Letters From Post-WWII Reconstruction Guam

From the Papers of James and Erin Stewart

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This document contains excerpts from letters written by James Stewart, who worked with Government of Guam planning during the post-WWII reconstruction years 1948 through 1959, and by his wife, Erin Gary Stewart, both of whom were involved in civic activities during those years. Appendices include copies of items among the papers, including work-related documents and two of Erin's informal writings about reconstruction Guam. The Stewart children compiled this document in 2011 to deliver to the Richard Flores Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center at the University of Guam.
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INTRODUCTION

I. ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

James Stewart (1915–2008) worked with Government of Guam planning during the post-WWII reconstruction years 1948 through 1959. He and Erin Stewart (1917–1987) were involved in civic activities during those years.

This document begins with a collection of excerpts from reconstruction era letters among the papers of James and Erin Stewart. Appendices include copies of original documents among the papers. In Appendix 1 are papers on Guam history. In Appendix 2 are drafts, letters of invitation, clippings, and other items. In Appendix 3 are several hand-written letters. In Appendix 4 are two of Erin Stewart’s informal writings about reconstruction Guam. Appendix 5 is an elementary school text book discovered among the papers, with the hand-written name “Maria Francisco” on the front. Maria Francisco was our neighbor on Guam. Pictures are copies of photographs among the papers, except for a few, the sources of which are noted.

This document is written for our family and for students of Guam’s post-WWII era. Its purpose is to inform about events and to communicate some of the ambience of that era.

Murray Stewart’s anticipated visit to Guam this year offers an opportunity to deliver these documents and this paper to the Richard Flores Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center at the University of Guam.

II. BRIEF BACKGROUND ON GUAM

Sources. We who compiled the letters are not formal students of Guam history, so we have chosen to rely for this background on documents in the Stewarts’ papers, which are listed as references on page 3. Some references are from the time of our parents’ stay on Guam, and some are earlier. More recent referenced documents that were discovered among the papers lend a retrospective glimpse of the reconstruction days.

Geography, Geology, Population, Climate. Located about 5100 miles west southwest of San Francisco and 1500 miles east of Manila, Guam (Guahan) is the largest and southernmost of 17 Mariana islands. Its capital is Hagadña (Chamorro name that, in 1998, officially replaced “Agaña”, the name used during Stewart years on Guam). James and Erin Stewart’s letters mention Saipan, Tinian, and Rota in the northern Marianas, also Wake, Palau, Ponape (Pohnpei), Yap, and Truk among other Micronesian islands, of which the Marianas are a part. The letters refer also to the “Trust Territory”, a former United Nations trusteeship that included Micronesia except for Guam. The Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands was administered by the U.S. Navy from Guam until 1951, after which the U.S. Dept. of Interior administered it from Saipan.

Guam covers approximately 225 square miles, about one-sixth the size of Rhode Island. Thirty miles long, 8 miles at its widest, and 4 ½ miles wide at its middle, Guam is shaped like a “footprint — heel north-northeast and the toe south-southwest.” Geologists consider the island “a mountain top on the crest of a large wrinkle in the earth’s crust” (see Google map of ocean floor topography at end of this book). The more populous northern and central Guam is a volcanic rock plateau, covered with coral and limestone, only a few hundred feet above sea level. Mt. Lamlam, Guam’s highest peak at 1334 feet, is located in the mountainous southern half of the island, also of volcanic origin. The island is encircled by a coral reef.

The population of pre-European Guam is described as perhaps tens of thousands. A 1903 census reports 9,676 indigenous residents. In 1960, the population was about 30,000 indigenous and 30,000 transient. By 1990, the population had increased to about 25,000 service personnel and dependents and 100,000 residents.
Guam’s humid, tropical climate has little seasonal temperature variation. The mean high is 86° F and mean low is 76° F. Average annual rainfall is 96 inches. Typhoons may occur any time but are most common toward the end of the rainy season (July through November). Several super typhoons occurred after the Stewarts’ stay on Guam, with wind gusts reported to have exceeded 200 miles per hour.

**History.** The Chamorros, a sea-faring people, are thought to have first populated Guam as long as 4,000 years ago. A 1948 elementary school textbook reports that historians speculate their origin as 1) the Malay Peninsula, because of similarities in (Austronesian) language, or 2) Patagonia (from a Magellan term, a region located in Argentina and Chile), because of similarities in culture and arts as well as ocean currents favorable to a canoe voyage. Authorities point to linguistic and archaeological evidence of the former.

Ferdinand Magellan landed on Guam in 1521, the first European on record to do so. Spain established the first colony in 1668 and controlled Guam, sometimes brutally, until 1898, when Guam was surrendered to the United States following the Spanish-American War. William Safford, in recording the Spanish occupation, begins one chapter “Conquest of the Natives”. Guam was captured by the Japanese on December 8, 1941, hours after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and was occupied, often brutally, for two and a half years. After 18 days of fierce fighting, U.S. troops recaptured the island. The beginning of this Battle of Guam, July 21, 1944, is commemorated every year as Liberation Day. The road toward self-determination lay ahead.

The U.S. Navy administered immediate post-war Guam affairs. A major early step toward self-rule was the Guam Organic Act of 1950, which established Guam as an unincorporated organized territory of the United States, provided for the structure of the island’s civilian government, and granted the people U.S. citizenship. Until 1968, the legislature was civilian but the Governor was appointed by the U.S. President. Today, Guam is one of five U.S. territories with an established civilian government.

Steps toward self-determination and economic development continued long after the Stewarts left Guam in 1959 and continue still. Security restrictions ended in 1962, enabling the people to promote Guam as a tourist destination. The Guam Tourist Commission was created in 1963; by the early 1980s, Guam had 300,000 visitors per year. Super-typhoons, including Karen in 1962 and Pamela in 1976, stimulated rebuilding and led to stronger building codes. The Guam Airport Authority was created in 1967, transferring authority from Govt. of Guam Dept. of Commerce. Election of Guam’s governor was provided for by 1968 legislation. In 1972, the U.S. Congress provided for one non-voting Guam delegate in the U.S. House of Representatives. The Port Authority came under Guam autonomy in 1975; by 1985 the port handled over one million tons of cargo as compared to 86,000 tons in 1951. The Guam Visitors Bureau was created in 1977. Voters won the right to introduce legislation through initiative and referendum in 1980. The Guam Supreme Court was created in 1984. Throughout the years, Guam received substantial federal grants, exemptions and debt refinancing. More background is presented in Appendix 1, especially the 1998 U.S. House of Representatives Resolution, which outlines Guam history in the context of, and leading up to, the House resolve to reaffirm its commitment to increased self-government for Guam.

**Economy and Crosscurrents.** Hampering of Guam’s economic development was described at least as early as 1905, when Safford wrote that not only destructive typhoons but also “the unwise course of certain governors in discouraging individual enterprise...have prevented the general prosperity.” Post-World War II, the requirement of a security clearance to enter Guam was considered by many to hamper citizens’ interests, including economic development, in favor of U.S. military interests. Joe Murphy in Guam Daily News “Progress Report, 1986” wrote, “Guam...was sleepy 25 years ago because the island was restricted, because of a security clearance ruling.” The restriction was lifted in 1962 by executive order of U.S. President Kennedy. “(G)ross island products (statistics)”, Mr. Murphy continued, “now show an impressive
$1 billion.”³ Tourism, with many visitors from Japan, and United States military stationed on Guam are major sources of the island’s income.

III. THE LETTERS

Sometime after Erin Stewart’s death in 1987, her sister Linnie Sue Challen turned over Erin Stewart’s letters from Guam to her family in Memphis. Letters from certain time periods, for example 1954, were apparently not saved. Heeding a suggestion by Linnie Sue Challen in a note accompanying the letters, we have gathered excerpts from the saved letters. We have added excerpts from the few preserved letters from James Stewart to his mother and to his aunt Gladys Keathley. We have included excerpts from several of the few preserved letters written to James and Erin Stewart related to the Guam reconstruction era.

The letters themselves are quite long and contain a good bit of daily family communications as well as book reviews and thoughts on many subjects. Appendix 3 contains, as examples, copies of several complete hand-written letters. In the excerpts, a few reference events are highlighted in bold blue print, and explanatory passages that we, compilers of the letters, added are asterisked and placed in parentheses. Dates of travel are red. Often, James Stewart is referred to as “Jim” and “JMS”; his mother as “EHS”; Erin Stewart as “E” and “EGS”; her mother and sisters as “Mama”, “A.B.” (Annie Beth) and “L.S.” (Linnie Sue); children as “M” (Murray), “A” (Alice) and “L” and “Liza” (Eliza).

The Family in Memphis

In her letters, Erin Stewart reported a book reviewer’s observation that Tolstoy’s War and Peace thrusts a reader, like a newcomer to a city, into a confusing array of people and events that only time and thought help the reader sort out. This was our mother’s description of her experience on Guam, too, an experience, she wrote, that she relished and hoped to convey in her letters. Our cousin, Betty Challen Woody, relates that when a letter from our mother arrived from Guam, the Gary family gathered in the living room of “Mama’s” home for a reading, as a family might gather to hear chapters of a novel or to listen to TV News.

2 Remedios Perez and Alice Wygant, Textbook headed “Naval Government of Guam, Department of Education, September 30, 1948”. Authors attribute material to Searl’s History of Guam and Safford’s Useful Plants of Guam, with valuable contributions from residents from Agaña, Santa Rita, Dededo, and Asan on Guam and from Rota, a neighboring island. On the textbook is written the name, “Maria L. Francisco”, who was our neighbor on Guam.
SECTION 1

BEFORE GUAM
Letters From Reconstruction Guam

Before Moving to Guam....

James Stewart worked with the Memphis Park Commission, then was employed with the Baltimore Park Engineering Department as Principal Architectural Draftsman. In his resume, he mentioned his studies of modern architecture and his private work, including designing a modern home. Erin Gary, a math major, was an honor graduate of Southwestern (now Rhodes) College in Memphis. She and James Stewart married in 1939. Murray was born in 1942, Alice in 1943, and Eliza in 1946.
SECTION 2

LETTERS FROM 1948 THROUGH 1953
**1948**

*Sep. 11, 1948  JMS to EGS*

Sweetheart...Think I’ll write this as a diary and try to keep it up daily en voyage. This is the second day out now...My salary began when I came aboard...

Guam is 5400 miles from ‘Frisco, and should be reached in 12 days (Guam is the ship’s first port). The General Anderson is the largest ship in the Pacific although only half the size of the Queen Mary. (*Describes ship and passengers)....I have a state room on the back corner of the promenade deck...(and) can see the ocean while lying in bed....The ship left ‘Frisco with all the fanfare one sees in the movies —bands playing and crowds on the pier...already had a close view of a whale spouting...

Have met several nice and interesting people about our age, most of whom are returning after leave in the States....have had exceptionally smooth sailing...the food is excellent...there is a movie every night...

Found out a lot about the island from returning workers. They all love it. Was surprised to know that there are now 90,000 people and more coming all the time. The port is being opened only this month to civilian shipping and in the future practically every ship crossing the Pacific will stop there.

(*We) set our watches back an hour each day. This done at 4 each afternoon gives everyone an extra hour and an appetite for supper. (*Describes meals.) (*From website http://www.ussgeneralanderson.com andy.htm, photo at left and an officer’s log: “13 JAN 49 departed San Francisco for Pearl Harbor with troops and cabin passengers, crew of 30 officers and 370 enlisted, including 100 stewards....31 JAN arrived Guam”)

...Taught a varied art class up on the sun deck....started on charcoal sketching....

Have heard that (*on Guam) gasoline is 7¢ a gallon, changing a tire $3.50. Food is 1/3 less than “state-side” as it’s called...(*Labor is high priced because) no one is permitted on the island unless they were born there or are under contract to the Navy, so (*native born) have profited from the inevitable real estate boom.

The mothers with small children seem pretty exhausted — compare this with a child’s birthday party which has continued for a week....I’d recommend you fly all the way to Guam...I talked with two wives who have flown with their families and regret not having done so this time....
Played bridge. Fortunately there are three very good and enthusiastic players aboard.... Met a man with several hundred colored slides of Guam — am most favorably impressed. He has some of Hawaii too....

Have sort of paired off with a young civil engineer in charge of surveying the Mariannas. He is a former Lt. Commander — a good bridge player and interesting conversationalist. We pooled our white laundry today and had enough for a Bendix wash....

Word has gone around that we will reach Guam about 9 tomorrow morning...everyone has begun...getting addresses and making dates with new acquaintances. I’m already booked pretty well with bridge dates, and have been invited to stay with the high school principal’s family in their new home if I should not like my quarters whatever they may be....Understand my car might not get over for a month....

Too bad we couldn’t have enjoyed it (*voyage) together. I could have helped with the children — would like to watch them when they first see the desert, the mountains, the ship, the ocean and things. Alice and Murray are old enough now to remember it as I do Colorado. I was only 5 then — and it will be as educational for them as it is for me....have heard I’ll be met at the pier and all have been arranged for me but haven’t any idea of what to expect tomorrow.

Sep. 21, 1948  JMS to EGS

Sweetheart...The Planning Commissioner and the Administrator of Lands and Claims met me as I came down the gangplank this morning and took me to the best club for cocktails and lunch before anything. Then, as the Commissioner had an appointment, the Administrator used some pull to get me into...(*a) men’s dormitory with a corner room.

They aren’t called dormitories, but this best describes them. My room is about 12 x 15, on the second floor and overlooks the ocean about 300 ft. away with only a park between.

He then arranged for my meals and laundry and took me to my new office, which is next to the Planning Commissioner’s and Admiral Pownall, Governor of the Island (*May 30, 1946–Sep. 27, 1949). Spent the rest of the afternoon meeting people and drinking coffee. Don’t remember but two names yet. Then to supper and back to the room to unpack. Please change the address of Progressive Architecture and send towels.....

~Sep. 25 (Saturday), 1948  JMS to EGS

Sweetheart...There’s so much to write that I hardly know where to begin. Will say first that this is a dream of a place and I believe will prove to be a dream job, too.

The Planning Commissioner is a former student of Frank Lloyd Wright, and is now one of his closest friends. He is probably the most brilliant and temperamental person I’ve ever met. Quite a non-conformist and with unequaled savoir faire. His present assistant, whose place I’m taking as he is returning to the States next month to practice architecture in Pasadena, Cal., studied under Gropius, America’s #2 architect at Harvard, and is also a friend of Wright’s, and has quite a reputation himself. Both seem delighted with my ideas, etc., and have devoted most of their time so far introducing and entertaining me. [James Drought, Planning Commissioner, is listed as ‘Original Wright Associate’ in Geiger’s ‘A Directory of Frank Lloyd Wright Associates’. Frank Kelly was Drought’s assistant, whose position JMS took. Both Drought and Kelly left Guam within a couple of months of JMS’s arrival, leaving JMS Acting Planning Commissioner. Kelly later became Richard Neutra’s representative on Guam. Richard Neutra was commissioned in the early 1950s to develop a plan for the post-war redevelopment of Guam. This work ended in 1953 because of conflict of interests, Neutra having been commissioned to design Government House. JMS worked with all the architects through 1953. Reference: EGS letters, esp. pps. 31-32.]

Today... (*inspecting?-illegible) and sightseeing, this evening a dinner, and tomorrow a village fiesta.
The Commissioner ranks close to the Governor. He attends all sessions of Congress and has almost the most desirable bachelor’s quarters on the island. There is a cafeteria in connection with the best food of any cafeteria anywhere, I’m sure.

But more of my life in later letters. Know you want to know about the island.

Guam has over 100,000 people now. All roads are wide and paved. There are a number of large towns with all the conveniences of any city “Stateside”.

Guam is a land of anomalies and superlatives. Its scenery surpasses the best in Florida and California combined. Beautiful mountains covered with tropical plants more exotic than I had imagined.

This is considered typical weather we’re having now. It’s hard to describe for it can’t very well be compared with anything at home. It isn’t as hot, but due (they say) to the humidity, I perspire more – so much more that I’ve found that unless I take 4 or five salt tablets a day I actually feel dizzy. It hasn’t rained so far but once - and then at night, but very hard. The sun is unusually bright. We all wear sunglasses whenever we step out.

People dress quite informally except for rare occasions. Administrators always wear shorts and long sleeve shirts in the daytime. Manual workers wear long pants and short sleeve shirts – I don’t know why. Personally, although I conform to the administrator’s code, I should prefer shorts with sports shirt.

Since writing the last 2 pages I have had my sightseeing tour, taken in a cocktail party and a dinner. Also did some shopping and found some peculiar shortages and conditions. For instance, although luxury items are plentiful (such as jewelry, luggage, perfume, and oriental fabrics) such things as Rinso (when it can be found – I wanted it for washing socks) cost 65¢ a box. When the “ship’s store” has it it’s only 10¢, but anything that’s bought in a “native store” cost several hundred % more.

Bought 2 large size bath towels – heavy white at the ship’s store for $1.00 & a carton of Camels for 65¢.

Have been asked to a beach party tomorrow morning. Wish I had a large beach towel. If and when you get to town, wish you’d find me one. Would also like some saddle soap & 6 coat hangers (wooden-as metal ones are said to rust) as these aren’t to be had here.

Incidentally, was interested in the fact that a light is kept burning in each closet all the time to counteract the humidity and everything including books and shoes are put in them.  

Love, James

Oct. 1, 1948  JMS to his aunt Gladys
Well, I am on Guam and after 10 days of constant sightseeing and parties, I still think it is the most beautiful and interesting place I’ve ever seen.

Am sure Mother has reported on my trip out, so won’t repeat. But will try to describe my life and the island.

My first glimpse of Guam was of verdant hills flecked with snow white houses and broken occasionally by colorful coral cliffs coming right down to the bluest water imaginable. I thought at that time it surpassed the best of Florida and California combined, but the interior is, if possible, even more beautiful.

National Geographic colors couldn’t do it justice. Poinsettias here are weeds.
The island is 50% jungle, though there are over 100,000 people here, and there are many perfect roads through the jungle where one can see the ground covered with poinsettias, wild coffee (clusters of red berries) and ferns.

Through this, blue and lavender morning glories climb the trunks of coconut palms, mango, and breadfruit trees, and an occasional patch of heavily laden banana plants or flowering hibiscus lend variety.

Even the clouds here are more colorful than I’ve ever seen anywhere.

25,000 of the population are native to the island. They look like the Filipinos to me. Almost half of the native people live in small (*older-style)... villages. The other half have moved to (*more modern)... communities and have become wealthy as merchants.

Our government doesn’t permit anyone to come to Guam other than Government employees, so the Guamanians (indigenous people of Guam) have a monopoly in catering to these employees.

(*Describes a fiesta) Guam, as you know, was under Spanish rule from Magellan’s discovery until almost 80 years ago, and the Guamanians are naturally Catholic. Each town has its saint, and one Sunday each year the town celebrates its saint’s name day with a Fiesta. It was a procession led by the priest starting from the church, winding through the two crooked streets and ending at the church with lots of singing, dancing, and flag waving. The dinner was exotic, nothing else could describe it. I hardly recognized anything served. My favorite dish was heart of coconut palm, diced and seasoned.

Will have to borrow a camera to send you some pictures.

There’s so much to write about. I’m asking Mother and you to share your letters....

**Oct. 14, 1948 JMS to EHS**

Your letter of Saturday the 9th came today....With regards to my health — I’ve never felt better....

Will try to tell you ...what seems to be a fairly typical day.

This morning I...walked ...along a paved walk paralleling the beach to the cafeteria. An orange, French toast, bacon and coffee for breakfast — all for 25¢. We pay by the meal — that is, 25¢ for breakfast, 30¢ for lunch and 50¢ for dinner...It’s well prepared, too, but I do miss lettuce, milk and tomatoes....Back to my room...at 8, the man whom I’m replacing (*Frank Kelly) picks me up in a jeep, which will be assigned to me when he leaves on the 11th of next month.

It’s a ten minutes drive along the coast on a new 4 land highway from Asan (new housing area) to my office in Agaña, the capital of Guam....My office is in a Quonset, as are all offices of the civil government. The Quonset is in the middle of a beautifully kept tropical flower garden....Several of our friends...drop in each day....

We come back to the cafeteria for lunch some days, sometimes to one club or another...then back to the office until 5. Occasionally, like today, we drive out to a town site, look over the topography and discuss the surveying problems. At 5, we meet the Commissioner at an officers’ club for a couple of cocktails, then dress for dinner, usually at one of the clubs. Last night (*we dined) at the Builders Club with the Commissioner. This is the most expensive club. Our dinner (for two) with drinks was over $10!...
As for my work — I’ve just finished planning a street system for a new town which will replace a town of 3500 natives (*that was) destroyed during the war. The draftsmen are working it up now, and I’ve begun designing the public buildings for it — just sketches for them to take over. People constantly interrupt by coming to have permits granted and zoning orders clarified.

Nov. 2, 1948   JMS to EGS
Sweetheart, From my position here it looks as if war were pretty close right now, and this may be my last uncensored letter for some time. We have already converted to a war-basis. I’m writing this by candle light because all island lights are off tonight to save fuel....

All air transport to and from Guam has been indefinitely stopped, air mail will be limited and less regular from now on and all cabin space on all ships from here has been reserved for the removal of dependent families. All planes here are being armed, sentries are stopping all cars on all roads for various reasons, parties and movies are being cancelled, etc. It’s most exciting and interesting.

I have received passes which permit me to go anywhere anytime and if this scare should materialize I’ll be well off.... The island has a good 3 months supply of food and necessities here. Although purchases at the commissaries are being rationed to families and forbidden to single people, I can find canned goods and begin to stock. [*Photo is a pass issued in 1950, presumably like that mentioned in this excerpt from a letter written two years earlier.]

I’m certainly glad now that you didn’t come out with me, and aside from regretting that we aren’t together, would rather be here in the event of war than elsewhere. I do believe...it might be best if you stayed there until we know what to expect. I hope I’m unduly alarmed — haven’t seen a paper from the States for some time and the Guam paper is published by the Navy and at present is thoroughly censored....Must stop now and try to hitch-hike to the post office to mail this tonight ahead of possible censorship, which the Governor said today would “probably begin within the next four days.”

Dec. 28, 1948   JMS to EHS
...Have found a place where I can get Klim here now, so you needn’t bother sending that any more. In fact I’m gradually learning to know my way around as well as anyone. Of course, I should, for I ride so much on inspection tours of living conditions, roads, utilities, etc., over the whole island.

Spent X-mas day at the home of some prominent Guamanians....Dinner was buffet style and included many foreign and naturally delicious (to me) dishes, among them taro — a bread made from pulverized root...Finny Dinny (sp?), barbecued pork seasoned with many local herbs and the best meat I ever tasted...Coconut palm salad, some interesting fruits, and a cooked spinach-like leaf which sounded like fandango....(*after supper, the evening meal) a religious procession led by a girl carrying an almost life-size plaster figure of a baby in a real blanket came to each house in the village...The girl was followed by acolytes carrying candles in red chimneys on long poles and were followed by an alms-taker with a box on a long pole — a Spanish custom, I’m told....

Jim (*Drought) brought me...Bememan’s The Best of Times just out and beautifully illustrated. Also got some “Cherry Heering” — a Danish liqueur...
Aug. 17, 1949  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

I have found flour, corn meal and most fresh vegetables and fruits now, and the prices are not much more than in the States. On some items they are considerably lower, so that it isn’t bad at all. I always make a beeline toward the cans that are olive drab as they are Navy surplus. Bread is available, too, though there is a limit of two loaves and it is always white. I shopped at two commissaries today, as I left Rosita (*later married Frank Francisco, neighbor) at home with the children, so came home with four loaves. James bought me a mixmaster, too, before I came and before they put the govt. tax on them, so that I can make bread easily and, of course, the children go for that. One of James’ friends brought us a big bouquet of orchids from his orchid tree, and Rosita keeps us in flowers.

Did I tell you about Murray climbing a coconut tree? I think we’ll take a picture of him at the top... Murray has taught Liza to say “Thank you” instead of “ta-ta”, and when she gets her own way, she always looks so proud and says, “see?”.

I’m writing this by candlelight as the generator is off again. That’s really about the only difficulty I have now, but we’ll get a coal oil lamp, and that will be fixed, too. Sounds like olden days, doesn’t it?

My sunburn is better, and Murray hasn’t had any more asthma. I got some sun-tan cream on sale for 25¢. Also went to the bank and opened an account.

The island seems quite large. The 30 miles as in the encyclopedia is a bird’s flight measuring. It’s actually longer. I haven’t had a chance to see the really pretty parts of it, as on the less frequented roads and in the jungles. Hope to soon, then I’ll have more to write about.

James says secretaries are greatly in demand here...If things go well here, I may try it next year.

The governor (Adm. Pownall) is retiring next month, so we’re beginning to have a lot of invitations to send him off, one this Friday night. I’m glad Mary gave me the evening dresses, as most of the parties are formal.
Nov. 21, 1949 JMS to EHS

(*Typhoon Allyn) We’ve just gone through one of the worst typhoons that Guam has had in many years....I was in the Governor’s office Monday where the weather station called him to report that one was 600 miles away, headed this way at about 15 miles per hour with a velocity of 120 miles per hour. The day was sunny and calm. Typhoons don’t travel in straight lines, and it was quite probable that it would curve and miss us. However, as a precautionary measure, word was spread by phone to the police and commissioners (corresponding to our mayors) of each village and to all department heads, as well as by radio to be prepared. Planes were sent from here to constantly stay in the center of the storm, and its path was announced hourly.

Tuesday was calm, but Wednesday we began having spasmodic gusts of wind, and the storm was heading straight for us. By Wednesday night the wind was blowing quite hard, with occasional rain squalls. Cars were ordered off the roads. We went to a musical given by some Guamanian friends for a Philippine pianist on his way home after playing at Carnegie Hall and the Philippine president’s daughter. Fewer than half of the guests came — only those with enough authority to pass the road blocks. The pianist was well worth having. Enjoyed it immensely. Also the reception at Carlos’ afterward.

(*“Battening down”) Thursday, a (*Public Works) crew put large steel cables over the house and anchored them into the ground. The wind was blowing about 30 m.p.h....but little rain. As you can probably tell by the photos, our house is practically an open porch with large overhangs — all screened, of course. We had heavy canvas curtains nailed down to cover the screens. It made the house quite dark.

The wind increased rapidly until about 2:30 it reached typhoon intensity. Murray, who had skipped in Tuesday, happily announcing the “Good news! A typhoon is coming. School is closed for the week!” , became a little worried and asked E if she were hoping for the best. About this time I told them that the typhoon was finally here, and Murray asked where.

E and I actually enjoyed looking at the swaying palms and flying clouds. By 4 o’clock the lights and water were off. We had filled all pitchers and pans and E had coal oil lanterns ready.

About 4:00 the kitchen door blew in, smashed into many pieces...we covered the bookcases and radio in the living room with ponchos....Around 5 o’clock the roof blew off the kitchen, dining, and bathroom. The tiedown came loose on that section and the heavy cable blew several hundred feet and tangled with the light wires. The ceiling stayed on these rooms but water dripped constantly like a leaking shower.

Then, about six, while we were eating cereals for supper on the front porch,... the canvas (curtains) blew or ripped off our bedroom and everything in it was soaked. E and I slept on the large couches on the porch. The wind was shrieking, the house was trembling and the few loose sheets of tin still on the back wing we rebanging, but by then we were used to it and all slept until morning.

When we woke Friday, most of the wind had gone and the sun was out. We found several coconut trees down near the house. A Guamanian neighbor cut some hearts of palms for us. The yard looked a wreck...The fence covered by the Ceylon morning glories (“wood roses”) and many flowers were blown down. Also the banana plants. (*Photo: www.hawaiian woodrose-Argyreia_nervosa-wikipedia.jpg)

After lunch we all got into the jeep and took a long ride to see how others fared. The damage will amount to millions. Many houses were completely demolished. Hundreds of large ware houses flattened. 50% of the houses were hit as hard as ours. Amazingly, there was only one fatality....
Our lights and water came on Saturday morning...our life is back to normal and we look on it as an interesting and beautiful experience....

