

48.

Bombay.

27.7.45.

Darling, Yes indeed - things are looking up. I think I've had all available mail up-to-date - it came yesterday & today & made me a very happy man. Glad to see you've started to number again, baby, but I think your No. 61 is ~~one~~ ~~missing~~ out, unless there's a letter adrift somewhere - however I'll be able to check up in future. And now I suppose there's a lot of answering to do & I guess I'd better open up yours of the 16th Inst. & commence.

If I promise not to worry you for anything else do you think you could make an extra special effort in the camera line for your little boy? I know you're pitching hard for me now, honey, & you can bet I appreciate it, but in one of your recent letters you wrote, very sweetly, that you'd like to sink your bank into something for me & there ain't any other present I want off you than a good camera (if you've delved into prices, you'll know by this time that it's enough too). It really would give me an interest in life out here, & if I had the camera I'd have

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Sufficient incentive to go after the films no matter what the difficulties. Still, I realize you'd try your best in any case so I'll just await a yes or noe from you.

I was very interested in the Little Society Bulletin altho' it seems to have five, then the Case of us. I note it mentions the possible redundancy of E.O.s - acting - in the Ministry, & their reversion to their substantive grades. I'm not very worried about my own case for I feel that 4 or 5 years in even an acting capacity counts for something when considering either confirmation of my E.O. promotion or subsequent promotion in the event of reversion. It seems rather silly to keep me out here doing very little when I'd be useful in my old job, but I don't know whether the C.S. have discussed that or not - I've read nothing about it in the papers. I fear that it's the old game of the people on the spot grabbing the jobs before the new arrive - I read in that Bulletin that the Society are very concerned about their post-war position & they're trying to get a clear picture as soon as possible - when the position is cleared up it will require some very open-minded folks to say that the

job open to acting-promotees (?) to enable them to retain their higher rank should be apportioned so that returning Servicemen have their share. I wonder. Still, as you'd believe, we'd in a good position in any event & I'm very hopeful.

So you had a Storm, huh? And you hid under the sheets! Well what a big baby. You want Ed to get into bed with ya - I'll get under with you. But I have read about it from many sources & I guess it must have been a champion do - a sort of winding-up of all the wisecracks & sneezes that've been going on for 5 years. Perhaps they've picked up now they've ~~had~~ had their fun. The rain has continued unabated & the mud gets thicker every day. They tell me we've got another month of it to come & then it ceases off, until, at the end of September, it ceases until next year. Well I suppose St. Mother Nature will have her way whatever I say, but another month will just about do for my No. 1 suit & I dunno whether the leather wear will stand up to cleaning. I had a look at my pipes the other day & the moss was a

Good $\frac{1}{8}$ " thick! The grass etc at the back has grown to about 3ft in height & if you look at that snag I sent you you'll hardly see any - we haven't wandered about in it for fear of snakes; I don't like them blokes a little bit.

Speaking of the dance, I thought you might be interested in a snag of the Sir Something Hall in which we held the dance (we'll have to fill in the name from that ticket I sent you). I might as well describe the other snags whilst I'm about it. The Metro is the cinema de luxe of Bombay - I think I've mentioned it to you. ~~It~~ Just away to the right of the snag begins one of the most notorious streets in Bombay - out of bounds & it just illustrates that amazing contrast of contrasts that is Bombay. The beggar man cooking at his charcoal stove may be found just outside the most affluent place in town & nobody notices or objects to him. You may step out of the Metro walk a few paces & gaze at an anonymous prostitute sitting in a cage opening on to the street - I've only

Gazed once, I aint that keen on seeing life in the row. The imposing looking building, which you may well imagine to be a town hall, is, in fact, the Town Hall of Bombay inverted into the Sir Alwyn ~~isra~~ Canteen for the Forces - you can't mistake it. "Sir Alwyn ~~isra~~ Canteen" runs right across the top of the volume in letters 3ft high! Getting to know a bit about Bombay now, aintcha dumb?

I know I get a wonderful kick in reading about how much you miss me around the place. I know how chocea you feel, darling, & I don't, repeat do not, get a wonderful kick out of reading, realising how much you get in the dumps, but I feel nice & important to you & your happiness, & that's good to feel thataway, eh sweet? You wait & see, baby - it'll be no time at all before I'm home - things are going along very nicely indeed in the despatching line & you can imagine that I'm hard to please in that matter. Can't say too much, of course, but I'll make that Xmas party yet, with time to spare.

