World War II and the Pacific Theater: General Island Life

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(Daniel D. Price WWII Films)

Overview of WWII Pacific Island Life

In the summer of 1943, North Carolina native, Daniel Dortch Price of Mount Olive, N.C., arrived on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands, where he would serve as a Sergeant in the 38th Air Materials Squadron of the U.S. Army Air Force for about a year. Price’s role at this point in World War II was to operate the aircraft supply hut on the Lunga Beach Fighter Strip on the northwest side of Guadalcanal, following the end of the Battle of Guadalcanal earlier that year. When he was not working to fulfill supply and parts orders for the Air Force, Price and his friends found other ways to fill their limited non-working hours. It was during his time on Guadalcanal that Price and his comrade, Bill Carroll, shot two films depicting camp life in the Pacific Theater. Both films are rare, unedited, non-official government views of the average experiences of North Carolinians and other American service individuals on the Pacific islands.¹

Life for North Carolina military individuals serving in the Pacific Theater during World War II varied depending on their assignment location and time of service. Many experienced the hardships and horrors of combat; while others who arrived after the battles had been fought, found island life to be uneventful and monotonous. This packet contains excerpts of letters, diary entries, photographs, and films, showing the experiences of several North Carolinians on different Pacific islands, all encountering similar yet slightly different challenges on the islands.

Island life was far from fun, especially for those who had never left farms or cities in North Carolina. Daniel Price recounts in an interview that arriving in New Caledonia and Guadalcanal had been the first time he had ever been on an island in his life.² It was not easy for the first Americans who came upon islands filled with Japanese military forces, that had embedded themselves in the various islands awaiting the arrival of Allied forces. The Japanese were prepared to give their lives for their emperor, and for their families’ honor. It was a world that many Westerners were unprepared for, and had never encountered before the war.

In the first year and a half of America’s involvement in fighting in the Pacific Theater against the Japanese—from the early spring of 1942 to the late summer of 1943—most American military personnel experienced the heavy toil of island and jungle warfare. There was no time to swim on the beaches or sightsee in mountains using an Army jeep, since hidden Japanese forces were still ambushing Allied troops as they pushed further into the islands after the major portions of battles had ceased.

By the time men such as Daniel Price had arrived in the Pacific, island life constituted setting up supply bases, airplane landing strips and fields, military camps, and entertainment for the men stationed there. All of this was part of the United States “island hopping strategy.” This strategy targeted key islands and atolls to capture and

¹ Both Price WWII films are available for viewing on the State Archives of North Carolina’s Youtube page. The black-and-white film, shot in the summer of 1943, is available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJ5c8Lnbv18&feature=youtu.be. The color film, shot in the fall of 1943, is available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmGpGiChpsI&feature=youtu.be.
² See Daniel D. Price Interview, MilColl OH 1055, North Carolina Veterans Oral History Collection, Military Collection, State Archives of North Carolina, accessible through the Internet Archive here: https://archive.org/details/MilCollOH1055Price
equip them with airstrips, in order to bring B-29 bombers within range of the enemy’s homeland; while hopping over strongly defended islands, cutting off supply lanes, and leaving the Japanese forces there to wither.\textsuperscript{3}

American island living could be perilous, too, as enemy ships could destroy supply ships heading to a given island, leaving the men on the island to fend for themselves until they could be resupplied. The Japanese had left booby traps, such as grenades with trip wires, hidden all around Pacific islands where Allied forces were landed—particularly in the interior of the islands. Also, staving off boredom would prove crucial to keeping up the morale of the men and women on the islands, who would in some cases spend four to five years away from their homes and loved ones.

Not every Pacific island experience was the same for a serviceman or servicewoman, but all islands shared common experiences. What follows are examples of different daily aspects of Pacific island life in WWII, as told or seen by North Carolinians through original letters, photographs, daily diary entries, or through interviews.

**General Island Living**

Captain John F. Mallard of Jones County, N.C, was a U.S. Marine who fought in the Guadalcanal and Marshall Islands’ campaigns in 1942. In a letter home to his wife on May 24, 1942, Mallard presents a general description of his new home on an unidentified Pacific island, shortly after his arrival there:

“Well, We’ve just finished moving again, and are just about settled down in what will probably be our permanent home for some time to come. We again are living in a native house which is quite the other extreme from a house. The floor is dirt with a few stones thrown upon it. There are no sides, no privacy, no conveniences [misspelling]. The roof is thatched of palm tree leaves but is quite water proof. The men are living in tents and they had to go right into the thickest jungle to clear a place to them.”

“There are plenty of flies and mosquitoes, especially flies, but life here isn’t as bad as that. Give me the good ole’ U.S.A. to any other place in the world though. This is supposed to be an island paradise, but any place in the U.S. would suit me better than a king’s throne here.”

