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*Letters from "Sid" Goldman:  
A Tire Technician in World War II (1944-1945)*

*Shelfmark*

California State University, Fullerton (CSUF).  
University Archives and Special Collections.  
SC-2018-08.

Sidney Goldman War Letters.  
Selections from document boxes 1 and 2.  
[February 15, 1944], to April 18, [1945].  
Nineteen letters (numbered 1 to 19 below).

*Introduction*

The nineteen letters edited here are part of the "Sidney Goldman War Letters" collection held in CSUF'S University Archives and Special Collections (UA & SC). The letters were donated by the letter writer's daughter Rhoda Goldman in 2019 (after she had been referred to UA & SC by CSUF faculty member Arlene Ring). The letters were selected to provide an impression of their author's wartime experience from basic training to the end of World War II in the European theater. They are presented in chronological order, and an attempt has been made to integrate several undated letters into the sequence. The documents are well preserved and written in cursive, sometimes in pencil, sometimes in black ink, on yellow stationery or on military-issued paper. In some cases, the envelopes have been preserved as well.

Sidney "Sid" Goldman (1912-2008) was the son of Abraham Goldman and Rose Mesigal Goldman and grew up in Chicago, Illinois. His four siblings (Minnie, Frieda, Irving, and Shirley) all make appearances in the letters. Sid was married to Lillian "Lil" Weinberg, and their daughter Rhoda was born in 1939. They initially lived with Sid's parents in Chicago. After Sid enlisted in 1943, Lil and Rhoda moved to Revere, Massachusetts, to live with Lil's mother, a co-recipient of several letters. After the war, Sid continued his military service in Japan. Sid and Lil eventually retired in California. The letters selected here provide insights into a wide range of subject matters, such as Sid's disdain for military protocol, bureaucracy, and censorship (letter 1, 10, 17, 18, 19); his impressions of basic training and field training (letters 2, 3, 9, 10); his interest in practical education and work (letters 2, 4, 5, 14, 17); his experiences while on leave or off duty, including gambling (letters 3, 4), a trip with Lil to New York City (letters 3, 4), and dinner at Atlanta's famed Herren's restaurant (letter 8); impressions while serving overseas in Europe, especially attending Jewish religious services in a synagogue that had been damaged and desecrated by the Nazis (letter 11), seeing the destruction on both sides of the French-German

border (letter 12), witnessing French prisoners of war returning home (letter 14), hearing of the death of President Roosevelt (letter 16), and entertainment for the troops (letter 18); as well as his health (letters 4, 16, 17), financial and legal matters (letters 6, 13), and his affection for his wife and daughter (letters 5, 7, 12, 14, 15, 19). Sid Goldman was able to observe and reflect on the war without the immediate danger of the front lines, making these letters primary sources for World War II history from the perspective of a soldier who supported the war effort from behind the scenes.

The transcriptions below preserve the spelling and capitalization of the original correspondence. Any additions are enclosed by square brackets.

Joe  
 Tuesday  
 Pardon the delay. Seems as tho  
 a chicken dissection was forced on  
 the bull. board Feb. 12 (note date of 2/11  
 letter) to the effect that Company  
 must be written out on penalty  
 of restriction & a lot of other crap.  
 As you no doubt know the war  
 will be won with courages &  
 periods & who is a fast S. I. to ar-  
 gue with?  
 Better write out your co. (paper)  
 most forgot) Company as they may  
 take away your caddy.  
 Sid

Figure 1: Letter 1 [undated; February 15, 1944], page 1 of 2.

*Edition: Letter 1, Sid Goldman to Joe [no last name given],  
[undated; February 15, 1944], [no location given]*

Page 1 of 2 (single-sided):

Tuesday,<sup>1</sup>

Joe,

Pardon the delay. Seems as tho a chicken directive<sup>2</sup> was posted on the bull[etin]. board Feb[ruary]. 12 (note date of 2/11<sup>3</sup> letter) to the effect that Company must be written out on penalty of restriction & a lot of other crap.

As you no doubt know the war will be won with commas & periods & who is a poor G. I. to argue with?

Better write out your co. (oops I [al]most forgot) company, or they may take away your candy.

Sid

Page 2 of 2 (single-sided):

Tues.

This letter was delayed a couple days on a/c[count] it wasn't addressed properly. I forgot to write out "company" and you can't win wars like that.

We're getting a lot of chicken<sup>4</sup> (unedible) in re[garding] our mail & even tho the letter was written a day before the order came<sup>5</sup> out it doesn't count.

Probably get our candy taken away again<sup>6</sup> but I don't have much of a sweet tooth anyway.

Hope you're the same.

Sid

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<sup>1</sup> There is no date or location given, but the "Tuesday" (i.e., the day the letter was written) after "Feb[ruary]. 12," the date mentioned in the letter, was February 15, and the content and wording of the letter, when compared to Sid's other letters, suggests the year 1944, which is why we are tentatively dating this letter "February 15, 1944." The addressee's last name is unknown but he is probably identical with the "Joe" mentioned in the letter of June 22, 1944 (below).

<sup>2</sup> Slang for an official order.

<sup>3</sup> "2/11" appears to be inserted later; apparently a reference to an earlier letter written by Sid and addressed to Joe.

<sup>4</sup> Slang for an official order.

<sup>5</sup> February 12, 1944.

<sup>6</sup> Slang for the revoking of privileges.

*Edition: Letter 2, Sid Goldman to Leo [Young],  
[undated; before February 27, 1944], [no location given]*

Front:

Sunday<sup>7</sup>

Dear Leo

Got your letter yesterday & you sure write an interesting letter. When you get into the Army (I hope not) you'll have to cut the size of your letters cause you won't have time to write such long ones. (While I think of it - send me Willies address.) I'll send you a picture as soon as I can get some film for my camera.

