

**Guam  
Sunday Morning  
8 December 1941**

**by  
Pvt. James A. Drolette**

transcribed by Cathy Drolette Sullivan from original document

The morning started off the same as any Monday morning on Guam December 8, 1941. That routine changed quickly for the one hundred and fifty Marines. Our Bugler had made his way through our quarters. His duty was to wake us, and on this morning he must have felt a little like Paul Revere. In his own way he passed the word that Pearl Harbor had been bombed. We were not surprised and looking back we obviously did not respond to this alarm. No word came down through the Chain of Command advising us that the Japanese would attack us at any moment. We arose leisurely as usual. Some went to breakfast others directly to their assignments. If you can believe it LtCol McNulty ordered a formation to attend morning colors. Sharp at zero eight hundred hours the troops stood at attention as the Color Guard raised our flag for the last time.

I did not attend but saluted from a distance with another Marine. We were both in Motor Transport and had early morning runs. Private First Class Charley Noonan drove the trash truck and Private Jim Drolette was supposed to drive to Agana.

The formation was breaking up and troops were scattering to the wings with no apparent sense of urgency. What ever the Commanding Officer had said to the Marines in that formation caused no alarm. Certainly not panic. Later I heard that something was mentioned that there would be the usual fifty percent liberty. You would have to be there to realize if "Godzilla" had just landed on the island our Colonel "says" there will be the usual fifty percent liberty, we would have believed everything would proceed at an orderly pace.

The Japanese single float sea planes came gliding in around eight thirty that morning. We will never know if they were on a schedule or not. They were late if they had hoped to catch us asleep or standing colors. Not so late that there were no targets. It is a sign of the times that on that beautiful little island located in the middle of Japan's ambitions that the CO did not spend precious time more prudently.

You would think given the reputation of The United States Marine Corps had in those days, "First to Fight", that while it was still dark and the old man knew that we had a war on our hands, Alarms would have sounded. Ammo broken out, our rifles would have been ready and the Japanese would have received a proper welcome.

Instead we played out a comic opera of how not to respond to the obvious. Strangely the whole operation was to become a series of unbelievable events.

There were nine of those single float seaplanes. Some came in with the sun and behind. The three I saw first, did not do that, nor were they as silent as a glider. These were Bi-planes and the wind whistled through their wing support struts and wires. I first heard that whistling sound as a boy in Oregon, watching the old World War 1 airplanes, as they barnstormed their way into our memories with loops and dives. It was an exciting sight, the enemy, just as sneaky as I had heard. The little silver bombs came hurtling by. You instantly know they will not hit near you and you watch as they strike the gourd and explode. Your eyes also note the Marines who are running in every direction. A bomb hit our radio shack. Another explosion and several Marines seem to be floating in air, doing a stumbling routine. I thought they all died. They all lived, some may still have shrapnel. A Sergeant whom I never did like yelled, "Head for the boondocks", or words to that effect. The planes miles around expending their ammo and left. It was right after that I recall high level bombers coming in. I don't think we were their target. We had on the island a Pan American Building, a radio station, a little Navy yard and our own facility. Their bombs were larger and were more of a worry because under the thick canopy of the jungle you let that they were aimed at the small of your back. It is quiet as we emerge from the relative safety of the jungle to a sight that did not restore much confidence. Ammo is broken out, we get our Springfield's Model 1903 bolt action rifles. Not the one issued in boot camp that we were so familiar with. These had been issued to us just before we left our stateside Command. They must have been stored in a cosmoline soup since the Great War. As a boy, my Father had told me a Marine is issued one rifle, and it stays with him his whole career. I have only been a Marine for eleven months and this is my third weapon. In the summer of "41" we received the Garand M1 and had to turn in our precious boot camp "03".

We were not an infantry organization that did not excuse what happened because before the war started we had conducted infantry exercises complete with machine gun drills. Perhaps the C.O. thought ours would be a futile effort and overruled all history, training and tradition by making the decisions that

followed. We were not ordered to report to anyone with few exception. The only actual word that came down the first day was something about not firing.

The periodic appearance of a lone enemy air craft, whose mission seemed to be to concentrate on destroying the island radio station. Some Marines went sight seeing to the highest point in our area, Mount Tenjo, I believe. Others stayed in caves, which really were boring. That night we met the real enemy, mosquitos, small but very aggressive and outnumbered the Japanese we were soon to see. The second day was more of the except by that time we expected more information an got even less. I spent my time sightseeing. That eveibg rumors began flying and some of us were given an opportunity to volunteer to go on our first patrol. Our Patrol Leader handed me a bar and a Browning automatic rifle and ask if I knew how to operate it. I told him I did if someone showed me how to accurate the bolt. They gave the bar to someone else. We went out and came the point, where it was rumored some Japanese had come ashore. Nothing so we start back, our imagination keeping us very alert, all to no avail. Having done my duty I retired to do battle with the ever dangerous mosquitos.

Sleep comes to everyone eventually, no matter how terrified.

We awake on the morning of 10 December to the sound of Naval gunfire, and more rumors. The good fight was being waged in downtown Agana. Guam was under Naval Government. The Governor of the island was a Navy Capt. McMillan. Marines on the island assisted in the administration of Guam, Agana and all the villages were loosely tied together by this dual control. The Guamanians had their civilian governmental hierarchy and things, at least on the surface went smoothly. At each village in the outlying area a marine acted as the law and a Corpsman served as Health Director. There was a Marine Officer in Agana who was the Chief of Police, a Sergeant was The Brig Warden. A small force of Marines served under their direction.

The only organized resistance was the Guamanian National Guard. It was a constabulary force. A Navy Chief Lane was their organizational and tactical leader. During the Defense of Guam I had always hoped that someone who knew the overall picture would tell the story.

It is estimated than no fewer than thirty Japanese ships ringed Guam and five thousand troops were landed on the first day. All I really know is that somehow as the morning progressed, I noticed Marines were forming into a long file of which I became a part. We moved, we hit the deck, a stray shell from a cruiser

or destroyer some say. We arrive at a point overlooking the road which was the approach from Agana, leading to our compound and the little village of Sumay. I cannot remember if I could actually see anything or not. The word passed to strip our weapons and throw everything as far as we can, into the jungle. It is over and rumor has it that we would have really trapped the Japanese in the classic ambush if the marine gunner who was to sprang the trap could have gotten his weapon to fire. Seems that before that could happen it was noticed that the lead vehicle carried one of our Marine Corps Officers who carried a white flag.

