

I'm thinking of it they took no bone out
for November (it simplified things to do it
that way) so one will not be coming along
for that month!

The two captains who are going with
us to Japan reported in today none the worse
for their experience of being forced down in
Missouri.

As yet we do not know our
overseas address. They still don't know the
war is over and keep it secret until we
leave!

No word either concerning the
promised promotions However once we are
settled I'm confident they'll try to do some-
thing about it.

Guess that's the news for the
moment.

Oh, yes, the camera arrived from
Grauville so I ought to have some pictures
of our adventures

So long, folks, write often
when you finally get my address.

Love,

Dick

230th day in the Army

Sat. forenoon Dec. 8, 1945
E. of Ogden, Utah

Dear Folks: Heading west across the snowy landscape of far western Wyoming. This is the first time I've seen this country in the winter and it certainly has a different and very spectacular type of beauty. We have seen quite a few sheep grazing but what they're eating other than snowballs is a mystery to me.

Our train is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours late. It left Chicago 2 hours late so we're not doing as badly as it sounds. I've not been, however, so very favorably impressed with the Union Pacific railroad - at least not by this train which is called "the Challenger". Just a few minutes ago a Greyhound bus went past us on the highway along side - this in spite of the fact that the road ^{appears to be} ~~is~~ quite slippery.

Looks now as though we'll arrive at San Francisco about noon tomorrow. Hamilton Field is about 30 miles out of the city.

Neither of our Captains is now with us. We left one in Washington and the other in Chicago. The latter decided to stay over until Friday in Chicago so that he could see his

girl friend who was coming down from St. Paul.
He's doing it very unofficially so we'll sorta have
to "cover up" for him!

I slept very well Thursday night but
last night it was colder than the dickens and
two blankets weren't enough. The heat from the
steam pipes just doesn't get up to the upper
berths! Its real warm in the car now though!

Sorta funny to look out at all this
snow and to think that before the week ^{ahead} is
over we'll be in Hawaii.

Larry Craig happened to see one of
the fellows from the Wright Field hydroponics unit
in Chicago on Thursday. He told Larry that the
whole hydroponics program has folded up! So now
we wonder what would have happened to us had
we stayed at Wright Field. But then that's
over and there's no use even guessing!

After you have my address write
often. Send John's address too will you?

Getting close to Ogden will mail
this there!

So long, folks

Don't work too hard at
that trimming, Dad!

Love,
Dick

Hamilton Field Calif
Thurs. Dec 13, 1945

Dear folks:

Still haven't taken off and it looks like we will not be until about ^{next} Monday. The three of us and one of the Captains are all ready to go but the other Captain who arrived Tuesday afternoon had not had all the necessary shots and he can't finish them up until Monday.

Larry and I have been staying with Ed. and his wife at the home of some friends of theirs down near Palo Alto (50 miles from the Field). And what a home it is — a house in about the 25000 dollar class I'd guess, four acres of beautifully landscaped ground, a Japanese house man and a Japanese gardener etc. etc. And the funny part is we're here all alone — the people who own the house live during the winter in San Francisco in an apartment. What a life!

We've had a chance to look around San Francisco quite a bit. Had dinner at fisherman's wharf Tues. nite and ate at an Italian restaurant last nite. We don't have to go out to the field today — will probably go in to Palo Alto and visit the Stanford University campus.

If you send mail to me at A.P.O. 4260 San Francisco, California it will reach me. That however is not our permanent A.P.O. number — we'll not know it until we reach Tokyo. + six cent ^{air mail} stamp is all that is needed for A.P.O. mail.

That's all for the moment.

Send John's address!

Love, Dick

Monday Afternoon
Dec 17, 1945

Dear Folks! Still here and it looks very much as though we may be here for 2 or 3 days yet! The one Captain finally got his medical clearance this morning but now there is no plane available. All the planes have been loaded down with #1 priority cargo and passengers and were travelling on a #3 priority. I hardly dare think of the fact that they limited our furloughs to ten days because there was such a need for haste!

Ed Ekland's wife left yesterday evening for Los Angeles so now we're without an automobile. We'll have to stick around the field pretty closely.

We've certainly been having nice weather though. Yesterday and today are both sunny and bright - temperatures in the 50's! Paper tells us today that winter has really come your way.

I sent a package off by express to the farm for Marian today - hope it arrives by Christmas. Suppose I should have gotten it off sooner! I'm sorry her vacation will be so short. Got some letters from her today - she sounds as though she's enjoying her work. Hope its true!

A lot of U.S.O. Camp Show people have just gotten aboard a plane here - have certainly seen a lot of them since we've been hanging around here - they don't look very much like "show people" should look!

Not much else to write I guess. If I hear when we're leaving I'll send a night letter to Marian and hope they call you.

So long, Folks

Love, Dick

244th day

8 months in

Hamilton Field, California
December 22, 1945

Dear Mother and Dad,

Well here we sit and it looks more and more like we'll be a sittin' for a while yet. We found out yesterday that for some reason the theatre command in Japan has stopped all movement of #3 priority passengers - that's us!! In fact for a while no one was moving to Japan not even #1 passengers. As I say no reason is given for their action. So all we can do is wait until a telegram comes from the theatre releasing us - When that happens we'll move out quickly because we're pretty well toward the top of the #3 list!

We haven't been doing much this week. We were put to work on Wednesday helping with some filing in one of the offices here at the terminal. There's not enough work to keep us very busy so we have time for letter writing etc. Suppose we might as well have something to keep us occupied - but they've not put the Capitans to work and they - the Capitans - have really been dodging adroitly. It's the same old story - the gravy goes to the officers or so it seems!

By the time this reaches you Christmas will be over. I'm sorry Marian had such a short vacation. I can't understand why the President didn't at least give them the day after Christmas off so that the people who went visiting would not have to leave to return on Christmas day. I think President Brown feels that the faculty at Deinson is a little sensitive about the rising costs of administration during the past few years and if he allowed the administrative personnel too much time off it would look more and more as though quite so many were not needed! I hope, Mother, that your gift to Marian and mine were not the same. I meant to write to you to tell you I had in mind getting her a cosmetic kit but by the time I had actually decided to buy it, it was too late to let you know. I'm wondering if mine arrived on time I sent it from here via express last Monday - but with rail transportation as badly snagged as it is I'm very much afraid that it will not have arrived. If it does come too late - you'll send it on to Marian, won't you?

We have not decided what we will do if we're here for Christmas - probably nothing different than usual. This will just have to be one Christmas that doesn't count. Certainly hope that we can make up for it next year.

Boy, we've certainly had a couple of rainy days here - it looks as though it wants to clear up today but on Thursday and Friday it really came down. From what I read in the papers you've been having a bit of weather yourself.

By the way I got your letter and was glad to have it. Hope that John is able to make it down on Christmas for a little while. I think it's wise to have a lawyer - those divorces can be tricky affairs.

Later now - well it decided it wanted to rain some more and believe me it's really coming down.

