

July 19th

Dear Ones,

Yesterday was pretty uneventful. I finished J.P. Marquand's "So Little Time" - it was better than either "Apley" or "Pulham", I thought. The approach is similar to "Pulham" and it is more finished, fewer rough spots. His subtle satire and revealing realism are fine. Last night I started "Strange Fruit." I went over to ~~XXXX~~ one of the hospitals last night with Lt. Benioff and we played a couple of hours of bridge with two medics. We played about six rubbers of which we only won one, and we were only vulnerable one other time. I think all in all we played only five hands; they got the bid every other time. I was really picking up some lulus.

Tonight I am to give an orientation talk down at the company (and the officers are having a discussion about post war conversion ^{LATER}). Presumably I am to review the European news but I will undoubtedly erupt in a volcano of enthusiasm and filibuster for thinking etc. We are getting an excellent response up here at the headquarters company in our little bull sessions; and I think I can penetrate the outward indifference of the men down at Ordnance too. All you have to do is break the ice once and the thaw begins; I have the advantage of being a new face and a new personality.

The weather here continues to be delightful and it is something to be thankful for. I was fortunate in that we had a beautifully clear night the night I was on guard. We get guard about once a month around here. I am now helping out and doing some of the censoring of the men (in this office's) mail; that takes next to no time at all.

It looks now as though the question will be: who is going to get to Paris first? The Russians are rolling- the news this morning puts them just outside the gateway to East Prussia; by the time you receive this there is no telling how far they will have pushed. The fact that the Russians will probably get to greater Germany first undoubtedly means that we will have fewer post-war problems than if the allies came in. It is a good feeling to be on the winning team.

Not much special to report; just a comment. Every time I comment to Herb about reading a book or something the conversation seems to turn to "social significance" or "social attitudes." To my mind this type of thinking - Lou Raybin had it in a limited way - is super serious, it forbids mental relaxation. If I enjoy a book, I enjoy it; I do not let its imposed implications clutter up my mind. Needless/ to say, I can be serious when I like. But I think Herb lacks a little balance. Oh, well, it's just an idea.

OK for now.

Love and kisses,

Sammy