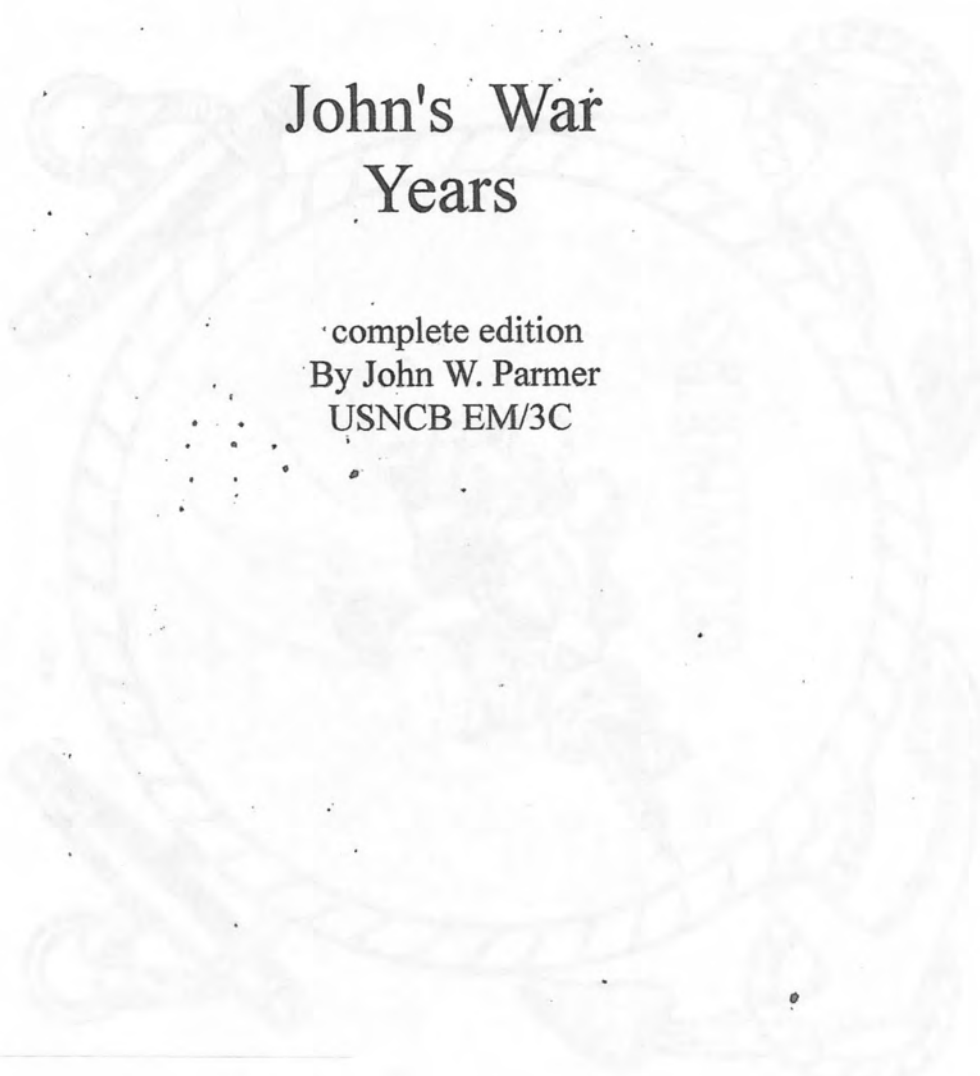


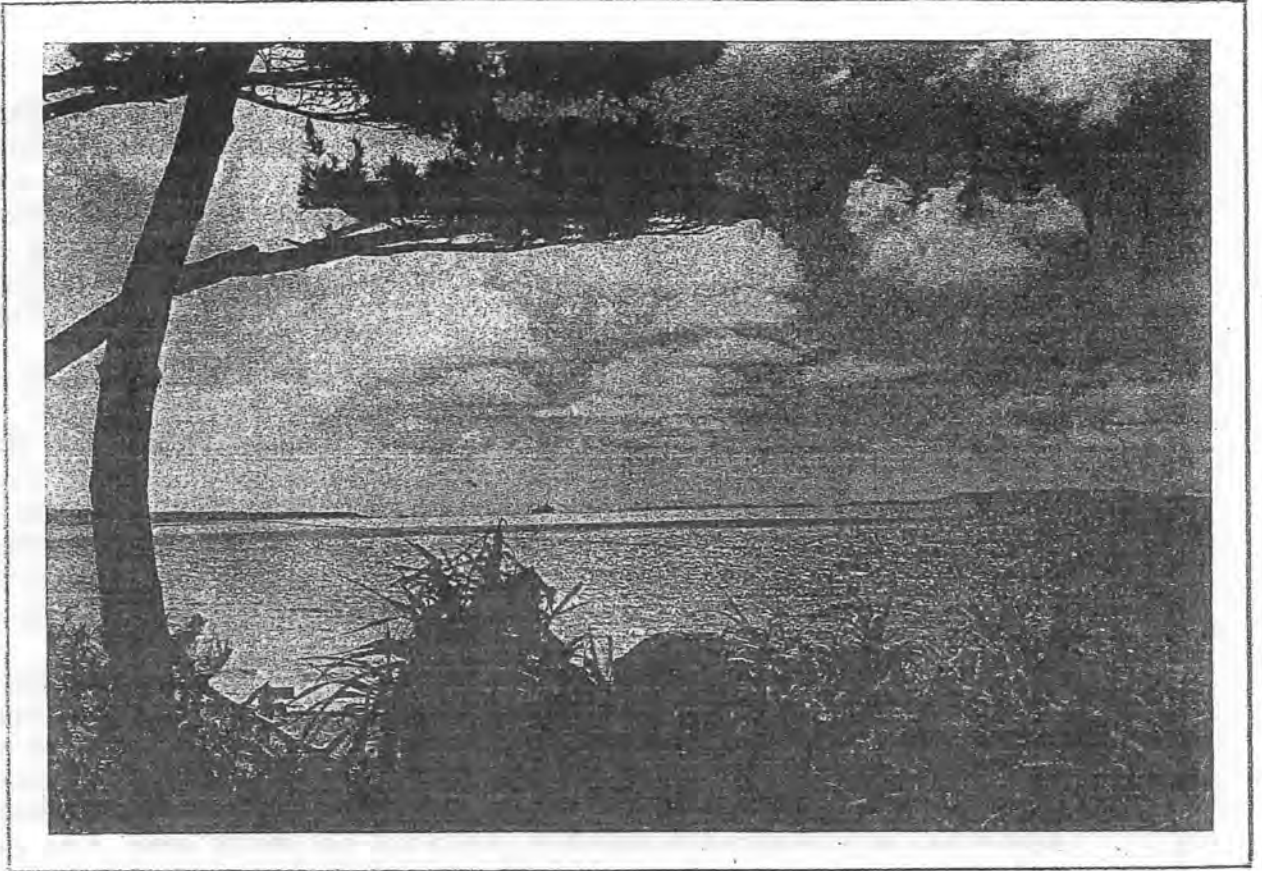
John's War Years

complete edition
By John W. Parmer
USNCB EM/3C

WE BUILD AND FIGHT WITH ALL OUR MIGHT

UNITED STATES NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALIONS





OKINAWA

THE thirty-day leave had been desperately short. Now back at Camp Parks all lips were asking "When? Where? What?"

Days of State-side routine slipped by. Drills, reviews, inspections, hikes, training movies, lectures, technical training, odd jobs, and liberty. Then came reorganization.

Six months passed. Now the Twenty-fourth was alerted for its second tour of duty. Aboard were 450 of its original men, 150 petty officers received from other outfits, 460 seamen for whom this was to be the first overseas tour.

It was May 17, 1945, when the APA 226, the U. S. S. Rawlins, slipped away from the dock in Frisco. For some it was exciting, most were quiet and somber. From the heights of the Golden Gate Bridge astern three wives waved good-bye. There was a catch in many throats.

There was the first night, the choppy sea, the pea-greenness of seasickness, the mad dashes from the chow hall. Then came Pearl Harbor, our first glimpse of the might of the Fleet's home, the repair docks, the carriers, battleships, cruisers, destroyers, and the swarm of the amphibious and supply train. Then on to Eniwetok and our first introduction to the Navy's beer gardens which seem to complement their refueling stations throughout the Pacific. Then on to Ulithi, the long stay in the harbor, the frequent trips to the old native village of Mog Mog, home now of Pabst Blue Ribbon, Schlitz—did someone say Goebbels?

On June 28 the Rawlins weighed its anchor. Next stop—Okinawa.

The emergency drills increased, signal lights flashed regularly throughout the convoy, guns were ready. Yet there was to be no incident. On the morning of July 2nd the convoy was off the southern coast of Okinawa. We watched our dive bombers attacking, a destroyer shelling some outpost of resistance, occasional bursts of artillery or mortar fire. The Rawlins pulled away and swung up the eastern coast. At sun-down the men of the Twenty-fourth were in the landing craft, moving towards what they were soon to know as Gray Beach in Nakagasuku Wan.

Till the early hours of the next morning trucks moved the battalion to its bivouac. En route were rifle shots—snipers or Americans. No one was sure.

Dawn broke on a bivouac of pup tents pitched hit or miss in the dark. The sun set on a camp of pyramidal tents and a field galley. It had been a busy day.

We were the first to arrive of a group of battalions which, as the 46th Naval Construction Regiment, Captain Dole F. Thompson, CEC, USNR, Officer-in-Charge, were to undertake the construction of a large Naval Supply Depot. The men of the battalion, long tired of the State-side drills and the inactivity aboard ship, fell to with a will.

Mercifully the first three weeks were dry. By the end of that period our access road was in, a coral pit was operating around the clock, a vital bridge was completed. The rains would not isolate us, or cut off the battalions that were coming in. The camp took shape around a fine, excellently equipped galley and mess hall, with concrete decks, housed in spacious stran-steel buildings. Quonset huts were up for sick bay, for the administrative offices and an officers' mess. Our supplies and tools were secure in framed 16x50 tents. Soon there were to be wood decks and lights throughout the camp. Already movies were shown in the evenings.

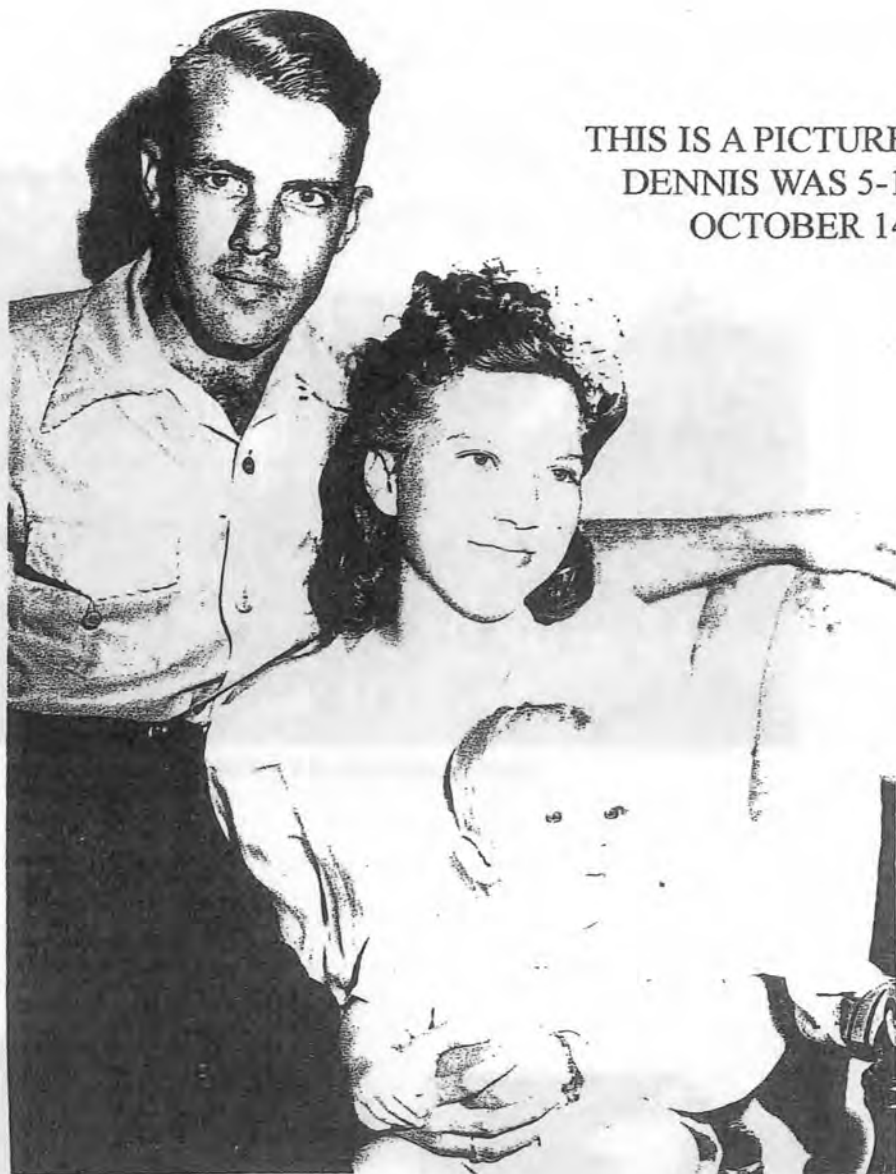
Then came the rains, almost a week of weather for which we had had time to get ready. When the sun came out again work started in earnest—for the Twenty-fourth the operation of the regimental coral pits and concrete plant, grading and coralling for a large warehouse area, roads and open storage areas, the erection of one 100x400 stran-steel warehouse each week; for the 68th, the 19th, 126th, the 6th, the 27th and CBMU 630 more roads, piers breakwater, warehouses, galleys, camps, storage areas—a vast effort directed towards a depot that on November 1 would be able to supply a carrier task force in forty-eight hours.