We’ve had lots of friends popping in to see how we survived and report on their experiences, and they’ve all heard of South Pacific and are most enthusiastic over it....

We are all going to the beach now. The children are waiting in the station wagon. Lots of love, James

1950

James says today that Mr. White called to say we are definitely scheduled to go on the Sultan to make the leap trip. However, James says nothing is definite on Guam; something may happen yet. I’m keeping my hopes up.

Carlos Taitano got up a party last night to go to the play, The Voice of the Turtle. The Army puts these plays on, and they are quite amateurish... There were eight of us, and we went to the Army Officer’s Club afterwards for drinks. The Army seems to me to do things in better style than the Navy, and this place was quite attractive. The play, too, wasn’t too bad. The scenery and the costumes were well done. [Photo is of JMS, Carlos Taitano, and ? (Public Works employee?), on an outing with others, “1948]

Paul Souder is here now talking to James about plans for his home. He is an ex-officer of the Navy, married into a prominent Guamanian family, one of the sweetest people I’ve ever met. The plans look attractive. Paul has his own ideas and has done most of it himself, but has applied to James for structural advice. They are busy at it right now, and my company doesn’t seem needed.

Almost all of Liza’s talk now is of the “kip” – she wants to know if we’re going to take this (a rock or a shoe, etc.) on the “kip”.

Nyles (*Murray’s friend) takes ballet lessons from a lady near his home who teaches the children free. I think I’ll look into it for Murray and Alice. Nyles showed us the different dancing “conditions” as he called them...
...Before we went to the beach we went with James to inspect several of his jobs. One is a convent and we picked up Father Alvin, a priest, who is general manager of the project. When he came out in his long white robe Liza asked him if he had his bathing suit on under that. He has a sense of humour and told her “Yes.” [Photo taken at Tarague beach.]

Last night we went to a picture-show...We were lucky. It was “Pinky” and the scenes and dialogue coming from Mississippi, gave us nostalgia. It wasn’t an exceptional picture, but better than most we see.

Rosita is living next door now. She and Frank (*Frank Francisco, neighbor) got married recently we hear. I started something, didn’t I?....

The baby whose christening party we went to sometime back was the fifth, and the mother looks scarcely twenty. After that baby, she took a vacation trip to the States for several months and is back now. There’s much wealth here, and the families who have it go back and forth to the States or Hawaii like we go to Shelby Forest. Most of the children in these families are sent to school in the States, too.

I’m glad you liked the woodroses, Mama.

[*summer trip to Memphis home]


...With mixing milk, slicing bacon (slabs are all we can get now), filling kerosene stove and ice-box (*refrigerator) as well as all the usual work, I have a long work day....I asked Rosita to babysit for me Sunday afternoon when we went calling. She also ironed clothes...Her younger sister kept her baby! I think it may be a good arrangement. We have to go about once a week at least...

We don’t hear much of the war news here, no one talks it. (*Being close), one is less concerned, I suppose...

Nov. 17, 1950 (envelope’s postmark)   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

We had a guest for supper (*Rothwell). He really had to take pot luck. The governor had asked James to entertain him yesterday, so I told him to bring him on home....It worked out fine. I had already made spaghetti the day before in preparation of commissary day and luckily had some roll dough (by your recipe, Mama) in the ice box (*refrigerator), also slaw already prepared. He is Hawaii’s foremost architect who, because he has specialized in the building of hospitals, has been asked here as a consultant in the building of a new government hospital. He says he has four children of his own and adopted two boys of his brother’s who, with his wife, was killed when the boys were eight and ten. All the children are grown now, but he seems to enjoy ours, especially Liza. She asked him if he’d been on a ship. When he said “Yes,” she said, “I didn’t see you!” Murray and Alice simply amazed me when they got up without any prompting whatsoever and cleared the table in fine style....How they enjoy seeing the table pretty for a change. This Mr. Rothwell surprised me with a New England accent, which the family has held on to for 100 years when his grandfather migrated from Connecticut to Hawaii...We’re invited to a dinner party for him tomorrow night.

Dec. 23, 1950   Alice to EHS

(*The Stewart children opened one gift before Christmas, usually the gift from “Grandmother Stewart”, which would contain a number of small items.)
Jan. 15, 1951 JMS to EHS

Home again after a delightful trip....slept most of the night on the plane (from San Francisco) to Honolulu. The stratocruisers are so spacious and comfortable....The Taitanos met me in Honolulu and showed me the island...drove 150 miles one day. It’s beautiful and most interesting. Quite a foreign atmosphere and everything so neat, clean and quiet...(W)hile Strella and Joaquin (Taitano) were taking me around her mother prepared exotic Portuguese and Hawaiian dishes....

[*10 ½ months of missing EGS letters]*

Nov. 18, 1951 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

We’ve been overloaded with parties lately because Mr. Rothwell, the architect for the hospital, is here again and the farewell parties for the Holbrooks and the Urbans have begun, too. Besides that, we were invited this week to have dinner with the only Guamanian dentist, Dr. Mesa, and his daughter, Mrs. McMillan, at the Com Mar Officers Club. Frank Lanahan, a very attractive bachelor with Atkins-Kroll Shipping Agency, also asked us to dinner at his home. I keep thinking that surely this can’t go on, but it does!

I took my raw silk to a tailoress last week with a picture from the *Times*. She is charging $8.00 to make it.

We’re having a party ourselves for the Holbrooks, Urbans and Mr. Rothwell this Friday night, so Thanksgiving will have to wait until next year. We have asked 24. I’ll serve curry, buffet style. I have been chopping all week, and now all the food is safely put away in the deep freeze, to be warmed up Friday. James has polished the silver, so that all we have to do now is wash dishes, glasses and clean house. Leon (*Filipino who worked at the dairy or as fireman) promises to bring three others to serve that night. They are delighted to serve whenever the governor and the Bishop are there....The children are fast developing into good helpers, too...He (*Murray) opens them (*coconuts) and I grate and toast them. There’s nothing like these fresh coconuts toasted.

James is working this afternoon on the Public Works budget, Murray and Alice playing cards, Liza playing with her neighbor friend....

Nov. 27, 1951 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

(*Thanksgiving) We went to a wedding and reception in the morning. The bride was the librarian of the Pacific Islands Navy libraries, the groom a Navy architect. The reception was at the Com Mar Officers Club. It seem strange to be drinking champagne with breakfast. Afterwards we had turkey with all the trimmings at Strella’s (*Mrs. Joaquin Taitano) house. The children were invited, too, and we all enjoyed it very much.

Our party Friday night was what I suppose you’d call a “success,” judging from the clatter of conversation. The guest list jumped to thirty-one before we were through.

We went to a Public Works farewell party for the Holbrooks on Saturday. Saturday night we are invited to a formal dinner at the Urbans. Monday night next week is the first Symphony concert, which we will go to, James being president. Wednesday night the Skinners are having a farewell dinner for the Holbrooks, Thursday night another dinner party for the Urbans.

Friday night is the governor’s charity ball for tuberculosis relief. When the Holbrooks and Urbans set sail (Dec. 12th), maybe we can settle down. Who would ever have thought that I’d be in this sort of situation? However, I feel I might as well be doing this as something else.
The famous architect, Neutra, is here, and James is in conference with him every day. We may take him out to dinner one night, I haven’t decided.

As for the trip home next summer...I believe the children will be reconciled to staying here if need be...The neighbor children, Jimmy (*Mackey) and David (*Peterson), have been playing barber, and Liza is a dreadful sight – sort of a cross between a boy and a girl. I hope it grows out before Christmas.

Dec. 4, 1951  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

I’m enclosing the Symphony Concert program (*not among Stewart papers). James worked hard with organizing details and the conductor, though young, has a great deal of talent. There is also a good deal of talent on the island, so that the first performance was quite a success. It didn’t sound amateurish at all, and we are planning an even better program next time, that is, Bach, Beethoven... Jim Butler, the vice-president, invited us along with about a dozen others to dinner at his home before the concert and we had a small reception (unplanned) for the conductor and officers of the Society afterwards. James served them drinks, and I opened a can of pretzels, and a can of corn chips. That was all. There were about 25 in all, among them Mr. Neutra, the guest architect, who had expressed a desire to see our house.

I am enclosing a clipping from the paper about him (*Richard Neutra – clipping not among Stewart papers). He is perhaps the most famous visitor we’ve had on Guam since we’ve been here. He admired the house, especially the Norman Bel Geddes furniture. He also liked my yogurt. I wish that I could have talked with him more while he was here but have seen him only at parties.

(*On photos enclosed — not among the papers with the letters) That’s Nora next to me (*from islands, a student staying with the Stewarts). My improvised hat is of real gardenias out of the yard.

(P)erhaps he (*author JB Shaw) had a right to be conceited — still it goes against the grain. Mr. Neutra is very much like that, too, I gather — i.e., used to having people step around him. He asked James to show him his plans for the cathedral the other night when we were both obviously very busy with the guests. James told him that if he would stay until the others left, he would show him them...(*But Mr. Neutra) was the first to go, as he keeps a rigid schedule, rising at 4:00 a.m., no matter what!

(*Parties...) Invitations are streaming in. This life is one continual picnic. I have come to the conclusion that it’s because this is a pioneering community and everyone has parties sort of to establish themselves, much as in the old days when they had quilting parties. Saturday the governor’s secretary and her beau dropped in about 5 and stayed until 8. We just skipped dinner.

Dec. 10, 1951  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

The children have had their share of social life. Saturday they went to Harriet Holbrook’s birthday party, yesterday to Helen Mackey’s. A big part of my job is wrapping presents. I keep a trunk of miscellaneous things for such occasions and sometimes the gifts are very miscellaneous! James had ordered some 3-foot diameter balloons for Alice’s birthday party, but as they arrived too late each of her friends receives one for his birthday.
Dec. 13, 1951 (postmark on envelope)  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

I have enrolled Alice in a Brownie group, L.S. Would it be too much to ask you to send the uniform (*hand-me-down of niece Sue)?...The group is at the Naval Air Station, where we go to Sunday school. Alice is the only outsider they are taking. The group was organized this week and has 25 girls but three co-leaders.

(*Enclosures were mentioned) The enclosed pictures are some that Ken Urban took at Tumon Beach where our two families played together shortly before they left. Liza will be much prettier when she has hair again.

Dec. 16, 1951  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

We’ve had workmen in every day. James had a long storage cabinet built in one end of our bedroom. Without an attic it seems we never have enough storage space.

Wednesday morning we were up at daybreak to go to a breakfast at the Sinclairs for the departing Holbrooks. They will be stationed at Shumaker, Arkansas and asked for your address. He was head of Public Works for the Govt. of Guam here, James’s immediate superior. He is an engineer and is now Commander in the Navy.

(*Missing page)...our party was buffet style, so the help – children and others – just had to pass the hors d’oeuvres, take up the dinner plates and pass the dessert and coffee...One of the helpers has served at the Manila hotel. Every one of them seems to have had experience...The party wasn’t “elegant” as you say, but it was just about as nice as anyone else’s here, I think. I do wish that everyone didn’t think serving a meal is necessary...

“Christmas Day” (Seems to be 1951)  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

(*Gifts and dinner at home) Liza knows (*about Santa) from Jimmy Mackey but doesn’t quite believe him.

Yesterday at the Rotary Club party Herbert Johnston lent his theater for an hour’s showing of comedies to the little guests, then there was a dinner for them, favors, and last of all Santa, who called by name some of the children, among them Liza Stewart. My but she beamed! The Armed Forces radio has had letters to Santa Claus read by Santa Claus and Mrs. Santa Claus every night for the past two weeks. We struggled through listening to all, except for one when Alice’s letter was read, we hear.

1952
Jan. 3, 1952 (letter address is 1951, apparently in error)  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

...The Rogers, also friends of theirs (*Urbans) whom we like very much, asked us to the Com Mar Officers Club New Year’s party. We had cocktails and breakfast (at 2:00 a.m.) at their house and dinner and dancing at the club in between....I haven’t seen a person drunk at any of the parties....George Rogers served us all one mint julep beforehand and we had a crème de menthe after dinner. I think the Rogers may take the Urbans’ place. They have three children just our children’s ages....

You were sweet to write to Alice, L.S. She is thrilled over being a Brownie....and I am thrilled about the uniform.

The school (Adelup) was moved during the holidays to a Navy installation, Camp Bright. It is fifteen miles from home... The children leave at 7:30 and get home at 3:30. The new permanent school will be built on the former site, Adelup Point....

(*Photo: Mrs. Robinson & 2nd Grade Class, Adelup, 1950-51 school year; Alice on the right, 2nd from front)


I wore your new dress to the governor’s reception...I love it. It came out beautifully on the first wash....

I’ve been suffering from an infected thumb. The doctor says I must keep it out of water. Murray and Alice have come to the rescue admirably. I have not had a washing machine since June, though. We can’t get anyone to come out to fix it or to load it into the station wagon to take it to the shop. The emergency shouldn’t last much longer.

We’ve found someone pleasantly stimulating – Alice’s teacher’s husband (*Joe Lareau), a young physicist, lieutenant in the Navy, has tried his hand at writing, designing and even training horses to do stunts....It is such fun listening to someone talk in other than island jargon.

Jan. 12, 1952  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

(*Typing) I am “brushing up” a bit in helping James write a letter for his private work.

You (*L.S.) were sweet to send Alice the socks. She is certainly thrilled with her Brownie accoutrement...

Last night Captain and Mrs. Heintzelman (he is commanding officer of the Naval Hospital) invited us to their house for cocktails and afterwards to dinner and dancing at the Hospital Officers Club along with twelve others including Admiral and Mrs. Litch (commanding officer of the Naval forces here). ...I was almost tongue-tied, but Captain Heintzelman...kept up a line of patter so that I couldn’t have said much even if I’d wanted to.

Tomorrow night we will go to a Guam Academy of Music recital....

Jan 19, 1952  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

Monday is such a grand day with mail coming in. I enjoyed your letter, Mama, and yours, A.B. You should have heard Murray’s sigh of relief and seen his broad grin at your opening sentence, Mama. He does so hate to write letters! But how pleased he is to get them. He was terribly disappointed that your tree was gone...He and James seem to relish it (*chopping trees) and there’s always plenty of it here, as everything grows so fast.


...James (*sick with flu) got up this morning for the first time and went to a governor’s conference. We are supposed to go to his house for dinner tonight but James said Mrs. Skinner had word this morning that her mother is seriously ill and they are trying to get her (*Mrs. Skinner) off on a plane today.
There are two visitors from Washington to come, and I am making plans for a dinner for them if it seems we are called on to give it. They are experts on Parks, who have been sent out to investigate and make recommendations for the restoration of any historical remains. Mr. Rothwell, the architect for the hospital, will arrive tomorrow bringing Mrs. Rothwell with him. I don’t shudder at the thought of entertaining any more, but I don’t look forward to it either.


The mails brought your...package, L.S. (*Brownie uniform for Alice, comic books for Murray, gown for Liza)...The Brownie uniform looks brand new. I do hope we can keep it that way...

Now, Mama, to get down to the sad business. I know how you feel about the children...I still think it will be better for me to bring just Liza. Our life has been so strenuous these two years that (I suppose it’s selfish) I look forward longingly to a comparative vacation...(*And) I really don’t see how I could get all our clothes ready, with all the consultants and whatnot in that we are supposed to take care of.

This is probably the busiest time that James will ever know (and me too consequently) with the ten-year building program for the island just getting under way. He says he couldn’t possibly get away for a trip this summer.

We had our dinner Wednesday night for the Rothwells. Leon brought a friend to help serve, and everything went off beautifully. I drove Mrs. Rothwell around the island for shopping on Thursday and helped get them to the plane that afternoon. She seems so sweet. You’d like her, Mama. She must be about 60, and her father was governor of the Hawaiian islands at one time. She is gentle and serene, and I was glad that we’d had a really nice dinner for her. Mr. Rothwell is still after James to go into partnership with him, with James’ headquarters on Guam. James hasn’t decided yet. There are so many obstacles, such as getting our own house, etc.


We’re having guests for dinner Saturday night, a repeat of last week’s – melon ball cocktail (comes frozen), shrimp and celery salad, chicken and mushroom casserole, corn pudding, green beans and bacon casserole, hot rolls, refrigerator cheese cake and coffee.

The guests to come are two from the Washington Park System, Mr. Reed and Mr. Roote, Mr. Flores of the Guam Daily News, Frank Lanahan, our favorite bachelor on the island, and Commander and Mrs. Craig, who are taking the place of the Urbans.
Alice looked so sweet in the Brownie uniform today. They will have investiture service on Valentine’s Day. Murray folded her handkerchief for her and she was so proud of his brotherly kindness.

Feb. 8, 1952   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

...Now to answer your questions about the trip. No, please don’t send me anything. We will have to travel fairly light by air....

On Tuesday Mrs. Hall from Public Health came by to see me to tell me they wanted Alice to have the tuberculin test, as a shadow showed up on her x-ray. Murray has a rash on his face which turned out to be impetigo. Yesterday Liza popped up with a stomach ache and vomiting, so I piled all three in the car and went the rounds of almost all the doctors in the hospital...We’ll hear from Alice’s test tomorrow morning — there’s so much tuberculosis on the island that the Public Health Dept. has started x‐raying all the school children. Liza’s vomiting returned today and she was put in the hospital under observation for three days. I came home to pack her suitcase, cook spaghetti for Murray’s Cub Scout dinner tonight, and wash clothes. I stayed with Liza about an hour this afternoon. She’s in a ward with a ten‐year‐old Guamanian girl next to her, who has adopted her already...

Murray accompanied us to a bingo‐dinner party of Captain and Mrs. Bean, head surgeon at the Naval hospital. They had asked the new chief of nurses at the Guam Memorial Hospital and Frank Lanahan and John Lewis, bachelor friends of ours. They included Murray just like an adult.

Did I report on our second dinner last Saturday night? It went off easily...repeat performance (I must be careful, though, not to repeat the guests for this menu!). It’s the thinking and planning that’s hard.

Would you mind saving the stamps from my letters until April 1st? At that time they will no longer be post marked Guam, Guam, and philatelists from all over the world are sending now to get some of the last.

The Cub Scout dinner was general bedlam with some sixty boys and all their brothers and sisters and parents – a big success judging from the satiated looks on the boys’ faces and weary looks on the parents!

P.S. (Sunday morning) Surprise ending! I am in the hospital, too. The Cub Scout communal dinner was too much for our stomachs. James was the only survivor. (*How it happened) Alice and I went to the hospital. The doctor looked at Alice’s tuberculin test and pronounced it negative, then we went to general admission to get medicine for our stomachs. We waited a long time because of the Saturday morning rush of complaints, an emergency case, and also the governor who’d come for light treatment on his back. He stopped afterwards to chat with me (still in line) and I was glad that what happened to me later didn’t happen at that time. After getting our prescription, there was another wait to have it filled. Suddenly standing there I collapsed with vomiting and diarrhea. Our neighbor took Alice home. Both of us are in the hospital now, Liza is in the next ward to me.

I chose the ward, as it is free, and the private rooms $5.00 a day...I am the only Statesider and cannot understand most of the talk going on around me. There are 11 other patients, 16 beds in all. The Guamanians in sickness are just as hospitable and gracious as when they are well....They share their fruit and newspapers with everyone...I find the doctors very sympathetic and the service surprisingly good...

Feb. 15, 1952   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

I’m trying out our new typewriter. We grabbed it today at a ship store, the last of six that had arrived only an hour before. It’s a tiny portable made in Switzerland.

Last week, with all the trips to the hospital, I couldn’t find time to search for valentines. Alice and I made valentines for everyone in her class with color paper that her teacher had handed out....
You asked about James’ prospects for the partnership with Mr. Rothwell. Mr. Rothwell was hired by the Government of Guam to do the plans for the Guam Memorial Hospital, which is more than just a hospital such as we know in the States. It also has to house all the staff, doctors and nurses as well as many other functions which the situation demands, about a half million dollar enterprise which will take about three years to construct. Mr. Rothwell is now in partnership with a man who wants to retire soon. Their offices are in Honolulu. The plans are almost finished and when the construction begins he will need someone here all the time for supervision. He has drawn up a contract for James whereby James will do the supervision of the hospital and have a percentage of all the firm’s business as a partner. The governor has given his permission for James to leave his present position to do this. If James accepts, eventually we would have to buy a house.

Feb. 23, 1952  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
We have had another banana stalk. There were only 52 bananas this time, and 30 of them have gone already in three days. It’s good to have something that the children can eat all they want of.

I just finished reading The Long and The Short of the Fall, a story of the Marine invasion of Guam and Iwo Jima...It still makes me shiver to think of such bloody fighting having taken place right on the ground we live on. Murray and his friend Stanley go “boondocking” every day to a field close by that must have been a major battlefield, for they bring back…Marine helmets, knives, machine guns, etc.

Strella Taitano is giving hula lessons on Tuesday nights to a Navy friend and her little girl. Alice and I are included, too.

Murray came down with asthma Sunday afternoon…I am so thankful for Dr. Clark’s prescription and also your nebulizer, A.B.....Yes, Alice likes to read, too, A.B., but hasn’t developed any discrimination yet. She reads everything from cereal boxes to discarded newspapers and makes a song of words she likes the sound of.

March 4, 1952  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
The Public Works Division has some new people, the Helliars, who have a child named Erin. She, too, was born in March, so her mother pulled the name out of a hat because of St. Patrick’s Day.

James has at last recovered his old title of Planning Commissioner. The Planning Commission, which had its own authority as a separate department under Naval Governments, was made subservient to Public Works when Governor Skinner came in. It has been a headache to James in many ways under this set-up, for he has had to forego much planning for Public Works work. He will enjoy being more his own boss now, and it also means an increase in salary. Of course, it would come just when he is considering leaving.

Last night I went to a P.T.A. meeting...(because) it was called an “open house” in order to give the parents a chance to talk to the children’s teachers and to see the new school location and equipment. I went with the Sinclairs who took some time going around to all their four children’s teachers.

I have my washing machine back at last from the shop and had the best time yesterday washing everything in the house. On the last load, though, the machine balked again, so I had to send for the repairman....I do hope he can fix it. I’d forgotten what a time saver it was.

March 9, 1952  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
(*Packing for trip, Erin Stewart’s birthday)... James took me out to dinner last night to celebrate, and it was very pleasant not to have to talk to a lot of other people while we ate.

March 13, 1952 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
(*Liza’s birthday on March 12) Liza was as pleased with your cards as with being five years old at last....We had the neighborhood children in, the two Mackeys, the two Petersons and Rosita’s little girl, Anne. I made
popsicles for them and gave them Bireley’s orangeade. Liza’s presents were a purse, handkerchiefs, coloring books, a tracing set… and a toy ambulance which Murray picked out for her himself.

We received a package of three nice books some time ago and put them away….(*Liza found the books.) They were from the Iskiwitzes – Liza’s was Alice in Wonderland, Murray’s was Richard Halliburton’s New Worlds to Conquer, and Alice’s was The Singing Tree. Aren’t they good to these children?

(*Describes Several Parties…) Saturday night we’re having the heads of the civic organizations in for tea to try to promote the Symphony…The next concert will be next month and a much stiffer program planned. We have a new publicity man who volunteered his services, and he suggested the tea. I think he’s a good man, except for that! No, I don’t really mind. The arts have to be pushed anywhere.

March 18, 1952 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
(*Scouting Activities) I have kept a neighbor’s child the past two days, 4-year-old Loraine. The Peterson’s eldest child, David, had a severe asthma attack and Mr. Peterson had to stay at the hospital with him….Liza feels much older than Loraine, now that she’s five, and takes responsibility for keeping her out of trouble.

We had a surprise package today from the Rothwells – Macadamia nuts (only grown in Hawaii), two jars of poha preserve (also special Hawaiian) (*smooth skinned orange berry) and one of Guava jelly. Wasn’t that nice?

March 24, 1952 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
I’m writing this in bed – sore throat and aching….James took a day’s annual leave today to help at home.

The other day we looked out and Alice was at the top of a tangan-tangan tree, Liza half-way up and the kitty right behind her! It looked so cute.

Murray has bought himself a bicycle tire repair kit and has business almost every day. He is quite mechanically minded. We certainly need a mechanic!

April 1, 1952 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
One more month now! My trunk was picked up at last today.

Mrs. Roosevelt arrived at 7:00 Saturday morning, and we were asked to be part of the party to meet her. She was just here between planes and looked very tired. (*In a later letter, Erin Stewart wrote: “Yes, I did go to hear Mrs. Roosevelt…Meeting her was only a matter of shaking hands and saying, “Welcome to Guam.”)

Murray has gone into the bicycle tire repair business. He charges 10¢ a puncture, and it’s hard on Alice, who seems to pick up all the tacks on the farm like a magnet. She has to pay 10¢ for Brownies, too, and it hurts her Scotch soul. She says she won’t be a Brownie if she keeps on having punctures. Bicycling is more important.

April 8, 1952 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
I have fallen into a bad job. The chairman of the Brownie committee resigned and no one else would take it. Most of the Navy wives will be leaving soon. I finally agreed to do it. The three leaders of the group have had a lot of friction, but I thought it had all been settled. Now they are arguing about what children should be in whose group, so I shall have a committee meeting…to decide. I never would have taken it if I had known…I have a miniature idea of what the United Nations is trying to do. Is it possible at all?
April 15, 1952  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Mr. Neutra is back, this time with Mrs. Neutra, so we will have them to dinner next Monday night. I have some of the food left over from the last time tucked away in the deep freeze, so I’ll just serve the same menu. Mrs. Neutra plays the cello and is going to bring one and play for us Monday night, also sing.

I’ve been invited to the Navy Wives’ luncheon tomorrow by Mrs. Hill, the Brownie leader. It’s a “crazy hat” luncheon. Can’t they think of a lot of ways to waste time? I let the children put my hat together, just a lot of sewing matters around a ring mold....

April 23, 1952  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
There were parties for the Neutras as well as ours to prepare for.... (And) there was the Barrigada fiesta with three homes to call in, a housewarming for the new Public Works’ engineer, and Brownie mothers calling almost constantly. At the meeting last night we decided to divide the troop into two separate troops, which meant that I had to write a letter to all the mothers explaining the decision. I wrote it after I got home, notified the leaders and took it to the Girl Scouts to be mimeographed. Tomorrow I shall have to call another meeting to straighten out the division of finances, reports, etc. Then I think I’ll be through. I hope so.

Our dinner was successful, I think, in spite of a good many last minute mishaps. I didn’t have water all day to begin with, then at 4:00 Gene Kraft came in saying he thought he’d had a heart attack and wanted James to ask Captain Heintzelman to take him in at the Navy Hospital, at 4:30 one of our guests called and said she’d been stricken with food poisoning and couldn’t come, at 6:00 Leon, who was to help serve, came with an eye closed from an infection! James somehow managed to get Gene into the Navy Hospital (a thing we wouldn’t even ask for ourselves!). Paul Souder brought his visiting mother, who kindly replaced our sick guest, but Mr. Neutra came in sick himself! After dinner he retired to our bed. Mrs. Neutra couldn’t play for us because the only cello we could find for her was a baby cello. James had to go at 6:00 to the Symphony rehearsal to give the musicians a pep talk, as there is some grumbling there. He was back at 7:00, in time to walk in with the guests and to get the Neutras another government car to go home in, as their lights had failed on the way! Doesn’t that sound wild? As I spent all of yesterday doing Brownie work, I washed the last party dish tonight.

April 29, 1952  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
We managed to pull through the second symphony concert last night and a reception afterwards. It was well received and 100 more tickets were sold than the first time. We had student tickets this time and general admission, too, which helped account for more tickets being sold, I imagine. You’ll notice on the program that the conductor is not yet 23. He is amazing. He played his violin for us at the reception, and such a repertoire! ...He played Bach, Sarasate and a selection from a Filipino composer who is supposed to have been the greatest they have ever produced, and he was beheaded by the Japanese!...Nobody knows how much effort goes into a concert except those who do it....

