

[Transcription begins]

#18 Monday, January 17, 1944

Dear Douglas:

Your mail comes thru very quickly--the last letter to Dad, dated by you on the 7th, was delivered to him at noon on the 12th. Then there will be a stretch with no letters, and we presume that you are out on active duty. You mention shore leave and I know that must be a welcome diversion for you, even if its only walking the streets and as you say, "window shopping." Do you ever have a chance for tennis? Roger, Jr., when he telephoned asked whether you mentioned doing that, so I thought perhaps officers had a courtesy card at some club on shore. My questions may bring a laugh for conditions may be so foreign to what I seem to imagine!

We still are keeping free from snow storm[s]--it is cold (12 above this morning) but when pleasant and no snow underfoot, we like it. Daryl sleeps out every day for about three hours when it is 20 or over. She scrambles around the house like a crab, dressed in corduroy overalls, either blue or peach color and makes poor Chip so nervous as she goes after him that he comes and shivers by our feet for protection! Bing doesn't seem to mind her at all, will let her get near enough to put her hands on him and then will walk just out of reach. Daryl sleeps right through the night, from seven to seven, but once in a while she will wake up, talk to herself in the pitch dark for a few minutes, then all will be silent again. Bill came home for the week-end and Marilyn had a chance to go out to dinner and to the movies with him. He had left his blues home to be cleaned and came home in his grays, forgetting to bring a blue top for his hat, a frantic bit of telephoning unearthed one of Tommie Buffum's, so he was able to go out for the evening correctly dressed. Marilyn's first government check came thru this week and she is planning her money very wisely, so they should have a very good nest egg to start housekeeping after the war. In the meantime, she is learning a lot, is quite a cook, and is doing a grand job with Daryl.

Saturday night the Dicks had supper with us, not beans this time, but we had been allowed an extra ration stamp to be used for pork of which there has been a surplus, so we had delicious centre cut chops. Dad has set up the Ta-bowl game and plays every night so that he is getting good. Bill likes it too. Mr. Dick's son Mark, is in Italy. At home we have our idea how different countries look at war and somehow I had a picture of all of Italy, more or

less in shambles, and nowhere civilian life going on as usual, and yet he writes of seeing “LaBoheme” [sic] in the third largest opera house in the world. It is hard for me to visualize being able to go to an opera in a war-ridden country, much less to be able to get together a cast!

And that makes me think of the big treat in store for Marilyn and me tonight and one which I know you will envy--”The Student Prince!” with an unusually excellent cast. I think everyone I know is going to it, about twenty from the YPF, Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Buffum, Jean MacDougal, Bette Lockwood, Marilyn and I are going together. So many are attending from the Martha Waterman group that they have had to postpone the regular meeting which falls on tonight! We could not get seats nearer than the 27th row but are looking forward to every minute of it and I shall think of you when I hear “Golden Days” “Serenade” and “Drinking Song.” Dad bought a book of Overtures for Christmas and whenever we play “Light Cavalry” I think of you in the Cranston Band.

Don’t think that you have to keep all the pictures that I send you--they are just to show you from time to time, how things look at home. Herbert Henrikson takes them for us, is doing quite a side business in baby and wedding pictures.

We have been cleaning out the old records, you know they just don’t sound like anything and they are so anxious for the material in them that they pay us four cents apiece for them. We ran across the one you and Dad made at the World’s Fair and you would be surprised how clear it still is on our machine. You sound a little breathless and I have to laugh when I hear Dad’s voice, “Hello, hello, Saidee my sweetheart!”

Just think how many things I have mentioned in this letter which will give you subject matter to mull over sometime during the long hours of your watch--Student Prince, World’s Fair, Ta-bowl.

The Buffums have not yet heard from Tommie so we think he must be on a long “cruise.”

Dad is doing very well on his “no smoking” campaign, has had only three cigars in as many weeks, and is beginning to get over that extreme nervous tension which always has to go through at first. I have tried to keep the egg shakes on tap as well as candy and interesting books when he is home and

that helps. In fact I think he is putting on a little weight (I am trying to take some off!)

We have both just finished reading a most interesting “Kabloona” a white man’s account of time spent with Eskimos very, very far north living exactly as they do and coming to have a great admiration for them and learning to like the life. Every one who has read it finds it quite fascinating and I am wondering if you would care to have us mail it to you, it [sic] that is allowable. On a hot day it is certainly cool reading and after you are thru with it I am sure some of the crew would find it interesting. Let me know the answer to this 64 dollar question.

We have magazines galore at the house now. Dad gets “Life” as a Christmas present from Bill and Marilyn, Aunt Marion gave me the “Ladies Home Journal” and then of course, there are our regular Geographic, Good Housekeeping, American, Saturday Evening Post, Readers Digest. In the LHM one of the editors is a distant relative of ours, Aunt Hazel and Grandma have visited her and says that she reminds them of me very strongly. I was much interested to read last month in her article that she always cooked her beans by “Grandmother Reynold’s rule.” That of course would be your great-great grandmother. The writer’s name is Gladys Tabor should you ever happen to come across any short stories by her. She has three cocker spaniels and two or three cats and lives in Connecticut and very often mentions her pets.

Did I tell you that Dad had had my diamond ring re-set and a five diamond ring of his mother’s made smaller so that my fingers quite flash as I type!

I think I have covered most of the news of the week, we live a very normal life but we miss your being here to share it with us, and stand in front of the map very often wondering just where in that broad expanse you are at the moment. We are glad that indigestion is not bothering you and hope you continue to feel well and contented, except for your enforced absence from home.

Our love to you at all times

Mother [Transcription ends]

