

Chapter Twenty-Eight

Tsingtao¹, China: June-July, 1939

On Wednesday, June 7 the USS Canopus finally arrives at its desired summer location.

Well, here we are at last in Tsingtao, the old home China port of the Canopus that I thought we never were going to get to see.

It is a nice-looking place here as you approach it from the sea. You can see a lot of modern, tiled roof buildings that comprises the heart of Tsingtao and all the buildings in the residential section near two or three good looking beaches are pretty nice.

The inner harbor is fairly well sheltered from the sea. Several large Japanese warships and planes were noticeable as we entered port.

I guess the place is practically under military rule. The old laundrymen had a job getting passes from them to come out to the ship. And it is a serious offense for Chinese to be caught with Chinese money up here now. Since the Japs have enforced the use of the yen here they have had a heck of a time trying to stabilize it.

It looks like our stay here and what we do and where we go ashore will mostly be controlled by the Japanese. We have orders to salute their officers or sentries as the case may be and strictly abide by all their laws and regulations.

Still we should be able to spend a pretty nice summer here what with the beaches; and they'll probably have a few good fields over there where we can play softball. (June 7)

Herb tells Louise what he plans to do now in his spare time.

I'm trying to put in at least a half hour every day on my second-class manual. Our exam will be in the first week of July and it will be good experience to take the exam even if I don't stand a chance of making it. There is even a third class on here now who we got off the Chaumont last week, who can make a higher mark than I can since he has more time in rate and service than I have. (June 7)

¹ The modern name of this port city is Qingdao. It lies on the north coast of China, on the Yellow Sea. Seoul, South Korea is at the same latitude, and only 380 miles across the Yellow Sea from Qingdao. Nagasaki, on the south coast of Japan, is 590 miles from Qingdao to the southeast.

The next day he writes more about some of the regulations they must follow while here.

This morning we all had to fall in at quarters and our division officers read several pages of orders to us regulating our conduct ashore. We must at all times be courteous to the Japanese and their flag and abide by their customs. If we enter a Japanese café or tea room we must leave our shoes outside the door and wear slippers in as they do. ... These Japs are so darn suspicious; they are going to make it miserable for us at times. So unlike the Chinese, who used to welcome the Canopus here with open arms. (June 8)

A few days later Herb continues the same long letter, writing about his career with the Navy.

Well darling I have four years in the Navy today. Tomorrow my extension starts which means I have two more years to do until June 10, 1941. It seems like it was a short four years but it was quite a change in my life. I've learned so much about all angles of life in various countries. ... But whether it betters me or not remains to be seen.

Monday I get my travel, or enlistment allowance as it is called. A little over \$150 and in my next letter it will be on its way to you darling for our nest egg. My pay also jumps up \$6 a month now. I get a 10% increase on my base pay of \$60 a month. So it won't be many more months before I put the final touch to our bank account sweets and then our goal will have been reached. (June 10)

Herb's mood reflects what most of the sailors are experiencing so far: "Things look like they are going to be very dull in here" (June 11). "All morning I pasted pictures in my album and all afternoon I played Mah Jong" (June 11).

He tells Louise what the Japanese are doing.

There is quite a bit of Japanese military activity here. Every day some big bombers fly off into the hills to bomb Chinese guerillas if they can find any. And there is a Jap air craft carrier, a pretty good sized one, anchored not far from where we are. Then there are a few destroyers, gunboats, and transports around too. (June 11)

He continues to reflect upon his enlistment with the Navy. "I've come to the conclusion that I don't particularly like the Navy, and it would really not be advisable for me to stay in, with that attitude" (June 11).

Two days later he has good news to tell Louise about their finances.

I got paid my travel allowance yesterday; they give you five cents a mile and they take it from the shortest distance possible. I shipped in at New York so they paid me from Seattle to New York; \$154.80. So, enclosed are two money orders for \$150; I hope they arrive there safe and sound. (June 13)

Again, Herb tries to be positive about the time that is remaining for him.

I'm sure you aren't bothering about the time much anymore. We can almost do the rest, as the fellows say, "standing on your head." Come on, Henderson; Jan. or Feb.!!! Why, only six or seven months! Gee whiz, time sure has been flying the last few weeks. Don't you feel it too, hon? (June 13)

The next Saturday evening Herb starts another letter.

