Dear Miss Blaney & Bryant Service Club:

After leaving Mississippi we spent a few weeks in California. That was our last stop in the States so you can be sure that a good time was had by all. Our stay there was short; I will never forget the last look I got at the shores of California. I then realized that it would be a long time before I saw the States again. The band had marched us to the ship, so after we loaded, we boarded the transport. They played the songs as marches that I wanted to hear. As we pulled out, they started playing “The Song of the Islands” - I then was sure that our destination was the Hawaiian Islands. Some days later we docked only to leave the Hawaiian Islands a few weeks later.

While visiting Honolulu I met Herb Goldfield & Donald Rubenstein, two Bryant boys. It was a great day for us as we really painted...
the Town next. We swam at Waikiki, dined at the Royal Hawaiian & really had fun. It was the last time I saw both fellows as I then shipped out.

After spending a good part of my life aboard ship we finally debarked upon reaching Tinian (in the Marianas Group). Struggling down cargo nets with full packs of rifles was the beginning of my life on Tinian. Then I hit the beach, my first thought was, “I wonder how long it will be before I board a ship headed for the Golden Gate.” My thoughts were interrupted as we then proceeded to climb aboard trucks. We were to be taken to our home.

On the way to our camp site this is what I saw: the town could have been a fairly large one; couldn’t tell because everything was a mass of rubble; from then on the picture was the same. Jap planes &
equipment was scattered all over. Twisted steel, melted glass, craters and burned (ap) equipment plus many other results of a barrage were a common picture.

After arriving at camp we started work immediately. Our camp site was in terrible shape but it wasn't long before tents went up. It is surprising to observe the progress we have made since setting foot upon our site. K & C rations have been our food since arriving. I hope that soon we shall eat a hot meal on tables. Trying to ward off flies, mosquitoes, ants, bugs, lizards, worms & many others, and attempting to eat at the same time is quite a job. Milk & eggs, I mean the real stuff & not powdered, is something I haven't had since leaving Hawaii & I sure miss it.

Rain & mud is plentiful here. It is getting so that we are making good use of rain. There are no shower facilities here so when it does rain we get our soap & towel & enjoy a good shower. When it doesn't rain then the sun is out &
 unsere forts with all its might. It gets so hot here that you can easily fry an egg on the tents. Dengue fever is the only disease present on this island. I'm looking forward to trying to pass this one up by covering myself well next I say.

Our recreation is reading and writing. Maybe someday we will have movies—I hope so.

Some of the Japs are in the hills a short way from us, which necessitates carrying a rifle with you. For a while they were sniping from the hills but it has quieted down somewhat. Frequently they are caught stealing into camp in search of food.

Please send me a copy of the "Campfire" and other student publications. I am looking forward to hearing from you. Give my best to Harris, Appleby, Vital, Inglis, Taylor, and don't forget Mac & John. Luck & success to all.

Sincerely,

James J. LaRussa

4-24-20