

New Guinea

February 12 1945

My darling Mama:

Monday night and we are comfortably ensconced in our quarters – a love story is being enacted over the radio all of us are quiet as we write.

A letter today from you dated Jan 31st in which you told how nice the stock looked. I would give anything to see the farm now. On a not too chilly day you and Ed and I could go out and ride a bit & cook our dinner out there.

I had quite an interesting weekend – Saturday night we attended the opening of the Ordinance officers club – sans dates – we tried at the nurses staging area but had no luck. The affair was a gala one ordered and drink flew thick and fast. Whisky – Brandy- Beer – G2 alcohol (mixed with grapefruit juice). There were lots of [illegible] & most I ever heard. We started laughing at the jokes to be polite – we laughed & laughed until tears ran down our cheeks and the more we looked at one another the harder we laughed. I am sure the colonel felt very pleased with his jokes – Somehow, it was a sort of hysterical laughter.

Sunday night we ate supper at the base officer's mess – chicken was on the menu & also ice cream - following the meal a private from the cast of the stage show "Stars & Stripes" gave a demonstration of hypnotism & hypnotized an officer – The latter ran around in the trance for half an hour & was made to perform all sorts of amusing things I think that a persons dignity is lowered when he allows himself to be hypnotized & I wouldn't allow myself to be for any amount of money – One phase of the demonstration was absolutely uncanny – just before he removed the officer from the hypnotic state, he made a post hypnotic suggestion & told the officer that exactly two minutes after he awakened from the trance, he would be selling newspapers & start running about the room distributing them & crying out the headline, "Hitler is dead the war is over". Well the officer awakened from the trance & looked very sheepish, and befuddled – The private gave him a drink of water – talked to him & when the two minutes were up, said to him – Two minutes newspapers – The officer ran from the stage – yelling the suggested cry and running all over the building waving the imaginary newspapers.

After the demonstration we [illegible] for the movie (show – I hate the word movie) – T'was "The Keys to the Kingdom" and was an excellent picture! It was so bitterly sad that tears came into my eyes – I came out of the show with the firm resolve to pray for priests & brothers & nuns who suffer from the [illegible phrase] to their vocation.

Frances wrote that she has joined the Red Cross; will start training soon & expect to be sent overseas soon. The training takes only 4 weeks. The Red Cross is an excellent organization & the girls who are in it, I am sure, are of excellent character, but no girl to whom I pay serious attention shall be in it – especially if she goes overseas – So I shall write her very politely that I am through, which I am.

One of the casual men who worked for us today & who has come from the Philippines, had a small monkey with him. It was a young one & as cute an animal as I ever saw. It played with everyone like a kitten does – up in one of our ammo sheds, he took the holster off the monkey & let him roam around. He ran here & there, but would always run back to his owner, climb on his shoulders & nestle against his neck – we brought him to the orderly room at [illegible], where he was confronted by Pin Up who acted

very hysterical and ran about like a bull in a China closet – the monkey screamed at her & scurried up on the furniture to safety. The boy said there are lots of them in the Philippines.

I think the darn cooks are slowly stealing the pepper which you sent me. Mama they are delicious beyond words.

I am pretty much out of humor with Bolter about his failure to even call – tis merely a confrontation of the truism that there are no good Germans.

The dust is terrible bad here of late – it hardly ever rains any more

Well mother dear my fingers are going to cramp so I shall close. Be very careful of your health Mama - & tell Ed to do likewise when I return to the states on rotation, you shall come to my run past with me & we shall get an apartment – Suppose we shall have to wait until I am out of the army before we take our trip. Since a leave wouldn't allow us time – May the month whip by until then.

I love & worship you.

Your loving son,

John M. Harrod