

Wednesday 4 July 1945

[65]

Hq 14<sup>th</sup> AACommand

APO 75, Frisco

Happy Fourth of July Darling:

, That is, as happy a Fourth as we could have while we are apart. I am going to celebrate it in a very military way by being on guard this evening. I have to walk my post for four hours. This is a dreary job and one which I am not looking forward to. I hope I get stationed on a post inside because it is raining to beat the band now and it looks as if it may continue to for quite a while yet. I have no raincoat or field jacket so I would rather a sorry sight if I were outside in the rain.

Most of the fellows here [sic] gone to see the army[sic] -navy football game in Rizal Stadium. I did not go because of this guard. I don't think the fellows who go to the game will be back before 5:00 and that would not give me very much time to get ready for guard mount. The game would not mean as much to me as a regular school game would because I know none of the players and couldn't summon up much fervor for a regular service team. I haven't been in Rizal Stadium yet but I guess it must be quite a big place because they hold football and baseball games there, as well as the boxing bouts they have every week. There are supposed to be many very good Filipino boxers, especially in the lower weight classes. The straw boss of the Filipino work group here is supposed to be a very good middleweight boxer. He is one of the huskiest Filipinos I have yet seen and is very much inclined to be a bully, which is the reason they hired him to supervise the workers. He can keep them on the ball because they are all afraid of him.

This noon there was a little skirmish between a couple of these workers. One of them was plaguing an older man and the old boy went for him and did a nice little carving job with a very dull messkit knife. He cut the fellow's upper arm quite badly. I don't know what they are going to do to the old boy but they were holding him in the orderly room when I last saw him. Someone said that he had grabbed a hatchet first but had discarded that in favor of the knife. Whatever the circumstances, it was a rather gory sight and one which I would not have cared to have anymore than a spectator's part in. Most of the Filipinos seem to be quite even tempered but I guess that underneath this calm exterior there is a red hot temper.

Last night at the show I saw VALLEY OF DECISION starring Greer Garson and Gregory Peck. This is the second time I have seen him and he has done excellent work both times. Greer Garson was good but it was rather hard to imagine her a schoolgirl just graduated from high school. She is good looking and all that but in a more mature way. They found another part which Lionel Barrymore could play from a wheelchair. It seems that they always manage to slip him into pictures even though he is a cripple. He did a good job of portraying the hate-crazed father in the picture. I thought it was a very good picture. In the news they tried to show scenes from the conference at San Francisco. One of the scenes was part of the argument which preceded Argentina's admission to the United Nations. I guess that was one of the big things which led to the displacement of Stettin as Secretary of State. [crossed out sentence] I consider that to be one of our big diplomatic boners. There are so many such boners pulled off by all the nations of the world. Denunciations of nations with a policy of territorial aggrandizement on the one hand, and the grabbing of territory by the same power which did the denouncing. That seems to be the

main thing. A thing is right or wrong according to who does it. The same old double standards that are applied to everything.

I have a small book of excerpts from the Postscripts section of the Satevepost and have found one poem which I like very much.

“TO HAVE AND TOO OLD”

The bride, white of hair, is stooped over her cane,

Her footsteps, uncertain, need guiding,

2.

While down the church aisle, with a wan, toothless smile,

The groom in a wheel chair comes riding.

And who is this elderly couple, the wed?

You'll find, when you've closely explored it,

That here is the rare, most conservative pair,

Who waited till they could afford it!”

I got a boot out of it and thought that it was quite good. I am glad that we are not going to lose any time when I get back because I love you so very much that every day we are apart is a day that is thoroughly wasted.

In one of the late issues of TIME there was a write up of some new cartoon books out on the market and one of them is by Steinberg who does a lot of work for THE NEW YORKER. If you happen to run across a copy of it somewhere will you get it and keep it for me. I want to get a few books of this sort for our library because I like them. He has a very distinctive style which I like. It is pure line work and very good line work too. You must have seen some of it.

There was no mail for me this noon although I had hoped to get at least one letter from you. I guess the mail will be rather crossed up for a while until it starts coming to this new APO. That is the big trouble with moving anywhere out here, it takes such awhile for the mail to catch up. When the mail gets straightened out though, I should get very good service here.

I just met another fellow who went to MSC. He graduated in 1941 so I guess you wouldn't know him. I can't think of his name right now but he didn't seem to know you so I gathered that he was before you time at school. He went with the daughter of the fellow who runs Byrnes Drug Store, Mr Byrnes I presume. He did not seem to know any of the profs [sic] who were there when I was. He didn't know Col. Rodney or Capt. Atchison, I had thought that they were old standbys at the school. He seems to have left there before they got the idea of putting the lights in Pinetum and says that that was a very popular place then, even as now. He said that it used to be so that you couldn't take a step without

tripping over a prostrate form. Ah me, the outdoor life. How I love it. Remember the picnic we had out there?