Last night I broke down and went to the Guam Women’s Club luncheon. It is newly organized and is supposed to be a working thing, not social. I hate clubs so that I thought I’d not get involved, but then I decided that there are so few who do anything that maybe I should investigate at least. There were seventy-five there, so I suppose I was wrong in my surmise. There certainly is great need of civic organizations here where the government, especially Naval Government, has been trying to carry the whole load. It’s interesting to watch. The more I see of that form of society, the less I like socialism.
May 6, 1952   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Alice’s Brownie uniform came today in record time. Thank you so much. She is so pleased with it. We are invited to dinner tomorrow night at the home of one of the geologists, Dr. Tracy. He and Mr. Tracy are an interesting young couple, she from Arkansas, her grandfather from Tupelo...

There have been times when I wished I could entertain or keep house, not both. But everyone does both here, and most of the wives work besides. It certainly isn’t a languid tropical island.

Ruth Rogers (the Navy wife I like so well) has asked me to go along with her to Manila, HongKong and Bangkok....I have started my shots. There’s a lot of red tape involved, which is irksome.... (Ruth) knows people in all those ports, and she is a thoroughly delightful person, so it’s hard to resist....

May 13, 1952   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
My trip is a realization now....I’ll let you know.

[EGS’s brief trip to Asian countries]

May 26, 1952   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
I am home again after my “world tour” and so happy to be, too.

There is so much to tell that I think I’ll save it all until June 11\textsuperscript{th}. Liza and I should arrive either on that day or the next...

I feel that surely I must have been away for a month I have seen so much. The best part of the trip was going shopping in Hong Kong with a Chinese woman and having tea and dinner in her home. It was fun to eat with chopsticks. Bangkok is like no other place in the world I know. I really felt I was deep into the Orient there. A graduate of the best University in Bangkok took us about. She has a sister who will enter the Univ. of Michigan to get her master’s degree. It will be so interesting to compare the East with the West.

Walter Gieseking (*French-born German pianist and composer) was on the plane coming from Manila to Guam. I told him of our symphony orchestra. He was surprised that we had one on Guam. Maybe we can have him play here.

June 3, 1952   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

Just one more week from now Liza and I will be half-way home....There are parties and more parties as usual to fill the time. My mind is still half in Bangkok, the other half in Memphis....

This morning I had the Brownie committee meeting at my house and rushed from that to shop for thank-you gifts...Now I have to go to a Guamanian wedding breakfast in the morning and a dinner and bridge evening tomorrow night, so forgive me for making this short.

July 18, 1952   Jim Drought in California (Planning Commissioner in 1948) to JMS
Yesterday Richard Neutra was in and I spent some time with him at the office and again for several hours in the evening. He spoke highly of you and glowingly of Erin. He commented particularly on some furniture you had done.
As you know the (*U.S.) Congress recently passed the housing bill which extends the benefits of the Housing Acts to Guam. Despite any claims to the contrary the passage of the bill was engineered solely by the Housing and Home Finance Agency. The housing part of Interior’s bill never got off first base and was withdrawn, largely, I believe, because no one in Interior (least of all Sade [somewhat illegible to transcriber of this Drought letter]) knew what it was about.

We in the Div. of Slum Clearance have been working on the FHA to make arrangements for mortgage financing in Guam. They are reluctant, as was to be expected – but will go along sometimes.

About a week ago some of the boys associated I believe with Ben Polamo were in. Namely Don McNeal and Purchase. You no doubt met Purchase when he was in Guam. They came in to discuss the sketch (*Government House) plans Neutra had prepared for them – and I might add were slightly annoyed to discover I had already seen them (N. having sent them in to us the week before).

Neutra has kindly given me copies of the two brochures — the one prepared for the Governor and the one above mentioned which was prepared for the development group. I have scanned the report to the governor and find it to my liking. I have agreed to give it further study and forward any comments I may have to Neutra.

About 3 weeks ago Carlos (*Taitano) stopped by to pick up some data on FHA financing. He was off to Mexico for a month and wanted to study it a bit. I did not have time to give him much of a fill in and I have the feeling he will be enormously surprised to discover how unsimple it all is.

So you see thru’ ten thousand miles and three years I am still not very far from the island. We do what we can from afar.

Incidentally Neutra told me that Frank (*Kelly) came down with an attack of bursitis the day he was to leave for Guam and had to cancel his reservations. No doubt Alexander has told you this.

But what of you and Erin? Has E returned to the States this summer as expected? If she is in the States let me know when and where she will be. As sometimes happens I go here and there for a few days at a time and it may be possible that our paths will cross.

Cordially, Jim

[*According to Robert Alexander, the Neutra/Alexander firm left Guam in 1953 when it was ruled that their two types of contract – for an island master plan and for structures, were in conflict. Interview of Robert E. Alexander by M.L. Laskey, Vol II, TAPE X, 371 UCLA Oral History Program, 10/4/1986. http://www.archive.org/stream/architectureplan02alex/architectureplan02 alex_djvu.txt. Jim Drought worked with the Guam Planning Commission and Frank Kelly was his assistant (EGS in Nov. 1952 letter states Kelly later became Richard Neutra’s representative in Guam). James Stewart (JMS) was to take the position of Frank Kelly (EGS Nov. 1952 letter), but, within months, both Jim Drought and Frank Kelly returned to California (JMS personal communication), leaving him acting planning commissioner (12/14/1948 Guam Planning Commission document, top of p.11).]

[*Summer – Erin and Liza Stewart spent in Memphis. James Stewart’s mother, Edna Hyatt Stewart, spent the summer in Guam. Document on the left is Mrs. Stewart’s security clearance, permitting entry to Guam.]
Sep. 24, 1952  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
We’re all unpacked and settled in. The trip was better than I had expected….Mrs. Stewart is leaving Friday (*Edna Hyatt Stewart). She plans to stay a few days in Honolulu and a few more in San Francisco. She is planning to do substitute teaching at Merrill School this year.

The invitations have started, but I doubt there will be as many as before. The Heintzelmans asked all three of us to dinner and bingo at their club last night. Mrs. Stewart won two steak dinners, which we will have later. The governor is having an Hawaiian luau (pig roasted underground) on Saturday night.

Commissary and ship store privileges will be dropped for us at the first of the month. Saturday we’ll go shopping to stock our shelves for the last time.

~Sep., 1952  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
I’m finding it hard to settle in, especially with the new contingency of privileges being cancelled. We are hoarding, much as a squirrel laying in his winter supply of nuts….If the going gets too hard, we can leave. James says the governor made the statement that the change would be grounds for breaking a contract if anyone so desires. However, we can’t count on his memory.

Each time when I leave them I forget the mildew, the rain and the problems. I have become accustomed once more to the mouldy smell, the change in water, soggy crackers, etc., but I’m still resenting the rains a bit, especially after today when I simply had to wash clothes (*and line dry). Liza wasn’t bothered in the least.

James is working up some preliminary plans for a 42-room hotel overlooking Agaña Bay to be submitted to the government for a loan. I typed his specifications last night and hope to continue to do this part. We’ll leave off partying for work this year. His new contract does not begin until January and he can’t accept any private commissions after that, but thinks he’ll have enough before then to carry him through the next two years.

Murray really does play a good game of chess, but what is more important, at least to me, he is willing as ever to do anything helpful.

Oct. 4, 1952  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
This morning I installed Alice in a Brownie group at the Naval Hospital led by Mrs. Heintzelman, the director’s wife. Mrs. Heintzelman is a grand person and the work with this group should be pleasant. Murray isn’t interested in Cub Scouts any more.

We entertained three bachelors last night…One, who is head of F.H.A. in Honolulu, is here to investigate the feasibility of having it (*F.H.A.) on Guam. If so, we plan to buy a lot and an F.H.A. loan will take care of the building. We’ll rent it and have it to go to if we need it.

I do hope getting prices is not too much a burden, A.B….I want to write to Cliff Davis about the situation… I don’t like to take it lying down…but I want to get all the facts first. The prices seem exorbitant….Bread is 35¢ a loaf here, so I plan to make all of ours. Eggs are 94¢…We are fortunate, I suppose, to be able to get these things at all on a little island this far removed….One store has dried skim milk now, a big help.

Nov.?, 1952  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Frank Kelly asked us to dinner last night. He used to be in James’ present job and is now Mr. Neutra’s representative on Guam, quite pleasant and intelligent.

Nov. 2, 1952  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
It is such a beautiful sunny day with only a slight ripple of palm trees…Last night there was the biggest moon I have seen, which made it hard to see a movie (*outdoor movie, probably at B.P.M.).
Halloween is behind us, too, which is always a relief. My ginger plants even looked a bit healthier this year. Alice’s Brownie group was invited to the Halloween party at the hospital. They do have the nicest parties.

There is a Brazilian sailing ship in the harbor. It is on a world training cruise. We rode down to see it after our swim yesterday – simply gorgeous. It is large for a sailing craft, but we decided its men must be packed liked sardines in it, for the whole island seemed one swarm of white uniforms.

**Nov. 4, 1952  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

Don’t worry with getting the prices. It has occurred to me that since we are Govt. of Guam employees and not Federal, Cliff Davis couldn’t help us, nor could anyone else for that matter. It’s not too bad. I’m still finding some corners to cut.

**Nov. 13, 1952  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

You’d like Frank Kelly, Mr. Neutra’s representative. He resigned his government job here because of problems with Jim Drought. He seems to have the Irish good nature and dignity himself, and what a brain! Someone suggested a guessing game at our party for him, the questions covered every field. He knew all the answers.

We have discussed many things, and he always has a lot to add. I like people who can do that. He’s been coming here Saturday nights to talk with James.

(More parties and activities…) I suppose we’ll be having a new governor soon. It’s customary for Democrats to resign, I believe, under a Republican administration. However, a group of businessmen and politicians here who have been favored by the governor have sent in a petition to keep him.

Our Brownie group is going to take a field trip to the aquarium. The Bronsons, who own it, even have baby sharks. Elizabeth Bronson says they can’t bring themselves to eat fish any more since they have been nurturing these.

**Nov. 24, 1952  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

The Woman’s Club is having a luncheon and fashion show December 6th. I’m to work on mimeographing the program. James is taking the month of December off to work on his private business, so I’ll have typing to do for him. We’re having an eggnog party during Christmas week, too, so I’ll be busy! That seems the easiest way, though, to repay obligations all at once and is my own idea. I already have many dishes in the freezer.

We’ve asked Frank Kelly to Thanksgiving dinner. I got a 3-lb. turkey, full-grown. Have you ever heard of such a thing? I was getting desperate looking for a hen to bake. All must have been bought by the Butlers for their christening party yesterday – 6th child. I have never in my life seen so much food at once...

**Dec. 3, 1952  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

No, I don’t think I want the X-mas cards...James’ monastery is under construction now, so maybe 1953 will see that on our cards.

**Dec. 18, 1952  JMS to brother Richard (“Dick”) Stewart**

In May, just before she went back to the States, Erin flew to Hongkong and Bankok with Ruth Rogers, whose husband, now Cmdr. George Rogers, was two years ahead of you in Annapolis. I’m much too busy...haven’t left the island and don’t expect to for another two years.

My work with the Government of Guam continues to be interestingly varied although most of the interest is killed in frustration...90% of my time is lost in untangling red tape. You’ve heard of the architectural firm of Neutra and Alexander. They have been commissioned as consultants, and served as such for a year now, but have accomplished absolutely nothing because of this red tape.
...To bring up the job responsible for this letter….As you see this is a small store with offices on a mezzanine. The building is to be air-conditioned with the exception of the warehouse area. There is a ten foot utility easement adjoining the rear of the building...(more details.). I need an air conditioning consultant to develop complete plans and specifications for the installation of all necessary equipment in this store, and hope you might be interested in undertaking it, or, if not, would turn it over to someone who would (more details.)...

I’m writing this on my new Hermes. You’ve probably seen the smart advertising. Well, don’t fall for it...

We’re just back from a dress rehearsal of Alice’s pageant. She looked so sweet in the angel’s costume. There will be a party afterwards at the Naval Hospital.

We went to three parties yesterday after 4:00 o’clock. First, the Rotary party for the children. You can imagine fifty horns blowing at one time and confetti being strewn over everything. There was an orchestra, but they gave up after a bit with the competition. Liza was the most pleased with her gift from Santa Claus, an aloha shirt. Murray got a gun, Alice a toy refrigerator.

The rest of my family is assembling a pseudo-Christmas tree. James has strung wrapping cord from the ceiling in a cone-shape to the floor (*anchored with decoratively wrapped heavy packages, e.g. cases of cat food) and has wrapped strings of lights and garlands around it, from which the ornaments are suspended. It looks surprisingly nice. Guam is a place of improvisations. [*This “string tree” became traditional at the Stewart home. During the Elvidge years, the Stewarts decorated a similar “Christmas tree” outside Government House, described in Appendix 2G.]

Governor Skinner has resigned, and we are all speculating on who the next one will be.

The party last night seemed a success, and I’m glad it’s done. It wasn’t as hard as having six guests to dinner. The children were so helpful. Busier than bees. Alice passed trays. Murray took up glasses and cups. (This morning he said he couldn’t go by anyone that they didn’t say “Here’s a glass” or “Here’s a cup” and his intonation was perfect.) Liza kept pulling at my skirt and after a long time I had a chance to see what she wanted. She wanted to pass something, too. So I suggested she pass the candy. The next thing I knew she was being very hospitable to the guests and to Liza. Both cheeks were puffy with sweets, and she was hugging the tray as if she knew the guests were candy thieves.

This was a red-letter day. The Christmas ship was delayed because of a storm, so packages weren’t ready to deliver until today....The poor post office employees are working eighteen hours a day, like we did in registration, trying to sort 7000 packages. (*A.B. was registrar at Southwestern College, now Rhodes College, in Memphis. L.S. and, for a time EGS, served as assistant registrar.)

We are in Condition 2 for another typhoon and Public Works is battening our house.

...We’re invited to a New Year’s party tomorrow night, and I’ll wear the dress we (should say you, Mama) made, if the typhoon doesn’t keep us at home.
1953

Jan. 1, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
(*)Typhoon Alice*) was not as bad as 1949 (*Typhoon Allyn*)...James took the children yesterday afternoon in the height of the storm to the police station to find out if we should abandon quarters....the telephone had been out since morning, electricity off since noon...They didn’t come back for some time and the suspense was dreadful....The roof which was already nervous in spots gave way under pressure...enough to let a lot of rain in.

Jan. 14 (envelope postmark) There was no letter in the envelope that accompanied this newspaper clipping.

I supervised five brownies Saturday at selling Girl Scout calendars in one of the ship stores. They sold 75 in one hour. When I came home, James said, “You look disheveled.” I felt worse. But what fun they had!

Feb. 9, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
James’ private work was supposed to have stopped December 1st but he has to finish the jobs he’s already started. There’s still one more, the Butler apartment building to do. Then he won’t accept any new ones, though how we’ll manage without the extra money I don’t know. Most of the wives here work because they can’t manage otherwise. James thinks inspections, etc., on these jobs will take about two years, and after that we’ll begin to worry.
We went to a nice party Friday night, given by Mrs. Johnston, school supervisor, but this was not the traditional meal...a buffet; (it was) served quite formally. Mrs. Johnston is the leading woman in civic affairs here and has such a store of amusing tales to tell about life during the Japanese occupation. Mrs. Johnston’s husband was from Franklin, Tennessee. [*Photo was sent in memorium (Dec. 30, 1977) by Emilie Johnston to EGS and JMS. Franklin, Tennessee is near Memphis, Stateside home of Erin and James Stewart. Mrs. Johnston’s biography is at: http://guampedia.com/namesake-school-agueda-johnston-middle/]

The Heintzelmans have asked us to a dinner dance at the hospital officers’ club this Thursday night. It has been such a pleasure working with her in Brownies, and he is fine, too. I shall miss them when they leave, which will be soon. Then we won’t have any Navy friends.

Mr. Neutra had a showing in Progressive Architecture magazine of his Guam work, and included in it are the plans for Adelup Point School, which James did!

**Feb. 16, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

I know you want pictures, but we hate to invest anything much in a good camera because of the effect of climate on them. This (*photo at left) is taken at a Rotary picnic, an annual affair. One of the rituals is dunking anyone who is dressed. I had my yellow Hawaiian playsuit on over my bathing suit. Emilie Johnston grabbed me first thing and threw me in... The Skinners were ready to leave when the picture was taken, so they are dressed. Next time we’ll do better. [*The photo on the left, and other photos, were in a letter dated May 4, 1953 from EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”]

There are all sorts of farewell parties now for the governor...We went to a beach breakfast for them yesterday before the Rotary picnic. Imagine hot dogs for breakfast.

The first prize winner at the Symphony costume ball was a girl in an Indian sari. It was beautiful, and she had even gone so far as to have the caste marking on her forehead. There were Philippine mestiza dresses, Chinese, Japanese outfits, Spanish mantillas and South Sea island sarongs as well as Hawaiian moo-moos. Quite colorful.

Can you tell me, Mama, how much dough you save when you want to start the next batch?...Bread-making is a weekly chore now. Murray said he had to write three smells he liked best. He didn’t mention the smell of baking bread “because no one else knows what that is!” There are others who do it, though. One of the doctors’ wives, a Latvian, made three hundred of the best little rolls with bacon stuffed in the middle, for the picnic yesterday....

We had a letter from Dick Holbrook who was amazed at Mr. Neutra’s claiming the Adelup school, too. He had seen the article and wants to know what’s happening.

...(Murray) can spell anything called to him, but in transferring it to paper it always gets simplified, such as “I coton (caught on) to that.” He hasn’t “coton,” I would say.
...I never thought it would feel like winter in the tropics, but I can actually see (or imagine) seasons now. There are days when the early-morning air feels like spring, and at other times when the wind is high, there are intimations of autumn. These are such slight changes that newcomers never realize they exist.

**Feb. 24, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

Did you read of our latest typhoon, Typhoon Irma? This is certainly a year for bad weather all over the world. This was a very mild one, only 50 knots... (but) our roof is a sieve now. We waded into breakfast and swept the water out the back door. All during the typhoon our Navy radio station was having a request program with contributions accompanying the requests for the Netherlands Relief Fund. They finally stopped at 6 A.M. Sunday morning (!) with over $15,000.00 donated. Wasn’t that a nice thing to do during a typhoon!

In spite of the typhoon the Traffic Department here had their annual beach party on Sunday. They had worked all week cleaning the beach, erecting improvised palm shelters, volleyball court, dance pavilion, bamboo benches and blowing up inner tubes for the children as well as preparing the usual quantities of food. We were rained upon and blown about by the winds, but Murray, Alice and Liza had a wonderful time.

Yesterday, being a holiday, we spent cleaning and painting closets with D.D.T. paint to stop the roaches...

...I took the children to the Hospital movie last night at the Heintzelman’s invitation. We civilians are not allowed to go to the free movies any more except as guests. The children have taken it better than I expected, and we have been playing cards in place of it.

The Heintzelmans have word that they will be stationed in Memphis, of all things...I surely want you to know them. He is Captain Heintzelman (Jack) and has been commanding officer of the Naval Hospital here. She (Lois) is leader of Alice’s Brownie troop... They have two children, Janice, who teaches science at the high school here — she sang in the Soldiers’ Show in Japan recently — and a son who is graduating this June from Purdue.... They’ve been so nice to us...It will probably be several months before they arrive (in Memphis).

**March 9, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

My biggest news is that I have a clothes dryer at last, a two-year-old G.E., which we bought from the Lareaus, who are leaving Guam. She was Murray’s teacher last year.

We’re having (a) dinner for the Heintzelmans...our other guests will be Judge and Mrs. Shriver and Dr. Wynberg, the director of Public Health. He is fairly new to the island, from Holland. He seems exceptionally nice and interesting. So are the Shrivers. I think we have the cream of the crop.

Friday night Public Works had their yearly party, a dinner dance. The governor, as he is leaving, was to be the honor guest, but couldn’t come until 10 o’clock. As he and Jean walked in, the band played “For He’s a Jolly Good Fellow”, then dinner was served but they said they’d already eaten.

**March 17, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

...Last week was particularly vicious...washing machine broke down because of climate conditions, according to the repair man...two flat tires...caused by, I think, the terribly rough road leading to our house...Liza received a cut lip from a fall from a tree...water went off just before the Heintzelman party guests arrived and electricity went off just after their arrival. The party went off well in spite of everything.
We learned today that a new governor has been appointed, a Mr. Eardley (*Elvidge), 60-year-old lawyer. I hope his years and wisdom will improve our lot. Guam is not a place I’d like to govern. Too many conflicting interests.

March 19, 1953 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

We are about to get a new governor. I was mistaken about the name. Plans are already underway for the inaugural ceremony and receptions. James is on the committee.

March 31, 1953 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

Last week we went to three parties and had one of our own. The occasions were Mr. Rothwell’s return. He’s here on hospital business again. Our party Sunday night was almost impromptu. I served spaghetti buffet style to ten. The children removed plates, served dessert and coffee and were in general excellent servers. They do enjoy it so much.

(Easter) This year the stores have done better. The Easter shipment arrived before Easter instead of a month afterward as it usually does. So I have candy eggs for the first time on Guam.

There is talk now of taking away the “overseas differential” in salaries for Statesiders. They are slashing us to the bone. The only thing left to take away is housing, and that subject has been brought up, too.

Mr. Elvidge, the new governor, will arrive any day now. He has been sworn in already at Washington. The local committees are quite upset, as they had expected that ceremony to be performed here.

April 8, 1953 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

Monday night Mr. Rothwell invited everyone who had entertained him (20 in all) to a Chinese dinner at a Chinese restaurant. We had only chopsticks and bona fide Chinese food. Last night the Heintzelmans had twelve for dinner and bingo at the Hospital Officers’ Club. All the guests but Judge and Mrs. Shriver and us were Navy. The Shivers are very fine. One of the ladies at our table won a bottle of champagne, so we had that. Captain Heintzelman is a born comedian and kept us laughing. He should be on the stage.

The nominating committee of the Women’s Club asked me if I’d be an officer. Wanted me to be recording secretary which sounded much too much work, so I settled for vice-president, which is nothing (I hope).

The post-Lent parties have started, and the governor is to arrive on the 24th. The formal reception will be held on the 25th. He is a friend of Admiral Litch, commanding officer of the Naval Forces here, so maybe we will have more understanding and sympathy between the two regimes. The situation is certainly unpleasant now.

~April 9, 1953 (envelope postmarked Apr. 9, 1953) EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

I am taking dictation now for some specifications. At times James has to stop to refer to drawings, and I shall take advantage of these to talk to you.

We are going out to dinner each night while I do this, and I’m letting everything possible go. It will only last about a week, but James has several jobs pressing. I wish I were less rusty and had a bigger typewriter....

You see from the enclosed clipping that the new governor has been appointed. I hope he will favor his employees more than this one. There’s not much more that could be taken away except our houses, and Carl Skinner would have done that if any had been available for rent. The few that are rent for $200.00 a month! What could we do on a government salary?

The assistant librarian, a Negro, is very well-educated and pleasant. It touched me very much when she brought her copy of Gibran’s The Prophet, which I had asked for and the library didn’t have, especially since
she has a note in it that the book was passed on to her by a friend who is now deceased. I think Liza won the privilege (of reading it) for me. She saw Mrs. Smith at the post-office and said, “Mama, there’s our friend”, jumped out of the car and ran up to talk with her.

Mrs. Butler, a Guamanian just back from Europe, brought me two beautiful handkerchiefs and a scarf from Madrid and James a cigarette. Wasn’t that kind?

~April 12, 1953 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
A friend of ours, Dr. Josh Tracy, with the geological survey here, whose wife is secretary in James’ office, told James that a friend of his at Yale, Hi Cody, had written him to look up a friend of his wife’s, meaning me. His wife is Polly Jacoby, whom I knew at camp. It is a small world.

I hope the governor doesn’t come for some time because I’m enjoying the freedom from parties. It’s Lent, too, and the Guamanians rest from parties during that time.

April 15, 1953 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Last night we had the sailor from Tupelo to dinner…The leg of lamb was one I’ve stashed away in the deep freeze since before privileges were removed…When I asked him to come, he said, “I’d love it, but I don’t want you to go to any trouble for me.” That good Mississippi lingo was like a breath of spring to me.

…Mrs. Stevens teaches home economics and invited Liza and me to go with her for demonstrations at two of the southern schools last Friday. I got to see the insides of the village schools. They are concrete buildings, but only one large room divided into classrooms by movable chalkboards. It was hard to hear her demonstrate making cookies at times for the din from the other rooms. The children seemed happy, though….

Barrigada had its fiesta Sunday. We are invited to more houses in that village than any other, but after three we were exhausted. I can’t understand how the Guamanians keep it up for two whole days.

Apr. 20, 1953 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
This week is governor’s week (my own dubbing). We received a very formal invitation to the inauguration on Thursday morning (*Governor Elvidge inauguration April 23, 1953) at 9:00. It seems so funny, since nothing really seems formal here. This will be in the Plaza, the grounds of the old Spanish governor’s estate in the center of Agaña. It is entirely open air and vulnerable to tropic rains which somehow never fail such occasions. At the last one Governor Skinner and the few dignitaries around him, being the only ones provided with shelter, were the only dry people. Thursday being declared an official holiday, the children will get to see it too. I’m sure they will enjoy it. The formal reception will be held on Thursday night. We will have to meet the plane on Wednesday, too, and proceed in the cortège to Government house.

No one seems to have any hope of getting commissary privileges back. Once lost, they are probably gone forever. The new governor would have a hard time bucking the businessmen, I’m afraid. Still, I mean to take it up with him if no one else will.

Last week a convict escaped and hasn’t been caught yet. Seems impossible until you think of Tweed living in the jungles for two years and the Japanese on his trail all the time.

The latest, and a tragedy, news – the wife of the new director of the Guam Memorial Hospital committed suicide on Friday night. I had only met her once, at their reception for the hospital staff several weeks ago. She was very attractive, the daughter of the king of Denmark’s physician. I believe that the reason for the act
was a quarrel with her husband over having to go to parties. Of course, in their position, they were invited to even more than we are. I can sympathize, though that doesn’t seem the solution.

I have to meet with Mrs. Heintzelman and Miss Ginnity, the Girl Scout executive, tomorrow afternoon to have the troop turned over to me. Mrs. Heintzelman will leave on Friday. They will be at the Naval Hospital in Milington. I know you will like them – really fine people.

I’m enclosing the schedule of our college (Territorial College). Governor Skinner is responsible for getting this started. It is in conjunction with Ohio State. Professors are sent out for relatively short stays. As you see, it is mostly a teacher’s college now, but they have hopes of making it a 4-year college in the next ten years.

Did I tell you about Murray’s finding bugs for Mr. Peterson, the entomologist? He has his eyes peeled always for anything that others want. Last week he found a centipede that was just about to hatch her eggs. Mr. Peterson was so pleased that he called Murray to thank him. Liza is following the example but has turned her research into a remunerative endeavor. Mr. Peterson gave her a dime for one bug, so she hustles down to his office almost every day. The next day, he gave her a nickel for a moth! Yesterday she had a feather in a jar ready to be transported. I caught that one before it emerged, fortunately.

We were fortunate to find homes for the kittens. Liza’s two were named Betty and Erin. Betty turned out to be a boy. Murray named one of his Richard the Lion-Hearted.

April 26, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Thursday morning we were all five dressed in our best and at the Plaza for the inauguration at 9:00, brought the children home and fed them lunch, then with James to his Rotary Club luncheon. At 5:00 we were dressed in our very best (tuxedo and my straw-colored organdy) at the reception. The new governor seems, on first acquaintance, very warm and capable. Mrs. Elvidge, too, I think we’ll like.

