

March 10, '50

Truck - Dublin Va.

My dearest & only Mom & Pap,

At this very moment I am free to begin a letter to you dear ones so far away. However, when I start each sentence I have absolutely no assurance whatsoever that I will be able to finish it without some interruption. My dear little Merrill has been very ill & has demanded my time more than he ever has in his life before. Michael too has been ill and as such so I honestly haven't had the opportunity ^{to write}. Last night I had the finest real sleep this week which accounts for the fact that I have enough ambition to begin a letter even though I realize that I probably won't get much done at each sitting. The plane won't go out with mail for a week so I'll have plenty of time to start & stop while I wait for the boat to go out with the mail.

2-
Now to go back and pick up on some of the details which have been omitted due to lack of time. I think that I told you most of the high points of the boat trip from Honolulu. I was really very thankful all the way along that the children were as well as they were. Michael was sea sick the last night as we neared Guam & that was somewhat upset a couple of days but other than that we weren't sea sick. Merrill was entirely different however, aboard than he usually is. He was really very cranky for him & just hated the dining hall. I guess he was upset & he still isn't back to normal. I hope that someday he will revert to his former easy going ways.

However, many of the children on board were worse than ours in health & behavior as well.

One of the doctor's boys (who sat at our dinner table) was playing in a passage way & fell & hit his head so hard that he had a convulsion. His father thought that he might have had a concussion or fracture but the next day he was quite normal. However, I was very thankful that it wasn't either of ours as I will never forget the agony I went through when Michael had his fall. Even this doctor had a sleepless night he was so worried about his kid. I thanked the Lord every day that neither of the children fell down the open stairway nor climbed over the rail, etc.

I guess that I told you that at times it was really hot - like an ~~even~~ roving afternoon & evening in the stateroom but the heat didn't upset our children the way it did so many. Both of them took good naps every day even though they wake up in a puddle. I was certainly convinced on the way down

& in Guam that I did the right thing
in coming with Chet. It would have
been terrible above.

Sunday - 3/12/50

When we arrived in Guam the
Air Corps band was out to meet
the ship and the arrival was
quite exciting as most of the women
aboard were met by their Navy
husbands whom they hadn't seen
for several months. The dock at
Guam wasn't too impressive & there
weren't too many down to greet the
ship but we were glad to see land
again & to know that we had
reached another milestone of our
journey. I was really touched as
they took the first passengers
ashore. As soon as the gang plank
or landing stairs were in place they
carried off a little bassinette
accompanied by the ship's doctor.
I was a little three month old
baby who had hardly stood the
trip. I guess that they expected

the baby to pull through but it had really had a bad time having been fed through the veins & having a shot every day. She says that the trip is really hard on tiny children - dehydration leading to lots of trouble. I heard that the last trip or so they had lost a baby so I raised a prayer of thanks that we had come through thus far in safety.

The Navy had a bus which met us & after stopping over before going on to Saipan & civil service people for Guam etc. It was really quite gay as we all loaded ~~in~~ our baggage & kids into a bus & proceeded to the various stopping places. Our first stop was at the Navy barracks where we let out a Navy chief, his wife and three children, a sailor his wife & three children, a woman travelling alone with three children, ~~two~~ a chief & two members of his family, two wives & one daughter of navy enlisted men.

you can imagine that with such
a crowd the bus was not too quiet
not empty. We had luggage every-
where no scarcity of children. However,
we were all sort of tired and silly
so we had a pretty good time.

When we left the afore mentioned
group off we all got out & helped
them unload & inspected their new
shoes which were dusty & worn
huts. It took us quite a time
to unload them & our kids had
plenty of time to get filthy. Then
the rest of us piled back in and
got a nice scenic ride up to
Commas the Navy headquarters
where the officers stay. There we
passed company with our doctor friend,
his wife & two boys. Among our
thirteen pieces of cabin luggage
(a number far in excess of the Navy
limit) was a bent truck that
had bought at Sears to help us
with our moving. This came in
handy at the unloading stage

7
so that was quite popular.