I just finished writing a letter to John - thought he might like to hear what's been happening to me after being in on the beginning of the story at Thanksgiving.

Do you discovered some "Southern Comfort" did you, Dad? What do you think of it? Sorta always went up my nose!

Too bad about John Robinson but it had to come sooner or later - he had a good long life! Bet it was a big funeral. Clip the story out of the Lawton Leader and send it to me. Did you put that story in about me?

Mother I certainly appreciate your sending the jelly to the Millers in Washington and there was no hurry about it at all. They'll enjoy it I know.

Guess I'm about at the end of my rope for this time.

An announcement just came over the loudspeaker wanting someone to share a roomette on a pullman leaving tonight for Chicago - Wow would I like to be the one.

Happiest of New Years!

To long now, folks
Love Dick

Monday Morning, Dec. 24, 1945

Dear Mother and Dad:

There is no work to do right at the moment around the office where we do our filing so I'm going to borrow a typewriter and pound out a few lines to you folks.

It's raining here again this morning. We had a few hours of sunny weather yesterday, but apparently it was too good to last. However, this is the season of the year when rain is to be expected in the San Francisco vicinity. The moisture is turning the grass nice and green and the hills which rise in back of the airport are becoming more and more attractive.

One reason for writing this letter is to tell you that yesterday I packed a box and sent it off to you express collect. I think however you'll agree with me when you see the contents that the effort and cost were worthwhile. You see the barracks in which we are living is inhabited mostly by fellows who are just passing through here on their way to their separation centers. The boys don't much care what happens to their clothes and equipment and they have a tendency to throw a lot of it away. Well, yesterday a bunch of them moved out and after they had left I did a little "salvaging". My haul netted me two Army blankets, a couple of pairs of trousers, a couple of towels, a pistol belt, a canteen cover and canteen - and a few other items as you shall see when you open the box. Mother, I'd appreciate it a lot if you'd wash out the stuff which is washable (can you do the blankets?) and stow it away with the rest of our junk. Use the blankets of course if you want to! Perhaps I'm silly to mess around with the stuff and to ask you to mess around with it too, but it's stuff we'll be able to use sometime on camping trips or field trips. And yesterday I had nothing else to do anyway!!

It was awful nice to hear your voice yesterday, Mother. That call certainly went through in a hurry - it took less than five minutes. Surprised me because Larry Craig had to wait almost two hours to get a call through to New York City! I had called Ypsi earlier thinking that Marian would be there. I had figured that she'd probably come out to the farm today - (Monday) and would not be going back to Ypsi. I thought she had to be back at work on Wednesday. Glad she didn't have to, however, because by going back to Ypsi she was able to avoid the long farm-to-Granville drive. With public transportation lines as badly jammed as they are I'm certainly glad we hung onto George - Marian seems to have a big time with him! Isn't the train passenger jam awful? I read about the trouble in Chicago and suppose you have read how terrible it is here. There are fellows sitting on ships in San Francisco Bay who have been there for three or four days since arriving home and yet their separation centers may be no farther away than Los Angeles. More of the Army's stupidity -- they made all sorts of provision to bring them across the ocean and forgot, apparently, all about the fact that they'd have to get them away from the port where they landed!

As you notice from the difference in blackness of letters above I've had to change typewriters. One of the secretaries wanted to use the one I was using!

Golly, I was glad to hear that John was able to get down to the farm for Christmas - at least I hope he was able to stay.

We still don't know when we're going to be able to get away from here. Yesterday though we did find out that number three priority people can leave if there is room for them on any of the planes leaving - for the last few days we would not have been allowed to leave even if there had been room - for some reason the theatre command had prohibited the ~~the~~ movement^{of * 3}. Yesterday some of the U.S. Geological Survey people arrived here to await shipment - they're on a number three priority also. They grew a little discouraged when we told them we had been waiting here for two weeks. I think, however, we're quite apt to get away within the next two or three days

(How many times previously have it said that) because one of the things which was holding us up was the fact that they were shipping a lot of mail which travels on a number one priority. Now that Christmas is almost over the mail should diminish in quantity. Guess I told you that another thing which was in our way was a great number of U.S.C. show people. Haven't seen as many of them around these past couple of days!

Our Captains have thought of trying to get us a better priority, but by the time they could arrange for it we'll probably be shipped out. To get a better priority requires telegraphing Washington who in turn must cable the theatre then the theatre cables Washington and Washington telegraphs us - you can readily understand why that procedure would take a long time.

We've been talking to some of the fellows who have come from Tokyo and from what they tell us we should be quite comfortable once we arrive there. They say that the enlisted men attached to Headquarters are well housed and very well fed. According to one fellow's story they even have Japanese servants waiting on table in the mess hall. Hope the stories are true, but we're taking the pessimistic view and not building our hopes too high. Am glad we're not going to Manila - from what we hear that's just about the worst place in the world! Guess the Japanese completely wrecked that city and the Filipinos are not doing very much to try to get it back in shape.

Although we've not seen very much of the Captains these past few days, we think they are "allright" guys and we should have a lot of fun with them. We think they'll stick up for us and that's pretty important because an officer can do quite a lot for a person. We're quite confident that they'll do all they possibly can to get a promotion for us - hope so anyway!

Am at a loss to know what to write now so guess I'll close for this time. Be on the look out for the express package which should be getting there in a week or ten days, and thanks for taking care of the contents for me.

Write often - only one letter since I've been here - that's not enough!

Happy New Year!

Love,

Dick

Harmon Field, I. of Guam
Monday Dec 31, 1945

Dear Mother and Dad:

Well we're this far - and when I stop to think of it "this far" is a really long ways. I can't remember when last I wrote to you - did I write from Hawaii? But at any rate here's how we've been travelling.