Friday, Liza and Alice picked flowers immediately after breakfast and made leis for Mrs. Heintzelman and Janice, and we were at the port, some twenty miles away, by 9:00 to wish them farewell. I then took Alice to school, brought Liza home for her lunch and went to the Women’s Club luncheon. Yesterday I had the Brownie troop all to myself for the first time.

[*Plumeria & orchid are home photos; hibiscus at flowers.vg]

April 29, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
(*luncheon)....We are making good friends, people who stay here on Guam as we do. This time it was Jean O’Connor, who came out with me on the freighter three years ago and wore the same dress off the ship (navy blue print with cape). Their child, Deirdra, is graduating from high school in California this year, so Jean has more time than most of us do.

We made our formal call on Governor and Mrs. Elvidge Sunday afternoon. There was no answer to the bell, so we left our cards. On Monday morning James was called by Mrs. Elvidge to consult with her about Government House furnishings. He says she seems very pleasant...They left yesterday for a governor’s conference in Washington, will be back in three weeks for a two-months’ stay (maybe) on Guam before their next conference. James had this same job to do with Jean Skinner when they arrived. She asked him what he thought ought to be done about the ceilings. Knowing they had recently been painted, he said he thought they might be cleaned. She agreed very charmingly...(but) as soon as he was back in his office James had a call from the governor saying that by all means the ceilings should be painted. Mrs. Elvidge asked him the same question, and having learned from experience, he replied, “By all means paint them.” Then she said she believed they might be cleaned just as well!

I’m on the Civic Improvement committee (Guam Women’s Club) now and we’re working on plans for a Play Center this summer. Guam has no public playgrounds, and juvenile delinquency is stepping up. We are hoping
this will be a start, and the villages will take up the idea. It will run from 9 until 12 every morning during July. We will pay the director, and everything else will be volunteer help.

**May 11, 1953   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

Last week was so quiet I found myself getting restless, of all things! (*Passage about callers on Sunday afternoon.*) The Meyers from James’ office came first, then the Shermans (she is Murray’s teacher) and their three children. It was eight o’clock before we ate dinner.

**May 28, 1953   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

Tuesday night I was busy preparing lunch for Mrs. Elvidge, who, in talking to James about their house and gardens, expressed a wish to see our plants some morning. There seemed nothing to do but ask her to have lunch with us. She is enthusiastic, easy to talk to, and her hands look as if she has done much work, the same as I....

Mrs. Woelfl, the head of the library, had us to dinner Saturday night along with eight others. They served barbecued lamb. It was delicious. Her husband works for the Navy, so they can still have such food. You should see some of things I cook and call meat.

Sunday night Cynthia Torres, a Guamanian woman who owns the Pabst beer agency, invited us to dinner. She had about 35 guests and served T-bone steaks. The party was for a Pabst agent who didn’t arrive in time after all. Guam can be so frustrating. It was also for the Elvidges, though, and they were on hand. [*Photo was part of an ‘in memorium’ insert in 2001 Johnston newsletter that Emilie Johnson sent to EGS and JMS. “In 1954, Largimas Leon Guerrero Untalan and Cynthia Johnston Torres were the first women to be elected to the Guam Legislature.” -- http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CRECB-2001-pt3/html/CRECB-2001-pt3-Pg3329.htm.]

I suppose James and I will get enough to eat at parties and the children don’t seem to mind having hot dogs often. We’ll manage somehow.

**~May 29 (Soon Before the last day of school year), 1953 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

...The Sinclairs are having a supper party in honor of the Elvidges tomorrow night for all of Public Works, some 65 in all. I am going to help prepare for it in lieu of bringing food. She hasn’t asked for any help, but that seems a tremendous undertaking, especially with five children.

Friday is the last day of school, and both children’s rooms are having parties. I’ll make gingerbread for Alice and send either hot dog buns or paper plates to Murray’s room. Liza packs her book satchel with its new crayons and pencils every day. I do hope it is still intact by September.

The picture is of Alice’s Brownie troop before Mrs. Heintzelman left. All were not there that day. In case you have a hard time finding Alice, she is on Mrs. H’s left...

I’ve had a good time playing the “What animal would you like to be?” game. Alice wants to be a panther, Murray a boa-constrictor, James a sloth. Ambitious family, no?

**June 1, 1953   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

I was elected vice-president (*Guam Women’s Club*), and the president, Mrs. Shriver, is planning to go home for two months. How do I manage to get into such predicaments? The group of some 75 women really is a service group and there is certainly need of every kind of service here. The Hospital Committee members put
in over 300 hours of work a month, filing, compiling records, etc. at the hospital. The Education Committee has shown health films at all seventeen elementary schools as well as making a survey of school needs to be presented the governor. Our (*Women’s Club) committee, Civic Improvement Committee, has plans underway for the summer vacation play center. There has so far that I know of never been any supervised recreation on the island. We’re also giving a scholarship to the Territorial College.

(*party for new governor) The Filipino party Friday night was very lavish. The shirt he (governor) was wearing is a traditional Filipino formal one made of Husi cloth...There must have been 800 guests, and so much food!...The entertainment was Filipino folk dances and songs (that) I think are the nicest kind of entertainment for the islands.

June 8, 1953   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

We are working on Play Center plans, and this takes much time calling people, mimeographing, etc. It is rather fun to watch a brand new thing being born.

I forgot to mention the Guamanian Tea given by one of the (*Women’s Club) club members to raise money for the scholarship fund. The guests contribute what they want. It was really interesting, all native foods. The punch was made of green coconut juice, most refreshing drink I’ve had here. There was fried breadfruit, similar to potato chips, coconut meringues, rice bread made of rice flour raised with tuba (coconut) yeast and steamed, and avocado sandwiches, all served elegantly.

June 13, 1953   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

(*Capt. Hammond’s visit) Rosita (*Francisco, Stewarts’ neighbor) had a third baby and had a christening party yesterday noon. He (*Capt. Hammond) enjoyed it. He fits right into the family even if he is salty. ...He bought some jewelry for Ruby Lee...expensive because of the rarity and handmade earrings from Fiji made of “cat’s eyes”, the “door” of a particular shell fish, set in silver.

June 14, 1953   EGS to “Mama”

My days seem full of meetings now...an executive council meeting of the Women’s Club, a play center committee meeting, a Scout leaders’ meeting...In between, it has been my job to call all the volunteers for the play center to a meeting to be held tomorrow. After this year, I think I’ll retire from civic work.

...We had) dinner at the Government House last night...just us...He (*Governor Elvidge) has a nervous twitch in one eye, which I wonder if the Guam situation has caused. There are so many cross currents of feeling here that it could easily make the heartiest nervous...He says he cares only about the Guamanians not about the Statesiders here, so my silent (thus far) hopes of getting commissary privileges back flew out the window. His first objective seems to be to wipe out vice and gambling on the island, which in my innocence I didn’t realize was so bad here.

[*JMS taking the place of father of the bride. Escorting? Sylvia Shepherds, who married Bob Jordan? Date? The photo is included here because the event is referred to in the June 14, 1953 entry that follows this.]

June 14, 1953   EGS to A.B.

Mrs. Sinclair with her five children reminds me of Mama in our younger days. Nothing seems impossible to her. She had the idea of the play center first, and it is launched and the prospects seem favorable at the moment.
James is going to be father-of-the-bride again this week. Madeline Zeien, our former neighbor, is back from school abroad to marry Ricky Bordallo, the son of B. J. Bordallo, a prominent Guamanian... I took a morning off this week to go through clothes to outfit us for the occasion. The wedding will be at 7:00 A.M. Saturday morning. There will be two bishops, one from Manila as well as Bishop Baumgartner here.

(*Bridge with Dr. and Mrs. Sessions) He is a professor at the college, and it has been interesting to know them. Dr. Sessions says that credits from this college are accepted by any college in the States, as it is affiliated with Ohio State.

June 22, 1953   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
The wedding and attendant parties were all lovely, nice experiences for us. The children behaved beautifully and have been miniature brides and grooms ever since.

June 24, 1953   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
(*Zeien-Bordallo wedding) The wedding was beautiful. We were up at 5:00 Saturday morning in order to get everyone dressed prettily and be at the church by 6:30. There was only the family there, but their families run to about fifty or sixty, and all were invited to the breakfast afterwards. That’s the one meal at which they don’t serve rice. They had eggs, ham, fried chicken, sweet rolls, cake (not wedding cake) and coffee, soda pop for the children. At the reception that night, all 400 guests found places at tables, the governor’s and the bride’s being the only reserved ones. ..At about 10 o’clock, when I was helping my plate at the buffet table, the groom’s sister asked me please to go there. She said she didn’t know why no one was sitting there. Magically, the table filled all at once after that, and it was fun getting a bird’s eye view of the event. The wedding cake, very beautiful, in the center of the bride and groom’s table, was never cut. The Bordallo family, hosts, put on a little program, all impromptu, the bride and groom both singing, sisters and brothers singing their numbers, too. That is another custom, entertaining their guests that way. The bride and groom had visited relatives all day and stayed until the orchestra left, about midnight. It is hard to know what is expected of one when their customs are so different. We stayed because we thought we should, but maybe they were waiting for us!

Sunday morning we were invited to have breakfast with the Ostranders at the U.S.O. He is manager there. ...He was chief administrator on Tinian Island before they came here, a nice couple. James is giving them some advice about remodeling the main building of the U.S.O.

Sunday night, the Sinclairs asked us for bridge, pleasant respite from big parties. Last night we had to go to a dinner party given by the Military Engineers Association.

Saturday night some Navy friends of the Urbans have asked us to their home to get acquainted. It is nice to inherit friends like this. Sunday night we have three invitations, one to play bridge with the Meyers (he is chief engineer in James’ office), another to a reception and dinner for Mr. and Mrs. del Rosario (*? somewhat illegible), from the Philippines, visiting the de la Cruz’s here (Mrs. De la Cruz is head of the Guam Academy of Music), the other to a supper party at the Sinclairs, who are entertaining the legislature. We need to be six people instead of two, I think.

June 29, 1953   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Last night we went to two dinner parties! The Sinclairs entertained the legislature. They asked a few of us (*Statesiders) to fill in. We went on to a dinner party given by the de la Cruz’s for the Filipina pianist and her mother. It was very nice, not buffet as most are, but sit-down for about fifty people. These parties amaze me still. I don’t think I’ll ever get used to them. We’ll hear the pianist on Wednesday night. I am looking forward
with great pleasure, as I enjoyed her so much three years ago, when she was only fourteen. They say she’s even better now, and treats like this are so scarce here.

The **symphony orchestra is being reactivated**, as Mrs. De la Cruz has at last found a conductor for it. James is making plans with him and a promotional manager now as I write this.

Our Play Center is growing by leaps and bounds. We had a $100.00 donation from one of the business firms today, the retail grocery super-market that is skinnning all of us!

Days like today when I take James to work before 7:00 A.M. and try to get all the errands and marketing done as well as attend club meetings leave me pretty “scruffed”...so I’ll beg off and turn in.

**July 6, 1953**  **EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

They are unveiling a portrait of Admiral Pownall, the last Navy governor, whom the Guamanians loved, tomorrow. James has it in the car tonight.

...I wish I could understand the psychology of (ceremonials). The Bishop has tried to discourage expensive fiestas, but after reflecting a great deal on the subject, I sometimes wonder if they don’t accomplish the same purpose as Girl Scouts, clubs, etc. The people work and laugh and play together on these, and there’s a satisfaction in being part of a big activity.

This is not exactly the time for me to be preaching this, though. I’m quite convinced that a society of hermits is the best solution! (Last week) I made telephone calls to 40 volunteers for the play center as well as 10 mothers of brownies about the Scout festival on Monday night and Tuesday morning. On Wednesday I took James to work before 7:00, picked up typewriters at the secretary’s home and registration cards, etc. at the committee chairman’s home and was registering the first children at 8:00 A.M., four at once, all children of a Chinese Hawaiian, who, seeing that I wasn’t well set up, even offered her services. I stayed on until 3:30 when I had to go for James. On Thursday afternoon I helped register, too.

Friday was even worse. The children and I plus the Sinclair boys were cutting bamboo trees and coconut palms to decorate the Scout booth all day. Our framework had already been prepared. I do wish you could have seen the cute thatched roof huts they built, and they say they will last twenty years without a nail even. Saturday and yesterday we were selling leis and corsages from 9:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M., and we had to gather the flowers before we left!

To complicate matters Captain Hammond called on Saturday night. When I could get away yesterday I went to his ship and brought him back to the festival, a poor way to entertain, but he seem to enjoy it and swelled the G.S. funds, too. He saw the girls do their stick dance and bought a hat for Mrs. Hammond made of coconut fronds. These can’t be bought any other time. He also bought a nut, fruit of the neppia (*Nipa) palm, which is the kind they use for thatched roofs. There are few left on the island. The nut is huge and looks like polished mahogany....Will you tell Mrs. Hammond (*Hammonds were known to EGS’ Memphis family) that he talked of little else but “Ruby Lee.” He has been on the sea with those bombs for two months. (*a section here about inviting him to stay at Stewart home and tour the island)... I wonder if my three little atom bombs aren’t going to be worse for him than a ship full of ammunition! I believe he said that all of it will be unloaded...

We registered 175 children for the play center. There will be more who come without registering, I know.

I had a letter from the Lareaus who left in March. They want to name their newest “Erin”. I feel flattered.
Aug. 17, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.” (Erin Stewart received news of the death of her brother, Knox) (*On Knox’s death) I was in Memphis all last week (*figuratively). Friends here have been kind, and I had the sweetest letter from Ruth Hyde. It seems a pity for Knox, Jr. not to finish his college work. I believe I can get work one day a week and be able in that way to send $50.00 a month to help take care of that...After this month I won’t be busy with club work and with the children all in school, I think it will be easy. There is a new secretarial service where business firms come, dictate their letters on a Dictaphone, and have them typed...Part-time employees should be needed...

Aug. 21, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
We have had more rain than I ever remember. ...I must soon get to the mop and tackle our puddles all over the house. The roof is a sieve. Public Works is engaged in getting schools ready now. After the children are safely in school, they will begin work on the houses. James has put in a work-order.

This week I have had to attend three committee meetings as acting president of the club (*Women’s Club). It will be good to have the real president back next month. On Wednesday I had my last Brownie meeting and turned over the reins. That will be a relief, too.

The wife of the commanding officer of the Air Force has asked me, again as representative of the Women’s Club, to attend their wives’ club luncheon on September 3rd along with Mr. Elvidge, who will be guest speaker. She says they will wear hats, of all things.

(*On Knox’s death) Dear A. B. and L.S., It’s a relief to know that Ann and the children (*of Erin Stewart’s deceased brother Knox) can manage....

The last typhoon did so little “damage” that I didn’t think it worth mentioning. There’s another in the air now. All day there has been absolute stillness which is always unusual for Guam. Tomorrow morning will find the palm trees bending low and me mopping again. The children enjoy the excitement. They have a big capacity for pleasure.

Aug. 26, 1953  EGS to “Mama”
(*On Knox’s death) Dear Mama, It makes me feel better that you feel like writing. I do hope you will go to see Cousin Rebecca Cullens. There is a great deal of solace, I think, in sharing similar experiences. I feel just like you that it is not real that Knox has gone. Don’t you think that they don’t go, but what they have been lives on with us? Memories of people’s goodness are life’s best thing, and I’ll always be grateful for those nice talks you and he and I had during the months I was home.

I had promised that I would work tomorrow (part-time secretary job), so I will, but have told Sylvia that I can’t do more of it. I would have wanted to do it if help was needed. I hope you will tell me at any time. My children can do so many things at home now that I think it wouldn’t be too great a burden.

Sep. 6, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Mrs. Elvidge returned last Sunday... They brought their nine-year old grandson back and asked all of us and all seven Sinclairs to have supper with them on Thursday night to introduce John to our children. Thursday noon I had to represent the Guam Women’s Club by taking Mrs. Elvidge to be the guest speaker at the Andersen Air Force Base Women’s Club luncheon.

On Friday night we celebrated Alice’s birthday by going out to dinner as usual and took the grandson, too. He is a live wire but cute. He was very ostentatious about holding the door open for me, etc. When we commented on his good manners, he said, “I have to kick myself to remember them. My grandmother gave me a long lecture right before you came!” Children always give you away, don’t they?
We’re having the Elvidges to dinner tomorrow night along with the Sinclairs and the Herbert Johnstons. It’s something I’ve known I had to do since March but have put it off. It’s a task, and I’ll be relieved when it’s over….You’ll notice that I very seldom entertain these days. James and the children have polished all the silver, and as tomorrow is a holiday, they can relieve me of much of the housecleaning, too.

The children aren’t going to go to the new modern school after all. The districts were changed, so they will go to the other school for Stateside children, Wettengel. Alice was happy when she saw her last year’s teacher there. Mrs. Murphy had arranged to be changed when her children were. Liza still doesn’t have a teacher.

**Sep. 8, 1953 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

School days at last. I can’t possibly describe the sympathetic pain I felt all day after I left Liza to fend for herself. All wasted, of course, because she came home glowing…I always forget that she is not shy like I was….Murray and Alice seem happy with their teachers, too.

(*On Knox’s death) I’m so glad you feel like writing to me, Mama. I feel, just like you, an awful emptiness…I had a sweet note from Annie Rose. She said we are such a devoted family and the longer she lives the less she thinks of anything else in life counting for much….Elizabeth Anderson wrote a long letter too. She is such a fine person.

(Crowell Sinclair) takes on the burdens of the world and makes them featherweight for everyone else. Sometimes she gets discouraged I know, but keeps on doing it. I have gotten to know her so well in the Women’s Club work and also (*to know) several others almost as fine as she. That’s the only real compensation for it, I feel. Living out as we do, enjoying the country air and quiet, we would otherwise miss some fine friendships.

**Sep. 15, 1953 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

...(*On Knox’s death) It’s all very well that people say we are brave, etc., but actually I believe we just don’t accept the fact. My mind doesn’t seem to, my spirit even less....

This year’s routine is so much easier than last year’s. We still get up at 5:45 but take our leisure as James doesn’t insist on getting to work at 7:00 and the children don’t meet the school bus until 7:45. Last year they had to be at the corner at 6:30.

All the schools are so overcrowded because of the war babies coming on. James has had so much trouble making extra classrooms out of supply rooms, offices, halls and any available cranny. The situation is still not as bad as in the States from what we hear. Each class has no more than 35 pupils.

**Sep. 17, 1953 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

(*on James Stewart’s coming to Guam) Nellie’s friend (*Nellie Powell), Mrs. Orrell, saw... those houses (*JMS houses featured in Memphis press) and because of them was instrumental in getting this job for James...

(*next trip home) According to the contract, it will still be 1955, but James keeps promising to...try to have it changed to next summer. He just has a hard time attending to his own personal business especially now that Mrs. Elvidge calls him every day for consultation about the landscaping, furnishing, etc. for the new Government House, which is under construction. This will go on for the next year. He wants to come back himself next summer. He can never get a vacation here. The office keeps calling him back, and he already has accumulated more annual leave than the govt. allows. Three years is too long. Though I like the life here and we have made good friends...still...my heart, I believe, will always be in Tennessee.

Another typhoon has just passed us by….It’s a funny sight to see buckets around the floors of every house.
Sep. 21, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

...I am so happy you saw the Heintzelmans. Finer people were never here, I think....I have found another (*who is) equally fine in the president of the Women’s Club and this year promises to be very satisfying because of this. Mrs. Shriver is the wife of the U.S. Federal judge....for the most part I believe they (*government and civic positions) are filled by really fine persons, and it is good to get to know them.

Life is strange. I suppose few of us get into the type of work we really prefer...James is happiest when he is at a drafting board, but seldom has the opportunity in his work...

Sep. 29, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

James was elected president of the P.T.A. last night at Wettengel School. It was a complete surprise, as we thought very few knew us at the new school...Now we have another year’s work ahead of us. He is having a meeting of the officers and principal at our house on Thursday night. There are over 1000 pupils at the school, and there were about 350 parents and teachers there last night.

Oct. 4, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

(*enclosed clippings: “Isle Education Leaders” and “Governor Tells Women’s Club About Women”) I’m passing these along to Melba, as she’s been off island for some time.

Oct. 5, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

Colonel and Mrs. Simenson (he is commanding officer of the Air Force here) have asked us to dinner this Thursday night. It will be interesting to learn something of the Air Force. All our military friends heretofore have been Navy. Mrs. Simenson is a former model and for a mother of grown daughters, who are also models, she has preserved herself well. A Navy friend has asked Crowell Sinclair and me to be her guests at the Navy Wives’ Club luncheon on Wednesday.

Tomorrow I’m supposed to attend a new committee meeting with the governor. This is a Ways and Means Committee to see how the Women’s Club can work...on some...plans for the island.

Oct. 16, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

(Typhoon Alice)  We would have been dryer in a tent. This was the most rain Guam has seen in 26 years and has not stopped yet after 48 hours. All our furniture and rugs are soaked, and the smell of wet cloth and straw
is not pleasant at all. But we fared better than most... It is appropriate that typhoons are named because they are as varied in their personalities as people....We were only prepared for a tropical storm...At 3 a.m. we were awakened by the crash of our bedside lamp...We rolled up a rug or two and went back to bed, only to be roused by Alice at 5:00, telling us that her bed and rug were wet. It was not called a typhoon until morning.

(*First mention of Gov. Elvidge addressing Parks, Monuments, & Museum) The governor is working hard on minimizing vice on the island now. I am officially a member of his Ways and Means Committee as a representative of the Women’s Club along with two Guamanian women. We will try to promote a museum and parks and preservation of landmarks. Another member, a Mr. Baird, who has offered his services as curator of the museum if we get it, came in to see James about planning for it and said that the governor had not decided on any other member but me yet. This was before I was officially notified by Melba Shriver. I hope it won’t mean too much work, but should be interesting to pioneer at any rate.

P.T.A. will be a little less boring here than in the States, I think, because of the different groups represented... The worst part for me is having to attend meetings now. We always went to one meeting a year before.

The Air Force colonel's party was held last night in spite of the weather. There were sixteen, all military except the Shivers and us. The Air Force people seem different from the Navy, rather less formal and more showy. The house was quite a mansion for Guam....As at most of these parties, all branches of the service were there, Army, Air Force, Navy Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard, Naval Operating Base. The buffet dinner was very simple but elaborately served....The host’s daughter is pictured on the cover of last month’s Ladies Home Journal and in some ads. She is working her way through college in this way.

(*Aftermath of typhoon). This is the first typhoon where life was lost — four people drowned — a farmer trying to get in his cows, and three servicemen crossing one of the bridges across the Talofofo River which was washed out to sea. This bridge...is the only link that residents of the south end of the island have with this end.

Oct. 29(?), 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
You asked about the governor’s (*Ways and Means) committee. The Women’s Club is recognized now as being the instrument of most (*volunteer) influence in the island – possibly because we are the only organization really doing anything much. The governor felt that we could be an instrument for him in arousing public opinion to accomplish some of the things he wants done...

(*Advocates Parks, Monuments & Museum) I sat next to him at the luncheon and mentioned the fact that I’d like to talk to him sometime about a museum. We have been thinking of trying to promote one and so have other people on the island, but I wanted to feel him out first, because it will require appropriation from the legislature and unless he believes in it, I didn’t think there’d be any hope of getting it. He was enthusiastic and mentioned it in his talk. Later he wrote to Mrs. Shriver asking her to appoint a committee to see him. Seven of us went to find out what he wants, and then the permanent committees were formed for specific tasks. I stuck my neck out when I mentioned the museum, I suppose, but I am interested in seeing some cultural institutions on the island, and this will be a start. So far, the library, and it is limited, is the only thing of this nature.

The governor is terribly concerned, too, about the taxi dance hall situation...several legislators...own the dance halls. Girls are imported for this purpose, so they say, of dancing only (50¢ for 2 minutes)...It’s a sorry situation and one that Guamanians have never had to deal with. It was my idea before we talked with the governor that we should use a positive approach to this problem by having a museum, parks, recreation, etc. to set the general moral tone of the place, rather than attacking it....I think most communities expect Women’s Clubs to do this (*attack community influences considered harmful) and laugh at them for doing it. This may be the governor’s idea, too, but he seems so concerned that I suppose he thinks it best to get public opinion right in behind him immediately to try to rid the island of the taxi dance halls as well as working toward the other goal, which will necessarily take longer. We have drawn up a resolution to be presented to the governor
if it is adopted at the meeting Friday, and I imagine the newspapers will be full of it for a day or two. The Guamanian women on the committee have seen the Bishop, who has given his whole-hearted support, and are now getting signatures on a petition about the situation from all the members of another organization, the Catholic Mothers of Guam, which includes almost every Guamanian woman. It should be interesting. Actually, public opinion is not so strong a force here as in the States so that it may come to nothing.

A Women’s Club is the last thing I would ever have thought I’d join, but I find I like it, at least in its infancy as this is now. It’s the only club I’ve ever heard of where there is no selectivity. Anyone may join who wants to work in civic service, and we do have a conglomerate group. It has been successful as far as goals achieved and a minimum of friction are concerned – an experiment in real democracy. However, there is already talk of selectivity. Wherever human nature is involved, these things will happen, it seems.

Nov. 2, 1953 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Crowell Sinclair is president of the Adelup P.T.A. She and James have a good time comparing notes. Now we are working on membership. James’s first letter is enclosed. All but Liza brought one home from school. She said her teacher told her she didn’t need one because her father wrote the letter!

(*Guam Museum) I’m not working on the taxi dancer situation. My job will be promoting the Museum and preservation of landmarks as a member of that committee, much more to my liking....I believe in promoting museums, parks, library, etc., not so much for the immediate pleasure derived from them as for the stabilizing effect as symbols of a permanent culture founded on fundamental principles. So far we haven’t had a meeting of the museum committee other than that first one when the governor outlined what he wanted. I have been formulating all these arguments in favor of it in my own mind and trying them on individuals just in passing.

The response is discouraging. Crowell, who isn’t on the committee, believes more in teenage recreational programs and such. I do too, but don’t think they are as fundamental. Others don’t think much money should be spent, which is as much as saying they don’t believe in it. Still, I refuse to be completely discouraged. All these things have been accomplished in the past by a few, I suppose.

We have the added handicap here that, for so many of the citizens, Guam is only a temporary place of residence. You cannot imagine the turnover. Except for the Secretary of Guam, who came here with the Navy six years ago and the librarian who came when James did five years ago, we are now the oldest Statesiders. A few have married Guamanians and stayed. I’ll just keep your father’s (*Dr. John Steven Holditch, a pioneer in Tupelo, Mississippi) example of planting the oak trees in Tupelo in my mind, Mama.

What do you think of two women being chosen “Citizen of the Year?” There were other names, men, in the running. I’m so glad the tribute fund is swelling. Julia Marie may be right about reaching $1000.

We are hearing again from one of our guests, a passing consultant, of three years ago. This Mr. Roote was sent here then to make a survey of Guam and was here only about two weeks. James tells me we had him to dinner! Bill Sinclair went to the States recently to find people for certain government jobs and asked Mr. Roote about Planning Commissioner. Mr. Roote told him that he had the only right man for the job that James used to have before the civilian administration reorganized all the government departments, James! James had a letter from Mr. Roote yesterday telling him of all this development and his recommendations and I think the governor is considering revamping the departments back to the old set-up now.

Cost of living here is still rising as it is there, except that it is already so high to begin with. James has prepared a report at the governor’s request on his ideas of what government employees need to induce them here and keep them here. We shall talk to him about it, and I’ll get my word in about prices at last. I think he’s beginning to realize the problem as so many of his employees are not renewing contracts and it’s harder and harder to get new ones to come.
Nov. 11, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S."

Murray’s gift card for the *Natural History* magazine came today – with a 3¢ stamp, but must have been put in the air mail packet notwithstanding. Naturally it was quite a surprise to receive a X-mas present on Armistice Day. Murray said, “Now I’ll be a big wheel with a subscription!”

