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Image 1:

Ziracco, Italy  
July 1, 1945

Dear Mother, Dad, and Grandpa

Right now I am on duty, and I was just brought this evening's mail. No letters from you, but a huge stack of reading material which is a welcome sight indeed. The "N.Y. Times" of June 17<sup>th</sup>, the June 16<sup>th</sup> "Liberty," the "Life" of the same week and the June 25<sup>th</sup> "Time" all came tonight. I mention the dates so you can see how fast they are getting here. We get the pony editions<sup>1</sup> of "Time" and "Newsweek" but I like the full issue from the States with all the advertisements. The other articles are the same, though.

I thought I might have possibly gone to Trieste for the day, but I didn't get to. I am going to try to go the next time they send a truck over.

I'd like to see the Jewish Synagogue in Trieste, and perhaps talk to some Jewish people there, if any are left, to see how they fared during the occupation. I bought a souvenir booklet in Venice with pictures of places of interest in Trieste, and one of them was the old Synagogue. Italy, of course, has very few Jews. I suppose you read about the Chief Rabbi of Rome who was converted to Catholicism and is now working for the Pope in Vatican City.

Speaking of Rome, I'd like to go there more than ever now, for they are accepting telephone calls to the States from there. "Stars and Stripes" had an article on it yesterday. I'm enclosing that and also one about the 10<sup>th</sup> Division. If I ever get there I'm certainly going to call you. Wouldn't that be something? I imagine that in time they will inaugurate a similar service in Florence and other cities.

Please send some food any time you want to.

Image 2:

(2) Ziracco, Italy  
July 1, 1945

If I had waited, I probably could have gone to Rome instead of the Lido, but actually the Lido is nicer for a vacation. At that time I didn't know about the phone calls. In the Army one takes what one can get whenever he can get it.

Frankie Sinatra came here to Udine with his show while I was away. I don't think that anyone passed out.

[Jinx Falkenberg](#) and her U.S.O. show are coming sometime next week. She recently married a Lt. Col.<sup>2</sup> who is public relations officer for the Mediterranean Allied Air Force. Hope I can get a to see it.

Also [Grace Moore](#) and [Nino Martini](#) are giving a concert in Verona this week. I'm enclosing a clipping about that also. If there is a quota for the Signal Co., I would like to be in on it.

[Primo Carnera](#) who lives only about 15 miles from here is scheduled to give a boxing exhibition here in the near future.

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<sup>1</sup> The Pony edition magazines were printed during World War II especially for air transport. To facilitate this, the magazines were printed in a miniature format. Textually identical to the normal magazine issue, these Pony editions were published without advertising.

<sup>2</sup> John "Tex" McCrary, a journalist who joined the Army in a Public Relations role for the duration of the war. After the war, "Tex and Jinx" would popularize the talk show format on both radio and TV.

I do wish they would send some good legitimate shows over. Now that the war is over in these parts, there are plenty of places to stage them. Naturally a legitimate production couldn't come up to the front lines like a simple vaudeville show.

Did I write you that I saw [Roscoe Ates](#), the stuttering comedian, while at the Lido?

I've seen a bunch of movies lately—"Tomorrow the World," "It Happened Tomorrow" with Dick Powell, "Guest in the House," one of the best plays I've seen in a long while with Ann Baxter, Ralph Bellamy, Alan Ladd, and Gail Russell, Olsen and Johnson in "See My Lawyer," "Bowery to Broadway," and "Janie." The last 2 I had seen in the States. Last month I saw "[The Battle of San Pietro](#)," a 45 minute documentary film about that terrible battle south of Rome. If it is shown at home, I'd advise you not to see it. It's too gruesome. Tonight, if it doesn't rain (and it has been off and on all day) we will see "The Conspirators."

Please send some food at any time.

Image 3:

(3) Ziracco, Italy  
July 1, 1945

Tomorrow this Army Education Program is supposed to begin. We are to have it for 2 hours every afternoon. They are giving the courses which the majority of men wanted such as auto mechanics, salesmanship, etc.—nothing very academic. We had our choice of 8 or 10 of these courses so I chose Italian. I don't expect to be over here all my life, but then I will at least be able to follow the librettos at the opera if I learn Italian. That's about the only practical use I can think of for it.

In the mornings (woe is me!) we are to have a regular training program—drill, calisthenics, etc. And every Monday morning a 4-hr. road march is scheduled. Sounds lovely, doesn't it? They told us that this education program was to do away with all that stuff. That's the reason for it's being set up, supposedly. After the last war so many went A.W.O.L. because of military training, and they didn't want to repeat their mistakes. I never believe anything I hear anymore.

As for the 10<sup>th</sup> Division, all we know is what we read in the papers, the latest being the enclosed article.

Passes are also being given to Lake Como and the Italian Riviera, both lovely places.

Maybe I can get out of the road march tomorrow. If not, it shouldn't be that bad. I'm supposed to help write the history of the Signal Co. for the past 6 months.

I've been reading quite a bit about Italy lately. Just finished the article in "Harper's" May issue about "Italian Art Under Shellfire." In it is mentioned the Ponte Vecchio in Florence and the area around it which was totally destroyed by the Jerries<sup>3</sup>. I wrote you before that I had seen all of this.