Ponape-Mar. 20, '50

If I don't do anything else today I am at least going to try to finish this letter. You probably can't understand why I haven't finished it long ago but please believe me when I say that I would really have liked to but my time is so full that ~~is extremely~~ difficult to get letters written. Right now Michael has gone with his daddy to see if our household goods is on the boat which came in this morning and to oversee some more work on our house. Merrill is with me and we are so very thankful that he is well again. He has been sick almost all the time since we arrived on Truk but I really feel that he is back to normal today with the exception of his weight which will take a while to build up again. He is not nearly as good a boy as he used to be so writing a letter while taking a care of him is a stop and start affair. I bet that he has interrupted this paragraph 10 times already. However, it is good to have him well again so I forgive him many sins. Now to go back to Guam where this letter left off and to supply a few more details of our experiences before saying more about Ponape.

That Sunday when we arrived in Guam we were among the last passengers deposited at our stop-over abodes. We went with the Civil Service employees to their camp--Asan where we stayed all the time we were in Guam. It is located on the beach at a very pretty spot so we did enjoy the scenery. We were very grateful for our quarters--two rooms, four beds, electric lights, a shower and toilet which we shared with our neighbors. The place was exceedingly dusty so our first task was to sweep and mop the floors. By the time we had it done the children were filthy so we started bathing them in a wash tub with cold water and I guess that was the beginning of our trouble. They loved the cold water and since there wasn't any hot and since we didn't have anything to carry hot in we thought the cool would be o k. Merrill didn't get the cold first but Michael did and although Merrill didn't catch it right away there wasn't any way of keeping them separate so he finally got it. However, the cool water probably wasn't alone responsible. The weather was hot and we all perspired and then there was a breeze so there was lots of opportunity for them to get colds. Merrill really wasn't sick in Guam at all so we were able to spend some time on the beach collecting shells and one evening we walked up to a little Guamanian village.

*A couple of times we took her
sister around just to see the place.*

8 March 21st

In spite of my good intentions I was unable to get much done on your letter yesterday. This morning I was going to try again but I couldn't as the children were bath up. Now they are resting & I would like to do the same myself but if I do I will never get a letter to you. Back to Guam.

The first evening we were in Guam I remarked to Phil that it was at beaches like this that our boys landed during the war.

Then on the evening that we went to the little village of Asan we passed a monument which said that here was where the American forces came ashore in the liberation of Guam.

While we stayed at Camp Asan we ate in the mess hall where the food was abundant but prepared in large quantities & planned for working men. The children didn't enjoy the walk to the mess hall nor did they enjoy sitting at the table so

meat time was sort of a chore
but we were grateful for all the
provisions which the Lord had made
for us. One evening we were invited
to dinner at the Head Chaplain's
home. The meal was delightful
but the children were naughty.

One afternoon a General Baptist
Native Guamanian missionary took
us for a drive and then spoke
at his church the Sunday morning
before we left Guam.

When we arrived on Guam we
were told that we would probably
leave the following Thursday. However,
we only had orders for surface
transportation so a dispatch had
to be sent to Coak Harbor & the
order for air transportation didn't
come back in time for us to get on
that plane. We were preparing our-
selves to stay another week when
on Saturday we were told that
we would leave the Monday at
6. am. I guess I told you

about that.