Liza now and Alice have been playing with them (*rag dolls), and the positions I find them in about the house tickle my fancy. Yesterday they were hanging with their arms over the towel rod in the bathroom looking for all the world like Alice and Liza themselves doing their monkey-shines.

One of our friends who belongs to the A.A.U.W. had a benefit bridge party last Friday night. Each member, about 8 in all, had one at her home that night. Each guest paid a dollar to be applied to a Territorial College scholarship. We went to help the cause and found the other ten guests so-called bridge experts. All play every Wednesday night in a duplicate bridge tournament at the Com Mar Officers Club. I was really nervous but made a huge effort not to appear completely stupid. Wonder of wonders, I came out with top score!

We have played bridge several times with Alice’s teacher and her husband (*Jack and Willa Roberts). They are the nicest young couple from St. Louis, Missouri. Her father is from England. They are just out of college and it’s exhilarating to hear a fresh point of view. [Photo at left: Roberts family on Stewart’s front lawn.]

The picture of the Wettengel Class (*not among preserved papers) I don’t want back. Thought you might like to see the variety of students—Statesiders, Chinese, Guamanian, and Hawaiian. They look happy, don’t they?

There’s the nicest drizzle outside which is captivating me for sleep. When the tropical rains aren’t accompanied by wind, they are so very pleasant and gentle.

Nov. 17, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S."

Oh, Miserere!...

Liza was in the hospital. It was diagnosed pyelitis. I brought her home in the little British car in the midst of another one of those terrific tropical downpours. There is a place in the road at Barrigada that always floods in any rain. In this one the water was over a foot deep. Naturally, in that low car we got stuck and had to be pushed to dry land. The nearest telephone was a half mile away at the police station, so I walked in that deluge to call James. He was at a P.T.A. meeting, and before he came the car decided to start. I set out again and found that the brakes didn’t work, having also been drenched, so we crept along at 10 miles an hour.

We had planned an outing to Tarague Beach with the Roberts, but as Liza had been sick, James suggested that the men should go to Ceus River Falls. The “men”, of course, included Murray who has never been quite so elated before. I haven’t seen the falls yet, as he says it’s too hard for a woman. That evening Liza began vomiting. James had had to go for Alice at school today because she had the same thing.

The last straw is that I have had to scrub down the walls and everything in the laundry room of sewage, which the plumbers in trying to unstop the sink yesterday somehow diverted that way....All I need now to complete the picture is a batch of cats, which prospect is imminent.
James started his vacation last week and will be at home this month. He has spent most of his time at civic work. The symphony orchestra is reactivated and first rehearsal was last week. Various business firms are going to finance band concerts in the Plaza d'Espana on Sunday afternoons as well as supporting the regular symphony concerts.

I am taking Mrs. Harris (*who had visited the day before) and Elizabeth Bronson, her daughter, to our next luncheon meeting...The Bronsons have the sea shell shop and aquarium, and Mr. Bronson is on the Museum Committee. This meeting will be mainly concerned with the museum. Mr. Baird, the curator, will be the guest speaker.

You wonder about these long letters....It's my way of visiting. I just set aside one night a week and let nothing interfere. We are not partying as before. Government employees can no longer afford to entertain much, our work under the civilian order doesn't throw us into contact with military people so much...An occasional bridge game...affords a much better opportunity of really knowing people than the big parties did.

**Nov. 23, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

We had the big turnout at the first P.T.A. meeting because it was open house, I think. Parents love to discuss their nuisances with the teacher. We promised refreshments and will have this inducement at every meeting. I missed the last one because Liza was sick. There was a panel discussion — all agreed it was a good meeting.

James designed our Christmas cards this year (*photo at left) and had them printed for our use. Mrs. Elvidge did this and has contributed $50.00 to our scholarship fund, her profit from the sale of the cards at one of the shops.

I visited our college Friday with several members of our Education Committee to investigate the possibility of furnishing a room as a lounge for the women students. Such pitiful surroundings and meager library, but at least it’s a beginning.

A young Guamanian doctor, interning in Detroit, died last week of double pneumonia. He had won every medical honor to be had. Isn't this the worst tragedy when people need such inspiration?

Stores are going all out to have supplies for Thanksgiving. So different from two or three years ago when the Thanksgiving turkeys arrived for Easter. We’re pioneers no longer.

**Nov. 27, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

Tomorrow night we’re having the Meyers for dinner (turkey hash), as they are leaving Guam for Honduras. He is one of the engineers in James’ office. So I haven’t been able to stop at all.

I even had to take time out before cooking our dinner to call all our committee members for a meeting in the governor’s office on Tuesday morning, at which time the Museum, by his proclamation, will become a reality. That's only the beginning, of course, as maintaining it is going to be the really hard task, but at least the seed is planted. James has helped a lot since he's been home by washing dishes, etc., but I don’t seem to get any more than usual done.

I wore the gray dress with red trim and my red shoes to our regular monthly club luncheon (*Women’s Club?) today. I felt very well dressed, as these meetings are informal. It is a wonderful dress to have, no ironing. (*Erin Stewart writes often of Stateside relatives’ sending clothes.)
While I was typing the letter, three kittens came into the world on Alice’s bed. She is distressed to tears, but Murray says “I wish they’d have been born on my bed!” Always the optimist, Murray. The mother cat chose the one that loves her most, but Alice doesn’t love the mess. This is the first time they’ve witnessed the phenomena.

[*Photo at left was taken in 1956: The kitten “Gray Matter”, who went by the name “Gray Wit”, was given to the Elvidges—full photo on page 76.]*

**Dec. 2, 1953   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

We climbed to the top of Mr. Lamlam, Guam’s highest peak, last Sunday. Murray...scaled the summit at a trot and arrived there long before anyone else. I asked him if he’d seen any of the scenery, and he said, “What scenery?” I chuckled over his remark (*in his letter to Memphis family) “Have you seen any falls or dams lately?” I suppose his next letter will contain “Have you climbed any mountains lately?” We’re giving the Roberts a tour of the islands and discovering it ourselves.

**Yesterday the museum was launched at the governor’s office.**

It’s fun to see the beginnings of things. I’ve been committee meeting all day today and had the nicest lunch at Mrs. Shriver’s house in between morning and afternoon sessions.

Thank you for sending me the Holiday Inn paper. We have a Statesider here who is something like a Kemmons Wilson (*Founded Holiday Inn). He came about six years ago, saw all that was needed and set to work establishing it. He started without a penny but got a little financial backing from a Guamanian. He had the first auto repair shop, the first so-called super-market, drive-in restaurant, etc., etc. Now he has a huge housing area of small efficiency apartments renting for $100.00 a month.

**Dec. 8, 1953   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

Yesterday I had to conduct the first meeting of our museum committee. Dr. Baird, the chairman, called me at almost the last minute and said he couldn’t be there. Men! The committee decided at mention of almost every job that he was the one to do it – served him right for not being there. I was proud of the women. Five came, and only three men were present, although they are in the majority. I believe it is going to be very interesting, and I’ll learn a great deal about archaeology, marine life, anthropology, etc., along with the promotional work. Most of the men on the committee, being scientists are like college professors – just geniuses along one line. They kept straying from the main course of how we could accomplish our ends to which monument we ought to preserve first, each, of course, with a different one in view! It should be fun, though somewhat frustrating.

In the afternoon I met, along with several members of our club’s education committee, with four of the women college students, and with the only woman professor, to discuss the social room at the college which we want to donate for the women there. It is certainly needed, as almost everything else is. Those young women are so appealing. One of them is our scholarship student. When I asked her how she is getting along, she said, “College is hard.”…. I thought that was a good indication that the college is good scholastically.
Dec. 14, 1953  Joseph Flores, Pres. Guam Savings and Loan, to JMS

I am pleased to pass on to you the availability of 10 shares of the capital stock of Guam Savings and Loan Ass’n at $107.28 per share....You will note the remarkable progress we’ve made with what little we have to work with in three and one half months of operation. (*Mr. Flores founded the first locally owned newspapers and the Guam Savings and Loan Assoc. & Marianas Finance Corp. He was Gov. of Guam from 1959-61.)

Dec. 19, 1953  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

Yes, all our privileges are gone. The local shops occasionally have sales, though, so maybe I can find us some Oriental things yet. I’m not completely discouraged yet, though two years at these prices does seem a long time. We’ll manage to eat at least, and that’s the most important thing. We have the sunshine, sand and surf, too, and they are free.

We went to a cocktail party Friday night of our last good Navy friend. They will be leaving in June. It was rather sad. There were only four other civilians there – the acting governor, the Philippine consul, the manager of Pan-American and the manager of Atkins-Kroll shipping agents – in a crowd of about 150. The Navy and civilians represent now two different ways of life that won’t converge, almost like two separate countries in fact. It was nicer when we were all Americans doing a common work.

This is the tropical fruit season. Every plant bears during the dry season, so that its babies can be nourished with the rains. We buy mangos for 3¢, avocados for 15¢. Bananas are the only scarcity. They prefer rain, and we should have a good many of our own soon.
SECTION 3

LETTERS FROM 1954 THROUGH 1956
Am writing this on the plane (my first amphibian ride) on my return trip to Guam...I’ve seen so much and gone so fast that it will take a week or so to coherently collect these experiences...I’ll briefly mention some of the highlights...

Jack R. (*Roberts) and I left Guam two weeks ago on a small freighter (176 ft.). We had the one passenger cabin...most comfortable. Also excellent meals. On board time passed quickly, for we had brought books (I reread *Travels of Marco Polo*) and chessmen (we are evenly matched).

On the third morning we put in at Yap. It is considered one of the most primitive islands. The week before we saw the picture *His Majesty O’Keefe*, a fairly authentic documentary show, which although actually filmed in Tahiti because of conveniences there, is a story of Yap, and the Yapese people and their island, still very much as pictured. I had read the book and recommend it.

On Yap there is a colony of some 10 Americans with their families—administering the Government of the Trust Territories. The Civil Administrator, impressed perhaps by the fact that we were the first tourists permitted in the area since the war, devoted his time during our stay to showing us around, and the other Americans welcoming any outsiders entertained us royally. We visited in homes in native villages, “Men’s Houses”, old military installations, both German and Japanese, and were given some rare and beautiful shells, native dinners of exotic (and a few delicious) dishes. I addressed a conference of chiefs through an interpreter, rode in outriggers and one of the three jeeps.
We stayed two days and left reluctantly. Then after 25 hours sailing we reached Koror — with another American colony — this time 30 families. Koror is comprised of a group of islands somewhat resembling the Thousand Islands. In land area, collectively they are twice that of Yap and about equal to Guam. Now they have a population of 7000. Before the war there were 30,000 Japanese with a thriving city and prosperous plantations of copra, sugar cane and tapioca. The Japanese were returned to their country, the Americans destroyed everything and left the natives poverty stricken. As a result Koror is not interesting. The people live, look and dress much as the Guamanians do.

We enjoyed staying with my friends the Owens, though. I think I’ve previously mentioned that he is head entomologist for the T.T. (*Trust Territories). They have a large house in a beautiful garden (puts mine to shame).

Jack just stayed one day (maybe two) and flew back on this plane (an 8 passenger weekly service). But I was fortunate in meeting a family from New York City whose avocation is taking underwater movies. They had authorization from Washington to take pictures here and had chartered a boat with a crew of eight. They had two truckloads of equipment with them and are some of the nicest and most interesting people I’ve ever know. We became good friends right off and I was invited to take a week’s cruise to Peliliu, Ankorah and places which I can’t begin to spell. Peliliu was the scene of some major fighting during the war and I seem to remember Dick’s mentioning it.

On this week’s outing we lived luxuriously, playing bridge, cocktails before dinner, etc. I went down in a diving helmet (an interesting experience) and watched the filming of a picture of a native diver spearing a large eel and removing the meat from a giant tridactra, one of the enormous clam shells similar to the one we have in our living room.

We are approaching Yap now….before taking off for Guam (a four hours flight). I hope this letter isn’t too illegible, but the weather is rather choppy and I’m writing with my briefcase on my lap. I’ll drop this in the mail at the terminal at Guam.

Sep. 17, 1954 Jerry Schweitzer in NYC to JMS & EGS
....We still remember all the excitement in Guam and I don’t know what we would have done without your kind help and hospitality.....

[Letters are missing for 6 months.]

1955

April 18, 1955 JMS to EHS from Manila Hotel
(*Describes leaving Guam and stay in Manila, leaving from Hong Kong the next day) Last night we had friends at house and at airport at 1:30 a.m. to see us off — among them the Tisdales, Helliers, Roberts, Sessions, Turbeyvilles, LeMonts, Jordans (née Sylvia Shepherds), and our neighbors, the Petersons. The Petersons leave Guam for good next month and our children will miss theirs.
May or June, 1955  Alice to EHS

We are aboard a Danish ship, the Patagonia. I am having a lot of fun playing with my new playmate, who is going to be fourteen this month. She is half Danish and half English. I am learning a few Danish words ....We are in Africa now. Yesterday we saw land.... This island had steep cliffs and deserts. It had muddy slopes and hills. I saw a whale spouting water and shark right off of this island....

Sep. 12, 1955  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

We arrived last night after a short delay at Wake Island....It’s a strange feeling to change time so rapidly.

The children seem glad to be home and finding their possessions again...(*Describes chores)...A trip at both ends is certainly a task, but I’d do it again next week just to see you if I had the chance.

I’ll write better when I feel more settled. We are pulling at things in the bags now...The talk about pleasant events in Memphis mixed in adds its bit to the confusion. We did have such a good time. It’ll carry us forward.

Sep. 15, 1955  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

Liza will go back to school tomorrow. Her tonsils will have to be removed later. She was her old bouncy self today...I’m staying in bed (*with the flu)...The family can take over now...It’s really a blessing to have a little rest after daily trips to the hospital with Liza and getting all started in school.

We have a TV set now. The children zip through chores and homework in the afternoon so as to be free for the night’s entertainment. The programs are very poor so far....Murray and Alice are still reading books.

James had lunch today with Mr. Turveyville, the manager of the coke plant. Mr. T. complimented Murray highly, saying he was so accurate in turning in his reports at the golf course, etc., and that he will see that he gets a better job with the Coca-Cola Co. if he wants to work another summer.

Did I tell you about having Liza’s eyes examined? I think she wanted glasses for the prestige...Mrs. Marble in James’ office asked Liza about it. Liza said, “The doctor says I’m slightly blind.” She said she was exceedingly blond and therefore dark glasses might help! He couldn’t find anything really wrong with her eyes.

Sep. 29, 1955  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

We seem to take a new lease on life after a strenuous effort is put out, don’t we?...How long a rest is required after five months’ traveling, do you suppose?
Did James manage alone (*you ask)? Yes, and had the pantry stocked with a full day’s supply for us. His eyes bulge at the cases that have been pouring in since in exact proportion to the diminishing of the purse contents.

I’m forming vague notions of getting a job, not this year but next. I am very much concerned about the children’s schooling….I would so like for them to have at least as favorable opportunities of making friends and studying as we did….The schools here are bulging at the seams with the steady increase in population, and I don’t blame the Dept. of Education. James says the governor’s chief worry is the problem of handling it. The money that is being spent on education allows nothing for capital improvements anywhere in the government for the next five years, and so much is needed everywhere.

...It has been a blessing for Murray’s allergies (*to live on Guam), and James, too, feels better here. So, I must not let homesickness spoil the scene but be cheerful. I try to do that and find it’s wonderful medicine.

I had already decided that I didn’t care much for the New Yorker anymore, and your Whitehead conversations explained why, I think. Mrs. Whitehead remarked that she laughed at some of the stories and cartoons but had the terrible guilty feeling that she shouldn’t be laughing. Isn’t this the way you feel?....Elegance is admirable but, for me, elegance without compassion is pretty empty.

Bethea Sessions has asked us to dinner on Saturday night….They will be here until March. I shall hate to see them leave. They are real friends.


(*There was) a nice letter from Crowell Sinclair, which I found waiting for me.... It must have come right after we left, and in it she begged me to call her collect if we couldn’t see them in Michigan. What a pity I didn’t receive it in time. There are some fine people everywhere, and I am not going to isolate myself and miss knowing them.—

Today I got involved again in clubwork, but I consented for this reason – making a friend. Martha Turbeyville is chairman of the Education Committee and was rather desperate for help in addressing the invitations for the Teachers’ Tea. [Photo at left: The first Guam Women’s Club Teachers’ Tea was held in 1952, according to the article. This photo is of a tea in 1953. Among people pictured who are mentioned in letters of Erin Stewart (left) are Crowell Sinclair (third from right) and Melba Shriver (right).]

The Turbeyvilles came here a few months before we left. They are from Chattanooga, be the manager of the Coca-Cola plant. They showed their desire for friends by having us to dinner before we left.

When I arrived home, I found Mrs. Elvidge here. The children had just arrived from school and were bombarding her with talk. She seemed to enjoy it and kissed me affectionately. I miss you all so, but keeping busy and knowing there are those about who care, and the feeling is mutual, helps a great deal. Melba Shriver hugged me, too, when we first met. I’m sure she’d be on hand if I needed help of any kind. She is one of six children, too, and had exactly the same reaction as I did upon returning this time – deep homesickness. We have both recovered and can manage.
I had a chuckle the other day when I took the Austin to the garage to be serviced. We are having the usual two-year troubles with it, and I went in a bit disheartened, but there, lined up with about twenty big trucks coughing up their insides for repair, was one tiny tricycle without any handlebars, waiting its turn patiently.

I wrote to Dr. Coolidge apologizing for not fulfilling his mission to Brussels. In his fine reply, he enclosed the pictures he took of that field trip with the scientists. Mrs. Elvidge tells me that he is expected here soon.


I have wanted to send you some of our tropical plants, and I thought ever since I arrived that I would call Dr. Liming, who would know about such things, to see if they would be allowed in the States...I plan to send some “lobster claws”, which are similar to the bird-of-paradise....James, being tall, always likes tall flowers. He cuts the stems very long, and they stand about 3 feet high. The plants grow to about 8 feet.

We keep asking people about the schools, and it seems to be the majority opinion that students get about as much here as anywhere else, perhaps in some different ways, but nevertheless valuable to them.

We had the Sessions to dinner tonight. I like having just a couple to sit down with us as part of the family better than having a crowd. I think it’s good for the children, too, to listen to the conservation.

Alice’s new chum is begging her to join the Rainbow Girls. I suppose this will be our next “activity”. Alice says she “sort of got roped into it,” using her own expression. I said “How was that?”, and she said “I just didn’t like to say ‘no’”. Doesn’t that sound like us? This was Alice’s day (*to visit this friend, Karen)...Murray went off to see Jim Bartee. Liza said dolefully, “I don’t have anybody to play with,” but one minute later she was telephoning Jimmy Poole. Two minutes later she bounced out and three minutes later came back with Jimmy and Rose. The three played Canasta, or called it that, until dinnertime.

With four planes a week, this more-steady correspondence should keep you posted fairly often, as yours does me. It is a comfort to hear more often – better than the old days when there was only one plane and letters written more than once a week just piled up.

Oct. 9, 1955  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

I’ve called Dr. Liming, and he says we can send the flowers. I do hope they aren’t too wilted when they arrive.

Alice’s man teacher is ambitious for them. He gave them an assignment to gather material for a debate, asking them to discuss it with their parents. Maybe you can imagine how hard-put we were to think of five reasons why marriage should or should not be for love and answering such questions as “Is divorce a good thing and why?” and “What things can happen to cause families happiness, unhappiness?” Oh, the life of a parent! James and I have been busy buying supplies which “I must have tomorrow!”...


I had bad luck with your flowers. After carefully wrapping in damp cotton and cellophane, packaging and addressing, they were refused at the post office for lack of the stamp from the Dept. of Agriculture. Dr. Liming didn’t tell me that was needed...so they are here looking very forlorn and disapproving of me. The season is almost over. Oh, this government red tape!

Murray and Alice are enjoying their B.P.M. friends’ privileges. They went to a picture show with them Friday night and to the U.S.O. beach for a swim and lunch Saturday. There is a bus that takes them every week. Alice has friends there, too, and Murray is helping her develop them. They walk together to meet the “bees”. It’s about a half mile...I plan to have the crowd for a hot dog supper and canasta during the Christmas holidays.
I’m trying to figure the cost of the trip with doctor, dentist, shipping the car....I’ll never regret that investment.

And now just one more Guamania.  Today we had two electricians checking the wiring.  They were speaking in their own language...(*when) all of a sudden something sounded familiar “unos, duos, tres, quartro.”  Don’t you think it remarkable that they learned Spanish and are now learning English?

Oct. 27, 1955  Alice to EHS
...This year we are in a school with half the students Guamanians...now I’m learning a lot and like it.

I was elected class officer as usual and I’m board secretary.  I don’t like this job very much but I’m doing all right at it.  As usual the officers have to do more than the rest of the class and I had to make a speech today.  We are very busy now at our Halloween party and have appointed four committees to plan it...

The Elvidges have asked us to dinner on Wednesday night.  They want to know more about our trip, as they plan to go home that way when his job is done here.  She says they even want to take the same ship that we did!  I must go that same day to a farewell luncheon for Betty Pilgrim.  Friday, Emilie and Herb Johnston have asked us to dinner.  People keep asking us, and I never have a chance to return.  I can’t go and be at home preparing at the same time.

I’m glad the flowers weren’t absolutely wilted when they arrived.

We’ll love the New York Herald Tribune book review section.  You’re sweet to think of it, A.B.

Nov. 5, 1955  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

Last night we had the pleasantest time at Emilie and Herbert Johnston’s new home.  Their family, like ours, is always a party in itself, and all are always included.  Six of the seven Johnston children, Herbert being the oldest boy, are here now.  The two youngest have finished college and are back.  All with spouses and children were there and four other couples including us.  Two of these also brought their children.  The Johnstons love to sing and always have a song-fest after dinner.  The many small fry join in and everyone has a jolly family time.

Today all five of us went sailing in Elizabeth and Bert Bronson’s new (or rather second-hand, new to them) yacht.  They bought it to convert into a commercial boat to ply between the islands here, and invited some 30 of their friends to try it out while it is still rigged.  Elizabeth said this is probably the first and last cruise of this type.  The crew of five brought it 14,000 miles from New York.  It is a beauty.  Such a thrilling new experience to get to see the insides of a yacht and see the sails furled and unfurled.  Almost all aboard got seasick, but our stomachs, all but Liza’s for a tiny while, made the hurdle.  The sea was quite calm and the weather perfect...

Tomorrow night we are going to the annual dinner of the duplicate bridge club.  James will take me as a guest...James and Dr. Session have played very little, but the Limings are avid about it....

Murray brought a nice Irish classmate home yesterday, Michael Sawyer.  Murray introduced him as easily as if he’d been doing it all his life...The child has the sweetest, guileless face, and James says he has a good sense of humor.  He took him home to the Naval Air Station base.
We sold the Volkswagen...We’re trying to economize with just one car....

Alice and I have such good times now talking over dishes, folding laundry and straightening house. Her mind is wide open and thirsty and hungry. I wish I could feed it more. If only there were hours in the day and I had more food within me. Murray, too, has changed. They listen now.

Frances Murphy’s bridge party was pleasant. I see at her house an entirely new set of people, those whose husbands work for the Trust Territories. I like to hear their talk about the other islands. The Trust group all have houses together and are rather closely knit. Virginia Selwyn has asked me to a luncheon farewell for Betty Pilgrim...It begins to look as if resigning from organizations is not enough to release me from all activities. I do like these people so much, though, that it is very hard to resist the pleasure of seeing them occasionally.

Nov. 8, 1955    EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
(*) Describes Murray’s reading) He is studying on his own — only this morning, the section on astronomy in the 1955 almanac. He grasped the idea of light years quicker than I ever did and remarked, entirely upon his own observation, that many of the stars we see aren’t even there, only the light which has been traveling all these years.

Alice took *Microbe Hunters*, and I saw it under her arm with schoolbooks this morning. She is keen and how I long to inspire her...I hate for her to waste her time with the Rainbow Girls, and she is already feeling some trepidation about it.

You asked what B.P.M. stands for. Brown-Pacific-Maxon Construction Co. It is a huge company which is in charge of all military construction here, private, takes contracts on a cost plus basis. Horrible to think of the cost to the government. The salaries can be as high, and I think probably are. Most of the families have been here seven or eight years. Jim Bartee’s father must be a supervisor of some sort, judging from the house they live in on the compound. Silly way to judge, but it’s true that the higher officials get the better houses. The compound is like a small city, and it is about ½ mile from us. There is a church, movie, store, repair shops, etc. Most of the group live mostly to themselves. James’ duplicate bridge games are held each Thursday night at the club there.

Nov. 12, 1955    EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
We’re going to the Helliers to play bridge...Tomorrow night we’re having the Woelfls, LeMonts, and Shrivers to supper, so the whole family’s been hard at helping me get ready today. As usual on these occasions we were without water except for a few minutes several times.

Murray has taken to going off on jaunts with the boys. Last night they “camped” in an abandoned Quonset nearby. He said they were doing it the “modern” way.

Alice, Liza, and Jimmy Poole were making root beer yesterday. We needed sugar, so they walked to the neighborhood store. On the way they found $8.00 in the bushes. Jimmy actually found it but divided it between the three.

Nov. 16, 1955    EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Yesterday I made my call on the governor about the high school situation. He tells me to present a program, which is a bit of encouragement, but a lot of work! Why can’t I stay out of trouble? I suppose because no one else will initiate anything. Almost everyone just sits around and grumbles. I mean to go ahead and do what I can with it. I know the A.A.U.W. is interested and may help me. The military contingent is giving the governor a lot of criticism about the schools, too, so I think he’d like to do
something to satisfy them. Poor man! It is a hard job with imported teachers, terrific increase in school population and a colonial situation. He gave me a copy of his speech to the teachers.

Melba Shriver is in charge of a bazaar for the Women’s Club. It’s to be held a year from now, but she is much concerned already with preparations. She says she misses me in the club, so I agreed to make some items.

The children helped me with my dinner preparations Sunday as usual and served the table so beautifully. One of the guests remarked that she could never have done that at 8 years old, and Liza beamed. We had a crowd that liked to talk all at once, but whenever Judge Shriver put in a word, there was sudden silence. He has the most delightful way of telling stories, and has ideas as well.

A.B. I’ll need more help in my campaign...I need some facts. 1. Is it true that colleges, Harvard, Yale, Princeton for instance, have no entrance requirements as to specific h.s. credits now? This is what Dr. Haitema, the Director of Education, maintains. 2. If we push for a Stateside-standard school, I’d like to know the requirements for teachers, both in the elementary and high schools. Does Memphis require a degree from college plus education credits? 3. I will want to use Central and Tech High as examples. Are the requirements for teachers more rigorous in these? Can any child from anywhere in the city elect to go to one or the other of these schools, or are they chosen by geographical section? Would it be possible to get their curricula? James talked with the high school principal today over plans for the new school...He is of the same opinion as we are, or seems to be...The most deplorable fact is that his hands are tied. The director will not allow any other of the staff but himself to talk with the governor, and he paints a pretty picture to him!~ I believe that I can somehow manage to have the governor call the principal for a conference without the director. He says he would welcome the opportunity. Am I getting into hot water? Sometimes it’s necessary.

Alice says that her friend Karen told the class about a move to get representatives of all the countries of the world together just to get acquainted with each other. I was pleased that Alice seemed so very interested..

Nov. 20, 1955  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
We had callers this afternoon – the Shermans. They left Buddy to play with Murray and took Alice to finish the afternoon with their girls. Catherine Sherman was Murray’s teacher in the third grade, and a very good one, too. They were so distressed about the school situation at Mongmong this year that they took Buddy out and put him in the Father Duenas Catholic School for boys. There he was promoted to the 9th grade and is really enjoying the work. I overheard him tell Murray that algebra is so nice because you can use numbers below zero. I keep hoping that Murray will find high school work interesting, too.