The long file reversed its route and we returned to our base. The colors were brought down for one last time at an emotional ceremony. We returned to our quarters and it was not long before the Japanese arrived. Our quarters were old Officers homes and they were really tropical houses located on the golf course which surrounded the compound.

We could hear sporadic rifle fire and could see that Marines were emerging from their quarters and being directed to sit down on the ground. The rifle fire discouraged anyone from wanting to leave from our building so I volunteered. Never will I forget the look on the little Japanese soldiers face, whose bayonet looked bigger than his rifle. I found myself walking around this little fellow rather than by him.

They stripped us and had us sit in a group. Somehow bottles of Four Roses Whiskey showed up and were passed around. There was nothing orderly about the surrender. Although I have mentioned Marines, there were more than one hundred and fifty Navy Personnel on Guam. We had a complete Naval Hospital and Dental Support. A small Naval vessel was anchored in the bay. Every individual has a different story to tell. Most managed to be captured without incident and it would be thirty days before almost everyone turned themselves in. The main group of Marines which I was apart experience a few tense moments on more than one occasion. That first afternoon while sitting on the ground some ground fire broke out. Shortly after that a Japanese war plane flew over and our captor's waived their Rising Sun Flags with a great deal concern out of fear that the aircraft would return the fire from the ground. It turns out that one of our Marines decided not to end the war without firing a few rounds for The Glory of the "Corps".

We heard so many rumors that first afternoon that you could take your pick. Even after we ere allowed (to) put our uniforms on, there was great concern what

the Japanese planned to do with us. They finally gave us our first rice ball with the sour center. They loaded us on trucks and put a couple of guards in with us. The only problem was they fixed their bayonets. Our driver lost control of our vehicle and jumped a water pipe line which almost tipped us over. The soldiers bayonets were the most dangerous during that wild ride lucky no casualty's. We arrived at the Naval Hospital in Agana and for a couple days life was almost normal. Then we were moved to the Catholic Church and that proved to be our last address until we boarded the Argentina Maru on 10 January 1942. For about twenty eight days we were given a ringside seat to the spectacle of how the Japanese occupations forces operated. They paraded the same troops around and around the square until we recognized the same units marching by. They marched is to a demonstration area and gave us a look at small until tactics Japanese Army style. Actually some of their troops were from the Imperial Navy including the initial landing force. There were horse mounted cavalry, drawn artillery units and mechanized units.

Perhaps their objective was to establish some credibility. They lost no opportunity to draw our attention to how our position in life had changed. Early on we were sent on searches to find the weapons and parts which were unceremoniously scattered in the jungle. There were burial parties of those who had been killed during the assault. Ask anyone about those days and one of the first topics might be food. The rations we received during that twenty eight day period were inadequate to say the least. I learned a lesson or two during this time. One if you fee prisoners a little on a regular basis they will become so dark that they are not the physical threat which would require a large contingent of guards. Two, food becomes an obsession and you begin to plot and plan on how to get it. The situation was not bleak, many Guamanian friends were permitted to bring food to the POW's. What a strange sight to see this scene played out. The reality was not to be ignored, Japan had kicked our ass and there was nothing we were going to do about it. The time for bravado was over and the time for perseverance was upon us. The ironies of war are seldom subtle. They are embarrassingly noticeable. The Japanese might be small and wear glasses, but there seems to be nothing wrong with they ability to wage war.

Rumors has it that we are leaving, the Japanese are no better keeping secrets than we are. To confirm all the speculation some of our Sailors and Marines turn themselves in. They tell us that we were being removed from Guam and any Americans found on the island after we departed would be decapitated. The western mind is a practical mind. Better to surrender than to take a chance that the Japanese are bluffing. We are glad to see them, their stories breathe new

life into us. Things happen fast now, the rumor is true. The short launch trip to the small Japanese luxury liner places us on her port side. Now we are all mixed together, civilians, Marine, Sailors we climb the ladder, cross over to the starboard side. The sight of her main salon with tables set and crystal chandeliers hanging down is a short one, we keep moving aft. Our fantasy about sumptuous quarters is dashed. We are placed in steerage not to unlike the accommodations my Grandparents had when they came to America from Palermo, Sicily. To the non world traveler it takes only four days by a fast ship to reach the Inland Sea. My Marine Corp Recruiter promised travel adventure and no bed of roses. His promise has remained in tack. I never knew that the Navy fed better than the Army until our first meal aboard the Argentina Maru. White rice and a light gravy with onions. To this day it remains the best meal I have ever had. Over the years prayers have been most apparent during times of stress involving fear. The thought of one of our own torpedoes exploding against the hull caused me to consult with God several times during our dash to the Islands of Japan. When you are stowed like cargo below a hatch your imagination does you no favors. You can imagine our relief when the sensation of high speed on open waters disappears and is replaced by the calm, gentle motion of a large ship in quiet waters. We have arrived at our destination the Inland Sea. The anchor is lowered at a point close enough to the little town that will be our first solid ground belonging to the enemy. There will be no rescue here. Our first look at Japan is an unforgettable one. The coast is gray and foreboding to match the equally somber sky. The Japanese have a flair for the dramatic. Sometimes of course an inept person can be responsible for the drama. Whatever the reason the decision to debark us after dark was bad enough but to overload the little ship assigned was almost fatal to take us ashore. Our numbers made the little ship top heavy. Nothing is more frightening than the feeling of complete helplessness to prevent a ship from capsizing. If we were not already number with cold from the wind and chill factor, a disaster might have followed. Some how the Skipper reversed his engines in time to back away from the larger Argentina Maru and our small vessel moved away.

The shore line loomed heard and were were soon tied up and ordered ashore. It is around midnight and the billing we are in offers some shelter from the cold and wind. There are some who would say the shelter hardly helped. Five days before the coldest day might be sixty five degrees, the temperature the night we arrived in Japan was lower than that. Our first meal was bread and soup. The bread was cold as the night, very doughy and delicious. So far our mode of transportation had been better than our accommodations. Consistent with that

observation our short ride from the sea coast to Zentsuji proved to be better than our night in our new home.

Zentsuji was the perfect place for a POW Camp. Situated on the Island of Shikoku and facing the Inland Sea. We were located within the compound of an Army Calvary Recruit Training Center. We were right on the edge of the camp and next to a shrine.

