

Pasco, Wn.
April 4, 1952

Dear Dan,

I'll bet this is the most put off letter that you have gotten in a long while. I'm not going to make the excuse that I haven't had time, because for the past two months I've had more time than anything else. It's just that the time has been so chopped up with doing things and trying to think of things to do that I haven't been able to get into a writing mood.

As you probably know, I graduated from Wash. State in Feb., and am going on the medical school at Loyola University in Chicago. I'm tickled to death to have gotten in to that particular school as it is in my opinion anyhow, the best of the four catholic medical schools in the country and one of the best recognized of all medical schools. Of course, Yale, Harvard, Washington University in St. Louis, the University of California, and several others are probably more widely known, but have no better record for putting out medical men. Anyhow, you can see that I am really pleased with what I got. I think that any of the catholic schools would come closer to giving me the type of training that I want than any other private or State school. that undertaking gets under way 25 September.

After graduation I left home with the intention of going to Alaska to work, as I had heard so many stories @ the big money that could be made there, but when I got to Seattle I found that Alaska was still frozen up and that there were a lot of men up there who did not have jobs. I decided to wait till things thawed out, which was supposed to be in April, so I went job hunting in Seattle-Tacoma area. No jobs. Finally I found a sawmill job at Aberdeen, about a hundred miles south of Seattle and on the coast. I piled green lumber there for two weeks, but got in only 40 hours, as they were either broke down or shut down for want of logs so much of the time. At \$1.80 per hour you can see that I wasn't getting rich. On one of the shut down days I found another job. This time in a logging camp, setting chockers for \$15.00 a day, five days a week. I lived in the camp, which cost \$2.50 a day for room and board. The ground was steep and it darn near

killed me running up and down the mountain, but I stayed with it for two weeks and two days of the next week, at which time the camp closed on account of snow. It had snowed nearly every day that I was on the job, but the snow usually melted before it got too deep. When we finally quit there was about two feet on the ground, so we couldn't get around at all.

Well, that was about the twentieth of March. I took a bus to Seattle to find out about jobs in Alaska. I found that I had better get into a union if I wanted to get a job, so I then shopped around to find out which union would be the best to try to get into. Painters, carpenters, plasterers, etc. each have a separate union and most of them require that you serve an apprenticeship of three or four years before you can get a journeyman's card or pay. I could probably get into the laborers union, but if I took a job as a laborer I'd have to stay with that as there would be no opportunity to try for any other job. Besides it costs anywhere from \$27.50 to 100 dollars to join a union so it's not too good an idea to join one if you don't stick with it. As a laborer here in the states I could get \$1.25 an hour and about \$3.00 in Alaska. That is more than an apprentice in another job, but not as much as I think I can make it something else. I finally decided to try to get into the Operating Engineers Union. That is for bulldozer men, other cat jobs, and shovel operators. It looked like the best place to get into the union would be at Pasco, as there is a lot of construction work here, so I went home, got my car, went back to Aberdeen, got my clothes etc. went to Seattle to do some more checking on Alaska jobs and then back to Pasco. I've been here for six days now and have not gotten a job yet, but I think that I have got myself talked into a place in the union.

In Seattle I found that there probably won't be much work in Alaska before the first of June so I'm going to try to get into the union and get some experience here by that time. to get into the union is a chore. First you have to register with the union agent. Then when a company wants a cat skinner they call the union office and the agent sends a man out. if you try to get a job without belonging to the union the union men bitch and if the company doesn't fire you the union men strike, so all of the companies hire there men from the union agent. Ok, so I register with the union agent and

he puts my name on the list as a non union man. Then if he runs out of union men or a job comes in that none of the union men will go on, he starts down the list of non union men. What I'll have to do is go out as a grease monkey on some job that has such bad conditions or something that a union man can't be kept on the job. Then when I'm on the job I hope that some cat skinner will quit and maybe they will let me try it. Then I'll be in. the grease monkeys belong to the same union as the skimmers so even if I get the greasing job I'll be getting a start in the right direction. Then I just have to hope for the break to get skinning so I can get a skinner's card before it's time to go up north.

While I'm waiting for the greasing job I could be in the labor union and working, but I have to be here when they call for me from the union office if they get a job for me. All in all the unions can about tell a person what to do ----damnit. If I get into this union (Operating Engineers) I'll get \$1.85 for greasing or \$2.35 an hour for driving cat. In Alaska skimmers get \$3.47 an hour, so you can see why I want to get into that union and why I want to go to Alaska. All I can do now is to keep trying and hope.

I accept your invitation to use your camera, and on the first roll of films I got it swiped. I had it in my suitcase in another kids pickup and someone stole the suitcase. The other fellow had some insurance so I think we will get something out of it. I listed the camera and light filters as being worth \$90.00. the insurance company, however will not allow full value on anything so I don't know what I'll get for it. At any rate, I'll either replace the equipment for you or give you the insurance money whichever you prefer. Fair enough? I was sorry as hell that it happened, and still am, but -- --I reckon things like that just will happen. In addition to your camera I lost clothing, shaving kit, suitcase etc. estimated to be worth about \$75.00. It'll be interesting to see what I get out of the whole works.

As to the general trend of things at home, you probably are about as well informed on the details as I am. Albert's recent escapade and trip to the alter upset everyone more that it surprised them, I think. I haven't seen them since right after the wedding, but I understand that they are managing to stay alive, which is about all they can expect to do As

you probably know, mother said that she was going to have the wedding annuled, but as near as I know she has taken no steps in that direction. Frankly, I dont think she can do it. She can of course make a big stink, which is especially hard on those of use who live in the community. That is, of course Dad And Rita. Dad seems to be in good spirits through it all, however. Jim and Joan being back in the country provides him with some people to talk to etc., which all helps to make a man feel better.

Pat and Clarke got married without me and I guess they are just as happy as if I'd preformed the ceremony my self. It's hard to believe that that could be, but I guess that it is true.

Dad is not happy with his new teeth, but he has been feeling pretty good all winter and hasn't been downright sick, which is better than past winters so I dint know whether the teeth are more harm than good or not. Since Albert left in early January he has done the chores himself. He milks one cow and recently has gotten a couple of litters of pigs,- just about enough to get him out of the house a couple of times a day all winter. As long as he is feeling ok I think it's good for him. I don't like to think of him being alone when the farm work begins, but he can hire someone cheaper than I can afford to do it, so he'll just have to figure that out the best he can. If I could help him in the busy season and still make enough to go to school on I'd be glad to do it, but the way things look I'll just have to stick to what I have planned and hope that he can work things out on his end.

Jim is in school and seems to be feeling better than when he went to school before.I sure hope things work out for him, as he has had a rougher go of it all along than any of us. With all of his service time and the trouble at home he has never had a chance before now to have any piece of mind or try to do anything for himself. Now it looks like he might get a chance for some normal living and I pray to God that he does.

By the time you get home you will have had your share of being shoved around and I hope that you will be able to get settled in what you want to do and start working toward something with a future to it, which the Navy doesn't have.

Well Dan I'm about talked out so I'd better close before I started to tell you of my love life and maybe even get phylosophical.

If there is ever anything that I can do for you or send to you don't hesitate to let me know, because I'll be only too glad to do what I can.

Sincerely

Your bro

John

Flerchinger Gets M. S.

Washington State College — Two from Genesee were among the 1,376 individual graduates to earn degrees or certificates at the State College of Washington.

Francis Henry Flerchinger, was granted his master's degree in agricultural science and John Lorang earned his bachelor's degree in pre-medicine.

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