It's almost three weeks since we got some stateside mail. Now I know how you must feel when you don't get mail for a long time. I miss letters from you so much; it makes me realize how terrible I'd feel were you to stop writing to me. (June 17)

Earlier in the week, Herb and three others from the Supply Department had to go ashore early one day, to open and award contracts for food and provisions from the local merchants. That process took all afternoon, and when it was over Herb decided to stay ashore to enjoy liberty with one of the others. They went downtown and had supper, then to a newly opened Navy Club for beer and to exchange money. Then Herb went off on his own.

Around six o'clock I decided to go cabareting for a couple of hours. For one thing I wanted to take a look at a girl that Smitty has gone overboard for. ... So I walked into the cabaret where he said she worked and sat down and ordered a beer. ... I danced with Blondie, one of the mob of Russian girls who came up from Shanghai, and one of the girls I danced with a few times down there, and I asked her which girl was Jenny. ... So the next time I danced with Jenny; and asked her about Smitty and I told her I was a friend of his. Then I asked her over to my table because I felt like talking to someone for a while and I wanted to see what she was like.

Her English was pretty good but she kept twisting her sentences around a little. She is only about 18, like most cabaret girls she was dressed to kill. I didn't meet her mother who sells dance tickets there and who keeps a close watch over Jenny, who Smitty assures me is a very "good" girl. We kid him a lot though and tell him if she's a Russian she can't be.

Naturally though it's their living to be gold diggers if they are cabaret dancers. It's very cheap to dance with them since dance tickets are cheap. If you sit with them and buy them drinks, they usually drink soft drinks which cost two dollars a piece and they get one fourth of that. That is where they make most of their money.

After talking with her a few minutes and dancing a few dances with her I shoved off to another cabaret. I just stayed in each place a short time seeing who I knew from the ship. In each place I saw some girls who I had seen in Shanghai.

Around 8 o'clock I joined a couple of the flag yeomen I knew and we made the rounds together having a pretty good time in each place we hit. It only started getting dark around 9 PM and around 9:30 the shore patrol started clearing the places out and getting the fellows started back to the ship.

Well, we were at least feeling happy enough by then so that we could sing all the way down to the landing and back to the ship.

(June 17)

The next morning at the breakfast table, Herb enjoys reading the news over a cup of coffee. But he is alarmed at what he reads. Later in the day he writes extensively about it.

I learned about the latest submarine disaster, the sinking of the French sub off the coast of Indo China. The Phoenix with about 70 men aboard is believed sunken in about 600 feet of water. ... When we were in Saigon we saw her too, flying by at full speed. It was a large modern sub, one of the newest the French have.

You know, darling, it's fantastic but there almost seems to be something phony about those subs sinking. Three submarines in 24 days. One French, one English, and one U.S. All of the latest types of underwater craft just recently launched by their respective countries. With a total loss of almost 200 lives. It sounds almost unbelievable, that it all could have happened. And at a time when the naval authorities of the countries concerned thought that the sub had almost been perfected as far as safety in peace time was concerned.

And still our old "S" boats, the six attached to this squadron, continue to plow the deepest waters of the Pacific, through typhoons and storms and it never seems to bother them. There are three alongside us now. In a few weeks two of the three at Manila will make the trip all the way from there to here by themselves. And later on in July, the Pigeon and the sixth sub will come up here for a reunion with the squadron which will be the first time the Canopus, Pigeon, and six subs will have been together in about ten months.

(June 18)

Herb finally received letters from Louise: three of them, which of course made him quite happy. He begins writing a new letter, first telling her what he did yesterday.

Red invited me over to his house last night so I went ashore with him. It was the first time I had visited them in months and I didn't want to put it off any longer. Red and his wife have a great big double room and an outside veranda and they pay 85 local dollars a month which is less than \$10 U.S. You can't beat that.

A ship's cook here, a jolly fat Italian, and his Russian wife who he recently married also have an apartment in the same place, and the five of us went out to eat supper in a Chinese place. ... There were eight or nine courses, oh yes, and we all used chop sticks. It was my first time. ... We had a lot of fun.

Then we went window shopping for a while and I started to feel a little out of place with the married couples so I bid them goodnight and hopped down to the cabarets where I had a few dances before heading back to the ship. (June 20)

Now he begins answering Louise's letters, which were postmarked May 12, 18, and 23. Throughout his writing he also tries to resolve some practical issues.