Now came the news of the atomic bomb—the wonder of it—would it shorten the war? Then the night of August 10, during an air raid alert, and without warning, from mouth to mouth, came news of the end of the war. Suddenly out of disbelief came elation. The sky filled with tracers; rifle shots rang out. Excitement ebbed and flowed. Rumors ran wild.

Dawn brought the disillusionment of the premature announcement. But the elation would not down and on September 2 the final surrender papers were signed in Tokyo.

The war was over—over—over. Soon was to come the point system—soon 180 of our older men were to leave for their homes—soon Commander Le Blanc was to say goodbye to the men he had served so faithfully. It had been three long years, and now it was over. Time would heal the heart-aches, obscure the work. But the moments of courage, the funny things, the friendships would be with the men of the Twenty-fourth forever.

THIS IS A PICTURE I KEPT WITH ME
DENNIS WAS 5-1/2 MOS. OLD
OCTOBER 14, 1944



JOHN W. PARMER EM/3C 3



ME ON OKINAWA



BOB CARTER AT WEDDING



ME AND DENNIS



This is a letter I wrote to Maxine apparently after the censorship was lifted. It was not dated. It tells about a lot of the things that I wrote about daily, which follows this letter.

My beloved: We left the States and the first stop was Pearl Harbor. It seems to me there was an awful small channel entering the bearing, it was quite a harbor though. Things are built back up, you wouldn't know anything had happened there. It's a rather mountainous area, with lots of vegetation. We left there then anchored off one of the Carolyne Island group. The most interesting island was Mog Mog. Just a stopping off place for the troupes, more or less. There was a building for the Officers and a place like a run down park with a band stand for the troupes. The issue was usually two beers and one coke. The coke drinkers traded to the beer drinkers and vice versa. There were quite a few coconut trees there. The island was just a coral and sand formation, really not much to squawk about. There was still some native huts, and native graves.

We left Mog Mog and later arrived in Okanawa. Quite a deal, we expected the worst. We cruised around the island and there was a small amount of shelling yet. We landed on a small dock, and very much to our surprise, the lights were on and an open movie showing. You wouldn't know there was going on. We sat there for about four hours then finally some trucks took us about sixteen miles into the hills on the other side of the island. The town was called Gushicha. It was dark. We slept in a cabbage patch and the next morning the Csamp site was selected. They got a pretty good place, on a beach shore and a terraced hillside. Everything is terraced here. The island is different than anything I have ever seen, or imagined. The island is hilly and covered with foliage, and nearly everywhere you look there is the remains of a cave, or an old fox hole. The entire area is laid out in patches about 50' to 100' square. Each is sunken and around the edges about one foot, leaving between the patches a little walkway of turf they could walk on and it holds the water. The fields are self fertilized by their own leavings. This is cause for caution of using the vegetation for consumption. The little farms seem to have been handed down from one generation to the other. The entire project is worked by hand with a little short handled hoe or what else they may have in crude makeshift implements. They grow much sugar cane, beets and sweet potatoes. They keep it well cultivated, and practically all of the labor is done by the women.

The houses here are very interesting. In the first place the house is stuck in a hole enclosed by a bank on the side exposed to the wind, the others protected by large rock walls. The rock is simply laid on top of each other leaving a very uniform shape. The trees grow on top of these rocks and the roots mat themselves all through the mass.

The houses are of frame structure hued out of wooden pieces using mortices and pegs, no nails, to hold the pieces together. Some are walled with crude thin lumber. The roofs are steep and thatched with grass matted thickly together. Some are tiled with homemade tiles. The floors are wood sheeting lain with hand woven mats about 8' to 10' square. The tables are only about 4" off the floor as they set in squatted position, no chairs.

The houses usually have 3 rooms, one for them, one for sleeping and the other for a goat, pig or horse. Their toilet is a box in the corner as they save the remains for fertilizer. The houses are grouped close together, like crude shelters. They sleep on straw mats and huddle together to keep warm. Each house usually has a crude hand made spinning machine. Hand made blankets around. The dishes are very small. Each house has a bake

oven outside, I guess for fire safety. If those old grass huts caught fire They would really burn. I know because we burned some to clear the camp area.

The women carry an awful load on their heads, work like mules, and live like slaves. They are here to raise children do the work and sleep with at night. The men follow empty handed, the woman with a large basket of stuff on her haid, her arms loaded and bare footed. The people bathe and run around naked, do their necessites anywhere they feel the need. I passed a house and a woman was bathing by a horse in an open barn, like a small wood shed. The men set around and smoke. The children are always begging with their hands out at passing trucks for candy ciggarets or what you might have. The kids strap the smaller ones on their backs as do their parents. The infants sleep hanging in the slings, you would think they would choke. Sometimes you would see a small child carrying one slmost as large. The people are verry small but mighty, I saw a child looked not more than twelve carrying two five gallon buckets of water. They claim a woman can carry 1/2 as much as a donkey. A donky carries two tubs of sugar beets, a woman carries 1 tub on her haid. The women look to be a hundred, except for the younger ones. The young ones wear a slack uniform with baggy pants, if un-married, If married they wear dresses or drapes. One of the guys saw a woman carrying a tub of potatoes on a stick over her shoulder with a rock on the other end to ballance. Wondered why she did'nt use another tub of potatoes or why she just did'nt split the load on each end.

The people gather in large groups, to work the fields. then start down the road barefooted, all in a single file, carrying hoes and all kinds of hand implements, The women look haggard, carrying baskets on their heads. The men ride on one horse carts. Men only. Later in the evening they return in the same mannor, heavily laden with the crops. Women loaded like horses, men on the carts.

Each family builds a toumb for their own. They burry their dead and after three years, they dig them up and put the remains in urns in the toumb. The toumb is built on a hillside to represent a pregnant women with opening and lower part representing legs. There is a resemblance. They believe in re-incarnation. The urns represent the ovaries and the parts are placed in them,

The hills are full of caves and boobie trapped. The officials tried to coax the Japs out of the caves and if they refused, dangerous and impossible to get them to come out, they were blown up. Sometomes with women ans children slaves as hostages. The Japs had the women and children afraid of torture. Soon they learned how the American men treated the women with concideration and respect and became very friendly. even around when you were stripped, across a straddle trench doing your thing., or showering. One might walk up to you and start jabbering and smiling. They had good morals and nudity meant nothing to them . One sure appreciates the American women after seeing these people.

They can live on a small handfull of rice and beets. They wash their food with their feet in a tub by stomping on it. I would say the the people and customs here are way behind the general line of civilation. The thing that bothers me the most is the ill respect of the womanhood here. I've always regarded women as the most wonderful things in life.

Love, Your everlovin hubby

THE WAR YEARS

John W. Parmer

I graduated 1938 at Plattsmouth Nebraska High School, entered the C.C.C. camp (civillian Conservation Corps). Weeping Water Nebraska and put in chare of a 36 man barracks, taught typing, carpentry and had 5 men to work for me to do camp building and maintenance. The C.C.C. was taken over by the army and I was offered a 1-st Sergeants rank if I would re-enlist. At that time my parents had decided to move to California and I chose to go with them.

I had always been interested in aircraft and flying We settled in South Gate Ca. 1939 and bought into a partnership with Ben Hughes Electrical Contracting business. and I began working as an electrician. I began taking flying lessons as time permitted.

December 7, 1941. I was driving to my then girl friends house in East Los angeles and passing under the underpass at Telegraph and Alantic listening to music on the radio when an announcement broke in and announced that the Japonese had bombed Pearl Harbor, all leave:s canceled and all millitary personell to return to their bases. I had been working full time at our business then called Hughes and Palmer Electric Co. At that time the name was spelled Palmerdue to a mistake when we moved to Plattsmouth. The name was found to be spelled this way all over town so dad decided to leave it as was because work was tight there and we might not live there long. We stayed and kept the spelling until we later corrected it in California. The war was getting started and I wanted to join the Air Force,. I had started flying Feb.11, 1940 at Mines Field Inglewood Ca. a 2000 ft runway surrounded by hay fields . now known as LAX . Started with a 40 hp Taylorcraft then Fleet Bi-planes, Luscombes and others. I soloed July 1940 at California Flyers, a popular quality flying school, housing Clark Gable's Republic Sea Bee, Bryan Hearn's Mono-plane, Hoot Gibson's and Harold Loyds Bi-planes, Frank Clark's Great Lakes, Bob Cummings Auto Car and Travelair Fleet bi-planes which I rented mostly, paying \$6.00 pr hour, \$12.00 hr with instructor. I had 30 minutes solo time and was informed that I would have to look for another place to rent planes as the Military had booked all of the available time. I found a patched up bi-plane available at the Dairy Parachute Co. that I could rent to continue flying. I was allowed to sit in on classes on Civilian Pilot Training started at the Compton Jr. College by the Military but could not get credits. I did well, got 90 in Meterollogy, 90 in Navigation and 95 in Civil Air Rules. I accumulated 15 hours flight time by Oct 5, 1941, I could only afford 30 min or so at the time. I resumed flying after the war and recieved my license at LaPuente Ca. Feb. 28, 1948.

I went to the requiting office to join the Air Force, sure that my early training would be of help. Their first question was "do you have two years college" This I did not have and he said "sorry, gain all of the experience that I could as they would probably relax this requirement later.

I told my dad that I was going to apply for a job at North American Aircraft and next day early morning Sept. 4, 1941 I went to the plant in Inglewood. The employment line was long and I placed myself at the end. I finally reached the window and was asked what was my qualifications and I said "electrician".

His reply, "we don't need any at this time" "next". I turned away and thought to myself that this was not what I wanted to hear so I returned to the end of the line. Again, after reaching the window, the man said "you were here before weren't you"? I said "yes", but you didn't hire me". He said "come in" and sent me to a department called wire manufacturing. Here they assemble bundles of wire groups and solder lug-connectors for pre-fabricated units to be placed in the aircraft being assembled as B-25 and Mustang fighter planes. I was always particular in my work and it was liked by the foreman so he had me instructing the new employees. Soon I was approached by the Superintendent of Inspection Department and asked if I would become an inspector, and told that I would be trained in all of the departments of the B-25 and Mustang, including the Experimental Department. The inspectors were paid well and this happened March 2, 1942. Maxine and I were married Sept. 1944. and I ended up as a Service and Flight Inspector Feb. 28 1944, rated Essential Employee, and admonished not to go near the draft board. Top pay at that time was \$1.35 pr hr. and we worked 10 hour shifts. One of the highlights of this job was because I was qualified to take charge in any department, I was asked to take inspection job in the B-25 wing department as they included wiring and bomb racks under the wings for the Tokio Raid. The wings came down the assembly line and at this time the day and night shift were in contest to put out the most assemblies. I found the wiring to be faulty and wrote "squack" remarks to be corrected in the book. At this time I was working the Swing shift 4:00PM to 1:00 AM. The production removed my ("squack") correction sheet and put it in the trash barrel. I saw this and each time, secretly removed them and locked them up in my desk drawer. (My foreman did not want to be bothered with problems and told me when I became inspector that I was in charge and he would back me on my decisions if I was right.) This seemed to be the time so at the end of the shift I red tagged the wings and 3 aircraft that they had installed the wings on. I stamped the tags E-45 which was my ident. and went home. The next day I came to work I was sure I would be fired, everyone was waiting for me, Major Harris the Air Force Rep., The Supers and my foreman. The line had not moved and the question was "Where are the Squack sheets, there are not in the book" I said because production had thrown them out and I had them in my drawer. and that I would not accept the wiring as installed. Major Harris blew his top reprimanded production, commended me for my insistence on perfection. the problems were corrected. I returned to the Flight Line, The Inspection job was an important and interesting one.

As time passed I became to feel like a draft dodger, not too respected in those days. I was supposed to bring my draft notices to the office at the plant because I was rated 2-B and needed at the plant. One day November I asked Major Harris, the Air Force Rep. to write me a recommendation for the Air Force and went to the draft board. in Los Angeles and was drafted December 1944.

The draft Board rep. told me that the only ones that they were recruiting at this time were for the Army. I was sent to the separation Center ~~SAN PEDRO~~ near Long Beach, Ca. and assigned a barracks bunk. (I had remembered that a friend had told me that most of the services were short handed and was run by junior personell, as yomen etc., and I should take advantage of it to get what I wanted.

I thought that this was the time, so I slipped out of my quarters and found the building where the men were being separated, and waited outside the exit door, and asked who was going in the Navy and was told that only people for Radar. The next day my Barraks was called to line inside the building. there was four desks in front Navy, Army, Marine and Air Force. When I approached the front of the line my name was called out "Army". I thought this would be my last chance so I called out in question, "Army?, I'm supposed to go in the Navy." The Navy man asked "why do you say that?" I promptly said "Radar". He asked if I had taken the Eddie Test. (This was a test to qualify for Radar training). I said, "not yet, they said I would take it in San Diego, Look at my resume, I have been an electrician most of my life, it's on the records. He looked, believed me and stamped my papers Navy, and was told my next stop would be the training base at San Diego.