I'm in a basic training company for 2 more weeks & then I go to technical school for 8 weeks. I don't know yet what kind of tech[nical] training I'll get as yet. They have a tire school here but I understand its quite small & hard to get into. They pick you out

Back:

& you can't see the man or do anything about it. There isn't a hell of a lot to write about. It's pitching a hell of a blizzard outside & we go out on bivouac<sup>8</sup> Monday. Give my best to Ruth & the family.

Regards

Sid

*Edition: Letter 3, Sid Goldman to Leo Young and Ruth,  
February 27, 1944, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland*

Envelope: [sender] PVT. SID GOLDMAN 36783791, Co C. 1st ORD. TRG. REGT., ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, MARYLAND [recipient] L. Young, 4851 No. Sawyer Ave., Chicago, Ill.<sup>9</sup> [post mark] ABERDEEN TRAINING GROUND M. D., FEB 28, 1944, 3 PM [stamp field, hand-written] FREE

Front: [U.S. national coat of arms, letterhead] U.S. Army, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

Sunday 2/27/44

Dear Leo & Ruth,

How is the family & how is everything in Chi[cago]? It's the nuts out here. I'm really enjoying myself except that I dont have much time to myself.

I met Lil & Rhoda in Baltimore last week end & hope to meet em in New York next week.

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<sup>7</sup> There is no date or location given, but since Sid states he is "in a basic training company" and is announcing a bivouac trip which appears to be completed by the time he writes his letter of February 27, 1944, we are tentatively dating this letter "before February 27, 1944." The addressee's last name is evident from the letter of February 27, 1944.

<sup>8</sup> Camping without tents.

<sup>9</sup> Address; built 1910; still standing (2020).

We were out on bivouac at the rifle range last week for 3 days & it was somethin. You ought to see me shoot. I was dirty as a pig. 3 days no wash, shave, or tooth brush then 100 y[ar]ds. on your belly thru mud under live machine gun fire.

Back:

When I got back here I was 31st in line for a shower but for 20¢ I bought 3rd place. It was worth it.

I've won 150 since I've been here. Just left the crap game<sup>10</sup> after winning 50 & I've found 2 guys who play pinochle<sup>11</sup> worse than I do. Although just to keep the record clean I went bait last nite on a 400 spade hand by a point.

Hoping you're the same

Regards

Sid

Are you I A?<sup>12</sup> Hope not.

P.S. Where is Willie?

I'll send you a picture for your gallery soon.

*Edition: Letter 4, Sid Goldman to Leo [Young],  
March 28, 1944, [hospital; Aberdeen Training Ground, Maryland?]*

Front:

March 28, 1944

Tuesday

Dear Leo

I finally got a chance to catch up on my correspondence. Had to catch the measles (B. 2. version, formerly known as German measles)<sup>13</sup> to do it. Its nice here in the hospital<sup>14</sup> tho. I'm not sick a bit.

I met Lil in N[ew]. Y[ork]. Sat[urday]. nite & we went nite clubbing. When I got up Sunday A.M. she noticed the rash so before I got back to camp I bought 2 handfull of 3/50 Perfecto Garcias<sup>15</sup> & right now I'm sitting on a nice sun porch smoking one, eating Dutch Mill candy and writing letters. The only things I miss here are the crap games we used to have in my regular co[mpany]. They don't allow

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<sup>10</sup> Dice game.

<sup>11</sup> Card game.

<sup>12</sup> Highest classification for suitability for military service.

<sup>13</sup> Rubella.

<sup>14</sup> No location is given; perhaps at Aberdeen Training Ground, Maryland.

<sup>15</sup> Cigars.

Back:

gambling here. However, I found a rummy<sup>16</sup> player here that I can hold my own with.

I'm going to supply clerk school.<sup>17</sup> Its a breeze for me & I hope to wind up with a good rating out of it. I tried to get tire school but finally found out that the only school they have here is just mounting & tube repair etc.

I met Lil Sat. nite as I said and we really had a time in New York. You'd like it there I think. I know I was fascinated by it. Its a live town & looks like a swell spot for a hustler with a little brains. Also took the rubberneck<sup>18</sup> tour thru Radio City.<sup>19</sup> Saw N[ew]. Y[ork]. and also the Statue of Liberty for the first time. Got quite a thrill. Are you in yet. Write me at hospital. It will be forwarded.

Sid



Figure 2: Sid, Lil, and Rhoda Goldman, Revere, Massachusetts, 1943/1944.

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<sup>16</sup> Card Game

<sup>17</sup> Training program.

<sup>18</sup> Sight-seeing.

<sup>19</sup> Entertainment venue (New York City); opened 1932; still operating (2020).

*Edition: Letter 5, Sid Goldman to Rhoda [Goldman],  
June 18, 1944, [Atlanta, Georgia?]*

Front:

Sunday

18 JUNE 1944

DEAREST RHODA,

It was nice of you to send me a card for father's day. Seems to me like they should have a daughters day so I could send you a card too.

Its very hot down here now.<sup>20</sup> From what you said to me over the phone its probably still cold in Revere.<sup>21</sup> I would really like to see some snow right now.

Are you going to Sonny's party next week. I sure wish I could be there too. However as you get older you'll find that you can't always do the things you want to do.

Mother tells me you've been a very good girl.

Back:

I'm very glad to hear that. Please try & stay good & don't give Mom any trouble. I'm sorry I kept her away from you for 2 weeks but you see I get lonesome too sometimes.

The tire school is very nice & it smells just like our store used to. I only wish you were there too.

Maybe I'll be seeing you in a month or so.

Love

DADDY

P.S. I printed RHODA & DADDY cause I know she can read it.

*Edition: Letter 6, Sid Goldman to Lil [Goldman], Ma [Weinberg], and Rhoda [Goldman],  
June 22, 1944, [Atlanta, Georgia?]*

Front:

22 June 1944

Dearest Lil, Ma, & Rhoda

Enclosed find the interest on the money you sent me. I didn't get the 25 yet. Spouse it'll be in tomorrows mail.

