

30 August 1945

Ingolstadt, Germany

Dear Folks:

You were very correct about hearing that the Danube is very swift here at Ingolstadt. Its a very fast proposition, and strictly nothing to go swimming in, except on a very limited scale. Certain shallows are available for bathing and swimming. Sonner, a born and bred Ingolstadter, is trying to convince me of the advisability of going out every morning at six to bath in the river, an activity to which he attributes his vigour and health. It sounds so fascinating, that I am tempted to try it; but again, the hour involved is very prohibitive.

Which reminds me that I should describe the "Herr Sonner" to you; the main source of many hundred of Counter-Intelligence captures and arrests. He is a restless watchdog of the present administration. When we overnight together, he is always gone very early in the morning, for his bath presumably, and also to make some calls. These arrest calls he invariably makes unarmed, and by himself. He has regaled us with narrations of some of them, and they are mighty interesting. By now, all the Nazis in town know him, by sight and by reputation. I have made some of the visits with him, for the sake of observation, and the general procedure is about the same in all of them. Because he is a born townsman, he is acquainted with all the people, and addresses many of them by their first names. "gooten morgen, Maria." "Gooten Morgen, Max." Then a minute of niceties, in which nobody is fooled as to the major purpose. "I have heard that your son has come back from East Prussia. I'd like to talk to him." "What about?" "Oh, general things." And he often sweeps into the bedroom to drag the poor fellow out of bed, and drag him off to wherever he is going. Quite a few of them are war criminals, who know that they will never come back, and there are touching scenes as they fumbling and tremblingly dress, clumsily say good bye to the children and frau, who by now are thoroughly unhappy about their man's once profitable connexion with the Party. "When they

see me coming, they start to shake", said Max modestly. There is no doubt that he gets a huge satisfaction out of his position, and he never tires of recounting how he laid low during the Hitler regime, and observed and noted without even being thought of as an Anti-Nazi.

In his early days, as a boy, he and his brothers were notorious rowdies and hell-rakes. After the last war he became a communist, and is still of that conviction, tho not a Bolshevik, and indeed was the one who denounced the secret communist meetings that were being held under our noses a month ago, under the sinister auspices of Red Army officers and political commissars. He is really a cracker jack fellow.

For some reason he has taken a tremendous liking to me, and has showered me with gifts, including this beautiful wrist watch that I am now wearing. (The watch you gave got dirty and had to be cleaned; one week after it was cleaned the wind blew the window open one night, blew the curtain out and knocked a vase and my watch off the radio. I can 't make up my mind to take it to one of these watchmakers. Upon noticing for a week that I had no watch on, he got me this one.) His and Runte's latest gift to Brady and me, is this Summer House in the Forest, which was "leased" by Sonner for us from the wife of the Nazi Party organizer for Greece and Turkey. The organizer himself was arrested by Sonner earlier, and is now awaiting trial as a War Criminal. I have some photos of Sonner and Runte which I am having developed.

Love,

Bob