4-28-1953

Albert J. Sedlacek Korean War Correspondence #1

Albert J. Sedlacek

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VIA AIR MAIL

Miss Joan C. Palmer
84 West 176th St.
Bronx 53, New York
U.S.A.
USNS MARINE LYNX is a C-4 type Navy transport built in 1945 in Vancouver, Wash. She is 523 feet long, 72 feet wide and can cruise at 17 knots. Complete facilities for troop recreation are available on board. Equipped with modern safety and life-saving gear, the ship is part of the fleet of transports and cargo vessels operated by the Military Sea Transportation Service, Department of the Navy.

This was the ship I crossed the Pacific on. It docked at Yokahama, Japan, Wed., May 13, 1953. Exactly 3,124 brand new ships will be quite busy the next several months, but you can expect my letter as soon as my job is done.

To Joanie
with all my love

Albert
April 28, 1953

Darling:
Here we are, off to the sacred, mysterious, yet lovely Orient. As we steadily moved out to the blue Pacific, through Puget Sound, we stood on deck, trying to get a last look of the U.S. The wind was blowing slightly, as some gray mist surrounded us. My thoughts turned from being a infantryman to being a navy bottom sailor. I quickly had these thoughts discharged from my mind once the heaving gang started. We had about 7:30 a.m., then I started to write you. I figure I'll write one continuous letter instead of one everyday. Okay? I'm going to hit my stretcher and get some sleep. Good night, Joanie.

April 29th—

Got up this morning with a real appetite! After a long wait, my stomach was rewarded with eggs, sausages, toast, fruits, bread and butter, coffee. As I went up to the main deck, the ladderwell were filled with moaning and groaning troops. Some hoping to die, some wanting to blow. Well, they didn't reach the reaching in time! While walking on deck, I met Paul, we walked to the bow of the ship and just talked and looked out across a pretty big ocean.
We stood there for quite awhile, till the
(shall we say “aroma” from the overfilling
food of the person who did make the rush,
birds. Paul quickly climbed down his
latchway for cleaner breathing, as I went
to the latchway leading to sickbay. Climbing
down the stairs again I reviewed the
same sight as when I went on deck, but this
time it was double. I told the doctor my
reason for wanting to go to sickbay. He
politely showed me the way. The doctor
came in and looked at me saying, “you
not sea sick.” I quickly told him I knew
I came down here because my dumb gut
infected again. He looked at it sternly,
said get on the table. I proze my
thumb, took the scalpel and cut. There were
two men being treated for seasickness. One
when saw the stuff coming from my hand
just turned green and ran to the latrines. He
bandaged the hand and gave me a percolat-
shot to improve to quarters ship. I went
back to my (bunk?) and read a book till
casey. I got up when chow call was given
and again waited patiently. We soon were allowed
to eat x after I again went up on deck to
fresh air & a smoke. I was now driven slow
from there, because the behavior mostly of
men. It has a strong stomach & my mind
can’t be talked into getting seasick, but how
much can a human stomach take. So far
the only place I can get a way from
SIXTH ARMY

The deluge is my lunch. At least all
we have to eat this is the morning of
men. We ate show at 8 o’clock and I just
made the show to the mess hall before they
closed it. We ate with less men than
ever, since on board. I went up topside
to have a look over once more and then came back down to my
cell block, compartment #5. I began this
writing being wide awake but this rocking
put me asleep fast. Jovanie, that’s a beautiful
name! I wonder what I’m going to dream
about tonight. Probably the two of us on a
shipwrecked island. Good-night, I love you!

April 30th

Not much happened today, except most of
the men feel better, thank God! After chow
this morning, I went topside and walked to the
bow of the ship. I just stood there and looked out
across the water. My thoughts turned to home.
I was wondering where you were and what you
might be doing at that moment. How much
I would have given to be with you see and
just talk to you. The sea is a pretty big
place and it can make one feel lonely. I thought
what my mother might have for dinner
and then my favorites popped through my head.
i was thinking how much i would like to have seen the baby before i left. it is funny, i think it was maybe more real than frederic. after awhile i went to the desk and got another shot of penicillin, then i went back to my bunk and read the book i started. i didn't move much except for change, during the rest of the day we played some cards and morning, and helped past the time away. i dreamed of my last night but it wasn't on a shipwrecked island. it was about the two of us walking down a long deserted street, with wild creatures, jumping in-and-out of the stores. when we finally made our way to the end of the street, there was a large steel box. we started to climb the steps to get to the box. when we reached it opened the box there was nothing in it. i don't know what this dream meant except at least we were both together as if most we were this very moment. i'm going to share now of other till the next. maybe tonight i'll have a much more romantic dream, somewhere in my subconscious mind. goodnight darling i hope when i reach japan, some of your letters will be waiting for me.