<table border="0"> <tr><td>Left Hamilton Field</td><td>Wednesday Dec. 26</td></tr> <tr><td>Arrived Hickam Field, Hawaii</td><td>Thursday Dec. 27</td></tr> <tr><td>Left Hickam Field,</td><td>Friday Dec. 28</td></tr> <tr><td>Arrived Kwajalein</td><td>Saturday Dec. 29</td></tr> <tr><td>Left Kwajalein</td><td>Saturday Dec. 29</td></tr> <tr><td>Arrived Guam</td><td>Saturday Dec. 29</td></tr> </table>	Left Hamilton Field	Wednesday Dec. 26	Arrived Hickam Field, Hawaii	Thursday Dec. 27	Left Hickam Field,	Friday Dec. 28	Arrived Kwajalein	Saturday Dec. 29	Left Kwajalein	Saturday Dec. 29	Arrived Guam	Saturday Dec. 29	<table border="0"> <tr><td>2:00 p.m.</td><td>San Francisco time</td></tr> <tr><td>2:00 a.m.</td><td>Honolulu time</td></tr> <tr><td>2:45 a.m.</td><td>{ actual flying time time 14 hrs 30 min</td></tr> <tr><td>" "</td><td>" "</td></tr> <tr><td>12:30 p.m.</td><td>Kwajalein time</td></tr> <tr><td>2:45 p.m.</td><td>{ flying time 11 hrs 15 min</td></tr> <tr><td>9:00 p.m.</td><td>" "</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>{ flying time 8 hrs 15 min</td></tr> </table>	2:00 p.m.	San Francisco time	2:00 a.m.	Honolulu time	2:45 a.m.	{ actual flying time time 14 hrs 30 min	" "	" "	12:30 p.m.	Kwajalein time	2:45 p.m.	{ flying time 11 hrs 15 min	9:00 p.m.	" "		{ flying time 8 hrs 15 min
Left Hamilton Field	Wednesday Dec. 26																												
Arrived Hickam Field, Hawaii	Thursday Dec. 27																												
Left Hickam Field,	Friday Dec. 28																												
Arrived Kwajalein	Saturday Dec. 29																												
Left Kwajalein	Saturday Dec. 29																												
Arrived Guam	Saturday Dec. 29																												
2:00 p.m.	San Francisco time																												
2:00 a.m.	Honolulu time																												
2:45 a.m.	{ actual flying time time 14 hrs 30 min																												
" "	" "																												
12:30 p.m.	Kwajalein time																												
2:45 p.m.	{ flying time 11 hrs 15 min																												
9:00 p.m.	" "																												
	{ flying time 8 hrs 15 min																												

Total: 34 hours

Total miles: 6400 approx.

The above is a record of the trip to here; the last leg now is from here to Tokyo a distance of 1580 miles which will take us 8 hrs. That means then the total trip will require 42 hours of flying time and the distance travelled will be 7980 miles!

We didn't expect to be here today - fully expected to leave last night. In fact three of our party of five did leave - Larry Craig and I were left behind. It seems there wasn't room on last night's plane for all of us and our name happened to be at the bottom of the list - the passenger official didn't know we were supposed to stay together - and so we were cut off. It looks now as though we'll get away tonight around midnight.

Yesterday we had an interesting day looking around this island which is of course our greatest base in this far western Pacific area. You can't possibly imagine the tremendous quantity of equipment which there is at this place nor could you imagine without seeing it how greatly the face of the island has been changed by building airports and roads - many of them multiple lane highways - and barracks and docks etc. etc. Believe me it's a tax payer's nightmare!

Dad, I'm enclosing a little souvenir I picked up yesterday. You may have thought that this particular plant grew only in Van Buren Co. Mich. but you see it is not so. I could have plucked the same souvenir in Hawaii or even on remote Kwajalein!

We of course have been having a very interesting time but I as yet can't make it seem real. Can't imagine being so far from home and can't believe we're actually seeing the places we've read about so frequently. Yesterday we saw the little native village of Agaña where a lot of fighting took place when our forces recaptured this island from the Japs. It's hard to believe that the ruined church and houses and other buildings had once been intact and had been destroyed by shell fire from Naval guns. Hard to believe that scars along the ^{rock} wall rising in back of the village were made by exploding shells when our forces were trying to get Jap snipers who had "holed up" in caves.

Am not going to start another page right now. Marian will send you my letters with all the details.

Jan 1, 1946

So Happy New Year, folks - It'll be three o'clock in the afternoon here when you hear the whistles blow where you are! So long, Love Dick

December 26, 1945
9:50 p.m. San Francisco time

Dear Mother and Dad,

We're probably about 1500 miles out from San Francisco and are at elevation 8000 feet. It's simply impossible to make it seem real. A person tends to look out the windows every now and then and expects to see houses and gas stations and lights of passing cars - instead only the stars gleam and from where I sit I can see the dull red glow of the hot exhaust stack of one of the engines - it's proper for it to be red hot I understand so don't worry.

What a trip this has been so far! We took off at 2:00 p.m. exactly. For two or three hours there were clouds above and below us but as I say, the stars are gleaming now. We should arrive at Hickam Field (5 miles from Honolulu) about four o'clock tomorrow morning (six hours from now) but that will be 1:30 a.m. Honolulu time (7:00 a.m. your time). As we understand it our route from Hickam Field is to Johnston Island, Kwajalein atoll (in the Marshalls), Guam, Manila, Okinawa, Tokyo. Yes, we're really going the long way round - this pleases because we'll have a chance to see a lot more than if we went from Hickam to Johnston to Wake to Marcus to Japan! A plane going that way is about an hour behind us but of course they'll beat us there by a couple of days. Perhaps more because we're apt to be held over for a few hours at our various stops!

This plane^{called a C54 - 4 engines} is really something. The cabin has 40 seats (that makes the interior considerably larger than the inside of a Greyhound bus - it's not as large a plane, however, as the one we went in at Wright Field) There are only 16 passengers aboard - there are 9 crew members 3 pilots, a radio man, a navigator, an engineer, and 3 flight clerks (one is a WAC). 3 members are extra - they're just making the trip for practice.

We had a very nice ^{hot} dinner about six o'clock served to us in our seats by the flight clerks. It was really something.

Riding the plane is very smooth. Because there is no jerking, reading and writing is very much easier than

on a train. There isn't too much noise - I wouldn't say it is quiet though and you can feel the vibration when you lean on the seat arm.

I've written a long letter to Marian which she'll send to you describing the trip in great detail so I'll not write it all over again.

^{just before we left} By the way I sent another box of "loot" off to you today, so be on the lookout for it.

Well we're glad to be on our way at last and the trip has been so exciting so far that we haven't become fully aware that we've really left the country (good old U.S.A.) for no telling how long. That very sobering realization will come to us later without a doubt. But what lies ahead should really be very interesting and it will all be a very valuable experience.

I had a very nice Christmas yesterday thanks to these two Denison "kids". They treated me royally and we had a great time talking things over. They even fixed up a Christmas sock for me - so old Santa found me after all! They've had a hard time finding any friends who are very much to their liking so I really think they were just about as happy to have me there as I was to be there. They're really both swell people! I'm sorry I didn't know sooner that they were at the field!

And now I must write the Harveys a "bread and butter" letter so I can mail it at Hickam.

Goodnight, Mother and Dad - please don't worry about me any more than you can help. I'll be all right - I'm sure I will.

Will send my address as quickly
as I can!

Love,
Dick

257th day

Ww 1

Tokyo, Japan
January 4, 1946

Dear Mother and Dad,

First day at work at the office and since no one has given me any work to do I'll look busy by writing this letter.

Yes, here we are at long last. We arrived Tuesday morning; but because that was a holiday, we were not able to get settled down. We were assigned a temporary place to sleep for Tuesday night. Wednesday morning we all got together and found out pretty well what the dope was. Our two captains are not going to be able to establish their office for about three weeks, meanwhile the three of us are going to assist in the work of this office which is doing now about the same kind of work we're going to be doing later. Essentially our job is to expedite in any way we can the work which is going forward on this large mapping project. The actual work on the mapping is just beginning that means that the Air Corps is taking a few pictures and some unit of the Corps of Engineers is out in the field beginning to do some surveying which is necessary before the maps can be made.

