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Boy, oh man! Is it ever hot!! My nose and forehead have worn out their second coating of epidermis; baking, burning, and blistering without even attaining that enviable brown. Yes, the days are terrific hereabouts. The heat makes one sluggish and feeling so unlike work. Leastways I use that as an excuse. I can never remember enjoying work. The nights (when it doesn't rain) are grand - cool and refreshing. I've given up trying to sleep below decks in my stateroom. Nearly everyone has. We just grab a blanket (to spread under us to soften the hard spots on the deck) and a sheet to lay over us (so the stars won't be embarrassed by our semi-nudity). It really is a sight to behold! The topside deck is probably thirty thousand square feet in area. From an aerial view one would swear it be impossible to wedge in another cot or blanket. Sometimes, quite unexpectedly, a heavy squall will put in a most unwelcome appearance

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in the wee hours of the morning. As if at a signal or simple command, a thousand or so sorry - looking individuals rise fold up their "tents" and quite unlike the Arabs, make a mad dash to scramble thru the nearest hatch.

From the foregoing you've probably gathered we're in port (which we are) and relatively free from night air attacks. He wouldn't dare spread out en masse topside up around Okinawa way. The white skivvies, sheets, and blankets would light us up in a way that even flares or starshells couldn't. No Topside sleeping is a luxury reserved for this hinterland.

I was in the Okinawa campaign. No more can be said. In fact no more need be said. The map tells the entire story. Well, almost - a nightmare or two will supply the details.

My brother Tom and I were all to get together a week ago for twenty-four hours. It was great

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seeing him, even amid these surroundings. Tom and I were like any two Irishman from the “auld sod.” [old country] We talked ourselves out about our “old country,” the gang we knew, the times we’d had, the places we’d been, etc, etc. I don’t expect I’ll see him again this time here. It’s anchors aweigh again in very short order for me.

The few days we had been here have been a God send. Though it has meant work, and more work, provisioning ship, painting same, loading new ammunition, it has been a great relief to be away from the front lines. Yet even as we rebraided frayed nerves others have been prowling around in enemy waters. That’s the way it’ll be till it’s over, long interminably long, months in the foreword area broken occasionally by a few days in an anchorage such as this.

We have a fine Officer’s Club here on the island. It must have a seating capacity of a couple of thousand. We rate liberty every

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other day with a boat to take us to the Club and back. On one of these visits last week, I ran into Gene Murray who is an LCI [Landing Craft Infantry] - same type of duty as he had in the European theatre. We had quite a chin-fest over our brews. He had all the scandal of S.T.C. [Salem Teachers College] on the tip of his tongue. He must have been waiting for some eager scandalmonger like myself to relay it to. Both of us had received your latest news-letter. Two or three times our conversation went like this:

“Did you hear about...”

“Oh yes, Miss McGlynn mentioned it in the last news letter.”

Gene was to come aboard here for dinner some night but he hasn’t show up yet. I’m afraid the local padre is doing too fine a job in usurping USO prerogatives. Well there’s a nice juicy filet mignon awaiting his acceptance when he sees fit to take me up.

It was great news to hear of Freddie Pompeo’s presence on the most recent muster list. Are Sheehan, McKinlay, and Freddie on

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the way home yet?

I haven't seen anything of Walter yet. Have him keep his seamen eye peeled for us. We'd be easier to pick out than what his ship would be.

I've said my say for today. Edna, so I'll close now. Remember me to "presey," [Priscilla] coach, Miss Burnham, Miss O'Keefe, et al. Until again, good luck and a pleasant summer.

Sincerely,
Dick