

Letters Home from Cpl. Charles Pospisil, Ft. Ord, CA USA-Feb. 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.]

Feb. 4, 1945--The weather out here is mild and in its rainy season. Had two days of sunshine, three of rain, and one of cloudiness in all five days that I have been here...We are being processed, being issued all new clothing and equipment. That's about all we've been doing all week...It's still hard to guess what way we'll be going, for we didn't get the clothing that fits the climate we're headed for. It will be summer here somehow soon...We have a million dollar soldier's club right on the post, which is a very nice place right on the Francisco Bay. They serve beer for 40 cents a pitcher, sandwiches (for) 5 cents, with pool tables and ping pong tables available for those that want to play...Salinas is the nearest town and Monterey can be seen at night, with its lights, from the soldier's club...Just as soon as we are instructed as to what we can take along, I'll be forwarding some more clothes home...We're marking time and there isn't much news to tell. Rumors are a dime a dozen and none worth mentioning. However, should I ship across, add these names to your list: Stanley-China = Rudy Burma = Joan Australia = Susan Germany...Did some washing today and repacked my new issues, which I got during the week. Yesterday I stenciled all of it with my serial number...Read the Sunday newspapers and had a nap this afternoon. It's been a very dismal day--a really blue Sunday.

Feb. 11, 1945--Guess you're wondering what's happening out this-a-way. Well, your guess is as good as mine. We are still awaiting orders and they are expected every day...We are fully equipped with all brand new equipment, including shoes, underwear, socks, field jackets, fatigues, web equipment, etc., and, in other words, everything new...During the week we had plenty of training and was required to go through the infiltration course, practiced abandoning ship overboard and small craft landing, such as we seen in Metedeconk many years ago. All in all it's been a hectic week and rough...Last night they shipped approximately 200 from our company alone to a destination unknown. They surely are piling up manpower out here and most of the recruits are young lads from 18 to 25, just in the Army 5 to 7 months...Well, so much for the Army. It's no good no matter how you try to figure it out...Been missing your mail terribly, for I haven't received a letter since I came out this-a-way. If you will address it to this station as addressed on the envelope, it will always follow me up. I didn't think I'd be here as long as I am and if our orders don't come shortly, it will seem ever so long that I heard from you...I have a package ready to send home to you, but won't be able to send it until the beginning of the week--perhaps Tues. or Wed...The weather here is strictly Californian--warm during the day, like an April or May day at home, with cold nights like Nov. or Dec. at home...I had a slight cold the early part of this week and felt very miserable, but managed to get by without reporting sick and feel much better today. Practically gone with the wind.

Feb 12, 1945--Today was the day, yep. I received your first letter and mighty glad to hear from you...First, the news of the day. Well, we moved to another company and now most of us that trained together at Robinson are all in the same company, which makes things more pleasant. Our address now is: Name Serial No.; Co M 2nd Regt; A.G.F. Repl Depot No 2; Ft Ord Calif...So far as shipping orders are

concerned, they still are in the wind. Rumors have it we'll be going east again! Other than that every (thing) else is the same...Your clippings in today's letter were very interesting, especially that of pay raises being granted. This makes it more probable that (?) will get theirs, too...Certainly sorry to hear of Scekel's misfortune. She was a very nice person and met her only a few times...Yes, we arrived in Frisco on Monday and spent the night at a U.S.O. lodging room. We slept after cleaning, showering up, etc., until the early hours of Tues, when we had to get a train connection to Salinas, then to Ft. Ord. Arrived just at the hour on noon Tues...Glad to hear all is OK at the office with you. Thought perhaps Carmany might have raised a bit of hell. Maybe he did and you ain't saying...No, I didn't use any of the B(?) stamps, only down at the shore, when we purchased 4 gals. Remember? That was the only time...I forwarded the package today, so if you will, have the articles cleaned and pressed. If Dad cares to, let him have the shirt. It is a 16 size collar--too big for me. The pants are too small for him I believe...Will sign off again and as things progress I will keep you posted, so until tomorrow, smooth motoring and the best of everything to you.