We're pretty well settled in the building where we're to live. It's called the Finance Building (it was formerly the headquarters of the Department of Finance of the Japanese Government). It's a very large place, is five stories high and covers a square block. I have no notion how many men live in the place but there must be three or four thousand. At the moment Larry and I are living in a huge room which must contain about forty beds. Ed, who left Guam a day before we did and hence got here Dec. 31, obtained a bed in a smaller room. Some of the fellows in his room are leaving and we may be able to move in there - it would be a little quieter, but as it happens it's not so warm.

As regards eating -- we eat in a building which is called the Dai Ichi Building. It is the nicest building in Tokyo and the one in which General MacArthur has his headquarters. It was formerly a bank and also contained the offices of a large insurance company. This company had a very excellent cafeteria for its employees on the seventh floor of the building (the top floor) and that's where we eat. The food so far has been marvelous!! It is well cooked (by Japanese supervised by G.I. cooks), is abundant, and there is variety to the menus. Its so much better than I ever dreamed it would be that I simply can't get over it. I keep thinking that the food will get poorer, but so far it hasn't and the fellows say it has been this good all along. So far the only thing I've missed in our diet is such items as lettuce and celery - fresh vegetables. We have a lot of fruit - apples and tangerines (which are raised here in Japan). And we have more butter almost than we can eat. There is no fresh milk, of course. If the food keeps up this way I'm going to get to be a big boy I'm afraid!

As regards our office -- it's located on the fifth floor of a building called the Forestry Building. Yes, it was formerly occupied by the Department of Forestry of the Japanese Government. The office is nice, there are good wooden desks and tables and bookcases and cabinets etc. just as there would be in any office in the United States. The typewriters of course are ones which the Army brought with them - this one I'm using for example came along with the fellows in this office all the way from New Guinea. Incidentally, the men who are over here with the U.S. Geological Survey have their offices in this building too (on the second floor). Suppose that's where Sherm and Virginia Neuschel will have their headquarters when they arrive - We haven't seen much of the U.S.G.S. personnel as yet, but probably will as soon as things get settled down a little bit.

Of course you're wondering about the city and the signs of the bombing which are to be seen. Well, you can't imagine how awful it is nor can I describe it to you so that you can get anywhere near the correct picture - you just have to see it to know what it's like. However, if you imagine about ten thousand lots looking like the J.R. Jones corner in Kalamazoo, you'll have some notion. We drove through the city for about ten miles coming in from the airport last Tuesday and on both sides of the street and as far back from the street as a person could see at least five sixths of the buildings are gone - they're not just burned out, they're burned entirely up! There are hundreds and hundreds of burned up automobiles to be seen, hundreds and hundreds of burned up bicycles, scores and scores of burned buses, and tens and tens of burned streetcars. Factories have been burned down and the machinery sets there rusting. One wonders where all the people have gone who formerly lived in these burned out districts - I can't figure out where they did go. Some have salvaged bits of sheet metal and have built shacks for themselves, others have crowded into the few remaining buildings, some are living huddled under the tracks of the elevated railway lines, but this accounts for only a few relatively speaking. Great numbers of them must have moved out into the country. We saw a few farm dwellings coming in from the airport and they did appear to be very crowded establishments, but, of course, perhaps they were that way before the war. In one of the rooms over at the building where we live the fellows have "adopted" a little Japanese boy about six years old. Guess he doesn't have any family at all any longer, but he seems quite content - of course he should be content, he's lucky - he's well fed and warm and that's more than most of the Japanese can say.

Right here in the downtown section where the buildings were of brick and stone and cement and steel, they've held up a little better. But even so, many more than half of them are burned out. Imagine six or eight department stores about the size of Gilmore's or larger burned completely - no windows left, the roof caved in. Along the main shopping street of Tokyo which is called the Ginza, the merchants are beginning to try to get back in business - they're repairing their old buildings if they're repairable or they're building new ones. However, the new ones are just little one story frame structures. It's very interesting to see the carpenters at work - they mortise the beams together and fasten them with pegs just as barns were built in the midwest of the U.S. a hundred years ago. It's possible to examine the whole framework of a small building and not see over ten or a dozen nails! Don't know whether they build this way because they have no nails or because that's the way they've always built their buildings. They certainly can work wood beautifully! The wood they're using at the present time is largely cedar.

General MacArthur has his headquarters in the Dai Ichi building (the one where we eat) which is right next to the building where we have our office. We have not seen him yet, but have seen his limousine a couple of times out front waiting for him to come out - a crowd of Japanese and soldiers always gathers to catch a glimpse of him. Believe me you get the impression that he's really the boss around here!

We've just returned from lunch. About all I did all morning was work on this letter; did spend about an hour doing some other typing for the Sergeant in charge of the office. Think I'll call this all for now, however. Below I've written out my correct address - it's a whopper, isn't it. I asked Marian to type it on some envelopes for you, perhaps she has done so by now. We hear that it takes mail about ten days to reach the states from here and vice versa. Takes packages, we understand, anywhere from four weeks to six weeks!

So long, Folks, write often

Pvt. Richard H. Mahard, 35985568
Intel Div, OCE, GHQ, AFPA
Advance Echelon, Tokyo, Japan
A P O 500, San Francisco, California

Love,
Dick

No 2

Tokyo, Japan
January 8, 1946 (Tues.)

Dear Mother and Dad,

Have I explained to you about the difference in time between where you are and here? Well, we're 14 hours ahead of you. For example it's eleven o'clock a.m. Tuesday here - that makes it nine o'clock p.m. Monday in Michigan. You're probably just about going to bed Monday night and here we have a half a day's work done on Tuesday! Seems funny doesn't it?

Things go on here in a rather unexciting fashion. We're pretty well settled into the routine. We go to bed pretty early and I personally get up pretty early. I arise at six o'clock and go down to the basement of the building where we live (our room is on the 4th floor) where the showers are located and draw myself a steel helmet full of hot water. (There's no hot water anywhere in the building except in the basement and oftentimes even that supply is exhausted.) I carry the helmet full of water to a nearby lavatory where there is a mirror and do my shaving. After shaving tooth brushing is in order - this must be done using the water from my canteen. We're not supposed to drink the water from the taps of the building and some of us think we ought not therefore use it to brush our teeth. The water to fill our canteens is especially purified and is stored in large canvas bags called "Lister Bags" which hang from tripods along the corridors of our building.

By the time I finish shaving it's a little after 6:30 usually and I wake up Larry and Ed. By seven o'clock we've finished dressing and have made our beds and swept up the room a little bit (we're not required to have everything in apple pie order the way we were during basic training, but we're supposed to keep things reasonably neat). We catch the bus from the Finance Building where we live to the Forestry Building where we work, come up stairs to the office to pick up our cup and silverware and then go back downstairs and go next door to the Daiichi Building where we eat. We usually arrive at the cafeteria before 7:30 so we have a little over $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to eat breakfast before reporting for work at 8:00 or a little after.