I believe that I told you that we were told that our transportation would come for us at 4:15AM Monday morning. Well, in order to be ready at the appointed time we had everything detail prepared and planned. We had everything packed except what we would wear and our nightclothes. We had all four of our outfits laid out for the next day and I had mentally planned every step in our mornings schedule. We borrowed an alarm clock and set it for 3:30 A.M. However, the alarm clock never went off as I was awake at least once every hour as I felt like it was the night before Christmas and Michael was restless too so by 3:25A.M. I punched the alarm button in and got up. Everything proceeded perfectly on schedule and by 4:15AM the last suitcase had been closed and the kids looked as spick and span and wide awake as they ^{EVER} could. Then we started to wait for the transportation. Chet decided to take the luggage to the end of the hall to make it easier for the boy to load. So with the hand truck he took our thirteen pieces of luggage to the back porch. Michael and Merrill were real gay and kept saying "let's go on the Plane," Since the place where we were staying was planned to catch every breeze it also carried every sound and soon we heard one neighbor clear his throat. As the children got out into the hall we heard another get up and go to the bathroom. After several trips up and down the hall with the hand truck and children in procession one fellow came out in the hall to get a drink. Well, time passed and still no transportation. Chet posted himself at the back porch and the kids and I went to the front. The moon was beautiful and the breeze lovely and warm. The surf was lighted by the moonlight and we did sort of enjoy the scenery even though we were impatiently hoping our transportation would come and I guess our neighbors (about 16 couples) were even more impatiently waiting for us to leave. Finally Chet decided to take the baggage down to the street level, as we were on the second floor, in an effort to speed us on our way when the transportation did come. At 5 A M after just 45 minutes of waiting with our two little charges in the middle of the night and sleeping neighbors our transportation loomed in the distance. It was a big Navy truck driven by a native. I hurried down the stairs and met him up the street and told him to go back and around to the other end of the building. Then we hurried back to the room, grabbed the hand pieces and met our waiting chariot at the back door. The four of us and our thirteen pieces of luggage were safely loaded into the back of a covered but open truck --the type used to transport a gang of men with benches along the sides. We really got quite a kick out of it as we breezed and bumped along the road

which shone silver behind us in the moonlight. We passed out of the sleeping camp Asan where just a few of the workers were beginning to get up for the days work. Then passed the little beach where the forces landed probably one dark morning to come ashore and take the island, past the little Asan village with its colorful little houses on the hill, and out to the airport. As I road along I thought that perhaps we had inconvenienced ourselves a bit to get up in the middle of the night to ride in an old truck out to a dark airport in the early hours of the morning but we were enjoying it and we were doing it for the Lord. Then I thought of the many fellows who had certainly done a lot more to come ashore and free the island from the enemy-- and what they had done was just for their country and I am sure that they weren't happy in doing it. I thought especially of one of Chet's roommates-- Fritz Lange who had lost his life in the liberation of Guam. They say that he was a fine looking big fellow, the son of a family from one of the meetings in Chicago. He gave his all for his country so how happy we should be that we could give something for the Lord.

The ride to the airport soon ended and we disembarked from the first lap of our days journey. My one concern was for Merrill. He had been in good health on the ship, and in Guam but the morning we were to leave Guam he woke with a wheeze and a rattle on his chest and a slight cough. The truck was breezy and the plane was cool and as the day progressed many things added up to make him worse.

We waited awhile at the airport to get checked in and by 5:45, I think, we boarded the plane. Michael had looked forward to the plane ride as he has *always* enjoyed commercial plane rides but this was to be a new experience. As we stepped into the cabin he began to notice the difference. No plush seats, no fancy trim, but the bare parts of the mechanism staring us in the face. The plane we rode on was not designed for passengers but for wartime so it is like a plane without any of the finishing touches. You see wires, and tubes, gadgets, etc. However, although he looked surprised at the looks of it the noise of it later when it started to warm up brought verbal expressions of fright. Since nothing is enclosed the noise is all around you. No conversation is possible. If the crew wants to say anything to you or you want to say anything to them you practically embrace them and yell in their ear and then you can usually understand after repeating the sentence again. This is absolutely no exaggeration. Well, we donned our life preservers, fastened the safety belts and *wait*

waited amidst the din for the plane to warm up. In spite of the terrible noise Merrill went to sleep before the plane took off. Then as we left the ground I remembered that we had signed ourselves away in case of accident but I was glad to know that we were "In that hand, that mighty Hand, that flung a universe in space" or however, it is that grandma's poem goes and I had confidence to know that we would reach the destination the Lord had prepared for us. When you fly with the Navy you sign what they call a release which states that in case of accident no relative can sue and that you fly at your own risk.