I got a lot of mail today. I really hit the jackpot. Joe,<sup>22</sup> Jule, (preinvasion), Fritz,<sup>23</sup> Min,<sup>24</sup> & Paul Budney. None from you. As you can see I've got a nites writing cut out for me but I love it. I was going to go into town tonite but its too damn hot. I'll go tomorrow nite & get my laundry & a haircut.

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<sup>20</sup> Letters 5 to 7 contain references to intense heat, and letters 7 and 8 were written in or near Atlanta, Georgia, which is why we are tentatively ascribing all June 1944 letters to that location.

<sup>21</sup> Town (just north of Boston, Massachusetts).

<sup>22</sup> See above, letter 1.

<sup>23</sup> Frieda, Sid's sister. "Fritz(i)" can be a female nickname for Fri(e)da and Fri(e)derike.

<sup>24</sup> Minnie, Sid's sister.

Looks like they're not getting too much to eat in Chi[cago] either as you can see by the enclosed clipping. I got a decent piece of beef last nite at the service

Back:

club much to my surprise. I'm waiting for Ray to get ready & we'll go up there again tonite. Damn this heat to hell.<sup>25</sup> The sweat is running off me onto the paper.

I'm writing Fritz<sup>26</sup> to have Arnold draw up a will & power of att[orne]y. in case I ship overseas. Maybe it might be a good idea for you to come down here for my 8th week in case I ship to Texarkana<sup>27</sup> after that? What do you think of the idea?

Can't think of anything else & Ray is ready.

Love

Sid

*Edition: Letter 7, Sid Goldman to Lil [Goldman], Ma [Weinberg], and Rhoda [Goldman], June 25, 1944, [Atlanta, Georgia]*

Page 1 of 2, front:

Saturday

25 June 1944

Dear Lil, Ma & Rhoda

Its too damn hot to go to town<sup>28</sup> so I'm going to catch up on my mail. I've got about 6 letters to answer so maybe its just as well.

Got your letter today and I can't imagine what I wrote in Rhoda's letter that is so wonderful. If

you think it is well O.K.

Did you get bath hands? If I'm still able I'm going to town & buy a li[gh]ter Mon[day]. nite.

If Gerri is still there tell her she owes me a letter. I got mail from Jule & he does miss her. Thats a rough deal on that fraud. He'll have

Page 1 of 2, back:

to pay it too.

Looks like we're on the way. Beating the crap on the Jap[anese] navy,<sup>29</sup> Cherbourg<sup>30</sup> due to fall any hour, and Russia beating on the back door.<sup>31</sup> Maybe I'll be home for Xmas?

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<sup>25</sup> See above, note 20.

<sup>26</sup> Frieda, Sid's sister.

<sup>27</sup> City (eastern Texas, with a twin city across the state line in Arkansas).

<sup>28</sup> See above, note 20, and reference on page 2 of 2, back of this letter.

<sup>29</sup> Battle of the Philippine Sea (June 19-20, 1944).

<sup>30</sup> Battle of Cherbourg (June 6-30, 1944).

<sup>31</sup> Operation Bagration (June 23, 1944, to August 19, 1944).

What kind of a fuss is a Oedipus Complex?<sup>32</sup> I've heard the word before but don't know what it means.

Got a letter from Paul & he has very little to say. He's still waiting for orders. Also mail from Jerry Greenspace, Sue, George, Paul Budney & Min.<sup>33</sup> Since I've been writing so many letters I get so damn many answers its rough catching up.

Page 2 of 2, front:

(2) Pa<sup>34</sup> says he likes the slippers very well & Ma<sup>35</sup> is worried that if I get a furlough I won't want to spend any time at M[edical]. C[orps]. Wonder who told her that? God knows thats the last place I'd want to spend any time there (if I have any to spend)

I've been working quite hard the last 2 days. Fixing combat tires & they're rough. I finished one last nite tho and was quite proud of the job I turned out. Who knows? When this thing is over I may be able to get a job as a vulcanizer<sup>36</sup> for 22.50 a week.

Julie seems to want me to go to O[fficer]. C[andidate]. S[chool]. I don't

Page 2 of 2, back:

want to go tho 'cause I sure dont think its worth it. As you know at one time I did think so but I've changed my mind. He says the wimmin<sup>37</sup> in England are friendly & willing but thats observation not research. Same thing goes for Atlanta & that too is observation. Guess Jule & I both can't find anything to compare even remotely to what we have.

Hope you're the same.

Love

Sid

*Edition: Letter 8, Sid Goldman to Lil [Goldman], Ma [Weinberg], and Rhoda [Goldman], June 27, 1944, [Atlanta, Georgia]*

Front:

Tues[day]. 6:30 A.M.

27 June 1944

Dearest Lil, Ma & Rhoda

Up early this A.M. & had early chow. The rest of the co[mpany]. just went to chow so I've time to write.

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<sup>32</sup> Psychological theory concept.

<sup>33</sup> Minnie, Sid's sister.

<sup>34</sup> Probably a reference to Sid's father, Abraham Goldman.

<sup>35</sup> Probably a reference to Sid's mother, Rose Mesigal Goldman.

<sup>36</sup> Skilled occupation of someone who works with rubber (e.g., tires).

<sup>37</sup> Read: women.

Ray & I & another Jew Boy from Akron<sup>38</sup> went to town last nite & found a steak. We had dinner at Herrens<sup>39</sup> and it wasn't bad. I also got a haircut & a barber shave & my face feels fairly good. These Cracker<sup>40</sup> barbers are the same as everything else down here. They stink. Walked around the town looking for a decent show couldn't find one & came back at 10:30 P.M. Someone should write a book "A Night in Atlanta:" Don't know what they'd use

Back:

for filler after the first 2 pages.

I didn't get a single letter yesterday. Maybe tomorrow will be better (or today I should say.) Haven't heard from Shir<sup>41</sup> for 2 weeks tho I did get mail from Fritz<sup>42</sup> & Min.<sup>43</sup> I'm awaiting your decision on the trip down here. I still think it'll be rather foolish (tho I'd love it.)