I arrived there and was assigned to a training co. The training Officer asked me to be Petty Officer of the Guard. This would be my job to assign guards, prompt them and put them at various locations, and check on them at times. This gave me more freedom and a little importance. We were interviewed for assignment and asked what branch we preferred I told them that I did not know anything about Radar. and that I was an electrician and supposed to go into the Sea Bees. I was told at that time the only ones going in there was younger men and much older experienced men. At least I was in the Navy.

Time passed in training, and I met a buddy named Woods. we trained together and as luck would have it, a Sea Bee Chief named Douthit was temporarily assigned to our unit while ashore here and was one of our training officers. He was a good man and I became a friend. I told him that I wanted to be a Sea Bee and asked him if he would turn his head when we marched so Woods and I could sneak off and see what we could do. It was about noon when we slipped out of rank We found the personell building and waited untill the brass left for lunch. The yoman was there so we went inside and he asked if we had a chit permitting us to come in. I said no, a mistake had been made and I did'nt want to stir it up unless I had to. I told him that we were supposed to be called to the Sea Bees as I was an Electrician and Woods was a Drag Line operator. He pulled our files and told me that I was scheduled to go to Alanta Ga. Shipboard electrician and Woods was to go to the Anfibs, (a Navy boat operation) I convinced him that this was a mistake I was an electrician, all on the form, and Woods is needed as a drag line operator. He believed us and re-typed something and the next couple days we boarded a bus for Camp Parks Sea Bee Base near Loivermore Ca.

We entered the gate to the base and I noticed besides all of the barraks buildings, there was a section on Quanset huts, (metal buildings developed for many uses), clothes lines and visable living there, so I asked what it was and was, and told that it was quarters for enlisted men to live in with their familys while they stateside. We were to go to an area called Detention. Here we would get our shots and be configned for 10 days I slipped out and went to the hut area, many being lived in and many morbeing built. I asked the Cheif there about the huts and he told me the set-up and asked what outfit I was with?.

I told him that I was with the 24th. batallion. (I had heard that had just returned from Alaska and we were to be assigned to them.) He said "oh they just came in from Alaska". I said "yes" (Did'nt tell him that I was a new recrute, just assigned to them.) He told me to come in and sign up that I should have one. Maxine wanted to come up to be with me but it was impossible to find a place to ren t. Bud did find an old shack though. It had weeds waist high all around it, windows broken, an old bed with rusted springs you could hear for blocks. but they were glad to get it. After my time in detension, having shots etc. We were marched to a large barracks to be assigned bunks . and the names were called out with bed numbers. When my name was called the officer said "John I don't know how, but you have a Quanset Hut waiting for you. Just be here on time for morning muster and duties. April 23, 1945 I was required to sign a rental agreement to maintain the quarters and pay a fee of \$1.00 pr. day and a \$3.00 service fee. There were 3 completely furnished rooms. 1-kitchen and living, 1- bedroom and 1- bath, small yard, clothline and parking space. This was great, we had access to the facilites on the base, the comosary, medical etc. Maxine drove up from South Gate with our little son Dennis. I had to be on time for morning muster and returned home each evening after duties, This was great.

There was an officer named Moon, a nice guy, He had been with the 24th Batallion and was due to be shipped out again with us. He liked San Francisco and as I had a car on base and priveleges, he asked could I slip him out in the trunk of the car. I said "sure but if we get caught, I did'nt know you were in there, and you are on your own. This was fine to him and we did it several times. He was greatful and told me that when we reached our destination that he would see that I got a good job. Our destination turned out to be Okinawa, and he kept his word, (details later.) One night Moon was in the trunk and we were heading out for San Francisco as usual. Normally the guards at the gate recognising me and the car waives us on but this night a guard asked to see in the trunk. I pulled over to the side and got out of the car reached into my pocket, then told the guard "darn, I changed the tire today and left the key on the table, Just a minute, I will run back and get it," and turned to do it. He said "forget it and get going" This we did happily. I was affraid that if I got caught that I would loose the priveleges that I has so luckilly acquired, but knowing that it was soon to ger rougher I would appreciate what this experienced officer might do later.

We had no idea where we were to be sent, they even issued us cold weather clothing, lined pants, shirts jackets etc. which we got rid of later. Our stay at Camp Parks came to an end and we were prepairing to be shipped out of San Francisco Bay undser the Golden Gate bridge. We gave up our little home, settled up with the rent etc. Maxine then had to make the trip back to South Gate with the car and little Denny. It was pretty tiring for her and she was weary and saw a sailor hitching a ride so she decided against her better judgement to pick him up to possibly help her with the driving. He was a nice guy and did. She and Denny arrived home safely which was a worry to me, and she told me all about the drive in a nice letter which I recieved later

IN NAVY

The following account was compiled from notes and from letters that Maxine had saved that I had written in service. The difficulty was that the Censors cut out dates and bits of information that they thought might in some way give the enemy a clue of our position and operation if they somehow got possession of them. A friend told me that a man sent a letter to his wife and the censor had cut the bottom off after Dear Mary; and added a note "He still loves you but he talks too much". When we departed we agreed that we would save our letters to read later when I got home. This account is compiled from notes and from letters that I had written, and includes only the military aspect, not the personal messages. I am not a writer so there will be mistakes.

As noted previously I had been stamped Navy. The following is an account of the days following, as best I could piece it together.

12-07-44 We boarded the bus and left the Separation Center at Alameda near Long Beach Ca. and rode to San Diego, Ca. Naval Training Center. They bunked us and gave us blankets, shower, food and to bed. All windows wide open. Rolled us out at 5:30 p.m. and marched us to chow. Got examined, vaccinated, shots and a close haircut. We are now stationed at U.S.N.T.C. U.S. Naval Training Center. San Diego Ca.

12-09-44 In Boot Camp, everything double time and busy. Issued clothes, and now waiting for a Company to form which we will be assigned to. I was put on guard duty 8:00 -10:00 p.m. Marched on the Grinder (drilling area) Have a nice Platoon commander named Kelly. He is efficient and we keep this place spotless in and out.

12-11-44 Learning Semaphore (message using flags), Codes and General Orders. Lots of drilling, marching and training on cleanliness and hygiene.

12-12-44 Took I.Q. tests I got above average they said. The mates said that I talked in my sleep about Maxine and Denny. There is about 40 in this barracks, bunks 3' apart.

12-14-44 Took strength tests, very tiring I got a good average. I got 46 the group average was 40. We were briefed on family benefits should the occasion arise. Swimming tests tomorrow, I have to swim 220 yards and stay in water, deep end, for ten minutes after. Have to read 6 chapters of our manual practice semaphore and learn general orders, and clean all of the time. We take yellow fever, and typhoid shots, and are learning drilling maneuvers. The Navy issued everything we need. I gave my shoes and cloths to Red Cross.

12-20-44 I have been assigned the job to check and place guards. Quite a few new men, and it has to be right. I have a crew that goes on duty from 12:00 to 2:00 am.

12-22-44 Had a big washing and had to clean the barracks. We go on parade in front of the Brass next week. Have to drill, do semaphore and other movements. This also has to be right. Setting here looking at your and Denny's picture, I get lots of compliments. My guard men are doing great, Makes me look good. Have to go on skullery duty, everyone has to.

12-26-44 I have been officially appointed Petty Officer of the Guard I have to drill my men on general orders, march them to H.Q. and make reports We had the parade and everything was great The Brass was happy. We serve food today, and I served Gene Kelly The Movie Star.

1-03-45 I mustered my men guards, had rifle and small boat training. they gave me a crew and a whale boat and made me coxin, (gave orders,) we did a pretty good job. at least we did,nt sink.

1-04-45. Walked into the barracks and was told to rush my 22 men to HQ. now i am sitting watching them learn to swim Long march tomorrow. Some of my men passed swimming so far. Possibly more some havn't checked in as yet. Vow from a homesick sailor, When I get home I am going to do everything I can to make you and Denny happy

1-08-45 A man came in and checked me all over and said I had a slight case of scarlet fever, called it scarlettina. Throat not so bad, lungs ok. said I would have a rash tomorrow. Now i'm lying in the bunk looking at you and Denny's picture. Went to the Hospital to get throat sprayed and pills. I was told that about 50 has rash not sure yet if it is scarlet fever, or red measels. They have called off all shows, closed rec.hall and will probably cancel all leaves.

1-09-45 Now in hospital, said scarlet fever. I feel ok. temp normal.. They are using busses as ambulances to transport men to hosp. 1 load this morning 1 load at noon and now 1 waiting. Some guys got it hard. Doc. said I had a mild case. The bed is soft and the food is great.

1-10-45 Still in this damn bed, I wish they would give it to someone who is really sick and let me go back to my unit. The doc. said I didn't need a shot.

1-11-45 *:00 now, just finished eating sick of hearing groans and bed pans. Some guys really sick some stretcher cases.

1-12-45 A guy just came by and gave me a big glass of pineapple juice. told me one guy has scarlet fever and measels another scarlet fever, mumps tonsilites and measels.

1-17-45 the nurses are Waves. Red Cross brought me a box, shaving cream etc They do this now you know where the money goes, it's great. The doc came in, the nurses brought me clean sheets. I'm getting lazy. A guy here had a letter with Dutch Kindleburger's picture and a cracked up plane. He was the pres. on North American Aviation I talked to him many times at the plant. He would come by and ask "How are you doing? young feller. Always walked around with his hands clasped in back like dad used to. The fellow worked in the experimental department. I was inspector there at times. They had a scarlet fever epidemic many died with bad serium.

1-20-45 Back at Training Center in Quarenteen. About 30 men in barracks. I have been appointed in charge, which means clean-up duties, etc. I don't know why they picked me, most of the men have been through schooling and in a Boot. Last night I heard a big thud. The guy that gave me the juice told me he clobbered a guy that was getting smart with a nurse, he said he lifted him about 3'.

1-21-45 Met a guy that said he worked for the Vogue theater at Huntington Park I asked if he knew Bob Carter I told him how we met and about Bob. He said he remembered and he dropped Bob off at the wedding to be our best man. Quite a coincedance.

1-22-45 They say we will start classes again soon. Next recognition of aircraft and ships. A lieutenant dropped in to see how many bunks were available. I have to assign 5 men to clean the C.P.O. room It's 3:00 and I told them I would be back to check. It's 7:00 now and I have to get my guards to their duties. lot of new men today.

Note picture later of Bob Carter at our wedding Colonial Wedding Mannor Lynwood, Ca Bob on right then I then Rev . Gortez, next Maxine, next Aileen, (Doc) Maxine's sister

1-23-45 Almost 2:00 Quiet now, not much to do I am in the Yomen's room studing have to get the men on detail at 8:00 pm. then bed time at 9:00 pm. I have been getting the mail and canteen stuff for the guys and they are all yelling for it. Better go and get it.

1-25-45 Springfield rifle class today and more studing .

1-26-45 Today the mail man came by and made me an official mail man. now I have to report in every morning and evening for mail, sort it and have mail call. All the guys waiting with their hands outstretched. I finally have a system. I have been doing this, but not officially. This will cease when I leave quarentind area and move on. I was appointed in charge of the mail for the entire ward area. Have 10 mail men and had to sign, bonded \$5000.00. penalty for mail tampering is 1 year in jail

1-27-45 Still in the mail business I asked why they picked me They said because I looked interested and dependable. Think they were passing me a line.

1-28-45 Have to go to the Hosp. and pick up mail. Outgoing, dead and unclaimed, then pick up from all of the wards, check and tie it. Lots of packages and approx 500 letters.

1-29-45 Mail job getting bigger, need to appoint another mail man Got 3 more. While I was sorting mail I found a letter to My Batoon leader Kelly, I had to leave his command when I went in the Hosp, I wrote on the back of the envelope "Hello Kelly" and signed it John Parmer, Chief Postmaster. Bet he was suprised He was a nice guy. Sorry I didnt get shipped out with them. I have 12 mail men now and an assistant.

1-31-45 Had about 5000 letters and 100 packages to sort today. Returned a big mail sack full so many moving or something, went to my mail office at 8:30 am. and finished 5:pm.

2-01-45 The Chief came in my mail room this morning and was wondering who would take this job when I got released from quarentine to go back to duty. He said it was quite a job. I agreed. I told him I was anxious, homesick and ready to get back to duty. He just smiled.

2-03-45 I,m in a new Company my old group went on. Lots of Company,s have gone It,s 7:30 now and I am getting an idea of how this company runs things. I an not boss anymore, just plain boot. Now I have to workon my own. no crews to tend.

2-04-45 Up at 5:30 am. Sunday checked out a boat with a friend and went sailing till about 3:00pm. Boy was he excited It got pretty gusty. Have to get up 4:00 am. to serve food tomorrow. Got last shot last night. A quite a few died with this shot, from bad serium.