Our trip to Truk lasted from 6-10:30 so the noise wasn't too long endured. Both the children slept some but Michael was sick several times. He had been seasick the last night on the ship, and had vomited the Saturday evening before we left and was sick again in Truk so I don't know whether he was airsick, had the flu or was just nervously upset. When we landed on Moen (Truk atoll) we were met by several Navy officials who were very nice but no Charlie Hueser. Chet was scheduled to go on in an hour and a half so I was taken up to the officers club where I said good-bye and planned to wait for Charlie. The mission is located on Dublon which is another island in the Truk group and there is no way of communicating with the other islands except by boat. Our flight had been a special one and when the Navy on Moen heard from Guam that we were coming they sent word by canoe to Charlie but it happened that he got it the day after I arrived. Well, I waited around, met some friendly people and went to lunch at the mess hall. Then I learned that Charlie's boat was in picking up cement and that I could go back with the natives when they returned about 2 o'clock. All in all the day at Moen was fine and the Lord met every need. I met a girl from Honolulu ("grampa" Yuki-tomo's niece) who paid for our lunch. Another lady and man had us wait at their house and everything worked out beautifully. The children enjoyed the time and were good and the crowning provision was a very thoughtful native boy from Hueser's school who raced all over the island to find me and took charge of us completely when he did meet up with us. He spoke some English so took care of everything from there on in. I thought that he was just a young kid and couldn't understand how he was so good taking care of Merrill until I learned that although he is only 24, he is the father of three children 5, 4 and 1 yrs of age. I got aboard the Pompom (Japanese built motor launch) with the natives and the cement and as the children

slept most of the way we had quite a pleasant trip. The scenery was lovely, the breeze refreshing and my only concern was for Merrill who just couldn't be kept out of the breeze and away from the spray. Take did his best to protect him but his cold was worse when we reached Dublon. I was thrilled as all the young people from the school ran down to meet us at the little pier and to know that although we weren't at Ponape at least we were in Micronesia. Charlie and Miss Dederer were down to meet us and was Charlie discusted that he hadn't know about the pland. He had met every means of transportation since the 1st of Feb. and then I arrived when he was on Dublon. I really didn't mind at all and was thrilled by the way the Lord had taken care of us even to having his boat go over that day for cement when it usually only goes on Thursday. We climbed the hill and met Gertrude who couldn't get over our freshness in spite of our lang trip.

The stay at Dublon had its joys and sorrows--both sort of extreme. I was thrilled by the natives, the ruralness of the mission settlement and the opportunity of doing a bit for the people but I was wearfed and worried by Merrill's illness. The night of our arrival Michael vomited and had diarrrêhea all night and Merrill was restless. That was my third night with very little sleep but not my last for several days to come. Tuesday Michael still was running to the toilet all the time and Merrill's asthma was bad. The weather turned wet and do I mean wet. Tuesday afternoon I took a little rest and when I woke up I felt like I was drowning for the air was so damp that it was almost like breathing water. Well, there lay little Merrill flushed and panting like a little fish that had been pulled out of water. It almost broke my heart to watch him as I had so feared and yet hoped that he wouldn't be that way. Then began about four days of carrying him almost all the time-night and day as he would cry every time I would go to put him down, I really think that he could hardly breathe when he lay down. Needless tosay I prayed much and so did Anna (Miss Dederer) and Gertrude. Wed. the boat went for more cement so Charlie sent a note to the doctor on Moen for penicillen as he had a bad chest cold as well as the asthma. The doctor didn't send the dosage so Thursday when Charlie went he got the dosage and more medicine. Then we started the shots every three hours day and night and when Anna (who is a nurse) had to go to another island on Friday, I goave the shots myself. I had hoped to learn to give the shots but I hadn't planned to have to start so soon and on my own child but