Hope you're the same.

Love

Sid

*Edition: Letter 9, Sid Goldman to Lil [Goldman], Ma [Weinberg], and Rhoda [Goldman], June 28, 1944, [Atlanta, Georgia?]*

Front:

Wed[nesday]. noon

28 June 1944

Dearest Lil, Ma & Rhoda

I'm enclosing a snap of Pa.<sup>44</sup> Not a very good one but Rhoda will probably enjoy it. The folks<sup>45</sup> leave Sunday for the summer. Write em huh? 1717 Lake Shore Drive Stop 11, Michigan City, Ind.<sup>46</sup> Fritz<sup>47</sup> also sent the enclosed clipping. [Ap]Pears to me they're wrong 'cause "phesterruse"<sup>48</sup> is an old auctioneers word meaning nothing. Its just used as fillin[g]

Heard a new rumor today from a supposedly good source. Seems like those of us who haven't had field training will go back to Aberdeen<sup>49</sup> & then go to Camp

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<sup>38</sup> City (Ohio).

<sup>39</sup> Ye Olde Herren's Restaurant (Atlanta, Georgia); established 1934/1939; closed 1987.

<sup>40</sup> Slang for whites, especially poor whites, in the South.

<sup>41</sup> Shirley, Sid's sister.

<sup>42</sup> Frieda, Sid's sister.

<sup>43</sup> Minnie, Sid's sister.

<sup>44</sup> Sid referring to himself.

<sup>45</sup> Probably a reference to Sid's parents.

<sup>46</sup> Address; built 1919; still standing (2020).

<sup>47</sup> Frieda, Sid's sister.

<sup>48</sup> Perhaps "festerous."

<sup>49</sup> Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.

Pickett, V[irgini]a.<sup>50</sup> for 6 weeks of field training. Prior to now it was only 3 weeks. When

Back:

on field training (as I told you before I think) we're near Richmond, V[irgini]a. sleep in pup tents<sup>51</sup> etc. no passes & if we had any we'd have nowhere to go. I'll know more about it 2 weeks from now.

Aunt Sara told the folks that Harold wrote he was on his tenth mission. Looks like he & Art have the combat duties in the family.

Going to town tonite to try & get a decent meal.

Till then.

Love

Sid

*Edition: Letter 10, Sid Goldman to [Lillian and Rhoda Goldman], [undated; spring/summer 1944], [no location given]*

Page 1 of 2 (single-sided):

Mon. Nite<sup>52</sup>

Dearest Pair,

Everything happens to us. Here I was planning on calling you tonite so they wake us at 5 A.M instead of 5:30, get us out to the depot at 6:30 to take inventory. Seems like the civilian help out here is piss poor & the Joes<sup>53</sup> have to take over. Its 9 P.M & we just got back. I haven't showered yet, stink like hell and my P. F. B. (poor -<sup>54</sup> back) is hanging down to my ankles. We catch it again tomorrow same time, same station so I won't be able to call then either. It really helps morale doesn't it? This crap is supposed to finish tomorrow & we go to the shop Wednesday (if nothing happens.) I go on the 3 P.M. to 11 P.M. shift so will try to call you Wed. A.M. IF I CAN. What a hell of a way to fite a war! As if that weren't enuf we get guard duty Wed. and Sun. nites. The morale in this outfit is really high. I was bitching

Page 2 of 2 (single-sided):

my brains out tonite as only I can & the Old Man was standing outside the barracks laughing fit to kill. I didn't know it till he walked in. Said he'd like to bitch too but his boss prevented him & that he was happy to hear us in that frame of mind. Showed we were happy. He should know how close his whole

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<sup>50</sup> Military base (near Blackstone, Virginia); established 1941.

<sup>51</sup> Small tent, shelter-half.

<sup>52</sup> There is no date or location given, but it appears that Sid what still stateside because he talks about calling his wife and daughter, and the activities sound like basic training or field training, which is why we are tentatively dating this letter "spring/summer 1944."

<sup>53</sup> Joes: the "G[overnment]. I[ssue]. Joes," i.e., soldiers.

<sup>54</sup> Expletive.

co[mpany]. is to going over the hill (or maybe he shouldn't.) Yeah, I know, you're not the chaplain & don't have any T. S. slips.<sup>55</sup> I s'pose after I shower & shave & gripe some more I'll get it all out of my system. Really I don't mind it too much.

Been getting your mail regularly. They did us a favor & brought it out to the depot on the chow truck. How's mine coming?

Lil - please don't write me how Rhoda looks when she sleeps & when going to sleep. Nuff Sed? I'm sure you can find other things to write about.

Love

Sid

*Edition: Letter 11, Sid Goldman to [Lillian Goldman],  
February 25, [1945], [Metz, France?]*

Front (single-sided):

Sunday

Feb[ruary]. 25

Dearest

Just got back from town and have quite a lot to tell you. [I t]hink I did tell you I was going to the synagogue.<sup>56</sup> It must have been a beautiful place. Marble pillars and marble memorial panels etc. The chaplain<sup>57</sup> who was right behind Patton<sup>58</sup> when they took the town tells us that it had been used as a medical supply depot & dump just before they got here. The civilians say that before that it was used as a gas & oil storage depot. The windows, all stained glass, are all broken & the inside was in terrible shape. To hear services in a place like that was an event I'll never forget. After the services we (the soldiers) pooled our candy & gum & distributed it among the children. Kibitized<sup>59</sup> with quite a few civilians and some of the stories we heard are really heartbreaking. We don't realize how lucky we are to be in the U.S. & that's not just idle talk. Went home with a man and his wife & they were eager to have us. They practically forced us to eat with them and we did, tho we ate very little. Most everything they have including bread, is rationed. They do have a radio tho and we listened to news & swing music. Except that it was cold it was [al]'most like an evening at home. They have no central heating and coal is scarce.

