

Sat. Afternoon
April 5, '52
Oa., Ponape

Dear Mom,

Just this minute it is nice and quiet but I do not expect it to last long as I think it is about the time Michael wakes up. Yesterday, when I was scolding him about always leaving the door open so that the chickens could come in the house he got a bit provoked at me and said that he was going to go every where his daddy did. When he wakes today I think I will remind him of it and see if I can get him to go up to the school building where his father is and maybe I will be able to write letters a bit longer. I couldn't get him to get permission from his daddy to go every where with him as I know that Chet wouldn't want to be bothered with either of them all the time as it is much easier to go places and get work done without them. Nor do I need to worry that Michael is in any inclination to desert me as I usually have difficulty in getting them to go off with daddy. Michael has gotten over his being a mama's boy a lot and I think is about normal on the subject now. I think it will be nice when they are bigger and will be able to go more with Chet but just now I don't care to have them start out on too many adventures. They are both cute little boys --in different ways. They aren't perfectly behaved but they have shown a lot of improvement of late and I think that it is because we have had a much more settled and normal life. I am just afraid that about the time they get really settled it will be time for us to pick up for another jaunt. Michael saves both Chet and I a lot of steps in doing little errands and helps Merrill quite a bit. He seems a lot older than Merrill in many ways but they are close enough together to know how to tease one another. When one starts to the toilet the other starts and tries to get there first. If one wants to sit on a kitchen stool we have-- they both race to get there first. So it goes with toys etc. You should have seen Merrill washing the dishes some nights ago. He really went at it with a vigor and not too many had to be done over. Quite a bit of water went on the floor but I guess that I should let him at it while he has the urge.

Michael has gotten up but scoffs at the idea of going up to the school building--I hardly blame him it is quite a walk and much of it is up hill I reminded him of his threat of yesterday and he only grinned. Now he is drawing but I doubt if it will last long. Poor kid has had quite and affliction for some time now--bugs in his head. I put DDT powder on him once when we lived in Kolonia and he got rid of them. Now I have put it on and Lela did while we were away and he still has them. If it came with a dirty head it seems to me it would be Merrill who would have them as he hates to have his hair cut or washed but Michael is pretty good about both. I think he gets them from the students as he is with them more than Merrill. Chet wants to cut his hair real short but I like the locks of it the way it is and sometime it comes in so funny. I don't think that would get rid of the bugs anyway. He doesn't have too many but I never anticipated the day I would sit around picking bugs out of my boys head the way the moneys appear to be doing in the zoo. This is just another phase of missionary life I guess and I am sure we will all live through it/

April 5

You were worried a long time about my walking to Oa. I am still wondering if one of my letters didn't go astray. I was sure that I had written before that but perhaps I didn't. We send our mail in with so many different people and Lela is sometimes a bit absent minded about things so some letters may get misplaced. Well since that time I have almost walked to Kolonia but in two different relays. The last time we all went into Kolonia the motor worked for a bit over half of the trip. Then it stopped pumping out water in the cooling system and Chet took it apart to fix it. A boy with us in helping to turn a screw, broke it in the machine so there was no way to fix it until we got to Kolonia. Two boys were with us so to make the boat lighter we all got out and walked. The boys rigged up a sail using a pancho and beat us into K. by more than an hour but if we had stayed in the boat it might have taken longer. The walk took us over two hours, I think. Michael walked all the way but Merrill had to be carried some. It was in the late afternoon so it wasn't too hot. Then a week ago Sunday Chet was going to the church in U which is the district between here and Kolonia--about half