We have an hour for dinner from 12 to 1 and we eat supper right after quitting work at 5:00. I usually come back to the office after supper and write my nightly letter to Marian. Sometimes go to the movie at six o'clock. The movies here are free - they're not too good. The film is 16 millimeter and the pictures are not as clear nor is the sound very satisfactory. I understand that the Army soon is going to take over one of the local Japanese movie theatres. Perhaps if they do that they'll move in some regular 35 millimeter projectors.

Our meals continue to be very good. Last night we had steak, mashed potatoes and gravy, asparagus, parker house rolls with gobs of butter, chocolate cake, coffee. They continue to have a big bin of Washington State apples and a bin of local Japanese tangerines and one can help himself to these and take all he wants. I'm glad we have the apples - they help to make up for the one lack in the menu - fresh green vegetables such as lettuce and celery!

The weather has been good. Every day since we've arrived has been sunny except this past Sunday. It's quite cold - temperatures hover near the freezing mark. How some of the people stand the cold protected no better than they are is beyond me. Last Sunday we went for a long walk and we saw quite a few people wearing their clog-like shoes without any stockings of any sort and we saw one little boy about three who was playing in the street without any shoes or stockings at all - at the same time we were just about freezing ourselves. Yesterday I went with one of the fellows to the main postoffice here in Japan - the place was entirely filled with blue smoke from the numerous little wood fires which the employees keep burning in little clay pots to keep their hands warm. There is no other heat in the building.

I think I've forgotten to say in any of my letters that the automobile traffic here all moves on the left hand side of the street. It's very difficult to grow accustomed to it - when one starts to walk across a street, he must first look to the right instead of to the left. It's a darn wonder that the Americans haven't all been hit! One also sees quite a lot of Japanese automobiles which run on the gas generated in a charcoal burner. It's very strange to see them going down the street with steam issuing from the complicated looking apparatus on the back end of the vehicle!

On Sunday we encountered for the first time the famous "honey-bucket" man of Japan. He's the fellow who goes around each day with a cart loaded with ^{wooden} buckets of about ten gallon size into which he dumps the waste material from the Japanese equivalent of our bathrooms. He then hauls his load out into the country and it is used for fertilizer. Dad, if you think that horse manure makes your grapes grow, you ought to try some of that stuff. Wow! To get to the leeward of one of those loads of buckets is almost a guarantee that you'll have the tissues in your nose burned out. How the fellow who hauls the load around (usually by hand - sometimes he has a horse) can stand it is beyond me!

Yesterday we made some inquiries downstairs in the geology section to see what the possibilities were that we could transfer to that work. When we walked in the office they already knew our story - that is, they knew that we were here in Tokyo and they were more or less expecting us to drop in. The man we talked to was Tom Hendricks, the boss of the project, he said that they were very short of help and certainly would like it if we could be transferred to them. We came on back upstairs and talked to our two Captains, but, as we expected, it was ~~a~~ "No go". The captains appreciated our position but said that right at the moment it was impossible for them to let us go. They did promise that sometime later after their work gets under way they may reconsider the proposition. I'm not as disappointed as the other fellows - especially Larry - because I'm not entirely certain I'd like the geology work any better than the work we'll be doing for the Captains once we get started at it!

We certainly are missing our mail. It's hard to think that it may be several days yet before your letters will reach us. It takes mail just about ten days to make the trip. You should be receiving my address about the 9th or 10th and then it'll take your letters ten days to get back here.

Guess that's about the story for this time. Be sure to write often after you get my address. It still doesn't quite seem real that we're here and are so far from home, but one day we'll get back - wish I knew when!

Much love,

Dick

Sherm and Virginia Neuschel are not coming to Japan I guess. There is a regulation prohibiting man and wife combinations.
Guess General MacArthur is the only one whose wife is allowed!

No 3

Tokyo, Japan
Monday Morning
January 14, 1946

Dear Mother and Dad,

I wanted you to have the story of our past week-end as soon as possible so I made a carbon copy of it for you - sent the original to Marian.

We certainly had a good time and it was a very interesting experience. And the fact that it cost us nothing does not detract from the enjoyment of the week-end. Don't worry about our selling the stuff to the Japanese. Yes, I suppose it's a "black market" of sorts but actually it's a harmless one and the authorities pay little attention to it. That is they pay no attention to it so long as the soldiers sell only things which they buy at the Post Exchanges. If the soldiers began to sell their equipment - that is their clothing etc. - that would be, and is, a different matter. We, of course, would not do anything like that!

I thought you might like to show the enclosed story to Mr. Spicer - he might enjoy reading it. I don't think the part about selling things would matter do you? You do as you please, of course! If you do show it to him, tell him I'm sorry I didn't pay a little more to the sentence construction, grammer, punctuation, etc. I wrote it directly onto the sheet without making a first draft and I'm afraid it shows it!

The Captains told us this morning that the Colonel who will be our boss has arrived and we're to have a conference with him tomorrow morning. So we'll probably know a little better where we stand at that time.

We're hoping that sometime this week we'll begin to receive some mail and it certainly will be swell.

Guess that's about all for this time. Will write frequently. You do the same.

Love,

Dick

Just talked to the Captains again and they say that until around the first of the month we'll just sit tight as we are.

Sunday, January 13, 1946

STORY OF A WEEK END AT ATAMI

It began on Saturday afternoon at 4:30. We had obtained permission to leave the office a little early. We caught a train at the main Tokyo station at 4:40 which would take us to Atami which is a small resort city along the coast about 60 miles or so from Tokyo. There were five in our party - Larry, Ed, and myself and Bruce Hughes and another boy from the office named George Burridge. Bruce was the leader of the expedition; he had been to Atami twice before and early this past week he had written to reserve a room for us at the small hotel where he had previously stayed.

The train was very prompt in departing - it seems that that's almost a fetish with Japanese trains - but it was very crowded. As soldiers in the U.S. Army we are entitled to travel free on trains so we had no problem of tickets. We at first tried to find seats in the "first-class" coach (it's marked by a light blue band running the length of the car) but discovered it crowded and also quite undesirable because one of the toilets (the only toilet, I guess) had run over all over the floor and the smell was "out of this world". We searched elsewhere for a seat, but the people were jammed in in a fashion which I really and truly think rivalled anything I've ever seen in a New York subway. Another opportunity remained for us and we took it - we went to the baggage car and found it unoccupied except for a small amount of express which we readily converted into make-shift seats. The baggage-men were entirely content to have us.

The weather was cold and there was plenty of air in our car after we got to moving inasmuch as one of the doors on one side of the car was completely missing and the windows were broken out of the doors on the other side. We moved up toward the front of the car forward of the doors and it wasn't so bad. Presently one of the baggagemen made us a handsome "presento". He came out of his little compartment with a metal pail, about gallon size, which was filled with beautifully glowing charcoal. We thanked him profusely and made a "presento" of candy and gum to him in return. We then all gathered around the fire, Bruce shed his jacket, we spread it over the fire and over our knees and kept very warm and comfortable throughout the journey!