2-05-45 Served food, now 6:45 am. went and saw a Lieutenant and had him write me a chit (slip) to go to Administration. I went, and the yoman told me I could'nt come in as they are not supposed to see recutes. I thought as much, that was why I got the note. He looked up my records and told me that they were to send me to a shipboard electrician school in Georgia . Luckly a Sea Bee Chief was temporery on base and was assigned to train us. He was a nice guy named Douthit. We were friends, and I told him I wanted to get in the Sea Bees. Would he turn his head when we marched so I could slip off and go

to the personel building. I had a friend named Woods who was a drag line operator, had a family and did'nt know what was in store for him.

2-06-45 The Chief marched us near the building, glanced, turned his head and we left rank. I told Woods we would wait outside until the Brass left for lunch and go in when the Yoman was alone. We went in, the Yoman said we wern't supposed to be there. I told him that a mistake had been made and I did'nt want to stir it up. I told hin that Woods and I was supposed to be gone to the Seabees weeks ago. He pulled our files and said that Woods is slated to go in the Amphibs. and I to go to Ga. I said that is a mistake, I am an Electrician and woods is an equipment operator, thats why we were called. He took our files typed in something and in two days, we wreere told to pack our gear for departure.

2-08-45 On our way to Camp Parks, got up 4:30am. packed gear, boarded dirty train 10:00 am.

2-09-45 Arrived Oakland and boarded a good bus to go to Camp Parks Shoemaker Ca. Near Livermore. At camp no one seemed to care what I was doing after I checked in I found Boud and had a good lunch with his batallion. Good chow. they have shows, rollor skating, bowling pool tables etc. liberty every night from 5:30to 7:15 am the next morning. strict on this On the bus coming in I noticed quanset huts with clothslines kids and people living. I slipped out of detention, (we were configned to an area for shots.) went over there and asked the Chief what it was,. He told me they were units for returning men to stay until they went out again. He asked what outfit I was with. I told him the 24th. not telling him just assigned. He said "oh, they just got back from Alaska" I said "thats right." He said "why don't you sign up". I did.

2-12 45 Up early 4:00 am, moved to another section. Had fire instruction, put out many types and had to go into smoke filled chambers and use gear.

2-13-45 Work detail loading 60 lb boxes of mortar shells Touchy stuff. Great chow, men getting assignments, I should get mine soon.

2-14-45 Up early again 4:00 am. moved to another barracks, learned to tie knots, had more fire drill. tired tonight.

2-15-45 Went to Dock had my leggs and feet taped, too much marching they called it shinsplints, painfull, the tape helped a lot.

2-19-45 Tried to get in Boyds outfit, no luck, worked in canteen sold candy, cigaretts etc. Went on leave and got back late, the guy at gate turned clock back for me when I checked in. The cab driver wanted \$20.00 to drive me. I told him I wouldn't have \$20.00 in two months and to stuff it.

2-20-45 Checking my gear to go to the 24th Batallion They say the 86th and 24th will probably convoy together, who knows where. Perhaps Manilla.

2-23-45 Signed rental agreement for Quanset Hut. \$1.00 pr day and a \$3.00 proprocessing fee.

2-24=45 We were marched to a barracks to be assigned bunks, when the names were called out the Co. said "Parmer you have a Quanset hut waiting for you", "Don't know how you did it. You need to report in for muster each morning." and leave after duty.

Maxine and Dennis moved in with me on base. She wanted to be with me but there was no place to find to rent. This was great.

5-17-45 Departed Camp Parks 12:15 pm. From hereon all mail was sent to censor
so I will try to note inserts by me and info. from my notebook that I could not write at
the time. by an * (enclosed. with) .

Letter # 1 We loaded on ship * (U.S.S. Rawlins APA-226 a troop carrier and sailed out under the Golden Gate Bridge 5:00 pm.) "dates cut out by censor" Saw harbor got real sea sick when we hit rough water by *(Farallon Islands) Lost everything, laid in sack two days ate slices of bread the mates brought me. A storm hit us the first night out. all you can see is water and more water. the ship handed us out their little news papers, I cant send them to you because it has the ships name on it. I will save them for you to see later. Got a good bunk. I am in the foreward hold in bow of ship 4 th up from the deck with 2 above me. The sea is rough in the bow of the ship but not too bad now. Give my sail boat away don't want anything to do with boats .

* (5-22-45 Arrived Pearl Harbor 2:00 pm. Boyd got anxious to see and jumped ship and got wet. The water was murky with contamination and he had to be de-contaminated when he got back to his ship.)

*(5-23-45 Left Pearl Harbor 2:00 pm. Ship crowded with men.) Movies aboard I tried a little fishing off fantail. moving too fast to troll. I feel fine now, water is calm and beautiful. Air fresh out here, very warm. I am going to write a little, can't tell you where I am or have been. I will start letter and add a little each day until it can be mailed. A guy told me that a censor cut the bottom half of a letter he sent to his wife and wrote a note, "He still loves you, but he talks too much," A guy offered me \$50.00 for the knife J.C. made for me. A notice has been posted that mail would be picked up for censoring to be mailed at the next stop.

The moons are huge and beautiful Golden. Never saw a more beautiful setting. This ship is taking me further away from you each day. The nights, cloud formations, sun settings, moon rises and deep blue water is fantastic. Card games numerous on almost every spot room for 4 or 5 mates. Sunrises and sets like a big fire in a pretty cloud formation Got up early and shaved. I have my helmet hanging over a pipe and use it as a catch all The toilet is a long trough, you squat, and raise, and squat as ship rolls, as the stuff flows back and forth beneath you. Fresh water is short and most of the washing is in sea water using salt water soap. Sometimes showers are warm and soft but sea water is turned on before you can finish. Not a lot of room on deck. Its hot, not much ambition.

*(When you are aboard a ship during an attack or threat the hold doors are closed and dogged to be ship tight if a shell should hit. I knew this, and being in the fwd. hold and at risk, I would get topside and sit behind a large tube like thing, (mine cable cutter) it was mounted on bulkhead and had a nice bracket I could set on and it sheltered me from the wind. I spent a lot of time here.)

The mates rigged up a boxing ring atop a hatch cover, they are going to try matching their skill. Water is rough today, looks like rain (Censor cut out dates) I should know better. I am laying in my sack in my birthday suit on. It's hot You can sunburn quickly outside. I found out the hard way. I am to go on watch tomorrow don't know where. *(it was in the bottom of ship near propeller shaft.) The Chaplain is continually taking movies of the trip. Would be nice to get a copy. Perhaps.

I have to serve food 2 more times then done with that. *(We crossed the international date line got a little certificate Harken Ye The said vessel, officers and crew have

inspected and passed 881-87-96 John w. Parmer and has found sane and worthy of the silent Mystries of the Far east. Copy in back of book.)

Off k.p. today cleaned and shaved. Hot. *(A band came aboard from the ship U.S.S. California and entertained us today) Had a touch of the flu, stayed in sack quite a bit. Not much to write about . Little excitement a small crate floated bu and all hands watched it go by. It was the first thing seen for days I went fishing on the fan tail, Finally caught one. Got it out a couple feet and lost it. *Censor cut out the type it was in letter) I wrote the guys at North American, don't know how many are still there.

* Following is information that I could not write in letters.

* 6-1-45 arrived at Marshall Islands (Perry Islands) a Large circle 1-2 miles apart connected by coral reefs. We anchored off-shore.

*6-03-45 Mail boat arrived. We went ashore for a beach party. See picture of grass hut. had ball games beer cokes etc. traded beer for cokes or \$1.00. The uranals on these islands are mounds of sand with 2" pipes sticking in them about 2' high with a funnell on the end All you needed was a good aim.

*6-05-45 Left Marshall Islands 4:pm.

*6-07-45 Had a pay day aboard ship Paid 90 Yen not good aboard ship.

*6-09-45 Sighted the Carolinas Islands dropped anchor off shore 4:00 (1600) pm.

*6-10-45 Went ashore, another beach party like last one.

*11-12-13 Anchored off shore.

* 6-14-45 Went ashore for another beach party. like before.

* 6-15-45 There was a large grass hut ashore and it had a large bill board inside with names. I looked for renes husband Charles Kitts name but did'nt find it He was a Marine.

*6-17-45 Still anchored off shore I think we are waiting for convoy ships to arrive,

*6-19-45 We were paid \$5.00 to spend aboard ship for things we might need.

* 19-20-21 Still at anchor.

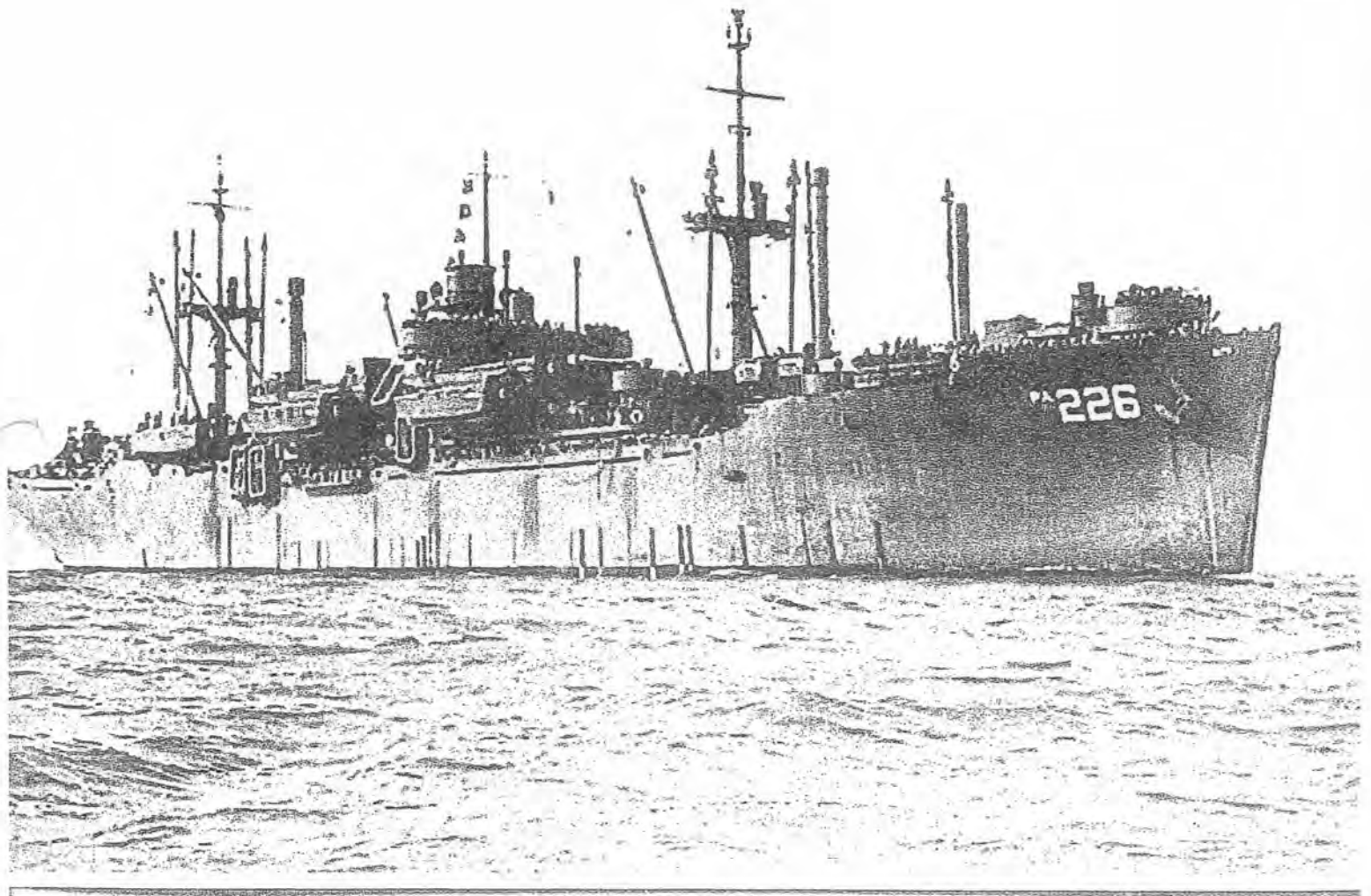
*6-22-45 Found out that Boyd's ship arrived. I went to the signal man with blinker lights to try to find his ship. He did. I got permission tom visit him.

*6-23-45 I bummed a ride on the mail boat to his ship went aboard visited had a good lunch and bummed a ride back to my ship on the evening mail boat. This was a great help by everyone and appreciated it.

*6-24-25-26-27 Still anchored off shore.

* 6-28-45 Weighed anchor 11:30 and left the Carolynes. We were instructed to be vigalent and keep our eyes pealed, as anything could happen now. We are a Convoy, many ships.

* (Under way again. To where? We are evading enemy subs using a zig zag route. The warning whistle would blow and the ship would roll sharply in a tight turn) On board with a wet end. It's cooled down quite a bit now, Windy. Wet where I was so i retreated to the sack. Another washing to do but I hate to get at it. You have to wash them in a sink and they don't come clean with salt water soap Have to hang them where you can.. Very hot today not much shade on deck not much ventalation below. Went ashore a small Island for a beach party to break the monotony. played ball. had cakes and the usual. Sold my beer for dollars.



USS Rawlins APA 226 A Haskell attack transport Victory ship built at Vancouver Washington. Commissioned November 1944 Sailed from San Francisco May 17, 1945, and landed at Okinawa late in evening July 2nd, 1945. and debarked seamen including my outfit, the 24th. Naval Construction Battalion. She was decommissioned November 1946.

16A

I suppose you are missing the xxx kisses on the letters, thats a no-no, one of the censor rules, I guess they know best. Carught another fish, not allowed to tell you what kind. Cant tell the names of the movies they show also. Met a sailor from Des Moines Ia. a cousin of uncle Ralph Wikker. He knows mothers people, Levi's, Coxes, Lovells, and Chandlers. His name is Kenneth Thomas.

*(7-01-45 Approaching Okinawa, the island is not secured, told to be extra vigilent. I recieved a battle star. We cruised around and landed full army style over the side of the ship on rope ladders into landing boats at 7:00 am. at 6:pm (1800) we loaded in trucks to head for our to be camp area, traveled in darkness, getting sniper fireI got grazed on scalp, burnt a little and pulled hair out but no blood, no purple heart. one of the guys said john scratch it with your fingernail. but I did'nt. The truck driver stopped and asked if anyone was hurt. fortunally no one was. but the helments went on. We arrived at our area in total darkness. Had to bed down for the night, I chose a spot but bedded on an ant hill. I felt something crawling and wrapped in net. next morning I was covered with large red ants, no bites, lucky I guess. A warrent officer thought he heard a chicken and looked, got shot. They found the sniper tied in the tree._

*(We set up on a nice gentle sloping area ashore Kimma Bay near a town called Gushicha. An old native shook his head and said "no good," "typhoon blow away." He pointed to a more sheltered area. He was right as noted later.

*(7-06-45 un-loading and un-packing gear and supplies, trucks coming in continually. A couple trucks came in loaded, one with meat the other with sugar, said that they saw a line and backed in it, thought we could use it. The seabees were noted for this sort of thing.)

Setting up temporary chow hall, had first hot meals on Island. We also set up tents on dirt floor and moved in. Little more comfortable.

*(7-09-45 To work We have been assigned to set up Navy Supply Depot A.B.C.D. This was a good mistake on their part. We needed a lot of stuff. and it looked like a good place to get it. I was issued a cherry picker to operate, (a small crane) for lifting etc. We all took advantage of the situation, We had nothing, the supplies were abundant. We kept our eyes open as they trucked it in off the ships. We managed to drop and open crates of items like flashlights, coleman lanterns, bucketts etc. Our Chief needed a Walking Stick (a drill on wheels to drill dynamite.) we found one and procured it. Cant complain, we were well supplied in the proper way.

7-11- 45 I needed a small transformer loaded by hand on truck I got huge native and pointed to transformer and said turckoo, He shook his head, said too big, I put my hand on my knife and said truckoo, He picked it up, no problem. He could of snapped me with his little finger. Working daily at Supply Depot.

7-19-45 Started to build a bridge, working nights. have generator and flood lights. A bomber came over high and I asked Chief if I should douse the lights, He said no, not until I see the bombay doors open, Luckilly they did'nt.

*(Boyd came over for a visit He is in the 86th and camped at Yonabaru above Buckner Baay(Nakagusuku Bay)

It's hot now sleep with nothing but shorts o, sweat a lot. Writing by candle light work is hard. No We did,nt stop at Phillipenes, you asked. Couldnt have told you anyhow.

It's quiet here, dont think we will need to dig fox holes, It's hot and dirty, camp barely set up. Sleeping on our folding canvas cots, The salt water baths are a littler irritating. Water purifiers not set up as yet. They give us candy, cigarets and gum every night. The area is picturesque. Can' describe it to you, censored, perhaps later. Canteen not set up, no pay yet, no place to spend it. Everyone got 16-18 letters, mail sure got held up. there a few souvineers around, not good to look around, lots of booby traps.

Came home to 7 letters today, the boys at N.A.A. wrote some nice ones. I will bring them home. It, hot again today sweat rolling off my back. Cenepedes about 6-8" long. poisonous and painful have to be careful with shoes and clothes.

7-24-45 Writing by flashlight, raining, sloppy out. have deck floors now, much nicer, Huge spiders all sizes and colors.

7-25-45 Mud getting deeper. go to work 12:00 to 6:00 then 6:00 to 12:00 one morning off then one afternoon off. They issued me a 4 wheeled compressor, two sets on 50' hoses and 2-Bink spray guns. Told me that I was now a painter. Have to spray chow hall and canteen. Chow hall all gloss white inside. Will be paining now for some time.

Its getting wet now have to air my clothes watch out for cenepedes and lizzards. Wash clothes in rain water. soap not available yet. Constant sweating makes washing clothes more frequent We only wear pants (shortened), shoes socxs or nothing. no one here but us Seabees. Only women are natives and they could care less. Lots of heat rash and fungus to watch out for ant treat. I am hungry most of the time. We are eating out of issued mess gear now. Later we will use trays and get cold cocoa and lemonaid.

7-31-45 Boyd came for another visit Pretty tired tonight. went to work 7:30 am got off about 9:00pm after cleaning equipment. Woke up at 12:00 had to go back to work at 1:00am 3/12 hrs sleep. lots of work to be done. Bridge still being built, Chow hall and some showers, more floors for our tents. A buddy and I took off and went cruising, Saw a lot of country, and strange sights can't tell yuu about it but it was most interesting. Went to sleep and was awaken by a big blast. Jumped up thought one had been dropped. It was the road builders. I started a small moustache. Camp coming along fine now. Lot of refers.(walk in boxes) means fresh meat and fruit. Showers are good. Pipes elevated outside to stand under and bathe. We are building a laundry now.

I never knew things and conditions and customs like this existed. I know these people are uprooted and have to make do with wht they have. it's sad. The scenery and area is beautiful.

8-01-45 Still painting, worked until midnight, showered came to tent, air raid sirene blew, lites out. put pants on and felt something crawling down my leg. could'nt turn on my flash light, bomber overhead, the all clear blew, I turned on my flashlight and a cenepede was reaching my shoe top I hoped it wouldn't crawl inside It did'nt, by this time the other guys had their lites on it, and killed it. Then a search went on for others

. Boyd had a bad scare. He was hunting souveneers and went in a cave.No more hunting for him.

*(This is what he found. He saw a box of what he thought was saki He pulled a cork and white fumes came out. He was smart, heald his breath and ran out. He reported it and it was Picric acid a deadly mixture one whiff and you are dead, Another thing he found was a horse bridle bit that was packed with explosive, blew up in fire.)

Finished painting the Chow Hall, We had a grand opening celebration, had ice cream cake, chicken, cokes etc. I am still writing by flashlight.

8-03-45 Laid a cement floor, had to get up at 5:30, big job.

8-04-45 Lt. Moon kept the promise he made me at Camp Parks. They came and got me off the cement job and made me a telephone switchboard operator. Now working in a building called O.D. (Officer of the Day). They take care of anything that comes in camp. They check in there first. The switch board is in this office. Now working 7:am to 5:pm until we get the PA system installed After 5:00 pm I am on call if needed. No night shift

One of the officers came in and said "I got you this job on the switch board" then walked into the Skipper's office and said, "quite a fellow, electrician, carpenter, cement man, aircraft now a switchboard operator" "A typical seabee" gave me quite a boost. I heard that virity was the spice of life. I am glad though they noticed, I have been working hard, I was getting disgusted moving around from one thing to another.

Sitting in front of the switch board dressed in a pair of pants cut to shorts, shoes, no socks and no laces. Guys putting up lites now, and in tents There is a mate named Heich He is a telephone installer and lineman He has been coaching me and has furnished me with a diagram of Island interconnections so I can patch calls where needed quickly. Sometimes the natives cut the lines to tie up their sugar cane, (kibby) and I have to reroute several times to get where I want. I now have 23 lines active on the board.

There is a Chief of Company B which is a working Co, (This is my Co. but I was loaned to HQ, to take the switch board job.) They came off of building a cement plant sweaty, dirty and tired. I was setting, cool and lightly dressed, He said "Parmer you look too comfortable I'm going to put you on KP" He did I was working in Chow hall and the speaker said "Parmer report to the OD shack immediately." I did, the Skipper was trying to call HQ. at buckner Bay, lines were down and they could not get him through. I plugged in and rerouted a couple times and he was there. He said "Parmer don't you leave that switch board, no matter who tells you" No more KP.

8-08-45 Heard news of 1st bombing of Japan. Then 8-09-45 second bombing

8-10-45 All hell broke loose, tracer fire into sky in form of V for victory. they thought the war was over. gun fire and bullets everywhere shrapnel falling, and bullet holes. I grabbed my mattress and went in a ditch and covered. One guy running around yelling condition red (invasion by air) 56 casualties, 7 deaths. On switchboard next morning The skipper got a call, I listened in. Who gave the order to fire,? What were they shooting at,? and how much ammo was expended, His answer back (I thought brilliant) No ammo was fired in this camp.

*8-12-45 (Air raid 2:pm passed over no bombs.)

*8-14-45 (Peace proposals, had another blackout)

8-14-45 Pres. Truman announced War was over, great news Jap. 2 engine single tail bomber passed overhead chased by fighters. He finally crashed out of fuel.

8-17-45 Point system being established for disembarkment.

8-19-45 Supposed to be VJ day but no news of surrender yet.

8-21-45 Lifted black out. now we can have lights on, and in tents. Not much chance of sniper fire Japs moving north tripping our trip flares. One runs through camp now and then, lots of commotion when it happens.

8-27-45 Men starting to disembark 9 leaving today, bet they are happy.

8-30-45 Flight after flight of b-29s overhead going to Japan, nose to tail continually

9-07-45 several more men leaving, Carpenters put screen doors on tents Much better, no unwanted critters.

9-16-45 We were issued a storm warning, I have to call every 30 minutes and track it and report to the Skipper. It is bad wind blowing tearing everything up raining inside this building. i have a canvas stretched over switchboard and a 1000 watt light inside to try to keep it working, Now and a flash crosses across my terminals Lightning strikes, A chief just came in. wewt and cold He had been on a barge in the bay with a load of bulldozers He said they were trying to swap ends and he bailed out and swam ashore. I gave him a chit (slip) for chow. Saw him some time later and he remembered.

9-16-45 The wind was reported at 212 mi. pr hour. the tents went at 70 mph. I had tied all my gear in bag and roped it to my cot, Had to hunt for it the next day. It was still together. The following is a copy of a letter I sent to Maxine about the storm.

My Beloved;

Boy what a typhoon, did'nt get much sleep last night. Expected to lose the tent and boy, what a rain. The wind is blowing hard now, and the phones are busy all the guys have been given day off. I hope they are securing their stuff. It was blowing in from everywhere last night. I pulled covers over and tried to sleep there were boards flying in the air. Our batallion boat broke loose and broke a hole in its bottom. Hope it dont blow harder. I have your and denny's picture safely in bag. It's raing and blowing harder now, Raining inside on me. I am trying to keep the sw. board dry. Darn Honey, Things are so hectic here now I will have to quit writing. Going to try another line, The wind has increased the rain is violent, I'm getting hurricane calls every few moments. The barges and docks and boats are all beached. One fellow I am trying to put a call through for abanded his barge with 3 bull dosers and a grader on it. the waves washed his control house off and the rocks have broken the propellers. It's rough. I just called over the speakers for all hands to lash down camp area. I am doing tripple duty on the phones and PA now. I don't know how they are in my tent. four said they should be able to take care of things. I've called out the electricians, carpenters and equipment men to work Another man came in from the dock. We lost more barges. I sent a crane down to try to pull our boat out. there is already a hole in it. Chow time now. It's raining and blowing harder they predicted that it would reach 90 mph. They put two 1/4 inch cables and a hauser on the barge with the equipment on . the one the guy left, the storm broke all of them. The door broke off the office here a while ago, got it propped up for the time being. There is a bucket of water over the deck. I have my pancho draped over my equipment here The switch board Pa and record player. They should'nt get wet. and they are. already. I got a shock from the switchboard. I am wet so I've been expecting it. The carpenter came to fix the door The storm is supposed to break early tomorrow sometime. I'll be glad when this is over. I am cold, wet and I don't feel too good. I expect the lights to go out soon. I saw the box, though inside on the wall is full of water. It's 1:30 now (1300) excuse the writing, the whole quanset hut ia shaking from the wind. In about an hour i'm going to call for another storm report. Hope it has turned, it has taken such a crazy path they cant predict which way it is going to go. Boy this Quansit hut is really shaking now.

I cant believe our tent is still standing, the guys tied it down with #9 wire and re enforced it with 1 X 6 boards and it is more sheltered from the wind. . This buildings is shaking, hope the tin don't start to come off. If it does it's time to run. I have some good music on the phonograph. asme PA still works. Got another shock awhile ago, not bad it came from the telering setup. I am tired the storm was violent last night kept me awake. Hope they get the guys out next week I am about as anxious as they are . I have 29 1/2 points.

They are having a big pow wow in the office wonder what they are are cooking up Wish I could hear from Boyd. The dock has just vanished. piling and all, also a motor launch has dissappeared. I suppose it turned over and sunk. Wish i could watch, when I opened the door it almost took me with it, and hit me on the head when I closed it.

It's 3:30 now, the wind is worse, i just called to report that the tin is blowing off the Chiefs mess hall, a quanset hut. Flying tin is dangerous, it can cut you into.

We have companys A,B,C,and D. Each has a particular area to tend to. When they call in a problem I call the Cos. in charge of that area. It's hell out can't open your eyes the rain is so hart it hurts.

The crew is throwing ropes over this hut now, trying to keep the tin on. If that tin starts to blow around, I'm leaving. I'm going to retreat to one of those toumbs. It's a safe place The natives have a legend that they are built to turn away the evil winds that blow around the souls. Guys came in soaked, Chow hall still usable, it's turkey tonight. Hope so I am cold wet and hungry. I am suprised the phone lines are still in tact.

One hour later, their not. A Captain of a landing craft just came in. He wants me to call Operations Base. His ship has broken anchor. His men are trying to keep it clear but the wind is too strong for them to hold it. All lines are down. We are taking him to a signal tower so he can contact his men. The carpenters are putting more braces. the whole building is rocking. Now I can't call Port Directors for weather reports. Went to chow. then to tent. We put all of the bunks in center of the deck the sides are bulging. don't know how much more it can take. The tents are flattened elsewhere. Makes it hard for sleeping. They called me back to the board, They want me to stay through the emergency. Most of my lines are gone, Im soaked to the bone, my shoes are full of water. and I am tired.

The tin is leaving the building next door, the lights are out, the PA system is dead and I am using a flash light. I have to crank the phone by hand now, like the old time phones to power the ringer circuit. You should see the sparks fly. I went to the head (outside toilet dug deep by clam shell (digger). When I reached for the door the ground gave away under me and the only thing that saved me from going down with it was the good hinges on the door which I hung onto. The water had undermined the floor, when it ran down into the hole. No one would have known where I went.

the ocean is wild. I guess Boyd will think he is back at the Aleutions, all this wind. I will mail this in the morning, Wrote quite a bit, I thought you would enjoy the blow by blow description It is pretty exciting at that, Storm will prpbably pass in the morning.

It's a little past 12:00 now a messenger came in. They are having trouble at sea. Two light cargo transports have lost anchor, They want lights and help. I sent portable Generators and floods to their help,

They are going to rig a breaches bouy to try to get the men off of the light cargo transports . This is like a trolley on a cable. They shoot a line ashore, and pull a cable to fasten between thee boat and ashore then transfer men in a chair like a trolley. They could'nt get a boat near them or even land a boat ashore, the sea is too rough. I have to stand by until they get the men off. I called the Naval Base to get a report on the storm and it is officially passed.

I'm going now, it's 2:30 pm. all is quiet, raining a little, there is equipment strewn up and down the beach. The boats in distress are secure, and things look pretty good now. The sun is comming out. Tried to sleep and could'nt went back to worl at 7:00 to try to call for another weather report. end of letter.

The next morning I reported the toilet problem and they put 4X6 timbers under them and put on a porch floor in front

9-22-45 You asked how the men reacted to the news or war ending. When they announced it I thought it was foolish as it was'nt over here. We still had blackouts. Jap soldiers mooving North. Occasional bombers overhead. The reaction was dangerous and foolish but spectacular with reprucussions. I bet they won't do that again.

9-25-45 Still on the swoitchboard, no days off. More men getting ready to leave. They are outfitting other craft Carriers and Battleships to troupe carriers to bring the men home. A bunch went on a battleship. The 24th Batallion was highly commended for the jobs done, the waterpoint, bridge , Supply depot, Dental lab etc. This phone job is supposed to be a 6 hr job, I've been working 11 hrs. 7 days a week.

9-26-45 Have to clean and turn in my rifle. wo'nt need it anymore. Outfits breaking up everywhere, men being transfered to other batallions. A buddy found out that the 24 th. batallion is to be broken up. My name is on the list to stay on the switchboard. The 27 th. is doing the same work here. I am going to miss the men and officers, I have it made here.

9-28-45 Official. The 24th batallion is breaking up. I was alerted that a typhoon is supposed to hit 6:00 pm tommorrow, (1800) I tied and nailed down the tent. The aircraft is flying away, we lost 26 PBM's in the storm. I told them there wouldnt be a storm here. The clouds wer'nt forming. I was right. Could change today though.

9-30-45 Sunday I an at switch board, the wind is picking up. There is a storm warning Condition 2. I have to call again this evening for a report. There are 2 typhoons 1 off Philipeens and 1 off Okinawa. Don't worry love, We are ready.

10-1-45 Another month started, They will lower points to come home. to 40. I have 30 1/4 The storm missed us this time. Boyd said his outfit gets to go home on a Hospital ship' Nice bunks and good food. He will be home for Christmas.

Evening now It's raining, I worked at the board late. The tents are all torn from the last storm, breezy but not too bad. My buddy Buffington just hit the sack when the guys came in stomping the mud off their feet. Buff rolled over and said" Why don't cha pick up the gawd dawm chairs and stomp them around the deck" " lack of courtesy thot's wot it is". We all had to laugh He talks with a drawl. The next morning he woke up early and picked up a chair and stomped it loudly. He chucklled and said "annoyin aint it".

10-2-45 The order came in to break up the 24th Batallion. I am going to try to pull a little deal to stay another month on the switch board if possible. I will stay in the Headquarters Coumpany. When I transfer no telling where or what kind of job i will get.

10-03-45 I had a chance to fly to Japan, A Lieutenant pilot friend flies one of the PBM's in the harbor patrol here. He said it is a beautiful flight, they leave 4:00 in the morning and return 5:00 in the evening. I guess it is out now Lot of the planes were lost in the storm and I hav'nt heard of him since.

10-04-45 Boy what a day at thre switch board. Busy all day long. Most of the guys are transfered. the 44 pointers are going home tomorrow. They are going to send over a couple operators to take over, then I guess I will have to transfer to the 27th Batallion. They give everyone 10 free cokes. gave away 10,000 What a waste. The flag got tangled today. It is mounted atop a 40' 3'' pipe. Several tried to shinny up and failed another bunch tried, and one guy bet \$10.00 no one could. Well I went right up and untangled it. I did'nt take his money. I always had a good grip.

10-06-45 The Regiment Headquarters put in a request for me to transfer to their office. They are in command of about 10 Batallions. I heard they were in need of telephone operators. Now I'm standing by in the 27th phone crew. Nice camp Both military and civillian (native) women working.

10-07-45 A buddy named Chirchill came by today, got off and left early for Boyd's outfit, the 86th Battalion. The seabees sure changed the Island, almost did'nt know my way around. Boyds gone home He made it, I'm glad. We came back and checked (in a round about way.)

The switchoard operators have it good, 6 hr. shifts, lots of time off. No PA announcement duties No O.D office work Just Phone. I told them I ran the switch board 11 hours, made announcements on the PA and ran the O.D office part time too.

10-09-45. Terrible storm coming in I call every 30 min. to track The wind was reported to be 212 miles pr hr. At 70 mph. the skipper told me to make announcement "All hands strike your gear and abandon camp, Every man for himself. I took off. tried to find rain gear. none to be had. I grabbed a tarp and headed for a ditch and wrapped up.

A letter to Maxine 10-09-45

Hello My Darling;

It's rough now. Had a terrible typhoon. Everything on the Island is flattened and destroyed They announced to pack your valuables and cover them up We put them in our duffle bag and lashed it to our bunks. It started to rain lightly monday evening and by Tuesday noon it was really blowing and raining, lumber and tin began to fly so I ran to the winward side of Camp so stuff would be blowing away from me., near the ocean. The wind blew off the bay and up over the cliff. There was a ditch covered with Palm and shrub I stayed in it for 5 hours Soon 4 more men came and crawled in. All of the tents blew down, the frames crumpled then the tent platforms took off like a piece of paper.

We were in the safest place in the camp area. A lot of guys that did'nt use their heads did'nt get out and have broken hips, arms and legs. The quanset huts blew down, demolished everything The tin roofs blew off and sailed through the camp. The Sea Bees retreated into the toumbs. One had 10 Sea Bees and 10 coprpses. I stayed in the ditch until most of the flying stuff, wires and lines settled. We were in the eye and calmer. I grabbed a cup of coffee, and we moved the sick and injured into the big walk in refrigerators and made holes for air for them We figured it would be sa safe place for them. About 3:00 or 4:00 the tin roof started to leave. I grabbed shirt full of K rations,

and a friend and said lets go. We ran out the door, and down the road. Guess about 100 of us did. the wind and tin was following us and I got blown ofer the river bank boiling with derbis et. I clawed into the bank and pulled myself out. The guys kept going. We ran to a Gook village, found a little hut in a sheltered spot with bake oven. We built a fire and took off oue cloths and dried them out. some of the guys brought water and with our K rations we sat there til morning. While we were setting there by the fire a bird, much like a Robbin, came and lit near us. jumped up on a rock and walked around over our shoes etc. He was sure a tame little devel. We burned everything we could pry loose.

We came back to what was left of the camp Guys were coming in from all sides, out of caves, tounbs and ditches. the big warehouses were crumpled. Some of the guys were foolish enough to get in them and could'nt get out. Ships were washed ashore Boyd left just in time. Honey I know you worry, but don't I look out for myself. When things like this happen I don't hang around.

Things are a total wreck now Mabye they will give this danged island back to the natives now. They told us that what we were building would not stand. Too high, no good. They were right.

All hands turned to to put the camp in order to have a place to eat and sleep. Tell Boyd the new Naval Supply Depot was demplished. The 4th Batallion chow hall is a mass of reckage. I'm tired out. We got a shower working, cold water. I was full of dirt. The toilets all blew apart.

It's been such an experience. made a place to sleep tonight. I have a small makeshift light. The Post office blew down, not taking mail I worked on the power lines today the camp is back in operation now, Went over to Chirchills tent. They froze a galon of ice cream mix, put a can of fruit cocktail mix in it. It was sure good.

It's 9:30 pm now almost sack time I'm hoping they will get us off this island. There's no food, only K rations Everything blown down.

Dried my bunk today the weather was nice We wired tents, today, some of them not completed. will wire the rest tomorrow. All the mater with me now is I want to leave this island and come home to my wife and family Love.

End of letter.

10-10 & 12-45 Huge mess many injured and killed. Men are still washing ashore, Lots of missing boats. derbis everywhere.

10-10 & 13-45 I am finally on the electrican gang, That'a what I've been working for since in the Sea Bees Wired more tents and put up power lines. We are repairing the damage done by the storm.

10- 15-45 Another storm on it's way. Heard that some guys went in a cave in thew last storm, and built a fire and set dynamite on fire blew up killed and injured others. They were careless. You have to be vigelant and care for yourself at all times.

Tell Boyd when he sinks his teeth in that brown fried chicken to think of me eating K rations. It will get better soon.

Wired 5 barracks and set poles, in solid coral, hard to dig. About 60,000 men still here went to personel dept and they told me that I had 15 1/4 points now. I told them that was rong and they refigured it to 28 3/4 points. I will have another 1/2 point first of November, next month. That will make it 30.

10-2-45 Got a good job today wiring a recreation quarters. It is a romex, open wiring, and knob and tube job, lots of circuit breakers single and double throw switches. Dad knows. The officer I am working for asked me how long I had been a seaman 1st class. He wants to make me an Electrician mate 3rd class EM3/C. a better rate and more money.

A tent shorted out today, It's hard to get used to the half hazzard way they wire things here. I have always been particular about work.

10-25-45 Working harder every day, I wired more walk in refers this morning, and a radio shop in camp the rest of the afternoon. The refer job will take a couple weeks to finish. There are 4 banks of walk-in boxes and units., load of about 60 K.W. each. after the refers get running and cold. Running load will be about 150 amps. 220 volts 3-phase.

They are hauling in produce today, truck loads of oranges. Ate all I could, real sweet.

We power the group with 250. mcm wire and a 75 kw. deisel generator.

The fleet engineer plan called for 4 wires on poles to feed the units, I told him he only needed 3 because the units were 3 phase and had internal transformers for 110 volt lighting, and they were grounded. This saved labor and wire, He was impressed.

10-26-45 Worked on refers this morning and at noon went and wired a tin shop. The chief came in and told me "Parmer I put in a big battle for you, they want you to work on the phone switch board as you are experienced and men are leaving." He said he needs a man who knows wire loads, sizes and can figure loads etc. His guys are leaving too.

10-28-45 Sunday here, I'm catching up on washing, anxious to get home. I think I would like to get away from dasds shop and start an electric contracting shop of my own around Temple City, perhaps with Boyd.

11-05-45. Working hard today again on refers, will be glad to get them done. Some guys are just laying down, don't do anything. I sure could use a calculator for wire sizes.

11-06-45 Repaired a tray machine today, it worked fine, confidentially I was a little suprised. We are almost done with the refers.

11-09-45 Finished the refer job at the Naval Supply Depot, now working on a hospital, probably take a couple weeks. Also wiring warehouses and a dispensary. Did Boyd have trouble sleeping on a soft bed?

I talked to a native today. I showed him some tools, a wrench he called spanner, and hack saw he called sobosaw, He could reead a little and I pointed to a wrench made in Jamestown N.J. I said "look made by the Naha wrench Co. (Naha is a town here) He laughed and said in a broken voice "crea alo" looked at me and I said "Crestalloy" He said "Jamestown" I pointed at a roll of wire and said "wire: He said "wee" pointed at his tounge, shook his head, said "no" smiles laughed and said "bye bye", nodded then left. Pretty sharp fellow. They are small people here. They will carry off anything they can get hands on, clothes food anything, They take it to the village Gushicha, put it in a pile and devide it up among the people, One child was asking for smokes, and was told he was too young, He said "no, no, for mama, mama". One native was in a truck unloading pieces of wood with nails, barefooted I gave him a pair of shoes He bowed a couple of times and said "tank yu".

