

82.

Bombay.
12.10.45.

Dearest,

In the absence of any mail for days 'n days 'n days I'm now forced back on my own resources to find material for The Tri-Weekly Chronicle. Not this time may I steal ideas from your delightful prosies - I'm all alone in a literary merry-go-round. Not that I can't do it - don't you go thinking that I'm so mentally defunct that inspiration is dead - I'm not short of a pirate or two. You see.

Yesterday was the weekly make-a-mend, & following my now-established custom, I went ashore - to Bombay, of course. Not to spend money, mind you - I can go ashore without wallet-bashing & I can look in shops without wanting the moon. I took all my chips with me - never can tell - might run into trouble - might need it in an emergency.

All five went ashore - none of us were going to spend - oh no.

We booked for the New Empire last Saturday & there was no need to waste time lining up at the box-office. There was little need for anything at all really - we weren't going anywhere particular & we weren't going to spend any money

Window queuing - that's what we'd do. Look at the shops & sort out what we'd like to buy & what we might buy when we get out U.K. draft. No harm in that - pass the afternoon away pleasantly. The first shop was Laffan which is a men's outfitters comparable to a Burlington Arcade epotium. It's a high class joint. The day's window display had shirts as its theme - you will remember I'm going to bring back some shirts with me. They looked fairly expensive, but there would be no harm at all in stepping inside to look around, (picture five husky mates stepping in the B.A.

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Exposition to look around & the disgust on the Chief Pookah's face when they tell him what a bloody swindler he is for charging 4th 6^d for a tie!). We utterly disorganised the tenor of the shop, but I did get one lesser Pookah to attend to my requirements - yes, pigeon, by that time the shirts had got me - I can't help it, it's the way we mammals put our caps on. Considering the stature of the place, & the quality of the stuff, I don't think I did too badly with a collar attached, poplin affair @ Rs 4.88 - I would have bought two, maybe three, but, luckily for the wallet, I wasn't sure of my neck-size & took a size 17 for trial, (it's a little on the large size - 16½ would be ample - but I don't object to lots of room round a collar).

There's probably a psychological reason for it - I think it might be a thing in the Bombay air which has practically everything else in it - but see the purse

has been opened to let loose cash then
no power on Earth can close it again
to prevent more cash going. The rot had
set in, but, helpless as I was, I yet
retained sufficient willpower to pass the
carpet shop, & I controlled the terrible
urge so that the urge of spending
would be directed as to my future
advantage.

I bought socks - fine silk yarn
socks with blue & brown designs &
the Bombay honey & greenies laughed. I
bought vests to cover my shivering
body, (it ain't shivering here but it
will in England), & the Greenies
chortled. I bought a pound of butter
& they split their sides - they died, of
course, & I was able to go about
for the rest of the afternoon without
spending a single anna, which only
goes to show.

The show was J. Cagney in
"Blood on the Sun" which kept the
stars & stripes flying high. Quite
enjoyable even if only for Sylvia
Sydney who had developed into a

Class A Glamour Girl. Can I consider myself to be well up in the latest films, darling? Next-Saturday - tomorrow - we go to see "The Thin Man Comes Home" which, I believe, is quite recent.

Latest demob. news from the Far East? The Japs have started to go back to the U.K. - I believe they're actually on their way out of the Service I have heard that the Japs will be rolling in 3 weeks time! Geo. (31) is a gibbering idiot, a stage which I shall reach in about 5 weeks from now. We, in this camp, are dis-satisfied with the apparent slackness in looking after our demobbing, & view with bitterness the efforts that each man has to make to get his U.K. draft as his number comes up. Maybe we're wrong, but we can only judge by what our eyes tell us.

Rumours concerning the closing down of this base still persist. The

latest estimate is early December. But still no news whether, if it does close, we'll be shipped back to O.K. or not. Another rumour says we'll be taken over by the R.I.M. - in that case we'll be paid R 90 extra per month. I'd rather go back to England.

I'm away to the camp cinema tonight, sweetie, so it's short & sweet. As for the "sweet" part you know what I'm going to say, don't you, dearest. I love you - it's as simple as that. I don't have to read some of those romantic novels to get to know what it's all about - I know what I know & what I know is

I love you
L.S.

Dr. Arthur Service



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Received

18.10.45