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<sup>55</sup> Slang for (imaginary) "tough - [expletive]" paperwork. Soldiers would tell those complaining excessively to fill out a "T. S." slip and give it to the chaplain.

<sup>56</sup> Based on the Goldman family's memories that Sid was in Metz, the movements of the U.S. Third Army under General George S. Patton, and the description of the synagogue, this is possibly the synagogue in Metz, France (built 1850), where, after the city's liberation in late 1944, Jewish services resumed and the building was restored.

<sup>57</sup> Probably James Hugh O'Neill (1892-1972).

<sup>58</sup> General George S. Patton (1885-1945), U.S. Army.

<sup>59</sup> Yiddish for "chatting."

Not in the mood for writing and I couldn't fill another page very well. In addition to which I'm quite tired so

Love

Sid

*Edition: Letter 12, Sid Goldman to [Lillian Goldman],  
March 7, [1945], [near Saarlouis, Germany]*

Page 1 of 3 (single-sided):

Wed[nesday]. nite

March 7th

Dearest,

The basketball game is over and I've really got a long letter to write. Hope I have time to finish it before lights out. First of all we blew the game quite badly to a good team 39-15. The other team was much more [e]xperienced and have played together for some time. Of course there was a side bet about which the less said the better.

Now about yesterday - I was inside Germany proper. Not far to be sure but in the town of Saarlautern<sup>60</sup> (In another letter I'll tell you why we were there.) I'll try to describe what I can but there were so many things that I've probably forgotten some.

The first thing was a sign as we crossed the border. "You are now entering Germany courtesy of - Infantry Division."<sup>61</sup> Got quite a kick out of that. You probably saw the picture of the sign in the papers. Our guns were constantly firing over our heads at Jerry<sup>62</sup> and its a queer feeling especially when you have a quite large truck. The shells kind of whistle when they go over & its very comforting to know that they're going over & not at you. Closer up we heard some small arms fire. Needless to say we finished our job quickly & got the hell out of there. I'm sending you a few stamps & a Nazi flag which was 'bout all I had time to pick up. The enclosed picture from Stars & Stripes<sup>63</sup> is 'bout three days old.

The countryside is beautiful & just a bit more hilly than France. We passed the outer defenses of the Siegfried line<sup>64</sup> and you can certainly see that those -<sup>65</sup> were preparing for war

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<sup>60</sup> Saarlouis; named Saarlautern 1936-1945

<sup>61</sup> Popular World War II sign used by several U.S. Infantry Divisions.

<sup>62</sup> Slang for a German (Jerry) or Germans (Jerries).

<sup>63</sup> Magazine distributed servicemen in the U.S. Military.

<sup>64</sup> German western defensive line along the length of the Rhine valley.

<sup>65</sup> The dash here probably takes the place of swear word or derogatory term.

Page 2 of 3 (single-sided):

(2) for a long, long time. Was in a few of the homes and it looked like the people left in a Hell of a hurry. Found dirty dishes in the sink and remains of meals on the table. There's nary a civilian to be found in or near the town. Learned something of their religious (?) doctrines too. In one home we found a wreath made of thin wood. Apparently it hung in the window at Christmastime. In the place where we would have a candle or light they have that damned eagle & swastika. In that particular home a shell apparently had come thru the roof into a children's room. Toys were strewn about but I couldn't bring myself to pick any up. Its a damned shame that kids have to be brought into this war but I guess it has to be. In another home (apparently a very religious family & well educated) we found bibles & other articles of a religious nature side by side with Nazi books & pamphlets. They really sell 'em some ideas. The furnishings in the homes we saw were mainly of the cheap (borax<sup>66</sup>) variety with the exception of some grandfather clocks<sup>67</sup> one of which was still running. Most every house was pretty well torn up & seemed to be pretty well souveniered if you get what I mean. I'm sorry I got Rhoda's letter today requesting a Heinie<sup>68</sup> helmet. There were beaucoup<sup>69</sup> around there but I didn't take any. Mostly we didn't want to lift 'em up. We ate with a couple of combat outfits and they eat real good. Had real (not dehydrated) potatoes for the first time in a long time. The front line boys don't kick 'bout their chow. They get first pick & beaucoup cigarettes which is as it should be. There's nothing too good for

Page 3 of 3 (single-sided):

those boys. I could go on for hours & write reams about my impressions but for obvious reasons I can't. I don't think I've overstepped the bounds in what I've said & if I did censor will take care of it. I'm sending you a bunch of stamps which you can distribute as you wish & I wish you'd send Irv<sup>70</sup> a copy of this letter. Explain that I haven't too much time. There's another game tomorrow nite & Sat[urday]. nite & I have to go.

Now then - Our living quarters are almost home-like now & as to comforts I've acquired a bicycle (don't ask questions) so I have transportation. You know how I love to walk.

You have no idea how happy it makes me to read how much you loved the roses. If I hadn't though[t] so I'd never have sent 'em in the first place.

---

<sup>66</sup> Cheap but often showy furniture.

<sup>67</sup> Tall, freestanding floor clock.

<sup>68</sup> Slang for a German (Heini) or Germans (Heinies), derived from "Heinrich."

<sup>69</sup> French for "many" or "much."

<sup>70</sup> Irving, Sid's brother.

Smokey's D. S.<sup>71</sup> is with another tire outfit near here. Haven't seen him for 'bout a week.

Had a hunch that you weren't too well. 18,000 white count is anemia<sup>72</sup> isn't it? Thank God for Doc Meyer only don't tell him I said so. It is nice to have good relations & friends isn't it. [Re]Member how you used to squawk when I did someone a favor? It all comes back with interest. Didn't you get a hand to get pen set for 10 above. What else do you want. Nylons? Sorry.