I am ashamed to confess that I haven't been to the dentist, altho I should have the ~~two~~ tartars removed. The trouble is these damned monsoons - I have to go to Chembur camp (the first camp I struck) & I have to walk there! It's no fun in this weather & I prefer to wait until the dry weather comes - which I'll do. That new wisdom tooth of mine has been troubling me for the past two days but it'll gradually grow out & that'll be all more bother.

Parcels. I'm relieved to hear the first of our parcels has arrived, even tho it's not mine. If it takes 10 weeks it'll be another fortnight before the carpets arrive - takes a damned long time, don't it? A card here has had news of the arrival of a parcel of carpets sent 14 days before ours - he sent two 7' x 3' rugs & a small one & his wife only had to pay 28/- tax - good-oh. If you also have the same luck - if it is luck & not the proper thing - I think I can go safely ahead & buy more. I want you to tell me what colours you

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want next + whether you want a large or small one. It pleases me to please you my pretty little poppy, + so I'll leave the show to you - I think I'll work out the size - 10' x 12' or 10' x 10' etc, if it's a "large" carpet you want - because I might buy better bargain if I've got a free hand. Again, if you do decide on a large one per-lease send R 300 - f22.10 @ via the bank for purchase of same - if you merely want small rug I can manage it myself. Including the parcel recently sent with silk, etc, you have 1 shop-sent parcel with food + riggs, 1 carpet parcel, + 2 D.F. parcels. We have just been informed that we can send 24 D.F.s a year, totalling £12 in value! Around the middle of Oct I shall send home parcels to you + the family with Xmas fruit, etc, + hope they get there in time - I might be true to see them arrive how about that, eh? As for shoes, Sweet, don't be too hopeful about them - I went into Bombar yesterday afternoon on official business (narrative following) + had the opportunity to look in the best shops only open in the day-time. I'm

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darned if I could see anything suitable
- the Hollywood effect in these clothes. But,
Somehow, they didn't seem to be your shoes
- too Hollywood if you know what I mean.
Also, they only make 'em to suit tropical
weather + I'm certain they wouldn't stand
up to an English summer. But I'll keep
on trying +, maybe, I get something
that hits the spot. I'll also remember
about the size, but that also complicates
things because, as far as I can judge,
the Indian women have about size 2 feet
- Gaud knows how the European women
get on.

I went into Bombay to meet
the Welfare Officer who'd gotten an
option on a guitar in a musical store
wherein he went to meet. He wanted
me to inspect it but beyond that I
didn't see what we could progress. Did
I tell you that I'd applied for a guitar
on loan for camp entertainment? This
was the result - I imagined that there
was a pool somewhere that could be
tapped for supplying the troops with
musical instruments free, but not in India.
This shop was offering an inferior

instrument for £11 + the welfare office,
 whilst prepared to contribute 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % out of
 some fund or other, wanted this camp
 to supply the rest! We only have a
 Canteen Fund & it requires a meeting
 of the Canteen Committee to allocate any
 part of it for camp amenities - I couldn't
 see them giving money to buy me a
 guitar even tho' it would have been
 entertainment for a portion of the personnel.
 Anyway, the Welfare bloke didn't turn
 up, & after having a look at the guitar
 I wouldn't have recommended purchase
 if he had turned up, & if I had I
 don't know where the money would have
 come from - altogether, a fiasco. So I
 had a meal - it was about 5 pm - &
 went to the Regal to see Abbot & Woodhouse
 in something about Coeds - not very
 good I thought. The whole day
 was very uneventful & I came back
 to camp feeling very deflated.

The latest returns seem to indicate
 a landslide for the Labour Party, eh.
 Surprise, surprise!! He, I say nuffin,
 just wait & see what happens - they'd

better be good, that's all I will say.

Tomnight's a "musical" evening in the Beer Garden - it is also a beer night. It maybe that I shall get very jolly during the night, but it won't be through drinking beer - or 2 pints per week per man the chance of getting intoxicated are reduced accordingly. In any case I got my two pints for this week on Monday & all the got ~~are~~ memories. But I shall be around the piano in good company & the thought of the drought shouldn't affect me.

Bye for now baby - remember all your Daddy's told you about how much he loves you, & keep all your energies for when he comes back - you'll need 'em.

Love + kisses

Pa.

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WELLING
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Received
H.S.
6.8.55