“. . . . Well to-day is Sunday and I spent it swimming and paddling around. Lt. Smith and I bought an outrigger canoe from one of the chiefs [misspelling] in the village and we have quite a time scooting around with it. There are a lot of big fish around and we intend to try our luck the first chance we have. There’s a great reef about three miles away from shore around the island so we have almost a natural lake in which we can swim and fish.”

“Believe it or not we still keep in touch with the U.S. by radio. I just finished stringing an aerial [antenna] between two coconut trees and we can pull in stations from the States with the greatest of ease. Boy, that makes home life 100% better just to hear some good old swing [music]. The things like that you miss the most are these that you take for granted when you’re living in a land of luxury. Right now the radio is blaring away with some of the latest tunes” (see Item 1, pages 1-5).

Herman Harding Bolton of High Point and Burlington, N.C, served during WWII in the Pacific Theater with the 421st Bomb Squadron, 504th Bomb Group, U.S. Army Air Forces. Providing a quick synopsis of his new environment after just arriving in the Marianas Islands, Bolton writes to a friend on January 16, 1945, the following about the islands:

“In contrast to yours, my environment at the present is much different. We landed here, an island of the Marianas Group, on the 24th of December [1944] after a long trip crossing the Pacific. . . . We came by way of the Hawaiian Islands. Now that I have seen Pearl Harbor, I wish I had volunteered and had gone over there when I considered it as a civilian. The islands are beautiful and the harbor is ap[p]alling. . . .”

“When we first landed conditions were bad and living rough. On Christmas Day I set up my pup tent, took a bath from a helmet full of water, and ate ‘C’ rations from tin cans. These conditions are things of the past because we have most of our equipment set up now. At the present, I live in a six man tent, sleep upon a cot, eat in a mess hall and take a bath from a shower. The greatest inconvenience which still persist[s] is the air raids. The raids are of the nature of which I cannot comment except to say that the AA guns (anti-aircraft artillery) threw up fire which reminds me of the county fair fireworks but on a larger scale. It is very beautiful from the standpoint of appearance.”

“This particular island has been a beautiful place. It still appeared so to me after the boat trip but in the truer sense war has mar[r]ed its beauty enormously. The weather is warm and working without a shirt is putting a tan on me. The people here consist of Japanese and natives of the Polynesian race” (see Item 2, pages 1-3).

Living with Air Raids

While many military personnel expressed some discomfort regarding mosquitoes, food rations, or bad weather, during WWII in the Pacific, those not in front-line combat fared better in comparison to those men who fought in the fierce battles of the Pacific. Air raids became a 24-hour fact of life, where air warning sirens went off when suspected or observed Japanese aircraft were approaching a given Allied island camp. Japanese planes bombed Allied locations, airfields, ships, aircraft, and strafed beaches and military tents. An American soldier could work for 18 hours, then not be able to get any sleep due to regular air raid warnings. The air raids got on American service personnel’s nerves, causing them to be jumpy and feel a constant sense of worry or fear.

Staff Sergeant Wallace M. Littlejohn of the town of Spindale in Rutherford County, N.C., was a U.S. Marine Corps aviation mechanic. He served in the Pacific Theater during the Battle of Okinawa in the spring of 1945. Entries from his war diary during this time detail the misery of his Marine service at Okinawa.

For example, an entry from April 15, 1945, about a Japanese attack with little warning reads about the Japanese raids on his location around Okinawa (see Item 3):

Sunday, April 15, 1945

The Japs strafed 15 of our planes and dropped personnel bombs. Some of the planes looked like a sieve. Working like mad to get them back in the air. Haven’t had clothes off to sleep in two weeks; dirty, dusty and greasy. Everyone is; look like forgotten men. Not much joking anymore. But there has to be someone to do or say something to break the monotony or we’d all go nuts. Last night during the worst of the raid, some joker stuck his head out of his foxhole and yelled as loud as he could, ”Mail Call.”
Another diary entry from Littlejohn dated May 15, 1945, reads (see Item 4):

Learning to be Resourceful

In the challenging conditions faced by American service individuals on the Pacific islands, basic necessities such as a place to sleep or the ability to shower became coveted possessions for the soldiers, sailors, marines, and flyers. The lack of available natural resources on the islands—which had suffered the scourge of combat and clearance by the Japanese military—meant that American military personnel had to come up with new and inventive ways to obtain items of a daily necessity, or to adapt their military supplies to suit their personal needs.

