

I

Thurs. Sept 22

Dear Ma,

Today we left dock at 2 PM on schedule. We got the works including a band playing a few songs for us.

It's now 9:45 PM and we're out on the high seas. It took us til about 6 PM just to get out of Puget Sound. But we are now officially out of the U.S., It's raining like crazy and the sea is very rough. The boat is rocking all over the place but I'm not getting sick. I guess I'm lucky so far cause a few of these guys are green.

Jim's got guard duty on this trip over and he don't sleep in the same compartment as me but upstairs. We still manage to see each other all day.

Chow is definately a problem. Today I had to wait almost 1 1/2 hours in line to eat.

Nothing too much happening yet. It seems like I'm spending all my

Time in one line or another.

I got a letter from Cookie today saying you and her were making a Novena for me. That means you were there earlier tonite. Funny how religious people can get when they're faced with something. It seems like we never really call on Nim 'til we're faced up with a problem. He must really laugh at us. I mean how many times do we thank Nim when things are going well?

Friday 23 Sept.

We're now about 350 miles off the coast. I'm feeling pretty good. Quite a few of the guys got seasick today but I've been lucky.

Tonite they showed movies for us on the deck of the ship. They showed us a story from Perry Mason that used to be on TV.

Morale is pretty high so far.

There's a little newspaper that the ship puts out everyday for nothing. It's pretty interesting.

They told us today that we would be stopping at Okinawa to refuel and we'd be able to get letters off over there. We're now about 5,500 miles away from there.

The ship has been rocking like crazy and we've all got jittery stomachs from it but I can truthfully say I feel pretty good.

I'm spending quite a bit of time with Jim. It's a big ship but I don't have much trouble finding him.

They're feeding us by compartments now and it's a lot better. We're not in line all day long this way.

Well I guess I'll get some sleep now. Days are going by pretty

fast considering all we see out here
is water, water and more water.

Sat. 24 Sept.

Tonight the movie on board deck
was "Rhino" and it was pretty good.
It don't take much to satisfy us
H. I's. It's always cold, windy and
wet up there but there's always
a big turn out for the movie. To-
morrow night's movie is going to
be good. The name of it is "The
Young Lovers". I'm kind of curious
to see how the guys are going to
react to it.

I'm pretty sure I won't get sick
cause we've had some real rough go-
ing and it hasn't bothered me in
the least. My stomach isn't jittery
anymore. With my luck I'll probably
get land sick when we stop to get
off.

We're getting quite a bit of time

to take naps. It makes it a lot easier to get use to this time changing. By the time I reach where I'm going there should be something like 15 hours difference in time. Meaning when it's day where you are it'll be night where I am.

Monday we're due for another Malaria pill. I make sure I take them. Malaria is bad news.

I'm pretty well used to living in tight quarters. I now know what a sardine feels like. It's not too bad though cause I spend most of my time up on deck looking out at that water, sometimes shooting the breeze with Jim. By the way, the sea is not green but a dark shade of blue. I spotted a ship out on the horizon today. It was heading towards the states. ☺

Most of the time so far we're

been in bad weather. The first night out we were in a thunder storm. Reminds me of the day I went to have my picture taken at Loring's. Gerry would have loved it here that night.

I guess I'll end for today. There isn't too much going on. I'm feeling fine

Sunday 25 Sept.

Days are going by pretty fast for some reason or other. This morning I went to mass. They gave us all rosaries.

Tonight I saw another movie. I think you've seen it before cause I did. The name was "The Young Lovers." I wish you could have seen all the guys. It was real funny. Especially the part in the movie where Nick Adams gets his draft papers. The guys are more fun than the

movie.

Today we saw a beautiful rainbow that led right down near the ship. Weather is changing all the time. One minute it's raining, next the sun is shining.

We saw a school of porpoises off the ship this morning. As you can see things are very exciting here. Sun Sun, Sun,

It seems like all the meals are tasting the same now. Lousy.

Nothing more to say about today. I'm spending quite a bit of time taking naps. Very little work being done.

Monday 26 Sept

Today for the first time since we left Washington we could go on deck without a field jacket. It's still very windy but the wind isn't as cold as it was before.

Today we've got the roughest seas yet and it's showing. I figure about 15% of the troops are sick now. The rest of us just feel uncomfortable. That's how I feel. Not sick just jittery.

They didn't show any movie because they couldn't put up the screen because it was too windy. So me + Jim and a few of the other guys went up on deck and sang songs for a couple of hours.

It kept our minds busy and we had a good time remembering all the old songs of the 'good old days' when we were 17.

Tuesday 22 Sept.

The rocking of the ship is getting monotonous now. The routine is about the same now, eat and sleep. There's more rumors flying around than Carter's got little liver pills. Rumors about where we're going to, what we'll

be doing and how long our tour of duty is for.

The air temperature is 81° today but with the wind it feels like about 65° and comfortable. We're just north of the Hawaiian Islands and will pass through the north islands tonight or early tomorrow morning. They're having boiler troubles and it's slowing us up considerably. Heaven knows when we'll reach Okinawa. We're about 2500 miles out of Tacoma and we've got about 3500 miles to go.

Water is becoming a problem now. We distill the sea water to get fresh water and we're using it up too fast.

I can't remember for the life of me if I told you but I got a crew cut just before I boarded the ship. I'm taking pictures with my camera and when I get the roll finished I'll

mail it home to be finished. I've only taken one picture so far and that was a picture of the band down in Tacoma playing for us. In the picture you will be able to see the gang plank being taken away.

Wednesday 28 Sept.

I'm upon deck now where I spend most of my time. It's awful warm down below in the compartments. There's now seven hours difference between us. By the time we reach Viet Nam there will be 13 hours difference and I'll be a full day ahead of you after passing the International date line.

It's kind of hard to explain that to you.

The sea is just about a rough as it's always been. The weather out at sea changes very fast. One minute it's raining like crazy and the next minute the sun is shining.

There were close to 4,000 men on board ship right now. Room down below is very cramped. That's why I spend most of my time here up on deck.

We passed by Hawaii last night. I was sleeping but one of my buddies picked up an Hawaiian radio station on his portable. He said they were playing popular music just like in the states.

I feel real good today. I lost the jittery stomach for a while. Most of this seasickness is in the mind anyway. If you think about it you'll get sick. I keep my mind busy by thinking about home and what I have to come back to. It's not that I'm homesick cause I'm not. It's just that your home life is all you've got to fight for. For certain this kind of life isn't.

The next time I write it'll be

on the 30th. We're crossing the International date line tonite which means we lose Thursday 29th September. Tomorrow will be Friday meaning instead of being 13 hours ~~at~~ behind you, I'll be 11 hours ahead of you. I hope you understand cause this business can get confusing.

Friday 30 Sept.

Thursday never came for me. We lost it passing the International Date Line. Oh well I'll pick it up on the way back. I'm now 16 hours ahead of you back there.

It's a beautiful morning here. The sea is fairly calm and the weather is beautiful. It's not too windy so it's pretty warm. Not hot yet but it's warm.

We won't be able to receive mail 'til we reach Viet Nam but we're going to get our mail off to you in Okinawa

It must be rough back there, not hearing from me and just wondering how I am. It's not too bad for me. I know you're back there writing me. It's just a matter of waiting til I get there.

They tell us we should reach Okinawa Sunday or so. I hope so. That way I can get these letters mailed. I've written to all my sisters

I'm going to mail what I've written so far and start on a new letter.

Your Son,
Bill