

Do not mind the bad writing I do it so much! That's why I can't write the pen. 1-5-1945

HCA 101249
4/4/2

I am going to begin this letter, but it may be a long time before you get it finished because there is a real book to be written about our life since 1940! and I am lost with such a great big work to do for the F.F.I. and others jobs that I, every night, have to write until 12 P.M. — It is 11.30, I'll try to begin:..!

In 1940, we were in Mortemer when the Jerry were coming on! I got my first bombing on the road of Menesqueville, on the terrible day of June 9th (19 raids during the day!). Soldiers, refugees were on every roads, and the bombers came above! 19 of them were on the forest, sending their bombs on us. It was most exciting because you could see them coming down. I was not frightened, just my heart beating a bit quicker, but I got no heart. (Of course, they could not be compared with your bombs, much bigger!). I then saw 2 of the planes turning and going straight on to Mortemer, where my mother was! I got up and ran as much as I could but 14 bombs had missed the Abbey, for 200 yards. (There had been troops there having left the morning before. Nothing was

May 3rd

spoiled, only Maggie had been so frightened for me. Since the Thursday, we had been all the time in the ditch, behind the house. Next morning, I went on my bicycle to the village. All was empty, owing ~~to~~ the 5th column (French officers) who told everybody to run away. I got bread and a jerrycan of petrol for leaving. I walked up the hill, being more sheltered from the nasty Messerschmitt. As I got to the top of the hill, I saw a small plane coming ^{very low} right on me. I threw bic, and breads in a bush and fell my self under trees. Just where I was a minute before on the road, they sent 8 bullets of machine gun. I guessed why, afterwards. (I always tried to find out these bullets but never was I able to.) I jumped on my bic and went down. Then I understood why they shot at me. They had sent a spy from the plane. This was the 1st time. I was most frightened of all the war, I believe, though you are going to see through how many dangerous things we were!) I had to pass near the man. He was standing near the river motor, very blue eyes and holding his right hand in his (very big, and strong man.

pocket. I, of course, stood up brave and
 had to smile at him, for he said
 "Good morning" but for 50 yards I
 had to walk quietly, in stead of
 running as I badly wanted to!
 It was most horrible to wait that the
 man, guessing I found out he was
 Jerry, ~~who~~^{would} shoot me in the back.
 But God kept me, for all the war,
 you will see! We then decided to go
 and left the same evening, 10 PM
 for Brittany (where Dorothy was
 supposed to be.) Jerry came here 4
 hours later! The car took 12 hours to
 do the 20 kms to Gaillon. The road was full
 of killed, holes, bombs and people. Just
 before the bridge at Gaillon (the one of old Andelys
 was blowned up) we had a terrible bombing.
 (Happily my dog Loulotte was dead in 36. She
 was so frightened of bombs!) and passed the bridge
 just one hour before it bursted. We had not
 slept one minute! (Please, excuse this
 dirty letter. The paper is bad and I have so much
 to say!) We had meals outside, of course, and
 for 3 nights slept anywhere, in straw, with
 the 2 dogs (and lots of rats!) in the car, 3 or
 4 in the same room in Carnac. We were
 near South Brittany where we stayed 6 days.

Jerry came before we could get away! As we speak Germ. Maggie, rather: I, a little) we got on better! We went to Cotes du Nord until Aug. 4th - then came back to Normandy. Maggie was staying near Louviers and I did about 9000 kms, on my bic, bringing food to her from here! It was most horrible in 1941 because we were not "settled in the war" and really were starving; people had not planted potatoes in 1940. Some were eating nettles and grass! On day, here, I had just a spoonful of noodles with carrots, not butter, not bread. 6 weeks without meat. Then I took the risk of going very far and begging so much that we were better afterwards. I am a clever girl, you know! I must say I got on O.K.!! Then as there was nothing in Louviers, I took Maggie back here in 1942, easier for food and wood!