Also in this new "Life" there is a story on Pisa.

Please send some food at any time.

Image 4:

(4) Ziracco, Italy  
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See that Ed Sullivan wrote that the civilians in the States are getting a big kick out of newsreels showing G.I.'s in amphibious vehicles touring Venice. The British run these "ducks" between Venice and

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<sup>3</sup> Slang for Germans.

Lido and other spots also. A couple of weeks ago the gondoliers went on strike for 5 days, so the British brought in these big invasion barges which now run also between Venice and Lido every hour.

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July 2, 1945

I didn't get to finish last night, but will do so now. The hike was called off probably because of the rain. All kinds of rumors are circulating around here, and none of them sound very good. I won't even bother to repeat any of them because nothing is official and therefore everyone is really confused (which is nothing new for the Army). As I wrote you before, one day we are occupation troops, the next day we are going straight to the Pacific, and the following day we are going to the Pacific via the U.S. And then the cycle starts all over again.

Gen. MacMarney said the 10<sup>th</sup> may occupy Trieste, and Gen. Lear said that all combat troops destined for the Pacific will go by way of the U.S. But the things we hear today don't bear these statements out very well. But nobody knows. The best thing to do is to shut your ears to everything that is said. Only none of us can do that very well, for we are all very human.

Our food here is about the best I've had in the Army. Last night we had wonderful steaks.

Mother, the brownies you send are delicious and keep quite well in spite of the fact that the tops are all off the cans. The sealing wax looks like it is pried off the cans possibly by the censor. I don't see how it could come off otherwise.

Don't forget to send some food.

Image 5:

(5) Ziracco, Italy  
July 1, 1945

I have thoroughly enjoyed everything you have sent. You made some darn good selections.

If Stanley is being shipped to Pearl Harbor, it's probably the first step toward combat. No matter how much I dislike a person I hate to hear of anyone going into combat.

Sid Jr. shouldn't have it so bad (compared to his men). After all he is an officer and they get the best of everything. Of course a bullet doesn't know the difference between an officer and an enlisted man. If it did it wouldn't even think of touching an officer, I can assure you.

How I would love to have those french fried onions! I could eat a mountain of them.

22 pounds is an awful lot to lose. It must be terrific where Bob is. Harry, Jr. <sup>had</sup> better take all the courses he can get. The longer he stays on U.S. soil better off he'll be.

The pineapple juice you are sending will be swell. I bought a can of Dole's at the PX in Venice. I like it very much. You should keep some for yourselves, though.

How come they're sending Lenna way up to Maine? Rather nuts to send a little kid like that so far away.

I hope "[Salome, Where She Danced](#)" comes here.

No I don't think Hitler is dead, either. Probably in hiding somewhere with Eva Braun. I read an article in the Dayton paper concerning Tito by Dorothy Thompson. It was written over here in Klagenfurt.

Grandpa, I'm sorry to hear your "big ben" went on the blink. I didn't think anything could stop that watch.

Please send some food any time you care to.

Image 6:

(6)

Ziracco, Italy

July 2, 1945

Earl Robertson from Dayton was in my company in the 86<sup>th</sup> Division. Did he come home? I didn't know that Frank Sullivan was in the same outfit.

Stan Klein who was also in the 68<sup>th</sup> and now her in the sig. co. is from Columbus, and his home is in the Royal York Apts. He told me <sup>he doesn't</sup> know the Zeigers for he himself only lived there for 2 months prior to entering the Army. Perhaps the Zeigers know his family.

I will write out a couple of V-mails tonight requesting films as you suggested.

How is Harry, Jr. getting along in school? In a way he can consider himself pretty fortunate.

Dad, you are quite welcome for the Father's Day gifts <sup>of</sup> which I knew nothing about and had never seen. I too hope things will soon be different. I am sending you a little ~~paper~~<sup>letter</sup> opener in the shape of the gondola insignia which I managed to procure in Venice.

Mother, you asked me if I would like canned vegetables and soups, but thinks like that are too hard to prepare. I love that boned chicken, cheese, etc.—all the things you have been sending right along. As I said above, your cookies are especially welcome.

Yes, if you have any movie magazines, do send some. If the rain lets up, we'll have a good movie tonight—["Music for Millions."](#)

It's surprising the amount of produce you get from your garden.

I had to laugh when you wrote about telling Dorothy Herbst of my escapades in Verona.

Well, the rain is still coming down. I'll write more "domain" tomorrow.

Love to all of you.

Lovingly,

Jerome, Jr.

Image 7:

(7)

Ziracco, Italy

July 2, 1945

P.S. Can't find the clippings about the 10<sup>th</sup>. You probably read it anyway, though. McMarney said the 10<sup>th</sup> may occupy Trieste. Since then a million different rumors have sprung up.

Also while in Venice I saw the remains of the famous luxury liner, the Conti di Savoia. The Germans blew it up in the harbor there in Sept. 1943 when Italy surrendered. It was supposed to have been one of the most beautiful ships afloat. Just imagine the gay times enjoyed by so many in peacetime aboard that ship while crossing the Atlantic.