Now sweets, don't let the words to "The Masquerade Is Over" bother you because you know that could never be us! Of course, we could be changed Louise, but we won't be; you know that. I haven't changed and I can tell that you haven't changed. It will be just as if we were only apart for a few days. ... In our case honey, we just weren't meant to change, and we couldn't. (June 20)

He is not knowledgeable enough to respond to Pearl's suggestion that Louise should begin searching for a used car to buy for them. So, he starts a conversation with his buddies about cars. Later, continuing his letter, he writes extensively what he learned from his buddies. (June 20)

The next evening Herb continues answering her letters.

Do I love you honey; you ask! Oh Lord, if you only knew how much I love you Mary Lou! Yes, more than ever. Oh yes, thanks for enclosing the pamphlet from Bernard which gave the general history of the Temple. It's very interesting and explanatory.

Oh, you wouldn't want to necessarily think all men are like Ivan. Though I guess most of them are. I guess it is hard for a girl to have any real friends who don't try to make passes at her sooner or later. But then lots of men don't have many women friends either for the same reason. But as far as that goes; maybe I never was more forward with women than I have been because I was somewhat inclined to be bashful around good girls.

I don't know why men must always want to kiss a girl. Just a very strong natural urge, I guess. And since there is really nothing wrong in it, it's that much harder to resist. Do I sound like I'm speaking from experience? Who knows, maybe I am! ("Where do I get the maybe" sez you!)

Why there was nothing wrong darling about your coming home from dances with fellows as long as Anita was with you. (June 21)

He continues to be concerned with their finances, and how they will live on his monthly salary, after they are married. He gives Louise as much detail as he can think of, to reassure her (and himself) that they will be okay financially. (June 21)

Thursday evening, answering her letters, he continues to go over how they will be able to live on \$60 a month. He also continues to be very concerned about his stepmother's welfare and her finances. He writes that he needs to get information from her about the status of their old home, and if she gets any help from anyone besides him. He struggles with how to resolve this problem.

And possibly; without my help, she would be entitled to more relief. ... But that one thing seems almost certain darling; we cannot get married and still help support anyone besides ourselves. Because the few dollars we could spare wouldn't be much help.

Does what I have done up to now make up for what I might stop doing? My gosh my stepmother has a pretty large family and a few of them could help out some. And then my two step brothers are about out of high school and they should be able to do odds and ends that would carry them through. I'm still hoping for a lucky break that will clear things up for all concerned before I commit myself to a course I might later regret. I'll admit it has got me perplexed a bit. (June 22).

It's Friday evening, and Herb's next letter is typed because he feels he needs more typing practice. "Rather an interesting incident occurred today and we do not know exactly what was in back of it" (June 23).

There was a large Limey cruiser in here and two large Japanese warships. Around noon this morning as I was leaning on the rail looking around the harbor, I noticed a lot of activity aboard the one Jap ship. A few minutes later she hoisted anchor and got under way. The second Jap ship proceeded to follow suit. About that time, I noticed the barge of the Admiral off the Limey ship coming from the beach at full speed and as soon as the Limeys hoisted their boat aboard, they got underway and steamed out of the harbor too. So evidently something must have been up. (June 23)

Early Saturday afternoon finds Herb continuing his typed letter to Louise. He had liberty but he was staying onboard due to cloudy and stormy weather. So he will "just fool around playing cards and writing letters" (June 24). He resumes answering her letter of May 23.

Glad you got some unexpected letters sweets, and the money order o.k. Now where would I get the money darling. By saving it, so much each month; as I will for the next few months for that last one hundred. Then I want to get a few more things yet before I'll be ready to go back to the states. I don't believe that there is much to get here in Tsingtao. The next time we get to Shanghai or Hong Kong is when I'll get the rest of the things I want to get.

Why can't I come home on the Chaumont in December? Well darling for the simple reason that there isn't any Chaumont in December. ... The Henderson arrives here about July 10th leaving a few days later. The Chaumont arrives here again around the 31st leaving in the first week of September. Now, I catch the next transport after that which should be the Henderson but when she gets out here again, whether it will be Dec. or February no one knows, yet. But we hope to know within a month or so. (June 24)

Late that afternoon, the weather clears up so Herb decides to go ashore. He gets around to writing again on Monday evening. First he tells her of his adventure ashore.

