

9 October 1944
at sea

Dearest Folks,

It is Monday evening - a beautiful sky so full of stars that it seems that if any more were there it would overflow. I have just come down from the deck where I was standing and watching the sky. The entire ship is blacked out so that the stars seem just that much brighter. Every once in a while I could see a shooting star as it seemed to make its way to a new location in the heavens. On a night like this it is hard to realize that men are hating each other - fighting - and carrying on war. The sky is so full of stars yet they seem to get along quite well together, never having trouble with each other. A person can learn a great deal from nature if he really studies it. I find that out more and more. While I was on deck a couple other fellows were there for a while - we were talking just about anything in general but finally we started talking about religion. At times like that you can get to know how a person really is, I think. During the day when I am working fellows are just hi ya - or how's it doing; something like that but in the evening when you get together in little groups it is easier to know men. It is strange how sometime the opinion you first get of a person is completely reversed or changed around after you really get to know him.

Yesterday morning, as they didn't have any organized service, I took my mop and went back to the fan tail. I read some from different parts Psalms, St James and Mark. Then I read the page for the day out of the Upper Room. Altho it wasn't a very good church I felt much closer to God, and also it seemed to bring all of you nearer to me. It really helped a lot. That helped in a lot to make it a day different from the rest, as ordinarily they try to make them all the same. After I had finished another fella and I

took the fire hose and washed down the decks. The sun was warm so we took off our shoes & shirts that way we made a little pleasure out of the job we were told to do.

All thru these waters there are schools of small (4" or 5" in length) flying fish. All of a sudden you will see 25 or 30 of them take off about 3" above the water and fly along for 15 or 30 feet then they return to the water and seem to disappear for a while. Then they take off again - it has been that way for the last couple of days. Today I have seen a couple of gulls and also some smaller bird which resembles a snipe only it has a split tail.

It will be swell to hear from you again - when I catch up with my mail - rather when my mail catches up with me.

I wonder if Gene went up with his old outfit to where they were going. If so I may have a opportunity to see him soon. I certainly will be glad when this boat (not even a ship, just a boat - Ha.) ride is over and I can plant my feet on terra firma (Spelling is probably wrong but Boy the thought is right) again for a while. The life on this barge (Ha.) is interesting however for there is all ways some thing interesting or amusing going on that passes the time more quickly. And then to me have drills of different types and they to are interesting. It certainly will be interesting when Gene the two Bobs and I get together and compare ship rides - my how I think towards the time when we shall be able to do that.

It is hard to wait to see what the world is on the move. I keep wondering whether last Sunday was the last or not. and also if this letter is going to the wrong address now. I hope my mail will answer all that for me - I think it shall.

I must close now for the lights are soon to be turned off.
my prayers are with you always
Yours
Jim
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