True to my expectations, it has rained all afternoon. I wonder how the boys made out who went to the football [sic] game. They undoubtedly got soaked to the skin. I am glad now that I did decide not to go. I did some drawing instead and finished the project that I told you I was working on. I do have a few final touches to put to it but that is all. Then I shall forward it to you for your approval. I hope it does meet with your approval. I did gum up one part of it and that is the final tough part of the work. This is the first drawing I have done for quite a while and I had quite a bit of trouble because the paper was very damp and it absorbed the ink too much. I think I will have trouble with this all the time I am here [sic] because it is so damp outside.

My barracks has just received a new coat of paint and smells to beat the devil. I hope the smell goes away soon because it is no fun trying to sleep in that environment. The fellow [sic] who did the painting was very careful and took [sic] all my things off the timbers [sic] and placed them on the bed while he did the painting, then, after he finished painting, he put the things right up on the timbers which were wet with paint. The paint was the kind that soaked into the wood right away so my things did not get too messed up. I just got a boot out of the way he did it.

That situation of the Filipinos waiting outside the mess hall has been alleviated by putting a GI can inside the mess hall with a sign on it asking all the fellows to put their edible garbage in it and not throw any butts in it because it is food for the Filipino people. Damn but this all seems so damned unnecessary; that some people somewhere should be forced to eat the leavings of others while there is enough food in the world to feed everyone adequately. I guess these people are well off compared to others [sic] in the world. It is enough to make a person thoroughly disgusted with the world. I seem to be in the doldrums again Darling. I wish you were here to cheer me up, I just feel blue as the devil. Then you get some of these GIs coming out with the brilliant observation that if these people would do some work they would get along. The "hard work is always rewarded" story.

3.

This is being typed later. I have eaten supper and have stood guard mount. My relief at guard is from 10:00 till 2:00 in the morning. That is rough on sleep but I guess I will live through it all. I have a fairly good post to walk, the office, and will not have to be out in the rain. That was the one thing I was most worried about. It is still raining. My right shoe leaks like a sieve and there is nothing I can do about it because my other shoes are on their way up by boat and won't be here for a while. That means that I will not be able to hand these in for salvage until the others get here for me to wear while these are being salvaged. It is very irksome to have a shoe full of mud on my foot though. It is a very gooey feeling, just like wading through mud.

The kids came around to collect for the laundry tonight. My new girl friend was there. She is that little tike I told you about. I am making time with her too, already I know what her name is. It is, I know you are not going to like this, Mary. One of the fellows said that she is eleven years old. I want to draw her picture as I told you the other night. You need not be worried that I am falling for her because I have not yet descended to the lower stratas among the age groups. I feel sorry for most of these kids around here. Most of them have hardly any clothing to wear. These kids who take my laundry are not dressed in the best of clothes, but they are very clean. Their mother did a very good job on my clothes, they are

almost too nice to wear. I even have my own laundry mark now, it is VV, or a reasonable facsimile, sewed into all my clothes with white thread. Quite ultra don't you think.

The damned bugs around here are terrific. I thought we had a lot of them in New Guinea but this has even that hold beat. There are a lot of mosquitoes here, although I understand that not so many of them are malarial types. They can still do an awful lot of stinging. One of them got under my mosquito net last night and woke me up in the middle of the night feasting on me.

The football game was a dismal failure as far as I can gather. It was played in a real sea of mud with the players slithering around in the stuff. There was a terrific mob there and the fellows who went had a tough time getting in the stadium, and few of them did get in. They were all over the place. Some of the boys said that there was a huge mob on one very flimsy building when the thing suddenly collapsed. They said that one of the fellows was killed and that several others were injured. I am glad that I didn't go now. I am going to try to get tickets for the symphony Friday night though. I hope that I am successful.

You are now [sic] gazing upon a man who has acquired himself some negotiable lucre. I have in my possession at the present time some twenty six pesos, or \$12.50. This remains after I have paid my debts, laundry et al. The laundry cost methree [sic] pesos. I'll have to try to keep my sin tans clean and wear my fatigues wherever possible so I can keep my laundry bill down. I won't have much success if I have to wear these [sic] damned shoes much longer though.

This paper we have here should be good material for the NEW YORKER's "Infatuated with own words dept." For he wast [sic] four days they have had an item about some sailor who was killed by the mistress of the man who the sailor's girl friend worked for as a maid – if you follow me. At any rate, each day for the past four days they have quited [sic] some Sheriff who said that "the crime was committed in an aura of sexual recrimination". I guess the guy who is writing the story must be fascinated by these words. They sound a trifle silly to me however.

Thursday night.

The lights has went out on me last night and I had to stop writing where I was. I went on gusrd [sic] as scheduled and stood my four hour shift. That is a damned long and lonely job I must say. It seems that time just drags by and that the time to be relieved will never come. I didn't waste a minute when I got back to the barracks but went to sleep right away. I wouldn't have gotten up for breakfast but I heard someone [sic] say that there were fried eggs. Since this istoo [sic] good a treat to miss, I decided to forgo a little sleep in order to eat. I wish now that I had not because I went to sleep after breakfast and, as is always the case when I so [sic] this, I have had a headache all day long.

4.