"i love you an awful lot!"
May 1st

Well today we had a movie on board ship. Dean Martin & Jerry Lewis in "War with the Army." The picture is about 1 year old but luckily I didn’t see it before. It was quite amusing and it took my mind away from home.

The snow isn’t getting any better & I’m getting hungry by the day. I went to the sickbay for my last shot. They told me my thumb is almost healed. It looks like a piece of meat, all lated up. After lunch I started reading your letters and felt at ease. It’s hard to write on board ship with its tossing everything with nothing really happening from day to day. the contents might seem awfully restrictive.

I started day dreaming while I read your letters and thought about all the things we did & all the places we have gone together. I especially thought of two places. I guess we’ll never forget, everytime I think of it, I have to laugh & get a little red in my face.
All the time when we went to Florence's birthday party, you got the cake in my face. I wonder if you ever think about that time or would you rather forget about it.

The other place that I was thinking about was the time we went to Rockaway. Not that the day was so important that it should stick out, but I remember it just that after we had finished what little swimming we did (you barely even went in), we had fun eating. We went to the amusement park and you were so scared to go on the roller coaster. You were like a little kid. After we came down, you wouldn't go on anything that looked dangerous. After, if you remember, we decided to lay on the beach and listen to the radio. After you had called your mother to answer her call, we told her we were going to stay there. Remember when we were laying on the sand how the sky was real black and the stars were shining over us and their lights would make funny sights on the water. It started getting cold.

I gave you my jacket. Boy! I almost froze after that. Maybe it wasn't such an important day to remember, but it gives me something to think about while trying to fall asleep.
May 2nd

Jeanie, I'm dying from hunger. What junk their feeding us by I wouldn't feed this stuff to a hog. I could go for a juicy thick steak or some pizza, ravioli or even some hamburgers. With the food a nice cold refreshing glass of beer. Hmmm, but it's only a dream. When I'm settled over in Korea in a nice bunk, you can start sending a package or two of food. How is the kitty in Germany? ???? I bet it sounds like a dog always talking about food.

Well today is Saturday and what away to spend it crammed up in the "sattle-boat". This way or least I can't spend any money, don't have any to spend. Well at least to board the ship on Tuesday, there was a money order (that my father sent me) laying in the box in the post office and hope they forwarded it to Germany, so when aboard of the ship it'll be waiting. There really isn't nothing to say or write about, so we'll read a book or if Paul comes over we'll plug some cards. So "Au Revoir, adieu".
Sunday
May 3rd

Hey had services today for the men, but I didn't feel like getting up to go. Not only am I hungry but I'm as well. I've finished three books so far. I started on a new one this morning. So far, I've read "Descanted," "Lonny Now," "Morning Journey to Now." I'm reading a book "Danny Fisher." By the time I come home, I'll be an expert on all the novels written in the last 50 years. We had a good meal for breakfast to lunch. Supper we had turkey, but you would've needed a microscope to find it. It's getting harder by the day to find something to write. Maybe if I threw somebody over the side, it could write something interesting. Paul came down a few minutes ago, he's been waiting from the finish writing so we can play cards. So you must forgive me for stopping now. I'll close writing. Okay. I really miss you. You're bad as I wish I was a real good swimmer, then I'd swim right back to the U.S.A.
May 4th

Maybe my luck is changing. I hope so, anyway. Today we had Bingo on the ship for my compartment, my bunkmate, Frank Co.C, at Dix, and myself. We bought up to game a little early. We bought at the prices, which comprised a watch, Parker 51 pen, pipe, writing pad, AWOL bag, and a few more things. As told my buddy if I did win any of these things, it would probably be the AWOL Bag. The game started, and I won the first game. The prize being the AWOL Bag. I felt like giving it back, knowing I shouldn't have any use for it, where I'm going. Having won, I couldn't compete in any more games, so I went back down to my bunk. Soon the game was over. The guys came down. I quickly tried to sell the bag. It was worth $6 to somebody. I got $3 for it. I bought the pipe from the guy who won it. The pipe cost $6, as actually it gave me on the deal besides the pipe. So now, if I have something, I can use while I'm over here. That might never happen today, so I'll say "Demain je vous".
May 5th

I hope that you were able to understand my French, that I used last night. I have heard that there are so many ways to say I love you with all my heart, that it might you were closer to me now in the French language. Naturally, not knowing French, I can't say yes or no, if it's true. Sometimes I wonder what you think when you write so often how much you long for your love? Maybe it sounds kinda funny coming from a girl like me. I think I better stop this silly writing again, right here.

The water is real blue no farther.