In a diary entry from April 16, 1945, Wallace M. Littlejohn describes the creative way in which they constructed a shower on the island:

“ Took nice shower this p.m. We have a barrel full of water on a platform and the water runs out into a bucket with holes punched in the bottom and it makes a spray just like a regular shower. I put on clean clothes, feel lots better” (see Item 3).
Servicemen were not only coming up with imaginative ways to feel more at home, but also creative ways to entertain themselves in their downtime. A battle surgeon with the 307th Infantry Regiment, U.S. Army, John B. Graham of Goldsboro, N.C., writes in a letter to his wife from the Marianas Islands on April 8, 1945, about ways to make boats for leisure:

“Many of the mechanically minded men have fashioned boats out of airplane belly tanks and even wood and sail within the lagoon. One even made a boat out [of] a belly tank with a propeller. He has a bicycle chain and sprocket hooked to the propeller and drives himself around” (see Item 5).

**Entertainment**

Entertainment became an essential part of daily living on the Pacific islands for U.S. military members. Whether it was playing card games, gambling, reading magazines sent from home, dancing, listening to the radio, or playing sports, entertainment dominated the periods of downtime for service individuals. The men also found other forms of entertainment on the islands, including games of baseball and volleyball. Baseball became an international game as American servicemen played the game at military camps all over the world, teaching islanders and Allied servicemen the rules of the game. Many North Carolinian amateur and professional baseball players would join military camp teams, sometimes traveling to play teams from other U.S. military branches in regional locations.
Three photographs of a U.S. Army Air Forces baseball game on an unidentified island in the Pacific Theater during World War II. Pictured below are a group of U.S. Army members sitting on benches along the base path of the homemade baseball field. Photograph taken or collected by Ferd L. Davis of Zebulon, N.C., who served as a Captain in the 5th Bomb Group, U.S. Army Air Force (from Ferd L. Davis Collection, Military Collection, State Archives).
Above, a photograph of U.S. military personnel playing volleyball in camp at Samar Island in the Philippines during World War II. Below, a photograph of U.S. military personnel playing basketball on a makeshift dirt basketball court with a cobbled-together basketball hoop (from Ferd L. Davis Collection, Military Collection, State Archives).

American military members also often watched live plays put on by fellow service individuals on makeshift camp stages, or watched movies projected at night from handmade wooden benches on the sand. Hollywood
Films and U.S. news reels were often played, though many of the films were not the most recent films and many soldiers and sailors had already seen the movies.

Films would not always be watched without interruption, as John B. Graham recounts in a letter dated June 11, 1945 to his sweetheart about watching a film while at Okinawa:

“I stopped here [believed to mean Okinawa] a couple of hours ago to see a movie. There was the world premiere of “Gov’t Girl” [starring] Olivia de Havilland (circa 1942). I believe I was the only one present who hadn’t seen it. There is a battery of heavy artillery just beyond and behind the screen. They let go a salvo about every 5 minutes. The noise drowns out the sound and the yellow flash blinds you momentarily. The mosquitos were pretty bad. Isn’t it amazing what we will go thru to see a sorry movie?” (see Item 6, page 2).
Two scenes of U.S. military dances with male and female U.S. Army Air Forces personnel on an unidentified island in the Pacific Theater during World War II (from Ferd L. Davis Collection, Military Collection, State Archives.

Setting Up a Military Camp

Most of the men and women of the U.S. military in the Pacific slept in tents or screen-enclosed wood framed barracks. Most military camps had a mess hall, where the men and women would gather for meals or the occasional celebration. Some camps even had a military bar or a chapel. Camps were mostly located along the beaches, because some entrenched Japanese forces remained on the interior of the islands, or many bobby traps
were yet to be cleared further inland. On the islands, the servicemen and servicewomen often built all the structures from scratch, using empty shipping crates in many cases for timber.

Some of the men took great pride in their work and saw an opportunity to make camp feel more like home, as Captain Raymond L. Mulkey of Dunn, N.C. wrote to his fiancée on November 4, 1943, while serving in the U.S. Army’s Coast Artillery Corps in the Pacific Theater:

“Tomorrow morning I am beginning my new mess hall [and] hope to get enough lumber to do a good job for the old one made from logs [and] poles has just about seen its last days [and] my concrete floor that I poured last week is a humdinger—Level and so pretty and white—when I get done with it the boys are going to feel like they were back in Garrison” (see Item 7).

*View of a row of U.S. Army Air Force tents in a camp on an unidentified island in the Pacific Theater during World War II (from Ferd L. Davis Collection, Military Collection, State Archives).*
View of another row of U.S. Army Air Force tents in a camp on an unidentified island in the Pacific Theater during World War II (from Ferd L. Davis Collection, Military Collection, State Archives).
View of a U.S. military Catholic chapel service on an unidentified island in the Pacific Theater during World War II. Notice the open-sided chapel walls, with makeshift ceiling lighting (from Ferd L. Davis Collection, Military Collection, State Archives).

