

July 25, 1944

Dear Sumner:

The other night I had a dream that left me weak and trembling. I dreamed that you were holding a step-ladder while your bunk mate was nailing a board to one of the rafters off the tent and the hammer slipped out of his hand and struck you a glancing blow on the tip of your thumb. Then you fainted and it took hours to revive you. The doctor diagnosed the case as shock due not only to the fright but to physical exhaustion. The whole scene was so vivid that it left me in a weakened condition which took several days to wear off. That is why I have not written you about this before. Now I believe there is something in dreams and the terrible thought has come to me that you may have in fact held on to a ladder or something else while Herb was doing the nailing. My parental advice to you is not to over exert yourself.

When I came home yesterday afternoon I read all your six letters and relished them all, as usual. That excerpt from your letter to Dot was not at all empty or impersonal. I thought it was rather clever and did definitely inject one of your personal attributes. It was well phrased and carried the simile along effectively. It may have been impersonal in the sense that it lacked amorous or passionate expressions but it, nevertheless, was a person bit of writing.

Your ability to spend time profitably is a characteristic that too few men in the service, comparatively speaking, possess. To be self sufficient on occasions and not restless or bored is a commendable trait and should stand you in good stead on many an occasion. Reading is, of course, a cultivated art and I am happy that you have acquired it and are developing it with personal satisfaction. It is unfortunate that many good books now being put out are denied to the men in the service by reason of the Congressional Act that prevents the distribution of certain books which, by some wild stretch of the imagination, are regarded as containing "pernicious politics". To that effect, you will be interested in the enclosed advertisement from the publishers of Yankee from Olympus. To think that that fine piece of literature should be barred is incomprehensible. For the same reason that this book is taboo I suppose that Walter Lippman's latest, "Time for Decision" will not be available to you. It is to be regretted but I wonder what can be done about it. Certainly the man in the service must keep quiet, yet I am anxious to have you read it and I am hoping that I will be able to mail it to you as a Chanukah present.

Just had lunch with Helen at the Falmouth. It is really a joy to be with her.

Affectionately,