I'm treasuring your letter of the 21st. Usually I throw 'em away after I answer 'em but I'll keep that one till I come home. First time we have an argument I'll show you how much you thought of me once. Aren't you afraid I'll get bigheaded? Anyway it works both ways and you too can keep my letters for evidence if you like.<sup>73</sup>

*Edition: Letter 13, Sid Goldman to [Lillian Goldman],  
April 4, [1945], [France]*

Envelope: [sender] T/5 SID GOLDMAN 36783791, 232ND ORD. TIRE REPAIR CO, APO 667 c/o POSTMASTER, NEW YORK, N. Y. [recipient] Mrs. S. Goldman, 1636 No. Shore Road, Revere, 51, Mass<sup>74</sup> [post mark] U.S. ARMY POSTAL SERVICE 143, APR 10 [?], 194[5] [stamp field] red 6-cents U.S. Air Mail stamp [hand-written] Air Mail [additional stamp] PASSED BY US ARMY EXAMINER 48887 [signed, hand-written] A. S. Beelanski, 1 stpt.

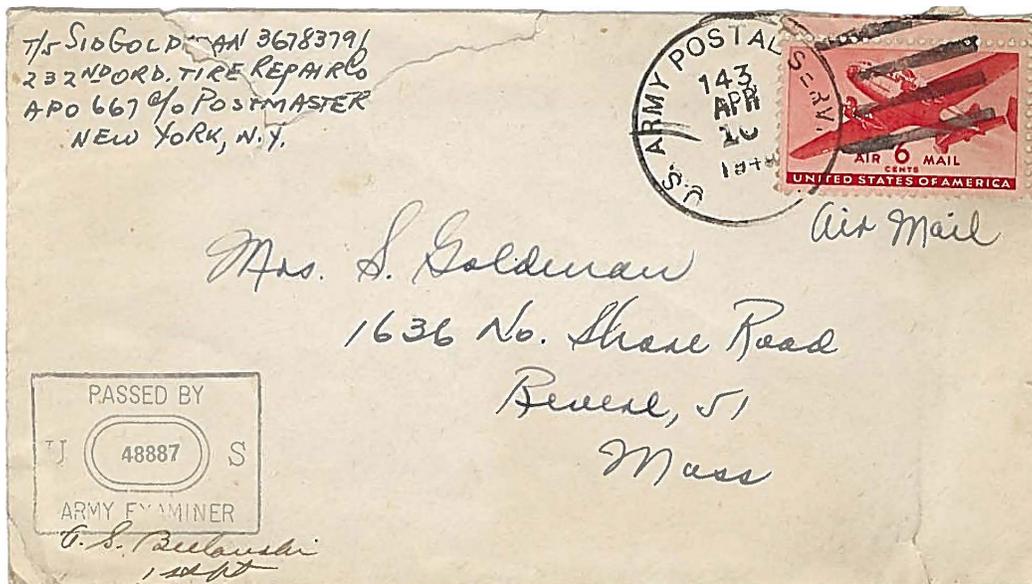


Figure 3: Letter 13, April 4, [1945], envelope with U.S. examiner's [censor's] stamp.

<sup>71</sup> Perhaps "duty station."

<sup>72</sup> Medical condition; hemoglobin deficiency.

<sup>73</sup> The fact that the usually sign-off ("Love, Sid") is missing suggests that there may have been a page 4 (either lost or censored).

<sup>74</sup> Address; built 1900; still standing (2020).

Dearest  
 Enclosed find three money orders <sup>April 4</sup>  
 that you sent me that I don't need on a/c  
 its not nearly as rough as it was when I  
 wrote you for it.  
 Janis was the only letter I got today so I'm  
 answering it before going to work. Its 2 P.M.  
 and I just got up. Seems pretty cold out too &  
 I'll probably have to dress more warmly. Looks  
 like Spring comes to France in spurts.  
 Today's Stass & Stripes says the boys are still  
 moving into Germany but fast. A few of our  
 boys were up there & brought back some wine for  
 ten francs a liter (we pay 150-200 here) & also a tube  
 for my bicycle. They say all the towns on both  
 sides of the Rhine were really flattened. See also  
 where Boston isn't so ~~so~~ either. A B.D. leaves a  
 loaded grenade in So. Station and a fishing schoo-  
 ner picks up a 375 lb. bomb in a net off New Bed-  
 ford. Rough all over isn't it?  
 By this time tomorrow you'll be an old lady. How  
 it felt to be thirty two? I remember how I felt. It  
 was pretty good.  
 We're getting a little more of our  
 daily aid and are getting more & more  
 as we go along. Then too the Hermit's are prog-  
 ressing quite rapidly. Guess they're anxious  
 to get home too.  
 Again - Happy birthday & you know the rest.  
 Love [Signature]

Figure 4: Letter 13, April 4, [1945], with two lines (bottom right) cut out by U.S. examiner [censor].

Front (single-sided):

Wed.

April 4

Dearest

Enclosed find three money orders that you sent me that I don't need on a/c[count] its not nearly as rough as it was when I wrote you for it.

Yours was the only letter I got today so I'm answering it before going to work. Its 2 P.M and I just got up. Seems pretty cold out too & I'll probably have to dress more warmly. Looks like Spring comes to France in spurts.

Today's Stars & Stripes says the boys are still moving into Germany but fast. A few of our boys were up there & brought back some wine for ten francs<sup>75</sup> a liter (we pay 150-200 here) & also a tube for my bicycle. They say all the towns on both sides of the Rhine were really flattened. See also where Boston isn't so safe either. A G. I. leaves a loaded grenade in So. Station<sup>76</sup> and a fishing schooner<sup>77</sup> picks up a 325 lb. bomb in a net off New Bedford.<sup>78</sup> Rough all over isn't it?

By this time tomorrow you'll be an old lady. Hows it feel to be thirty two? I remember how I felt. It was pretty good.

We're getting a little more of our [censored]<sup>79</sup> daily and are getting more & more [censored]<sup>80</sup> as we go along. Then too the Heinies are progressing quite rapidly. Guess they're anxious to get home too.