View of U.S. Army Air Forces members baking pies in a military camp kitchen on Morotai Island in Indonesia during World War II (from Ferd L. Davis Collection, Military Collection, State Archives).
One experience that all U.S. servicemen and servicewomen had in common was homesickness. Wishing for mom’s cooking, hoping to go back to college, wanting to kiss and hold a girlfriend or boyfriend, or visiting with friends—all were things hoped for by those facing the utter horrors or challenges of warfare.

In a letter written to his wife on June 19, 1942, Marine captain John F. Mallard expresses the importance of receiving letters from loved ones when overseas:

“Might as well have my say right at the beginning and get things off my chest. Sweetheart, here I am writing you twice a week at least and sometimes much more often, but so far I’ve only received three letters from you. Now darling, some of the others receive three or four letters every mail when I don’t get anything.”

“Honey, I know you love me as much as anyone can love another and you know your love is returned, but it would make me much happier to hear from you more. Don’t get the idea that I’m fussing honey, far from it, -cause I’ll never fuss with you; but letters do mean more than anything else to us down here in this blankety-blank place” (see Item 8).
What island life in the Pacific Theater taught many American military service personnel—including North Carolinians—is that there is no place like home.
Appendix: Scans of Original Records Used in Packet

Item 1: Letter from John F. Mallard to his wife, dated May 24, 1942 (from John F. Mallard Papers, Miscellaneous Military Papers, Military Collection, State Archives of North Carolina)

May 24, 1942

My Dearest One,

Well we’ve just finished moving again, and are just about settled down in what will probably be our permanent home for some time to come. We are again living in a hut, native house which is quite the other extreme from a house. The hut is dirt with a few stones thrown upon it. There are no sides, no privacy, no conveniences. The roof is thatched of palm tree leaves but is quite water proof. The men are living in tents and they had to go right into the thickest jungle to clear a place to put them. There are plenty of flies and mosquitoes, especially flies, but

Page 1 of May 24, 1942, Letter
Life here isn’t as bad as I thought. I have seen the good old U.S.A. to any other place in the world.

Thence here.

How can you stand another shock? I know it was quite a surprise to you when I made it; but hold on dear cause I’ve just been promoted again, this time to Captain. Hereafter you can just call me Captain Melland please. How does it sound now? Captain J. F. Melland. I must admit it’s very strange when someone calls me captain now. Oh well...
side can use the money darling  when this thing is over so be sure and salt some away.  Want me to give you a total of what I'm making?  

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Think we can live for a while on that darling? money means nothing down here so I'm letting all you aren't getting ride on the books until it really means something.

Well, today is Sunday and I spent it swimming and paddling around. It. Swit and I bought an outrigger canoe from one of the chiefs in the village and we have quite a time motoring around with it. There are a lot of big fish...
and around and we intend to try our luck the first chance we have. There's a great about three miles away from shore around the island so we have almost a natural lake in which we can swim and fish.

Hey honey, how are you making out on your time gallons of gas? It will help save your time anyway honey and we'll be able to ride when the great battle is over.

Believe it or not we still keep in touch with the US by radio. I just finished shrimping an acidic between two coconut trees and we can pull in station from the station with the greatest
g ease, boy. That makes home life 100% better. Just to hear some good old swing. Those things like that you never think of then that you take for granted when you're living in a land of luxury. Right now the rides is blaring away with some of the latest tunes. Darlin', if I could only see you just now and think life would be somewhat bearable, but an indefinite time without you dearest one is going to be very hard to endure. You're the shining light of my life and although I will endure any trials, I can't help but get the blues occasionally because it would be so wonderful just to be with.
you; to touch your beautiful hair; and to just kiss you how could be divine. That's what I'm thinking. I know dazzling but I love you so very much. You're still a kid (don't be the most wonderful in the world; and there'll never be a sweeter one.

Did you have a big birthday cake with all the candles and trimmings? May you have many more of them clearest, but not without me to help you celebrate. The rest will all be happier if I can make them so, "cause I'm nursing a hope that we'll all be back by the time you have another occasion to celebrate another one.

Goodnight my sweet.

Capt. Frank
Dear Friend,

Perhaps you already know that I have left the states. If you do not, this letter should assure you. Although mail from the states usually travels plenlty, yours did not. The mail was received ten days after it was mailed. I am happy to hear that you are doing so well in business and that you have your home started already.

In contrast to yours, my environment at the present is much different. We landed here, an island of the Marianas Group, on the 24th of December after a long trip crossing the Pacific. While there were many unsanitary and uncomfortable conditions aboard, there were many experiences I shall never forget. I became seasick the third day out, but after I recovered I enjoyed the trip and the experience in an odd sort of way.

I came by the way of the Hawaiian Islands. "Haoa that I have seen Pearl Harbor, I wish I had volunteered and had gone over there when I considered..."
As a civilian, the islands are beautiful and the Harbor is appalling.