The skipper of the little ship James went to Palau on came by to see us one Sunday afternoon. He is not like most sea-faring folk at all, that is, not salty, and he seems well-educated and very intelligent. He has been enough in the islands to have observed all their customs, and his stories were so interesting.

Dec. 12, 1955  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
James won’t be coming after all. Bill Hellier decided to go himself instead and left last Wednesday. He is such a close friend of Bill Sinclair’s, and Bill had called him several weeks ago about a job opening. We think Bill Hellier many have arranged the govt. trip so that he can investigate this possibility. His contract ends in February.

L.S. has probably told you of Murray’s escapade (*poison gas distribution). It seems funny now that it’s all over. I keep thinking how innocent parents are. I somehow never thought of our children being involved when I heard it announced over the radio. My only thought was to keep them in the house until we heard the danger was over.
The forecast for Guam is that we’ll have television next year. We will have to join the trend, I suppose. Our record player is such a pleasure….Murray played his favorites, Sousa’s marches, for several hours upon its return (*from the repair shop).

Murray spent the day yesterday with Roger Turbeyville. Roger called after the girls and I had left to go shopping so Murray left a note, “Hope you can get along without me!” I’m glad Murray has this friend. But Roger will have leave in June to go to the Staunton Military Academy.

Cecil Waite, one of the A.A.U.W. members invited Martha Turbeyville and me to lunch on Friday to discuss the school program. I had been doing some more research. I find that only 3% to 4% of the students here take the classical (I call it this for lack of a better name) course, so that I believe we have a strong argument for concentrating the course in one of the high schools. With divided enrollment, there won’t be enough students to justify giving Latin, second-year algebra, physics, for instance.

1956

Feb. 10, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

The Elvidges are staying. She came to see me on Thursday afternoon. She said she felt lonesome. I didn’t inquire. This is so unlike her. She is always cheerful and encouraging others.

She brought us some slides which she took the day we decorated the (*Govt. House Christmas) tree and also some of her delicious lettuce...

There’s farming at last, and occasionally we’re able to buy Chinese cabbage, lemons, oranges, and eggplant. They are much better being fresh than shipped-in products. [*Photo on left: field trip to rice farm]

Cold storage eggs, which are very small, went up to 98¢ a dozen, so I have started buying mine fresh from a neighbor at $1 and twice as big. This Mr. McWhorter has a very large chicken farm and supplies the stores at $1.15 a dozen. He gives us cracked eggs, free.

We took the children to their first play. It was the Teahouse of the August Moon, just right for playing on Guam. It was the best amateur theatrical I’ve seen. The military men played the military parts, and Japanese played theirs. I really think the young fellow who played the interpreter was better than the one
in London at Her Majesty’s theater, and the geisha girl was grand. No matter how hard we try to imitate their movements, ours are always somewhat jerky.

Another stroke of good fortune. Alice has found what promises to be a friend who’s “just right” and will probably stay here for some time. The Turbeyvilles brought her and her parents to the Rotary picnic yesterday. She is Kay Husted. Her father is the new asst. manager of Coca-Cola, just arrived from Japan, where they’ve been for seven years.

Murray helped me fry the chickens for the (*Rotary) picnic yesterday. Every year I draw something to be cooked. Next year I hope they assign me rolls to buy…

Feb. 19, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

Liza has gone to James (for)...pictures of bottles drawn for an arithmetic problem. He is drawing the 7th now, and Liza is saying, “That’s pretty good, Daddy.”

We went to an interesting cocktail party Friday night. The honorees were Mr. Muller, deputy director, U.S. Operations, Mission to Nepal, and his wife. They had been stationed on the island of Truk for five years, before that Germany, and some friends of ours with the Trust Territories here gave the party. Mrs. Muller said that she had learned the German language, but Truckese was impossible—“nothing but exceptions.” Her husband, however, had mastered it, as he does the language of any place he is sent. Wouldn’t State Department work be interesting?

Murray spent the day yesterday with a friend at the Naval Air Station. This is quite a treat to him. They get on the station bus and go to the crafts shop, snack bar, library, and bowling alley. Then last night they saw a double-header. Michael, the friend, seems to enjoy equally as much his visits with us in the country.

Feb. 23, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

...(Of “Forty-niners”, Erin Stewart’s paper about her experience of early reconstruction Guam (*in Appendix 4 of this document), also, “Tuffets”, her children’s story) I very much fear that is only family dotage (which none of us could live without) which sees any value in it, but it’s fun to try, anyway...

...I took Murray and Alice with me to the P.T.A. meeting tonight. The governor spoke. There was the meagerest handful of people there and practically no Statesiders. I’m glad we filled up three seats...

Tomorrow night the Elvidges are having a reception for the newest admiral. Admiral Schweitzer, who came here from Millington (*Navy base near Memphis), has already been transferred to the Philippines.

Feb. 26, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

Alice’s new prospective friend has flown. Her grandfather was in an automobile accident, so she and her mother have gone home until the end of the school year.

Jury trials have begun here, and last Saturday James had to take the juror-selection box, which he had designed and had made at Public Works, to the courtroom. He piled the children all in the car, and they came home bubbling over with the experience of sitting in the judge’s seat and in the jury box.

....(We) played bridge on Wednesday night with parents of some of the children’s friends, the Shermans. Went to the Elvidge’s reception for the new admiral on Friday night and dinner afterward at the Naval Officers’ Club with the Public Works staff, who were also at the reception. Last night the Helliers had two tables of bridge, and I had top score. This always surprises me. I don’t ever want to get terribly interested in bridge.
March 5, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Maria (*Francisco), our next-door neighbor, came over one day to make a telephone call and seeing bananas asked me if I knew how to cook them with coconut. She then proceeded to cook them. They were delicious. Maria has also shown me how to cook Spanish rice.

March 8, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
(*Murray’s “poisonous gas episode” and “the complete innocence of parents”)…All day until the children came home from school I kept thinking “I must keep them in the house until the terrible danger is removed,” never once thinking that any of them might have already been involved! And then to have the police appear suddenly at the door! When I went to the other parents’ homes that night to ask them if they would bring their little accomplices to the police station the next day (the Guam police asked me to do this, as they are not allowed to go into the B.P.M area), the B.P.M. police came to the first home while I was there. At the second, the Shermans’, who are real good friends of James and me, I began with “Have the police been here yet?” Catherine and I are still laughing at this approach. She said she thought I was joking because it was so out of character. Murray is considerably older and wiser from the experience – and so are we!

March 12, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
All too often people neglect showing their appreciation, I feel…The Hermans left with appropriate fanfare, as befitting the Secretary of Guam. Pat Herman had invited all the heads of departments to come to the ship for champagne. No one seems to know, but there is a feeling that the governor promoted the rest. We were told to assemble at the Congress Building at 4:00. There were policemen in white gloves, only used for formal occasions, and they lined all the cars up in formal procession. The governor’s car with flags flying and the Hermans bedecked in leis led the cortège, and it was like nothing so much as a funeral. They even had us turn on our lights! There must have been fifty cars in all, as some of the businessmen and all of the legislators were invited. The Guam Militia Band was there, and this was the sad part. Almost all of the guests betook themselves to the far side of the ship to look at the sea, and the band played on to almost no audience. Pauline Herman did have the good grace to stay on the band’s side, and we were just preparing to wish her a last farewell when the band struck up the Guam Hymn. The few of us there stood at attention, but half-way through some Navy friends came up the gangplank and engaged her attention. I noticed the band members dolefully putting up their instruments without even a thank-you, though when we went down I tried to compliment them. They looked sad, and I didn’t blame them.

I like the article you sent about educational opportunities. We must make mathematicians, scientists or engineers of the children if we can....

March 26, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
We’ve had March winds, or gales, here the last few days. There’s been a typhoon about 500 miles away. I’m like you now. The winds make me nervous. They blow the clothes off the line, papers off desks, slam doors and are generally irritating. We have no way of shutting them out either. We’re wide open and vulnerable.

Mr. McWhorter gave Liza a dozen little pullet eggs. They made me homesick, remembering how pleased you used to be with them. I think I’ll color these for Liza, and that’s all the Easter celebrating we’ll have here.

This afternoon we went to a little ceremony at the Plaza at which the governor accepted a cherry tree for Guam. The tree was sent from Washington. I hope it lives here. I felt rather sorry for it. Carlos Taitano, who was master of ceremonies, had asked us to come and help be the public. He must have worked rather hard at getting up a public, because there were more people than I would have expected.
...We discovered termites in our books! All of James’ Sweet’s Catalogue books (architectural supplies—the set worth $100) are gone and some of his other architectural books. We worked all of a morning dusting the books, then spraying the bookcase.

Mrs. Elvidge brought a houseguest of hers out to see me (*that) afternoon last week...Imagine at such a time with books all over the floor. Both were very much taken with our cat, who really was just about the only thing presentable (*section about Mrs. Elvidge “joining a group making a pilgrimage to Japan, Hongkong and Bangkok”). Melba Shriver is having a coffee for a friend on Friday. Her invitation was “can you stand another coffee at my house?” I liked that, because I think we’ve almost reached saturation point on parties. However, a coffee at her house is always pleasant.

(*On writing a memoir) I’m sure one would laugh at really funny idiosyncracies but some stories are unkind. (*An editor advised one to) concentrate on the humorous aspects of ones life...laugh with but not at people.

April 1, 1956 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Liza was first up, so James told her there was something the bunny had left her. She looked and looked before he told her “April Fool.” Then she played it on M & A keeping the straightest little face. They looked a long long time for the eggs we’d dyed last night. They were still in the refrigerator....

Rama (*the cat) has learned that whenever I go kitchenward, the whole troup follows my footsteps and starts wailing “I’m hungry.” Rama is one of the troup now and adds his “meow, meow.”...The pleasantest thing about Melba’s coffee on Friday, I thought, was seeing her two cats perched up on top of her car looking superciliously, as cats do, at all of us going inside to chit-chat.

April 8, 1956 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
We’re just back from Cocos Island. Sun, sand, water and beer, to say nothing of the forty miles over rough road, combine to induce sleep rather than writing, but I don’t want you to miss your Friday letter. The trip to Cocos we would have skipped if we could. We have been over a good many times. The children love it, but it is exhausting. This time the Helliers asked us to go with them. They are in great distress. Bill Hellier’s father is critically ill, and they are awaiting news to see if Mabie should take the baby, named for Bill’s father, back for him to see. Bill himself cannot leave. They had never been to Cocos Island, so they felt they had to see it before they left. The village commissioner took us over in his motorboat and his two daughters had prepared the lunch... (*Rama) always greets everyone who comes and he sticks with the company if it seems agreeable. I envy him the privilege of choosing. Last night he was patient with the Helliers’ baby, who treated him unmercifully, pulling his tail, his ears and bouncing him around. Rama finally begged to go outside and we let him. Later Murray had to rescue him from a neighboring cat who picked a fight. Talk about “a dog’s life”. I think it should be “a cat’s life”!

James and I went to a big fandango on Saturday night. It was the first big wedding party in a long time. There must have been 400 or 500 people there, and for supper too. This was the groom’s party....

April 15, 1956 EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Let me tell you about our springtime here. This year, I believe, is the first one which has brought us to full realization that springtime does come all over the earth. In spite of no noticeable change in temperature, there are other signs, definitely spring-like. The winds, first of all, are high and frolicking. Maybe they are blowing pollen about. Certainly they are blowing hair and clothes on lines about and whipping up a delicious fragrance. This time of year here always reminds me of spring in New Orleans. Murray is captivated by it like I was at about his age. He has taken to rising before dawn and going outside to drink it
in. The other day he presented to me a captured jasmine blossom in full bloom. This blooms only at night, so we have wondered at its mystery. We get wafts of its exotic perfume, but the bush in the daytime has not the slightest sign of any blossom. Now we know what this elusive flower looks like, and I must say it is just about as dull looking as the bush it grows on. Then there is a bounty of fruits this time of year. The children are past masters at scavenging after seven years of experience. They bring in baskets full of green mangoes and avocados every day. We're making that wonderful green mango sauce again.

We had the most distressing news in yesterday's paper. The governor (*Governor Elvidge*) and Mrs. Elvidge are in Washington. He has resigned his post here. We will miss them very much, and I believe the island will suffer a great loss, though there are some who don’t realize it yet. The businessmen especially have criticized him. I have felt a deep pity for him from the first. He came enthusiastic and with the staunchest ideals of what is right and worthwhile, and with intelligence he tried to pursue such a course only to suffer insult. He is resigning to go back to his law practice in Seattle.

I took four fellow old-timers to lunch at one of the restaurants in honor of Mrs. Wharton, wife of the manager of the Bank of America. The Whartons were here for four years, coming about six years ago. They were transferred to Tokyo, then to Bangkok and now back to Guam for four months to relieve the present manager to go on vacation...exhausting, I should think. Ollie Mae said they will go from here back to Tokyo, then to Manila, Hongkong, Singapore and will be in each place three or four months. They hardly finish being welcomed-entertained before the farewell parties start.

I was particularly interested in the conversation. We were all wondering about, someone said, “something that makes us irritable about our life on Guam”, and others expressed “an elusive feeling”. I suggested it might be our “pastlessness.” – We are rather suspended in the present here. I imagine it must be like the life of pioneers. For all practical purposes we have no past as there are no shared past experiences, events, friends or places. We have no future either for the same reason. There is nothing that will be shared beyond a very limited time. It’s this latter aspect, I think, which makes our situation particularly morbid. At least the early pioneers had something of a common future to anticipate together. Melba said she had often thought that it would be a blessing if she could just have one relative or friend visit her here, so that she’d have someone who understood. How far away we are from the daily life we have left. The conversation was not self-pitying as it sounds when put to paper. It was more a seeking of that something elusive about our Statesiders’ mutual status. I’m afraid that I haven’t the ability to put the idea across, though.

I have recognized and accepted the fact of being “suspended in the present”. I am rarely irritable. It has its advantages like anything else. Many of the old prejudices fall away like withered fruit. I say “fruit”, because without realizing it, I think we get a certain pleasure from having prejudices, and I certainly enjoyed the old life, prejudices and all. All the same, it’s nice to taste of new fruits, the fruit of meeting new faces, new ideas, seeing new places. There isn’t much time for prejudices or at least I haven’t found much. I’m willing to take the bitter with the sweet. Did I say I have no prejudices after those scathing remarks about the people who badgered Governor Elvidge? Well, there’s always time to shudder at injustice.

(*Party “last night”*) We had fourteen people, buffet curry as usual. We had the Johnston family (Mr. Johnston was from Franklin, Tennessee), the Turbeyvilles, who are from Tennessee, Mr. Cantlo (*sp*?), the new entomologist with a luscious Boston accent, and a Mr. Griffiths, who is here only for a few days. Mr. Griffiths I liked very much on first acquaintance. He was sent here to consult with James about the new junior-senior high school. He is an engineer with a construction company in Los Angeles, which has a branch here in Guam. His field is steel construction, and James says he is considered one of the five foremost authorities on the subject. He fit right into the crowd of strangers and called me “Erin”, which I
like. No one seemed to count him a visitor at all. That’s a very unusual quality to possess, I think. He struck me as someone who just plain likes folks.

Mr. Cantlo asked if our cat was a tomcat. Liza replied indignantly, “No! He’s a Siamese!” We have an old yellow tomcat who hangs around trying to kill Rama. This is the cat who got in and killed our kittens... “Tomcat” to Liza is this awful menace.

I’ll have to explain Alice’s reference to a banana can-can. This is what all the teenagers here wear to hold their skirts out....Alice had difficulty serving last night as she was so swollen in the skirt.

April 22, 1956  
EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

Last week was a busy social week, almost like old times. On Tuesday night there was a dinner party in honor of Mr. Griffiths and Mr. Vinnell, 30 of us at the Fontaines’ home. Wednesday to Liza’s class open house, Friday luncheon and afterwards the bazaar tea, Friday Night Bridge with the Helliers, last night an anniversary dinner celebration of the Shermans. Today we took our weekly beaching and carried Alice’s friend and the kitty along.

(*Sessions) I had a nice long letter from Bethea....Funny how most people who depart from here go with that feeling — you’ve left a part of your life and yourself behind. I’m sure the Elvidges will feel like this because there’s less time for a governor and his lady to give anything but all of themselves to the job than for anyone else. I’ve expressed this badly. Do you know what I mean?

April 26, 1956  
EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

My museum experience...That certainly was a peculiar experience, my getting so involved simply from a chance remark to the governor.

Lately, I’ve been going on the forays to gather avocados and mangoes. We have good times. One day some goats were tied close to the fruit trees. I’ll admit that I was somewhat wary. All three said in one accord, “Mama, are you afraid of goats? They won’t hurt you. They’re friends.” But Murray told me to watch the basket because the goats would eat our pickings. They talked to their goat friends and persuaded them to leave our treasure alone, never seeming the least bit concerned about the necessity of convincing them to leave us alone!

The Elvidges return tomorrow. I can hardly wait to get a first-hand explanation of their decision to leave. Rumors are flying...Some say that the governor wanted to tell some things about Guam in Washington... (There’s an attempt by some to have the 13,000 Filipino workers on military projects removed)...I pity those in Washington who are victims of such diversified accounts of us so far away. How can they administer efficiently?

May 6, 1956  
EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

If my theorizing about our “pastlessness” inspired your (*long letters)...I’m sorry to have worried you. It’s only a fact of our life and really doesn’t bother us too much. The only real grief is seeing friends depart and having to make new ones. I’m convinced that after a certain age (about now) this becomes a real chore. One would like to settle into a comfortable routine, or at least I would. But this doesn’t bother us much either, so don’t worry. At this time, the social unrest, I think, is partly responsible for our fatigue. Things will settle down.

We will meet the new secretary, Mr. Corbett, and his wife at a reception at Government House on Wednesday. The carousel goes round and round. The Elvidges, just the two of them, had dinner with us on Friday. It was good of them to come. We enjoyed this one last real glimpse of them. The other times will be at big parties, where of course no one ever really sees anyone. It’s just party chatter even with best
friends. Read the enclosed editorial (*not enclosed in the Stewart file letters) – the disparaging remarks for public reading...

...I agree with you about E.B.B. (*Elizabeth Barrett Browning) and I think sweet people are few and little understood. Mrs. Elvidge is one of them. She says she feels so sorry for everyone entertaining them and then having to do it all over again for the new secretary. There are not many who would care.

May 9, 1956  JMS to EHS
The Elvidges plan to leave on the 19th even though no successor has been appointed. The new Secretary arrives tomorrow morning and will be acting Gov. ...We had the Elvidges for a family supper and bridge Friday night...They are booked solid every night until they leave with dinner by every official dept. of the government...After dinner last night we went to the Helliers with the Johnstons and Taitanos....

May 13, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
The reception Wednesday night was nice, and we made our call this afternoon on the new Secretary. We liked him and his wife. It would be better if these weren’t political plums, I believe. We need someone governing who is not fettered by politics. Mr. Corbett (*William T. Corbett New Secretary; Acting Governor May 9-Oct. 2, 1956) will serve as governor until someone is appointed, and he brand-new. It does take such a time to understand at all the situation here. By the time they learn, they’re gone.

Friday night the Shrivers had another dinner-bridge party for the Elvidges. ...It scares me to death to try to play with these good players. I don’t know why we were included.

We took the girls to see the Hanna girls. Dr. Hanna is the new dean of the college. The girls are cute, one in 9th and the other in 10th grade. Liza said afterwards, “We had a real fine time tonight, Mama.”

There’s a coffee tomorrow morning, a luncheon Friday, and a gov’t. farewell party Friday night. How the military people stand changes of command every 18 months is more than I can see....

The Helliers leave June 10th, so the round of parties will go on until then, it seems. Not much time for anything else.

May 20, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
...After the luncheon (*Virginia Selwyn’s-Pan American luncheon), I trekked up to Government House for a final little private farewell. It was exactly like the first morning call I made on Mrs. Elvidge three years ago, except that this time she hugged me and I her. Farewells are terrible. She had just removed a very gorgeous lei of baby orchids, and she took me out to see her prize ones (not babies). It must have been hard to leave so much of themselves here. They were released at last from the festivity cage yesterday morning. It does feel so empty — but we will have something of them for yet a little while (*final copies of Mrs. Elvidge’s Monitor), and she insisted on sending Quina out to get lettuce....Quina and Alfred (*full names?) (*Government House housekeeper and houseman) suffer particularly from these changes. I told her (*Quina) that I would bring the children up to see her and Gray Matter, the cat, which they still feel is part theirs, having helped with his birth. They loved the Elvidges and Quina, but I believe that the cat is really the pièce de résistance of Govt. House.

Someone called James the other day to try to enlist his help again in reactivating the orchestra. This fellow thinks that, maybe through the Navy’s help, we might get artists to perform here occasionally. This would certainly fill a great need. Even in peacetime, the armed forces and others abroad would be inspired, I feel, by such people as entertained during the war. We have had Bob Hope since we’ve been here. There was a tremendous crowd, I heard.
May 21, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

It seems to me that it takes a great deal more tolerance than the church is able to instill for us to get along together. Maybe Eisenhower was wise in not professing any religion until, as head of the nation, he had to show he believed in God. I am sure that in all his dealings before with all those foreigners, they must have sensed that he was a good man irrespective or perhaps because of his religion.

Governor Elvidge was sent with the specific mission of healing the breach between military and Govt. of Guam, which developed under Carl Skinner administration. I think he and Mrs. Elvidge were successful in this but the businessmen complained that Governor Elvidge neglected them! Oh dear. Guam is such a small place to have so many cross-currents.

May 27, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

I’ve promised the children a show at B.P.M. tonight. B.P.M. is closing soon, so we won’t have these free shows. The children will miss their friends there even more than the shows. I’m glad the government is getting out from under this tremendous exploitation of our taxes...Brown-Pacific-Maxon is a big construction outfit which obtained most of the reconstruction contracts immediately after the war in Alaska and the islands on a cost-plus basis. They could pay (*thus exact) any amount for labor and materials...There are other private contractor firms here now who can do the work on a competitive basis...

I have read that the Americans found the Guamanians almost poverty-stricken when they took over in 1898. During the Spanish occupation, everything went back to Spain. The government paid little bits to the people, who spent some on costly church trinkets. However, Spain apparently did not care for their land. There was no need of military strength (This need wasn’t felt until World War II), so the Guamanians at least had an agrarian life. We Americans paid them royally for the land we felt we must have and also for the war damage to coconut trees, etc. Now most of it is gone, it seems, this time into the pockets of American businessmen. Is there any solution? It’s depressing. I suppose we’ll always just have to go along with the tide. We must keep these outer bases to stem the tide of Communism, but I honestly believe the Guamanians would accept that as readily as democracy, and why not? Their life would probably not be very different.

Our Guamanian neighbors, the Franciscos, invited us to a breakfast after Mass yesterday. They had been having a novena (*devotion repeated on nine days to obtain special graces) all week. I learned something of this custom. We heard them chanting every night about suppertime. The breakfast was in a little building on their property. I had always thought it was their own private chapel, but we learned that it used to be the village church — hand-hewed timbers and the thick rammed-earth walls. It must have had a thatched roof originally. Maria told us that the novena is always at the beginning of the rainy season for help with the crops. We had rice, barbecued pig, beef, chicken, cake and pie, coffee for breakfast!

June 1, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

This is the last day of school. Mongmong is making much over the graduation, and Murray seems to be reveling in it. On Tuesday, there will be a breakfast. We are to provide juice for punch and a dozen sandwiches. Murray says he can have four guests for the dance that night, but can’t think of anyone to ask!

Alice and Liza have commented, “Mama, you know a lot of people, don’t you?” There is surprise in their voices. People of their age are not yet butchers, bakers and candlestick-makers like most of adults’ chance acquaintances. I think they imagine that if you speak in a friendly fashion you must be fast friends.

(M)y new would-be writer friend, Virginia Wheat, brought a copy of a journal she had made on a trip to the Fiji Islands three years ago...They were living in Ponape at the time. Her husband took the trip on business and she and their 8-year-old daughter went along. They arrived in Sewa, Fiji just after Elizabeth II and Philip
had left. She taught her daughter by Calvert in Ponape and the child was promoted a grade when they came here.

Alice seems determined to put WOMAN where she belongs. Perhaps this is necessary (i.e., going overboard the other way) to obtain equal rights eventually. It seems to me rather precarious, though, because there have been communities ruled by women already, and in these the men had no say.

...The waves of nausea when I hear someone speak harshly to or of another persist....Mr. Guthertz, the owner of Guam Department Store, went into a long tirade one day to me about how the government here is not doing anything to promote business and that is why he is leaving...They (Guthertzs) had the courage to come in first with businesses that were badly needed and under such frustrating circumstances. They had a dry cleaning shop, a tailor shop and a men’s shop as well as this other, Guam Department Store, it was and is called. I really don’t know how the island would have managed without them in those first days (post war). The bases hadn’t even installed cleaning shops when I came here in ’49, and all those formal parties! And no one to repair equipment when the cleaning apparatuses broke down, as they did often. Mrs. Guthertz was the tailoress for a long time, then the cashier of the “department store”, working from 7 am to 11 pm and with children, too. I often wondered who kept the children. I saw the little 6-year-old boy in a piano recital back in 1950. He was dressed in full Tuxedo. He made his bow like a maestro and played his little piece with all the confidence of a virtuoso, though the teacher had to work the pedals for him. It was really one of those surprising little confections of Life....

June 5, 1956  JMS to EHS
Murray’s class is having a graduation exercise Tuesday. He goes to high school next year. E has bought him dark blue long pants, white long-sleeve shirt and a black tie. We’ll all go, of course, and I’ll write you about it next week....(*purchase of Pepsi-Cola stock) We’ve figured that our investments now bring in $700 a year, and of course we’re able to save more each year, so we think we are doing reasonably well. If you can use any of it please let me know.....An Air Force library had a sale of books...all for 25¢ each. We bought a number of very fine ones, mostly reference and have devoted this past week to reading...Today the girls went with me to the beach. Murray got too much sun Tuesday...His skin is almost as sensitive as E’s. He blisters when I don’t even feel it.

Tonight we’re all going to a dinner and showing of colored slides given by the Museum group for a visiting archeologist. The slides are his and are of the neighboring islands of Yap, Palau, etc.

June 9, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
This has been a busy, busy week with graduation. Rehearsals every day for Alice and Murray, and at last the big event last night. The production showed the work put into it. Everything moved along with precision. It was a fine experience. Murray was scared to death, but walked out straight as a ramrod and with an easy-looking manner at least.....I took Murray to apply for a job at the Coca-Cola plant on Tuesday. He got it and will start work on Monday, making 75¢ an hour.

The Helliers leave next Saturday, so there is the usual round of parties. Yesterday Public Works had the traditional beach picnic. Tonight we’re taking them out to dinner (almost everyone is entertaining this way now – much more sensible, I think). Wednesday night there is a bridge party for them and Friday night the Meyers have asked us to dinner with them. There really should be a way to send people off with more consideration, I feel, but I can’t think of any substitute.

The acting governor is quite the opposite of Governor Elvidge. He goes around to the offices saying “Hi, Sis!” to the secretaries, and he is buddy to all the men already. What Washington can’t do to our equilibrium! Maybe he will fill the bill. We’ll see.
**June 11, 1956  JMS to EHS**

...Murray graduated Thursday night. It was a very nice ceremony, and he was quite nervous, but looked and carried himself well. Tomorrow he starts working afternoons at the Coca Cola plant – making $4.50 a day. He will ride his bicycle back and forth. Several of his friends will work with him, and its very nice of Charly Turbeyville to do this for them...Liza is spending a week with a school friend who lives on the Navy Base...

The Helliers leave next Saturday. Yesterday the office gave an all day picnic for them, tonight we’re taking them to the Surf Club to dinner, and Friday the Meyers are having them and us to dinner.