Again - Happy birthday & you know the rest

Love - Sid

*Edition: Letter 14, Sid Goldman to [Lillian Goldman],  
April 10, [1945], [France]*

Front (single-sided):

Tues[day]. nite<sup>81</sup>

April 10th

Dearest,

Its [all]'most 2 A.M. but I can sleep late in the morning.<sup>82</sup> Most of our boys came back and we've been telling & listening to stories & roasting a few selected

---

<sup>75</sup> French currency.

<sup>76</sup> South Station (Boston, Massachusetts); historic train terminal.

<sup>77</sup> Sailing vessel.

<sup>78</sup> Town (Massachusetts).

<sup>79</sup> Approximately one third of the line (two to four words) cut out by the U.S. army examiner/censor.

<sup>80</sup> Approximately one third of the line (two to four words) cut out by the U.S. army examiner/censor.

<sup>81</sup> Since letter 13 (April 4) was apparently written in France and letter 19 (April 18) was explicitly written in France, we are tentatively ascribing all letters written in between these dates to that location.

people over the coals. Smokey sends his best and looks well. We should have almost a full crew in the shop now and should be able to turn out beaucoup tires if they leave us alone. That of course remains to be seen. I'm [al]most afraid to say it but I think Spring has come. It was warm & sunny today and really nice. Nothing much is happening. We're following the war play by play & our hearts are with the poor guys up front who are really doing a job. I saw a group of prisoners today (some civilians & some soldiers) just returned from prison camps liberated by our boys. It was a sight I'll never forget. They debarked from trucks here and the civilians poured out of the houses with bread & food from their own meager stores. I talked with one lad 26 years old who was a slave laborer for four years. Nuf sed.

On the brighter side - Spring is here (I hope), I've new tires & tubes on my bike & a horn & tail-light. Hope to have a headlight any day, my camera is being fixed, the chow hasn't been bad & I'm smelling buffing dust again. Only thing lacking is YOU & Love - Sid

*Edition: Letter 15, Sid Goldman to Rhoda [Goldman],  
April 11, [1945], France*

Front (single-sided):

April 11

France

Dearest Rhoda

Wrote Mommy last nite & just afterward all of our men came back from Germany. Naturally they brought back souvenirs for those of us who didn't go. I probably would have gone but I guess I've been a bad boy or sompin. You know how that is. Guess you've had the same trouble now & then.

Anyhow - the money<sup>83</sup> is stuff that they printed after we beat 'em last time (or did we) and is absolutely worthless. The Hitler citation<sup>84</sup> is similar to our E award<sup>85</sup> I think but they pass 'em out like passes to the circus. The swastika pennant etc. speaks for itself and the boys up front are doing their level best to clean all the swastikas out of the world.

Spring is here & I got up early this A.M. had breakfast and went bike riding. I've a nice bike with two new tires & tubes, front & back brakes, a tail light & an old style "boop" horn. If & when my camera is fixed I'll send you pictures. How 'bout some new ones of you & Mommy?

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<sup>82</sup> Since letter 13 (April 4) was apparently written in France and letters 15 (April 11) and 19 (April 18) were explicitly written in France, we are tentatively ascribing all letters written in between these dates to that location.

<sup>83</sup> It appears Sid sent Rhoda German "Notgeld Banknoten" (hyperinflation paper money) from the late 1910s/early 1920s, as well as different kinds of Nazi memorabilia.

<sup>84</sup> Unspecified Nazi award/certificate.

<sup>85</sup> "Excellence in Production" award; an honor bestowed by the U.S. military on companies during World War II.

Love & kisses

Daddy

*Edition: Letter 16, Sid Goldman to [Lillian Goldman],  
April 13, [1945], [France]*

Front (single-sided):

Friday<sup>86</sup>

the 13th

Dearest

And you laugh at my superstitious nature. One of the worst things I could imagine happened this A.M. One of the boys came in early this A.M. with the news that Pres[ident] Roosevelt<sup>87</sup> had passed away.<sup>88</sup> We all feel as badly as if one of our close relations had passed away. Our hope now is that the new President can carry on ½ as well as he did. We've been comparing his death with that of Lincoln<sup>89</sup> which if you remember your history came at an equally important moment.<sup>90</sup>

On my way to town to chow so I won't have time to write much. Got a p[ac]k[a]g[e]. from you yesterday containing medicine which cured my cough almost immediately, salami, wash cloths and a lock & you didn't forget the key either. I feel another cough coming on tho. Can you do anything about it? In fact - I cough almost constantly, must be the weather. There was no mail so I'll probably get some today.

More later

Love

Sid

*Edition: Letter 17, Sid Goldman to [Lillian Goldman],  
April 16, [1945], [France]*

Page 1 of 2 (single-sided):

Monday nite<sup>91</sup>

April 16

Dearest,

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<sup>86</sup> Since letter 13 (April 4) was apparently written in France and letters 15 (April 11) and 19 (April 18) were explicitly written in France, we are tentatively ascribing all letters written in between these dates to that location.

<sup>87</sup> Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945); U.S. President 1933-1945).

<sup>88</sup> April 12, 1945.

<sup>89</sup> Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865); U.S. President (1861-1865)

<sup>90</sup> April 15, 1865 (following his assassination the night before); toward the end of the American Civil War (1861-1865).

<sup>91</sup> Since letter 13 (April 4) was apparently written in France and letters 15 (April 11) and 19 (April 18) were explicitly written in France, we are tentatively ascribing all letters written in between these dates to that location.

Spent the week end in bed & all day today. I've been trying to ward off a hell of a cold. My back, arms, legs & head have been hurting like hell. We finished work Sat[urday]. nite bout midnite & I drank a pint of whisky took aspirin and went to bed. I perspired all nite & stayed in bed all day Sunday. We changed shifts & I worked last nite. Spent today in bed with the rest of the whisky & I feel a bit better now. Settled in my throat.

I've got mail stacked up 'round my ears but this is the only letter I'm going to write tonite. Not in the mood.