The sky. Can see. The surface is smooth, or guess calm would sound better, like a big lake. Tomorrow will be Thursday May 7th. We will cross the International date line tonight so we'll lose Wed May 6th. It seems I have a patron, here on board. His name is hand, keeps on buying books, candy, side, cigarettes, cookies almost anything. When I met him in St. Louis he plays Pinocchio (cards) with us. I know I shouldn't let him be so close with his money, but for a change it's not me. We were told arrived today at a lecture on Japan, about getting a pass for a day, after four months on the front. Drifting after stay in Japan, you can stay at a rest hotel, where food or a room is free.

All your clothes are clean as well as your
May 5th (cont.)

rifle unloaded. Then they told us
most of the men usually just leave
their dirty clothes to be cleaned at the hotel
and go off to the 5 day leave place. Here
for $2.50 you get a room, food, all the
essentials for 5 beautiful days. If you have
a girl for your own, besides, of course
and I have made you start thinking the
wrong way, please don't. With my luck
I'd be broke & spent 5 lonely days in
the Army hotel just eating & sleeping.
Well! It still wouldn't have been fun, but it
wasn't the use to dream of fun, boy!
Till tomorrow then, all my love, Army
(Dodo) - D. B. (Onley)

May 7th

Today has been another nice day as far
as the weather goes. Lives sunny & warm, the
water calm & the men were quite irritable.
After breakfast we stood on the O.T. line
to buy some candy & tobacco for my new
pipe. As we stood on line, a fight started between
a negro & white boy. One tried to brake into
the line & this brought on the fight. It was
stop almost as soon as it was started. Nobody
said much about it, as both parties could get in pretty bad, with the officers, should they find out about it. When it came my turn to buy the stuff, my patron, who has been financing my trip, gave me the initial money to buy it. I have tried to tell him I didn't need anything, but he insisted so what can I do? After showing the stuff away we went to see a movie. The movie was called "Royal Wedding" and had June Powell and Fred Astaire. I had already seen it before. When it was over, we went to the same more of the mess they've been finding us lately. Paul then came down and played some Pinball. Why? playing another fight started between two of the men in the compartment. Before it was broke up about six men were mixed in it. Again it was between white & black. The feeling here is getting worse everyday. It was headed up & all went off back to what they were doing. We played till Paul had to go on guard duty. I was looking at a poker game, when my friend gave me a dollar & said "All hands you want to play $1 for a dollar" I worked it up to $7.35 & then I decided to quit. Well now my love some money, thanks to my friend.
May 7th (cont.)

I gave him his dollar back & gave him two dollars out of the. The reason I hope to work up to a more respectable amount. We'll nothing more to write about, except that we crossed the international date line during the night.

May 8th

What a state this has been. Everything is breaking loose. We had a gang fight last night out of the mess hall. Today we had to dig trenches in the mess compartment. This place is getting better than hell. Here we are 8,000 men going to fight a war against blacks, black against Spaniards, Northerners vs. Southerners, and all against New Yorkers. Believe me, darling, I'm not joking. I'm pretty serious. The hate here against one another is getting worse. All you have to do is talk or look cross-eyed at someone and smack, right in your face. I'm sure
I'm glad that I come from N.Y. We hear about our racial & religious segregation & but its nothing to compare with the other cities & towns in the U.S. People hating, I mean really hating a person cause his skin is dark or he's a jew or a cathoic! I never believed in much what I heard about the south, but now I will change my mind now. The white folks on the ship from the south, Alabama, S.C, Tenn, N.C, Texas, all hell ignorant as far as personal liberties go for other men. Saying "as long as they stay in their place we'll tolerate them." These same people call themselves American & Christian. The color boys hating the whites for all the pressure put on them. Being in the army & having the same privileges as the whites, & taking to much for granted, over everying there's new born freedoms & equality. Northern, northemers hating & feeling resentful at the Easterners for their better living & money in there pockets, talk about the way people live in the East & act better toward one another than any where in the state. Then comes New York, fowever all the
May 8th 1961

Soldiers from these cities & towns... feel confused & resentful. They can’t understand how we can let Negroes & Puerto Ricans live so close to the whites. Have Negroes done to help bring about the birth of a white child. Having mixed marriages with racial as well as religious differences. Here’s so many things like stupid reasons that are given for all these hate. Yet we’re going to fight in Korea when our own back yard is filthy with segregated thought & actions. The same things we’re fighting over in Korea for. One begins to think which side is the worst, the one your sent to fight against, the one who sends you or among yourselves.

I guess I have written my self out. I hope I haven’t bored you too much. I tried to make them sound as bad as I tried to make them sound.