During the voyage there was very little work and time dragged itself slowly by. To dispense with it, I read an enormous number of books, played many games including cards, checkers, chess and others I don't recall and shot the bull with the boys. I celebrated both Thanksgiving and Christmas during the trip. There were turkey dinners for both occasions. The Christmas dinner was served on the 23rd because we were scheduled to land on the 24th and 25th.

When we first landed conditions were bad and living rough. On Christmas Day I set up my pup tent, took a bath from a helmet full of water, and ate "c" rations from tin cans. These conditions are things of the past because we have most of our equipment set up now. At the present, I live in a six-man tent, sleep upon a cot, eat in a mess hall and take a bath from a shower. The greatest inconvenience which still persist is the air raids. The raids are of
of which I cannot comment except to say that the 20 guns threw up fire which reminded me of the county fair fireworks but on a larger scale. It is very beautiful from the standpoint of appearance.

This particular had been a beautiful place and it still appeared so to me after the boat trip but in the true sense war has marred its beauty enormously. The weather is warm and working without a shirt is getting a tan on me. The people here consist of Japanese and natives of the Polynesian race.

Incoming mail as a general rule is not censored. It is subject to censorship however, if the situation demands it necessary. There has not been any censored for me so far.

Give my regards to your wife and family.

Sincerely,

A.W. Bolton
Sunday, April 15, 1945

The Japs strafed 15 of our planes and dropped personal bombs. Some of the planes looked like a sieve. Working like mad to get them back in the air. Haven't had clothes off to sleep in two weeks; dirty, dusty and greasy. Everyone is; look like forgotten men. Not much joking anymore. But there has to be someone to do or say something to break the monotony or we'd all go nuts. Last night during the worst of the raid, some joker stuck his head out of his foxhole and yelled as loud as he could, "Hail C6il".

Monday, April 16, 1945

Very quiet and peaceful today, so far. It's 8:15 p.m. now. Had a condition red about 7 o'clock but no Jap planes came over. Our night fighters are circling field. They're finally getting into operation. Radar guns didn't work so hot last night. They practiced today and now they're really hitting the target. Our sod. alone shot down four Jap planes today. Heard Pacific Fleet pulled out, leaving us holding bag. Army being pushed back by Japs. They're not far from Kadina Field, 11 miles from here. The Marines at Kadina are bringing their planes over here to our field (Yontan). Things too hot at Kadina. Marines advancing slowly in south around Naha. Japs between Marines and Army. The Marine 6th Division just north of here. Expect to have that area secured in a couple of days. Then they go south to help Army. We heard McArthur said he didn't need Marines to help. He just ought to be here to see. We have quite a few of our planes back in commission. Hoosereck (Jersey) keeps saying he wished 1000 planes would come over just to see them get shot down. He runs fastest when siren goes off. Coerman came late today and took all of Leavengood's gear; 782 equip't. and seabag. He left rifle and gas mask. He says they're taking Leavengood to hospital ship. We still think he has cat-fever; wonder if we'll ever find out. Good boy, hate to see him go, although he'll probably go to states. Received three letters from wife, including wrist watch pins. Took three months and 17,000 miles of travel but they're worth it. I'm making a crystal for my watch. Ernie Pyle on this island. Would like to meet him. Have flashlight now but writing this by candle. Have to arise in the morning at 3 o'clock to start ships (planes) on starboard watch. Jenks and Learner on guard now. Think I get it tomorrow. Took nice shower this p.m. We have a barrel full of water on a platform and the water runs out into a bucket with holes punched in bottom and it makes a spray just like a regular shower. I put on clean clothes, feel lots better. No slave as yet. Awfully tired, hitting sack, thinking of wife and home.

Tuesday, April 17, 1945

Started planes at 3 o'clock this a.m. -- air-raid, have to stop now. Dust was thick we couldn't see nor breathe. As usual we worked hard all day. Shooting still going on in hills south of here. I wished a little tonight but still let the beard grow. Wrote letter to wife and Charlie Reynolds (my boss back in states). Received a box of fudge from Don. Sure was good. It lasted about 30 seconds, everybody dived into at once.

(continued)
Tuesday, May 15, 1945

No raids last night; slept good. Drizzling rain all morning, worked awhile anyway. Good chow today at noon; white beans, hamburger, jam, peaches, green beans and hot coffee. Had pancakes this a.m.. Saw large convoy coming into harbor, made us happy. No news of world today as yet. Received 3 letters from wife last night. Worked 'til dark again tonight. Having movie tonight (16mm) at messhall, Olsen and Johnson in "Crazy House". Not going, don't have time. Got to wash, write wife and get some sleep. Continual rumbling of bombs and shells from Naha, terrific battle. This life of hard work, long hours, no rest, no recreation and continuous air-raids is beginning to tell, working on nerves. Not as steady as I once was. Jump at any sudden noise; not afraid, just involuntary action. God be with us.