I did just enough hitting the high spots Saturday night to make me sleep all day yesterday because I sure was feeling awful when I woke up yesterday morning. ... But now I'm getting so I don't even like beer anymore so I guess I'll confine my liberties to sight-seeing from now on though I might dance a few dances now and then, just to keep in practice for you darling so I won't be too awful when I get back there.

That's O.K. isn't it? You ought to see me do the Lambeth Walk. Boy its awful. No matter how much I practice I still can't dance to real fast or real slow music. About the only thing I can dance half decent at all is a foxtrot. (June 26)

Herb writes about Admiral Yarnell, and updates Louise on Japanese activities in Tsingtao.

The Augusta got in this morning. Admiral Yarnell goes back to the states in a few weeks. ... I don't know how much publicity Yarnell ever got in the states but it can be said that he did a darn good job during his tour of duty on the Asiatic station. He dealt firmly with

the Japanese at all times but still did not risk war in any of his dealings. I imagine the Japs will be glad to see him leave.

They had an anti-British demonstration over in town the other day. Naturally the Japs sponsored it and made quite a few Chinese unwillingly take part in it. ... The Japanese really have a very bitter attitude towards the English right now, and are imposing as many restrictions as possible on their shipping; aside from the blockade of Tientsin which is still a dangerous situation. The Japs realize how much England has at stake in China with her trade, settlements, and colonies, and would love to kick them out of China.

French, British, and Dutch naval officials had a meeting in Singapore the other day and decided that they didn't need any more warships here. They believe that their combined naval strength is enough to hold the Japanese, in event of war; until reinforcements could be brought in. (June 26)

Herb begins a new letter on Thursday evening. He writes about how busy he will be in the coming days.

As you can see, it is the end of another quarter; also the end of the Navy fiscal year which means that tomorrow I start taking an endless stream of tapes on my ledger again.

And then our exam is the first week in July and I'll want to study some for that even though my taking it is only for practice.

There hasn't been much new here during the last few days. In fact things have been sort of monotonous at times. (June 29)

Late Friday night Herb writes a short letter.

Gosh, just think; tomorrow is July. That leaves the last months of this year to go yet. That's all there really is, the other time won't matter much. Six cut and dried months and angel I hope they go as fast for you as I think they will for me.

This mail situation here surprises me. We have been here almost a month and we have received mail [just] once. (June 30)

On Saturday Herb had a long patrol duty, and only one incident required much attention. Herb enjoys telling this story.

The only thing that gave me and my patrol partner any trouble on the beat that we had in the place called "Upper Russia" last night was some thick-headed German; a Hitlerite. This fellow was feeling pretty good and he was causing a disturbance in one place where some of our sailors were hanging out. In fact, I guess he bothered two fellows in there so much that one of them poked him in the jaw.

Anyhow a dame came running out and got us and we dashed in to see what the trouble was. The sailors were sober and since that was the second incident of the evening in which the German had been involved, we just ignored him. The sailors went out as we asked them to leave even though it was the other fellow's fault. For we have no authority to do anything with civilians.

And then he became highly indignant because we had not arrested the sailors and he "demanded" to know their names. We just laughed at him and walked out in the street where he followed us. He approached us with his chin up in the air in an arrogant fashion and then demanded our names. He said he was an officer. He was the third engineer off some merchant ship in port, but the way he carried on you would think he was an admiral.

Well, he wasn't about to get our names; and when we asked him what his was that stopped him. So he said he'd see our ship, or the consul, or someone about it. We just ignored him all the time. But oh Lord how we'd like to have bent our clubs over his thick skull. ... He was calling us names in German, and insulting us in English and we really couldn't do anything about it.

Later on we told the patrol officer all about it just in case the fellow had been stupid enough to try to get us in trouble. And the patrol officer told the manager of that one place that if he didn't value Navy trade more than he did some drunken civilian he'd close the place up. So that concluded the day's excitement for me, because after supper I had a dull 9 to 12 watch on the dock. (July 2)



Above: Dressed for patrol duty. Herb is at right.

July 4th fell on a Tuesday, and Herb writes “You know what made this a holiday for me? The fact that we got stateside mail this morning and here I have three letters from you. ... Your letters are postmarked May 28, 31 and June 7. Pretty recent – for Tsingtao” (July 4).

