


ENS ARTHUR BARNETT MCCOMB (TAD) 22 February 1945

22 February

Print the complete address in plain block letters in the panel below, and your return address in the space provided. Use typewriter, dark ink, or pencil. Write plainly. Very small writing is not suitable.

No. <u>ONE</u>	To <u>LIEUT. PETER K. MCCOMB, USNR</u> <u>U.S.S. CONCORD (CL 10)</u> <u>FLEET P. O.</u> <u>SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.</u>	From <u>ENS. A. B. MCCOMB, U.S.N.R.</u> <small>(Sender's name)</small> <u>U.S.S. FRANK EVANS (DD 754)</u> <small>(Sender's address)</small> <u>FLEET P. O., NEW YORK CITY</u> <u>22 FEBRUARY 1945</u> <small>(Date)</small>
----------------	--	---


(CENSOR'S STAMP)

DEAR PETE,
YOU'VE PROBABLY HEARD FROM MOTHER BY NOW AS TO JUST WHERE I AM AND WHAT I'M DOING, SO I WON'T EXPLAIN THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH BROUGHT ME HERE. THIS IS TEMPORARY DUTY, DESIGNED ONLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF GIVING ME PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE, SO I'LL PROBABLY BE BACK AT NOTRE DAME COME MID-APRIL.

THE "EVANS" IS A BRAND NEW DD, JUST ABOUT READY TO START OFF ON HER SHAKE-DOWN CRUISE. TO MY INEXPERIENCED EYE, SHE'S QUITE GOOD-LOOKING. INTO HER 384-FT HULL THEY'VE PUT MOST OF THE POWER OF A WORLD WAR I LIGHT CRUISER..... THEY'VE ALSO PUT A FEW MORE MEN THAN THE FIRST LIEUT. KNOWS WHAT TO DO WITH, ALTHOUGH COM. AND ORD. DIVISIONS ARE STILL COMPLAINING OF BEING SHORT-HANDED. I'M SLEEPING UP FORWARD IN THE C.P.O. QUARTERS; MY GEAR LOCKER IS DOWN BELOW IN THE FORWARD CREW'S QUARTERS..... TO FURTHER COMPLICATE MATTERS, WE ARE PROVIDING TRANSPORTATION TO OUR SHAKE-DOWN BASE FOR 2 ITALIAN 3-STRIPERS! IT SURE IS A FUNNY WAR WHEN YOU CAN WALK INTO THE LITTLE WARD-ROOM OF A UNITED STATES WARSHIP, AND FIND 2 "ENEMY" OFFICERS SITTING THERE PEACEFULLY. AMAZING!.....

GETTING THESE ORDERS TOOK ME OUT OF A 10-DAY LEAVE I HAD BEEN PLANNING ON, BUT I STOLE A MARCH ON THE NAVY BY WORKING IN A DAY OR SO IN N.Y.C. ON MY WAY TO REPORT ABOARD. LA LAWRENCE, YOU KNOW, IS WORKING IN A HOSPITAL IN THAT CITY, LEARNING TO BE A CAREER GIRL. SO I DID MY BEST WITH THE TIME AVAILABLE TO US. FRIDAY NIGHT WE WENT TO THE CENTURY ROOM AT THE COMMODORE AND HAD A BIG TIME. MAYBE IT WASN'T EVIDENT IN THE ALEUTIANS, BUT THE MORALE OF THE ARMED FORCES WAS RAISED 10% THEREBY.

V...-MAIL

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT PERMIT NO. 1

This V-Mail was written by ENS Arthur B. McComb to his brother LT Peter K.

McComb aboard USS CONCORD (CL 10). ENS McComb served TAD aboard FRANK E. EVANS February - April 1945.

At Williams College, I Arthur Barnett McComb entered the USNR V-12 program in July 1943. Then came USNR Midshipman's School at Notre Dame, Indiana, 6 June 1944 (D-Day) thru 10 August 1944, commissioning as ensign. I was an instructor in navigation at Notre Dame until September 1945, then Shore Patrol officer at Tientsin, China, from November 1945 to June 1946. (From my thought beginning, I knew my eye-sight wouldn't let the Navy assign me to sea duty.)

My first in-uniform taste of the sea was the temporary assignment to FRANK E. EVANS. My orders took me from South Bend to Norfolk, from where FRANK E. EVANS departed for Brooklyn. We were there for a week, including two days up Long Island Sound, around Montauk Point and back along the south shore.

Thence across the Gulf Stream alone to Bermuda, in real February - March weather. I soon learned ladder ascent-descent control from-to my quarters forward! My first and last dinner-chucking was one evening on that run. We spent a week in Bermuda, going out every day for sonar runs on a captive submarine, anchored in Great Bay every night, but there was no shore leave. (The V-Mail reminds me of the Italians who left us in Bermuda.)

We then spent several days convoying 2-3 supply or auxiliary ships to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. We operated from Gtmo, primarily anti-aircraft exercised, for probably three weeks. New Chevalier and other DDs were also there. I served observer duty several times on 44-mm platforms, and once on 20-mm right behind 5 inch turret No. 2 bang! Other times I was observer in CIC or on bridge, and once in the engine room. I stood JOOD watches. Of course the exec. had to keep bouncing me around to keep Washington and Notre Dame happy. We got shore liberty to Gtmo Officer's Club and eventually back to Brooklyn, where I brought my girl on board one afternoon. Then the train to South Bend. (Oh yes: while FRANK E. EVANS was coming up the East River, the exec. saw me outside improperly uniformed, and had to order me out of sight and into proper dress.)

I recall two officers from FRANK E. EVANS: [1] CDR Harry Smith, our skipper, whom I thought a model skipper. I remember his occasional friendly disagreements with the signal officer, LT Julius Smith Young, at mess, the captain having had a tour of duty, which I believe involved revising the signal manual! [2] LT Bill Platt, former All-American football player at Yale, and easy to talk to. I was his JOD more than once when he was OOD.

(From the Aleutians, my brother Pete in CONCORD moved toward Japan and fired the Navy's last shots of the war at the mainland.)

In the V-Mail, there is reference to Ruth Lawrence, who became my fiancée later in 1945 (by long distance from China). We were married 5 September 1946, and are still (2007) married. We have two children of whom we are very proud: David, who sent you my FRANK E. EVANS contact, and daughter Jean Brannigan here in Poughkeepsie.

Combined with the V-Mail, this makes a lot more than I could contribute for you. It doesn't raise the Navy's morale by 10% this time, but I've enjoyed it. Please give Ruth's and my good wishes to the FRANK E. EVANS shipmates at your forth coming reunion.

Arthur B. McComb
29 S. Randolph Ave.
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-5123