

Masan, Korea
December 30, 1950

Dearest Darling,

How's my sweet baby tonight? Fine, I hope. Well, darling, everything is still O.K. It's still cold. I have a good case of the shits. I almost shit in my pants a little while ago. I'm glad I didn't.

Yesterday I got another shot. It stung as bad as a bumble bee would. They said it was to keep you from getting an infection in case you are wounded.

Tomorrow is New Years. It won't be long till 1951. Will it? Dam, time is flying, isn't it, darling?

Some of the boys have been going down to the village and getting some rot gut whiskey. It makes them drunk as hell. We get one or two cans of beer almost every day. It comes in handy.

Dam, how I would like to get some letters from you. I miss you so much, baby. Dam, sweetheart, why do I have to be so far away? How's Peanut, baby? I guess he will soon be walking and talking. I was thinking the other night of the fun we used to have together. How you used to tease when I untied your apron strings while you were trying to cook and how I would laugh at you. Wouldn't it be nice, darling, if we were back in that apartment right now. I think of the things we used to do all of the time.

It is getting cold as hell outside right now. My writing paper is beat up as hell, isn't it, baby. I would like to tickle you with my mustache right now. This is all for tonight, darling. Good nite and swweet dreams. I love you so very much, my little darling.

Your loving and affectionate husband,

James E

Masan, Korea
January 7, 1951

Dearest Darling,

How is my loved one tonight? Fine, I hope. Today is Sunday, and I have done very little today but sleep. Sooner or later, I believe I will get used to sleeping on the ground. A soft bed with you in it would be much better though. Dam, how nice that would be. Wouldn't it, darling?

That boy that shot himself died at 1:30 last night. I didn't think that he would live that long.

I have been happier today, darling, than I have been in a whole month. I got some mail. Four letters were from you, and one was from Mother. They were dated October 25th, December 14th – two on that date, December 21st, and Mother's was October 26th. Those two in October were addressed "General Delivery, Pendleton," the first address I gave you. I got a laugh out of reading those letters. It's funny the way I got letters dated the 14th and 21st. That just goes to show you how f----- up mail is over here.

So Phillip is sitting up by himself now. I knew it wouldn't be long.

You said something about the government drafting women to work. You just make g-dam sure that you never take a government job. We will let some of the other son-of-a-bitches in the United states do that. You can do just as much for me by working in a beauty shop as you could in a government job. My being in this f----- up branch of service is enough for you, I, Phillip, and both of our families. Piss on the rest of the people at home. Let them help themselves. I g-dam sure don't want to be over here.

I would like to be home listening to those 2 new records with you. I love you, my little darling. Be sweet and good. I love you so much, darling.

Your loving and affectionate husband

Pohang, Korea
January 24, 1951

Hello, Darling,

How is my loved one today. Very good, I hope.

Guess what! It is still cold as hell here. Can you imagine that? Ha! I get approximately a letter a day from you now. I certainly am glad of that, too. I still have about 10 or 15 old letters coming from you, though.

I managed to get paper and envelopes today – 3 of each. It takes 9 days for one of your letters to reach me. Not bad service under the circumstances.

I'm sorry about the fire. I hope it didn't destroy too much. Yes, I imagine that man did frighten you. Ha! Did you ever get your beauty license? If you don't have them, you had better get them.

Mother said that Peanut was walking backwards. Ha! He is f----- up just like his old man, isn't he?

Darling, I damn sure hope you aren't pregnant. Why in the hell don't you go and find out? What do you want? A boy or a girl? Or twins? Oh, hell, we might as well have a half dozen, anyway. Hadn't we?

I hope you aren't working too hard, sweetheart. If you think you have lost weight, you should see me. I have lost about 20 pounds. No more big belly for me. Have you lost your's – (belly)? July 28, and I'm just getting around to it. That's what we both wanted, wasn't it? Ha! I hope all of the son-of-a-bitches back there get drafted.

Well, darling, we are moving up day after tomorrow. The name of the place, as far as I know, is Yongdong. Pronounced just like it looks.

This is all for now, darling. I love you, sweetheart. Be sweet.

Your loving and affectionate husband.

Junction City, Arkansas
January 28, 1951

Dearest Darling,

How are you tonight? Fine, I hope. I just got through writing Pat.

Have you seen Dick, yet? Have you been on the front line yet? We saw something in the paper about the 1st and 9th Corps. I just wondered if it could have been you all.

Well, today is Peanut's birthday. He is half a year old. But I guess you remembered it. Mrs. Elkins gave a dollar to put in his bank. He lacks a lot having his elephant full yet.

We went to Farmerville this afternoon. They were all O.K. Sue is still jealous of Phillip. She told them this afternoon that they didn't love her; they loved Phillip David.

