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Image 1:

Somewhere in Italy
March 24, 1945

Dear Mother, Dad, and Grandpa,

I'm hoping that today's mail call will bring some letters from you. Earlier this week I received several letters from you, Mother, 2 written on the 10th and 11th and an undated V-mail. Those came on Monday and then on Wednesday your letter of the 6th arrived.

Last evening the box you sent Feb. 14th came—and it was in perfect condition. Thanks so much. Everything is marvelous. The cheese and crackers look especially tempting. Also the fruit juice. I liked the cheese and mustard with melba toast so very much—the things you sent in a previous box.

This past Tuesday I had the extreme good fortune of being able to see a production of the ["Night of January 16"](#) which was very well done for that type of play. It was raw in many spots, but, ^{since} they were playing to a G.I. audience I ~~ken~~-knew that they would do it that way.

I'm enclosing the program which you might find interesting.¹

Please send some food whenever you care to do so.

Image 2:

(2) Somewhere in Italy
March 24, 1945

We had to travel quite a distance to see the play – through twisting, turning mountain roads—too much altitude to suit me! But seriously, it's some difference from stepping into a shiny car and driving a short distance to the Victory for a legitimate production.

The war is progressing quite well it seems. This morning I heard over the radio that Patton has crossed the Rhine. I came in at the end of the broadcast, so consequently I missed the details, but am anxious to hear about it. Kesselring has been removed from this front to replace Von Rundstedt, it has been announced.² The Germans are well on their way to Valhalla and the "Twilight of the Gods" but they can still do a lot of damage.

We got the pony edition of "Time" and I read about, ^{the} action in Italy in it. You read it, no doubt. It is the March 19th edition.

In the same issue General Leonard and his 9th Armored Division get a nice write up for taking the Remagen bridge.³ What does he write Mrs. Sullivan?

Don't forget to send some food.

Image 3:

(3) Somewhere in Italy
March 24, 1945

¹ Located in the scrapbook in Jerome Epstein papers, Box 16, George Mason University Special Collections Research Center.

² Albert Kesselring and Karl Rudolph Gerd von Rundstedt, two high ranking German generals.

³ In one of the more famed exploits of the war, the 9th Armored captured an intact bridge over the Rhine at Remagen. The German army had systematically destroyed all the bridges over the Rhine, but the explosives at Remagen failed to fully detonate. The capture of this bridge and bridgehead avoided a costly cross-river assault operation. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Remagen

I was going to write you about it the day I received the clipping from you, Mother. As you say, he wanted to make a name for himself, and is doing it.

Thursday night the family we are living with at present invited us to an Italian dinner. They are wonderful people. They haven't much, but would give us everything they have and would do anything in the world for us.

It was the first time we had eaten on plates since leaving Swift. The started out with real Italian spaghetti a mile long with chicken cooked it it [sic]. We all had a heaping plate full of it with more for everyone. Then they served us roasted [undecipherable] rabbit with potatoes on the side. Also plenty of home-made bread. The women worked all the day before baking bread. And of course "vino" or wine flowed like water. And we even had tablecloth! Funny how such seemingly trivial things can become so important. It was a very pleasant experience to remember.

And while I'm on the subject of food, my favorite topic, don't forget to send some whenever you care ^{to}.

Image 4:

(4) Somewhere in Italy
March 24, 1945

Yesterday one of the boys scanned [?] around and was able to buy 3 eggs for each of us from a farmer. 15¢ apiece, by the way. So for breakfast this morning we had bacon and eggs, sunny side up. Outside of these times, though, we have been eating with the rest of the company. And we do have bacon and eggs quite often, but it was a novelty to do it this way.

The woman here is doing my laundry. I gave her a bar of Kinkman's soap which I got with my PX rations.

The food in Cincinnati must have been terrible. Those cookies you are sending sound wonderful, Mother.

I have been getting your air-mails in a very short period of time, so I don't think that clipping applies to this theater. Looks like V-12 is just about finished.⁴ I imagine all colleges want to get back to normal as soon as possible.

I'm sure I wrote you that the sweater and scarf came. They are swell, and I was terribly glad to get them.

Please send some food whenever you care to.

Image 5:

(5) Somewhere in Italy
March 24, 1945

Mother, you write of Churchill being in Germany. Well I just heard that he was there for the spectacular crossing of the Rhine which was just described in detail. It certainly is wonderful.

I will thank everyone, etc. as soon as possible.

I'm waiting for the almond bars. They should come soon.

If I can get today's "Stars and Stripes," I will send it. We can only send the Saturday edition.

I must write a few lines to the kids. It's hard to realize that Victor is in the Confirmation class.

⁴ V-12 was a program to produce Naval Officers out of civilian colleges during the war, supplementing the supply from the U.S. Naval Academy. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/V-12_Navy_College_Training_Program

I'm so glad you liked the things I sent. Mother, today is your birthday, and I can't tell you how much I would like to celebrate it with you. I know it will be a happy birthday, and I wish you so very many more of the same. I haven't been able to send you any remembrance, but I may have an opportunity to do so yet. But it will reach you quite late.

It is "One World," isn't it? I believe I mailed that box Jan. 28.

Please send some food whenever you care to do so.

Image 6:

(6)

Somewhere in Italy

March 24, 1945

I was surprised to hear of Paul and Phyllis' blessed event.

Well, the holidays are almost here. Last Passover I was in Camp Livingston. Today all boys of our faith were given a box of matzos supplied by the N.J.W.B. I think it's a very nice thing. A gesture like that means so much to all the boys over here. Here's hoping you will find the holidays at home very pleasant. I know you will.

Love to all of you.

Lovingly,

Jerome, Jr.

P.S. Please send some food whenever you care to do so.