

22 January 1943

My darling mama!

9:30pm – This Friday, finds me sitting on my bed in the officer's quarters of the Sierra [illegible] Depot, looking out the window at the rainfall as I write. Wired you a few moments ago-after which I took a bath-the first since last Saturday.

If you were to take the "middle of nowhere" and distill it-then redistill it, you would have a fair idea of this Post – It's darn near amusing. We had ridden 400 or 500 miles out of Salt Lake City viewing mountains first on one side of us then the other – with 20 and 30 miles of Sage brush and [illegible] wood flat between us and the mountains – all of a sudden a host of warehouses & buildings loomed up and there we were. The post lies in what seems to be the center of a circular range of mountains – the Sierra Madres – [illegible] the description above its between 15 & 25 miles to them although they look to be only a mile or two away.

They are covered in snow to [sic] within half their distance from the bottom – The late afternoon sun shining through the clouds on there makes a sight almost infinitely beautiful – The snow appears luminous – other than that one can't say much for the place – There is lots of land; the wind blows a gail a good bit of the time and it gets cold as hell – doesn't' rain much. This Post – most of the people on it are civilians – is all ammunitions depot for the Western defense Command. It is already stacked with thousands of tons of ammunitions and bombs. A great part of the ammunitions receptacles are concrete "igloos" built into the ground with only a mound of earth & opening into them – of course there are lots of warehouses to receive the ammunitions. It's a large place – but our troops – 300- are the ones here (10 others) – about 30 officers – 4 or 5 hundred civilians – most of them laborers doing construction work - a rough looking lot – Lots of girls – a hundred or so – doing clerical work & acting as chauffer's about the Post. [illegible] facilities are really wonderful although there is not a hell of a lot to do – There is a dance tonight, but I'm not going since I have to get up early in the morning & want to have a clear head these first weeks, most of the girls stay out here in dormatories. Reno is 56 miles away – a place of 4 or 5 hundred.

As to just why in the hell we were sent here I don't know – we haven't learned yet – our exact states – not even the head [sic] your entire outfit know just what lay ahead of us – as near as I can gather we are to train the two companies – more are to move in later – I don't think we are to actually work in the depot.

Feel sorry for the poor negroes – there is no recreation here for them - & it is so far from anywhere & they looked so cold & [illegible] where we arrived – I like them very much & sure [sic] enjoy working with them.

This is such a desolate looking place that it feels that the rest of the world is a million miles away – of course I don't suppose that we shall look for entertainment with all the [illegible] around.

The Mormon temple at Salt Lake is huge – Salt Lake is a pretty place; is built at the foot of a mountain and runs up with the mountain – The mountains – [illegible] thou [sic] the snow covered parts, have a peculiar colored brown grass all [illegible] that creates a picture (rich looking) effect they are very impressive; the only sights I've seen except New York that weren't a bit disappointing.

Hope to hear from you soon.

Your loving son

J. Harrod

I love and adore you