 Wednesday, May 16, 1945

Siren went off last night at 3:15. Just did make it to foxhole. Bombers at high altitude directly over field. Search lights on them but anti-aircraft couldn't reach that high. What a shame. One bomber maneuvered at outer edge of harbor, keeping anti-aircraft concentrated on him while other bombers came from east end of field. Lots of bombs dropped all over field, ack-ack filling air. Looked out of foxhole; bomber directly above. Glad he didn't drop bomb. They would have never found any of us. Beautiful day, sun very bright. Two more men added to my crew temporarily, Pfc Dunne and Corp. Sternman from mag. 22 at Iwo Shima. Today at noon forty F47s were escorted in by three B29s. I'm boiling some clothes today. I have a beautiful wife. Worked 'til dark as usual. Finally got cherry picker (small tractor with cleats and derrick lift) to lift a wing on a plane. Started letter to wife at 8:15 and was interrupted by air-raids three times before I could finish. Leavengood came back today from Guam on a tanker. He was really glad to be back and we were sure glad to have him too.

Thursday, May 17, 1945

Jap bomber kept us awake most of the night; finally left foxhole at 1:15, up at 6:15. Pancakes for chow. This may sound like a lie but it's true; we had ice cream for noon chow and it was delicious. Think I'll eat a tub full when I get home. Boy! how I'd like a chocolate sundae. More F47s came in today. Have begun to tell wife the facts about this life instead of sunny side. I'm never sad, never blue, not complaining. All credit goes to God, just lonesome for wife. Worked 'til 8:30 tonight but we had an alert at 8:00. Worked right on. Washed in helmet in dark. We all sat on top of foxhole waiting for ack-ack to start and when it did we all jump in foxhole. Alert over in 1 1/2 hours, lights came on. Had stationary in lap, getting ready to write wife when all of a sudden the siren went off; back to foxhole. 90 mm bursting right over our heads. Concussion makes skin burn. Dozed a few minutes in foxhole. Not writing wife, can't, impossible. Had nice chat with Homer Donaldson, wise old man. I like him.
Marianas 9a  8 April 1945

My darling,

Today I received a letter from you mailed on 21 March. As I hope to have come thru Hawaii, I hope soon to start getting letters direct from you. As I wrote you on/about 25 March from here, something seemed come thru soon.

I haven't heard from John Barnett yet. If he is anywhere in the vicinity when this boat puts into port I can get a few days leave. I hope that he can come and visit me. He can't be too far away. I should hear from him soon. You haven't mentioned anything about the watch I asked you to see about. Is there any notice about it? Where is Chas. now? Do he still at Camp Peary?

Yesterday (Sat.) we took the deep afternoon ride and braved the elements to the beach. They have a pine beach here that puts Waikiki to shame. However it is still water, about like the sound at Morehead. The water...
is very clean and clean (looking). Many people have swimming goggles consisting of a circular piece of glass about 6 inches in diameter mounted in a rubber face-piece which is fitted to the face. With this it is possible to examine shells, fish etc. in the water. It is quite a nice way to spend your time. The reason that the surf is absent is that there is a reef about 1/2 mile from shore which deters the surf and forms a natural anchor. Many of the modern, well-mindfined men have fashioned boats out of airplane parts, tents, and even wood and sail within the lagoon. One man has a boat made out of a belly tank with a propeller. He has a bicycle chain sprocket hatched to the propeller and drives himself around. The beach is clean and the finest sand imaginable. It was a Japanese Riviera apparently, at least by legend. Today we returned back to the beach and I got a real sunburn. We like this beach especially because the ocean was a hospital right on the water's edge. The officers have been kind enough.
to let us use their shower to change and bathe in. They have a club next door with Coca-Cola, I hear. I have been wanting to get into close quarters with several bottles of something unconstitutional for some time. Co, Co is waiting for us, 6 a month. At the army club tea + coffee + mixed drinks are complimentary. The Officers club is said to be very nice, roof garden etc. Naturally the Army nurses have seen quite a lot of it. There being no Navy nurses here on the Island, it is frequented by many by Tyrone Power and other notables.

I went to church twice today. Honey, aren't you proud of me? I haven't been to prayer meeting yet but am going to do so next week, if they have it. Have you been going to prayer meeting lately, honey? Tsk, Tsk, Tsk. You really are neglecting your church work. I am very proud of the chaplain here. He is a top-notch extremely nice fellow. One of the things he has done recently is to pick up our mail at the depot for us, thus saving several days of the delivery. This has
been going on for sometime &
our knowledge. He is one of the few
people who can get transportation
at any time, here. Being unassigned,
I haven’t the brass to then ask for
it. Bumming has answered my purpose
so far. Overseas they subtract a
certain amount of money from your
pay for food whether you eat it or
not. I think it is easy to drop in on
the nearest mess at bedtime whether
it is your turn or not.