He begins answering them.

That silk will soon be on its way to you. A buddy of mine leaves on the Henderson Monday and he's going to take the package which I have all wrapped up and stamped, ready to be mailed. All he will have to do is drop it in a mailbox in Frisco and we'll be all set. I hope you get it all right and that you like it.

I'm glad you met a fellow who might make you a good friend hon. In his circumstances he should be content with just being interested in other girls for friendship's sake. Because it is nice to have a few friends in the opposite sex as you were telling me in one letter. (July 4)

Herb wrote to his stepmother inquiring about the family finances. He shares with Louise some of what he wrote.

I told [her] that after waiting two and a half years, never in the world could I postpone our marriage. Also, that my income then would be just enough for you and I to get along on. It made me feel a little funny writing like that darling, but gosh it has to be cleared up. ... Now I'm curious to see the response. (July 6)

The U.S.S. Henderson arrived, bringing over a hundred sailors to their new assignments; and it picked up those returning to the states.

This noon we transferred about 50 men to the Henderson, twenty fellows were good pals of mine who came out here with me. They didn't get rated so they were lucky enough to get back to the states six months ahead of time.

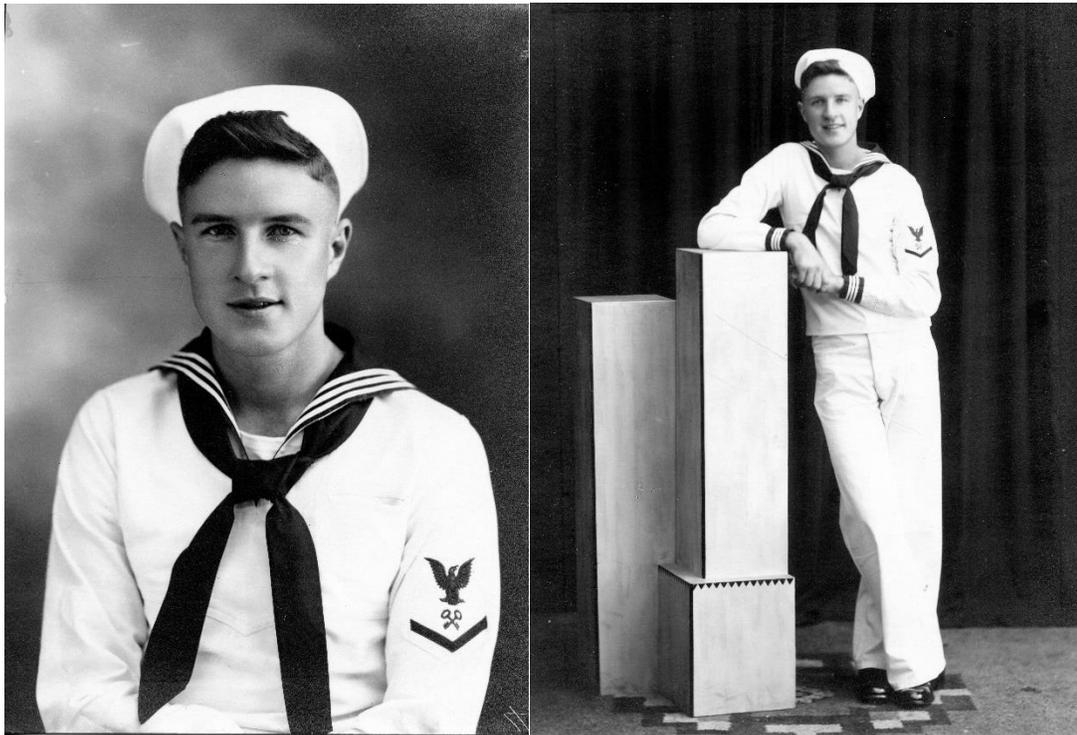
One of the fellows, Joe LaMonica has your prospective wedding dress safely stowed away in a suitcase. ... You should get it sometime in August.

As the U.S.S. Henderson steams out of the harbor, Herb writes “Now I can say I get the next Henderson” (July 9). He tells Louise how he feels.

You know honey, watching all my buddies stow seabags and suitcases yesterday just about got me down. So I went ashore yesterday afternoon and rode around in a rickshaw. And bought a few more pictures for my album. Oh yes, and had a few more taken to send to you darling. (What was your ultimatum; ten pictures before the end of October, wasn't it?) Well, I should get ten to you by then; if they have to be all studio pictures.