We were not alone in the car for very long. At a station about two or three stops from Tokyo a crowd of perhaps 25 or 30 Japanese simply overwhelmed the men who were loading some baggage and clambered aboard the car. You should have seen them - there was a very old lady with a very large and apparently heavy pack on her back, another younger woman with a child strapped to her back and a great bundle in her hand, there was a very dignified looking man of middle age in well-fitting but shabby clothes who was carrying a brief case, also assorted discharged Japanese soldiers, small children, young girls, etc. These people, however, did not invade our end of the car - they huddled as far to the other end as was possible (it must have been very cold there) and watched us intently as we sat around our brazier laughing and talking.

Our journey lasted about $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours. There were numerous stops but actually the train travelled smoothly and swiftly; the railroad like most Japanese main lines is electrified. At Atami we had but a short walk from the station to the hotel. It was dark and we could see little but we knew we were in hilly country, but the picturesqueness was not to be revealed to us 'till morning.

When we arrived at the hotel we entered a little lobby and here we removed our shoes! The floor was cold too and the slippers which were available were the Japanese type which depend up a sock with a split between the big and second toe consequently we had to remain stocking footed! We had a little difficulty getting the people to understand about our reservation because the owner was not around and personally my heart sank - I had visions of having to go back to Tokyo or having to look around for another place to stay. The owner - Mr. Takahashi finally appeared and after some discussion (he speaks English a little bit), he led us to our room.

the
hotel not
public in general.

"public" only
for other guests of the

We had to cross a little court which was cobbled with tiny black pebbles but we didn't walk on these . . . Instead we stepped on wooden slabs cut from the end of a large log and embedded into the cobbling but projecting perhaps an inch above it. These slabs of course revealed the annular rings of the tree and were very highly polished because they are not stepped on except by feet clad in slippers or stockings. There was a little entry-way to pass through before entering the room itself - in this entry-way even slippers are shed before passing through sliding doors and into the room which was "carpeted" from wall to wall with a mat woven of very fine stalks of straw. There must be some sort of padding beneath the straw mat also because it "gives" slightly when walked upon.

The only articles of furniture in the room were a large (about five feet in diameter) red lacquered table, and two commode-like affairs with drawers and one with a mirror. In one corner was a bamboo frame screen-like apparatus with hooks for hanging our coats. The table was about twelve inches high and lying on the floor around it were pads about two feet square and two inches thick - these of course for "chairs". Very soon after we arrived the maid appeared - she was dressed in quite a colorful kimono outfit such as the Japanese women wear. Bruce told her we wished to be served some "sukiyaki" and she said, "O.K." and departed. We made ready to take a bath.

Actually our room was provided with a private bath, but Mr. Takahashi apologized to us and said that there was no hot water and would be none until morning and would we mind using the "public" bath. So that's what we did. We took off all our clothes except our underwear and donned the kimonos which were provided. We crossed the little court again and entered another part of the building and went down stairs. We went into a little dressing room where there were flat woven baskets for our clothes. We noticed that some of the baskets were filled and we saw the owners when we opened a door and entered the bath itself. That is we saw the other people dimly through a thick cloud of steam which was rising from a tub, or shall I say tank, of water in one corner of the tiled room. The tub was oval in shape and about 7 feet long by four feet and about two feet deep. It was filled to the brim and the water was pouring over the edges and into a shallow trough and thence to a drain. Sitting around on the floor of the room were some little wooden dishes or basins. One dipped a basin full of water out of the tub and sat down on a tiny wooden stool about six inches high and washed himself thoroughly - we provided our own soap and wash-cloths. After washing, the water in the basin was poured over oneself and additional water was dipped from the tub to complete the rinsing. Then came time for the immersion! By the time we were ready to immerse ourselves the other people had been in the tub a couple or three at a time and were out again. So in we went and it was marvelous -- you can't imagine how glorious that hot, hot water felt after having been pretty thoroughly chilled by our trip

Three of us were sitting comfortably in the tub and more or less facing the door from the dressing room when in walked a Japanese woman and a little girl about four years old ready to take their bath! Oh! Did I forget to say that the bath was a public one for men and women as is the custom here! The woman was completely unconcerned and took no notice of us and began to bathe the child and then herself. Meanwhile we tried, more or less successfully to be unconcerned too! When she had finished washing and bathing she came over to the tub lowered the little girl in and got in herself. She got in at the opposite end from where we were - but opposite ends of a seven foot tub are not far apart are they? but at that end there were a couple of Japanese men who took no notice of her. Believe me it was a most peculiar experience as far as I'm concerned and yet strangely enough there didn't seem to be anything so very wrong with it.

When we had finished our soaking - a person was tempted to stay in the hot water longer than he should - we climbed out and bravely, before leaving the bathroom, took a cool shower. We got dressed then and went back to our room. I expected to be cold when we left the bath, but was not. I can't get over how completely warm that bath made me and how I stayed warm in spite of the fact that our room was not heated in any way (the outside temperature at Atami was perhaps 45 degrees!).

When we got back to the room the maid has been there and had placed a lacquered box-like affair in the center of the table; in a clay pot in the center of the box was

ing a charcoal fire. She came in a few minutes and placed a pottery bowl over this char-coal flame and began to prepare the sukiyaki. First she poured a sauce of some sort into the bowl and after it was very hot she added some strips of beef, some onions (they looked like very large green onions), some celery cabbage, and I guess that was about all. After this had simmered quite a long time, the stew was done. She dished it out to us on little dishes about the size of saucers and we ate it, with considerable difficulty, with chopsticks! The maid stayed right there and kept dishing the food out until it was all gone. The sukiyaki, although it certainly isn't anything very elaborate, was very good. There wasn't enough of it, however, to make us a full meal and we supplemented it with some good old fashioned Army ration beans which we had brought along with us and which they had warmed up for us! Ate the beans with chop sticks and that's a pretty good trick!

After the meal the maid cleared the dishes and things away and we sat around and talked. It was soon bed time but before we climbed in we all decided to have another bath. There was no female present this time although just as we were leaving the dressing room one arrived and began to prepare to bathe.

While we were bathing, the maid had fixed our beds. They're very simple affairs just two pads on the floor and kind of a sheet on them and two very thick down or lamb's wool filled comforters. Two of us had very strange pillows filled with husks of some sort they were quite noisy and not very soft. The rest of us had to use the seat pads for pillows and they weren't very satisfactory. I seem to be having pillow trouble over here. These people apparently don't go in for soft headrests!

We all slept quite soundly until about eight o'clock and then Bruce got up and opened up our room. All along one side of the room and for about half the distance along the other there were sliding panels - the inner panels had glass panes in their upper half but the outer ones were entirely of wood. The outer ones were so arranged that they could be slid completely back and past one another and into a wall recess. It's almost as though the wall of the house was removed. From the windows along one side of the room we could look right out over the city of Atami to the not so distant hills. It was a perfectly grand sight. The whole area of the city is hilly and the houses simply cling to the sides of the hills which drop right down to the sea. From our window we could see the ocean too with the breakers rolling in.