At last, after years of slavery, 1944 came! We were only living with B.B.C. and the many tracts (papers) sent by our beloved R.A.F. and which I sent on by post to various people in towns. Anyone who were listening B.B.C. or gathering tracts were treated as enemies of course I should have deserved to be shot so many times!

In August 44, we had 5 25 grammes of butter, ^{nothing else.}
(for food we had 275 gr bread each, a day - 90 gr
of meat, a week. 250 gr butter a month, 150 gr coffee.
I used to make our own flour and bread, also
coffee with grinded wheat.) On June 6th you landed.
The same day, Lisors, which was full of Germans
was bombed for 2 hours by Mustangs! It was
so exciting, from here (top of our gate!) I could watch
the whole scene. They were so good, no one French
killed but never they missed a Jerry truck!
I nearly got mad of joy! Then next day, one
German petrol tank was brought in the forest
near Lyons (200000 litres!) Thirty minutes later,
the bombers came! And threw their bombs from
above here! The house was shaken like a boat!!
Unhappily they could not burst the petrol. Then
on the morning of 10th our first little "blue
bird" came here! His plane was blown down
near Lyons. He was a young P.O. from London,
Philip and was wounded. We took him here,
were hiding his clothes and I nursed him but
during the night, he was very badly ill and next
morning, I went through the forest, trying to
get to Lyons, where was my friend? I came
who is a Doctor. Marshal Rommel was
in Lyons! all the roads were kept with SS
and wires. I went to the Jerry. They said I was
not to pass without a permission from German

officer. (I really could not ask one!) Then I gave
 them some butter, ~~told them~~ ^{told them} not to shoot me
 in the back; and, like one indian, I walked
 like a snake, under the bushes, away from
 the roads, though I knew it was risky! At
 last I could join Diane who first told me
 I was mad, then came afterwards, with the same
 risks, to visit Philip. (of course it was forbidden
 to aid those airmen!!) He, at last, got a little
 better. but 'planes were falling all over
 the district and on June 28th we got 4 more
 blue boys. The youngest was Reg, 19 -
 Don (canadian) 23 - Ron, 24 - and Doug. 28.
 I never was happier for years because since
 the war, I had asked God, every day, to
 send me english to save! They were sleeping
 in the loft, having supper with us. Many
 times I took them out (in civilian) for walk.
 Of course the Resistance and many other
 people (safe) gave the food for them and we
 never were short. Alas, on Aug 7th as they
 badly wanted to go back, the Resistance
 took them away to try and join up
 your country. Germans caught them!
 If only they had been a little more patient!
 I was not at home when they left.
 Only Maggie. You can ~~get~~ ^{guess} sorry.

how anxious I was. It is only in Jan. that by
their families I heard they were prisoners in
Germany. 4 of them. but from Philip, nothing?
The RAF will come once more to see me
soon to enquire about him. Poor boy! I think
I must go to bed. otherwise you won't be
able to read this! — 6.5.45.

Well. We had met several times one American (air-
man) officer who was hidden at one F.F.I. Chief ^{was} here.
(We had been taking care of one of these
chieves hidden by us in the hole, you know,
and where we had kept the boys, while Jerry
was searching them in the forest.) and just for
a fortnight, there had been also a Canadian Airforce
officer. On Aug. 19th at night, I saw 3 men
opening the gate. I saw Ted and said "What
is the matter?" So he said: ^{american} "You told me yester-
-day that if we were in trouble, to come to you,
so here we are!" — I said "What's the trouble?"
— Gestapo" he answered. M^r? T, where he was
had been given up by a tortured man, and
They all came in to hide in here (the house
is very small, as we were not in the Abbey.
I put M^r? and M^{rs}? T and their big she-dog!
What a job keeping her away from my
own "Belle!" — in my room. I slept
in the kitchen — The 4 boys, Ted, Nic and one

