

14 October 1945

Dear Ones,

I am a little puzzled as to what sort of a letter this will turn out to be. It is just after 0700 and I am down at the depot. The typewriter is resting on the hood of a jeep; I am sitting on a rain barrad, resting my feet on the jeep bumper. We were ordered to work today, but since we have a Navy work crew and an Engineer crane operator all we need is one Ordnance checker and I didn't see any point in spoiling Sunday for any of the men. I have nothing to do anyway. So I picked up the portable and here I am. Last night we played better than five hours of bridge and I won again. We are playing so much that we strike a great many interesting hands - I become more and more convinced of one thing - bridge is a unique combination of relaxation and concentration. It is spoiled when there are misplays because the bidding is forgotten, cards not counted, the hand not planned. (Oh, oh, the sun just went behind a cloud - my typing plans do not call for rain!) No mail again yesterday - this situation is getting serious; we have a busy few days ahead so if it does come in today or tomorrow, I will probably have to let it pile up without being answered for a while. Fish is still here he hopes to get off today - he got a little fouled up; there was a B-24 coming through and he was supposed to get on it but someplace along the line between the airport and here the connection failed and the plane arrived and left without him - good army style. (I just lost the jeep to let the men go after water; I have transferred the typewriter to the water barrel and I am perched on a none too strong empty crate. The sun is out again and I don't know whether it is better to face the threat of rain or the glare that comes from this white paper in the morning sunlight.)

The question now becomes what to write about. I read the Hard article on the Readers Digest last night and I thought that it was fair and realistic. I hope that it signals the predominance of a new "we must find a way to work with Russia for the sake of peace" attitude rather than the old type line of "look at everything that is wrong with Russia." There can be no doubt but that the atomic bomb once and for all materialized the dangers of "the horrors of the next war," which I guess are used as peace arguments after every war is over. We used to talk about Germ warfare and gas raids and bacteriological attacks, but the atomic bomb took this right out of the thriller magazine class. The testimony of Langmuir and Shapley show that American scientific leaders are certain that Russia will have the secret of atomic power and its control before long - this sword, like most others, will turn out not to be unique.

It is now 0750 and no trailers have showed up to haul this stuff we have away; the Navy doesn't work on Sundays ordinarily. But since the gang showed up I figured that the urgency of staging this material for shipment had led them to break their rule. So, I just called Major Moore; I'll let him worry about getting the trucks and trailers down here, it makes no difference one way or the other. The gang of men we have is part of a group of stevedores and laborers who were serving in the brig for various offences and were sent out here on probation; as I understand it, if they are on good behavior for one year, their bad time and their sentences are cancelled. It seems like a sensible policy; valuable man-hours are not wasted in the brigs and the men are offered the opportunity to get back on the right track. The stuff we are moving out now is M290's that is, Weasels - the little amphibian cargo carrier put out by Studebaker; it is a tracked vehicle. All of ours are crated; they were sent in for the division, never used, the crates never opened. What is the world they are good for now I do not know.

This is the kind of day when I wish that I could recall all the odd thoughts that pass through my head - whenever I sit down to write, I seem to lose touch with my own subconscious and the ideas and thoughts which seem to come so quickly and easily when I allow myself to lapse into day-dreaming (which is often) just do not come to me. There are times when I am driving, say, from the depot to the office, when I pull up at the office and find that I have been in a reverie during the trip and that I can not remember driving at all. I guess my subconscious never lets me know what my conscious is doing! If I ever were to try to write, I think that I might not do too badly - but it requires more work and concentration than I seem to be able to muster now. (Just heard from the old Major - shipment cancelled, detail to be sent back - I only lost a couple of hours out of my Sunday. I'll resume this back in the tent.)

It is now after lunch - Fish got off this morning. Still no mail - this is getting serious to say the least. There seems little point in rambling on in this letter because I feel so drowsy that I can't even think straight. Also I have been looking at the LIFE's with pictures of celebration in Frisco and of MGM's attempt to cool down "Postman" for the movies, and what I am liable to day dream about at this juncture is better unrecorded. Lana Turner -- oh well. I may give the orientation talk this weekend if things work out so that I have the time. I am planning tentatively on discussing Russia in general and the sharing of the secrets of atomic power in particular. It is an hour long session and it will require a lot of preparation and organization. We shall see.

OK for this sunny Sunday.

Regards to Doris

All my love,

*Summer*