Our acting governor Corbett was in the same college class with both Capt. and Mrs. Heintzelman. They were together in Washington just before coming here. The H’s told him (*Acting Governor Corbett) about us. Also the Elvidges introduced us...

**June 18, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

(*Describes activities around Helliers and Shermans leaving and entertaining Hera Owens) The Helliers and the Shermans are bequeathing us all sorts of odd things, most of which we can use. We fell heir to a great many of the Shermans’ books, and I have already dipped into one, *Yankee from Olympus*. I had always been confused over Oliver Wendell Holmes, the poet and the judge. I didn’t know that one was father, the other son.....James says his mother writes that she had an operation on her eyes recently and that the Heintzelmans had been in Memphis to attend the son-in-laws’s graduation from U.T. Med. School. The new governor went to school with Captain Heintzelman, who told him to be sure to look us up here.

I took the children this afternoon to the unveiling of the bronze marker from the Plaza d’Espana which I ordered last spring for the P.M.&M. (*Parks, Monuments, and Museum) Committee. It is a handsome piece, and the ceremony with band and speeches by Mrs. Johnston, the Admiral and the Governor was perfect. My main thought was how happy I was to be able to look at it with only the general public’s eye...(*and) that the committee was progressing so well in its work. The Plaza grounds were combed and groomed for the occasion and the museum had a new coat of point. Mrs. Glenn, the paid, but poorly paid, curator loves her work and has a really fine collection of islandia now. I enjoyed especially the admiral’s wife’s remark when someone pointed out a lava-lava (Caroline Islands woven grass G-string) and explained that’s all you’d have to wear there. Mrs. Ammon commented “That would be fine if it were a perfect 36.” I was glad I happened to be in the little knot of people who heard this.

**June 24, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

Every summer here we say we’ve never felt such heat, but this one really does take the cake. I have seldom felt warm here at home as we are on a little hill which catches all the breezes, if there are any. For over a month, there hasn’t been a flutter, and the humidity is absolutely stifling....The rains only make it worse. The sticky dampness afterwards rises up and envelops one.

There is always some redeeming feature. Everything is in full bloom now. The flame trees are especially spectacular with their riotous red everywhere....For the first time I can appreciate Mr. Neutra’s plan of blending the (Government) house into the landscape. It is very low and unobtrusive...Sititng on the cliff overlooking Agaña, as it does, ... the rather small lawn falling off to a circle of flame trees, big blobs of red, and below them, as if in support, big blobs of green (trees that at a distance look like bushes). It is truly gorgeous.

I had a very enlightening chat with a Hawaiian who is married to a Statesider. They have a store and the Volkswagen agency. We were on the same plane coming back to Guam last summer, and now we rehashed
the trip. They had gone to arrange for their son to enter M.I.T. next year. She wasn’t too hopeful, as they were told there were so many applicants. I suggested Ga. Tech., but she said she wouldn’t want to expose her son to that situation so young. Said she, “I’ve never known anything like it; there was a definite feeling as we drove through the South. The people were kind, but we still felt it.” She is rather dark with coal-black, straight hair, rather handsome. I told her we were from the South and tried to explain that I thought the boys would be treated as foreign students. She told of an incident when one of the boys had gone up to a drinking fountain marked “White”. A blond boy beside him said “Where are you from?” He replied “Guam”, and the boy said “Is that in Africa?”....I think the U.S. will look much better to foreign countries when we correct this evil.

June 25, 1956  JMS to EHS
Liza wrote this all by herself — ideas and all. Don’t you think it exceptional for 3rd grade?. (*Apparently there was an insert. There follow paragraphs about having one car only now). Murray is still working and loves it. He earns about $125 a month, and is saving most of it for college. All three have bank accounts for this purpose, and between them have several hundred dollars. Alice earns her ironing, Liza washes the car and weeds and Murray did cut the grass. I’m taking over that now while he’s working, for one job is enough — at least at his age. We’re proud of him.

This week I played in an island-wide duplicate bridge tournament and finished near the top, ranking with those who plan constantly. Tuesday night all of us went to the stage play “Arsenic and Old Lace.” ....I enjoyed reading the play several years ago. Yesterday we all went to a big beach party and dinner and last night all to a show at B.P.M.

July 1, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
This time of year here is always particularly strenuous with departures. This and being away from you all are detestable facets of this life. But it’s been a good place for Murray’s asthma and we are able to make a living. Ours is a rather unusual family, anyway, in having stayed together so long. One accepts the fact of separation a little more easily when there are others in the same category all about. Catherine Sherman, for instance, says that her mother’s six children are all in different spots on the globe, not one in Hawaii with the parents...(They) had to go where opportunity knocked.

Murray has worked three weeks now very industriously. He won’t work on Sunday any more. Not enough cokes were bought. His co-worker, Buddy (*Sherman), left this morning. Now Murray is the only Stateside boy on the loading crew.

We were up at 5 a.m. to see the Shermans off, and we have to go to a reception to meet the new bank president tonight.

July 8, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
...Pat Ehrhart gave it (*luncheon) for a newcomer in her husband’s business, one of the shipping firms. This is a young wife with an 18-months baby. She says she’s finding it’s a bit hard to get used to the household chores (*describes newcomer’s having lived in the Philippines, where she had help)....I sat with one lady who told of experiences in Alaska and the Virgin Islands, another of Japan and a trip around the world, which included South Africa and South America. Sometimes I think I’m living in a dream world. People talk about going to these places like going to the corner drugstore.

...It (*Erin Stewart’s story “Children Eyes and Ears of the World”) will only bear him (Dr. Haitema) up in his theory that the children should be integrated here. I feel now that perhaps he is right, though I was very dubious at the first of the year. I read a (Harper’s) article written by an Englishwoman named Darwin about the colonial situations in Africa. She says all countries have had colonial difficulties but the Portuguese. In this colony, there are Hindus, Catholics and followers of African religions, but all children go to the same
schools. She doesn’t claim that this has anything to do with the success of government but mentions it as the only example among colonies of such a program. How will we understand each other if we don’t break down barriers?

July 16, 1956   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

We’ll be coming next summer, but we’ll be careful not to arrive at 1 a.m. again! We’ll have such good times!

If ever you feel like calling, A.B., you know I’d love to hear all those good voices. The difference in time is the hardest part of it. If you call say 6 a.m., isn’t it about 10 p.m. here?....

My latest time-consuming occupation is helping Liza set herself up in “business”. Ever since Murray went to work, she has been divining ways to earn money. My suggestions of tasks about the house weren’t very palatable, so one day she asked me if she and Rose could sell cookies. I told her we had too few to sell. “But we’ll make some, Mama, and all by ourselves,” she said. I told her to make some popcorn, which she did. They gathered ebas and had in all about ten neat little bags of produce. Their first sales were encouraging, so the next day they really set up shop, putting Liza’s little table beside the road. They made signs “Popcorn 10¢”, “Ebas 5¢”, gathered two papayas from our tree, and Rose’s mother gave them some bananas to sell. Alice husked a coconut, and another friend brought some mangoes for the enterprise. In true American fashion, they decided they must have something FREE, so Liza asked me if she could take ice-cubes out. Alice made them a huge “FREE ICE WATER” sign. At the end of the day, they were tired and elated over having 76¢. That night Liza said they were going to use it to buy popcorn, peanuts and Kool-Aid to sell—putting profits back into the business. So James took her on Saturday to the store to invest. She had to borrow 14¢ from me, which they paid back before nightfall. They are so busy roasting peanuts and popcorn, putting them in bags and making popsicles now....My sandwich bags and sugar are dwindling and Mrs. Pereira will soon be bereft of bananas!

We had a couple in to play bridge on Friday night, the Murphys. They are like homefolk, almost exactly like you and Jimmie in manner, L.S. They’re from Virginia, have four children...

I had to brief Murray about banking. After I showed him how to make a deposit slip and what to say and do, he said, “Were you scared the first time you went in a bank, Mother?” He wanted to buy shoes and put the rest of his check into his account. He hitch-hiked to Agaña and came home shortly, saying, “It wasn’t so bad.” His plain black shoes seem a very nice choice, too. Making the birds fly isn’t easy. But such fun to watch.

James and I have to go tonight to the annual stockholders’ meeting of our little company.

July 19, 1956   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

On Wednesday morning I took the girls to Govt. House to call on Mrs. Corbett, and they to see Quina and the cat. Mrs. C. seems very gentle. She prepared coffee for us and we all sat out on their terrace overlooking Agaña and the bay. We had a pleasant time. James was there, too, helping to rearrange the government furniture to suit the new occupants. These two, I believe, are as sincere as the Elvidges were in wanting to do the job well. There’s quite a difference, though, in the East Coast and the West Coast approach.

Saturday is the big annual event here, Liberation Day....For myself, I can think only of what a horrible day it really was.
July 21, 1956  **EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

James worked with his group of workers on the Queen’s float until 1:30 a.m. Friday night. He also had charge of the Rotary float, which was very simple, a big globe of the world with children dressed in costumes of many countries. Marian Taitano had rounded up fourteen, ages 4 to 10. They looked darling. I found we need one more, an American child! So I put Liza up on the float. She was disappointed when she heard “Mexican”, “Chinese”, “Filipino”, but no “American”.

There is a feeling of unrest here…One of the articles which appeared in the Liberation Day edition of the paper sounded downright vicious. It made me feel very sad. There’s reason to complain of the inequalities, but I believe we are trying…it requires patience and perseverance….

July 29, 1956  **EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

Both girls have reveled in the new “proud of big brother” experience and Murray has come through famously, bringing them Coca-Cola hats, rulers, golf balls.

We have a TV now in Guam. We won’t get a set until later, though. The manager of the radio station tells us that the programs will be canned Westerns for awhile. Captain Bean of the Naval Hospital forecast five years ago that Guam would have TV, and we all hooted the idea. The Naval Air Station is expanding to make the runway long enough for jet planes. Pan American will have them next year, we’re told. This peaceful island will roar. An air-conditioned room will soon be the only place in the world where quiet can be found.

Aug. 12, 1956  **EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

There are a few (air-conditioning units) here now, and such a pleasure it is to find some relief if but for a few moments....It isn’t too hot here on the farm...I pity the people who live on the crowded bases without any trees to protect them from the sun’s fierceness.

Today we went to a christening party. No sign of a baby anywhere, but a nice party given by Val Reyes, a Filipino architect in James’ office. There were some 75 guests at a Chinese restaurant, the Panciteria....They keep making additions in what seems to be the most haphazard manner....The owner was in process of constructing the “Guam Garden” part at the back. James asked what he was doing, and he told us that every Chinese building was planned like a dragon if possible....It’s not unattractive, but it looks like something that couldn’t possibly have happened.

Aug. 26, 1956  **EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

We have ahead of us a fiesta at Mr. Santos’, the postmaster’s, home in Barrigada. They have been good friends since we first arrived here. At 5 o’clock we’re invited to the LeMonts’ home for dinner and inspection of their new home, which James has helped them plan and build.

This week we all had our second polio shot, so we feel reasonably safe. So far the cases have been mostly in the Air Force area which is at the extreme northern end of the island, some 20 miles from us, but there has been one case rather close to home, a 4-year-old daughter of one of the teachers, next door neighbor to our friends, the Daniells.
**Sep. 2, 1956**  
EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

We are in no danger, that is if the polio vaccine is effective. We heard of the emergency before almost anyone else did. We went right to the hospital and had the shots without any delay whatsoever.

They all want a TV set now, so Murray is contributing $50 of his summer’s earnings to it. Murray will have saved $200.

**Sep. 9, 1956**  
EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

Alice and Murray came through the first high school pangs with flying colors. Murray was hazed the first day, covered from head to toe with lipstick. Alice fared better. She said someone asked her the first day what grade she’d be in. She told him, “I’ll be in the tenth”, explaining to me that this was the truth as next year she will be in the tenth. The second day Mary Jane Hanna, a junior, gave her a slip of paper stating that Alice was her “slave.” This produced immunity.

Cecil Waite asked me to be her guest at the tea for teachers which the Women’s Club gives in September each year....(She) said, “You know you’re more interested in education than almost anyone.”

**Sep. 15, 1956**  
EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

It’s still beastly hot here and rain! Even the cat can’t find but a few minutes to frolic outside. He goes out and tries it, soon the skies open and he starts meowing furiously as if the skies had betrayed him.

**Sep. 30, 1956**  
EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

James arrived safely, and we don’t know when he’ll be home, but the children are helping me manage, and we’re getting along fine.

**Oct. 3, 1956**  
EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

Your suggesting agriculture for Murray was a brainstorm. His teacher is very fine, I gather. Today Murray was thrilled by a panel discussion the teacher had arranged. Dr. Liming, the agriculturist (*?), Dr. Cantlo, entomologist, and Bob Jordan, who has set himself up here as a middleman between farmer and market, participated.

I’ve accepted another civic job – library board. Lucile recommended me to the governor, and I’ll be sworn in soon for a two-year stretch. I accepted hesitantly. But it’s always the luck of the Garys to have developments in all their involvements, isn’t it? Let’s hope for the best. Lucile has done a really stupendous job, starting from scratch and bringing reading matter at last, even to all the villages by means of a bookmobile.

...(*Describes James away and guests at home; James was on a business trip probably related to plans for a new Wettengel school) I had hoped to get the repairs to the house underway (termites, leaking shower, sagging floor, leaky roof), clean out cupboards, sew....So far, the termites are all who have suffered. Dr. Cantlo unearthed some and sprayed, and now the carpenter will have to come and tear out one of the
kitchen walls and one of the laundry room walls. In the meantime the termites have moved to the porch! It’s hard to keep the pieces of this old house together.

...We now have in residence a baby chick and a snapping turtle. Both were rescued (?) in a ditch by Liza and Murray....I made the mistake of telling the Daniells boys about the new pets. What did they do but come home on the bus with Liza the next afternoon to see for themselves?! They think Murray’s a hero, so he fell heir to entertaining until their Mama found them at last.

I don’t know whether or not I can explain James’ mission. The Air Force is at the extreme northern end of the island, quite separated from the rest. Its numbers have been considerably increased in the past several years, so that now there are enough children to fill a large school. Rather than transporting them to existing schools, the Air Force has been pressing the Govt. of Guam to build a school on the base. There was a great deal of opposition to the idea for some time because, I suppose, it was feared all the military commands would want their own schools. The Govt. of Guam has an arrangement that all of the income tax from military personnel goes into the govt. here so long as Govt. Guam furnishes schooling. Naturally, the Govt. of Guam is ever afraid that this remunerative source may be taken away. But finally consent was given for this big Air Force school. The contract was let to a construction company in L.A. with a branch here. James has taken the plans to them and will investigate materials, etc. It is the same kind of thing as Govt. House, which was let out to Neutra and Alexander, except that Public Works decided to try reversing the planning process, that is sending James there rather than their architect here. Building by long distance isn’t easy, whatever way it is done.

Oct. 8, 1956    EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

James came in Friday night at midnight. As he was coming in the front door, two slaughtered pigs were coming through the back to be installed in our deep freeze. Frank Francisco had come over earlier to ask if they might. The pigs were removed Saturday afternoon to be roasted for the fiesta yesterday. Isn’t this an exciting life? I never know what will happen next!

On Friday and Saturday I helped at the bazaar, my first experience as a saleslady. I wasn’t very good at it, but it was fun. The women have done it again. Raised about $2000 with their own hands in their spare time, quite a contribution to the Youth Center. Mrs. Corbett was there and asked the girls (*Alice and Liza) and me to lunch at Govt. House next Saturday. She is sweet, a lady...quiet and demure.

We’re to have a new governor soon, someone from American Samoa.

Dixie and Hank Meyers wanted to hear about James’ trip, so asked us to their house Saturday night. One of the other guests was the new deputy director of Public Works.

Yesterday the Daniells joined us to attend fiestas in Yona as well as here in Mangilao. The men stayed home. Margie, the children, and I ate, then saw the procession at 4:30...(It) was impressive. The children, who are ready for communion, all dressed in white, first; then the priests and attendants bearing the statue of the patron saint; next, the maiden ladies, also in all white; and the grandmothers (I gather), most in the Spanish mestiza dress (*photo at left); then others. There was some chanting, but mostly peaceful silence.
Mrs. Corbett had a beautiful lunch, East Coast fashion. The governor was there, too. The children’s manners were exemplary. They loved especially the Corbetts’ spaniel “Pepper”. When they played on the piano Pepper sang, literally.

Today we took a ride over the new road to the southern part of the island. It is quite scenic. We had a picnic lunch on the way. I like these family outings best of all.

Dr. Coolidge sent me a copy of the annual report of the Pacific Science Board. This organization is doing a splendid job in the islands and parts of Asia...Bob Owen’s project with the carnivorous snail on Agiguan Island is mentioned. I feel that I had a part in that by housing him two months during the process.

**Oct. 19, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**
Today there were...two trips to the market to get ten pounds of ground beef for the Rotary picnic tomorrow. This is easier than 25 pounds of potato salad or frying 7 chickens, as I did last year!

Aren’t these silly monkeys cute? They sold like hotcakes at $2.50 a piece!

And you see that the G.W.C. won an award in the international contest. This was for an account of its work with the Youth center.

**Oct. 23, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**
We’re busy now preparing for the new governor. James is chairman of the protocol committee for the inauguration, which will be next Wednesday. There will be a school holiday, so I am getting clothes ready for all.

I was glad the children had the experience of a rather formal lunch (at the Corbetts’). Murray said all those forks confused him. When I told him that he should have watched Mrs. Corbett, he said, “I did watch her, but she was watching me!” [*Photo at left is of Acting Governor Corbett and wife at Government House with Murray, Alice, and Liza.]

Marge Daniells told me of attending a meeting (open forum) where three congressmen, each representing different parties, discussed their respective platforms. All three, she said, mentioned that they intended to investigate the high school curriculum to see if it satisfied college requirements. As I had heard nothing further from my letter except from Governor Elvidge telling me that he meant to do something about it, I rather wondered if the matter hadn’t gone down the drain.

Today I talked to the head of the Dept. of Education and the high school principal about my proposed school curriculum. I didn’t get very far, but am not discouraged. I learned a great deal at any rate. Eighty percent of students in the high school are natives. Some sectioning is done in the freshman required
courses according to the child’s previous grades. The same books are not used and some teachers, the h.s. principal admits, must teach some classes on sixth grade level. I managed to wheedle copies of the registration forms so that I could see what was offered. Would you mind, L.S. and A.B., taking a look at them and seeing if the children can get what they need? You are more familiar with entrance requirements than I am…Should they take Latin?…Seems to me two years of it helps with understanding English and studying modern languages. Spanish seems to be the only one of these offered. I’m sorry they have to take General Science. Did we?

Dr. Haiitema, D. of Ed. superintendent, assures me that they can get all they need here and that students do well in Stateside colleges. He showed me the list of colleges they are attending, i.e. the large number of scholarship students. …He seemed to think that most of them are accredited by the North Central Association.

The h.s. principal couldn’t say, but I had the feeling that he sympathized with my idea, because, as he says, he has three children, too. I give him credit for even holding the pieces together with 2200 students to manage. He has been struggling for a second high school for four years.

I have talked to mothers wherever I can. Most of them seem interested. Several have not approved of the sectioning idea and have felt that their children were pretty well taken care of in the high school. I’m still gleaning before I go to the governor.

Alice said she declined the presidency but accepted “Board Chairman”, whatever that is. From what I gather she writes things on the blackboard…The class voted for a dance and a dance they had. I wish I’d been an invited guest. Earlier Liza announced she’s chairman of decorations committee; she says vice-president now.

…Murray is learning to drive...He will drive only around the farm. I went with him once, and Alice had courage enough to accompany us, too. She split her sides laughing at Murray’s tooting the horn to the weeds to move over for him.

Oct. 27, 1956    EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
James has been busy with his protocol and has also planned three new schools this week…

Liza managed her parts in the P.T.A. program and said afterward that she was trembling. It was an unusually fine program.

Oct. 29, 1956    EGS to ‘Mama, A.B. and LS’
The sketch on the card (*enclosed in the letter; photo on left here) is by Alice Stilwell Cameron, General Stilwell’s daughter. The Stilwells were stationed in China when Alice was a child. She learned painting there… She is in Guam now with her husband, who is a military officer.

(*Inauguration of Gov. Richard Barrett Lowe, 11956-1959) Murray said he didn’t want to go, but I persuaded him that it was his duty to find out from the governor’s opening remarks how we are to be governed.

Nov. 2, 1956    EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Are you clinging to your radios like I am?...We are certainly in an untenable position now, it seems to me, but how could we do otherwise than uphold the U.N. policies?...Eisenhower seems to be struggling for
peace even at any cost. Maybe the cost is too high, but better than destruction...I can see many dangers in it (*Eisenhower’s policy), but let us hope that right will prevail. The peaceful way is so much slower than force. The children want to know mostly “What is going to happen?”

The new governor is duly installed. The ceremony was short and dignified... Governor Corbett was popular. The Guamanians had petitioned to Washington make him governor....The new governor made one statement of importance and that was to the effect that Guam’s military importance to the U.S. came before anything else. Perhaps this is the clue to why he was sent here....

**Nov. 10, 1956   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

The new governor...had his first staff meeting yesterday. Most of his work heretofore has been in the field of education. This first meeting was about schools, always our most urgent problem.

We’re having the Marbles to dinner tomorrow. She is the Russian I mentioned before. They are leaving next week. One night they had two tables at bridge. We met there Dr. and Mrs. Cooper from the college. He teaches psychology. We hope to see more of them.

....The world situation sent Eisenhower back into the harness, I’m sure. I feel sorry for anyone in that position. It’s so easy to make a scapegoat of a president when most of the time the social forces are so overwhelming that he, like the rest of us, is mostly a pawn.

**Nov. 12, 1956   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

Tomorrow night we’re having the Woelfls, LeMonts and Shrivers to supper, so the whole family’s been hard at helping me get ready today. As usual on these occasions we were without water except for a few minutes several times.

**Nov. 18, 1956   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

A.B., Melba Shriver tells the story of some woman in the world, who has done something special, each week on her woman’s Hour over the radio. I’ve been thinking that perhaps Ruth’s (*a close Memphis friend caring for her invalid mother) story would be inspiring. She gets most of hers from the “Women Today” page in the Monitor, but to my mind not one of them is as fine as Ruth’s....We have a great many sit-ins suffering from TB, and I thought that perhaps it might help them.

Last night we had the new deputy director, Mr. Madden, and his wife, Dr. and Mrs. Liming and the Waites for bridge....These entertainments are wearing...We hardly get started returning the compliment before we are enmeshed again in being entertained....Alice asked, “Mama, why don’t you have a big party and get it over with?” Murray’s comment, “Oh no, Alice, don’t you remember when we had that big party (*75 guests) when Mama and Daddy had to go to parties six months afterward?” He sized it up, but then we like these people.

...(*European crisis) We discussed...(*Europeans’ attitude toward one another) aboard ship (*Patagonia). I asked the European shipmates why it had to be when people from all those nations could come to America and live fairly peaceably together. Ellen Arends (*of Denmark) said, “Because they are all starting afresh. In Europe the old antagonisms are so ancient and entrenched that it is impossible to start anew. The Danes, for instance, are bitter toward the Germans, their neighbors, not because Denmark was occupied in World War II but because there has been rivalry over some little piece of land for thousands of years!”

**Nov. 27, 1956   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

...We’re having the Corbetts, the Murphys, and Selwyns, all of whom have entertained us. One more party like this after Christmas and I’ll be caught up...I wish we could entertain here in Guam without serving a meal, but no one seems to want to be the innovator.
...(*of Russ Todd) Some of his paintings are being shown in Seattle and in the City of Paris, San Francisco.

He is the teacher whom Murray had at first and who asked them at the outset such questions as “What is technique,” “What is rhythm,” etc. and then, after no response “Well, what is art?” and walked out when there was still no rousing them! He shouldn’t be teaching, he really does have artistic ability, but artists have to live...A neighbor came in unexpectedly and he was interesting, too...teaches English. He has had an article accepted by the Reader’s Digest. Do you remember the name Wengler? (*He toured Japan) .... Another time he toured Europe, and his article was about an experience there, I believe. There are many who come here for the travel opportunity, and they are always interesting people.

Did I mention the new farm dairy near our house? The veterinarian Dr. Detweiler...went to the States recently and brought back 13 fine Jersey and Holstein cows for use in improving the stock on the island...Liza is seeing life in the raw. She goes to the dairy with the three Detweiler boys who are 9 and twins, 7, to watch the deliveries. Yesterday there was a stillbirth but they saved the mother. We got all the gory details....There is more drama in this than in a TV show.

Liza is devoted to Rose Pereira, a Guamanian neighbor. I spoke of moving from this house someday to a smaller one. “But I don’t want to leave Rose,” Liza moaned.

...(*Describes fiesta, “link between Guam people and the military”, new governor and his wife as guest).... Marian and Carlos (*Taitano) had invited the general and the admiral and other service people. Their guests were a cross-section, and their fiesta food combined Stateside and local fare, too. They had urged us to bring the children. It was lovely party, such a mountainous undertaking!

**Dec. 3, 1956   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

The secretary of the duplicate bridge club called James and asked him to come to the annual dinner to receive his trophy. James has played only a few times this year and then only when he was needed to fill in. He placed third in twenty tables of players. The trophy is an ivory figure of Confucius holding a hand of cards, very lovely carving.

Our dinner for the Corbetts was successful, I think. They are sweet and informal. The children like them a great deal, which is a good test.

James brought Mr. Bell by for a coke. They are working on school plans together. Mr. Bell is business manager of the Dept. of Educ. They left, and Dixie Meyer surprised me with a visit. This is what is called a “quiet day in the country!”

**Dec. 9, 1956   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

We may not receive your Christmas box. One of the ships had a fire in one of the holds and had to turn back to Honolulu. We’re also suffering a bit from lack of vegetables as a result of this and the delay of still another ship. Seems like the early days in Guam, except that I am rusty at improvising. It was actually fun in those days “making do”.

On Saturday night we had a very gay time at the Corbetts. They had four tables of bridge, all old friends and business associates of ours. It was most informal. We just sat down helter-skelter. No prize. But wonderful roast lamb sandwiches. These Pennsylvania Dutch people intrigue me. They are so casual. The Heintzelmans were so and also Dr. Detweiler, the Quaker veterinarian, who is now our neighbor. They all seem to be overflowing with good-naturedness — genuine feeling down to their shoe soles. So different from the Seattle people who are very formal, we are told.

Last night we had the Coopers for bridge. Dr. Cooper says he is going to work on finding a test (*more appropriate than aptitude tests standardized on a Stateside population) which will help measure a
Guamanian child’s aptitude for learning. He says none of our regular tests are suitable because of the difference in language and, even more, in the home and social environment. For example a test of skill in handling blocks would not be appropriate for a child who has never played with blocks.

A.B., Melba (*Shriver) says she’d like very much to have Ruth’s story...

Dec. 17, 1956   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Almost every weekend we’ve had someone in. My only concern was with the children’s feeling about it. Yesterday I reported that I thought we’d complete our duties and could look forward to a few quiet family weekends. Alice said, “Oh, Mother, I like it better this way. We have to WORK on family weekends!” I think they enjoy the panorama of the various personalities we entertain. They are all ears on the sidelines and we do have interesting people here.