The Marine Corps had taught me something about regimentation and discipline. My tour with the Japanese Army would hone those skills, to a sharper edge. The Japanese taught us how to bow. That is the final surrender of civilian ways. A salute carries with it a form of mutual respect. Bowing is the act of giving in. The town of Zentsuji was large enough to be on the map and over the years to come it became a (illegible???) town of sorts. Some of us adjusted quickly and with ease. Others fought it long and hard. In the end all accepted their situation with a certain dignity which gave us a new identity. When you surrender your left with little self esteem.

The first morning was the last morning anyone slept late. We had arrived so late that we were allowed to get some rest. This is as good a place as any to say if every Prisoner of War had been treated like we were treated at Zentsuji there would be no horror stories. The working parties provided diversions for us and a source of information for those who remained inside the camp the entire war. We were given a glimpse into the past. Things were primitive but not unlike rural life anywhere deepening upon our origins we Americans found agricultural Japan a strange combination of ancient and modern oriental methods and culture. If you were not fascinated by what you saw you were in danger of missing a great adventure. We had the four seasons. We looked forward to the changes. Life settled down to a routine that we hoped would continue.

## Part 2

For those who knew how or thought they did, Poker served as a major pastime, during non working days or off hours. I would like to know how much money was won and lost, yet never collected. The promise made to so many was when we get to the "states". It is hard to imagine anyone innocent enough to believe that their old gambling buddy would pay off. Who knows? There were other ways to pass the time. We had some books and there were other card games, hearts and bridge were very popular. A good friend of mine taught me how to be his partner in bridge. Poor "Slick" Slocum had to have the patience of Jobe. I was

always trumping his winners in spite of me, he was good enough to win and winning often had a sweet reward. The Japanese love (sweets) sugar to be exact. The Army bakery next door to us allowed our own Marine Corps and Navy bakers a change to continue with their trade. When they started making doughnuts everyone seemed to gamble on the their ration of doughnuts. Slick and I would play for doughnuts and we would win more than we lost. You would have to appreciate our preoccupation with food to understand the lengths we would go to obtain and prepare food. The results would hardly make culinary history but make high marks for innovation and imagination. I cannot forget sugar. Sugar was like gold. It was highly marketable item. If you could get more sugar than you needed or could store, you had power. Like cigarettes, you could use these items to get your laundry and mess gear cleaned by the month or just sell or trade.

Corporal Newton, United States Marine Corps knew the value of sugar. He risked everything to get it and almost lost everything. When they caught him, he was stuck underneath the fence. His discovery by the patrolling Japanese sentry created a night to remember. The lights came on, in the barracks and the loud, gruff voices of the guards brought us out of our sound sleep. "Stand by your bunks for roll call." Our Room Leader commanded "Bango" or count off! Ichi - Nee - Son - Shi and on down, all accounted for! Then the guards came up to each of us and felt our bodies. Some not in our squad bay, but a few elsewhere in the building were hot and sweaty. The clever Oriental's mind figured it out. Those people must have ben the ones who got away. Corporal Newton spent a long time jail learning a new trade, how to weave sandals. When we were finally reunited, Corporal Newton had not lost his defiance or sense of humor, just the ability to talk fast. Seems they did not allow prisoners to speak while in civilian prisons. The same thing happened to Baggett. He slapped the guard who had slapped him first. He could barely speak when he returned. Newton and Baggett should have started a shoe factory when they were repatriated.

I remained at Zentsuji until the war ended. Some stayed, others were transferred out to less desirable addresses and employment. Hokkaido the Northern Island with its coal mine, the larger cities on the docks, stevedoring. I would love to hear their experiences again. Those of us who remained at sleepy rural Zentsuji would see three years and eight months pass us by before the almost unbelievable end. No one thought we had a chance of surviving unless a miracle took place. We had grown accustom to being Prisoners of War. But not to the thought of what the Japanese would do to us as their final days approached.

We all tend to paint ourselves a dark picture when we conjured up what could happen in times of stress. It was a classic ending for those of us on the working parties.

A Stevedore has in common something which transcends languages. Stevedores all like a break from working. Everything is moved in Japan by manpower except extremely heavy objects. If it could be lifted by six Japanese and one person could get underneath, that person would become a human mobile floor lift. While six others balanced the load. The one person moved the load from one end of the loading dock to the other. We also made up trains by pushing box cars together and then pushing the hooked-up box cars down the track. This made sense to the Japanese because they did not have enough switch engines to do the job.

We did a lot of Stevedoring and learned, never say never. At first when we talked about where we should draw the line and refuse to move war material. No scrap iron, no ammunition, no military equipment. We never even talked about submarine batteries and had we, it would not have made any difference. When it came right down to the tense moments of arbitration, we always lost. We always found ourselves loading or unloading some war related material that was on our list. Towards the end of the war I suppose the reason for not arguing with our captors was lack of interest.

Anyone could tell the Japanese were losing the war, their will and their ass. Our small fighter bombers were all over. Striking targets of opportunity, like trains after dropping all their bombs. Most large cities had already burned to the ground. You could stand in the center of any town or city and see the distant hills. Total destruction is a word that we learned would only be applied to places like Hiroshima. For all practicality purposes the massive fire storms caused by conventional raids were destructive enough to qualify for total destruction. For a short period of time we were not allowed to work in the coastal city of Takamatsu. The fire bomb raid that destroyed Takamatsu was our most personal experience with air power. We had been working on the docks at Takamatsu for years.

Our relationship with "Pee Wee" the Dock Foreman was almost affectionate. He was such a little liar. I don't mean that in a derogatory sense. "Pee Wee" was in the unenviable position of showing who was boss. The cargo had to be moved on schedule. Time frames were critical. If we made him look good, he was grateful even if he couldn't show it. Sometimes the pressure would become too much and everyone would lose their temper. The promise of a break, after the

next job, was just the “carrot.” The wily little Dock Forman would dangle before our eyes, the American Sailor Boatsman Mate Blooma who usually lead our working party had the honor and distinct pleasure of dealing directly with “Pee Wee.” I cannot tell you for certain, but I’m quite sure that when Pee Wee finally got home each night he was more exhausted from negotiations with “Blooma Son” than he was tired from his contribution towards the war effort. It is important to realize that after victories Pearl Harbor, Philippines, Wake, Guam, Hong Kong, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, etc the average Japanese really believed that nothing could stop them. No sacrifice was too great to support their new status in the eyes of the world.