You should have seen Donald yesterday. He was trying to dig a ditch, and he really worked hard. Daddy gave him \$5.00, and he was really proud of it, too. He said he was going to the ball tournament on it.

They are having the dual State Tournament here next weekend, but I don't care for it.

Your mother said she was coming up some Friday night and stay until Sunday. Then we could go spend the day with Granny Hunt. They are having a fit to see Phillip David.

Darling, I love you more and more every day. Please believe me. My love is so deep for you until nothing could come between us. Be careful, darling, and write when you can. I am sending you all my love.

Yongdock, Korea
January 30, 1951

Dearest Darling,

How is my sweet little darling this fine day? The very best, I hope.

I hope you will forgive me for not writing in the past few days, sweetheart, but it has been impossible. The name of this place is Yongdock.

I'm glad to hear that your Dad has a new car. I guess that all of you are proud of that. I guess that Phillip has 4 teeth by now. I would give anything to see you in your new suit. Especially you!

I went on a combat patrol yesterday. Fortunately, we didn't run into any enemy. I am very dam glad. At the present moment, they are fighting like son-of-a-bitches just 6 miles from here. Our artillery just behind our tents have been firing away like hell.

About 30 minutes ago, they called for an air strike on enemy positions. I hope they get every g-dam one of them. One of my buddies in C-Company is up there. I guess he is having hell. We will probably move up there in a few hours. I guess you find out whether or not I am worth a shit now. I just want to get my share of them, that is all. It is a very funny feeling. The outfit that Dick is in has been in contact with the enemy for about a week now. I don't know where he is though. Well, one of our Marines is moving out now. I guess we will all be out shortly. Some war, huh?

Dam, darling, how I wish I was at home. It would be so nice. I love you so much, darling.

While on patrol yesterday, we saw about 15 enemy tanks along the road that had been knocked out. They have really fought like hell around here. I have had very little sleep lately. In a foxhole most of the time. It is cold here at night, too. Can you imagine that? Ha!

Darling, I have so much to tell you, but no time to write. This is the first chance I have had to write since the last letter. I love you, my little darling. Be sweet. Remember that I love you and that I am your's to have and to hold to death do us part. Remember the preacher. All my love,

Your loving and affectionate husband,

James E

Sinnyong, Korea
February 14, 1951
"Valentine's Day"

Dearest Darling,

Now is my sweet little darling this beautiful white day? Yes, It snowed here again last night. It is still snowing a little.

Darling, I am sorry that I haven't written in the past few days, but, baby, I just haven't had the chance. I would like to write you every day, but I just can't.

We have been on a combat patrol for the past 2 days. Gooks were reported about 2 ½ miles from here, so we started after them. The bastards ran away before we could get there. It's funny, you can see them walking in the hills, but they are too far away to shoot at. We look at them, and they look at us. Some war, huh?

I got 3 letters from you last night, one from mother, and one from Jasper. I hadn't been getting many letters from you, so I was very glad to get them. Very glad.

Do you realize that in two more days we will have an anniversary? It seems like years and years, doesn't it? I hope our next anniversary is together. Don't you? It seems like I will be here at least 6 months. They have a rotation plan set up now. Some of the boys that came over here when this first began are on their way home now. I dam sure wish it was me.

The word is going around that we might make another landing up around the 38th Parallel soon. I hope not, though.

How is Peanut, darling? I hope he is fine. Tell everyone that I said hello. All my love, sweetheart.

Your loving and affectionate husband,

James E.

P.S.: I am sending you a \$30.00 check. You can cash it. It got wet while I was walking and sitting ass-hole deep in snow and slush. They gave it to me the day before we went up into the hills. Notice it says up in the top left hand corner "In the field." They weren't lying, either.

Wansan, Korea
March 1, 1951

Dearest Darling,

How is my sweet little baby today? In the very best of health, I hope. I guess you thought that I wasn't going to write again, but, as usual, I have been very busy.

I have been on the front lines now for about 12 days, and that is where I am writing this letter from now. I and my foxhole buddy are sitting in our foxholes in our sleeping bags trying to keep warm. It is mighty cold this morning; although it has been somewhat warmer lately.

My nerves are just about shot. Every time they start shooting at us, I get scared as hell. When the bullets come close, they make a cracking sound, just like a whip when you pop it. I guess it is enough to scare the hell out of anyone, though. As of now, our company hasn't had it too rough (that is in the past two weeks), but no doubt the worst is yet to come.

It's a funny thing, the Chinese are afraid of Marines. When we got here, they were pounding the shit out of the Army, but now they are moving back. No doubt you have read about it in the paper back home. (Please pardon the way that I write, but my hand is about to freeze.)

Philip was 8 months old yesterday. He's getting to be a big boy, isn't he?