At the present time I have a job which is not too much fun. I have to draw a ladscape [sic] merely from the description of one of the officers. I am having a heck of a time and hve [sic] done three different ones so far. The next one should be just about right because I am on the right track. It is still a hell of a job. If I do any more of these, I hope that I can get out to do a life sketch of the subject. This would be much easier. I can't complain though because I have had very little work to do here so far except for some odd jobs of freehand lettering which did not amount to adamn. [sic]

I have received another of your letters Darling. It was written the 19<sup>th</sup> of June. There are a lot of others on the way because it shouldn't take more than nine days for a letter to get here from the States.

From your description of the dress and the playsuit, as well as from your sketch, I should judge that they are very nice. I shall be looking forward to the [sic] pictures of you in these. Especially the picture in the playsuit, so please do not have the photographer, whoever may do the job, cut you off at the knees. I am still waiting for the cheesecake pictures I asked you for. I have only that one of you that Jack Osgood took. Of course that is a very nice one but I'd like to have al [sic] of them tht [sic] I can, you understand don't you?

Speaking of Jack Osgood Darling, what is his APO number? Maybe he is stationed near here.

You are quite a little girl scout aren't you, going along with Sue on her evening walk. I didn't know that walking was considered necessary for women in her predicament but if you say so it must be gospel. You had better get all the hints that you can because one of these days you will be needing it. Not that I am going to try to rush you into anything but eventually you will need the hints, so why not get them now? Of course I will have to get home first before anything can be done, but one of these fine days you will find me on your front door step. You won't mind will you?

I'm sorry [sic] to hear tht [sic] your apartment was not approved and that you are going to have to look for another job. Personally, I don't see what the difference is between puttingg [sic] you on the payroll and paying you by the hour. I can see it from your point of view because you would want to be put on the regular payroll if you work there, but from their point of view, I don't see why they couldn't put you on the regular payroll as well as they can hire you and pay you by the hour. You are just as well out of there after the underhanded tricks that Hoffer has tried to pull off on you. He does not fit my idea of anyone to work for. Untrustworthy, that is the term that I would apply to him.

That baby book for Aunt Blanche's baby sounds quite nice. I have never seen any of these Tony Sarg books but have heard about them and all that I have heard was good. I wil [sic] send you the card to go with it in a day or so. I know she will enjoy it.

It is a damned shame that the ration board would not approve the priority for the apartment building at MSC. Despite the boards decision, I am sure that there will be a very great need for just such a thing after the war because a lot of married fellows are planning to return to school. It is going to be hard for them to find suitable apartments now because there are not the facilities in East Lansing. I just hope we can get ourselves a nice place to stay while I am going to school. You will have to be on the lookout again to try to find a place that will fill our needs. I would like a place where we could have a little privacy and not one of these situations where we would be in with another family. That is not my idea of how I want to live after we are married. Maybe we could get a trailer. OK, OK, I just thought I'd mention it. I wasn't really serious. Are there any apartments near the police barracks now? I thought there was one apartment house there but I am not sure, it may merely have been the quarters for the troopers. As I remember it, it was a very nice little building. Something like that would be nice. I am sure that we will be able to find ourselves something nice. Of course for quite a few months after I get back we will not have to worry about that because we will be on our vacation. Gosh but I am looking forward to that more than I ever have to anything in all my life. It will

be the most wonderful thing in all the world Honey, because I shall be with the most wonderful girl in all the world. You are you know, the most wonderful and much the most beautiful. And I do love you terrifically, you darling.

I just gotback [sic] from the show. It was a very good picture titled "Pillow to Post", starring Ida Lupino and Sydney Greenstreet. This is the first comedy role I have seen her play for quite a while but she did a very good job of it. There was quite a bit of trouble before the picture got under way but they finally got it started and got through it without any serious mishaps. It seems that everywhere I go there is trouble with the projectors or the generators sothat [sic] I have to sweat out a repair job before seeing the picture.

Damn this typewriter. It is giving me more trouble than ever. It seems that the keys stick, or the carriage does not move evenly because I hit a letter and then the next letter that I hit types right over that. It is a pain in the neck. Of course I realize that my typing leaves something to be desired but that is neither here nor there.

Say, Honey, you know that cute little laundress that I have mentioned in this letter? Well it seems that her looks were very deceiving and that far from being only eleven years old, she is eighteen. That is what I mean when I say that it is hard to tell the ages of these people. You needn't worry though because my interest in her does not extend beyond wanting to do a sketch of her for the album. I would like to get in with one of these families so that I could do a regular series of sketches of their life. It would be interesting. I will also have to do some sketches of Jitters the monkey in the battery. I don't know whether I have told you about him or not but we do have a monkey and he is quite a character. He is into everything and loves to drink beer. He will climb up on anyone and likes to explore pockets to see what he can find that lends itself to eating. He will sample anything and likes to eat shaving cream.

It is getting quite late now Honey so I shall have to end this letter and get myself to bed to dream sweet dreams of you. Any dreams of you would have to be that. I hate so much being away from You Darling. I will be so glad when this war is over and I am back with you where I belong.

I love you my Darling,

Freddie