

Good evening, darling:

24 April 1945 2100

I haven't started my letter until late because I have been nosing around meeting some of the people around here and seeing what I could see. It has been an interesting day.

It has been amusing to notice how the people here have worked us into giving them our left over food. Of course, it wouldn't look right for any of the nuns or doctors to come over to us and ask us for it, so they had a couple of the better looking nurses aides come around with some cups and walk by our kitchen truck, a path which they never had taken before. No one took the hint so one of them asked if she could have a bit of coffee from Brazil, since it had been five years since they had tasted any. Well, we didn't need any greater hint than that and invited them to come back and get all of the food which we had left over, which they gladly did. Now we have no need to worry about any garbage because they take all of it.

The German propaganda has certainly been effective around here, for many of the people are still uncertain about some things, even tho we are here. One of the things which had been drilled into them was the fact that the American army had composed of colored troops who were nothing more than barbarians who would rape all the women and kill the children. They wanted to know if we had any colored troops, and couldn't seem to understand that ~~these~~ these troops were as American as we, but seemed to think that they were south Americans. They didn't seem to be too sure about our reassurance that these troops would cause them no difficulty, and thought that we had far more of them than we actually do have in the line.

It is a joke to see the various types of vehicles which we now have on the highways. Everybody seems to be riding in German trucks of one sort or another. Partisans are crowded into the smaller vehicles with gas bristling from all sides, running up and down the roads looking for any Jerries that might have been overlooked, and possibly even settling old scores with some fascists who were not fortunate enough as to get away. Then GIs are riding back and forth along the roads in vehicles of all sizes, shapes, and description. It seems that the Jerries were taken so quickly that they had no time to destroy their vehicles and so we have all the extra vehicles we can use. At our last area we had gotten a Jerry truck but there had been something wrong with the motor which my men had planned to repair, but they had to tow the vehicle up here first. Well, they didn't get to do this because they were stopped by the division salvage officer who told them that they would be able to get vehicles which would run without bothering to tow any vehicles around. Well, he certainly was right in that respect for this morning Tag came in with a German Ford V8 ton and a half truck with a couple of tents on it. An hour or so later Vince came in with another truck. Well, that was one more than we wanted, so we proceeded to take the good tires off the one and put it on the Ford and also took any other accessories from the one that we thought would be of use on the other. We let battalion know about the extra truck and the rehabilitation group (Major Glass's boys) came up and took it away. In the same place where we had gotten the trucks there were several generators and myriads of tools. It seems that the Germans had had an ordnance installation there which was captured intact, and that means that there were tools galore to be had for the asking. Tag stopped by later in the day and picked up about \$1000 worth of tools and brought them back to the company for our motor mechanics to use in their work. We really are well prepared for a good many things now. The generators were tremendous things, much too big for us, so we let battalion know about them and they went up and got themselves one. I'm telling you this is a regular field day for us. One of the main reasons for our major successes at the present time is that the Jerries ran completely out of gas, which meant that they were unable to use their vehicles, drive their tanks, pull their guns, etc. In fact they were using horses and oxen to pull everything which they still had. Well, you can't get very far that way, and it is a cinch that they haven't. It was funny how we found the ordnance dump. Tag was riding along the road in the jeep, after having contacted regiment, when he noticed a tremendous number of partisans riding around the roads in vehicles of all sorts. He inquired where they had gotten them, and they showed him the dump. He then got the partisan who was riding around in the v 8 to give him a ride in it, a ride which he described with hilarious gestures. First of all the partisan knew very little about vehicles and was riding at full speed with the emergency brake still on, until Tag noticed it and had him release it. Then the partisan, being in familiar territory was leaning three fourths of the way out of the window waving at his friends and calling to them in