Feb 14, 1945--What a day, and what's more, I received your Valentine card--indeed, a lovely one...Well, what's new with you? Things are the same out this-a-way and still marking time. Believe, however, it won't be long--perhaps before the week is out--we'll be on our way...I also sent another package home yesterday. Hope it arrives safely--not that it is a whole lot, but we will be able to make use of it, or the men folks if they so desire...Guess the paper headlines are pretty big these days back home, just like they are out here. But still nothing that can bring us home again...Can't say there is any more to tell, so I'll have to sign off. Our lights go out at nine bells here and not much time is left. Thought a few words you would always welcome...So, until I write again, the best of everything to you, with happy motoring.

Feb 17, 1945--Wishing you the best of everything and hope all is well on the eastern front...The western front has been blooming with details all week, which kept me busy, today being the first day that any activity has ceased and I managed to get into town for the first time...Yes, I'm in Salinas and the welcoming by the weather is not very promising. It's threatening with rain, but being as stubborn as I am, I'm fooling it by preparing with a raincoat...My first stop was locating the U.S.O. here in town. A spacious one-story building with all the accommodations of a modern U.S.O. All except sleeping quarters. Hard to beat Chicago. Ha, ha, ha...The first thing that fascinated me here in Calif is its palm trees, and if I can locate a nursery, I'm forwarding one home to you, at any cost. C.O.D. Ha, ha, ha. Let it be to my good judgment. Ha, ha, ha...Getting back to what I did Thurs all day, then Friday, etc., it seems as though while waiting for orders, they are using us as a work battalion on all regimental details. So, (on) Thursday seven others and myself work(ed) in the dispensary, helping out processing the replacements being sent here to the depot on a physical checkup. We processed or checked over 1000 records, which is consider(ed) a very good day's work. Fuming with disinfectants, I have enough of dispensaries or hospitals. Ha, ha, ha. Friday 84 of us were detailed on a baggage detail and assisted three train loads, or 2100 troops, with their luggage, off to ports unknown...If there is ever a more gruesome picture than seeing a train load of troops move out with the band playing and hands waving, I don't want to see or hear of it. That happened three times Friday, 700 on each shipment...Friday night four of us were detailed as barracks guards and were up two hours on guard and two hours off, which gave us from Saturday noon off until Sunday night. Now that gets to the story of how I managed to get to town for

the weekend. I call myself lucky and we four were envied by many of the men...Received a letter from Dick Russell this week and by all reports he still is in Camp Celis -- (?) awaiting a discharge. Said his ulcers are coming along fine and if he ever felt better he'd think something was wrong...Received your Wednesday, Thursday and Friday letters and always happy to hear from you. Although I waited for the noon mail call, none was there waiting for my call. Don't ever tell me I keep you waiting. Ha, ha, ha...Well, the sun is beginning to come out again and perhaps I might get to see part of Salinas besides the high society cafes. Ha, ha, ha...So until I get to writing you about Calif, happy motoring and remember: Early to bed and early to rise makes a person healthy, wealthy, and wise. Auredvois (sic) until tomorrow, when I might bring better tidings. Ha, ha, ha.

Feb 18, 1945--Well, it's a beautiful day in Salinas and to pass the day I'm doing a little bit of everything...Starting off, after I finished writing yesterday I jay walked the balance of the afternoon and all I can say is Salinas is a prosperous little community with about 20,000 population--mostly Mexicano, Filipino, Chinaman, mixed with the whites. At 6 pm I stopped for a bite at the S.F. Restaurant and had fried oysters, vegetable soup, pie, and coffee. After chow I met a soldier friend and we passed an hour or so at the Lutheran Servicemen's Club and there I made sleeping reservations, which they had to offer for 50 cents. Not bad at all. We then went to a bowling alley and at about 8:45 we managed to get an alley and bowled four games. We finished at 10 pm or thereabouts and stopped for a few glasses of beer. All they served was bottled beer, so all in all I had four bottles, which were the last he had. The taverns close at 12 midnight, so before going to bed we stopped for a snack at the Town Talk restaurant and had a hot dish. Tasted good, but felt as though the prices were out of order. Too high for the quantity, although the quality was good. Ha, ha, ha...By 12:30 we were both well in the arms of Morpheus and had a good night's sleep...Got up at about 9 am, took advantage of the showers, then shaved and went out for breakfast...Had a full course breakfast--two orders to be exact. One with eggs and the other with cereal...Being a beautiful Sunday morning, we walked through the outskirts of town and then, believe it or not, spent an hour at the Lutheran church. Heard their sermon at noon, came back to the Lutheran service club and here I am. Surprised? Ha, ha, ha...I hunted around for some nurseries, to see if I could purchase a small palm tree, but with no avail. If I still have the chance, I'll try another town, perhaps Monterey or Carmel...Don't know what is in store for the balance of the day, however I'll have dinner in town and toward dark head back to camp, even though my pass allows me until 5:30 Monday morning...So far as the fairer sex is concerned, the little I did see is nothing to rave about. Nothing like we have in Maplewood. Ha, ha, ha...This is about all the news in a nutshell. It was different. It was quiet and above all it was reserved...Gonna sign off, so in the meantime take good care of yourself.