Our remote island of Shikoku, with its rail system connecting the towns around the island were vital. Rice, Soy Beans and other staples were grown and shipped from the ports and loading docks. Although we numbered hardly a hundred on working parties, our efforts were substantial, sorry to say.

I forget the figures but we were divided into groups of ten, twenty, thirty men. All of these arrangement were the responsibility of the Zentsuji Camp Commandant and Chief Lane who conferred with the Senior American Officers.

Story did not continue from here....

IN REPLYING ADDRESS  
THE MAJOR GENERAL COMMANDANT  
AND REFER TO No.

307861  
AY-280-hn



HEADQUARTERS U. S. MARINE CORPS  
WASHINGTON

15 January 1942.

My dear Mr. Drolette:

From the latest information which has been received it appears that your son, Private James A. Drolette, U. S. Marine Corps, was stationed on the Island of Guam at the time it was attacked by Japanese forces on December 7, 1941, and as his name does not appear on any casualty list thus far received it is probable that he is now a prisoner of war.

The Major General Commandant appreciates your anxiety and directs me to inform you that the Department of State is making every effort to obtain information regarding the location and welfare of prisoners of war. As soon as any information is received you will be promptly notified.

Sincerely yours,

EMMETT H. SKINNER,

Lieut. Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps.

Mr. James A. Drolette,  
26 S. Almansor Street,  
Alhambra, California.



# THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

## NEWS SERVICE

RELEASE SUNDAY NEWSPAPERS, February 22

### TREATMENT OF AMERICAN PRISONERS AND INTERNED CIVILIANS IN JAPAN

Washington, D.C., February 21 -- First detailed reports from Japan relating to treatment of American prisoners of war and interned civilians were received today by the American Red Cross through the International Red Cross in Geneva, and made public by Chairman Norman H. Davis.

Dr. Fritz Paravicini, International Red Cross delegate in Tokyo cabled to Geneva under date of February 17 as follows: "According to letter dated January 25 from Captain MacMillan, ex-governor of Guam, 355 war prisoners from Guam are in Camp Zentsuji, Skikoku since January 16. In addition 134 civilians with 13 Catholic priests and bishop from Guam sent to Kobe, January 23."

The message continued: "Japanese soldier's ration provided to prisoners of war and treatment good -- only request, more tobacco and toilet articles."

The Prisoners of War Bureau of the Japanese Government at Tokyo notified the International Red Cross that the following foodstuffs were given to interned civilians: "Per day, at present, is as follows: meat (beef, pork, ham or liver) and fish 350 grams each; fresh vegetables, soup, fresh fruits and 690 grams of bread; jam, tea with cream and sugar. On Sundays, one egg and coffee added."

Another cablegram communicated by the Japanese authorities dated February 15 with relation to treatment of American civilians interned in Japan, reads as follows: "For the entire duration of the present war, the Japanese Government will apply the Articles of the 1929 Geneva Convention on prisoners of war also to non-combatant internees of enemy countries, on the condition that belligerent countries do not submit them to physical labor against their will."

"On the other hand, the Japanese Legation at Bern," an International Red Cross cable states, "assures us that enemy internees in Japan benefit from conditions more favorable than those of the above mentioned Convention, because apart

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2/25/42

from the furnishing by the authorities of bread, butter, eggs, meat and coal, internees can likewise receive provisions and clothing from third persons.

"Visits from families are possible, thanks to the proximity of the places of internment. Medical examinations and hospitalization for the sick are provided. Possibility of reading Japanese newspapers, using the radio and going out, if required conditions are fulfilled."

Chairman Davis stated that the Red Cross has not been advised how many American civilians are interned in Japan. Also no word has been received through the International Red Cross of the number of prisoners of war and civilians from Wake Island.

In answer to other requests from the American Red Cross, the International Red Cross cabled it was endeavoring to obtain a delegate in Hong Kong, China, in order to receive reports on the welfare of Americans there.

Upon the request of Chairman Davis, the International Red Cross is negotiating for the appointment of a delegate in Manila to report on the welfare of Americans in the Philippines. The International Red Cross reported to Mr. Davis, however, that "communications are yet difficult with Manila."

# # #

IN REPLYING ADDRESS  
THE MAJOR GENERAL COMMANDANT  
AND REFER TO NO.

307861  
AY-280-hbb



HEADQUARTERS U. S. MARINE CORPS  
WASHINGTON

MAR 6 1942

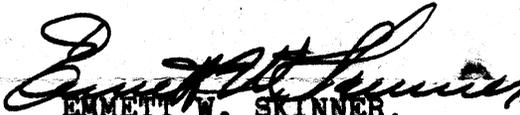
My dear Mr. Drolette:

A copy of the first report received through the International Red Cross, concerning the treatment of American prisoners of war in Japan, is enclosed for your information.

As your son, Private James A. Drolette, U. S. Marine Corps, was stationed on the Island of Guam at the time of its seizure by the Japanese, I hope this report may be of some comfort to you.

Should we receive any further information concerning your son, it will be relayed to you promptly.

Sincerely yours,

  
EMMETT W. SKINNER,  
Lieut. Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps.

Enc: (1)

Mr. James A. Drolette,  
Pac-Hy and Park Street,  
Grants Pass, Oregon.

HEADQUARTERS U.S. MARINE CORPS  
WASHINGTON

23 April, 1942.

My dear Mr. Drolette:

The Department of State has received the following cablegram from the International Red Cross at Geneva, Switzerland, giving the report of conditions observed upon a visit to a Japanese camp for prisoners of war:

