

LT FdE. Balderton
American Field Service

19 October
1945

Agg. 8, Hobart House
London SW
England

Dear Dad,

There should have received my cable by now, with appropriate astonishment. The fact of it is that we were whisked out of India very suddenly indeed; I left on the 6th and arrived at an airfield in Somerset on the evening of the 13th! We flew all the way in a converted Liberator, crammed down - twenty of us - into the bomb bay during each hop. The route was interesting: Madras to Karachi to Lydda (Palestine) to Castel Benito (Tripolitania) to Britain. The desolate wastes ^{around} of the Persian Gulf and the desert area east of it are the most forbidding sights I've seen in a long time. It was good to have 36

hours in Lydda, and I managed to
pay a day's visit to Jerusalem, which
I had been unable to do two years
ago during my stay in Gaza.

It was arranged before we left
India that I was to stay on for some
days at the London office (address above)
until Ward arrived. Shortly after ^(1 day)
here our representative - Capt. Robert
Munphy - dislocated his knee very
badly and was sent off to the
hospital for a two month stay. So I'm
OC England until Ward gets here,
and a fine bunch of a job it is!
Dealing with the most involved travel
matters of Special Volunteers, who want
to return for residence to France, or
what have you, is the most enervating
job. New groups of men arrive every
evening at the Air Trooping Center, and
I usually hustle out to meet them;
to make it easier to keep track of new
arrivals I am living at The Trooping

Mess.

How does all this add up for a quick home-coming? It's hard to be sure, but I firmly expect to be home before Christmas, and very probably a good deal before. This job doesn't look as if it will retard my departure from Berlin, since nobody is getting off for home yet on the regular drafts. Since I have to be here in any case waiting it's just as well that I can be of some use.

I was sorry to cause them confusion in money matters. The 100 dollars they sent me on 3 October is still credited to me in my account and I will be able to draw on it when the paymaster has arranged all the transfers of funds to London. In the interim I'm a bit short, hence cabled them for fifty dollars on the 17th. London is an extremely expensive place to live just now, but fortunately I am staying at a mess

run by the Air Trooping Center, and
have only the men fees to pay. Ordinary
one room bed and breakfast accommodation
cost a guinea a night. I've been
too busy to be on the town very
much, which is also just as well.
A double Scotch costs 6 shillings
in a good bar, so it's fortunate my
tooth in that line is not over-developed!

22 Bob arrived the evening of the 20th
with Ward, and we had a good
dinner at the Savoy. His arrival
decreases my worry considerably; the
ordinary hazards of flying are accent-
uated somewhat by the distance over-
land & water and the run-down con-
dition of some of the planes. Bob has gone
down to the big camp in Wales for the
present.

More later. I'll get this off so
there can be some notion of what goes
on. Write above address for both Bob and
me. 30 & a half ounce postage air mail.
Take care and wish love to all.

Get a big Turkey for Thanksgiving!

Very Sincerely
Frank