

16 June 1945

Dear Ted,

I just received your letter on Reader's Digest. It's really swell of you but I don't believe it will be necessary since I have a subscription to it and a lot of the others have too, not to mention those copies which come in with the GI ~~mag~~ selections. Thanx just the same.

Johnny Shirakawa must have been giving you a wrong impression of the cameras. I haven't gone out into the field myself but as I understand from one of my friends (semi-pro, he's working with the Red Cross developing films for the 442) most of the cameras are not as good as they think they are. You see, they're hypnotized by the name of Zeiss and a few others. He says that the ones he's seen (he scouts around seeing everything) are mostly of a good quality but slightly obsolete--he wouldn't exchange any of them for his Rolleiflex. There was one recently which the general had his eye on in the warehouse but by the time he had the requisition and everything to make it legal, it was gone. That began a shakedown of immense proportions. He began searching ~~men~~ guys personally, virtually grovelling in their belongings. Can you imagine anything like that. Needless to say no one has any respect for him--and why should they. But on cameras, granted there are a few ~~ones~~ but the guys either won't part ~~in~~ with them or demand such fantastic prices that it would be simpler to get them in the States. The boys are getting extremely camera-conscious and speaking of 2.9 (or whatever it is), speed and things of that esoteric nature--I'm not one of the holies. But thing is they give themselves away by speaking of miniature. I certainly don't understand the mechanism of a camera but I do know that that word is obsolete in this sense. Or is it? I know that I can take better stuff on a Brownie cuz I ~~know~~ remember those things I used to take as a kid. I'm sending you a picture taken of me some time ago in Genoa--that combat jacket makes me look pregnant but don't let appearances fool you.

Perhaps I've told you that I'll soon be temporarily detached to the battalion to take charge of citation as soon as I wind up my affairs. The regular citations man has his hands full on the unit history and it's more or less a favor rather than anything else. I won't benefit by it but anyway it will do me good to be away from the company awhile and I prefer this type of work--I'm more or less stuck with everything now

that Dobana is communications sergeant--the old one got discharged--that's an essential position but he worked on it from the angle as cook (He was only a PVT in charge of Dobana and me--got busted once for stealing in Shelby and busted again for black-marketing cigarettes in Nice). But can you imagine that this guy was a kleptomaniac--he can't resist taking anything and I never used to rest at ease with him in the CP. He had a way of acquiring things and that prisoner shakedown was his Seventh Heaven--he was really in his element, filling the CP to bulging. With Dobana's new order everything went out the window. We've got a lot of reinforcements (I'm using the army euphemy) who started out on the wrong foot--loud-mouthed as hell without even seeing combat. Incidentally Clarence (Cwawence to you) is in HQ. ~~LXX~~ Hundredth, thank God! I certainly was sweating him out. And his shadow Oda is in Charlie company.

I suppose you know that George went home on the 85 point deal--I was so busy and didn't realize it till the last minute--we were working on a deadline so I didn't even see him. I could kick myself--one of the best friends I ever had in this army. You know that don't you? With you and him everything was perfect for me at Shelny in spite of everything.

Right now we're within walking distance of Lake ~~Como~~ Como--I don't know exactly what the deal is though it involves training anyway. I expected to go swimming today but the weather changed all that and I've been working to clean up my affairs here. And that reminds me, if you were telling me the truth, I'll have to teach you to swim some day.

Guess I'll have to be going back to my work and finish a few more things before I go to bed tonight. Dobana's been running ~~mm~~ around in circles lately--I can't be of any assistance since I haven't any knowledge of electricity. He has the job of stringing wires. I'm his assistant and yet I take it easy compared to him--he's much too conscientious.

Yours,
Bob

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