

13 October, 1942.

Dear Johnny:



Today, the 13th, I received your birthday note, so you see your timing was not at all bad. Thanks a lot for the trouble you took. I am quite astonished that you should remember the day in the midst of all your cadet activities. I must say that I could easily forget it myself! I have a hunch that some of my friends are going to give me a dog as a present. I've been talking a lot about getting a little Scotty or something of that kind so as to have a companion that cannot possibly talk war.

I was delighted with the sections you made on the first general transfers as a yearling. Your standing in drawing compared to your other studies just about like mine did. I struggled hard with the darned stuff, but I never could do much with it. I've always envied these people who could print well and who could sketch neatly. However, I suppose that you and I were not built to be artists.

There are dozens of things that happen here daily in which I know you would be highly interested; however, they are all on the censored list so I cannot talk about them in a letter. Commander Butcher is keeping me a rather comprehensive diary, and some day I hope that you and I can get together and, with the aid of the diary, I can tell you everything that happened. One thing though I can tell you now. That is, when you get to high places in the Army, this business of warfare is no longer just a question of getting out and teaching the soldiers how to shoot or how to crawl up a ravine or to dig a fox-hole - it is partly politics, partly public-speaking, partly essay-writing, partly social contact, on to all of which is tacked the business of training and disciplining an Army. All in all, there's never a dull moment - but there are many in which a fellow wishes he could just get into a hammock under a nice shade tree and read a few wild west magazines!

It seemed to me that the report on your ear was rather favorable; however, I don't see why they don't get a rattling good specialist up to see you. There must be hundreds of them now in the army and even if they have to get a civilian, I would always be delighted to pay the fee for a good specialist to come up and have a consultation with your own doctor.

You learned one military lesson when you discovered that the air-raid alarm, for which you blamed the con, was not ordered by him at all. Military commanders cannot make excuses or give a lot of reasons for everything they do, so a soldier frequently gets bitterly criticized

for something with which he had no connection whatsoever. You will find this more true the older you grow.

I hope that you can keep up some tennis practice throughout the winter. As I understand it, there are indoor courts there and if you can get an opportunity to keep plugging away, there is no question about you doing well next spring.

Give my best to Major Stromberg, if you should happen to see him, and to young Bill Clark. My last letter from Mamie said she was feeling fine and having a rather nice time in Washington.

