

May 13th 1945

Dear Ones,

Happy Mothers' Day - it looks as though I will be holding down the office today while everyone else is marching around. Right now it is dark and overcast and threatening to rain. Fine! Last night Nate and I went over to the CB's and spent the evening with Hal - we hit a steak supper and a good movie "Ministry of Fear." His outfit really has a nice set-up - the club is about 20 feet from the water, it has a patio, very much the beach club effect. Hal's hut is no more than a couple of yards from the high-tide mark and since he is in the CB's of course he has running water and an icebox in his hut. One constant topic of conversation is to compare army and navy units - and needless to say the other fellow's side of the fence always looks greener. I got back to the tent around ten thirty and there was a poker game on - I joined for an hour or so. I went to bed and fell asleep doing a PM crossword which I took from Hal - I certainly fit that classic definition of an optimist: I do the puzzles with a fountain pen!

There was a good mail delivery yesterday carrying me through the 3rd of May. I hope that HB's date turned out all right - your comment on the corsage reminded me of something that is a pretty fair index of my social life in Portland and at college for that matter. I have never taken a girl to a formal dance and as a result I have never purchased a corsage! I still have a lot of firsts to look forward to! I am almost dropped through the floor when I read your report that Anna Sacknoff commented that I am like her nephew - conscientious, working extra hours, etc!! That is hardly the proper picture of life in Island Command at 708. As you say, however, there is no point in disallusioning people! I received the letter with the pictures and they are swell - just what the doctor ordered.

On the whole my feelings these days are neither blue nor happy, nor a happy medium - the best word for it is drab, since that best reflects the lethargy and dullness of the routine here - and the rub is that when things go wrong it is easy to slip into depression. But one of these days things will break and I may find myself in conditions to which I can make a more complete adjustment - that is what I am hoping for. There is very little on the bright side of an unconstructive, unprogressive existence such as this.

When you say that HB and I will be closer when I return because the age difference will be growing less and less you are right in more ways than one. HB is also catching up in school and in social life during these years that I am missing. I am glad that Grandpa pulled through his most recent attack successfully - I think that the summer at Menikoe will be a wonderful stimulant for him; just being in Portland can be an uplift for him. He certainly thank God for his children. In my last letter to Ruthie, I put in a subtle(?) comment about the slowing pace of her writing to me - I am waiting to see what her explanatory answer will be!

You asked about Herb's feeling on returning to the Pacific. He took it pretty well in stride - he never had kidded himself, he knew he was coming back and he prepared himself for it; and he did have the advantage over those who were coming out for the first time and who did not know what was in store for them. But believe me - it is rough to come back out here and all of us are counting on public pressure at home, if not the Army, to cause the improvement of the rotation system. With the release of men from Europe and the availability of transportation, no one out here can see any reason why within 6 or 9 months an effective system cannot be worked out for the permanent rotation of men with two years' service overseas. (The fact that the Navy has an 18 month effective system right now is a bitter salt in the Army wound.) I don't have to tell you that I am hoping for some silver lining to the current rotation clouds - for if the system is perfected and effective for 24 month rotation, it will happen just about a year from now when I become eligible. I hope, I hope, I hope.

The Spanish class is finished now - the instructor got his orders to move, so that ends that; I just stopped a couple of weeks before everybody else. I got a kick out of a note in



the Press Herald that Hildreth had paid a parking ticket and no one had recognized him - I just wonder whether his strength lies in his steadiness rather than in his dynamic personality. I am a little out of touch with the local political scene - but I can see in the moves of men like Sewall the same feeling which I have when I think in terms of living someplace other than Maine. There is an unresponsive air in the State of Maine, a readiness to sit still and to let things come as they may.

The mail just brought a batch of papers and magazines and I guess I will have plenty of time this afternoon to run through them.

All my love,

*Sewall*

Regards to Doris.