

[Transcription begins]

#26 Tuesday

March 7, 1944

Dear Douglas:

Just an extra, because last night when I reached home, there on the table was a letter from you dated February 20<sup>th</sup> and I thought that if I answered it immediately I would be sure to comment on everything which you had written.

You still seem to be without mail and I do not think that you have received any of the pictures taken of the Christmas tree and Dad, so I know you will have a lot when you finally receive it. The news seems to be good on all fronts, particularly in the Pacific and it will continue that way. Tokyo Rose<sup>1</sup> must be a constant source of amusement, could you give me any idea what time to try for her on our set? We have heard we could get her. Your coat of tan should do you a world of good and now is the chance to absorb enough sun to last you for years to come! By this time you will probably have our letters and will realize that we had only one snowfall, so light that Dad cleared the paths in record time!

I'm glad that you correspond with Mary and the other girls, you have a wide acquaintance with some very fine people and their letters must mean a lot to you. Your friends and acquaintances are so scattered that each one must have such interesting things to tell you and you, them. Last night Dad and Marilyn went to the Palace and met Frank Howard. He has been situated on a landing barge (?) at Los Angeles but has injured his back and is back for three weeks, then he returns to the coast but because of deafness in one ear will be in limited service. Fred is squatting on some atoll<sup>2</sup> in the Pacific, busy with his radar work, perhaps you will hail him one of these days. A long letter received from Tommy by his mother yesterday, gives her quite a bit of information, he is along the coast of England, has been not far from London, and thought he was to have an opportunity to attend a concert and dance and meet some English girls, but couldn't get the time off.

I have always been fond of reading plays and am pleased that you have an

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<sup>1</sup> Allied Forces gave the generic name of "Tokyo Rose" to any of approximately a dozen English-speaking female broadcasters of Japanese propaganda.

<sup>2</sup> An atoll is an island of coral that partially or completely encircles an island; most of the world's atolls are in the Pacific Ocean.

opportunity for that, for so long you simply had time for assigned reading and none of it modern that your education is being considerably broadened by this recreational reading. Don't be too much of a hurry to do what you call serious studying, your life has enough duties just now without taking on any more and while you may think you are just amusing yourself with this reading, it still is educational. As for the musical instrument, that is a grand idea and I hope you act upon it at the first opportunity. You know how much pleasure Doc McKnight gets out of his accordion and how Dad would love it if he could only play his banjo, so if it is only a harmonica, do try it for you will never have a better opportunity to learn something that will make you the life of the party as well as a very satisfactory companion for yourself!

I look forward to cooking each and all of your favorites in the near future (?) We are faring very well at home, butter is the only thing that we run low on, but I have never been completely out of that but shopping takes a "bit of doing" as the English would say. Marilyn is doing a swell job of learning to cook. Last night she had roasted the pork deliciously and made a perfect lemon meringue pie. It is grand to come home and find those things done and she is so anxious to learn that I know she is going to make a success of it. She does all of Bill's laundry and that includes heavy khaki oil-soaked trousers, woolen shirts as well as other miscellaneous items.

Your comments on Los Angeles, San Pedro and San Francisco were interesting as up to now, we were not sure just which port you visited. I can remember going up and down College Hill just as you did on Nob Hill for we had cable cars there years ago. San Pedro we cannot find on the map but I shall ask Roger Hard about it.

Have you heard the one about the private who kept on going after the command "Company Halt." When harshly called back by the commanding officer and asked why, he replied, "I didn't think you considered me company any longer, I've been here three weeks!"

A tough top sergent [sic] had just driven a general in a jeep into the camp, jumped down and opened the door for him to step out and as the general did so, gave him a vicious kick in the seat of the pants. Just then a private rushed forward and planted a kick in the seat of the sergent's [sic] pants. Of course a courtmartial [sic] was held at which the sergent [sic] explained that on alighting had stepped on his (the sergent's [sic]) corn and the pain was so intense that he couldn't refrain from kicking him. The understanding

presiding officer deemed that sufficient excuse but then called the private to the mat. He said, "Sir, when I saw the sergent kick the general, I thought the war was over and I have been waiting for that for a long time." Not too well told but you get the drift and can probably improve on it. What, in the [N]avy, compares to a top sergent [sic] in the [A]rmy?

It is pouring here today so I imagine things will be quiet in the shop and I can get a lot of my book work done.

The best of everything for you and the hope that you have mail by this time.

Love from us all.

Mother [Transcription ended]