



AMERICAN RED CROSS

Somewhere in New Guinea  
9 April 1944

Dearest Inez,

The atrocity sketched on this letter isn't any new secret weapon--and the Red Cross would utterly disclaim it, the heading notwithstanding. This little doo-dad is a comb, believe it or not. A little old "boy" of the Toufik tribe I ran across swapped this comb for a half empty can of foot powder. Of course at first he offered to sell it to me for "six bob"--96¢. I also got a braided bracelet from him which is about the neatest piece of workmanship I've seen. I'll send it to you sometime soon. A soldier has promised to bring me one of these combs that is inlaid with native gold. It should make a rather nice souvenir.

Oh, incidentally, I had the Aussie corporal I wrote you about paint a portrait for me today. He does very good work and I'll mail the picture--a water color--to you in the next few days. He developed a very good likeness--he was eager to do the picture on account of the "cookie duster"--wait until you see it. The Aussie said "I wager she'll let you hear from it. She'll send you a wireless of just three words--shave it off."

We were sitting alongside the road this afternoon watching a native soccer game--and could those boys kick that ball. The McComb Tigers could win every game on field goals alone if they had him. After awhile a potbellied boy, with rings in his nose and ears and a purple sarong and red and yellow paint marked all over his face, came up to the jeep. Paul said "Hi, boy," and the black monkey grinned, showing a mouthful of black, broken teeth. Without a word he climbed into the jeep and sat watching the ball game with us, paying us no attention whatever. Whenever they would score he would shout and giggle and said "Okay." We assumed that he was just an ordinary native, maybe a chief on account of his elaborate dress, but it didn't occur to us that he was one of the mission educated boys. After awhile he looked over and said, "Where did you get the carbine--it's a very good gun. Good." He nodded his head vigorously and grinned bigger than ever when we exclaimed over his perfect English. He told us that he had lived all his life right around here and that "Japs are bad. Americans are good." Then, the inevitable, "Give me a cigaret please, thank you." He invited us to go along with him and he would show us some birds to shoot. He spotted a flock of huge crowd and Morel banged away, but missed. The old boy,



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whose name was pronounced something like "Atowyeei", nearly laughed his head off. "Good gun. yes. but you--no good. very much no good shot." So, justly chastened, Morel decided not to exhibit his marksmanship further and I declined to show up my deficiencies also.

We had a most impressive Easter sunrise service this morning in our chapel. I'm enclosing the program. The chapel was very attractive with flowering shrubs actually transplanted ~~in~~ and living in the sand floor around the altar. Palm fronds were placed behind the altar in a pretty design. There was the largest attendance at the service, despite the early hour, ever experienced in the battalion. We awoke just at the crack of dawn and the service began as the eastern sky--which still seems west to me--began to redden. The chaplain delivered a very effective sermon, I thought. We've had religious services in our chapel most of the day--two Catholic masses and several Protestant services conducted for other units about us who have no chapels as yet.

Some of the fellows received mail today dated as late as March 25, but I was disappointed again, I feel sure you must have given me up for lost.

Well, it's 7:30 and the boys say it's "sack time" --and I am tired enough to go to sleep now, as usual. So, good night--I surely do miss you.

Loads of love,