The maid came in in a little while and we gave her some coffee which we had brought along to prepare for us. They also heated up some "ham, eggs, and potatoes" rations for us and we had these for breakfast. Also had some canned grapefruit and orange juice which we had brought.

~~They're a great delicacy worth over
two dollars per box!~~

Toward the middle of the morning Mr. Takahashi came in and we began to do business with him. You see we had brought along a good many things which he wanted to buy - such things as soap, candy bars, gum, canned juice, cigarettes, tobacco etc. While we bargained we drank together a pot of coffee and ate some fig newtons! For some reason, apparently to advise him, he had brought along his head maid (she was the one who prepared the sukiyaki for us the night before) You should have seen them go for the coffee especially after they had added liberal amounts of canned cream and great quantities of sugar which we had brought!

When the bargaining was over we had all made enough profit on what we sold to enable us to pay our bill at the hotel. So this trip I'm describing cost us exactly nothing!

For dinner we ordered beef "steaky" which turned out to be very good indeed although there wasn't much of it and we again had to supplement it with food we had brought along. Perhaps I should explain that one of the officers here at the office got the Army rations for us. The Corps of Engineers has a big supply which they use to feed their field parties.

Very soon after our noon meal we prepared to leave because we wanted to walk around the town a little bit before time to catch the train at 3:00. The town - and it's little more than that - proved to be a very interesting place. Although picturesque is a trite word I think it's more applicable to Atami than to any place I've ever seen. The

streets are very narrow and they wind around this way and that way to surmount the hills. The houses, as I say, are perched on the hillsides and are quite exotic as far as their architecture is concerned. The trees are most frequently pines which often have very interesting peculiarities of shape. And now and then down a street or between the houses and past some trees, one sees the ocean. Far up on the hills above the town are also seen bits of terraced land where some farmer is fighting a difficult battle to make the steep hill side productive.

Just before boarding the train the five of us bought a little woven bamboo basket of tangerines which we enjoyed all the way home. As we rode along we saw the tangerines as well as oranges growing in great abundance because the country around Atami is quite productive of citrus fruit. It seems to me the climate is pretty severe for it to grow but I guess it can't be because there the loaded trees were! For twenty miles or so north from Atami we were close to the sea and there were many beautiful views but I was equally fascinated by the nature of the agriculture which we saw being practiced. The terracing of some of the slopes was incredibly complex. In the valleys the flatter land was cut up into tiny fields often bordered by stone walls which looked like they must have been built centuries ago and tended since with loving care. Many men were at work in the fields "plowing" them with a tool which resembles a hoe but which has a blade perhaps twelve inches long. They chop away at the soft soil and turn it over in much the same way a gardener turns his soil with a spade.

It was still light enough when we reached the suburban areas of Yokohama to see the tremendous amount of destruction done by the bombing. I couldn't help but think of how unfortunate the people of this area were compared to the people who live at Atami where there was no sign of the war whatsoever.

Mo 24

Monday, January 21, 1946
Tokyo, Japan

Dear Mother and Dad,

Tis Monday night here and another week has gotten underway. Things have pretty well settled down into a routine here. This past week I've been working in a different office. Have been working, as a matter of fact, for the Geologists down stairs. It's really quite a coincidence - the fellow who was my immediate boss during that week I worked for the Geological Survey last April is the same man for whom I worked last week and for whom I'm working still at least until this Wednesday. This fellow's name is Frank Whitmore. Last April he was in Washington in the Military Geology Unit - he has been over here for about four months I think. He was handed a job last week by the men who are running this mapping program - it involved selecting the beaches in Japan which in any future war (isn't it disgusting to have to talk about the next war?) would be the ones most useful in an invasion. Frank was pretty busy and asked for some help if any was available - one of the Captains told him about me and he said send him down. After he saw me he remembered me from last April - I was embarrassed because I did not remember him. (I think I only saw him a couple of times that week because I was working in another room from where he was) At any rate, he's a very nice guy and he has put me to work on the beach problem and accepts my judgment as an equal - it's been very nice. After we've selected the beaches, they'll be photographed in quite great detail and the photos will be used in compiling maps and charts and will then be filed away in Washington for future reference.

It's looking more and more as though the three of us will finally end up in the Geology Section here. Tom Hendricks who runs the outfit is very anxious to have us and the Colonel who is our boss is perfectly willing to give us up when he can find some replacements for us. Both the Colonel and Tom Hendricks are seeking the replacements - they're going to be hard to find (typists for some reason are scarce in the Army) but sooner or later they ought to be able to manage it. Tom told me today that Larry Craig is more suited to do a certain job he has to do (making a geological map of Okinawa) than any man he has available in his section. Isn't that a pretty mess - Larry's the best man for the job, he's anxious to do the job, and yet here he sits idle, only three floors away!

I spent a very quiet day yesterday. I came down with quite a cold about the middle of last week and I thought to go galavanting around the country yesterday would not help it any - think it was a good idea to stay home because the cold is really a lot better today. Larry and Ed climbed aboard a train and went out to a small suburban city to look around; they got to talking to a couple of young boys who invited them to their house and Ed and Larry met the whole family - they had quite an adventure.

Hoping that this is the week when some mail will start coming through - it's been a long time since I've had a letter believe me! We heard today though that a lot of planes have been grounded lately by bad weather and I also heard that the Air Corps has discharged so many of their mechanics that they're having a difficult time keeping planes in the air. I personally wish they'd turn the job of carrying the mail over to one of the private companies who'd love to do the job. I figure you should have received my Tokyo address about the 11th or 12th and then allowing ten days back to here that brings it about the 21st or 22nd.

I suppose you'll be telling me in a letter which may now be on its way the answer to this question, but I'm wondering if the boxes I sent from Hamilton Field ever reached you. Did you wash out the stuff, Mother? How did the blanket come out? I'm not exactly certain I'll ever want to see an Army blanket after I get out of this organization, but I suppose I'll be able to put up with them after a while.

What did you think of the cosmetic case I bought for Marian? I hope Mother that you hadn't bought her one too. I forgot all about telling you when last I saw you that I thought that that's what I'd get for her if I had a chance. Marian will like it I think! I'm awfully anxious to have your letters to hear about Christmas and everything. The last letter I received from Marian at Hamilton field was written on December 18th. I received one letter from you folks while we were there.

