

Letters Home from Cpl. Charles Pospisil, Amchitka, AK—August 1945

[Note: Letters as transcribed include some corrections to syntax, grammar, and spelling. Material of a personal nature has been deleted in deference to remaining family members.]

*August 5, 1945*--There hasn't been any mail leaving this place all week because of the weather and with little or nothing happening makes it difficult...Since there is no mail going out, none is coming in and the letter I promised to answer during this past week is still the last to arrive. Hope you understand...I'm feeling fine these days and working nights. It sure is miserable getting around. There are no such things as street lights or Pal's Cabin to duck in...Once you're out you stay out until it's time to come in...Haven't been to a show for quite some time. However, four of us have been enjoying Bridge sessions, and to say the least, no one is losing their shirts. It is all for pleasure...The war news is certainly encouraging, but the boys up here are certainly bitching about the discharge system our leaders evolved...Remember the statement made last Oct. or Nov. '44 in Washington, that it would be cheaper to keep men in the Army than out as civilians? Well, I'm beginning to wonder. I can't make heads or tails out of the plan installed. At the rate they're discharging men with 85 points or more it seems like it will take 'em 100 years or more to demobilize...The censorship up here is very strict. Mother wrote and told me something was cut out of one of her letters and I haven't any idea what it could have been because I write so little as is...Your slippers are still good and wearing well. (It will) Be some time yet before I wear them out. I use them only in the hut...Someday I'll be able to tell you all about the Aleutians, but sorry I can't now. It will have to wait. Hope you understand why writing is so difficult...Our chow is still very good and I expect to have chicken for tonight's dinner. Is the food shortage eased up at home? Well, this is it. Gonna sign off and should the weather break I'll stretch it a point and drop another line.

*August 8, 1945*--The mails came through and I hit the jackpot. Thanks to you...It's been raining for the longest time. Rain and then fog. Gee...I wonder what the sun is like...Speaking of the litter of pups up here. Why, hell, they caused more confusion as to who is gonna clean up after 'em, etc. One hut in particular each man built a fence around his bed to keep the hound from underneath their beds. Honestly, it's a scream. I suppose when the master isn't looking the pup takes a beating...We have one in our hut and have him pretty much under control, so it isn't too bad...I'm waiting to hear how you received the pictures I sent and how many of them you received. Just wondering whether the censor passed them all...I like your nerve, asking is this place is a "winter resort." Where did you ever dream that one up? Winter resort...cripes, no! All I can call it is "the Rock" and that's just being nice about it.

*August 11, 1945*--This week, of course, has been a bit different, with all the good news coming and going our way. At present, like the rest of the world, we're waiting patiently for the news we're all waiting for. It just can't come soon enough. One request in line, if and when it comes, send the headlines out this way. Please...The weather, of course, hasn't changed any and it's as bad as ever...The only bit of news from here is that a U.S.O. colored show arrived the other day and they're making their debut tomorrow. Doubt I'll go to see it, for there is only one pair of gams I'm interested in! Haven't received but one letter this week, dated August 2nd. Hope it's only the weather to blame.

*August 17, 1945*--Your letters of Aug. 6, 8, 5 and Vin's and Mom and Pop's and your birthday greeting cards arrived the 15th. The mail service is not what it used to be since the Army took over...Now that Japan has surrendered we're all wondering what is next with us. Rumors are a dime a dozen, or better, and sometimes I feel it won't be long before we reach home. Could this wish be true just once? I promise to keep you informed of all developments...I understand that the censorship will be lifted shortly, but don't know exactly when...There was a two-day holiday declared when word was received of Japan's surrender and those that could, took their hair down and let themselves go. There was a beer issue and most everyone drank his share...Went to the movies for the first time in quite a while and seen "Twice Blessed" with Stephen Foster, Gail Patrick, and the Wilde twins. It was a good show and brought a lot of laughs. Make it a must on your list. Lyn and Lee, the twins, have really got a lot of oomph...Glad to hear you received all the pictures I sent home. I have five more, which I will send to Dad or Vin only. They are somewhat extraordinary...and have a little story attached to them...Speaking of movies again, "The Clock" with Garland and Walker played here some time ago, but I wasn't able to see it. Can't give you a report...Didn't hear too much about the U.S.O. show that played all week. Usually there are some remarks either good or bad. Guess it didn't go over.

*August 19, 1945*--The weather is still very nasty and at this moment it's really raining. Any day now we expect to get moldy...There was a little surprise for me in the mails yesterday. Guess what...well, a boat came in and delivered your gift packages. Thanks once again for them. I'm trying hard to send home to you a souvenir of our pastime up here. Your chocolates are delicious and an excellent treat...Yesterday I did a little something different. I went to work for a couple of hours, guarding the U.S.O. troupe backstage. Don't be alarmed now; it really wasn't anything at all to it. It was a variety show, all colored...three men and four women, seven in all. It was a little bit of everything-singing, dancing, a pianist, and a master of ceremony who cracked a joke or two. It was all over at 8:30 pm and I reported back to the company and seen a movie in our mess hall-"Objective, Burma" with Errol Flynn. It was a long show and I enjoyed it very much. That's about all that happened to me over the weekend. I'm still working nights and expect to change soon...There has been no news or light shed upon us as to what will become of us. However, we're all hoping for the best...Everyone is waiting for the censorship to be lifted, for this was one theatre that was really strict. Probably won't come until after V.J. Day is proclaimed.