The boys are supposed to be in near or around Berlin.<sup>92</sup> We're trying to find out what its all about but noone seems to know. They've really been travelling.

That bit the censor cut out was aptly figured out by you.<sup>93</sup> Sometimes I wonder if censors have any "cense." If there's military information in P[risoners]. O[f]. W[ar]'s unloading tires its a new one on me. Guess they have to cut something out now & then to show that they're on the job.

I'm in the midst of trading my bike for a motorcycle. Much easier on the legs. Then too I'll be able to cover more ground. If they keep me here long enuf I'll wind up with an automobile.

Page 2 of 2 (single-sided):

(2) It's a shame none of the pictures of Rho[da]'s birthday party came out. I'd have been very happy to see 'em. I was certainly sorry to hear about Mike Brown. He ducked for a long time. Guess it was his turn.

Things are picking up a bit as far as the tire Q[ua]l[it]y is concerned. We hollered, yelled, & pleaded for equipment and finally the powers that be woke up to the fact that we have a job to do. They've been bringing tools & equipment as per our requests.

The weather is nice & springlike tho I've seen little of it the past few days. Baseball season opens officially tomorrow & I'd give a lot to be there. Have to sweat it out till next years I guess.

Planning on spending part of my birthday with Jule. We change shifts that week end & I'll have 48 hours. Let you know more about it later.

Love - Sid

*Edition: Letter 18, Sid Goldman to [Lillian Goldman],  
April 17, [1945], [France]*

Front (single-sided):

Mar

Tues.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Battle of Berlin (April 16, 1945, to May 2, 1945).

<sup>93</sup> See above, letter 13 (April 4).

<sup>94</sup> Since letter 13 (April 4) was apparently written in France and letters 15 (April 11) and 19 (April 18) were explicitly written in France, we are tentatively ascribing all letters written in between these dates to that location.

Apr. 17

Dearest,

Since working on this [illegible deletion]<sup>95</sup> I don't know one day from the other. Its a screwy set up. Now that the end seems near it gets screwier by the hour. Back here its strictly a phony war. I don't think they're at all interested in turning out tires. They seem to be more worried about keeping the floor clean, shoes shined etc. Next week probably manicures. I'm feeling much better and am almost my old vitriolic self again.

Almost went to see Blithe Spirit<sup>96</sup> tonite. Annabella<sup>97</sup> & Peggy Wood<sup>98</sup> & an all star cast. It started to rain & Smoky & I wound up with some civilian friends in their house listening to Dinah Shore<sup>99</sup> & then Glenn Millers<sup>100</sup> orch[estra]. all courtesy of A. E. S.<sup>101</sup> I'll write a few more letters & then to work. Invited to dinner tomorrow nite. Its the middle of the week but they've caught some pike somewhere & are going to make gefuillte<sup>102</sup> fish. It'll be a real treat. Red & white wine, a little cognac & some salami (which we'll bring.) I'll let you know how it was.

The boys are still moving but it looks as if they want to flatten Berlin before they take it over. See you soon (?)

Love

Sid

*Edition: Letter 19, Sid Goldman to [Lillian Goldman],*

*April 18, [1945], France*

Page 1 of 2 (single-sided):

Wed.

Apr. 18

France

Dearest,

Just came back from a tres bon<sup>103</sup> supper in town. "Gefuillte" fish and as the piece de resistance - believe it or not - a salami omelet. What a deal. Seems like

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<sup>95</sup> Two words, probably inked out by out by the U.S. army examiner/censor to obscure Sid's specific military duty at that time.

<sup>96</sup> 1941 play by English author Noël Coward (1899-1973).

<sup>97</sup> Artist's name of Suzanne Georgette Charpentier (1907-1996); French actress.

<sup>98</sup> Artist's name of Mary Margaret Wood (1892-1978); American actress.

<sup>99</sup> Artist's name of Fannye Rose Shore (1916-1994); American singer and actress.

<sup>100</sup> (1904-1944); American big-band leader, trombonist, and composer.

<sup>101</sup> Armed Forces Education Services.

<sup>102</sup> Traditional Ashkenazi Jewish fish dish.

<sup>103</sup> French for "very good."

these people can't do enough for us. (Of course a double squeeze a la Charley Ross<sup>104</sup> does wonders now & then.)

My letters from now on will contain less & less. There's another new directive as to what we can write about the "phoney war." No info will be written as to hours of work and hours of operation etc. etc. ad infinitum<sup>105</sup> & I hope our censor doesn't interpret my Latin as code. There will probably be military info & the Heinies might win the war if I tell you that we play with tires for eight hours a day. Maybe some day we'll start to repair tires for eight hours a day. There are souvenir parties out daily scouting equipment with which to work. They are also hunting up mattresses which the powers that be won't let us use on a/c[count] they figure the hard boards are good for our backs. (Not for officers backs) I've got 'em beat on that one but I can't write

Page 2 of 2 (single-sided):

(2) about it. Some day I'll tell you I hope!! As you can see I'm in good health again: I'm my usual vitriolic self. bitching & beefing. I was feeling pretty low for a few days but am O.K. now. Only trouble is that I've gotten way behind on my correspondence & its hell to catch up.

Oh yes - Lest I forget - We will stand inspection Saturday A.M. Lockers, clean hands, combed hair (me too) & shined shoes ~~under severe~~ on a/c[count] the Jerries don't think much of us as soldiers cause of the way we look. Can't understand why they're scared to death of the unshaven Russky<sup>106</sup> soliders. Nuf of that -

In case this letter doesn't get to you for some reason or another, or in case this one gets there & the next ones don't remember that the censor can't stop me from thinking of & loving you,

Sid

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<sup>104</sup> Charles Brewster "Charley" Ross (1870-1874?); victim of an unsolved kidnapping in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. "Double squeeze;" a play in bridge (card game). The exact meaning of the reference is unclear.

<sup>105</sup> Latin for "to infinity."

<sup>106</sup> Russian.