Our meals continue to be good. We ran out of butter for a couple of days this past week but we're having it again in liberal quantities at present. I'm beginning to miss fresh salads and coffee with some fresh cream would taste marvelous. We saw in the Stars and Stripes the other day that several ice cream "plants" had reached Tokyo; when they get them set up we should have ice cream a little more frequently. We have it about twice a week now - it's good but one can taste the condensed milk! Our living quarters are comfortable. We have plenty of heat now and the water's usually hot when we want to take a shower although we have to walk a long ways from our room on the fourth floor to the basement to take it. The gang in our room is a pretty congenial bunch. We have a couple of new roommates who moved in this past week - they're a couple of Japanese-Americans. Both are very quiet although one of them snores pretty loudly! I'm the official "alarm clock" for the room - don't know why but I wake up every morning almost exactly at six, I get up at 6:15 and go way down to the basement and draw a steel helmet full of hot water from the showers for shaving. After I finish shaving I wake the rest of the boys up. We leave the barracks building at 7:15 and get over to breakfast about 7:30. That gives us time for a pretty leisurely breakfast - we read the morning edition of Stars and Stripes and report for work at 8:00.

Very slowly the citizens of Tokyo are beginning to clean up the rubble of their city and are beginning to repair a few buildings and build a few new ones - I think I described to you some of the new building which is going on. Almost all the structures are flimsy wooden ones. Some of the larger department stores are trying hard to replace the insides of their gutted buildings and get back into business because they could make some money selling to the soldiers. In spite of this activity though the surface has scarcely been scratched - I would guess it will be fifty years or more before the scars of the war disappear from this city. Someone said there was a fire somewhere in the city tonight - quite a large one too, but it probably didn't impress the people here to any extent when they compare it with the ones they must have had during the war. I simply can't imagine what it must have been like. I was talking to a boy the other night who knows some people who were here during the bombing and they say it was pretty awful - especially on May 25, 1945 - that was the date of the worst raid of all. When the bombers came over and dropped their incendiaries there happened to be a violent windstorm raging in the city and the combination was terrible - the fires raged completely out of control for 14 hours. Just to mention May 25 to a resident of Tokyo makes him shudder I guess!

Well Larry and Ed and I have all been here at the office typing letters tonight, but now it's past time to go home and to bed. So I'll say goodnight. Write often, won't you, and tell me all about things with you and things on the farm. How often I think of you there and wish that Marian and I could be there with you from time to time - hope the day when we can do just that isn't too far off.

So long, now

Much love,

Dick

279th day

5

Saturday, January 26, 1946
Tokyo, Japan

Dear Mother and Dad,

Saturday night is the lonliest night of the week! Yessir, seems that way tonight. There isn't even a movie to go to on this night for some reason. Will write this and then will probably go over to the "barracks", take a shower if there happens to be some hot water and then read until time to go to sleep.

We thought that we were going to get some time off this weekend to take a little trip which we had planned. We were going up to a place called Nikko which is quite a famous winter resort; hoped that we might be able to do some skiing. But this morning at the very last minute we had to change our plans because some work came in which we had to get done. Oh, I guess we could have taken off but it wouldn't have been playing quite fair with the Captain who has been a straightshooter himself so far so we stayed here at the office. We figure that if we continue to play ball with him, he'll do the same and it will be a lot more pleasant!

Army, 2nd

As a matter of fact this week the Army did come through! Just yesterday I typed up the letter which is to go to Washington requesting that we be promoted. Yessir, we're all to be moved up from 7th graders to 5th graders. Our promotions vary just a little bit - I'm to be made a Corporal and Larry and Ed are going to be made T/5. We'll all get exactly the same pay - it amounts to 79.20 a month - but I'll actually "outrank" them just a little bit. I guess that it worked out that way because the "table of organization" of our outfit calls for it and I got the slightly higher grade because I've been in the Army a little longer than either of them. They both went in in July! I suppose it'll take a month at least for the promotions to go through. But at any rate they're started.

Got your first letter addressed here to Tokyo on Thursday the 24th; it was postmarked the 16th so you see it came through in a hurry. Actually that's about two days better than we can reasonably expect. Ten days will be about the average amount of time. There was a time early this week when the mail was pretty fouled up. All the planes were grounded and we heard consistent rumors that some air mail was being sent out from here by ship. So if some letter sometime is delayed that will explain it.

We have not yet received the mail which is being forwarded from APO 4260. We sent our address there just as soon as we arrived, but they probably haven't gotten around to sending the mail on to us yet - it'll be along one of these days.

One thing in your letter sorta surprised me. I suppose you told me about June Travis in a letter I haven't yet received because you seem to assume that I knew that something was wrong with her - was it another miscarriage? If so, that's too darn bad!

I was very interested to hear that you have the attic all finished off - I'll bet it really looks very nice. I'm sorry you had all that junk of ours to work around. You must have really had to play "checkers" with all those boxes! Would like to be able to think that I'll be home in time to help you put the molding on, but I'm afraid it'll not come to pass.

Suppose you've been following the demobilization news with great interest. I'm not very certain I have any ideas on what Congress is going to do about the question. It's a difficult thing to decide. There is no question but what we need occupation armies in Asia and in Europe but it would seem that those armies should be made up if possible of men who have volunteered for the job. The boys who have been

forced in by the Selective Service law are never going to be content! They are saying that they'll have all men with two years of service as of July 1 out by that date. I feel that they'll lower the months of service more and more. Think it'll finally get down to 18 months but I have no notion how soon it'll be. I'll have in 18 months by next October 23rd. Even if I make it by then, it'll be too late to start in teaching next fall and that's the thing which is driving me slightly batty! I'm thinking more and more that the fellows with children may make it out a little sooner - that's the thing Larry and Ed are praying for! But if they do that - it'll hurt my chances I think! But, I suppose that's the way it ought to be (but I can't quite feel good about it).

As usual, the only thing which can be said is that we'll just have to wait and see!

Have done very little that was exciting this whole week long. Have gone on a couple of "window shopping" tours. Window shopping here involves mostly looking at what the street vendors have for sale, but that includes just about everything. I did make one purchase but you'll have to keep quiet about it for a while yet. I bought Marian ten yards of quite nice white silk cloth (at least I hope it's all silk) and I sent it to her the other day as a Valentine present. I sent it via first class mail so it ought to reach her is around twenty days. I mailed the package last Monday January 21st! I've said nothing to her about it.

Was interested in the story of the Lemke's. It's a big change for them isn't it? We'll visit them sometime in California - how about it? It seems to me that they got a mighty handsome price for their home in Birmingham!

I suppose that the Spicers are excited about going to California. I thought of Frank when I was there but couldn't remember whether he was around San Francisco or Los Angeles.

You're sure very prompt in paying your income tax. I have no notion how Marian and I stand in that income tax business. I think Marian knows about it though and will take care of it. Don't think it will bother her very much because she can take me as an exemption!

I'm anxious to receive the letters from APO 4260 because they're the ones which tell about your Christmas. Wonder what Christmas next year will bring forth.

Well, the boys are about ready to leave for the "barracks" and I think I'll go along with them. Want to buy some things at the P.X. before it closes.

Will probably add a note in the morning!

Goodnight Folks (in spite of the fact that you're probably just getting up at 6:00 a.m. Saturday morning). It's 8:00 p.m. here)

Love,

Dick