Feb 20, 1945--Back with a few lines, to let you know I'm still around...First, I hope you are well and things (are) going your way...After I came back to camp Sun Eve, at 6 pm, a notice on the bulletin board read that the following men will leave for T 4 training Monday morning, which means the fourth day of training of a schedule they have here for us while awaiting orders here...We left Monday morning for two days of bivouac and got back this (means?) for chow...It was nothing new, but just a review of what we had on previous bivouacs. Glad it's over and all I can say about it was that with the California evenings and mornings it was mighty cold. We used our overcoats to sleep in...One thing about it, we

simulated a perimeter defense out in the Pacific Island and they had us lying in fox holes for two hours, while snipers were trying to infiltrate our lines...Even trained dogs--quite vicious--were used in the problem. The terrain was that of an exact island, with plenty of underbrush and pitch dark in spite of a half moon...All in all, I'm glad it's over and whatever training day we have left over should be a lot easier...The mails were very good to me for I didn't receive any since Sat last. There were three for today...Surprised to hear that you and Elinor only went to a movie in Newark. Thought it was a N.Y. date. Glad to hear you both enjoyed the picture. Was that all you girls did? Ha, ha, ha...Getting back to your Valentine, which I sent, there is a little story attached to it. I sent it on its way earlier, and it wasn't but two days later I received it back, requesting a three-cent stamp on it. Can you imagine anything like that? It took just that much longer for you to get it...It's pretty hard to say what way we are headed. We've been trying hard to find out through channels, but no one seems to know. We trotted down a number of rumors, but all were without source...However, we are of the opinion should we be in the states when an armistice is signed with Germany--should it ever happen--we have a good chance of being discharged early. Ha, ha, ha...Alaska is a good bet, and so is the China coast and the odds are heavy in that direction. All in all, time will tell...We can't understand one thing. We have all our new clothing and equipment and yet we are here the longest of all replacements. All others who come here stay no longer than five days before they are on their way to the banana boat, as we call it out this way. Ha, ha, ha...It sure must be cold back home, with plenty of snow, according to your reports. Guess the groundhog was all wrong about his prediction. Ha, ha, ha...Say, I'll bear in mind about needing things, if any, however, I won't expect you to send any liquor. First, I'm not a drinkin' man--never was and doubt if I ever will be. No need in starting at this age. Ha, ha, ha. Should I ever need anything, I'll practice, as I always did, and let you know.

Feb 21, 1945--Another day, another dollar, and so it goes...and where? Nobody knows. Such is the day, another added to the Army roster...Do hope you're feeling fine and everyone at home the same way. Our weather is much more comfortable than yours these days, but I guess it won't be long before it really gets warm out this a-way...Haven't much news, for nothing is happening as yet, but I suppose when it does it will pour. Ha, ha, ha...Yep, all I can say is that I had an early day. It doesn't happen often and since it doesn't, I'll let you in on it...Got up at reveille, and after chow we reported for a luggage detail (241 of us). Transported 24 duffle bags from barracks to train and then dismissed for the day...Well, I tried hard to find something to do, so I managed to get another package off to you...Incidentally, if Dad can wear that one shirt, or if Vin can wear any of these articles, they are entitled to them. Many of them won't fit me. That one shirt I sent had a 16 collar and (I) believe it will fit Dad. He might wear it to work these cold days. The gloves are dandy for driving and if you can make use of them, go ahead...In the afternoon I took off for the beach, which is about four blocks away and reminds you of Beach Haven, with its sand dunes, only much higher, but the beach cannot compare to that of Beach Haven. There I basked in the sun and waded in the water for a short time only, for it was really too, too cold and (there was) a strong sea breeze. That made up the day's work or play and with all that time, thought I'd be able to drop a line or two. Ha, ha, ha. Tomorrow it will be different, for we are scheduled for T 6 training...Might add, no letter today; sort of looked forward to it...I was supposed to go to the post movies tonight, to see "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn" but postponed it until Thursday. Just wasn't in the mood. The book was quite popular...Know of nothing else, so I'll sign off and return again