*August 21, 1945*--I can't complain, but I guess I'm getting nervous from the service. For the first time I let my sentiments known. Guess I can't get accustomed to the Army's way of doing things...Well, the weather is still about the same, although it is getting colder. One is beginning to hear the wind howl...I finished work this morning at 7:30 am, had breakfast, then repaired three flats by noon, for my daily exercise. Had noon chow, showered up and then a big surprise came up--the mails came through...Seen the picture "Tonight and Every Night" with Lee Bowman and Rita Hayworth, in our mess hall. It wasn't bad, but it wasn't good either. I believe you seen it. I understand "G.I. Joe: the Ernie Pyle Story" is coming up this way Sept. 7th. Gonna have to see it.

*August 22, 1945*--Started on day patrol work and finished up at 5:30. Had supper and thought I'd take in a show. Seen "Out of This World" with Ed Baker and Veronica Lake. Everyone that seen it yesterday

acclaimed it as a good show. Well, you want my opinion? It's a good comedy, but there were a good many comedies I've seen that were a lot better. However, it was a good night's entertainment...We're all waiting for the peace terms to be signed, to see what is going to happen around here. Everything is pretty much the same and anyone's guess as to when we will be leaving is a good one...It's raining pretty hard and a warm hut tonight feels very homey...Well, that is all of the chatter from this cold storage plant. They say nothing can go bad up here, so there is no doubt we're all coming home as good as ever.

*August 25, 1945*--Nothing new out this way, although the rumors are coming in better and better all the time. I'll tell you more about it later...Thursday evening I played a bit of bridge and all four enjoyed it--like always. What a game! Friday...well, that was really different. Yep, the sun came out for the first time in, well, let's exaggerate a bit and say 'years.' Anyway, it seemed that way. Yes, a perfectly beautiful day, except for the wind clouds. What's more, we had roast lamb for dinner and steak for supper. I felt like I could take on Louis myself...After chow, back in the hut and a regular bull session about this and that, but mostly when are we going home. 'Tain't funny, McGee. Well, the latest and hottest rumor has it we'll all be, let's say, evacuated within ninety days or thereabouts. Not 100%, but 95% anyway. Rumor has it as a reliable source of information. If that is so, we'll be civilians once again, before Easter...We're all hopin', wishin', prayin' it doesn't blow up into a big balloon and bust...Today being Saturday, it's still just another day up here. Finished up at 5:30 pm, had chow, showered up, and the rest of the evening I'll spend with you...

*August 26, 1945*--It was a beautiful day, with the sun shining practically all day. This is about the first time this has happened since I'm up here. The weather today was really something to write home about...Had a chicken dinner for a change, with all the trimmings, and we all enjoyed it very much. Don't remember whether I mentioned the roast lamb this week, too, was mighty good...Must tell you about the rain last night. That, too, was about the hardest hitting since I'm up here, with a terrible wind. I guess what they call a williwaw (gales of wind) is due any day now...It is rumored that censorship will cease in about a week or ten days now. Don't know whether it will be an advantage or a disadvantage for you!

*August 28, 1945*--This is the bad man from the Aleutians...Well, the mail service is just as bad as ever and your last letter was that of the 14th. All I can say is it's rough...plenty rough! Last night we had an orientation class, which was something like a radio program. Four men picked at random that were quizzed on national and international topics. It lasted quite a while and went over a lot better than the previous classes we had...Played a game of chess later in the evening and retired shortly after the news, at 11 bells...Today...well...just another day. Cloudy, windy, and typical Aleut weather. Beginning to get colder.

*August 30, 1945*--Nothing new out this way. No sign of anything breaking as yet, although crates are being made, to pack all equipment. Guess it will take until Xmas time anyway. at least until then...The rainfall is pretty heavy these days, with a constant mist and cloudiness...Oh, yes, have to tell you. I met a Pvt. Herb, who says he knew you. So, I asked him, "You mean you don't know her now?" to which he replied, "Well, it's been so long I don't know whether she'd remember me or not." Tell me...do you

know of any Pvt. Herb up in the Aleutians?

*August 31, 1945*--Nothing new out this way, although we do expect things to start popping after Labor Day...Yep, just like I said in yesterday's letters, about the mails. Today post cards, letters, all good tidings, tomorrow the bottom falls out. Can't understand the mails. First I receive your letter of the 23rd and later your letter of the 22nd. Maybe I'm due for some old timers...Came back from the show tonight and seen "Along Came Jones" starring Gary Cooper and Loretta Young. The picture was different in that Cooper didn't play the tough guy role. The acting was good, but I seen him and Young in a lot better pictures. However, we did enjoy it and it was a good night's entertainment. A bit of humor, comical plus a Western thrill...The Post Commander declared a holiday, Labor Day, but the Patrolman and M.P.s, I guess, will be on duty.