

Thursday, April 19th, 1945

My dear Bill,

Do you know it's the third time I start to write to you? After your first letter I thought you did not receive mine and I started to tell you nearly the same things. Then, I met Andrée in the street and I heard that was not. I started again yesterday, but, just at this time I received the visit of my cousin Robert. And now I have your second letter. Thank you so much for the both. I am very glad to read you<sup>11</sup> and, don't be afraid, your writing is not at all unlegible for me. –So, if you have time and nothing best to do, write me often, that will please me. Thanks in advance. When I received your first letter I was just coming back from Paris.<sup>12</sup> May be I'll make you quite envious by telling you I spent my Eastern<sup>13</sup> holidays in “my” Paris? Can you understand how glad I have been to see it again, after five years? And the spring is so beautiful there. The weather was not so fine than in Nice, but I feeld<sup>14</sup> quite happy to see the Seine, even grey, so quiet, so peaceful, with the already green trees on its banks. On the Eastern night I saw the Arc de triomphe all lighted.<sup>15</sup> I went up the Champs Elysées and were so many people, french people, american and british!<sup>16</sup> All, we observed a minute of silence in remembrance of the dead of this war. Then the gun thundered (...correct?...), the bells of every church rang. That was very grand and stiring. All together, these thousands and thousands of men, women and even, so late in the night, children, we sang the “Marseillaise.”<sup>17</sup> The next day, Général de Gaulle gave flags

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<sup>11</sup>*hear from you*

<sup>12</sup>Paris is the capital of France and was the site of the historic 6-day battle which culminated in the end of Nazi occupation and the liberation of Paris. During the Occupation, life in Paris was very bleak as Parisians had limited access to freedom in terms of lack of food and resources, general fear about the future in addition to inadequate heat and electricity. Due to the strict food rations, no access to cars and general lack of habitable circumstances, Paris was under a lot of pressure and took years to recover from Germany's occupation. Parisians were living day in and day out in utter fear and with no control over the expanding situation.

<sup>13</sup>*Easter holiday*

<sup>14</sup>*felt*

<sup>15</sup>The Arc de Triomphe is a famous monument located in Paris, located at the western end of the Champs d'Élysées. During WWII, the Arc de Triomphe became the meeting place of French soldiers to parade their military successes. It is also the location of the annual Bastille day celebration.

<sup>16</sup>The Champs-Élysées is an avenue located in the 8th arrondissement of Paris. Since the 1640, the Champs d'Élysées has been one of the most beautiful and famous avenues stretching spanning 1.7 miles. Following the Liberation of Paris in 1944, Parisians lined the avenue to celebrate and honor the 28th U.S. Infantry Division, one of the groups responsible for freeing the capital from Nazi occupation.

<sup>17</sup>La Marseillaise is France's national anthem. It was written in 1792 by Claude Rouget after the declaration of war by France against Austria. The song was originally titled le “Chant de Guerre” (the song of war). The chorus is as follows: “To arms, citizens/ From your battalions, march, march!/ Let impure blood water our furrows!”

to the regiments of the new french army.<sup>18</sup> He gave, too, the cross of deliverance (liberation) to Paris.<sup>19</sup> All streets were dark<sup>20</sup> with people so happy to feel free, so enthusiastic for the allied armies and so glad to know the victory day so near.<sup>21</sup> I can't describe how happy I have been to see again my Paris, so new and so familiar, and especially during these patriotic days because the heart of Paris is so awake! Yes, Billie, you can't go back to America before you come to Paris and before I make you to see it. But these wonderful days did not last a long time. I had to come back to my pupils and ever since my coming back, just a few days later, we heard by the radio the death of President Roosevelt.<sup>22</sup> In France everybody feeled very sad, because we know he was a real friend, because we remembered that during the German occupation we were very trustful in him, we were waiting his words, his aid.<sup>23</sup> He really misses us very much.<sup>24</sup> My letter is very long this time and I am afraid you find a great lot of mistakes. But, please, don't fear to tell me when my english is bad because I should like to improve it. Now, Billie, don't thank me every time for I or my family did for you, because we should have like so much to see you much

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<sup>18</sup>General Charles de Gualle was a notable French soldiers, write and architect who played a major role in France's liberation during the war. Using the skills he learned as a political leader, de Gualle recruited countless volunteers for the war. These volunteers would then make of the Free French Forces. In 1943, he became president of the French Committee of National Liberation. Though he is seen as the "rescuer of France," de Gualle was not flawless and faced a lot of pushback from other countries like the US because of his methods. It is said that de Gualle emerged, during WWII, "as the biggest pain in the ass in the history of the liberal order."

<sup>19</sup>Eight months after the liberation of Paris, Charles de Gualle presented the city and its people with the Croix de l'Ordre de la Libération (Cross of the Order of the Liberation) during a commemorative celebration in front of the Hotel de Ville. This Cross of Order was awarded to the heroes of the Liberation of France. This was significant because very little military units or people were awarded this Cross during the war.

<sup>20</sup>full/crowded with

<sup>21</sup>The Allied powers or Allies was a coalition of allied countries in opposition to the Axis Powers of Germany, Italy and Japan during WWII. The major allies during this war were Great Britain, France, the Soviet Union and China. The shared goal of the allies was to defeat the Axis powers and create a peaceful post-war world.

<sup>22</sup>President Franklin D. Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945 due to a steep decline in his physical health. FDR served as the 32nd President of the United States from 1933 until his death in 1945. After his election, FDR dedicated his time and energy into designing and implementing "relief, recovery and reform" policies. In 1939, as another World War was arising, the U.S. government passed a series of laws "affirming neutrality and rejecting intervention." Despite these laws, following the attack on Pearl Harbord, he obtained a congressional declaration of war against Japan. He was instrumental in the war effort and even implemented a Europe first strategy in order to defeat Germany. His government initiated the first atomic bomb and layed the groundwork for a post-war world. In 1944, after his reelection (making him the only President to serve more than 2 terms), his health suffered and he began declining due to various heart ailments, high blood pressure and bronchitis.

<sup>23</sup>After Germany invaded Poland in 1939, FDR bypassed political red-tape in order to send military supplies to France and Britain on a "cash-and-carry basis." This was known as the Lend-Lease program which not only allowed FDR to send supporting materials to anti-Nazi allies but also to avoid direct involvement in the war. The program sent supplies like military equipment, food merchandise (beans, flour, milk, canned meat, etc) and clothing (wool and leather uniforms) to a variety of countries including Poland, Norway, France and New Zealand.

<sup>24</sup>*we really miss him*

more at home. But during<sup>25</sup> a long time you did not come to the Red Cross Dance, or you did not make me dance, saying just when I passed by you “hello, Susan”– So we lost a precious time and after you had to go in a great hurry– now, in Nice there are many and many American soldiers who come just to have a rest during 7 days. Perhaps you will be able to have a rest, you too. And then you’ll come again to Nice. I don’t tell you what we could do in this fine spring weather in order to not make you have regrets if you don’t come. But after war... I close now. But before I thank you again for your kind letters and especially for the eastern card of your mother. I am affected by your kind attention. With the best regards of my family and me

Your sincere friend

Suzanne

P.S. I don’t forget Tom. Is APO 464 % Post master, New York City your new address? I write your 1st because you did not tell me anything.