way. Chet was ready to leave by 7:30 in the morning but I didn't want to rush to get the kids and myself ready so I told him to go ahead and we would walk. We had all walked to the next prayer house once and M and M had run almost all the way over and back that day I thought they could make it to U as I had the mistaken idea that that was about half way. Well it was a beautiful day so we started out cheerfully in spite of the fact that a number of the natives whom we passed thought that it was too far. Chet had walked it more than once and had agreed that we had been about half way when we went to Kinokap. After we had a good start we turned to find that two of our girls had hurried after us when they heard that we had started out. I guess the Lord sent them as the walk was much longer than we had anticipated and in places the path was terrible. Much of it was in the sun in places where there was no breeze and nearing the noon hour. Michael walked it all on his own power and I carried Merrill some but if the girls hadn't come I guess that we would have had to find someone who would have taken us forward or back in a canoe. The girls here are smaller than I am by a lot but they seem to be much better at carrying things than I am. They all start young here to carry things and the boys and men can just amaze you with the things they carry. Or it may be that their being used to to heat or something gives them better endurance. But again it may be that they had just learned to grin and bear it. At any rate I was grateful for them as I am sure that I could not have carried them half the way to U. For myself, I think that if I could get another pair of good shoes, a pair of sun glasses in my prescription I could walk around Ponape in good style. I really am in need of shoes just now-- the walking shoes I had came apart the day we walked to Kinokap. They would be good if I could get them stitched but we have no shoe repair here. I should try to find a way to send them to Guam. I have a pair ordered on a blank which I haven't sent to Sears yet. Now I walk around barefooted on these cement floors and I think that it contributes a great deal to my tiredness.

Ketchum must be coming soon as we heard that he was on his way to Kusaie and he is supposed to come here from there. I won't be surprised to see him anyway time now. We are using their coming as another impetus to get some more done on the house. We are having the kitchen painted now and does it look nice. It is white with red trim and looks so much better than it has before. Michael's room is not too far from completion and we would like to be able to get into ours before she arrived but I don't know if we will make it or not. We at first didn't have glass for the windows now most of it is in but there are still things which have to be done to keep rain out when it blows in under the roofing etc. The doctor at the Board is so anxious that she and the baby have proper housing as they feel that it is so important to get off on the right foot. They even suggested we build a house for them before she came. Little do they know of the work involved in building a house here or anywhere else in the world. She may prefer to stay in Kolonia which might be nice for Lela anyway. We shall see. The last we heard they were not able to get her on the sailing on the 31st but maybe you had later news. They were then planning on April 15th. I trust she knows how little she will see him. Maybe she is prepared for such a life as he sailed for the same company as Bill and I guess Bill is often gone for months.

We had a letter from Hilda this week which showed just what a trying time they have all had with Chet's mother sick. She is improving but Hilda does not feel that she will ever walk again. Of course the state of her mind is the thing which bothers them most. For a long time she thought that Chet and I were both there and criticized Chet a lot for just sleeping on the bed in the other room and not helping the girls. However, I got by fine as she said that I gave her a nice bath etc. Now she knows that we haven't been there. Jane is planning to take her soon but that will be a real job for her. Aleta has the confidence that she was spared so that Chet could see her again.

Of the small American colony here, three of the women had babies the week of my birthday. One of them had gone home to Honolulu or the three beds set up for Americans would have all been full at one time. Quite a coincidence in such a small group. Two girls were born on the day of my birthday but in Honolulu that was not the same day as here. Or maybe there were born on different dates but actually the same day. The one here was the 20th the one there was given as the 21st.

Then a boy was born here on the 23rd.

For some time Lela has wanted some Gideon new Testaments. There are going to be used for young people but it wouldn't have to be the youth edition. Could you have someone send us some? We could probably use up to five hundred. If that it too many a couple of hundred would be nice. She said that she was going to write to you about it so you may have already heard from her. Lela has a great desire to have things when she wants them so if they could be sent promptly she would be pleased. For some reason, I don't chafe under waiting any more. A year goes quite rapidly and so the months of waiting aren't too bad. I have an aluminum clothes line I have been hoping to get up for about two years now and it still isn't up. We need to cement some pipe in for the posts. We have waited for over a year to get into our bedroom etc. so we are learning the virtue of patience.

Now I think that it is probably time for me to start lunch so I will leave this for now. Perhaps I will write more later. I was glad to hear from you this week. If I could have gotten this to the PO I would have written sooner.

