

W. H. Knowlton ARC
APO 957, San Francisco.



24 January 1945.

Form 2247

AMERICAN RED CROSS

OFFICE OF THE FIELD DIRECTOR,

A. P. O. 957

C/O POSTMASTER. SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

Dearest child:

By this time you must be looking for a letter with both ears back. It has been a busy week... believe me. Spent the week-end with Major Erskine, and had a grand time... returned to the post late on Sunday evening... taught school Monday night until quite late... went to Honolulu last night after work and was unable to make contact with the refrigeration man I planned to see, so came back and rolled into bed. We start the day at 7 AM, work most days until 6 with short time for lunch, and if there is anything doing at night it takes all of the very short evening. Tonight am going to a legit play in the little theater, tomorrow night will drag back to town and attempt to contact my man, so I can write an article for Phil, Fri. nite, teach school and Sat nite work until 6.. then I plan to sleep, as I am working again Sunday next.

Your letter, Jan 10 was wonderful... Glad you love the job; very much pleased with re-finance deal on the house... as want a mortgage, no matter what the interest; glad you are getting ARC checks on time... and hope that someday that damn Redeker gives you that check he has been promising for two months to send on to me and that I get it. Guess I told you, Jeanette Dow sent me one boot... where the other one is I have no idea, but it ain't here.

Learned this morning from my Lieut. friend that the military are refusing to clear the article I worked so long and hard on... "Fisher of Men"... It was about the guy who is doing the work on the project, but his rank is not high enough to warrant magazine publicity.. or something like that. I may be able to arrange with the right authority to re-write the entire article on another slant, but that looks kinda hopeless right now. They want all names of individuals left out.. which would take the starch out of the thing.. if you follow me.

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The other night I bought a lahala hat for Ann... think its about her size... will try and pack it so it reaches you O. K. .. but if its crushed it can be re-blocked like a felt hat. If she can't wear it, you can no doubt find some small fry who can... I just fell in love with it and bought it.

Which reminds me... didn't you ever get my Christmas package.. it contained lahala purse for you... very fine one... grass skirt for Ann.. copy of "Paradise Annual" for Barbie, and jacket for Henry Kaye... sent it first class mail, as I recall, so did not insure.... let me know... will you?

The Christmas cards you sent out for me have been bringing out a rash of mail... got wonderful letter from Bill Dodge of Business Week... have also heard from many business friends. Now that we have our lines of communication open on a fairly even basis, things are not half as bad... does not seem so far away when I know I can fly to the coast in 14 hours, and get you by phone in an emergency... costs like hell though, and have not had that much money at one time since leaving Seattle.

My class in "business administration"... is interesting... have taken it over while one of the lads is out for training... he has about 30 GIs... many of them very bright... have been teaching them the basic elements of advertising, promotion, and specialty selling and they seem to love it. Wanted to know if I could take the course over for good. Told them that was impossible as I had other plans... geographical plans.

Had a grand visit with Erskine. His marriage turned out badly... seems his wife could not resist the adolescents attending the school... causing something of a mess all around. Apparently she still lives there.. and is in possession of his large library. Seems he simply bailed out and joined the army. He looks a good deal older, but says he "can't understand why so many people let their troubles make them unhappy... everybody has troubles of one degree or another." We had good talk about days in Cadillac. Cadillac people, boys, education, politics, etc. far into the night. He let me sleep in his quarters until 11 Sunday.. which is the first luxury like that since I have been here.

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Sunday afternoon we went to call on a Mrs Damon who is one of the "big five" out here... her home is on one end of a huge estate... you can't see across it either way. She has one son flying the "hump" into CBI theater, another in the Navy living in town, and several married daughters. She is stinking rich... but common as an old shoe, and a very brilliant conversationalist. She told many tales of her early days as a girl in Scotland, and wound up with stories about a round-the world cruise of several years ago. She hates stuffy people and describes her experiences in the general style and language of H. L. Menken. She gave us great glasses of fresh milk (we get almost no milk here you know) and cake. Also promised she would make me a bowl of cottage cheese the next time I came to see her. She is now milking 200 cows, and last week some 50 died of some mysterious poisoning... they are still working on it. Anyway, it was a grand afternoon. We explored her gardens, where a native was cultivating with a water buffalo... very picturesque indeed. Jean Ludins, one of the men here (the artist) knows the son well, and reports that he has a magnificent home, but I have not been there as yet.

Last night, when I could not find my friend, another ARC guy and I had dinner at Lau Yee Chi's.... supposed to be real Chinese dinner...they must steam the vegetables, as they are only partially cooked and very delicious... one dish made with onions, carrots and cabbage, with thin pork gravy... another made up of tiny green peas (pods and all) and tiny flowers of fresh brocolli... very delicious. Barbara would love the place. It is open to the night air.. like everything here. In back is a lovely tiny dance floor and little orchestra shell, surrounded by a formal Chinese garden, with the exotic flavers and hanging trees... perfectly beautiful. I managed to sleep like a top, so guess the vegetables were good for me.

As the war moves forward it is getting more and more like the mainland here. Butter is now rationed... the O. C. has run out of meat for those delicious hamburgers, and we are getting very tough hot dogs instead. Food is very plentiful, however, and there is little chance to get hungry. This morning I bought several bars of semi-sweet chocolate, and wish I could send you a carton.. but we are not allowed to ship food home.

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Last night we stopped to drop the gals off at Nats to work in the airport canteen and I met a navy officer from "down under". Told me the last time he had heard from his "missus" was Nov. 8 when he left here...

Would like to tell you about some of our case work.. but thats out.. as I learned sorta the hard way not long ago... so will save it with many other tales you will hear when this mess is over.

[censor's tape]

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[end of censor's tape]

When you get time drop a line to Ted Quinn, Refrigeration Industry, 812 Huron Road, Cleveland and ask him why he does not write me... if he wants more copy... if he plans to use any that he has... and whats the matter with him in general. As long as I could call those guys up long distance and put a tack under them now and again... everything was lovely... but they let me get over here and then shut up like a family of clams.

When that blessed check comes in from PBR am going to hie me to the PX and get some pants and shirts... am still running on two of each, and thats something... its gets hot here and you sweat, and the laundry takes several days anyway.. so its a problem.

Would like to have one or two of the beautiful tropical wool uniforms the officers here wear, but they will be quite impractical where I'm heading.. so will stick to cottons.

When you get the mortgage squared away, let me know the money payments and length of the damn thing... will you? Interested.

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Must get back to work... send Barbara some pix the other day... hope they reach you O.K. Father writes regularly, and reports that mother is very fine ... for which. I am really glad. Trust the job is not too much for you and if it is rough this winter ... can spring be far behind love you so very very much... all four of you

Henry



Henry.