"HAVE VISITED CAMP FOR PRISONERS OF WAR ZENTSUJI MARCH 12 ACCOMPANIED BY AID FROM THE INFORMATION BUREAU AND THE JAPANESE RED CROSS STOP LARGE ISLAND OF SHIKOKU IN THE NORTH NEAR INLAND SEA FERTILE PLAIN BETWEEN HILLS COVERED WITH PINES GOOD CLIMATE NO ENDEMIC DISEASES STOP MARKET TOWN OF ZENTSUJI WITH 25000 INHABITANTS NEARBY STOP CAMP COVERS SIX ACRES SURROUNDED BY BARBED WIRE AND A WOODEN FENCE TWO ARMY BARRACKS TWO STORIES HIGH WELL VENTILATED 12000 CUBIC METERS IN ALL STOP CAPACITY 500 PRESENT NUMBER 374 STOP ONE ENGLISHMAN FROM SHANGHAI TWO DUTCHMEN FIVE AUSTRALIANS AND THE REST AMERICANS OF WHOM EIGHT ARE FROM GILBERT ISLAND TWENTY FROM WAKE AND THE REST FROM GUAM STOP 45 OFFICERS 10 DOCTORS TWO DRUGGISTS ONE DENTIST STOP BARRACKS RECENTLY DIVIDED INTO ROOMS OF FROM ONE TO FOURTEEN CAMP BEDS EACH HAVING FIVE BLANKETS A PILLOW "UN MANTEAU COUVERTURE" (COUNTER-PANE) MATTRESS FOR OFFICERS STOP HEATING BY MODERN STOVES STOP DAILY RATIONS 300 GRAMS OF BREAD 300 RICE 160 WHEAT PLUS POTATOES SWEET POTATOES GREEN VEGETABLES FISH EGGS ETC TOTAL 3200 CALORIES STOP MEAT SUGARED FOOD AND IN THIS SEASON FRUITS ARE RATHER RARE STOP YOUNG AND ACTIVE PRISONERS ARE LOSING WEIGHT OLD AND IDLE PRISONERS GAIN WEIGHT STOP COOKS CHOSEN FROM PRISONERS WORK IN SEPARATE KITCHENS WHICH ARE LARGE AND CLEAN STOP TOBACCO RATION IS 10 CIGARETTES PER ONE TO THREE DAYS ACCORDING TO RANK STOP CANTINE ALMOST FINISHED STOP CLOTHING SUFFICIENT FOR THE MOMENT BUT 120 PAIRS OF SHOES REQUESTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE DAILY LAUNDERING GOOD HYGIENE LARGE HOT JAPANESE BATH DAILY FOR WORKERS AND WEEKLY FOR OTHERS STOP LATRINES CLEAN AND ISOLATED STOP INFIRMARY IN BARRACKS MILITARY HOSPITAL NEARBY VISITS FROM JAPANESE DOCTORS THREE TIMES A WEEK MONTHLY INSPECTION STOP 15 WOUNDED IN THE INFIRMARY OF WHOM 7 WOUNDED BY BOMBS AND ONE WAS AMPUTATED ABOVE THE KNEE ALL ARE GETTING ALONG WELL NO DEAD STOP AMERICAN DENTIST WANTS TO PRACTICE WE WILL PROCURE INSTRUMENTS FOR HIM STOP PRISONERS WISH BOOKS EQUIPMENT FOR SPORTS AND GAMES PIANO TYPEWRITERS STOP PROTECTING POWER WILL TAKE CHARGE OF THAT STOP RELIGIOUS SERVICES CONDUCTED BY A MINISTER WHO IS ALSO A PRISONER STOP 200 PRISONERS WORK VOLUNTARILY TO CLEAR NEARBY HILL FOR POTATOES SWEET POTATOES WHEAT STOP SATISFIED WITH THIS WORK PAID 60 TO 90 SEN A DAY ACCORDING TO RANK STOP NECESSARY WORK IN CAMP PAID 15 TO 35 A DAY STOP POSSIBILITY OF SAVING 5 TO 7 YEN A MONTH STOP PREPARING TO ORGANIZE PAID WORK IN THE TOWN STOP OFFICERS RECEIVE SAME PAY AS THAT OF CORRESPONDING RANK IN THE JAPANESE ARMY STOP

23 April, 1942.

RECOMMENDED TO PROTECTING POWER THE ONLY CIVILIAN INTERNEE 5 WOUNDED  
AND 5 AGED WITHOUT MEANS STOP 4000 DOLLARS DEPOSITED BY PRISONERS STOP  
PRINCIPAL NEED IS THAT OF CORRESPONDING WITH FAMILIES LETTERS NOT SENT  
IN VIEW OF LACK OF COMMUNICATIONS STOP AT BEGINNING OF MARCH OFFICERS  
AUTHORIZED TO SEND PERSONAL MESSAGES TO THEIR FAMILIES IN AMERICA BY  
RADIO BUT REMAIN WITHOUT ANY ANSWER STOP PRISONERS WISH TO RECEIVE FINAN-  
CIAL ASSISTANCE BY CABLE FROM THEIR FAMILIES THROUGH THE INTERMEDIARY  
OF THE U. S. NAVY DEPARTMENT OR THE RED CROSS STOP HAVE ALREADY ASKED  
BY RADIO FOR PACKAGES OF PRESERVES MEAT FRUITS SWEETS AMERICAN TOBACCO  
STOP NO COMPLAINT ON SUBJECT OF TREATMENT DISCIPLINE AND COOPERATION  
ARE EXCELLENT STOP COMMANDING OFFICER AND OFFICERS COMPETENT AND FRIENDLY  
PRISONERS SENSIBLE GENERAL IMPRESSION VERY GOOD STOP"

Realizing your anxiety for news of this nature because  
your son, Private James A. Drolette, U.S. Marine  
Corps, is probably a prisoner of war, this report is  
furnished with the hope that it will in some measure alleviate  
your anxiety regarding his welfare.

Again assuring you that any information received regard-  
ing your son will be transmitted to you, I am

Sincerely yours,



EMMETT W. SKINNER,  
Lieut. Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps.

Mr. James A. Drolette,  
Fac-Hy & Park St.,  
Grants Pass, Oregon.

IN REPLYING ADDRESS  
THE MAJOR GENERAL COMMANDANT  
AND REFER TO NO.

307861  
AY-296-bej



HEADQUARTERS U. S. MARINE CORPS  
WASHINGTON

21 May, 1942.

My dear Mr. Drolette:

The Commandant, U. S. Marine Corps, directs me to inform you that a partial list of American prisoners of war captured by the Japanese Military Forces has just been received from the Prisoners of War Information Bureau, through the International Red Cross. This list contains the name of your son, Private James A. Drolette, U. S. Marine Corps, which definitely confirms the fact that he has been captured by the enemy and is alive. The only additional information given is that the place of internment is Zentsuji, Shikoku Island, Japan.

Your local chapter of the American Red Cross will furnish you with information regarding the best method of sending mail or packages to your son. However, if for any reason the Red Cross is unable to furnish you with full information, you should write to the Prisoners of War Information Bureau, Office of the Provost Marshal General, War Department, Washington, D. C.