But I didn't do any drinking at all last night outside of one beer with my supper. And it was too warm to enjoy dancing, so I caught the ten o'clock boat back to the ship. I still hadn't got rid of that feeling though, and watching those fellows complete their packing this morning almost made me homesick; you know it sweetheart.

Yes, there sure are a lot of missing faces around the ship tonight. And a lot of strange faces. We received a draft of 108 "pale faces" from the Henderson. Transferring is always a pain in the neck. You drag a heavy seabag and hammock, and maybe a couple of suitcases around; you get tired and dirty; you are in unfamiliar surroundings. (July 9)



Portraits from Tsingtao Photo Studio

Herb continues his letter, explaining what he just learned about the Henderson's schedule.

The "tentative" departure of the Henderson from Frisco to the Asiatic station again is November 28. ... On that basis, I should arrive in Frisco about February 23rd sweetheart! Isn't that swell?

In less than eight months; seven when you get this Miss Stenquist, you will be Mrs. Herb Lentz! Gosh, darling, but that thought has me happy now. (July 9)

The next day he continues the same letter, writing that his office was a "madhouse" with new guys coming in, and others changing jobs. He writes that soon he will be the fellow with the most time in this office. (July 10).

Wednesday evening Herb starts a new letter. He writes a portion referring to himself in the third person, to illustrate his devotion to her. It's about "a fellow named Herb Lentz."

You know he sure is terribly anxious to get back to the states. Claims there is a very wonderful girl waiting there for him. Can you imagine that? Why, people can't wait that long for each other. Still, they must be in love, and he certainly loves her an awful lot.

He never goes ashore much, and has nothing to do with the various girls one runs into in these ports. That's unusual for a sailor you know. She must be a wonderful girl, to hold a fellow's love like that. (July 12)

Continuing his declaration of love for her, Herb writes:

But you are wonderful darling; and I love you with all my heart and soul; completely and devotedly, because it is you who has meant more to me already in my life than any other person or thing possibly could. And it's a very clear and distinct love, ... because all the memories of you and what time we did spend together are very clinging. I can remember all the things I love about you; your smile, your sweetness, your gentleness, and a dozen other things that endeared you so to me. (July 12)

Thursday evening Herb continues his letter. He happily reports that he got two letters from her today, dated June 14 and June 16. Answering them, he writes "I'm glad I'm still the one you love Louise. In fact I don't know what I'd do if you didn't love me. Life just wouldn't be, that's all" (July 13).

Then he explains the schedule of the transport USS Henderson, and when he likely will catch it to return home.

Well darling in a way you do come close. Betting I'll be back in December or leave here in December. But I won't be back there until February though I may leave the ship in December. You see, we'll be down in Manila when the Henderson comes out and there'll be a first contact and a second contact. The Henderson will arrive in December, change some drafts and go on up to all the Chinese ports. Then a month later on the way back she'll stop at Manila again. That will be January. The chances are that I'll stay aboard here until January which would be all right with me as the less time I have to spend on a transport the better. (July 13)

On Friday evening he continues answering her letters. He feels the need to again explain his thinking about how much time remains before he returns.

Oh, you don't need to be sorry sweets because you complained about the time, that time. It's only natural; and I'm glad you told me about it. I never tell you that the time out here bothered me because I don't even let myself think of it long enough to write about it. That's the best way, I've found out sweets. (July 14)

Sunday morning Herb begins a new letter, and opens by describing the photos he is sending.

This morning I also mailed the pictures, three took over in town [Tsingtao], and that one basketball picture I promised to send you so long ago. I don't think any of them are very good; and I look angry in one of them; and no smile in any of them. ... But here's what counts (ahem); these four, plus the three, I sent from Shanghai makes seven; so I only have three more to go before October 31, to comply with your ultimatum. ... Oh, honey I know you like pictures and gee I'd like to send you lots of them but I just don't ever get around to taking any it seems. (July 16)

Herb's thoughts begin to focus on his return voyage; in particular, how he will bring home his large photo album and many of the things he has purchased.

