

May 26, 1945

Darling -

You've been a fish-widow the past few days! Every day we have a battalion meeting at 6:30; and every day at 7:10 I am on the way to the stream. Tonite was the best yet! It was a cloudy evening with skiffs of rain. The fish were biting well. By nine o'clock I had 10 nice trout 8 - 14" long; one rainbow. It is a pretty stream, where we fish it, which meanders through a meadow. The whole valley is lovely, with wooded hills topping the rolling meadow-land and pastures. There are occasional ducks winging by in the evening, and deer are plentiful. By 10:30 we are home again, wet, cold, and happy.

It is wonderful to have found this opportunity to be doing something so close to my heart. It helps that lonely feeling, for, out there, you are just around the bend in the next pool, biting your tongue, and casting for all you are worth. It is pleasant, these evenings I spend with you.

Actually with me is a boy from upper New York State who is an ardent fan. He is in an Artillery Bn. stationed here. I have four flies, which I am using in rotation until nothing is left but a bare shank. He made some today out of curtain wool & partridge feathers, and had excellent results. So -

Mitch and Huston are, at the moment, helping clean up a Russian hospital a few miles away, so I have this one to run by myself. This keeps me reasonably busy during the day, administrating. It is ever diverting, the little problems that come up. Trying to find artificial limbs, shoe leather, or tires; trying to place Kraut civilians, displaced Russkie, or Kraut NP's; finding transportation, coal, medicines; meeting the disciplinary problems that occasionally arise: all in a day's work.

This morning, for example, I closed out a small hospital we've been running in a nearby town. I took over there a rattle-trap old Kraut ambulance. Half-way over, a rear tire went Koput. No spare, of course. So we drove it on the rim. I picked up a German wounded soldier, a Polish girl with threatened abortion, an Italian officer with sciatica, and a Kraut major. Much weeping & wailing; chattering of German nurses; wailing of babies with diarrhea. Then off we clattered & bumped and chugged. What a business.

These days anything can happen and usually does. One of the boys stopped a man in civilian clothes the other day for identification. He was led away vehemently protesting "Nichts soldat. Me Syphilis." (Civilis.) We had a wedding in the ward last week. A soldier with

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nephritis and arthritis married a nurse. Looks like a necessary manoeuver, as she will soon be a patient in the maternity wards. Pophalus is the busiest Kraut in Germany. He is a p.f.c., but more important, he is our interpreter and official go-between. Whenever the Kraut Major Commandant wants something done, he screams for Popholus; whenever the patients have something they want, they buttonhole Pophalus; whenever we have orders or demands, we put Popholus on the carpet. He is a very heckled little man! I am trying to get him a pair of roller-skates so he can get around faster. Think I'll see if I can't get him made a sergeant!

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