soon. So, until then, the best of everything to you, and may the angels keep you safe and sound.

Feb 24, 1945--Do hope all is well with you, your health, your work, in short, everything...It being Saturday evening and in the company's day room, I can't find anything sweller to do than write a few lines to you...Our weather has been cool, but nice, and we all are a picture of health with our faces chopped up with wind burn. Yes, we've trained five days out of the six and being in the open at all times puts rosy cheeks on us all. Ha, ha, ha...The three days training Thursday, Friday, and Saturday was mostly a review about all infantry weapons, on how to use them most effectively, their care, etc. We also fired them one day...Finishing up for the week with a regimental parade at 5 o'clock, I had chow and retired to the day room for the balance of the evening...Things are pretty much the same out this-a-way and we're still awaiting word for shipment. However, we all feel within the next ten days will tell the story so far as any orders are concerned. It will be four weeks we are here, Tuesday 27th coming...The mails were good to me today, for only twice this week did I receive mail--Tuesday, three of your letters, and today three more. Your two airmail letters arrived this morning and one other in this evening's mail...Sorry to hear of Mother's falls and hope nothing develops from them. You must ask her to keep indoors during these wintry days, and if she feels a weak spell coming, to sit down and rest up...The moon came up early tonight, for at 6:30 pm it showed its full face. I just took one peek at it, for I'm really afraid of it. It always makes one feel a lot worse. Of course, it always depends on the situation. It makes me laugh, for that last sentence I quote ("It always depends on the situation") is a phrase that Lts. always use when giving a class in Inf. tactics. Here I am using it in a love letter. That probably makes you laugh--calling this a love letter, but go ahead...Gonna sign off and, so, may the best of everything be with you and the angels take good care of you while I'm away.

Feb 25, 1945--Good afternoon, just after devouring a good Sunday meal. I'm back to the day room and thought I'd occupy myself with you. It's a beautiful day out this-a-way, with a sea breeze that I know you would like...Do hope all is well with you, and hope mother is feeling better. If it's as nice at home as it is here today, you no doubt are out strolling with Susan. If not, you should be. Ha, ha, ha...Things are quiet on the western front. Went to bed when the lights went out last night at 10, and got up, breakfast after a good night's sleep. This morning I showered, shaved, wrote a letter home, had coffee, and about 10 am then went to the day room, smoked your pipe, and read the Sunday papers in a comfortable arm chair we have here. Just like home--a perfect Sunday so far, except you weren't here...Some of the men are playing pool, others writing or listening to the radio...The news is encouraging and it can't be long now before Germany surrenders, and even Japan--perhaps before Germany. If politics plays an important part in this conflict, and Germany holds out long enough, it's all possible Japan can be beaten before Germany...As for this afternoon, I'll spend it here and probably play some chess later on, and read a few magazines...Mother wrote me she received my income tax papers, so I told her to give them to you and if they are blanks to keep them, and if there is balance on them, which I owe for 1943, to just send me the figure, so I might know the balance...I wrapped a small package, which I'll send on its way early this week. They are G.I. sun glasses, which is an issue to troops going to the Far East, S.W. Pacific, etc. It is one pair of regular sun glasses and two pairs of detachable type--those that are worn on glasses. You might like them. Hope you do...This just about brings the news flashes up to date, so I'll sign off until a future date. Take care of yourself and try not to work too hard. Seldom, if any, thanks are

awarded for that.