native
fellows →

we did and he was helped and started to improve. How I thanked the Lord for every little sign of ~~im~~ improvement. The nurse in Honolulu had implied that if it hadn't been for penicillin we wouldn't have Merrill today and I agreed with her only I give the credit to prayer and penicillin. Often I know that I have prayed through some of his worse ~~seiges~~ but the injections have certainly helped to break up the infection and have speeded his recovery so much. I really think that this last illness on Dublon was one of his worst and I didn't have any of my usual methods of caring for him as we had ~~no~~ electricity for steam kettles, or the lamp to dry the air etc. However, the experiences taught its lessons and now I rejoice to see him in better health.

Michael's malady left him and he picked up quite a bit before we left. Merrill was pretty well the day before we left and well enough to travel when the time came. While on Dublon I brought greetings at a Sunday morning service, spoke to chapel at the mission school, was honored at two feasts, and simply thrilled the natives with my singing and playing of a little organ. Laugh ~~heart~~! They haven't had the privilege of hearing real talent so they thought I was wonderful and expressed real delight. I smiled to myself but thanked the Lord for the few piano lessons which I have had and was glad that every little thing one can do can be used for the Lord someway. Daddy your money and work for my lessons wasn't in vain even if I never could showoff like mother used to want me to when I was a little girl.

I heard from Chet that I could come on to Ponape on the 16th and everything worked out perfectly again. Both the captains on Moen and Ponape oked our going, Merrill was well and the weather was perfect. We left Dublon at 7:30 and arrived on Moen about 9. Then we heard that the plane which was supposed to leave Moen at noon hadn't left Guam yet so we would probably have to stay all night on Moen. I was rather disappointed but decided the Lord knew best. We visited around, went to lunch, and I went back to the quonset hut where we had been put up for over night to put the kids down for a nap when someone came and said that I was supposed to be down at the plane for it would leave anytime. In about five minutes I gathered up the kids and our junk and we were off in a special jeep sent by the captain. We bid hasty farewells and climbed in and soon were off. I gave Michael some benidryl so he wasn't a bit sick and slept the whole trip. Merrill slept almost the whole trip too. I almost cried for joy to be off on almost the last lap of our journey. I was so grateful

to the Lord for the weather, the good trip and not having to lay over in Moen that night. We arrived off Ponape before dark. The plane is an amphib and lands in the water and taxis up to a ramp on a little island. Then you are taken ashore on a landing craft. Chet and several of the native leaders came out with the boat to meet us and we had a nice little ride into shore. At the pier a large group of natives were out to greet us and were singing. I received a number of lei-like floral strades and several wreathes for my head. I shook hands with quantities of them and greeted them with the Ponapean greeting. Then we came here to the Burtons where we have been staying while they finish up our house. The Burtons are Christian people who have been helping out in the native church. He is an agriculturist with the Navy.

After our dinner here I went down to the church for a little service. The place was almost filled but nothing like when Chet arrived. It was over flowing then. Of course, people had come from all over then. Did he tell you that 782 attended church here in Kolonia the first Sunday he was here? I won't try in this letter to tell you much about Ponape or I would never get it in the mail. It seems to be much nicer weather than Dublon and the island is quite big. I will see more of it when we go to the chief's home the end of this week. He lives in another district and is quite well to do so has several boats and I guess a pretty nice home. We expect to be gone from 3-5 days. Our little house here at Kolonia has possibilities of being liveable but you would all laugh to see it. The natives here care nothing for a straight line and I doubt if there is a straight board in the house. We will try to do finishing things on the level and give the illusion of straightness at least. We expected our things to be on the ship which came in yesterday sort of as a birthday present but they weren't. We will pray that they will be on the next ship around the 1st of the month. In the meantime we will borrow things and camp. We hope to move in following our trip to Ronkiki.

Your letter, card and gift arrived on the plane that I came on. Thank you so much. I have worn the dress twice already. It was a nice to have it here before my birthday.

I have spent hours on this letter so I am going to close now, We all love you all.

Marge