

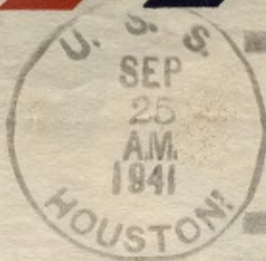
Wednesday, 17 September

Dear Folks,

I enjoyed Mother's letter very much indeed and hope that you are both going to have a most pleasant trip down to Mississippi and back. I certainly wish that I were able to go along with you, and I will be anxious to hear about things down there as well as about things in Charleston. I am glad that you are planning to go by there. Frances has written a great deal about the way that Larry is developing, and I hope that she will get some pictures out to me shortly.

Life goes on pretty much the same here on the ship. This week there have been a lot of routine matters that only occur about once a year but which for some reason were all scheduled at the same time. So I have been a little bit too busy lately. However I usually stop work to go up and see the movies and then work on a little while afterwards. I am not to stand any watches either at anchor or underway so it is going to be as comfortable in that respect as the last three years have been. Our operations so far have been by no means strenuous, nothing like the pace they are keeping up on the east coast, and in several other ways this is a lot more comfortable duty than they are experiencing back in the States. We hear little or nothing about the crisis out here any more. I got a small radio before we left Manila and set it up in my room. The officers country on here has an AC circuit put in for radios. With it I can just get San Francisco at night so that I can understand it. Then of course I can also hear Manila, Shanghai, Tokyo, Batavia, Hong Kong, Sydney, Rangoon and other closer stations. The short wave reception on these small sets out here is really remarkably good. The broadcast band however won't carry more than about fifty miles. Naturally we hope that some sort of understanding is going to be worked out with the Japs that will at least give us some more time. After listening to the President's speech and reading reports on Knox's it looks as though those on the East Coast are going to have a lot busier time of it. Of course we are about as far removed from the civilized world and its troubles as one can get so that perhaps we are inclined to take them a little lightly. The only ships even other than our own outfit which we see are native canoes and bancas. The ship is having a picnic on Saturday and another on Sunday for the crew over on an island nearby. There is nothing on the island except coconut trees and three native nipa huts. We have cleared off a place for a softball diamond, and have ordered some beer and hot dogs from Zamboanga, hoping that it will get there in time. A group of us are planning to go off on a trip of our own if we can have one of the ship's boats for the day. I hope to be able to send you some pictures soon of some of the places around here. I have promised to give these old geographic magazines to some of the mess boys on here after I am through with them. I trust that will be all right with you. I will keep a record of the individual copies and their contents in order to be able to try to replace them from a bookstore if you would like. We have Chinese boys on here and they all seem to keep scrap books. I'd like for you to be able to see some of them. They can't read written English but prize such pictures very highly.

Devotedly
Robert



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