Sincerely yours,

C. P. LANCASTER,  
First Lieutenant, U. S. Marine Corps.

Mr. James A. Drolette,  
Pac-Hy and Park Street,  
Grants Pass, Oregon.

WAR DEPARTMENT  
SERVICES OF SUPPLY  
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST MARSHAL GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

July 30, 1942

Dear Sir or Madam:

The Provost Marshal General directs me to advise you that special arrangements have been made by the American Red Cross to send a boat to Japan, expected to leave San Francisco on or about August 15, 1942.

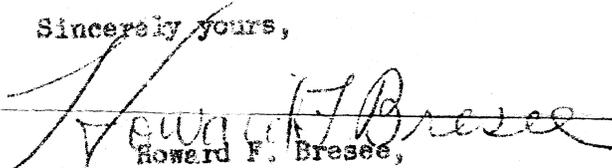
As the next of kin of a prisoner of war, perhaps you may want to send a package to him. Suggested articles that may be included in such a package are: tobacco, cigarettes, pipes, soap, tooth powder, tooth brushes, shaving material, socks, underwear, gloves, handkerchiefs, mufflers, small sweaters, shoes, playing cards and small games, such as checkers, chess and cribbage. No food or articles in tubes (such as toothpaste or shaving cream) may be sent at this time. Owing to censorship difficulties, the inclusion of food will result in confiscation of the package. No writing or printed material may be sent. No medical supplies may be included in your package, but vitamin tablets in cardboard containers may be sent. No glass containers will be permitted.

Your package should not exceed eleven (11) pounds gross weight; dimensions not over eighteen (18) inches in length nor forty-two (42) inches length and girth combined; should not be sealed and should be such as will permit postal inspection.

Immediate action in this matter is suggested as it is doubtful if packages reaching San Francisco after August 12, can be dispatched on the boat leaving for Japan.

There is inclosed the proper address of the prisoner which should be used on your package. You should present this letter to your local postmaster at the time of mailing your package.

Sincerely yours,

  
Howard F. Bresee,  
Lt. Col., C.M.P.,  
Chief, Information Bureau.

1 Incl.  
Address of Prisoner

Henry Turk  
 Calif Ore Power Co  
 Prospect, Ore  
 10 Oct 4

# Instructions Given for Start

Instructions to students in all grades of the Grants Pass school system were announced Thursday by Supt. M. B. Winslow.

Classes will organize beginning at 9 o'clock Monday morning, Sept. 14.

The announcements Thursday included:

1. Age at which children may enter the first grade.
2. Work books required in elementary schools.
3. Pre-military training additions to the curriculum.
4. Zones for attendance at various elementary schools.

5. Faculties of each school, and listing of last year's teachers who did not return this year.
6. School bus schedules.

## Admission Age

All pupils who have had their sixth birthday on or before September 14 will be admitted to school.

Beginning pupils who have not had their sixth birthday by September 14 but who will have their sixth birthday on or before November 15, 1942 may be admitted upon a request by a licensed physician stating that the pupil's physical development measures up to the six year six months norm. A psychological school readiness test will be given to all beginning pupils.

## Work Books

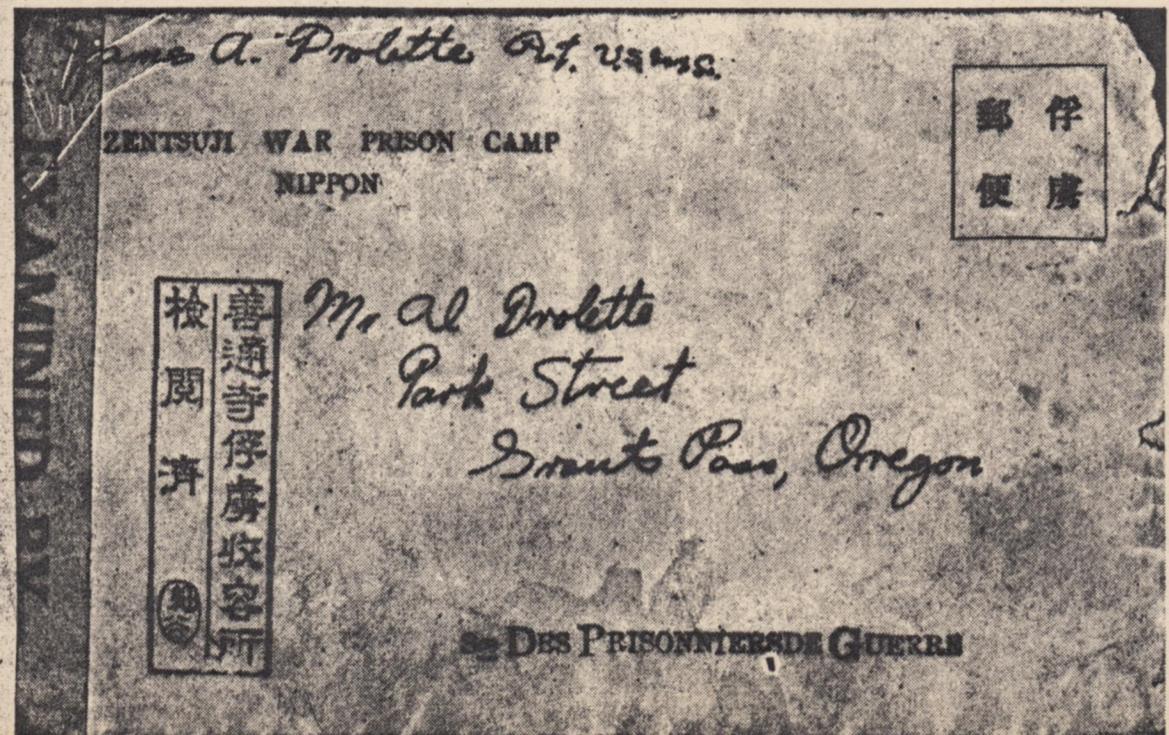
The following work books will be used throughout the elementary schools:

- First Grade**  
 Here We Go.  
 Companion Book to Read with Slides.  
 Companion Book Day In and Out.
- Second Grade**  
 Companion Book to Down the River Road.  
 Companion Book to Friendly Village.
- Third Grade**  
 New Curriculum Number Book-Book 2.  
 Goals in Spelling—Grade 2.
- Companion Book If I Were Going Through the Green Gate.**

# GRANTS PASS DAILY COURIER

OFFICIAL COUNTY NEWSPAPER PUBLISHED DAILY EXCEPT SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS  
 Established 1885 Grants Pass, Oregon Price 5 Cents  
 VOL. XXXII, NO. 300 THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1942 WHOLE NUMBER 8808

## Envelope from Japanese Prison Camp —



This is the envelope which brought first mail to Grants Pass relatives from a prisoner of the Japanese. Nipponese captured up to 60 southern Oregon men, most of them civilian workers on Wake island. (Courier

# RUBE

## Writes Home —



James Drolette, a United States marine on Guam at the time of its capture early in the war, wrote his parents. The letter is repeated on this page. (Courier Engraving)

## FD Bans Double Pay for Special

# Vote to Study First. Letter from Prisoner Forest Plan Is Of Japanese Received Here Unanimous

A unanimous step toward creation of a county forest if it is found feasible was taken Wednesday by the county court.