11-10-45 Now wiring a Dental lab with the hospital and 4 more huts for Wards, and a Dispensary. Had a small problem, a Navy chief started to throw his weight around.

I turned to my mrrn and said put your tools back on the truck. and get in We left. When we got back to camp I was asked why we left and I told them "a Navy Chief was throwing his weight around and I didn't like it. Get rid of him and we will go back" We were sent back, he was gone and a Navy Ensigne was there and he said "John I have Brass above me and I am in the middle." "I don't know anything about electricity do what you need to do and make me look good."

This will be about a 200 amp job. Material is hard to get, I dont know why they are building all of this stuff, they claim ~~were~~ are all going home. I am now living in the communication tent, I get all the latest skuttlebut.

Have to uncrate the dental x-ray equip It all has to be cleaned. They are covered with cosmalene a moisture inhibitor. Messy. Then we will wire them up. They are Ritter machines.

11-18-45 Sunday here My friend Woods went to Buckner Bay, caught a boat ride out to a destroyer tender about 45 minutes out. It was a nice ship. We went to see Woods brother. He was'nt there but they fed us chicken, mashed potatoes ,punch, corn, pie and salad. Woods is shy of officers. I said " lets get them to take us ashore the 86th Batallion" Wods said, "you cant ask them to take you anywhere you want at any time you want" I said "Let's see", went topside, saw an officer told him what we wanted, and he said "sure", and took us there . so we met ou r friend Chirchill. He was pretty down hearted too, wanting to get home.

11-21-45 Finished Sugury Building, ran in lights, plugs and 100 amp circuit for heater units. Thanksgiving tomorrow on Okinawa. Supposed to have day off.

11-22-45 Slept till 8:00 Noon Chow big deal, free ciggarets, beer, prizes (souveneers) pens and lighters. About 85 signed up for another hitch. All I want to do is sign my discharge papers and come home. Then building permits to build our house.

1-23-45 Started another wire job. A big warehouse It will take 3 or 4 days. They handed me a point sheet and told me to sign it. I said "I cant, it' figured wrong." They had 21 points, should have been 30. They changed and I signed It Wondered if they were trying to keep me longer.

11-25-45 Wiring material not here Laid around till noon They are taking 38 pointers out now they are converting carrieurs battleships etc to carry men home.

11-29-45 The first of Dec. I am supposed to get my EM3/C rate. I was told by an officer, I was supposed to have the rate when I came in this outfit, but he didn't know. still wiring warehouses, dug our ditches with a ditch digger I found and backfilled with a bulldozer I found.. I am using a Hyster hi-lift with a platform on the forks as a platform to work on wiring warehouses. saves using ladders ans scaffolding, and I can drive it along as wire is installed. Bie n g a Sea Bee electrician you need to know how to operate a lot of equipment, and a littlebit of everything in construction.

I gave a pair of shoes to a native who came in the tent. He looked at tiu and Denny in my picture and asked "Wyhoo? Kodo mo? I said "yes, wife and baby" He ashed how old, then said American women nice then nodded and left.

They said they were going to secure all work for our outfit, the 27th. Thursday. We will probably transfer to another outfit. Probably the CBMU (Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit) I know the Officers there, and they know my work.

11-30-45 Talked with another native today. A smart one. He was married and had two kids. He went to school 14 years, took math, geometry, Trig and sq. root. His wife is a teacher with no pay. I had a native to help strain up some wires. He was also pretty smart, He had been to Wisconsin and Ohio, He didn't like Texas, but liked California. He said He liked American and German people, working people. He said Nazis and Krombos, no good.

(Blacks) He called them Niggers. They had trouble with some of them, rape and killings. He was 25. He said he wants a wifoo when he gets home and can support a family He lost his father and mother in the war.

13-03-45 The word has got around, You would think I am a painter. The guys are bringing their boxes for me to paint addresses on to ship things home. I still don't have my EM3/C rate as yet.

12-04-45 didn't think I would have to work today but the Dispensary needed some plugs. There is talk of a big job coming up. A water point. Wells, pumps and 8-75 KW Generators paralleling for power. 10-50 hp motors. I think the CBMU (Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit) will do it. It's windy and cold, storm passing through. I thought I would lose the tent. I put pictures and gear away. No stoves, outside toilets are drafty. All of the natives look different now. They are all dressed up in some kind of military clothes have shoes of some kind, and are fattened up. They glom onto any thing they can pick up. They don't have much. They salute you when they leave after they talk or work. There is a huge rat trying to carry off a seabag or something. He is making a lot of noise. They are bold, getting fat, on the poison in the oats

12-07-45 I am in a nasty mood this morning, I am tired, it's raining and cold. They came and got me to do the water point job. I, Emmerson and another electrician went out looking for equipment for this big job. We need wire racks. We found a big spool of wire 1,500,000 cm to buss the 8 generators together. We will use 250,000cm wire for drops and feeds. We found a big Metropolitan Panel with 7-400 amp, and 1-200 amp switch boxes and some automatic starters. Now we are waiting for carpenters to put in slab and build the generator barn. We dug about 200 feet of ditch with a digger I found. We will lay 250 mcm wire 4-phase, and neutral in the ditch, sand it, and cover it with dirt. Dad will understand all of this.

The engineers said to build the barn out of 2X4 lumber I told them to build it out of 2X6 lumber and double it. They laughed and I told them that the wire we were going to use would load about 2-lbs pr. foot and all together would be about 10 lbs. pr foot. They took our suggestions. They are short of Chief's, electrical engineers and Gold braid that knows electricity. The code books you sent sure came in handy.

The following letter is one I sent Maxine about this time and explains some of this. I have left out the personal comments, and included only the military aspect of the letter.

This is letter # 172 dated December 11, 1945.

My darling; I have been put more or less in charge of the water point electrical job. Emmerson is EM2/C and my lead electrician (electrician matesecond class) We found some lugs for the 1,500,000 wire but they were made for 1,000,000 size. This noon we figured and re figured and wrote down all of the loads and the wire the Engineers specified is way too large and the 1,000,000 cm lugs would work if we cut off the outside

strands of the wire. I told the CNTC Engeneer to come out this morning and shortly after the CBMU engeneer came. Emerson had gone to hunt more parts, we had to hunt the whole Island for material. The Engeneers asked me all about how we intended to wire the project, and I told them of our plans. They did'nt like the idea of cutting the strands off the wire to fit the lugs. I told them if they would figure the job they would find it would'nt make any difference as there would be plenty carrying capacity left in the wire after we made it fit. They figured the job and said that I was right, but try again to find the right size lugs. I told them there wer'nt any. They thought they knew where some might be and we all piled into a jeep and went several places. Finally they said finally said go ahead and use them they are ok. We set bolts in concrete to hold down the generators and to my supprise they all fit when the crane set them down on the floor. There were 10 bolts and all out of line too.

This is quite a job. We are going to need a couple transformers. I found 2 5-kva ones Well lover I don't know what you think of all of this but I know Dad will be interestrd. I'll write another letter tomorrow. Time to hit the sack. Love you and miss you.

Your hubby Johnny

Next morning; My darling Maxine; Today they issued us some long underwear and two sweaters. I wish Dad was around so I could talk to him about this transformer hook-up. I talked to an electrical Engeneer and he told me to hook up the primary side "delta" and the secondary side "tapped Y" but I have been figuring on it and I think he is all wet. I only have 2- primary coils and 2- secondary coils and they are single phase transformers, so I just cant see that combination. I have to hook them up tomorrow, I've got more wires going into and comming out of them than you can count on your fingers and toes. I have figured out how I think they should be hooked up so I am going down to talk to the Engeneer in CBMU again. No one left here to talk to. He has been a life saver for me, or will be I hope. If he do'nt know I am going to hook them up and check them out with meters. I am going to stop now and go to bed, I am tired

Love, Your johnny

Letter #180 Dcember 22-45

I was right about the transformers. You remember I told you the Engeneer was all wet, I hooked them up like I wanted to, 4 of them. 1-1 isolated from the others. The guys kept kidding me saying that I had too many wires etc. I had about a dozen each transformer. Today I started a generator, everyone backed away, Emmerson was pretty worried, he kept telling me," boy I hope you hooked them up right, the will 440 volts on those lines". I said " there ok throw the switch" (I was scared too) Nothing blew. I took a tester and checked it out and it was perfect. I figured about three nights on it. Dad will know. I hooked the three of them them up Y-Y, carried a neutral and 1 phase to each 440 volt buss to the primary side and came off the secondary with one phase and bonded a neutral between all three transformers I wanted 110volt 3 phase from a 440volt 3 phase buss. Could have done it without carrying a neutral to the primary if I had hooked the three of together using the Delta hook up, and Y on the secondary. Well it all worked Thank god. This is the first time I have fooled with transformers It proved interesting

Emmerson just came in and brought me 10 pair long wool socks and a pair of linemans boots. We are going to be transfered now any day. The battallion is due to be de-activated I think we will finish the Water Point job though. The Lieutenant came and asked how much longer it would take us. and I told him 7 more working days. There are so many wires here and there, it would be hard for anyone to take over. I have it in my mind where everything goes. It rained today. The coral roads get slick as ice. when it's wet. There were three trucks turned over in one place. I'm going to bed now It's sure hard to get up in the mornings, I'm tired I guess. Love you and our Dennis boy I miss you both
Your Johnny.

Now back to my letter prior to letter I inserted. I had told the natives to cover the ditch, Dad will understand this. We ran into one of the motor buildings an 8 inch pipe 7 -250mcm and 1 #1. 4-# 1 to another and 4-#1to another. Set 4 poles for the two groups of four, We guyed the poles with shipboard antenna which stretched under the weight of the wire. couldnt get guy wire. an Electric Engeneer wants me and Emmerson in the CBMU I like him. I wish Dad could see the panel job, transformers an wiring I painted it all up and stapped the wires up neatly.

12-24-45 Christmas, I worked 1/2 day, wired up a Christmas tree. they gave us beer, 24 bars of candy, chocolate cake ice cream, and a jar of peppermint candy.

They are beginning to tear down the camp 27th Batallion. We will stay and finsh the water point. I was told that when I was at the switch board job and calling out all day, the boys would not forget my voice "Now hear this" the message to get their attention before the many announcements

12-26-45 I am now in the CBMU I like the guy in charge. He is an engineer named Davidson He likes my work. We were head~~ed~~ back to finish the Water Point.

12-28-45 Just us electricians left in the outfit now And a few mess cooks.. The officers from CNTC came over and highly complimented us. I was in camp and they asked if I had done it. The men told them yes.

At noon there was a little native girl about five years old. She was cold, covered with chigger bites. I had some ointment which I put on her. Then tied knots in one of my T shirt arm loops so it would fit her. for a little dress. I gave her a wool knitted watch cap. I had a pouch with a sling, like a womans purse, which I put a jar of peppermint candy in and gave her. She was so happy, I felt sorry for her, barelegged and barefooted. She bowed to me then did a cute little Chinese dance and bowed, It was nice.

12-29-45 More nice complements on the Water Point job.

12-30-45 The food is a crime now, I am glad we have our little galley in our barracks.

01-05-46 Ship blew up at CBMU harbor I got paid, had \$64.00 comming. (Navy way \$60.00) Even money.

01-16-46 I am at recieving now, It's late and raining, I am off to my bunk I ate supper at CBMU 578. Had good chow. There is a big draft leaving tomorrow. My name might be on it. I have a bunch of my buddies here with me and lots of commotion

01-16-46 All signed out now I heard that they are loading a PA for Shoemaker. I was given \$46.00 .

01-17-45 The Harbor is full of ships, I am still bumming food at the CBMU 578. Good chow. Boyd knows how the chow lines are.

My name is on the list I was issued a draft # 1119-H Div #37 Will leave Monday. I had heard they might freeze electricians to go to Japan Military Government duty.

01-19-46 7:30 am The guys are working on the details, I am watching and being in the right place at the right time. do'nt want to miss this. It should take about 14 days to come home. It took a long time to geet here because we had to evade the subs.

01 21 46 Left the dock at 11:30 am and loaded ship *VSS SHERBURNE 205* at 1:30 pm weighed anchor and headed home.

01-22-46 Entered rough seas. Ship crested on a huge waive, twisted and antennas came crashing down on the deck. Some cracks appeared and welders went to work welding reinforcing gussets. I am real sea sick. in the bunk and mates are bringing me food. cant make it to the chow hall. I tried but as soon as I went below I had to make a fast retreat.

01-28-46 Crossed the International date Line, for the second time.

02-05-46 San Francisco in sight. A huge sign ashore says Thanks. I asked my buddy if he could see the \$\$\$ signs on it.

A note When we passed Pearl Harbor there was a call over the ship speakers, All cooks, bakers and electricians report to the Hq. (Headquarters room) I had a hunch it might be a call to freeze them to go to Japan I did'nt report I told myself they meant Navy electricians. We docked, walked down gang plank. On American land and home.

The letters that I wrote and the ones Maxine wrote are in a box. They are armous as we were newley weds, apart and lonely.