Darling, I got my 2nd package from you today. It was the one with stationary, cookies and loose cigars. I greatly appreciate all of it, darling. Air mail is a hell of a lot quicker. I sure did like the peanut butter cookies. That's what we used to eat a lot of at Ruston. Remember?

Darling, there isn't anything to write. I just wanted to let you know that I was still in one whole piece. I love you, my darling. Very - very - very much.

Your loving and affectionate husband,

James E.

P.S.: I was plundering through a Korean house the other day, and I found a coke bottle that was made in Alexandria, Louisiana. Of all things and in such a place! Quite a coincidence. Ha!

Wansan, Korea
March 3, 1951

Dearest Darling,

(First part of letter is lost. . . .)

I would have written you sooner than that. You can't ever tell, though.

I haven't received your package yet, though. It should be here soon. By the way, don't send any more packages. I don't imagine I will be here to receive them.

We are going back on line about the 10th. Possibly, I may have to go back. I will be in the Company C.P. on line from now on. Not too much change there.

I am now Right Guide and Ammo. Corporal of the M.G. Platoon. It is quite a racket.

I guess Donald had a lot of . . . (Rest of letter is lost.)

Your loving and affectionate husband

N Korea
April 15, 1951

Hello, Darling,

How is my baby feeling today? Fine, I hope. Today is Sunday, and it is another beautiful day.

Guess what! I went to church today. Can you feature that? I have also been going to a Bible study that the Chaplain has been conducting for the past 2 afternoons. It gives me a funny feeling at times.

We still haven't had any word on when we are moving up. They probably won't give us but a couple of hours notice. That is the way that they generally do.

They have started giving us malaria pills. We had our first one today. It is as big around as a dime and about 3 times as thick. We had to take it, or else we wouldn't get any chow.

I will have to try that system on you. Keep you from eating until you take your pills. Ha-Ha! Do you think that would work? You would probably starve first. Ha!

I haven't received any mail from you lately, darling. I guess it is being held up somewhere. How is Phillip? I guess he is still growing.

Tell everyone that I said hello. I love you, darling.

Your loving husband,

James

P.S.: I love you, darling!

April 30, 1951

(Somewhere southwest of Hoengsang, South Korea,
A retreat known to the Marine Corps as fighting to the rear.

Dearest Darling,

How is my sweet little wife and son doing this beautiful last day of April? Better than ever, I hope.

As for myself, I am in the best of health. "Thanks to God."

Well, darling, as you know, I have been on the move for the past 5 days, and I have been moving like hell. As I said before, I was 15 or 20 miles deep in N Korea. After a long truck ride that I had yesterday, I am now southwest of Hoengsang. Quite a ways back. Huh?

I guess you know that the Chinese had us in a trap, and we were dam lucky to get back without putting up too big of a fight. The whole thing was caused by the damned Army and the R.O.K.'s.

The Chinks annihilated the 6th R.O.K. Division and routed the f----- Army, so that left us with our flanks exposed. So we had to pull back and form a new line of defense. We are setting up a M.L.R. where I am at the present, and it will probably be 10 or 15 days before the Chinks get here. Those bastards are going to be in for one hell of a fight. They even have me pissed off now.

I can tell you now that myself and the rest of the boys were plenty scared for a while. They were all around us, and we didn't know which way we were going. I am happy to say that there is no danger now.

Between 600 and 1000 civilians have moved out of the villages today. There is a mile or more of them in a line moving out of this area. I guess that they know that a big battle is soon to come. I can see them moving now. I am sitting on top of a mountain of snow.

Darling, I received your letter with two pictures of Phillip in it. They were very cute. I could kick your ass for not sending one that size of yourself. Ha Ha! Truthfully speaking, darling, I want one that size of you even if you have to have another one made, and I want it pretty dam quick, too. Don't let me frighten you with harsh words, darling, but I do want one so very much.

(Second page of letter dated April 30, 1951)

Oh, yes, I need some cigars. Send also some olives and oysters. I have one hell of an appetite, and as skinny as I am, I need some good food.

What I need above all, dear, is to be with you. Darling, I miss you so very much. Darling, I don't believe that I can stand to be away from you much longer. It hurts me so deeply to be away from you so long. Won't this silly ass war ever stop?

Darling, let me tell you again that I love you more than anything else in the world.

Darling, I know that you aren't receiving all of the letters that I write, but I do hope that you get most of them.

Your loving husband,

James E.

L O V E . . . spells love.

?? ? South Korea
May 3, 1951

Dearest Darling,

How is my loved one today? Fine, I hope.

We have moved again, and we are now about 7 miles from where we were the other day. We are in reserve now and probably will be here for a few more days.

I am greatly enjoying this little heat.

