

Monday 27 Oct. 1947

Hello Sweetheart,

I surely have been a busy little fellow today. I got a lot done too — for a change. The day started for me at ten o'clock this morning when I arrived promptly for the opening of the secretariat of the school. It was a very cold gray day and I didn't enjoy a bit waiting outside in the cold wind for ten minutes before they decided to unlock the door. Inside I had to wait another fifteen minutes for a two minute interview with the man who signs the scholarship papers. He signed my papers and approved my lists of books and materials (without examining them) and I was on my way to the Veterans Adm. office by 10:30. It took just half an hour to get to the Hôtel d'Iena and climb the four flights of stairs to their office. There was quite a crowd ahead of me and I didn't get into the back room to see the man until a quarter of twelve. It took him about three minutes to decide that my papers were O.K. (except for a smock I had on my list) and that I could have a ~~pass~~ P.X. card. So the little pregnant american girl filled out a card for me and I was off to find the Hôtel Astoria at the Place de l'Étoile (Arc de triomphe to you tourists). When I got out of the subway I took a long look all around the Place and what do you know — no Hotel Astoria. No hotels at all in fact. So I walked a block away from the Place and started around the Place on a circular street. The three people I asked, including one American P.F.C. had no more idea than I where the hotel was. After I had walked about 270 degrees of the circle and half a mile — there it was, about two blocks from where I started. The next time I walk in a circle looking for something I'll go clockwise.

The reason for going to the Hotel Astoria ~~it~~ was not for anything in the hotel, which is occupied by the U.S. Army, but to catch the shuttle-bus which runs from the hotel out to the army camp where the P.X. is located. The bus runs every half hour and is free. I found it just in time for the 12:30 run. It took about 20 minutes to get to the camp and I wandered around in the P.X. bug-eyed for another 20 minutes at least before I got up enough nerve to try to buy some of those marvelous things their shelves are laden with. Then I went back to the cashier's window and cashed \$40.⁰⁰ worth of travellers checks.

After I had bought two cans of peanuts, 2 boxes of crackers, 24 pkgs. of cigarettes, and 24 bars of Nestles chocolate bars with almonds — my hands were very full so I went to the back of the store and got a big cardboard box. I finished filling it up with a pound of Whitman's candy, 5 pounds of Borden's malted milk, a can of turkey and a can each of chicken, and anchovies, 2 cans of tomato soup, 2 jars of Borden's blue cheese spread, 2 cans of drano, and a can of dutch cleanser. Nothing was rationed except the cigarettes and Nestles chocolate bars. Total cost \$10.85. (I got 2# sugar too)

They have other foods — canned milk too — cosmetics, notions, clothing for men, women, & children (but not much variety and the nylon stockings are reserved for holders of 'A' ration cards and mine is 'D'), shoes, jewelry & watches, radios, elec. heaters, etc. etc. Its a regular general store. Next door to the P.X. there is a big commissary which looks just like a super-market back home, with push cart baskets. It was closed today and I dont know yet whether or not I can buy food there. I lunched on three hamburgers and a malted milk at the snack bar for 45 cents. Tell me anything you specially need right away and I'll try to make another trip out there before I come home.

I caught the 2:30 bus back to l'Étoile and was in my room at the hotel a little after 3:00 P.M. I fixed myself some cold bouillon (2 pkgs. I forgot to include in my list) and snacked on peanuts and a bar of chocolate while I read the paper. At four o'clock I went back to the school to see the patron and the massier. Neither of them was there when I arrived but both were expected at 5:00 o'clock so I hung around and talked or looked at books in the reference library until they both arrived a little after six. M. Lecoute was busy for more than an hour judging and grading some beginners work but I finally managed to collar him for a minute and a half at 7:15. He liked my drawing and told the massier he thought I should start in the première classe. The massier agreed and told him that he was taking me to see M. Vitale to try and get that officially arranged. The massier has phoned M. Vitale twice already to arrange an interview but couldn't get him on the phone. He will try again tomorrow. ~~This~~ This is the last big hump in my arrangements but I am pretty sure it will work out all right. M. Lecoute asked me to start working on a bank problem of the 1^{ère} class which they have been more or less working on since Oct. 8th and which is due the 14th Nov. I'll get the problem in the morning, then I'm really going to turn on the steam. You can expect me to be in mental hibernation until the 14th of Nov. I hope I don't have to lose too much time with this interview with M. Vitale. Having the massier with me will be a big help. I had a turkey supper when I got back to the hotel then wrote this letter and now it's eleven o'clock and I'm for bed. Goodnight dear heart, I love you.

Hewes