Your description of the base was quite
dead and about as I had expected. On
mothers’ account, I feel so sorry for her.

I love you so much honey. I’d give
anything to be with you. Barring
complications, I shall not until
the war is over. Rotation is something
which they have in Europe. There are so
many people over here for 3 years
that they’re not sure of any rotation
plan. I won’t strike home for
the duration & possibly 6 months. Yullie
and my son well flourish & thrive.
I know and will be all the more
precious to me, if that is possible when
homecoming is a reality. I loved you
with all my heart.

Give my love to everybody,

Your adoring husband,

John
Dearest darling,

I have received 3 letters from you since last writing 2 yesterday! Today. They were dated May 14, 15 & 28. As I recall, the last one I received on Saipan was dated 8 May. Hence there should be at least 15 letters kicking around the island for me. The one I received today was addressed to the 77th Regt. FM. Since I should begin getting the later letters before the earlier ones, the earlier ones apparently have gone to the division where the "rear echelon commandos" are too busy to get them out.

The other day & went down with the adjutant of the FM. to trade some Jap souvenirs for liquor if possible. We talked with one of the toughest most cold-blooded Jap guards when I have ever seen. As he puts it, he is in the "souvenir business". He is a Seabee who has access to the Navy & Merchant ships in the harbor. He trades a few souvenirs for goods then trades the goods to these alcohol shavers. He has about 15 times what he paid in souvenirs. He keeps explaining his profits in this way taking each when possible & sending money home all the time. He was very
frank with us, admitting that he wasn't really trading for souvenirs but trying to steal them. He has been doing this for three years. His profits must rival those of the cigarette thieves in France or the nurse on Saipan who made $30,000 in prostitution. It seems that in this part of the world, the racketeers work as hard as they do at home.

We are still resting. We moved from the rest camp to a new area just a somewhat better location. Things are still very slow. I have sick call each morning which lasts about 15 minutes and ask them for the day. After sick call, I went downtown and had a nice 2 hour visit with Bob. He told me that he has never seen his son, now 15 months old. He left the states the week after the baby was born in St. Louis. He didn't know that Barnett was now a member of the race and was quite interested in the news of everybody. He had left New York a year before we did and wanted to know about everybody. As it has been a year since I left, I didn't have too much to tell him. He has just been transferred from an infantry Rm. to the Engineer Rm. which is a much better job.
He doesn't go too far forward and has a much more permanent location. The engineer headquarters doesn't move much and has plenty of transportation, i.e., doesn't have to carry his medical supplies like we do. He also sleeps in tents instead of foxholes. However, he deserves this break. We went thru many people on most of the Okinawa campaign with the infantry.

I stopped here a couple of hours ago to see a movie. There was the world premiere of "Forty Girl" with Olivia de Havilland (circa 1947). I believe that I was the only one present who hadn't seen it! There is a battery of heavy artillery just beyond and behind the screen. They let go a salvo about every 5 minutes. The noise drown out the sound and the yellow flash blinds you momentarily!

The mosquitoes were pretty bad. Isn't it amazing what we'll go thru to see a sorry movie?

The campaign seems to be going well at present. We are expecting it to be over soon and to go into a
training period. I hope that we can
someday get some real nations.

We have managed to get a gas
mantle lantern which belongs unofficially
to the C.O. No. Company; this makes
letter writing at night possible, during
air raids. We have a psychopathic
old regular Army corporal in the
Bn. a PFC. He has about 25 years
in service, 20 of them back time.
He is the most brass I any saw
I have ever seen and is the
most official person I seen and the
official person I seen and the

He is a real character having been
trusted a hundred time for general
psychopathy. He is sitting next to
me at this moment pressing
me with a canteen. His "keisser
around a canteen." His "keisser
made from radioe, water
years. It is quite tasty, like
hard cider of kick like a mule.
He has a heart big as an elephant
like most psychopaths is quite
intelligent. He was very nice to me
when we were in combat even
giving me his own blankets. I
didn’t know it at the time, as
I enjoy a guest of medicinal whiskey
he claims that that is all he want.
but he really just likes to help.

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Page 5 of June 11, 1945, Letter
My washing is getting started tonight and I guess I’m going to feel like going to bed soon. I’ve just caught a cold and my B.C. is a good soldier.