Good night sweetheart. All my love.
May 9th

Today I took life real easy a just laid in my tent & read. I finished "All the King's Men", "Penny Beats", "Talibas Flat", "Case Book of Sherlock Holmes", "Duel in the Sun" started on "Turquoise". Once I'm settled over in my new home, you can send me some Pocket Book editions (of westerns or mystery) I guess by now you should have received my (so called) Jewelry Box, I hope you liked it, even though it wasn't finished or from Palos. We get a newspaper here, printed by the ship crew, and in it, we have read about the general conditions in Korea. The general feeling here is "we hell with all this talk", and that doesn't change, even though the men rather be in a fight than mostly. I hope you're not talking too much about any more of the standing proposal, but all next day were still listening to new ones.

About what I wrote yesterday I tried to show you what most of these boys feel to think toward one another, chiefly through traditions & what their parents taught them. Well, I guess that's all I got to write.
May 10th

another Sunday, and it would be
just one more day away from home,
even that it's Mother's Day. We were
deliberating whether today was Mother's Day
or not, or come to the conclusion that it
was. So I hope you will extend my
best to your Mother plus all the happiest
health in the world. Naturally I would
love liked to become today to see my mother
you know? When you're away you start
thinking about all the things you did and
to hurt your parents. you begin to wonder
how they could have taken all your ill
condition. Then you see just how much
they must love and hold dear to them.
Did you ever think that by June 1956
you might be celebrating your own Mother's Day.
That is, if everything goes right. if you don't
but to many of your fellow classes? ????

I played tennis today. I now have
$21 from the original $10 that started with these.
I finished reading "Turkish" today and started
on "Brown Bette." I never thought I would like
to read so much. We had southern fried chicken
today & I was lucky, I got two half's, making
one whole chicken. I finished it without

raising an eyebrow. We should hit Yokohama by Tuesday afternoon, left. From there, we go directly to Camp Drake, in Buses.

I hope that we get good pay, plus my money order, should be there, and the money slide into hand.

I'm going out on a limb here, but I'm going to tell you a story. Well, anyway, that's all for today. Love to hear from you. I'll write when I get a chance.

Back means sick in Blinde Island.

May 11, 1953

Today was another ordinary day. Nothing happened on board to change the daily routine of the past two weeks. We did have a physical exam, but that's all. While upstairs doing the exam, somebody helped themselves to my book, "Bean Baste." So I started a new book called "Coronado's Children." I was right in the middle of "Bean Baste," and I was quite interested in the story. It seems that the author has been working hard on it. The men on deck were watching the wind blowing too much. So we've been playing cards much of the afternoon, but having much to write today. I'll end this writing for today.
Tuesday
May 12, 1953

and a few of the men had clean-up detail today. We worked on cleaning up the compartment for 3 hrs after chow. When we finally were finished we went up on deck while on deck we sighted a fleet of Japanese fishing boats. Some of the boats were men but most of them looked old to be ready for "Gary Jones Lodge". Once the men saw them a big yell arose from their ranks. They ran to the railings to see the sight. I guess it made them feel good to see something besides water and the other men on board.

The rest of the day we kept on passing small fishing craft, as we came closer to Japan. We're suppose to hit Japan all of tomorow. We had a practice disembarcation drill, so we'll know just where to go before we leave the ship. Our group will be all the way up at bow of the ship, so we'll be the last to leave the ship.

All in all the trip wasn't to bad. The food wasn't too good, but we had some trouble among the men, but at least
part is was endured. Naturally reading your letters over a couple of times in thinking of some parts most of the time away, even though it made me feel bow at times to think of leaving you or everyone behind. I hope you haven’t been worried or gotten scared because you didn’t receive a letter from me in 2 weeks. Naturally you’ll understand once you receive this letter. I hope that most of its contents has bored you or the handwriting caused you unnecessary eye strain. Due to the fact that I leaving the ship tomorrow I won’t continue this letter later in Japan. I’ll try to mail this letter right away to start a new one in the scrapbook. (Map out of ink for today) 

So... long last this letter will come to an end. Darling I hope that we will never have to close writing to one another for any reason. fiancee I want you to know that I’ll always be in love with you, no matter what. I hope you’ll always remember this, Okay? Give my regards to your parents, June, Johnny, Ray & the Dang with all my love

[Alfred]
Pvt Albert J. Sdlacek
RA 12422130
Prov Co. S.E. NO 1101
APO 613
C/O Post Master
SAN Fransico, Calif.

Miss Joan C. Palmer
84 West 176th St.
Bronx 53, New York
U.S.A.

