

Netherlands East Indies
10 November 1944

Dear Gene,

Mother wrote me about the little fracas in which the similarity of two blue sweaters involved you a couple of weeks ago. I'm sorry, of course, that those people made such a mistake and I want you to know that I am sure you would never do such a thing. I know you will do nothing that isn't right. Mother believes that, too.

I am proud of the way you conducted yourself during the embarrassment of the incident, and now that it is over, I hope you can forget it. The accident of mistaken identity could have happened to anyone and I am glad the real rascal was caught and exonerated you so completely. Well, since you did nothing to be ashamed of, there's no reason to feel any shame over the incident. It's just one of those things.

Incidentally, did I ever tell you about the time I was arrested? Looking back at it now, it's sort of funny. Ottis Ballard and I hitch-hiked to Natchez one week-end, just to look at the Mississippi River, I suppose. We had very little money so we decided to camp on the river bank below the town. So we bought some groceries and went way down in a willow thicket and were cooking our supper when a man with a flashlight came up and told us we were under arrest. He wouldn't tell us why, but carried us to the police station and before the city judge. After questioning us about where we had been, where we were going and a lot of other things, we finally convinced the judge of our identities and had done nothing wrong. Then he told us the reason they had picked us up was because two convicts, whose descriptions were similar to ours, had escaped that day from the Louisiana penitentiary at Angola. By this time it was getting pretty late so the police advised us not to camp on the riverbank as it looked like rain. They said their jail was full of bedbugs, though, so they would let us sleep in the courtroom. So that's what we did. Ottis slept on the floor and I slept on the judge's desk. But, believe you me, next morning before it was hardly daylight, we tiptoed downstairs and scrambled before they could change their minds. Anyway, we got a number of pretty good photographs that day. I'm sure you've seen some of them around the house--some of the old colonial homes, a couple of mules drinking at a well, a little Negro boy riding a mule. Anyway, you can imagine how I felt when those policemen started nuzzling me that night. I knew I wasn't the one they wanted but I'll be darned if I didn't get scared I would n't be able to prove it. Perhaps you felt the same way and I am sure you felt relieved when everything worked out all right.

I had an interesting experience several nights ago when I danced with an Indonesian girl! I started writing you and the girls about it, but didn't get to finish the letter. I'll get it in the mail tomorrow sure.

Are you getting to go on many football trips now? I suppose McComb will win the Big Eight--three years from now, anyway, when you will be bucking the line.

Give the girls my love and all of you write,

Your dad,

