



Bess F. Levy (Lewenz)
Corporal
Woman's Army Corps
WWII

Biggs Field, Texas
1 July 1946

Dear Ruby,

Afraid we have quite a tale of woe for you....it all happendd like this:

We purchased the hose (51 guage nylons) and had them pack it in two packages Helen and I each carrying one. On crossing the border the customs inspector asked Helen what she was carrying and then how many pair. Guessing offhand she said five pair. He decided to check and on opening her package found eleven pair. He would have it no other way but that she was deliberately trying to defraud the government and made her pay a fine of \$12.00 also he confiscated the six pair she alledgedly concealed. That isn't all either. As for the remaining eleven pair they are being held for duty at the customs house.....total duty \$11.55. We did not have enough between us to pay that--in fact Helen had to borrow some from another girl with us to pay that \$12.00 fine. I realize this all makes for pretty expensive hose----but there you are----where do we go from here? I guess the rest is upto you. If you want to send us the \$11.55 for the duty we will get the remaining eleven pair out and mail them to you....also the necessary postage. I don't know what sizes remain, so you would be taking a chance on that.

We are both really very sorry for the whole thing, believe me... it all meant a good deal of trouble and heartache for both of us. I had five dollars remaining after I bought the hose and am giving it to Helen to help make up partly for the money she lost on the deal. It is my opinion that she ought to be repaid the remainder. For after all we had nothing to gain by it all outselves and I am sure that having been in the army yourself Ruby you will realize that \$12.00 to a girl in the army is a lot of money. You have quite a sence of justice so I think it is well to let you and your friends decide. If you still want me to, I guess I can try getting you six other pair of hose. Guess that is about all on that subject....let me know as soon as possible cause I would very much like to see all this cleared up before we leave. From the looks of things the required months of service will be dropped to 18 very soon and we ought to be out by August. Also rumors still persist about our outfit moving to Florida very soon.

It is quite hot down here and we are both getting quite tan though of course Helen has me way beat. We haven't been getting any of the big money you mentioned in your letter--though I just heard that the pay rais has just gone through and our next months pay ought to include that.

Guess that is all for now.....guess you can understand the need for an immediate reply.

Helen sends her regards.....

Love,

Biggs Field, Texas
19 July 1946

Dear Ruby;

Apparently Lt. Pilzer received your letter this morning, cause she took the situation to our Legal Officer, this morning. In fact Helen and I spent the best part of this morning in his office answering questions and listening to him dictate a long letter to the El Paso Customs office, also two affidavits for our signatures in which the whole thing was explained and sworn too. In his letter to the Customs Office he also explained just how everything happened and that neither of us had the slightest intention to defraud and that in view of our ignorance of the law (we can't bring anything into the states duty-free if it is not for our own personal use--learning the hard way) they reconsider and return the \$12.00 fine to Helen also the six pair of confiscated hose. Of course there isn't any assurance that this petition would be granted. But if it is you would still have to pay the duty on the seventeen pair of hose which would be \$17.85.....minus five dollars we had left from the original purchase, which I had given to Helen to partly compensate for her loss on the deal. That would leave a total of \$12.85 plus postage you would have to send. Of course if it works out that way it would greatly improve the situation from what it is right now and I think you ought to take it cause it would be better than for you to lose the original \$35.00, which isn't a mean amount in anyone's language, I guess. Anyway just keep your fingers crossed and hope that our petition is granted. If it isn't we are of course right back where we started when I wrote you that other letter.

In any event I should very much appreciate an answer as soon as possible. Also Ruby, I think you might have written to us in reply to my letter and relieved Helen and I on the subject of any worry. Instead of writing our CO you could have suggested to us that you thought we ought to see her. We didn't think of going to anyone for help because I doubted that the situation could be helped by anyone. Tho of course both she and Col. Kuhfeld, the legal officer, were both very nice and very helpful about the whole thing.

Guess that is all on the subject....Helen sends her regards.

Love,



OFFICE OF THE COLLECTOR
DISTRICT No. 24

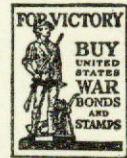
ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS
FOR THIS OFFICE TO THE COLLECTOR

TREASURY DEPARTMENT

BUREAU OF CUSTOMS

EL PASO, TEXAS

July 24, 1946



IN REPLY REFER TO:

G.O. No. 495
Bess Levy

Corporal Bess Levy,
Biggs Field, Texas

Dear Madam:

The receipt of your petition to this office is hereby acknowledged.

Please be advised that the eleven pairs of hose referred to are being held in General Order storage at this office.

You may secure same upon payment of duty in the amount \$11.55 plus .50¢ for storage, to the Collector of Customs, El Paso, Texas.

Very truly yours,

Alfred J. J. Taylor,
Assistant Collector of Customs

lf/

Hq. Ninth Air Force
Biggs Field, Texas
August 7, 1946

Treasury Department
Bureau of Customs
El Paso, Texas

Dear Sirs;

We received your letters of July 24, 1946
granting our petition for the release of six
pair of nylon hose, for which we sincerely do
thank you.

At present we are awaiting a reply from Mrs.
Hollingsworth in answer to a letter we sent
her requesting funds with which to pay the
customs tax. Upon word from her we will be
down to claim the hose and refund. Would very
much appreciate it if you would hold the hose
for just a little while longer.

Yours very truly

BESS F. LEVY, A-509152
Corporal, WAC

HELEN WALKO, A-515760
Corporal, WAC

RECEIPT FOR DUTIES AND TAX

UNITED STATES CUSTOMS SERVICE

Port of El Paso 1819, 1946

Received from Barry

Baggage declaration No. 463

Duties \$ 11.55

Internal revenue tax \$ AUG 19 1946 \$ 11.55

TOTAL \$ 23.10

PAID
AUG 19 1946
By Cashier, U. S. Customs
Port of El Paso, Texas

(Customs officer)

INSTRUCTIONS.—Prepare IN TRIPLICATE. ORIGINAL to be issued to passenger as receipt for duties, etc., paid. DUPLICATE to be attached to baggage declaration and delivered to cashier at main customhouse daily. TRIPLICATE to remain in book. Cashier shall maintain record on checking sheet Form 5253.

ORIGINAL

United States Customs Service

Bill for Miscellaneous Collections—Receipt

Port El Paso
Date 8/19, 1946

There is due the United States the sums specified below:

Fee for 240 No. 463 \$ 50

Storage (Gov't bldg.) \$

Seals PAID number @ 5c. each \$

Work performed hours @ \$

Storage (rented bldg.) pkgs. @ \$

Labor \$

Cartage \$

Salable customs forms \$

Government Publications \$

Cashier's Stamp

Total, \$ 50

Name of Payor. Barry