[Text: VIA AIR MAIL]
[[Image: U.S. Naval ship Marine Lynx]]

[[Text: U.S. NAVAL SHIP MARINE LYNX]]
USNS MARINE LYNX is a C-4 type Navy Transport built in 1945 in Vancouver, Wash. She is 523 feet long, 72 feet wide and can cruise at 17 knots. Complete facilities for troop recreation are available on board. Equipped with modern safety and live-saving gear, the ship is part of the fleet of transports and cargo vessels operated by the Military Sea Transportation Service, Department of the Navy.

This was the ship we crossed the Pacific on. It docked at Yokohama, Japan, Wed., May 13, 1953. Exactly 3,124 men disembarked. I’ll be quite busy the next several months, but you can expect me back as soon as my jobs done.

To
Joanie
with all my
Love

[[underline] Albert [[/underline]]
April 28, 1953

Darling:

Were on our way, off to sacred, mysterious + yet lovely Orient. As we steadily moved out to the blue Pacifico, through [Puges?] Sound, we stood on deck trying to get a last look of the U.S. The wind was blowing slightly, + as some spray [[hit?]] around us, my thoughts turn from being a infantryman to being a fancy bell bottom sailor. I quickly had those thoughts discharged from my mind once the [[h----ing]] gang started. We had show at 7:30 + then I started to write you. I figure I'll write one continuous letter instead of one everyday, Okay? I going to [[hit?]] my stretcher + get some sleep—“Good-Night Joanie”

April 29th—

Got up this morning with a real appeitie!
After a long wait my stomach was rewarded with eggs, sausage, cereal, fruit, bread + butter, Coffee.
As I went up to the main deck, the ladderwells were filled with moaning + groaning troopers. Some longing to die, some wanting to blow away, but they all had one thing in common, + that was, they didn’t reach the railing in time.
While walking on deck, I met [[underline]] Paul [[/underline]] + we walked to the bow of the ship + just talked + looked out across a pretty big ocean.
We stood there for quite while, till the (shall we say “aroma”) from the overflowing food of the persons, who did make the the rails, [?] Paul quickly climbed down [his?] latchway for cleaner breathing, as I went to the latchway leading to sickbay. Climbing down the stairs again I reviewed the same sight as when I came on deck, but this time it was double. I told the Medic my reason for wanting to go to sickbay + he politely showed me the way. The doctor came in + looked at me saying; “Your not sea sick-“ I quickly told him I know; I came down here because my tunb got infected again. He looked at it sternly, + said get on the table. He froze my thumb, took a scalpel + cut. There were two men being treated for seasickness, who when saw the stuff coming from my hand just turned green + ran to the latrine. He bandaged the hand + gave me a penicillin shot + confined to quarter ship. I went back to my (bunk?) and read a book and fell asleep. I got up when chow call was given + again waited patiently. We [[som?]] were allowed to eat + after I again went up on deck for fresh air and a smoke. I was soon driven down from their, because of the behavior of most of the men. I have a strong stomach + my mind can’t be talked into getting seasick, but how much can a human stomach take. So far the only place I can get a way from
the deluge, is my bunk. At least all
I have to [[strikethrough]] y [[/strikethrough]] hear is the moaning of the men. We ate [[slow?]] at 8 o’clock and I just made the door to the mess hall before they closed it. We ate with less men than ever, since on board. I went up topside once more + then came back down to my cellblock, compartment 4E. I began this writing, being wide awake but this rocking puts me asleep fast. Joanie, thats a beautiful name! I wonder what I’m going to dream about tonight. Proabbly the two of us on a shipwrecked Island. Good-Night, I love you!

April 30th—

Not much happened today, except most of the men feel better, thank God! After chow this morning, I went topside + walked to the bow of the ship. I just stood there + looked out across the water + my thoughts turn to home I was wondering where you were + what you might be doing at that moment. How much I would have given to be with you, see + just talk to you. The sea is a pretty big place + it can make [[^]] you [[/^]] awful lonely. I thought what my mother might have for dinner + then my [[favorites?]] popped through my head.
I was thinking how much I would like to have seen the baby, before I left. It’s funny, I think I was more worried than Freddie. After awhile, I went to the sickbay + got another shot of Penicillin, then to my bunk + read the book I started. I didn’t move much except for chow, during the rest of the day. We played some cards for (no money) and helped past the time away. I drean’t of us last night but it wasn’t on a shipwrecked Island. It was about the two us walking down a long deserted street, with weird creatures jumping in and out of the stores. When we finally made our way to the end of the street, there was a large steel box. We started to climb the steps to get to the box. When we reached it + opened the box there was nothing in it. I don’t know what this dream meant except at least we were both together as I wish we were this very moment. I’m going to shore now + Maybe tonight I’ll have a much more romantic dream, somewhere in my subconscious mind. Good-Night Darling, I hope when I reach Japan, some of your letters will reach me.