F.F.I. and one boy of 16 next to my mother.
 On the 22^d, The whole F.F.I.s of the village, Lisors,
 Rosay, Touffreville took "the maquis" for trying
 to kill Jerry and take guns - At night 2 AM
 I saw a torch at the gate. I went out, hoping
 you had come, our dear british'. Alas it was
 only Jerry! I was apologising, because I had
 locked the gate that was supposed to be left
 open, always. They said nothing, only they
 wanted to sleep any where, in the loft!!
 I knew if they had passed the room they
 would have seen the boys, so I brought
 them (11..!) into my kitchen and they
 slept on the floor! I had a sergeant under
 my sofa!! At six, they left. At 8.30 Two
 trucks of S.S. stopped near the farm,
 Jerry went into the bush and began
 to chase our poor F.F.I.s! 5 were taken,
tormented (feet boiled, broken forearms
 and so on) and shot in the evening, near
 here. As soon, M^r, M^{rs} T and the F.F.I. were
 lucky to escape. The boys went into the loft,
 René (little boy) stayed with us. One S.S. came
 in, was looking ^{he was very brave} everywhere and, at last,
 I showed him the tortoise and made him
 change his mind, He left! ~~the~~ meanwhile,
 M^r and M^{rs} T. were nearly killed in a big bombing

at Menesqueville but could escape!—)
 Then, when we had lunch, we saw one S.S.,
 opening the gate and rushing directly to
 the hen-shed... under the loft, breaking
 the doors, with his pistols in his hand! This time,
 said René, "I think we are finished!" God made
 him come out without seeing the airinen,
^{It is the only time I really wanted to kiss a Jerry!}
 who were kneeling and praying. We had deser-
 -ved so many times to be shot that we are
 still surprised to be alive!! — About 4 PM.
 I looked out side and saw one of our little
 #71. rushing from the bush into the farm!
 where they pushed him out because they
 were terrified! I took him here, just as the
 sentry was turning toward us: "He washed
 and changed his clothes, and quietly,
 with Belle, I took him to Lisors, passing
 and talking (I!) with the Jerry sentry,
 and meeting 4 patrol... which never
 stopped us! God was really with us!! —
 As I came back, at 4 PM. I saw, against
 the farm wall ~~one~~ one #71. chief and a little
 #71. caught by an acre ^{they knew we had life} like Belle.
 and 30 S.S. (beating the chief and keeping
 them (They were shot next morning!) then
 I feared they would come during the night
 I asked the German to do patrols all

night on the road, in front of the gate...
 - "So that the "terrorists" would not hide
 in here." So they did! and so the boys were
 safe! On the Thursday, the S.S. arrested
 Victoria's brother who knew we had the boys.
 (He was S.F.I. chief too) so, being afraid
^{he disappeared}
^{we don't know if killed} he would speak, at night
 in the mist, the 2 boys left with blankets
 and food. As we expected the Gestapo would
^{for the hole} come at once, the forest being full
 of patrols and they had told me, Jerry, that
 "I had nothing to fear, because I was correct."
 (How much!!) I told Nic that if next day,
 by night, I was not with them, I should
 be shot, so they would have left. They
 both kissed us. Nic was weeping, and told me
 that God would be with us. Nothing happened!
 Next morning, S.S. went to arrest René
 Loucopoulos, you remember (1 wife 3 children)
 and shot him. He was F.F.I. chief. Then at
 night I did at least 5 kms. to reach the hole
 hidden from Jerry who was all over the wood.
 I brought the boys, water, food and straw...
 which was most awful to carry! — On the
 Sat. night, they came back to the loft always
 with the rope! On the Sunday, I had a good
 time helping an Hungarian to desert