A resolution drawn by District Attorney Orval J. Millard said that data is to "be collected and an investigation be made to determine just what lands owned by the county are forest lands and chiefly valuable for forest purposes and that further investigation be made as to the probable expense of establishing and maintaining a county forest and that further investigation be made as to what regulations and provisions will be necessary in order to protect and effectuate proper supervisions of such proposed forest areas."

The resolution was unanimously adopted in place of one first offered by Commissioner Richard McElligott specifically resolving that the court establish a county forest "as soon as practicable. . . to include all county owned lands that are valuable for the production of timber only, using care not to include any area that has a possibility of inclusion in an irrigated district, or any tract of land where it is possible to establish a farm home, or any home."

The substitute resolution which Judge W. A. Johnson and Commissioners McElligott and Pete Fredrickson adopted asserted:

"The court in the administration of county forest lands has adopted and attempted to conform to the policy of sustained yield; and . . . the court feels that proper attention to forest lands will result in substantial income to the county thereby effecting a reduction of taxes, and that a permanent policy should be adopted wherever possible with regard to such lands. . .

"It seems to the court that the possibility of designating certain lands as county forests might tend to permanently conserve our forest resources and that a careful investigation should be made into such matters, and . . . although such lands might not be deeded away once the forest is established to private persons. . . such lands can still be deeded to the state and national government so as to not prevent any reforestation program that may be negotiated by either the state or national government that might be advantageous to the county."

McElligott offered for inspection by the other members of the court a map newly prepared by the reclamation bureau office here showing all lands which the reclamation bureau considers may eventually be irrigated.

## SHIPBUILDING PAYS

SALEM, Sept. 10—(P)—Shipbuilding accounted for 18 per cent of Oregon's \$100,000,000 payroll increase during 1941.

The first direct personal letter to be received from a local man being held prisoner of war was delivered here Tuesday to the Al Drolette family on East Park street. The letter was from Private Jimmy Drolette of the United States marine corps, who was taken prisoner on December 10 when the Japanese took the island of Guam.

The Drolette family was jubilant. Jimmy said that he was in "good health and had no injuries." The same day Mrs. Drolette received the letter from Jimmy. Mr. Drolette came home from Idaho where he had been touring as umpire with the Pioneer baseball league, and the greeting he received from his family was "We've received a letter from Jimmy." It was a happy day for the Drolettes.

This was the first word the Drolettes had heard from their son since December. They had been notified earlier in the spring by the navy department that Jim was a prisoner of war in Japan.

Jim was 20 years old in July. He graduated from the local high school in 1940 and in February of 1941 joined the United States marines. He had been stationed on Guam since August of 1941.

The letter was typewritten, but signed in ink by Jimmy, his sister, Alice, said. The family recognized his handwriting. He also addressed the envelope.

The letter is as follows:  
Zentsuji War Prisoners.  
Camp, Japan.

Mr. Al Drolette  
Park Street  
Grants Pass, Oregon, USA

Dear Mother, Dad and Sisters: Although there are many things you want to know, the only thing I can tell you is that I'm in good health and have no injuries. We were brought here to the Zentsuji War Prisoners Camp in Japan. I know

## Chrome Buying Dates Extended

The Metals Reserve company at Washington has extended the domestic stockpile purchase program for chrome and manganese from April 1, 1943, to December 31, 1943, the Courier was advised Thursday by Earl K. Nixon, state director of the department of geology and mineral industries.

Nixon said no change was indicated in prices.

The extension of the purchase program should increase production in the southern Oregon-northern California high grade chrome field, operators said. Most miners will be snowbound this winter until after April 1, and owners had hesitated about making any plans for production next year until the federal policy was declared.

you're going to worry about me mother, but I wish you wouldn't. We are being treated very well by the Japanese. We have enough to do around the camp to keep time from dragging. Take care of everybody Dad, someday we'll all be together again. Tell Alfreda and Alice hello for their little brother. Say hello to everybody. Goodbye for now, love,

Jimmy.

J. A. Drolette,  
USMC  
James A. Drolette

## Local Red Cross To Get Gauze For Dressings

Notice was received here Wednesday from the Red Cross headquarters that 73,200 pieces of mesh gauze were en route here to be made into surgical dressings for the armed forces, Mrs. Alice Smith, secretary, announced.

Mrs. Smith said she understood an instructor would be sent here to give instructions on how the gauze is to be prepared for dressings.

The local Red Cross chapter will do this work in addition to making the service kits to be presented the service men before embarking for a foreign port, and the sewing and knitting projects.

The August knitting report was announced by Mrs. Smith as follows: 41 workers made 51 sleeveless sweaters, six mufflers, nine cap mufflers, four pair gloves, two pair socks, two turtle neck sweaters and one child's suit.

## Potato Harvesters Are Sought Here

Gordon Shattuck of Portland, a representative of the farm placement service, was in Grants Pass Thursday, making a quick survey of the labor possibilities here to help in the Klamath county potato harvest.

Harvest of early potatoes starts Sept. 15 and the main crop will be harvested beginning about Oct. 1, Mr. Shattuck said. Anyone interested in signing up for the harvest may do so with E. K. Bruegger, manager of the US Employment service, at the chamber of commerce.

Mrs. Clint F. Hawkins, Sr., has returned to her home in Rogue River from a seven weeks trip south to Los Angeles and then to Enid, Okla., where she visited her son, Sergeant Clint F. Hawkins, Jr., of the army air corps.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 10—(P)— Payment of double-time rates for work on any particular day in the week such as Saturday, Sunday or holidays was discontinued today by a presidential order.