“I LOVE YOU AN AWFUL LOT”!
May 1st—

Well today we had a movie on board ship.
Dean Martin + Jerry Lewis in War with the Army
the picture is about 1 year old but luckily
I didn’t see it before. It was quite [?]
and it took my mind away from home.
The chow isn’t getting any better + I’m
getting hungrier by the day. I went to
the sickbay for my last shot + they looked
at my thumb + and said it’s almost healed.
It looks like a [strikethrough] ju [[strikethrough]] chunk of meat, all [[lasted]]
up. After lunch I started reading your
letters and fell at ease. Its harp to
write on board ships with its tossing + everything.
With nothing really happening from day to day
the contents might seem awfully [[repetitious?]].
I started day dreaming while I read
your letters and thought about all the
things we did + all the places we
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May 2\textsuperscript{nd}—

Joanie!, I’m dying from hunger. What junk their feeding us, boy; I wouldn’t feed that stuff to a beagull. I could go for a juicy thick steak or some Pizza, ravioli or even some hamburgers. With the food a nice col refreshing glass of beer. Hmmm, but it’s only a dream. When I’m settled over in Korea, in a nice “Bunker” you can start sending a package or two of food. That is if the [[kithy?]] is repl[---]sh???? I bet I sound like a [[hog?]]?, always talking about food.

Well today is Saturday and what away to spend it cramped up in a “cattle-boat”. This way at least I can’t spend any money, don’t have any to spend. When I left to board the ship, on Tuesday, there was a money order (that my father sent to me) laying in the [[box?]], in the [[P N?]] Office. I hope they forwarded it to Japan, so when I get off the ship, it’ll be waiting. There really isn’t much to say or write about, so I’ll a book or if Paul comes over we’ll play some cards. So “Auf Wiedersehen”
Sunday
May 3rd

They had services today for the men, but I didn’t feel like getting up to go. Not only am I hungry but lazy as well. I’ve finished three books so far + I started on a new one this morning. so far I read “Desenchant”, “Cannery Row”, “Morning Journey” + now I’m reading “A Stone” for “Danny Fisher.” By the time I come home I’ll be a expert on all the novels written in the last 10 years. We had [[lovely?]] food for Breakfast + Lunch. Supper we had Turkey, but you would’ve needed a microscope to find it. It’s getting harder by the day to find something to write. Maybe if I threw somebody over the side, I could write something interesting? Paul came down a few minutes ago, + he’s been waiting for me to finish writing so we can play cards. So if you will forgive me for stopping now, I’ll close writing, okay. I really miss you pretty bad, I wish I was a real good swimmer, then I’d swim [[straight?]] back to the U.S.A.
May 4th

Maybe my luck is changing, I hope so, anyway. Today we had Bingo on the ship for my compartment. My bunkmate, from Co. “C.” at Dih, and myself went up to the game a little early. We looked at the prizes, which comprised a watch, Parker 50’ Set, pipe, writing kit, AWOL bag + a few more things. I told my buddy if I won any of these things it would probably be the AWOL bag. The game started + I won the first game, the prize being the AWOL Bag. I like giving it back, knowing I wouldn’t have any use for it, where I’m going. Having won I couldn’t compete in anymore games, so I went back down to my bunk. Soon the game was over + the guys came down. I quickly tried to sell the bag, it was worth $6, to somebody. I got $3 for it, bought the pipe from the guy who won it. The pipe cost $7 so actually I gain $1 on the deal besides the pipe. So now I have something I can use while I’m over here. Not much else happen today so I’ll say “Demain j’ecrit” Okay?
May 5th

I hope that you, were able to understand my French, that I used last night. I have heard that there are so many ways to say, I love you with all my heart + that I wish you were close to me now” in the French Language. Naturally, not knowing French, I can’t say yes or no, if its true. Sometimes I wonder what you think, when I write so often how I miss you + long for your love? Maybe it sounds kinda funny coming from a jerk like me. I think I better stop this, nutty writing again, right here.

The water is real there as far as the eye can see. The surface is smooth, or I guess calm would sound better, like a big lake. Tomorrow will be Thursday May 7th. We will cross the international date line tonight, so we’ll lose Wed May 6th. It seems I have a patron, here on board. He’s guy, not a queer, keeps on buying books, candy, soda, cigarettes, cookies almost everything I need. I met him in Ft. Lewis + he plays Pinochle (cards) with us. I know I shouldn’t let him be so lose with his money, but for a change its not me. We were told earlier today in a lecture on Japan, about getting a pass for 5 days, after four months on the ground. During that stay in Japan, you can stay at a rest hotel, where food + a room is free. All your [?] are clean as well as your
May 5th (cont.)