April 8--evening

Well Chris Ketchum may be on Ponape. This evening as I was preparing supper Martin and another fellow came up excitedly and said that they thought they saw the Morning Star. I of course ran out to see too and sure enough there was a sail ahoy outside the reef just about in front of the house. It was coming from the direction of Kusaie and we thought for awhile that we might be able to signal them in here as we live near to a channel. For more than a half hour I flashed a mirror but they didn't flash back and kept right on toward Kolonia. Perhaps from the charts he thought it was easier to take the Kolonia passage, and his Marshallese crew had probably never been in here so advised Kolonia.

Then toche may be required to enter at Kolonia, the port, and may know more about that than we do. He has made good time if it is he and we feel quite sure that it is. We don't know if he made it to Kolonia before dark so he may be outside sailing around waiting for light to come in but it is bright moon tonight so he may have been able to make it at least inside the reef before dark. Perhaps we shall see him tomorrow if he gets away out or Chet goes in to meet him. It was quite exciting to watch the sail move along and realize that one who will be our friend was no doubt aboard.

If someone does go in from here tomorrow I will send this along perhaps. We are going into Kolonia this weekend but I don't know just when. Chet is having a service for the Americans. I'll never forget the service I had last year. I wish the same people were here we were so much better friends of the Navy people than we are this bunch. One couple whom we did like and who had much more interest in spiritual things left last week. She had been ill and had had one operation but had another attack of whatever it was and they didn't feel they could cope with her case here so now they have left. She was a New Zealand girl and had gone to school with one of the Laidlaw girls and had attended Brethern meetings there quite often. They don't plan to come back.

Now I should write a bit to grandma and grandpa. I am sorry to hear of Roger's unconcern and of your fears for him. I wonder where in we are failing the Lord, so that our prayers for him are not answered. I fear that for me it is a lack of real earnest and sacrificial prayer for him. O yes, I pray for him but I feel that my prayer life is so feeble. The busy life and the weary flesh are got the best avenues to spiritual power I feel. Now I may write more again but will put this aside for another stretch.

April 11

Now to add a bit more to this and then sign it off and hope to get it in the mail at K. this week. Well, Kris Ketchum has been here. It was the Star which we saw the other evening. He didn't make it into K. before dark but got in the next morning. In the afternoon he came out here and when I was ready to call Chet into dinner I noticed he was talking to a stranger and had a suitcase in his hand. I quickly changed the dishes from the kitchen to the dining room table

and was thankful that I had prepared a fairly presentable meal. It wasn't fancy and the piece of meat I had planned to use for him was being saved for the next day as Lela had sent a note saying that they would entertain him in K a couple of days as we thought that he would be staying awhile. However, he is rushing to meet Florence whom he expects to be in Truk on Monday. I don't know if she will make it that soon or not but she may. She did leave the 31st. That would put them in Guam before Monday's plane but since there will be the four of them (counting the baby) and Harold Hanlin I don't know if they will all get on the plane or not. If so they may be here in a couple of weeks. Kris hopes to come back here and work on the Star for awhile and help to get Florence settled. He thought much more favorably of Oa than K. as a place for her to start out. It will be nice to have them for company but there are always some disadvantages to living with other people. He seems to be a nice fellow and a very sincere Christian. I think that he will fit in to the work fine. I am sorry that the Star is in such poor condition and it really very poorly fitted for the work it should do. He was quite disappointed to find it in such poor shape. At present it really isn't sea worthy so you can remember him in your prayers as he sails about. There is much talk of a new Star which would be fine if the Board is able to swing the deal. That made a very poor investment in this vessel and I think hate to admit their error. From his conversation we gather that Florence will not be the type who will be just dying to get right into the work but perhaps she can gradually be worked into different things. Now the Board is talking of sending a couple here to do translation work so we may have a housing problem before long. I'm not too sold on the idea of the language work just now as I think in the eyes of some it might be sort of a substitute for the couple which we will need before we open the pastor's school. I don't think that it is quite the time to start building another house and it would crowd us up in either K, or Oa to put up another couple. The wife of the linguist is expecting a baby in October.

Now I should write so many other letters and do so many other things that I will have to draw this to a close. We didn't hear from you this week but I don't expect a letter in less than two weeks.

Love to you all,

Marge

I don't have a stamped envelope for
Grandpa + Grandpa's letter. Will
you deliver it?