I'll send back a small suitcase of personal things and non-taxable items like some suits I'm going to have made on the way down to Manila in Shanghai; a large album, and some wooden things I've bought out here on which there shouldn't be much duty, if any. That way, I'll have space for all the things that I'll be able to take back myself and not have to pay any duty on either. ... So, maybe sometime after we get down to Manila I'll mail you a suitcase full of junk. ... And before you look at the album, you'll have to pay due heed to the warning in the front of it. Because, besides the Bali pictures there are some gruesome war pictures and one or the other might not appeal to someone you might want to show the pictures to. (July 16)

Lately Herb has been doing a lot of planning and thinking about their future. In this letter he asks Louise to decide where they should spend their honeymoon, and suggests that she take care of the details. He wants her to figure out the finances and "balance that end of it" as well as figure out "how much it will cost us to get there, stay there, and come back and have a swell time." He adds "That will give you something to think about and something to do when you have some spare time" (July 16).

He asks her to help them decide where they will live after they get married.

Before I leave this ship to go back darling, I'm going to put in a request for shore duty, even though it might be a long time before I'll get it. When you put in for it you name the place you'd like best, and next best. Naturally I know you prefer the west coast to the east coast, so what do you think will be best honey. The naval districts of Seattle, San Francisco, San Pedro, or San Diego? You decide that too. ... Wherever it is we'll be there for about three years, providing I stay in the Navy. Or would you prefer San Diego or San Francisco? San Diego has its advantages. There is a large commissary store there; also living conditions are a little cheaper around there. ... But I want you to help me decide that, Mary Lou. (July 16)

Herb closes this letter with some news about mounting tensions between the Japanese and the British.

There are about four Limey ships in here now, and four or five Japanese warships. The other day some Japanese demonstrators threw rocks at the British Consulate here and the British promptly moved in some ships. Whereupon the Japs followed suit. There is a pretty bitter feeling between them right now with anti-British demonstrations going on here and in Japan. According to the press news this morning they also threw a couple of hand grenades in the British Consulate building the other morning. Red and his wife only live about a block up from there. (July 16)

Later that day Herb and some of his buddies were “hanging around the ship with nothing to do” so one of them started taking pictures. Herb was hoping to have several (from those two rolls) to send to her. (July 21)



Onboard the Canopus. Above left: Herb, Brooks and Andy. Above right: Smitty

Four days later Herb begins a new letter. It is Thursday evening, and he writes “It sure got warm this afternoon and boy did I feel lazy all afternoon; didn’t feel like doing a lick of work and I didn’t” (July 20).

Then he tells Louise how frustrated he is with the Navy.

You know honey, I’m getting so fed up on this Navy business with all its red tape and inefficiency due to the fact that there are people like our Supply Officer in it, that I’ve darn near definitely decided to go out of the Navy. Yep, he is beyond a doubt the poorest excuse for an officer and a man that I have ever seen and I have no respect for him whatsoever. And I know that later on in years if I stayed in the Navy, I’d meet more people like him who I might be tempted to take a poke at if I ever happened to fly off the handle.

On the outside if a man earnestly wants to work surely he can find a job; besides things are bound to pick up some day and I want to be on the right side of the fence if they do. Also, on the outside you can always enter private enterprise and perhaps get a lucky break that will take you to the top.

Twenty years is a long time to devote to a place like the Navy unless you love the life, and I don’t! It’s just another job to me. Surely, I could get a better one on the outside. I’m afraid if I shipped over again, and it would have to be for four years next time; I’d almost feel like a failure. For not having enough pep to go out of the Navy and land a civilian job. After I get back there, in the year or so I have to do I ought to be able to make a couple of contacts that will land me a job.

I want security, for us, and our home; and our children. If I once get started, I know I'd make out. Well, time will tell wont it honey? I'm glad you said that it would be alright with you, regardless of what I did. (July 20)

He closes his letter by telling Louise again how much she means to him.

I'm so glad I love you so much and you love me so much. It's something I'm forever thankful for and I know it was meant to be this way, Louise; and that nothing can ever happen to our beautiful romance. It's so unreal, isn't it; never having our love diminished even though we are miles and months apart. It would make quite a story but we wouldn't ever want publicity hon because it is all too sacred to us, isn't it? And how about all the people who said "It can't be done"? Oh, we'll just be silent and give each other a knowing look, eh sweets? With you by my side ... I have the courage to face anything and everything no matter what it might be. (July 20)