

AUTOTRASPORTI
DITTA ALDO CORTELLI
Casella 229
TRIPOLI

Received
3/15/43

19088
Pte. R. T. Street,
26 Bu. H. Q.
2 N. Z. Div.,
M. E. F.
3 March, 1943.

Dear Mum & Dad,

Since I last wrote to you, we have packed up & shifted on once more, & are now somewhere in a new country - Tunisia. I am writing this letter in the shade of a large olive tree: there is a little clump of them here with green grass, & yellow & purple wild flowers growing in profusion. The day is cloudless & quite warm - I am clad only in my shorts. In the distance can be heard the sound of the enemy's gunfire. We are a fair way from it here, however.

Well, I mentioned in my last letter to you all about our show "Thumbs up" which we put on in the Governor's Palace for five nights running. Each night we had a packed room, & the last two performances were given in the big theatre in town, the "Mirochese" which was packed on both occasions.

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This theatre is first class, built specially for sound, & can seat one thousand six hundred people. As I said before, I was the female impersonator of our show & was made up by Wally Brictor, the noted female impersonator of the "Kino concert Party" which is now in Tripoli. Wally spent an hour on my face alone & when he was finished, I looked like some screen star. Even my best friends - didn't know me. Our "melodrama" - "Poor but honest" went over in great style. There was the villain, complete with curling moustache, cane, black cloak & every time he appeared the audience hissed & booed. There was the hero - a simple, country lad called Harold; the baby (one of our chaps clad in napkins with a huge safety pin & nothing else) & I was here the heroine.

The street scene was excellent, with small pieces of white paper fluttering down for snow, & with the stage illuminated by blue lights. I was sorry when the show came to an

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end, as it was such a change from the usual
army routine. You would be surprised at the
talent in our units. We had a first class
violinist, several first class singers & a profes-
-sional pianist. We had a concert grand
piano to play on.

Each night after the show, we had supper
put on for us at the Y. M. C. A. It made a good
finish to the evening.

Did I tell you about the air raid which
came in the middle of one of our performances at
the Palace. The show went on in spite of the noise
of the anti-aircraft guns, & when a big bomb
-dropped near the waterfront, the palace rocked as
if in an earthquake. However, the few bombs that
were dropped caused no damage.

A few days ago, we discovered that beneath
the house we were living in, were four rooms.
The doorway leading to them had been roughly
concreted up, but it didn't take long to knock
a hole in it & there were steps leading down

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to the rooms beneath. They were full of books & clothes, crockery & goodness knows what else. We spent an interesting time "nosing" around to see what was there.

I have sent Dad two parcels of books & although they are in Italian, the photos will explain themselves. Hope they reach you safely.

Well, I will finish now & get some sleep. We travelled all day yesterday all night non-stop, so I'm feeling a bit tired. Otherwise I am A.O.K.

Hope these few lines find you all well in Nelson. Today is like a typical Nelson day - sunny & warm.

Love from your son,

Rewair