I understand you’re and beginning my new room taste and trying to get used to the new house. I moved from here last May and just about swell its last days. I have just finished the old one and I’m going to feel like having the new one made from logs today. I’m just about swell its last days. I have just finished the old one and I’m going to feel like having the new one made from logs today.
And right here I am going into them and you if there not any thing that needs special attention — I would send it along with it. The trip to New York, I would you a week or so ago about the proposed trip telling you that the only thought I was afraid to sound that during this time of the year and soldiers getting back might get stuck and lose their money, I’ve gladly give you the hundred dollars for your promise to be careful I will pick it up the first time I get a chance to go to the post office. But if you can’t send it to me, I don’t think you can unless you can be able to do much with a hundred dollars in New York. With these few days you have you might do — Anyway you know where here is now fixed and to get it — So the hundred dollars you get will be your last from your darling. Shortly will be going on the last three months of a great dollar over past. in Jacksonville, March 25th. Then next year will be the first year of the third year.
Everyday I and Audrey from you I am more reminded that I love your prose & lines that I heard in the midst of your words & thoughts & I think of either it or my finding someones else that is the good wish in your words that you return to me & that I return to life that is to me all the better & you yourself you will want Me the middle & I will put it off, your life is over or unimportant to find one 

And that I saw taste - please - 

Just I forget it, will you promiss that I will not drop & anything interesting while you think & your trick - and will not let you mentioned this later date getting tight & that I do not like +

Our glad that finally Charlie went away & happy he this thought had held & opportunity to come up to see you - Do health as gentleman he is & 4 days after four months me still missed him - What letters pictures did Charlie send you? I don't know if any one took some to mail here. What about sending letter to me please 4 days are going to build any 4 [illegible]

Want to fight in this world & we hope that people make something in this place to do it & the deserve it - goodbye & angels love you Daily Diana
This Rainy Day  
June 19, 1942

Darling,

might as well have my say right at the beginning and get things off my chest. Without here I am writing you twice a week at least and sometimes much more often, but as far as we've only received one letter from you. You had one of the other receive three or four letters every week when I don't get anything. Any, I know you love me as much as anyone can love another and you know your love is returned, but it would make me much happier to hear from you more. Don't get the idea that I'm guessing long, you know it's cause I'll never guess with you; but letters do mean more than anything else to me down here in this bleak, blank place. Then even with this plucky, blank place, there isn't not in so bad a predicament as Captain in so bad a predicament as Captain, so I'm out to be married with our outfit who was married quite a while before we left and has been down here quite a week.
dear: honey don’t take this the wrong way, I don’t want it to seem as if I’m
appreciate what you’re doing and the
letters I get from you; come you know you
to me than anything in the
whole world. That’s just the reason why
hurting me more since you left

Oh well dearest, that was an angel
way to start a letter as please go on and
would you be interested in knowing what
and that you are the most wonderful one
in this whole universe, and I’m just couldn’t
do without you darling. This ocean is too
while you were to achieve the sweet
things in your ear, but darling some
day we’ll sail back across that ocean and
then my time will come. When we do
set up house—keeping we’ll be the
happiest couple alive; we can’t help from
being, because we love each other so
much, there’s a new song I heard
much. There’s a new song I heard
number which I want to
dedicate to you: “Consider your self kind.”
think it will be right up on top if
the hit parade before long too, cause
it fits so many of us.
With all this rain coming down I can't very well remain saying something about the weather. This place must have over of the heaviest rains this in the world cause it's been raining continually near you almost a week. Everybody and everything is soaking wet and all probably be all rusty and nasty when we return. It is ten o'clock in the morning and raining so hard that I'm afraid to stick my head out for fear of drowning. You'll probably spend your days sitting in my squeaking cot from the rain. Unfortunately all my clothes are wet now and the rain doesn't let up long enough for anything to dry. Don't come if any boys go on the mountain to lay telephone wire about two days ago and when we went up again they were all running around in their birthday suits being quite a time. Everything they had was what gave you & their show you how modest some of their wives are.

Don't guess you know much about it but the work pay bill for armed forces has been signed which increases an income.
Dear [Name],

Two dollars a month goes up in smoke.

My practice allowance goes up in smoke. If I saw
my practice allowance goes up in smoke. If I saw
seven dollars a month to ninety. If it were
only back in the States what a wonderful
apartment we could have gone just as two.
I seem to distinctly remember hearing you say
you though it would be wonderful you
would like to live together. It would be even better
that darling as you are this concerned, it
would simply be heaven and some day we'll
have just that. You continue to get things
here and there, just you wait and see. I've heard how much richer
you write, let me know how much richer
our funds are now and maybe we
might could arrange to increase it some
be long darling and all my love.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Hally

P.S. Don't mention where we are to anyone
or say anymore about it in your
letter darling, cause it's still a
secret darling. We have a new
address on our outfit.

U.S. M.C. Unit # 545 [PA 505]

% Post office
San Francisco, Calif.