

Griesstatt, Germany
June 22, 1945

Dear Mrs. Davis:

I hope that my next letter will be telling of a meeting between Bob and I. I was away last Sunday and when I returned there was a note from Bob that one of his friends had left. Probably he has already told you that a section of his outfit is in Wasserburg which is only 9Km from here. He said that they run keeps between there and Ingolstadt every few days and that if I could get a pass I could catch a ride up with them. I have been trying to get up there to see about it ever since but guard etc. has prevented it. Anyway I will go tomorrow for sure and then if I just can get a pass I'll be all set. I don't know if I can get the pass but our Captain is a good fellow and he can help me he will. Its the best chance and the only chance I have had so far and I'll try hard. Sure would be good to see him.

You asked a couple of questions in your last letter that I will try to answer. We still have the tanks but don't use them much anymore. At first we used them to drag in shot & up German equipment but thats about all done now. For the past few days we have been painting them and trying to get them into some kind of shape. They were pretty run down after more than 6 months of combat when we couldn't do much to them. Its a wonder how well they will run when they are left alone. In the states when we were always fooling around with them we couldn't make even a short trip without having trouble but over here we only had one break down during the whole time which is pretty good. We are staying in an old hotel in this little town. Its old but pretty nice. Its a little crowded now that several of our outposts have been canceled but still plenty good. Some outfits are still out in the field in pup tents so I guess we are pretty lucky. The weather is pretty nice now. It still rains a lot but it isn't bad when we have shelter like this. The rain is different from that at home. It usually comes soft and easy and never driving like it does at home. It gets pretty hot during the day but its always cool at night. Its hot enough to wish for sun tan uniforms instead of these Ode tho. Yes, we are on a river--the Inne. Its the one that goes through Wasserburg and Munich too I think.

After about a dozen delays we have finally started our weekend sight seeing tours. First we went to Munich and saw all the sights there. Saw the famous beer hall, the square where Hitler made his first bid for power in 1923 and all the other things. Its badly bombed out but not so badly as other towns. In the square where Hitlers gang was fired on when they tried to stage a parade in 1923 some Kraut had written in German on a statue, "Dachau (and a couple of other famous concentration camps), I am ashamed to be a German!" On the other side some one had written, "Not the German people, only the Nazi!" Most of them wouldn't agree tho.

The next weekend we went to Berchtesgaden and saw the ruins of Hitlers home and the ruins of the homes of all his friends. They were completely destroyed by the bombings and looked just like the pictures in Life. Nothing but an empty shell remained of Hitlers place. I was disappointed in the size and design. Anyway it was interesting to stand in the large living room where so many pictures of Hitler and other famous people were made. I wanted to see Hitlers looted art collection but as might be expected it was for Officers only.

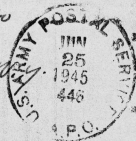
Then last weekend I took a trip to Brenner pass and that area. We got to set foot in Italy but thats all. They wouldn't let us go down to the most narrow part where it was bombed so badly. We stayed in Innsbruck and went up on top of a mountain in cable cars to a ski resort now operated by the 103 Division. Still a little snow up there. The next day we went to the place where the winter olympics were held in 1934 and then to the town where the Passion Play depicting the life of Christ is held every 10 years. I had never heard about it before but probably you have read about it. The guide said that it was first held in 1934. A 7 and a half hour show is held 5 days a week from May to Sept. and in 1934 600,000 people saw it of which 200,000 were Americans. It was a good trip and the mountain drive was beautiful. Of course it had to rain on all three trips. I'm afraid I'll have to say home this weekend because they are going to repeat that trip for those who didn't go last weekend.

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Gradually I am seeing a lot
of Germany. Hope they let me
stay a long time and see more.
That's about all the news.

John

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