

June 28, 1943

Dear Sumner:

Your letter of June 19th to Uncle Louie which he sent me certainly was written in no lugubrious tone. Far from it. You discussed the number of blouses you would like to buy and, I understand, blouses can be worn only by officers. The whole spirit of your letter with some reservation, to be sure but very little, was cheerful and optimistic. Reading that letter I almost see those bars on your shoulders. Now Louie, who had been recommended for promotion and who ought to be receiving his second bar within a few weeks, wrote that he was saving his silver bars for you and predicted that you would be wearing them by Christmas.

It is quite apparent that you have two sets of signals. I suppose no good football team is without even more than that number of signals; but why don't you try the same signals on your old man? You know he does not enjoy being thrown for a loss three downs out of four though the yardage is made on the 4th down. That is a little bit too nerve-wracking for him. He would like to be sparked once in a while with a good end-around run or an off tackle play yielding 15 or 20 yards and, of course, he would exceed the world's high jump record if he heard that you scored a touch-down from your own five yard line, running 95 yards with a few field reversings, one or two straight arm jabs and several snake hit swivels without being a Frank Merriwell, a little bit of confidence and some zip can do wonders both for the player and the guy in the stands.

On advice of counsel, I am not talking. When asked about your progress, I keep saying that it is tough and no one can tell whether the grade can be made. And I emphasized the fact that the army is now reducing the number of new officers because it is about to reach the saturation point. Hence the high mortality. I keep smiling and keep repeating what I really believe, namely and to wit: So far as I am concerned it does not make a hell of a difference whether you do or do not become an officer. Either way, I salute you.

Affectionately,

Right shoulder Left
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