rifle rechecked. Then they told us
most of the men usually just leave
there dirty clothes to be clean at the hotel
+ go off to the 5 day leave plan. Here
for $75 you get a room, food, all the
essentials for 5 beautiful days of life plus
a girl for your own pleasure. If
I have made you start thinking the
wrong way, please don’t. With [[underline]] my luck [[/underline]]
I’ll be broke + spend 5 lonely days in
the Army hotel just eating + sleeping.
See! It still would’ve been fun, but
whats the use to dream; Oh Hun, Boy!
Till Tomorrow then, all my love, to my
(Dodo) – D. B. – (Dinky)

May 7th

Today has been another nice day as far
as the weather goes. Livas sunny and warm, the
water calm + the men were quite irritable.
After breakfast we stood on the P.X. line
to buy some candy + [[strikethrough]] tabbac [[/strikethrough]] tobacco for my new
pipe. As we stood on line, a fight started between
a negro + white boy. One tried to brake into
the line + this brought on the fight. It was
stop almost as soon as it started. Nobody
said much about it, as both parties could get in pretty bad, with the officers; should they find out about it. When it came my turn to buy the stuff, my patron, who has been financing my trip, gave me the [[enital?]] money to buy it. I have tried to tell him I don’t need anything, but he insist so what can I do. After storing the stuff away we went to see a movie. The movie was called “Royal Wedding” and had Jane Powell + Fred Astaire; I had already seen it before. When it was over, we went + ate some more of the mess, they’ve been feeding us lately. Paul then came down + we played some Pinochle. Why’ll playing another fight started between two of the men in the compartment. Before it was broke up about six men were mixed in it. Again it was between white + black. [[The feeling?]] here is getting worse everyday. It was [[hurled?]] up + [[all?]] went back to what they were doing. We played till Paul had to go on guard duty. I was looking at a poker game, when my friend gave me a dollar + said “It seems you want to play so here a dollar”. I worked it up to $7.35 + then I decided to quit. Well now I have some money, thanks to my friend.
May 7\textsuperscript{th} (cont.)

I gave him his dollar back + gave
him two more dollars out of the $7. The rest
I hope to work up to a more respectable
amount. Well nothing more to
write about, except that we crossed
the International date line during
the night.

May 8\textsuperscript{th}

What a day this has been, everything
is breaking loose. We had a gang
fight last night after I went to bed,
+ today we had a big brawl in the
next compartment. This place is
getting hotter than hell. Here we
are 3,000 men going to fight a war,
+ yet we fight among ourselves. White
against black, black against spaniards, southerners
against Northerners, + Easterners vs Westerners and
all against New Yorkers. Believe me
Darling I’m not joking, its pretty serious.
Slowly the hate here against one another
is getting worse. All you have to do
is talk or look crosseyed at someone +
smack, right in your face. I’m sure
glad that I come from N.Y. We
hearing about our racial + religious segregation
but it's nothing to compare with the
other cities + towns in the U.S. People
hating, I mean really hating a person
due to his skin being dark or he's a Jew
or a Catholic. I never believed to
much what I heard about the south,
but know one will change my mind
now. The white folks on the ship
from the south, Alabama, Geo, [[Tenar?]], + Karl,
[[Texas?]] dumb all hell, ignorant as
far as personal liberties go for other men.
Saying “As long as they stay in their
place we’ll tolerate them”. These same
people call themselves Americans + Christians.
The [[soher?]] boys hating the whites for all
the pressure put on them. Being in the Army
+ having the same privileges as the whites, and
taking to much for granted, over exercising
their new born freedom + equality. Westerners,
Southerners, Northerners looking + feeling [[?]]
at the Easterners for there better [[learning?]],
money in there pockets, talk about the
way people live in the East + act better
toward one another than anywhere in the states.
Then comes New York, here’s where all the
May 8th cont.
soilders from these cities + towns get confused + resentful. They can’t understand how we can let negroes + Puerto Ricans live so close to the whites. Have negro doctors help bring about the birth of a white child. Having mix mariages with racial + well as religious differences. There’s so many other things + stupid reasons that are given for all these hates. Yet we’re going to fight in Korea when our own backyard is filthy with segregated thoughts + actions, the same things were fighting over in Korea for one begins to think which side is the worse, the one [[your?]] sent to fight against, the one who sent you or among yourselves.

