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The Riviera of Southern France

Monday, September 18th, 1944

Dear Gordon,

Your latest issue of the alumni magazine just arrived, and it was certainly welcome. Muhlenberg seems to be going places, and the success of the college is good news to all of us.

Sometime ago, Denny Beattie and I took a three day trip to the city of Cannes -- grab your map of France. It is a super resort town of the world famous Riviera. Special permission is necessary to get into the town, and as a result, few men in uniform -- particularly Americans -- tramp the streets. The population all along the Riviera is strongly blended with Italian blood, so that we have had very little contact with ~~any~~ what you might call a real French community. The town of C--- is an exception! High class French money bags established themselves here, years ago, and those who outlasted the German occupation, still have plenty of green lettuce to throw around.

Beattie and I quartered ourselves in one of the old time swank hotels, located directly across the street from the sandy beach. In peacetime, rooms in the Hotel M--- began at \$10. a day. Ah, it was seventh heaven! A bathtub, and hot water; a turn of the faucet, and water ran out; push a button, and the toilet flushed. None of these exclusive luxuries do we enjoy aboard an LCT.

The first night of our stay, I was awaked from a sound sleep by the shooting in the streets. At the least, I

expected German snipers. The shooting continued, and was broken by an occasional explosion -- we were in no position to do anything, and as no one else in the hotel seemed to be concerned (officers or civilians) we both settled down to an evening's rest.

The next morning at breakfast, we found the answer to all of the fracas. Surely ~~we~~ you have heard of the FFI. It is the French underground, now come out of hiding. The FFI has established a curfew ^{in C-} and anyone on the streets between the hours of 11 P.M., and 3 A.M. is apt to be shot at. Many Germans ~~who~~ discarded their uniforms for civilian garb and hid in French cities. The curfew has trapped more than just a few of them.

The FFI can be seen almost everywhere. In a large town M---, I heard stories that no less than three men, leading FFI groups, have set themselves up as the mayor of the town. However, gossip around here is very unreliable. (Would you believe it that a week ago, a lot of us here believed that Russia had declared war on Japan. Somebody told somebody else that he had heard it on the radio, and the news spread like wild fire. After several days of listening to the radio for confirmation of the story, the rotten rumor was tossed aside as a pure lie.)

The next day we set out on a buying spree, but not until we had stopped in the hotel barber shop for a shave. The face scraping went fine, and at the end of the ordeal, the English speaking barber said "Massage" to me in such a

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