someone loves you. A happy letter from you is the best mail in the world ~~for~~ ^{for} me. I'm sure you understand how I feel - so if you want to brighten up my mail, cancel my Post-Gazettes, and write me 5 V-mails & 10 airmails a day, or 10 or more, to make up for it.

Writing of V-neck blouses before, reminded me about my looking for a sweater for you when I was in Belfast. I tried to find a Scotch Cashmere sweaters - but no luck. I went to the finest Ladies Shoppe in town - Brands - and they told me they might have some in soon, but none now. If I ever do locate a Cashmere sweaters, I'll have another problem - getting coupons enough for it - have to chisel somehow. I'll keep looking - but I don't know about that round neck you requested. Now write and tell me Jim's bad.

While in Belfast, I went to a medical meeting - a clinical pathological conference, like we had during the course. I saw a lot of familiar faces, among the doctors, and they remembered us - made me feel for a short while that I was back in that Leave course. We couldn't open the meeting without having had tea first.

I have more definite plans about my trip to England. All the classes for Cambridge University have already been filled, for February & March. They were filled even before we heard about the course - so nobody ~~went~~ ^{was accepted} from the 65th. So I'm going to spend my 10 days in London, or travelling around England. I've set the date tentatively for the 21st of February - I'm counting on the Allies not to upset my plans before that, not that it will affect me one way or the other - just a by-stander. Now, ~~isn't~~ ^{isn't} that reassuring?

This week end I'm going to write to Bobie's sisters, and tell them I'm coming. For gifts I've decided on 1) Lux soap (can't get American soap in our ration anymore - it's all made here, comes without wrapper, but is still stamped Lux, Lifebuoy etc 2) box of cigars, which I bought already, 3) Chesterfield's - most popular brand with the English 4) Candy. That ought to be enough. I certainly am looking forward to the trip. Could you get a leave from the Cambridge Furniture Co at the same time and come along with me? We could have such a wonderful time together. Imagine seeing all the famous sights together, all the shows & nightclubs together (I'll try to see shows, but probably no clubs) and sleep together, and breakfast together in a London Hotel. Breakfast with you in the Sherry is one of my postwar objectives.

I love you and I miss you from your bed, up & down.