I guess I have written myself out. I hope I haven’t bored you with this phase of the trip or my own thoughts as bad as I tried to make them sound. Good-Night sweetheart + all my love.
May 9th

Today I took life real easy + just laid in my bunk + read. I finished “A Stone for Danny Fisher,” “[[Tabilla Flat?]]” “Case Book of Sherlock Holmes”, “Duel in the Sun” + started on “Turquoise”. Once I’m settled over in my new home, you can send me some Pocket Book editions. (No Westerns or [[?]] [[mystereys?]].) I guess by now you should have received my (so called) Jewelry Box. I hope you liked it, even though it wasn’t finish or from Saks 5th. We get a newspaper here, printed by the ships crew, and in it, we have read about the see-saw conditions in Korea. The general feeling here is “The hell with all this talking” Most of the men rather be in a fight than listen to all this hopeful talk, that keeps on picking your hopes up + then dropping them. We keep on saying to the “Chinese” that we won’t hear anymore of there [[stalling?]] proposal, but the next day were still there listening to new ones.

About what I wrote yesterday, I tried to show you what most of those boys feel + think toward one another, chiefly through tradition + what there parents taught them. Well I guess that’s all for to-night.
May 10th

Another Sunday, and it would be
just one more day away from home,
except that it’s Mothers Day. We were
deliberating wether today was Mothers Day,
or not + came to the conclusion that it
was. So I hope you will extend my
best to your mother, plus all the happiness +
health in the world. Naturally I would
have liked to be home today + see my mother
you know? When your away you start
thinking about all the things you did + said
to hurt your parents. You begin to wonder
how they could have taken all your ill
treatment. Then you see just how much
they must [[^]] have [[/\^]] loved you + hold [[^\^]] you [[/\^\^]] dear to them.
Did you ever think that by [[strikethrough]] [[?]] [[/strikethrough]] May 1956
you might be celebrating your own Mother’s Day.
That is, if everything goes right + if you didn’t
[[cut?]] to many of your [[Hygiene classes?]] ????
I played some poker today + I now have
$21 from the original $1, that I started with [[Thurs?]].
I finished reading “Turquoise” today + started
on “Beau Geste”. I never thought I [[strikethrough]] [[?]] [[/strikethrough]] would like
to read so much. We had southern fried chicken
today + I was lucky, I got two half’s, making
one whole chicken. I finished it without
(18)
raising an eyebrow. We should hit Yokahama by Tuesday afternoon + unload. From there, we go directly to Cang Drake, in Buses. I hope that we get paid, plus my money order, should be there, and the money I have now would give me enough to buy some soveniers to send home. Naturally that would only happen if we stay in Camp Drake, long enough for a [?]
Well darling thats all for today, have to shave + then hit my “stretcher”. “Gutte Nacth meine schöne Blunde Mädel”.

May 11, 1953

Today was another ordinary day. Nothing happened on board to change the dull routine of the past two weeks. We did have a physical exam, but thats all. While upstairs having the exam, somebody helped themselves to my book, “Beau Geste”. So I started a new book called “Coronado’s Children”. I was right in the middle of “Beau Geste” and I was quite interested in the story. Its been awfully hot down in the compartment all day, so we went up to the main deck. We didn’t stay up long, there were to many men on deck + the [[strikethrough]] [?] [[strikethrough]] wind was blowing to much. So we’ve been playing cards most of afternoon not having much to write today, I’ll end this writing for today.
Tuesday
May 12, 1953

I and a few of the men had clean up detail today. We worked on cleaning up the compartment for 2 hrs after chow. When we finally were finished we went up on deck. While on deck we sighted a fleet of Japanese fishing boats. Some of the boats were new but most of them looked old + ready for “Davy Jones Locker”. Once the men saw them a big j[---]r arose from [[two words?]] + they ran to the railings to few the sight I guess it made them feel good to see something besides water + the other men on board. The rest of the day we kept on passing small fishing crafts, as we came closer to Japan. We’re supposed to hit Japan, at 4 P.M tomorrow. We had a practice disembarkation drill, so we’ll know just where to go before we leave the ship. Our group will be the last to leave the ship.

All in all the trip wasn’t to bad The food wasn’t good + we had some trouble among the men, but at most
part it was endurable. Naturally reading your letters over a couple of times + thinking of home past most of the line away, Even though it made me feel [[how?]] at times to think of having you + everyone behind. I hope you haven’t been worries or gotten [[pissed?]], because you didn’t receive a letter from me in 2 wks. Naturally, you’ll understand once you receive this letter. I hope that none of it’s contents has bored you or the handwriting caused you unnecessary eye strain’s. Due to the fact that I leaving the ship tomorrow I won’t continue this letter later in Japan. I’ll try to mail this letter right away + start a new one in the barracks. (ran out of ink, + using [[?]] pen) So at long last, this letter will come to an end. Darling I hope that we will never have to cease writing to one another for any reason. Joanie I want you to know that I’ll always be in love with you, no matter what. I hope you’ll always remember this, Okay? Give my regards to your [[pounts?]], June, Johnny, Ray + the Gang with all my Love

[[underline]] Albert [[/underline]]