

MAY 28, 1944

DEAR MR. EICHE,

THANK YOU FOR THE LETTER AND THE COPIES OF THE COLLEGIAN. I ENJOYED THEM QUITE A BIT. IT IS NICE TO KNOW WHAT ALL THE FELLOWS IN THE OLD CROWD ARE DOING THESE DAYS.

I HOPE YOU WERE ABLE TO GET HOLD OF THE APRIL 8 ISSUE OF COLLIER'S, AS I AM SURE YOU WOULD HAVE ENJOYED READING THE ARTICLE ABOUT THE ARMY AIRWAYS COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM. IT GIVES ONE A PRETTY GOOD IDEA OF THE WORK CARRIED ON BY OUR ORGANIZATION.

ALTHOUGH I AM STILL AT THE SAME ADDRESS, I AM NOW IN THE 119TH AIRWAYS COMMUNICATIONS SQUADRON. MY MAIN WORK IS POINT TO POINT RADIOTELEGRAPH COMMUNICATION, BUT ON OCCASION I ALSO OPERATE A TELETYPE, MAKE RADIO RANGE WEATHER BROADCASTS (RADIOTELEPHONE) TO AIRCRAFT IN FLIGHT, AND CONTACT PLANES IN FLIGHT BY RADIOTELEGRAPH.

I HOPE TO GET OUT OF HERE AND BACK TO THE STATES IN ABOUT EIGHT MONTHS. I HAVE BEEN THINKING OF APPLYING FOR O.C.S. WHEN I GET TO THE STATES AGAIN. WHETHER I WILL BE CALLED IN TIME IS SOMETHING ELSE, AS THEY AREN'T TAKING SO MANY FELLOWS ANY MORE. IF I GO OVERSEAS AGAIN I HOPE IT WILL BE THE EUROPEAN THEATRE, OR IF I CAN'T GO THERE, ANY PLACE WHERE IT IS NICE AND HOT. I DON'T HAVE ANY LOVE FOR HEAT, MOSQUITOES, AND BUGS, BUT IT IS A HECK OF A LOT BETTER THAN BEING IN A WHOLE (HOLE) LIKE THIS, AWAY FROM ALL CIVILIZATION.

I AM LIVING WITH THREE OTHER FELLOWS IN A HALF HUT-HALF TENT AFFAIR CALLED A JAMES HUT. WE ARE STRICTLY DELUXE IN THERE. WE HAVE A TABLE, A FOLDING CHAIR, INDIVIDUAL SHELVES AND BEDLAMPS, A FIRST CLASS WASHSTAND, A RADIO, A TELEPHONE CONNECTING US TO THE SATION (STATION) AND MOST OF THE OTHER HUTS, AND AN "ATTIC" WHERE WE STORE THE THINGS WE DON'T USE. THE WASHSTAND HAS A MIRROR WITH LIGHTS ON

BOTH SIDES AND A CABINET TO KEEP TOILET ARTICLES IN. IT IS TRIMMED WITH RED ENAMEL, AND MAKES QUITE A SNAPPY LOOKING JOB ALTOGETHER.

OUR STOVE IS CONNECTED TO AN OIL DRUM OUTSIDE THE HUT, SO THAT WE BOTHER WITH OIL ONLY ABOUT ONCE A MONTH INSTEAD OF EVERY DAY.

EVERY TIME I COME IN THE HUT I "SEE RED." ONE OF THE GUYS IN THE HUT GOT PAINTING FEVER OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT, AND EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK NOW YOU SEE THIS, THAT, AND THE OTHER THING TRIMMED WITH RED ENAMEL. INCIDENTALLY, THE FELLOW IS FROM PITTSBURGH. NO MATTER WHERE YOU GO YOU ALWAYS FIND SOMEONE FROM PENNSYLVANIA.

SOMEONE MIGHT ASK PFC. JAMES SOISSON WHAT HE THINKS OF THE ALEUTIANS. LUCKY GUY, HE GOT THE HECK OUT; I'M STILL HERE.

WE HAVE LAUNDRY AND DRY CLEANING SERVICE NOW, SHOWS SOMEWHERE EVERY NIGHT, AND OUR PX'S HAVE IMPROVED GREATLY. THE CHOW HERE IS GOOD, ONCE IN AWHILE. WE HAD TRAYS FOR AWHILE, BUT THAT WAS TOO GOOD TO LAST. BACK TO THE DEAR OLD MESS KITS AGAIN.

YES, IT'S SURPRISING HOW MANY PEOPLE THINK THAT EVERYONE FROM PENNSYLVANIA IS DUTCH.

I'M AFRAID I DON'T KNOW MUCH MORE, SO WILL CLOSE, WISHING ALL OF YOU THE BEST OF LUCK AND SUCCESS. KEEP 'EM FOOLING!

VERY SINCERELY,

*Richard N. Balthaser*

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