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Letter from Marseille, France, August 7, 1945

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7 August 1945
Marsville, France

Dear Dad & Mother;

I am slightly behind in writing this week but not without reason. You see I actually got a little work to do which will last about a week and it really is quite a relief to be doing something to pass the time.

Due to the nature of my work I am not living in Marsville for the present. Oh I still have my apartment up there but I am roughing it out in a tent about twenty miles from Marsville. This particular tent city is treeless and sandy and reminds me very much of the California desert. It is quite hot and windy and I might add dusty! It's quite impossible to stay anywhere near clean so we don't even try. This is one of the staging areas for troops going to the Pacific. They moved a Quartermaster Service Co of 175 men in down here to be disbanded - it was without an Officer so I was sent out to run the company and help in transferring the men out to other units. As soon as all the men are out I go back to Marsville. By the way this is a colored outfit but very good. They haven't given me any trouble and really are quite

working with them. So far I have transferred out about 122 of the men or about $\frac{2}{3}$ of them. Am wondering if Jennie and Jan got down there like they were planning and did Ted come too for a day or so.

I still don't believe I'll be able to get home before 1946 but not because I don't want to. If there was only something that would keep one really busy so that the time would go faster it wouldn't be so bad — but with nothing to do but wait to go home, really gets tiring. I managed to get some swimming trunks so I will occasionally go out to the beach. We have to go about twenty miles to a beach where we can go in the water even though we are (my apartment) only a few blocks from the sea. But right here at Marseille the water is filthy due to French living conditions. Of course the French swim right here but there are lots of things the French do that I wouldn't care to do. They really have filthy living conditions and seem to thrive on it. You wouldn't believe some of the things until you actually saw them. I don't believe they have any modesty at all.

I suppose harvest time is about over now back home. How much was the yield this year? And are they still doing most of it by shock-threshing or are more people using combines?

fish on your vacation at the lakes. Surely
was nice you could get away at least
a couple of days for a little fun, you
know all work and no play makes Jack a
dull boy - so you two people remember that.

By the way Dad have you taught Mother
how to play "42" yet?

Well I must close now and write another
letter - hope you are well and not working
too hard.

Love
your son
Ralph