Feb 26, 1945--Have a few minutes to myself, so I thought of nothing better than to drop a line or two to you. Do hope you're feeling your best and the same to the family...With February almost over I guess it's safe to say winter is well on its way out. Happy about that? Ha, ha, ha...Finished another day of training, and rather an interesting one. The entire day was spent in demonstrating Jap equipment, from clothing to firearms, and then taught how to say a few words in Japanese. Enclosed is a copy of it...It being a windy day, it still kept our cheeks rosy, and, of course, it always adds to our appetite...The mails were good once again and I received two letters today--those of the 16th and 21st. The airmail service, according to the date mark, is very poor. It took five days to arrive. How long does it take my letters sent via airmail? I might add, our mail service going out is very poor, which might add a day or two to the time. Everyone here complains about it...Our chow is good and I guess we can't complain. Of course, sleeping is another thought. You don't let me sleep. Ha, ha, ha...If you care to, just relay the important part of that Washington letter. You need not send it all. Just the information pertaining to the conclusion of the war and peace to come...Speaking of letters, we were informed as to what type of letters we should write when we get overseas. To be honest and outspoken and putting it in the same words as they told us, I quote: "Write mushy(?) letters; the mushier the better and the censor won't think a thing wrong." They are the type they want a service man to write. It's supposed to help morale...Can't give an account of the cutie situation, cause I haven't tried. Of course, the men seem to complain out here and say there is very little choice. Ha, ha, ha. Guess you're still safe...Can't understand that religious letter--you not knowing the person who wrote it. Best you did drop it. That type of stuff is all malarkey...This is all my chatter, so I'll sign (off). Take good care of yourself and I'll see to it that the angels be with you always.

Feb 28, 1945--Dropping in on a wing and a prayer. How are you? The very best, I hope. The weather is cool, but nice out this-a-way and things (are) beginning to break...First, it being the end of the month, we were paid today and the government already took out my allotment of \$22, so it will be in the mail, at home shortly. I'll write my mother about it the end of the week, or before, so you can pick it up and add it to our big account. Ha, ha, ha...Well, things are beginning to crack and (I) believe that before this letter reaches you I'll be on my way again. Don't know where, but it will be soon...Before I go any further, we were informed that our allotment wouldn't start until in March. However, they took it out in this pay. When I get overseas it should be \$35. That's what I made it out for...I'm gonna try to get off your little package tomorrow, if possible. I tried earlier in the week, but was too busy...There is a rumor we're going to P.O.E. in the east and if so I'll be home for a day or so, but it ain't certain. If so, I'll wire you, or phone, whenever I should get near. Don't bank or put any hopes on it, but should it happen that I go east, I'll try hard to reach you...I went to the dentist today, for a checkup, and they wanted to pull a wisdom tooth for me. I told them it didn't hurt or pain any, and (asked) if it was really necessary. They said it will in time and asked me to wait my turn.

So, in the meantime I inquire, from one of the G.I.s sitting next to me, if he had teeth pulled and he said, "Yes" and he's been coming here for treatments ever since. When I heard that I picked up my hat and ducked out.

Ha, ha, ha. Believe they're still looking for me. So far as I'm concerned, they'll have to strap me down before they do any extracting. Ha, ha, ha...This highlights the news of the day. Ha, ha, ha...No letter today, but I did receive one yesterday...Yes, should there be anything I want, I'll always let you know. So far, nothing as yet...Say, if Vin can make use, or anyone else in the family, of anything I send home, why that's what it's for. That's what they are for--to be worn around the house, or wherever they serve the purpose...Getting back to assignments, which I forgot to mention, is the fact that A.G.F. (Army Ground Forces) has us assigned to the rotation plan, which means replacing some from overseas, which is at least a bit encouraging, for you know you are replacing a live G.I. and not a corpse that's been put out of action for good. Ha, ha, ha. That is the sentiment expressed around here. Of course, it's all rumors, and to be taken for what it's worth...There are two shipments leaving shortly--one of about 59 and the other of about 90 and I will be in one of them and we will be out of here shortly...Well, these are the highlights of the day, so with no other news I'll sign off and keep you informed of any developments...Until I write again, Auredvois (sic) and may the angels keep you well for me.