

Sidney Diamond to Estelle Spero

Fort Dix, New Jersey. Circa April 1945.

Autograph letter signed, 6 pages.

Fort Dix, N. J.

6. P.M. – Monday

Bun! –

Since last we met, (ah platitudes!) much water has poured [*struck*: has] violently beneath the not to steady bridge! – yes, Estelle, the inevitable has happened, don't scold – I lost my temper!!! – got into a combat with fists. – These fisticuffs (if we might call them such) started suddenly, lasted a few moments – and [*struck*: was] [*inserted*: were] broken up when the party got rough! – Here are all the lurid details – I'll attempt to be as rational and unprejudiced as is possible. –

1. There exists a clique of three or four gentleman who feel it their responsibility to uphold the morale of the men by continually harassing the men with childish pranks such as half sheeting beds, smearing cold cream and shoe polish [*struck*: with] an unsuspecting slumberers, shaving some.

2. All these a certain “guy” endured, realizing that its to be expected during the first few days. As the days grew into a week and still the nuisances continued this same guy said – “enough!”

3. Mind you, this “guy” approached this thing in a coldly scientific manner. [2] he reasoned as follows. a) These men would continue unless stopped b) not only would they molest newcomers but would enjoy bothering “Veterans” – taking advantage of friendships acquired. c) They had never been subjected to the same treatment D) and most important they did not realize what it was to be humbled

4. Well – “guy” was [*struck*: high lying] comfortable loafing in bed – attempting to read. – suffering slightly from an overdose of cookies; a heavy dinner and an inoculation received in the afternoon when suddenly he found himself flying through the air [*struck*: as], bed and all following him. – When he landed bed and all fell down on top of a big guy!!

5. – Well, why continue – verbal argument was useless – so now they don't bother

[*struck*: him] [*inserted*: “guy”] anymore and people think [*struck*: it] [*inserted*: “guy”] used to play football!!

Lets discontinue these distasteful details and go to something of more interest to both of us, particularly myself –

question department

P. Piano lessons? Romantic poetry? Tommy [Thomas] Payne? Poison Ivy???
coed??? trip home? reports? Natalie? Pearl? You???

[3] advice department

Again – keep clear of strange soldiers. Hit Romantic Poetry & hit it hard. Above all, sweet, take care of yourself. – You don’t want me destitute of life – I couldn’t stand your being ill – or somethin’!

miscellaneous

I don’t like this Roy fello!!

You’ll notice I’ve changed my hour of writing to you. Its a lot safer and easier on the “pot washer” Sid. It also gives me an opportunity to write more.

At present I’m seated at the same bench we occupied Sunday. The band is playing “As the Caissons go [*struck*: Marching] [*inserted*: Rolling]” – There’s a ball game not far off – The soft cool breezes of the before night, rustle trough the paper; The sun plays gently upon the soldier across the table – It causes him to slight his position to the left. Pens scratch madly, tongues protrude, paper[*struck*: s] after paper is filled with details of each persons life. Here a soldier tells of a dream. There a boy writes of love. Another grins at a happy thought – Yet, another saddens as he writes of fear!!

Darling, I have [*struck*: absolute] no regrets, [4] no longings, no homesickness except the gnawing hunger to be near you – to speak with you – to press your hand in mine and stroll – I say this now with convictions – Love [*struck*: supesade] supersedes all! –

By the way, your photograph is a little closer to my heart. I now carry it in the money belt. – hmmm! –

After Joe and I left you last night we met Bob (Med Stud.) All of us proceeded to the theatre where we were entertained (???) by a motion picture of questionable worth entitled “Sorcery chic.” with Edward G. Robinson – Home then & bed.

I know I'm getting [*struck*: If] lit but what the heck! – A very strange thing occurred today. You recall, I mentioned our sergeant as being the foulest mantled chap I'd encountered and that he seemed nothing less than [rien]! – Well I discover he has a four year scholarship to Syracuse University – quit after two years – [*inserted*: to get married] and won [*struck*: .] in a game of chance, for the first time when the draft numbers were drawn! –

Peculiar – very peculiar.

Yes I know this is [*struck*: going] [*inserted*: growing] into a manuscript but – well I like the new pen!!

[5] Stelle, I shall attempt, at least, to argue your thoughts of the unworthiness of the effort I am, through my own choosing, engaging in.

Our mutual friend Thomas Paine has aptly said “My country is the world and my religion is to [*struck*: go] do good!” Lets ponder over this for a moment. It is true as Goethe [*struck*: puts it that] suggests that in peace time every one concerns himself with sweeping his own doorstep and minding his own business and things will go well; But, at present, the world ([*struck*: one recognized country]) (which we recognize as our country fights hopelessly in [*struck*: the] [*inserted*: a] maelstrom [*struck*: .] as it is gradually and seemingly inevitably sucked into chaos. When a man drowns, one scarcely thinks of the future. One does not dream of future happiness– There is no desire to wait and see!! –

– “Love of country is more powerful than reason itself!” (Ovid)

If my neighbor [*struck*: shoots] whips his dog I “tsk tsk”. If he beats his own wife I look away – were he, however to attack a strange girl – [*struck*: Well, you know [6] me] The matter [*struck*: be] is no longer a family affair but a community problem. [*struck*: J. G. Holl] J. G. Holland [*struck*: says] [*inserted*: expresses] it more adequately when he points out that “The man who lives his home best, and loves it most unselfishly, loves his country best. – ‘Stelle – our country is the entire world and mankind our countrymen!!!

Whew – what brought that on – cool off Sid – take a shower!! –

Patriotism knows [*struck*: h] no time no land, no sea – it is not [*struck*: climatic] !
Geographical! It is not scheduled!!

Oh well – hm – hm – hm, all right I hear your mother whistling – Good night sweetheart – Love –

Yours – always!

Sid