Respectfully submitted;

John W. parmer

U.S.Naval Sea Bee

Domain of the Golden Dragon

RULER OF THE 180th MERIDIAN

TO ALL SAILORS wherever ye may be and to all mermaids, flying dragons, spirits of the deep, devil chasers and all other living creatures of the seas, GREETINGS: Know ye that on this 29th day of May 1945 in latitude 16°55'N longitude 180° West within the limits of my august dwelling

U.S.S. RAWLINS (APA 226)

on board

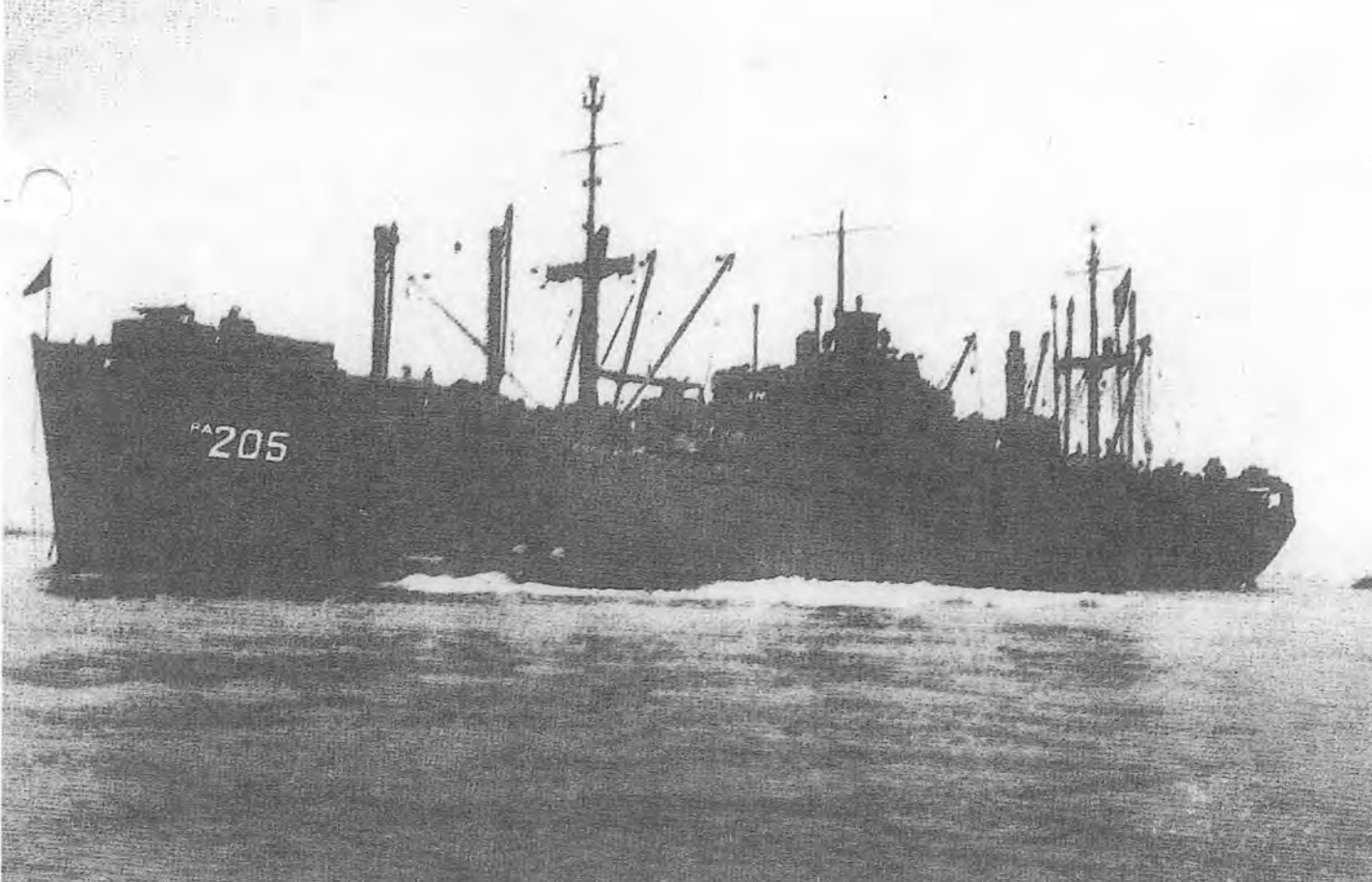
HEARKEN YE

the said vessel, officers and crew have inspected and passed
891 87 96 PARMER, JOHN W.

and has been found sane and worthy of the Silent Mysteries of the Far East.

M.I.N.Y. 2-20-45

GOLDEN DRAGON
Ruler of the 180th Meridian



U.S.S. Sherburne APA-205

USS Sherburne APA 205 A Haskell attack transport Victory ship
Built in Richmond Ca. and launched July 10, 1944. Dec. 28, 1945
she sailed to Okinawa for "Operation Magic carpet" to return sea-
men home. She delivered us to San Francisco Feb. 5th.1946.
She was decommissioned August 3, 1946.

When the typhoons came to Olinawa I had asked Maxine what the Statewide news had said about it. I found the following accounts in some news clippings that she had saved.

207 MPH WINDS LASH OKINAWA FOR THREE DAYS

100,000 Homeless; Sept. Storm Sank 5 Ships With 89 Dead. Manila Oct, 12 (Friday) A 207 M.P.H. typhoon that lashed Okinawa for three days, leaving 100,000 American troops and natives homeless but injuring only about 100, expended it's fury over Japan today. (In Washington, the Navy announced that 89 officers and men are dead or missing after the Okinawa typhoon of September 16-18. Sunk four motor mine sweepers and a submarine chaser. There was no loss of life aboard the subchaser, SC-636. Among the missing, the Navy said are Lieutenant Willard Edwin Blaser, Skipper of the YMS-472; Lieutenant Walter Scott Townsend, Commander of the YMS-98 and Lieutenant (jg) John William Colglazier, Skipper of the YMS-341) **STRIKES HONSHU** The typhoon later hit central and southern Honshu, the main island of Japan, killing 69 and leaving thousands homeless. Today's first official Army report on the typhoon confirmed that Okinawa is to be a permanent postwar base. Amplifying the report, Associated Press Correspondent Richard Bergholz in a delayed dispatch said four Japanese prisoners of war were killed by a building collapse. **LIKENED TO WAR** Lawson said the Island was left in much the same position as when the Americans completed it's occupation, when artillery fire had leveled virtually every building. Mercy ships and planes sped to the hard-won Ryukyu Island to bring aid to the victims and to evacuate 1650 American hospital cases left roofless by the three day storm, the worst in 20 years. Headquarters of the chief medical officer in Okinawa said that 35 percent of the American tents were destroyed in repeated blasts from the hurricane from Monday through Wednesday, Quanset huts were tossed aloft and 50 percent of the American hospital facilities and medical supplies were lost. Many troops were left without quarters by the destruction of tent and quanset hut areas. Lawson said that transfer of all units not needed for the permanent occupation to Manila or Guam is imperative. Shore installations largely were erased. A shortage of rations was a critical aftermath. Numerous planes, thrown into the air like chaff, were destroyed, but the number was not yet known. All wires were blown down on the Island, and radio communications still is only through emergency transmitters. Air fields escaped with comparatively little damage. The hospital ship Mercy, has already reached Okinawa, the Mormac Sea is north of the island, and the Comfort is en-route from Manila. These ships, while the storm was still piling up tremendous seas, set out for the island in order to evacuate 450 litter and 1200 ambulatory cases from smashed tent and hut hospitals. **WEATHER CLEARS** Clear weather permitted scheduling of the 10 air transport flights to Okinawa from Manila today. Okinawa already is suffering from a shortage of food, due to the fact that the area had storm warnings for the last 13 days, and ships bound for the island had to remain at sea. Work of organizing the island, authorities said, would be retarded many months, due to the damage to the beach installations and living accommodations. Ships with food, however, now have been able to put into port and are unloading as rapidly as possible under present beach conditions. Troops who had originally been scheduled to leave Okinawa for Japan or home two or weeks hence now will be rushed to their destinations in a day or two.

Article written by United Press

BIG STORM LOSSES ON OKINAWA

MANILLA Oct 12 Fifty superfortresses began to shuttle food, and medicine today to Okinawa, isolated and ravaged by the worst typhoons in 20 years. First reports said winds reaching 150 miles an hour beached 122 ships and small boats, sank 5 others and killed or injured perhaps hundreds of American personnel. More than 150,000 American troops, sailors and nurses were isolated on the island. Gen. Joseph Stillwell, commander of Okinawa, radioed that 95 per cent of the tents used to shelter troops on the island had been blown down, barracks wrecked and even hospitals heavily damaged.

HUTS BLOWN AWAY He asked immediate transfer by air to Manilla or Guam of about 125 hospital patients and urged that all service personnel not destined for permanent garrison duty be removed as soon as possible. First eye witness to reach here by plane reported that Quanset huts and pre-fabricated huts just "took off" in the high winds. Five hundreds nurses literally had their camps ripped from over their heads and took refuge in former burial caves. Communications were wrecked. The typhoons began about a week ago and reached their peak Wednesday. Worst damage was along the east coast and complete reports from that area were still not available. With ships unable to dock for a week or more, food supplies dwindled rapidly. The Twentieth Air Force immediately assigned 50 superfortresses to emergency flights on a seven day schedule. They carried 284 tons of food, enough for 115,000 meals. During the next three days, they will deliver an additional 333,000 meals. Some units had only two days rations left when the planes landed. **THE NAVY AT PEARL HARBOR** reported that 52 ships and 70 additional craft were washed into the beaches, while two tugs, a patrol yacht, a gasoline barge and a mine sweeper sank in Buckner Bay and nearby points. The beached vessels included a cargo ship, a repair ship, two gasoline tankers, an ocean going tug, two mine sweepers and misc. craft. **MANY BODIES SEEN** The navy report, admittedly incomplete, listed 3 navy men dead and 10 missing. However eye-witnesses arriving said scores of bodies of sailors had been washed ashore on Okinawa. In Washington the navy announced that 4 motor mine sweepers and a submarine chaser were lost in the typhoon in the Okinawa area Sept. 16-18. Eighty three officers and men aboard the mine sweepers were missing or dead, the navy said, but no loss of life was reported aboard the submarine chaser.

Article written by Associated Press New York, Oct 11, John Adams, CBS correspondent, said in a broadcast from Manilla today that 90,000 soldiers had been left without quarters, 5 killed and a score wounded in the typhoon which struck Okinawa Island Tuesday. Several correspondants on the first plane to take off from Okinawa since the storm reported "damage so great that had it come earlier, it could have well changed the entire pattern of occupation, he said. Had invasion of Japan been necessary, it might have been a disaster." "The southern part of the island took the worst beating, with nearly all army and navy installations destroyed" he quoted the correspondants saying. The wind mounted to 120 mph. when the wind gauge went out. Sheet metal roofs, tent floors and debris went sailing through the air, while down on Naha airstrip, all but two planes were damaged, some flipped on their backs, others with wings or tail fins or controls blown away. Also hard hit were some 500 army nurses who were in camp enroute to Japan were forced to ride out the storm crouching in scores of ill-smelling native tombs that dotted the hill sides of the island

Article written by Julian Hartt International News Service Staff Correspondent.

TYPHOON EYEWITNESS

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TYPHOON EYEWITNESS

TOKIO Oct, 12 I arrived in Tokio this afternoon aboard one of the first planes to leave the typhoon flattened Okinawa in nearly a week, leaving behind virtually complete destruction of one of America's greatest war born bases. During Tuesday night and Wednesday winds of recorded velocity of 143 mph. swept away tents like tissue paper and crushed Quanset huts like berry boxes. Costly communications systems vanished along with the tents and huts leaving the island for hours without contact with the outside world. **PLANES IN TREES** Aircraft parked on many airstrips rode out the typhoon better in the terrific September storm, but grounded ships dotted the coral shelf of the east coast beaches and on a tour of the island yesterday I saw observation planes parked in trees like birds. Miraculously, few deaths were reported after the fierce onslaught of the storm Tuesday night when metal from the shattered Quanset huts and jagged pieces of lumber ripped through the air everywhere. Many were injured however, and the Navy Air Transport Service ordered all planes taking off for Guam to carry only persons requiring medical attention. **BASES IN SHAMBLES** It was estimated that a score of persons were injured in the Yonabaru airfield area where the navy transports and fleet airwing planes based. That section was turned into a complete shambles. For 24 hours everyone was concerned only with finding food, and some semblance of shelter and gathering together what remained of their belongings. Their plight was made more bitter by a cold penetrating rain which whipped up by the high winds and prevented anyone from venturing forth once shelter was found. The storm demonstrated that the United States has not built for permanance on Okinawa as most of the Quansit huts were not even anchored to concrete bases despite the knowlege that such typhoons sweep the island each year..

Notes Earlier in my letters to Maxine, I had told her not to worry that I would take care of myself in all situations, and I used good judgement to keep out of harms way best as possible in these storms. The news clippings reported the winds less than what I clocked. The wind reached 212 mph when our animonometer blew down. I had asked her in one of my letters had she read any accounts of the typhoons in the papers, and I was suprised that she had saved the clippings. They were quite accurate, She must have been worried. I spent quite a bit of time rolled up in a canvas laying in a ditch on the winward side so the materials flying in the air was blowing away from me instead of at me.

John