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SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

At Sea

2 February 1945

Dear Miss McGlynn:

It has been quite some time since I last wrote to you so this letter may contain some interesting points. I received your Christmas card and appreciate your thoughtfulness.

I don't remember whether or not I told you, but I ^{never} had the good fortune of taking part in the initial invasion of the Philippine Islands at Leyte some time ago. Since then, as you know, the island of Luzon has been invaded ^{at Lingayen Gulf}. Our ship was a part of the large force which made the first landings here also. During both of these operations, we saw quite a bit of action against the Japanese.

Most of the action is something I can't write about. I will say that the Japs were completely outclassed in the air, on land, and on the sea. That goes for both of these operations.

* On a return trip to Leyte, (some time after the first landings) I had the chance to visit one of the Filipino towns. The following will be an attempt to describe this town as I saw it. The mud all over town is from 6 inches to one foot in depth. The Filipinos wade around in this mud in their bare feet. Before entering their homes, they wash the mud off in a puddle of dirty water. The houses are similar to old "broken-down" farm houses in the states. They have windows but do not have glass nor curtains.

The town has two small hospitals and a school. Most of the children go

to school and nearly all of them speak English. One of the courses taught is Gregg Shorthand.

Comparatively speaking, the girls wear stylish dresses. Some of them even wear lipstick. I saw one girl wading around in the mud, and she had toenail polish on. Quite modern these Filipinos.

In trading, the Filipinos are mostly interested in clothing. I traded a half a pack of cigarettes for 5 pesos or \$2.50 in American money. The money I received was issued by the Japanese government therefore it is only a souvenir.

The town itself isn't very clean. Hogs run about in the yards and under the houses. Chickens are seen on any street and some are tied to

posts or picket fences. On the whole, sanitary conditions are below standard of the United States, but regardless of the foregoing discrepancies, it seemed good to roam around a town inhabited by civilized people who lived in real houses and spoke the English language. X

Another school year is slowly but surely coming to an end. You are probably having your troubles correcting examination papers at the present time.

I've run out of things to write about, so with the hope that you are in the best of health and enduring the cold of New England as I am enduring the heat of the Pacific I will say "cheerio."

P.S. When to next, I don't know. Sincerely,
Ray Barbrick