The decree, signed by President Roosevelt yesterday, was intended, the White House said, to encourage one day of rest in seven "in the interests of efficiency."

Double-time payment for work on a seventh consecutive day still is permissible under the order but not because it happens to fall on a week-end or holiday. Thus the days of the week lose their identity for wage-determining purposes.

The White House did not disclose what specific emergency powers the president employed in signing the order. It was announced, however, that it was in accord with pledges given Mr. Roosevelt several months ago by William Green, AFL president, and Philip Murray, CIO president.

The announcement also explained that the elimination of double-time pay for particular days makes the practice universal as "many unions already have modified their contracts to put this pledge into effect."

The decree did not affect the wage hour act provision allowing payment for work over 40 hours a week at the rate of time and a half.

MEDFORD, Sept. 10—(Special)— Word has been received by headquarters of the 91st Infantry Division at Camp White that Lieutenant Colonel Theron W. Bean, who headed the corps of army engineers constructing the big military cantonment, has been promoted from the rank of major.

## Rolling Kills GP

Mortimer Lee, about 42, was killed Thursday morning by a rolling tractor on a hillside beside Iron creek, about five miles from Murphy.

He was the second son of Mr. and Mrs. George R. Lee of East D street to die this year in logging accidents. His younger brother, Eugene Lee, was killed in April.

Two other men, Paul McDonald and George Gentry, riding with Mortimer Lee on the caterpillar-type tractor, suffered shock but their other injuries appeared to be only minor.

Deputy Coroner Walter Entriken, who brought Lee's body and the injured men to Grants Pass Thursday afternoon reported the three rode the tractor up a mountainside early in the morning to look for more logs.

As they returned the cleats of the caterpillar track evidently became clogged with mud and as the machine came over a rise it skidded sideways and began to roll down the incline.

Gentry was riding the lower side of the caterpillar and jumped clear of the machine as it rolled over and over. McDonald, who was driving the "cat," said he remem-

Zentsuji War Prison Camp, Japan  
25 September, 1942.Mr. Al. Drolette,  
Pork Street,  
Grant's Pass, Oregon, USA

Dear Mother, Dad, Alice and Alfreda: I am glad I've got another chance to write home and let everyone know I am all right. A number of the men in camp have already received letters from home, so I imagine I'll be getting one soon. As I told you the last time, we are working on a hillside near the camp. The work is not very hard and helps time to pass quickly. We do not work on Sundays, and when it rains. I am feeling fine, have a good tan, weigh one hundred and seventy pounds. So, you see I am O.K. I thought that the flies and mosquitoes would bother us this past summer, but there are very few flies and we have places to sleep under. Say hello to everybody for me, especially the ol' Sar. I suppose you hear from Uncle Vin, Uncle Charly and Grandpa, Aunt Sey and quite often, give them my regards. Alfreda or Alice, if you happen to see Margaret Hood, say hello to her for me, that is, if she isn't married. If she is, skip it. I hope you two kids are still working for Uncle Sam, I imagine he's been pretty busy since they started. Say, Dad and Mom, next time you write, send some pictures of the family. Mother, I hope you, Dad, Alfreda and Alice are all in good health and everything is fine. I was glad to get a letter to know that everything is all right. Oh yes, Alice, cut Margaret's picture out of the High School year book and send it to me. Well family, I guess that's about all for this time. So, in the meantime take care of yourselves.

Your son

Pvt James A. Drolette, USMC  
Zentsuji War Prison Camp, Japan

Note: Letters to prisoners should be typewritten to facilitate delivery through censors.

Pvt James A. Drolette U.S.M.C.



濟閱檢  
17.10.15  
浮善

James A. Drolette Pvt. U.S.M.C. 1st letter

ZENTSUJI WAR PRISON CAMP  
NIPPON

郵 俘  
便 虜

EXAMINED BY

檢閱 善通寺俘虜收容所  
細谷

Mr Al Drolette  
Park Street  
Grants Pass, Oregon

See DES PRISONNIERS DE GUERRE

Pvt. James A. Drolette 2nd letter

ZENTSUJI WAR PRISON CAMP  
NIPPON

郵 俘  
便 虜



See DES PRISONNIERS DE GUERRE

檢閱 善通寺俘虜收容所  
細谷

Mr Al Drolette  
Park Street  
Grants Pass, Oregon

5147 10/12/42

Comité International  
de la Croix Rouge à Genève, Suisse  
Délégation aux Etats-Unis  
d'Amérique



International Red Cross Committee  
in Geneva, Switzerland  
Delegation to the United States  
of America

2500 Que Street, N. W.

~~Washington, D. C.~~  
1645 Connecticut Ave., N. W.  
Washington 9, D. C.

Ref: P/3/e  
October 27, 1943

Mr. Al Drolette  
Grants Pass  
Oregon

Dear Mr. Drolette:

I regret very much that we must return your letter to your son, as new regulations forbid letters of more than 24 words being sent to prisoners of war in the Far East. Furthermore any mention of the short-wave broadcasts from Tokyo is prohibited by the American censors.

When you write a note of 24 words or less to your son, you should address the envelope as follows:

Prisoner of War Mail

Postage Free

Pvt. James A. Drolette, U. S. Marines  
Interned by the Japanese  
Formerly in Guam  
Zentsuji Prison Camp  
Shikoku Island  
Japan

VIA: New York, New York

You should print your name and address on the back of the envelope.

Regretting that we must return your letter, which, please find enclosed, I am

Sincerely yours,

*Elizabeth Ann Rouse*

(Miss) Elizabeth Ann Rouse

Enc:

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

# WESTERN UNION

1201

SYMBOLS

- DL = Day Letter
- NL = Night Letter
- LC = Deferred Cable
- NLT = Cable Night Letter
- Ship Radiogram

A. N. WILLIAMS  
PRESIDENT

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination.

PRJ167 25 GOVT= WASHINGTON DC 27 708P

045 SEP 27 PM 7 13 *Rec'd 9-27-05*

JAMES A DROLETTE (FATHER)=

PARK ST SERVICE STATION

THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM YOUR SON  
 PRIVATE JAMES A DROLETTE USMC QUOTE AM ON MY WAY HOME SO  
 DONT GET EXCITED UNQUOTE=  
 MARINE CORP HEADQUARTERS

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE