

May 14, 1945
At Sea.

Dearest Darling Mary;

As I write this I am sitting on the "square of the hatch" below the cabin deck in number two hold. My seat consists of someone's suitcase lying flat on the hatch. My desk is the top of a footlocker. As the ship pitches and rolls so do I, but not always in a perfect rhythm of the sea. Why am I writing under such crude conditions? It is simply because I know of no better place to attempt writing. I often thought I would like to travel as troops do - in troop compartments - and that is just what I am doing this trip. I really have nothing to complain about, but along with many other officers I do feel that things would be better were it not for the female passengers aboard - nurses, red cross and G.S.O. I can tell you more details of the whole set up only when I see you, darling. As far as the women passengers are concerned I would be much more pleased were they not aboard and so would many others who don't care to associate with them.

The real important consideration is that this was the first transportation available to me and I am now well on my way home. I do hope the cablegram reached you and was not mixed up as the previous ones have been. I am rather skeptical of the letter I wrote, prior to embarking, reaching you much ahead of this one for I understand that some air-mail is aboard this ship. But why should I be so depressing at this time? It must be that you have received the word and have or will have succeeded in making the necessary arrangements to meet me, for that is what we have planned and schemed for so long now! We just can't fail, can we dear?

I am hoping that within a few days I might get to see Dan. Of course a lot depends upon whether he is still where I think he has been, and, if so, whether or not I will be permitted to leave this ship. I have already spoken to the ~~troop~~ officer, that is the officer in charge of the group of navy officer passengers, and he is

going to see if there is any way of getting special permission to leave the ship even if the others don't get off. If that turns out to be but an idle promise I will take it upon myself to do some arranging when the time comes and I'm quite sure something will happen.

From the above I am sure you will know where I'll be stopping for a short time. Just how long I'll be there is unknown. I hope it won't be but for a very short time. If everything works out the way I think it will, ~~we~~ I won't be delayed very long and I should arrive back in the States about the date I gave you in previous letters - not a few days in advance as I had previously anticipated. Providing you will have received my past letters, I am sure of our long awaited reunion on the coast.

This trip is much different from my trip out. On the whole I would say it isn't anywhere near as deluxe. As I have told you before I am quartered in a troop compartment - on the way out I had a cabin.

The officers wardroom where we are served is much more elaborate ^{than} that of the ship. I come out on and the serving of the meals is very deluxe in comparison to the way meals were thrown at us enroute two years ago. However, the food isn't as good as it was then. What we have is very nicely prepared, though.

My routine for each day is to get up each morning shortly after sunrise and get out on deck in the fresh morning air for about an hour before breakfast. After breakfast I'm again out on deck until it is time to go below and make up my bunk. Then if there are no emergency drills I read, take a swim bathe (not a full length sunbath as I packed my swim trunks in the bottom of my roll pack and don't want to break it open). After that it is about time for lunch. The afternoon always seem to go much slower. I usually read or take a nap. They have movies in the wardroom in the afternoon and evening - that is the same movie shown both times. I much prefer to see it in the evening for after darkening ship there just isn't anything else to do but go to bed.

15 It is now 0900 Tuesday, May
yesterday afternoon while sitting rather
uncomfortably in the hold and writing, I
became quite woozy from the pitching and
rocking of the ship and being in an enclosed
place. So, I decided it would be better to
come topside - I always like to be out on
deck as much as possible, anyway, for it makes
me at least feel so much better having the
wind blowing in my face and being able to see
the beautiful blue ocean all around. I know
you would love a cruise such as this, honey,
maybe someday we will make an ocean trip
together. But really that is the most reason of
all our hopes and desires for our future don't
you think?

Sunday Mother's Day, again I find
me wishing I had done something definite to
let you, my mother, and you too, know that
my thoughts and prayers would be for you ^{all} on
that special day. Although too much concern over
my leaving my former station, I guess, I allowed
time to slip away until it was too late to
send a special letter for Mother's Day. Then I thought
of sending a cablegram. I could have arranged to
have that sent prior to my leaving but then I
didn't want to run the risk of confusing you
on my status for I would have been about a
week at sea when the cables would have been sent.
There was a very fine church service

aboard Sunday morning. It was a combined
Mother's Day and V-E Day service since the Pres.
proclaimed that to be the order of worship
for all religious services in the armed forces.
The ship's chaplain conducted the service. They
were held on what is known as the starboard
promenade deck. There was a very large number
of both passengers and ship's company in attendance,
too. I have a copy of the order of worship
for our scrap book, dear. For security reasons
I am not able to mail it with this letter.

The news of the end of the war
in Europe was picked up at sea by the ship
real early on the morning of the 8th and,
although it wasn't officially announced throughout
the ship until late that day, everyone seem to have
the word the first thing in the morning. It
was wonderful news, wasn't it? I only hope
the people back home didn't think it was
cause for excessive celebration. There is still a
big job to be done out this way - and still a
bigger one to be done in winning the peace. The
D.P. Conference hasn't impressed me at all - that is
the results of it. Of course I haven't seen or heard
anything but the short communiques.

But darling, really I am not as depressed
as this letter might sound. Actually, darling, I am as
happy as anyone could be knowing that soon I
will be back with you and Sue. There is a
chance that this letter won't reach you before you
leave for the coast - but I didn't want to pass up
the opportunity I have of sending all my love and
wishes of a million real hugs and kisses when I do arrive -
Maurice