German army, gave him food, clothes etc.
On the Tuesday, the rain began. As the boys
 were having lunch in my mother's room,
 5 Jerry came in the kitchen, set down, ate,
 5. and began to dry themselves. They said
 they could not eat before "because Tommy!"
 2 (We knew nothing about the events. No light,
 no radio since ~~June~~ August 18th). They stayed
 1 5 hours. I was so afraid they would see the
 4 boys just accross (specially because Ted
 was so fond of seeing the retreating Jerry
 and always wanted to put his head through
 the leaves). At last they left. It was so deli-
 cious to see them rushing back to St. Catherine,
 using any vehicles: buses, horses,
 bicycles (they asked mine, also well hidden, I
 told them it was gone to Germany!) also
 they never found the wireless, not the pistols,
 grenades and machine-guns hidden
 here. As I came back to fetch from fetching
 the bread, at 6:30, I heard the Ecoris bells
 ringing: We understood; You were there?
 We thought they were American, no, it was
 our dear English Army! Next morning
 Victoria's daughter in-law rushed, screaming,
 "M. Huguettes, the bells!" "It was us!"
 I said nothing to the boys, not liking to give them

wrong hope, and ran to Lesors (my vic was under
the wood!) My F.F.T. Jean (saved and hidden
in the forest) came to fetch me even before
going to cheer the B.H. I heard all the village
calling me: "At last, run, M^{re} Hug, you must
be the first there!" I directly went ^{to} the little
caterpillar truck, and asked an officer, quick.
(I think I have been the only one not to kiss that boy
because I was so anxious to bring my too!)
I went to ask the officer what I had to do. One
forgotten mine had just burst and the bridge
was damaged). One girl lent me her bicycle and
I rushed here! The boys got mad: Ted walked
and ^{screeching} yelled!! I felt shy to walk with them!
we had taken so much the habit of hiding
them! All the F.F.I. who had been with them
in the woods, cheered and kissed them and
at last! I gave them up to British! And,
Duke, I then got my ^{first} English cigarette.
we had missed them so much for years!!
(It was a wild woodbine! I keep the box!!)
Then, Victoria's nephew asked us three for lunch
(Poor Maggie was left at home with only
potatoes!) and we had the most excellent
lunch. Ted ate at least 2 lb. of cucumbers,
Nec, a dish full of tomatoes, then omelette,
duck, beans, rice pudding, wine, brandy

Jerry left 13 Mortemer at 6.30!)

(Dear me, never the censor will have patience to read this). They gave the boys a whole bottle of brandy - flowers champagne afterwards at Derly's wife. The Hq. was at the big farm near the bridge to 8 coies. At 3 PM. My two boys went in a jeep with english going back to their Base. They kissed me in front of all the village, and all the troops! After they left, I was staying with your so kind officers and had tea. at last!! and I finally went to fetch Maggie, brought in car. Next morning, some trucks stopped, we gave ~~g~~ them coffee, they gave us all they could soap etc. Unhap. - pill. mines were near Sth Cath. and 2 of our poor little tommyes were killed! ^{The little} truck is still ^{here}

Well, I shall shut up and leave one page for Maggie. In my next letter, if this one reaches you, I'll tell you what I am doing, so busy for 7 1/2 since the vibration. I am really ashamed to write like that, so badly. I hope you won't mind? Happy to hear you are all safe. Where is your sister Leila? Did you ever hear from Kamala?

With kindest souvenirs and so many thanks to you all, British, for having saved us! Your faithful friend Huguelte

You know, dear Duke, I have time
to forget my english. Happily, we had
our english here

Well, Hitler is perhaps dead...
but perhaps not - never the allies can
take care enough or they will begin
again. Really, it was enough! What
franks, we could not ~~fight~~ we have
suffered!

Hug and I will tell you later
all was happening since ~~then 5 years~~
In 1940, we sold Montmorency, the
old abbey, badly but we must
have ~~frank~~ we only had bad money
and now the 10 ~~franks~~ (mines)

We brought in Lissos a big part
of our "disengagement", but we had
the franks, after 2 times the books.
Then, all our linge etc etc were
gone.

It is the war and some people
lost all! so it is well admitted.

Happy to hear that you are
well. Where is your sister Lila?
Write! Léontine & Coucou
(poor mother) and Augustin
send their regards to the M^{onsieur}
le Duc. Roger de Coigny is dead
since some years, his wife with
poor head, 5 children. We will
tell later for the rest.
With my best souvenirs
Maggie