How is Phillip? Fine, I hope. How is everyone else around Junction City? I guess it is still the same old place.

Another person in the 1st platoon accidentally shot himself yesterday in the hand. Boy, did he jump around and sling his hand. He reminded me of a chicken flopping around after you had wrung his neck. Ha!

Oh, yes, I guess that you have already heard that Hebert got married. Woodrow tells me that he married a little Mexican girl. Ha! I wouldn't doubt it. Hebert also asked to be called to active duty. He is the biggest dam fool that I have ever known.

Well, darling, news is short. Remember that I love you dearly, my darling.

Your loving husband.

Inje, N. Korea
June 12, 1951

Dearest Darling,

How is my sweet little baby today? In the best of health, I hope.

Well, darling, I finally have a chance to write to you again. I am sitting on top of a mountain about 3,000 feet high. Yesterday, we fought for more than 12 hours to take this piece of ground. We had it rough again yesterday. There were 16 casualties in my platoon alone. Several dead. It was one of the bloodiest fights that we have had so far. I thought there for a while that I wasn't going to make it. My nerves are almost completely shot.

The Gooks shot a hole in our mg. gun and put it out of action. The Gooks had the Russian heavy mg. guns on this hill and several other automatic weapons. I thought for a while that we would never take the hill. I lost a lot more good friends.

We had just gotten a lot of new men to replace those that we lost last week. They were from the 9th Replacement Draft. We had several of them. They had been here only three days. You can see how lucky I have been. Ha Ha! I have been here almost 6 months.

I sure do envy Phillip. I wish it had been me that you were giving a bath in the tub. Oh! What I wouldn't give to be home with you. I love you so much, darling. Maybe some day we will be together again. I hope it will be soon, too.

I'm too nervous to write much. I hope I will be able to write to you tomorrow.

B. Company is having hell taking the hill next to us right now. We will probably move up before the day is over.

I love you very much, darling.

Your loving husband

??? N. Korea
June 19, 1951

Dearest Darling,

How is my sweet little darling today? In the best of health, I hope.

Well, darling, I am happy to tell you that I am finally off the line – for the first time in more than a month. Darling, this is really heaven compared to what we have had. The day before we came back, B. Company had 28 casualties going up a hill. They didn't hardly have any men left in their company.

We had chicken for supper last night and cool tea for dinner. Oh, man, it was so good! We make the tea and set the container in a clear dry stream to cool. Hava-no-ice! Last night we got 2 cokes apiece, the first I have had in Korea. The dam Army gets them all the time.

Also, our lieutenant got 3 quarts of whiskey in his ration and gave it to me. I had a couple of shots and I really enjoyed it. Also, I got a box of cigars from you, and that made the day complete. Darling, I thank you so much for them. I still haven't gotten the cookies that you sent before the last box of cigars. Don't know what happened to them.

I don't know how long I will be in reserve, but I hope to God that I will never see any more action. Most of my buddies have been wounded and are now back in Japan in the hospital. Sometimes I think they are lucky, and other times I know darn well that they aren't.

They set up a small P.X. here today. I bought a chocolate milk. It did taste funny. Oh, yes, I took a shower today for the first time in 2 ½ months. Ha Ha! Long time no shower, huh? Although I did take a couple of baths in the Pukhan River though.

How does the war situation look to everyone back there? Do you think it will last many more months? Sometimes I think this dam thing will go on forever.

Today has been a beautiful day, but I do think it will rain again before long.

By the way, I met a boy from Tennessee by the name of Cheatham. He said he didn't know if he had any relatives in Arkansas or not. I didn't talk to him but a few seconds. He was with 75 Recoil giving us supporting fire one day last week.

Your loving and affectionate husband.

N. Korea
July 6, 1951

Hello Darling,

How is my baby today? Fine, I hope. I couldn't be much better, I suppose.

I still haven't had any mail from you in 3 days, so naturally I am pretty anxious to hear.

I believe I told you about the show that they were going to have yesterday. Well, I got to see it, and it was wonderful. The show was "Hollywood Stars." There were Jack Benny who cracked jokes, Marjorie Reynolds a Paramount actress, Benny Venota a singer, Delores Gay a top dancer, Harry Kahane who was somewhat of a magician, and June Bruner who played a guitar. Errol Flynn was supposed to be there, but he became ill and went to the hospital in Taegu. It was a good stage show. I haven't enjoyed anything so much in a long time.

In case I didn't make it clear, they appeared in person.

I just finished taking a bath a little while ago. I sure do feel good now.

I haven't heard anything about the cease fire in the past few days, so I don't know what is going on.

I guess Phillip is having a lot of fun now that he can play out in the yard all the time.

Tell all of your folks that I said hello.

I love you very much, sweetheart.

Your loving husband,

James E.