On Saturday night we had another delightful experience and a surprise one. The annual Governor’s ball for relief of TB. Carlos Taitano had drummed up trade for it to the point of knocking himself out, literally....There must have been five or six hundred people there. Marian Taitano said she had been canvassing house to house among the Guamanians. “Don’t just buy tickets ($5.00 each) but come,” and they did. It was nice to see the military all resplendent in their dress uniforms and their ladies in the latest Stateside styles. One even wore long white gloves. The rest of us, I’m afraid, look like Guam but didn’t care. The program, or floor show, was quite the nicest thing I’ve ever seen anywhere. All the nationalities here were represented. The Samoans gave their wild knife dance, the Palauan high school student a very interesting uninhibited island dance with music accompaniment from a harmonica played by one of them who also led the formations something like a Pied Piper. Philippine girls dressed in their mestiza dresses lent a contrast with a more formal dance of Spanish influence, some very young children did a very nice Hawaiian hula, the few Javanese girls (eight) gave a Japanese dance (lovely in the kimonos and tabi shoes) followed by a solo Geisha dance (very lovelier) and as a finale “something from Hollywood,” six Negro singers from Andersen Air Force base all dressed alike. This brought down the house. Imagine on a small island like this such a parade of cultures. Most of all I enjoyed seeing the real enjoyment which the Orientals (*Asians) and the islanders show in giving pleasure to others, their faces wreathed in smiles as they performed their dance steps.

The Pereiras (*neighbors in Mangilao) have been giving us Guamanian wing beans from their ranch in the emergency of no fresh vegetables. Liza goes with Rose to pick them. The ranch is about one acre of land near the (*experimental) farm. Liza loves Andrea almost as much as Rose. She says she helps Andrea grate coconut for the chickens and is very much impressed at how Andrea can call the chickens. This brought fond memories of how you used to, Mama....

Mrs. Stewart sent us the copy of the Post with Governor Elvidge’s article...I think it may be best to leave the Guam story unwritten. He’s right about many things, but...I have heard of those wild dogs roaming the “boondocks” ever since I came, but I have never seen one...The title of the article was the most unfortunate thing, it seems to me....

Dec. 21, 1956    EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
This is the last day of school (*before Christmas holidays). All the class parties went off gaily and the Rotary party is tonight. Each Rotarian has a poor child to care for as well as his own. All these children will be brought on a bus and we will see that they get supper, favors and gifts. Alice and Liza and I helped James and several other men decorate the Rotary tree on Wednesday night. Our poor child is an orphan, the father a Statesider having deserted the family.
Dec. 23, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
This afternoon we went to a Christmas party at which there were several Guamanian women friends whom I hadn’t seen in a long time. It was a fairly small party allowing me the opportunity to talk at some length with one, Irene Little. She is the daughter of the elder statesman in the Guam Congress, a fine family. The first question she fired at me was “Have you read Gov. Elvidge’s article?” Yes, I told her. “Is it true?” she asked with a tone of dismay in her voice. She was speaking of his suggestion that Guam might be a “ghost island” in the not too far distant future, i.e. when military construction is finished. This, I think, is perhaps even more unfortunate than the title. I cannot help feeling the deepest pity. I did the best I could to try to convey my feelings without at the same time playing traitor to Gov. Elvidge. I am fond of the Elvidges and feel that he was trying to unravel the knots as best he could. He missed his calling, though. He is a natural-born preacher and preaching isn’t welcome sometimes even from the pulpit. I had a note from Mrs. Elvidge explaining that the title and some of the article were the editor’s, as I had thought. Nothing has stirred Guam so much in years.

I’m glad that Japan was admitted to the U.N. There is a Japanese girl who has been in Alice’s classes off and on since the fourth grade. Alice admires her very much….I think your Y (*YWCA?) International work is wonderful. We must get to know one another better somehow.

Dec. 30, 1956  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”  [*post-Christmas thank-yous]
Here we are at the end of another year. It’s been a nice one in many ways, hasn’t it? The nicest part to me always is the flurry of warmheartedness that goes with Christmas. We’d probably fold up with all that kindness always, because it’s exciting, but it’s good to know at least once a year that people’s hearts are fundamentally generous!

[*Photo at left was taken in parking lot of NG1028. Puppy is Tootsie Ginger, son of Lassie, who adopted the Stewart children.]

I’ve been trying hard over the holidays to have Liza’s tonsils out, being shuttled back and forth between Guam Memorial Hospital and Navy Hospital…a possible glandular disturbance…not serious, the doctor assure me, will delay us…Liza’s as bouncy as ever.

All week we’ve had guests…This is the first comparatively quiet day. James has gone to show our new artist friend, Russ Todd, some of the nice places to paint here….He (*Russ) is here primarily to gather material for a thesis on island art....
SECTION 4

LETTERS FROM 1957 THROUGH 1959
Jan. 5, 1957   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Alice went with James and me to the New Year’s reception at the Government House. The reception was unusually quiet, almost dull. For one thing, it lasted three hours so there weren’t many there at any time. Only punch, cookies and nuts were served. The Corbetts caught us on leaving and asked us to play bridge that night, which we did. He hated to take leave of the holidays, she said. He is the most gregarious person I’ve known.

Jan. 15, 1957   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Did I write about our making our formal call upon the new governor and Mrs. Lowe last Sunday? They are very earthy people. The Govt. House large parlor was strewn with newspapers. It is interesting to watch the passing parade of personalities! The new legislators were conspicuous by their absence at the New Year reception. What a pity it is that life must be made even more difficult than it inherently is.

Jan. 20, 1957   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Mrs. Corbett asks the govt. wives in every Tuesday morning for mending, sewing and chatting. This started with the neighborhood where they live, but she has included me too. This seems a good idea of hers, but apparently the other wives are not cooperating too well. Last Tuesday only the governor’s wife and I appeared, and Mrs. Lowe was leaving....

Melba (*Shriver) read one of my articles on her program, this week, prefacing it by “with the author’s permission.” Heavens, but that sounded funny!...

Mrs. Glenn asked if I would appear on Tuesday at a Finance meeting to help her talk for the Museum. Every department is busy struggling for appropriations at this time of year. She told me of a Parks, Monuments and Museum meeting on Monday night, the last meeting for Mr. Kipp, whom I persuaded to take over as chairman two years ago...so I went to tell him goodbye. On Tuesday Emilie Johnston asked me to write a letter of appreciation to him for the committee to sign. Now I know how it feels to be a ghost writer!...

Jan. 27, 1957   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
...(C)ompliments are embarrassing...but knowing how mothers feel... please tell Mama (that) Melba told me that Mrs. Lowe, the new first lady, whispered to her the other day at her luncheon, “Mrs. Stewart is special, isn’t she?” “Yes,” Melba was kind enough to say. “I sensed it when I first met her,” Mrs. Lowe continued.... I just try to measure up to Mama wants us to be.
Friday, I spent most of the day at the Congress building to attend a public hearing about the museum and have my “test” for library board membership. That was an interesting experience. It was all taped — horrors! Mr. Perez, the chairman, an old hand at legislative work, handled it with dignity and finesse.

On Thursday (to go backward) Melba had a luncheon for the admiral wife’s sister who is visiting here — 12 guests...I was there for friendship’s sake....Her mother who was 88 died last week. She called me the afternoon of receiving the message. Alice and I took flowers out of the yard. I wrote a little poem, too. We found her alone as Judge Shriver was sitting on a case, so we stayed longer. She is very devoted to her family and it is hard being away...I admire her courage. She didn’t miss a day of her radio program.

Friday night I gathered up five of the smaller fry in our neighborhood and took them to KUAM to appear on TV. The J & G “Supermarket” sponsors a western movie on that night; the commercial section is a lot of “little buckaroos”, as the manager who announces calls them, eating supermarket ware. If a parent makes the mistake of taking the offspring once, he’s in for it. There’s no limit to how many times a child may appear.


Tomorrow I have agreed to work at the high school all day helping with the x-ray program for TB. All the students will be testing. The program takes two weeks and two volunteers are needed each day. I’m glad to help where I can. This “floating volunteer” job appeals to me, something different all the time.

Aunt Linnie’s young couple spent the day on Saturday. James took him shelling while Gloria and the baby stayed with me....Dr. and Mrs. Hanna and their daughters came to ask advice about world touring....so it goes.

We’re interested now in the research on cosmic rays being conducted here in Guam. We saw one balloon going up this morning. This is an interesting little island.

Speaking of “little island”, there’s no such thing here. We have to go into the Agaña post office for everything. Mrs. Lowe says that there is mail only once in two weeks in Samoa, and this is just recently. The first airmail flight there was last year. Mary Peterson, our former neighbor here, sent Murray a letter with the mark commemorating the event for his stamp collection. I get so excited when I think that it is possible now to fly around the world in 42 hours. The plane making that first flight flew over us, I’m told.


I worked at the high school with the x-ray for tuberculosis program all day Thursday and again Friday afternoon. Mrs. Liming, the nurse, called me Friday and said she was desperate with no help. It is so hard to depend on volunteers. I know from the museum experience. I enjoyed the students. They were so orderly and friendly. It always restores ones faith to see the next generation en masse like that, doesn’t it?...I asked Frances Murphy, who is one like me to get asked for every odd job. She sighed but accepted and said she’d try to get others in her housing area (Trust Territory group).
Poor James had a hashing over by the Legislature this week. The Guamanians bitterly resent the difference in salaries, and rightly, I think. We Statesiders get 25% more added on, “post differential” it is called, which is considered necessary for recruiting because of higher cost of living here. At the public hearing for the Public Works budget, Hank Meyers was questioned backward and forward about all the personnel and in particular James and one of the engineers. The newspapers mixed the two cases and the story was all over the front page both on Thursday and Friday. They even brought up the fact that James didn’t have a degree. I felt very sorry for him but he has stood up to it well, taking all the teasing and talk good-naturedly. Sometimes I think it’s good for us to be put to the test and gratifying to find that friends are steadfast. Anyone in a public office must accept the possibility of publicity, both favorable and unfavorable…Life is interesting!

I took Murray and Alice to an AAUW benefit barbecue supper…held in the Teachers’ Housing area, where they have friends…..Afterwards we went to the Daniells’ house in the area…all the h.s. art dept. (*seemed to be there)...Mr. Pyle, one of the artists, demonstrated the “bop”…wonderful, an intellectual version!.... The Hanna girls came in and showed us how it should really be done…I love the vitality of youth.

Now we’re listening to the Ed Sullivan show. ..Tonight it’s mostly Elvis, but I notice that only his head is being shown — because of criticism, I gather….Mr. Sullivan is at last congratulating him and saying that he is a “decent fine boy”...I believe that Mr. Sullivan is a fine decent man, but Elvis? Well, maybe!...I doubt we’ll be able to afford TV. We keep having trouble…because of the climate…last repair job cost $18.

Today I took Murray and Alice to the Mongmong Fiesta. Alice had been invited by Teresita Manibusan, from a very fine Guamanian family...The food was delicious and Teresita insisted we bring a whole cake home for the rest of our family who weren’t there! We have asked her to spend a day with us Saturday.

Feb. 8, 1957   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
The biography of Schweitzer has come, A.B., and I’ve enjoyed reading it. The children will partake over the weekend. These little biographies always leave me with the feeling of wanting more… Alice has consumed all such which our library offers and has a good knowledge of men and women and events as a result. James is rereading War and Peace now. When he finishes, we hope that Alice will undertake this.

Feb. 9, 1957   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
[Photo is of a famous Canadian warship docked in Ontario.]
Yesterday afternoon, I took Murray, Alice and Teresita (*Manibusan) to see three Canadian warships at the Naval port. These ships were making a 16,000 mile cruise for cadets in training. They anchored here on Friday and invited the public to view them yesterday. We arrived when our own Marine drum and bugle corps was saluting them. Next week the crack Marine drum and bugle corps will be here on a visit.....We went aboard the largest ship, a cruiser, and after poking about on our own a bit we somehow managed to attach ourselves to a sergeant, or he to us, and had a personally conducted tour. He carried us almost to the top of the mast. At each end of the ship there is a turret with the large guns, each of which fires a 120-lb. bullet, 8” in diameter. We saw a blank of this bullet, horrible, I think....Alice was curious about the Latin inscription and our guide (*found an officer who said) “In the beginning faithful, ever it will be.” Our rather salty guide offered Murray and me some of his Canadian cigarettes. I told him that Murray didn’t smoke. He laughed, “Not before you!”...Murray as usual took care of his stomach, following its cries into the kitchen where he was offered some toast...He had parted company with us for this escapade...Our guide and we agreed that Canadians are more American than British, in fact it is obvious that we all are Americans! He told us that the whole ship’s company (over 1000 in war time) assembles on the forward deck each morning for prayers. On Sunday they are required to
dress their best and be inspected. Except for this bit of British ceremoniousness, they seem to be informal like us. They prefer coffee to tea...Trust the housewife to get the housewife's angle. Murray came home with considerably more knowledge of weapons naturally.

**Feb. 17, 1957  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

(*Rama, the cat needed veterinarian care every other day for a week)...This is not too difficult, as the veterinarian's office is on the farm and his home directly across the road from us. There is no charge either. Dr. Detweiler is hired to care for the farm animals of the govt. A kinder man I have never seen. Rama submits so docilely in Dr. Detweiler's hands. We shall miss the Detweilers. They leave on March 7th and are not returning....Where the expression “Parting is such sweet sorrow” came from I can't imagine. I find nothing sweet in it. It grips my heart every time it happens, and here it is happening all the time.

(*Valentines)...I had a nice little surprise myself. Alice’s friend Teresita sent me one of those valentines “To the Mother of my Friend” with a message all over the inside in her own hand. It touched me very much. She has an eager face, and I felt when I saw her that I'd like to adopt her for awhile.

The legislative flurry is over, but a special session had to be called so that the business could be finished. They talk and talk. Appointments will be confirmed this week. Wouldn't it be funny if they don't confirm me? It matters so little to me. Lucile Woelfl is resigning from the library in April. Lucile has done double and has broken her health over it.

The Murphys asked us to the regular bridge group. Each member seems to use it as an excuse for entertaining and has several extra tables on bridge night. The Corbetts and we were asked in this category. The group itself is dwindling. The Selwyns (Pan Am manager) have been transferred to Rangoon, Burma. They had been here as long as we. I rather envied them the new assignment until Virginia Selwyn told me that there are no schools for the children. Well, I envy them anyway. I should love the chance to have first-hand knowledge of Oriental ways and thinking.

Margie Daniells has been working with a group of other artists here on organizing an art exhibit. They have it underway and it is scheduled for next weekend. James drew the plan for the set of screens of which to display the pieces as his contribution. They call it the “First Annual Exhibit” of the Fine Arts Society. I wonder if it will be continued or if it will fall by the wayside like the Symphony Orchestra and other attempts for lack of enough enthusiastic workers. It’s nice to have it even once at any rate.

Margie Daniells came down with meningitis, too, but not so severely as Margot Todd. Dr. Smart, a Seventh Day Adventist medical missionary, has visited her three times a day without charge. Apparently she must stay quiet for another three weeks. Modern medicine is wonderful.

**March 3, 1957  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”**

(*Describes family going three ways at once—Murray escorting Alice to “Outstanding Citizenship Award” ceremony at the Civics Club ball, Erin and James attending a wedding reception and later a dinner at the Barrys in teachers’ housing area, Andrea Pereira babysitting Liza)....It was rather like getting the corn and foxes across stream...(*“Alice’s award was academic” unlike the court)...The king and queen and princesses are “bought” positions. The students contribute to a scholarship by casting votes for candidates, a penny a vote....(Alice) said it nauseated her to think of people paying for popularity. This is a strange custom here, probably Spanish-inspired. The churches raise money by selling raffle-tickets and the queen of Liberation Day is chosen in this fashion.

Do you think the Middle East news sounds encouraging or not? It’s hard to judge from the little bits we get here. If only the world could spend the money for armaments on social betterment. When I saw all those
March 17, 1957  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

Do you like our bridge tallies? [Photo at left: two of several flower drawings, mostly by EGS, among the Stewart papers]....

These tallies (apparently also enclosed but not among Stewart papers) with Japanese drawings of seasons inspired me to give a party.

What horrible news the bulletin of President Magsaysay’s death in a plane crash. He has meant so much to the Philippines and his people loved him so. After all the corruption under other administrations, he seemed to be like a breath of fresh air giving them hope. Why must such things happen?’

The island is in quite a stir the past week because the director of Education was asked to resign. He has a personality that made working for him difficult at times. Still everyone seems agreed that he has done a good job in holding the schools together. A small group of teachers made some complaints to the governor, then the Board of Education voted “no confidence”. Now there is a group that feels that the governor mishandled it, another group cheering. Heavens, such a job that must be. I pity us all. Though I had trouble communicating with Dr. Heitema, I hate to see him crucified. We’re all wondering what will happen next, especially to the school system....

March 19, 1957  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

(*GWHS Student award ceremony)...The child receiving the award in the second picture is a Chinese girl, Bohan Chin. Her parents came to Guam five years ago. Bohan Chin couldn’t speak a word of English. Now she is leading her class. She is so eager and sweet-looking. Her story is in the school paper.

(*Excerpts from the high school yearbook. On left, Bohan Chin. On right, front row, Irma Chang, another high achieving Chinese student, and, on second row, Johanna Ledbetter, friend of Alice.)

March 24, 1957  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

...There is no International Club, there being no necessity for one. There is a Philippine Community headed by officers chosen from the ranks and advised by the Philippine Consulate. All the rest, Japanese, Chinese, Hawaiians, European refugees, Trust Territory islanders, live the American way together in remarkable (to me) harmony. There is very little difference in people really. The only feeling of diversity comes from, for example, the Guamanians worried about the Statesiders having the top jobs and the Philippine workers enjoying the fruits of labor on the island. It is a very unnatural set-up and naturally makes for friction.
More than any other subject it is discussed here. (*I witnessed) the governor, Judge Shriver, Judge Putnam (legal adviser to the Trust Territory group) mulling over it. One can see that it causes much distress to those in authority, too.

You talk of weddings, teas at the college President’s home, nuptial showers, seems like a world apart...I believe I could slip back into that sort of life...but I’m quite sure that Murray, Alice, and Liza are going to be looked upon as “different,” as we used to think of military children like Toni Noce....

We’ve all been shocked at the sudden departure of the high commissioner of the Trust Territories. ...advanced case of cancer...He looked so very young...They had lived everywhere and had fascinating stories. We shall miss them.

March 27, 1957  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

...We finished at one of the eighteen village Public Health stations, where the doctor examined some 20 babies. He makes a visit to each station once a month. The rest of the time the Public Health nurse takes care of everything. The babies looked fat and were quiet except one who evidently heartily disliked the doctor’s face. Dr. Paulsen explained to us that the midwives (licensed) still delivered most of the babies at home and that last year one had delivered over 500 without any still-birth or infection. He said this was quite a remarkable record anywhere in the world. These midwives and village nurses were trained by the Navy after the war. I was impressed with the cleanliness of this little station.

April 10, 1957  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

...I met Dottie Holbrook at the post office and she remarked casually “I hear you and I will be fellow passengers again (*on F. J. Luckenbach).” She had been told we “might” be among the passengers....There is only one ship bearing passengers (12) a month out of Guam. The other shipping company, American President Lines, has perhaps one in 6 months! The Atkins-Kroll Co. here, agents for Pacific Far East, receive word to put a ship on board for such and such a time, but passenger space is not confirmed from San Francisco until perhaps two weeks before. If there is space, I think we’ll get it; we’ve been on the wait list a long time. [*American President Lines vessel is shown on left.]

(*Urges A.B. to come to Guam on F. J. Luckenbach, returning with the Stewarts on the ship’s return voyage)...Call former Governor of Guam Carlton Skinner, now vice-president of Pacific Far East Lines, in San Francisco. Ask him to help you get reservation aboard the F. J. Luckenbach leaving S.F. on April 30...$775 for six weeks! (*Describes process for obtaining immunization papers and passport).

The tributes to Roberta Gillis were heart-warming. People are so often long on criticism, short on praise that recognition always makes one feel good, doesn’t it? Our legislature here recently passed a vote of
thanks to the man who has pinch-hitted as director of the hospital for more than a year. I’ve heard as many pleasant comments about this action that it seems a pity they don’t do nice things oftener. The new director is a retired Navy medical admiral. The hospital has always been one of the island’s biggest problems.

April 15, 1957  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

...Murray goes on the air Thursday morning. He prepared his questions to ask the professor. Dr. Purdue later mentioned to James that he was impressed with Murray’s having written them out beforehand. At that, James asked him if Murray had had any trouble reading his own handwriting!...

...(*Dr. Haitema resignation) He seemed to take real pride in being a “stubborn Dutchman”. As I see it, that very stubbornness helped him whip the tattered school system into shape, but then it must have been painful for those working under him. In all such cases, the fire once opened turns on everyone...It will soon be forgotten, though, and everyone can settle down again.

Last night James and I called on Mrs. Souder. She is visiting her son and his family again. She was here in 1950 when Mrs. Stewart (*Edna Hyatt Stewart, James’ mother) was here. She told us last night that at that time (1950) Paul had talked her into coming to Guam, then going on around the world. She was 60 and traveled all the way by herself, not taking tours in Europe. She said that she loved it and that it had widened her horizons and attitudes so much.

You asked if I’d “come back” after the social whirl. The whirl has never stopped. It’s a regular typhoon. On the way home after several parties, James said, “I’m so tired of party talk. I saw a barefooted farmer with a gun slung over his shoulder the other day. How I envied him!” Yesterday we had to turn down one of three invitations. Dixie (*Meyers) had a birthday breakfast for Hank at the Navy officers’ club — 20 people, very nice. Last night the LeMonts had a dinner party for one of their distributors here from New York. Ethel is from Atlanta and always entertains in perfection. There were some 36 people including the governor and the admiral. We had drinks on their terrace which is at the edge of the cliff overlooking Agaña Bay — It gives you the feeling of being in a penthouse looking down at the traffic moving along Marine Drive directly below. Cards were passed out to the men designating their dinner partners and flowers on their table. Colonel Cook, commanding officer of the Marine division here, drew me and we had orchids and Mrs. Ammon, the Admiral’s wife, and George Koster, an architect, as our table companions. George and the colonel talked of experiences in China. Whenever I hear such tales, I feel as if I’m in a storybook land. Mrs. Lowe had tales of her recent trip to the Orient. She went as a guest of the commanding officer of the Air Force base and his wife, General and Mrs. Schott. ...

April 21, 1957  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

Murray is basking in the glory of being star for a day. He managed the radio interview with aplomb, though he was terribly frightened. All the rest of the day on Thursday we received calls from ladies congratulating him – and the family! Alice said that she and Liza were sitting here listening and holding their breath until he finished....

Did I write that Murray has a pineapple growing in the yard now? He is very proud of it. Last week he brought home eight very large tomatoes, his share of the Agriculture class’s produce. They’ve sold most of their products this year to the teachers, making a total income of $500 for the F.F.A.

April 27, 1957  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”

Yesterday we got signed up definitely (*for a trip to US), though I had to do a bit of arguing with the Personnel Department, which is very distasteful to me. My greatest trouble always is that I see both sides
of every picture. I have to fight for my own position, but all the time I’m nodding my head, and sincerely, in agreement and sympathy with their premises. I must be a puzzle to them!

This week has been fairly quiet. The parties always come in whirls, something like cyclone eddies. I’m afraid I have given the wrong impression — Perhaps you are right about the Country Club set. I have never thought of Guam like that. Most of these parties are to foster relations between the various groups. But our activities are mild compared to those of government officials who must attend military as well as civilian functions. How they stand up under it, I can’t imagine. The American public is vicious!

Tomorrow is a busy day, Barrigada fiesta and seeing the Selwyns off to Burma. He will manage the Pan Am office there. We try to say goodbye to friends who are leaving for good.

May 5, 1957  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
(*Possibility of staying Stateside) Alice objected to the idea of leaving at first. She has loved high school this year, but later in the day she said it might feel good to begin a new life….Murray brought home this paper which has the announcement of Alice’s second award. That was sweet of him, wasn’t it?...The school (GWHS) is at last accredited, too. I’m glad. It’s been a long, hard struggle.

May 12, 1957  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
Tell Betty that I’m so thrilled with the report of her performance. I’m glad that our next generation has this keen desire to excel. Alice’s goal seems to be intellectual accomplishment, and I am encouraging her with all my might. I think it is a pity that the world does not seem disposed to admit that this is just as important an achievement as any other, say sports, drama, etc., and that it takes just as intense and specialized effort to attain.

Among the ten students chosen for scholastic attainment, Rock Gettys, the principal’s son was named along with Alice. He is a sweet boy. I saw him yesterday at the market where he works on Saturdays. I congratulated him, upon which he replied, “I don’t know why I got it.” Then his fellow worker, also a high school student, asked him what we were talking about. Rock began to explain, so I walked away. Behind the counter I overheard him say, “Alice Stewart and Bonny Greenway are the only ones who should have had it. You don’t know Alice? Boy! She makes all A’s all the time...But in college, that’s not what they want. They want people who make A’s and B’s.”...Well, he is right in a way, but I think colleges and society do need the thinkers, too, and it’s a pity to discourage them and level them all down.

May 18, 1957  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
James returned home with news that we will return (*to Guam), and now he will have two offices — his other office at the Dept. of Education, which consumes more than half his time in planning for Guam’s ever-increasing school population. I am sorry he must go through this ordeal at the end of every contract. He maintains a cheerful spirit throughout, but I wonder if they ever have any conception of some of our difficulties.

Dixie Meyers will keep Rama while we’re gone. The children have been so distressed about him. He is really a big part of this family, being an unusually intelligent and affectionate animal. I never thought I’d get silly about a cat, but I have. He greets us when we come in, wakes me up in the morning, naps with me, stays underfoot when I’m cooking and is a part of every guest assembly, even complaining when he isn’t taken to the car to say goodbye to visitors!
It’s such fun here learning the ways of our own country. The Gordon Mailleux’s asked us for dinner. Gordon had to attend a Guam Youth Meeting, so we sat outside and talked to Eleanor. ..Eleanor is from a tiny Swiss colony in the Virginia mountains. The residents have lived apart from the rest of the world for over 100 years….As we watched the steak broiling on the little charcoal stove and looked at the moon and talked, I felt almost transported to the mountains. Eleanor brought out handspun sweaters to complete the illusion. Tomorrow night we’re having Marian and Carlos Taitano and Emilie and Herb Johnston for dinner here. We have been many times to their homes, and now we’re returning the favor.

Melba (*Shriver) brought me a little farewell gift yesterday, and we had a nice little visit...We have made so many good friends here, but Melba has been the source of greatest security to me....The Guamanians seem to have the greatest respect for him (*Judge Shriver).

All of Alice’s island school friends are asking her to write to them. I told her to get addresses, and we’d send cards from Japan or Memphis. Bringing this bit of the world to them will be little enough for us to do for them.

May 27, 1957   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
You won’t recognize Liza with her curly top. Dixie made a poodle out of her. It makes her look fatter and healthier, but I miss my old towzled-headed Liza.

[Summer trip, via Japan on ship F.J. Luckenbach, to Memphis home]

Sep. 15, 1957   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.” (*Announces return from summer trip to Memphis home)

Oct. 27, 1957   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
James’ new school buildings are very pretty. One of them, the Price school near us, is being used for the first time this year. It is very modern and has soft but gay colors which the teachers and students seem to like. James attends meetings of the college faculty because of the plans for the physical plant. We think it funny that that sort of makes him a member of the college faculty now! Plans are underway for a college building (4 year) which will cost almost a million dollars...the connection with Ohio State will soon be discontinued.

Nov. 3, 1957   EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
I am almost as busy as before...and without any activities. The help and guidance in the secondary education is full-time (*working with Murray and Alice on lessons and extracurricular learning).

This past week has been something like the old days. No matter how hard I try to be a hermit, that doesn’t seem to be my fate. Lucile Woelfl had some library business to discuss with me over a spur-of-the-moment lunch. Melba invited me to a Women’s Club coffee. It’s nice to see some of the old acquaintances at these large affairs. Friday was a school holiday and Dixie Meyers came to get snail bait at the farm, paying us a visit and having lunch with the children and me. Last night James and I went to a farewell party for the Daniells, who are going on vacation.
I’m deep in reading in order to guide Alice....She read *The Red Badge of Courage* this week and has started *War and Peace*, one follows the other naturally, I suppose. She read 28 pages of *War and Peace* last night and said that she found it hard to put down. She is reading prefaces and introduction with great care. It is thrilling to be giving a tutorial course... Working with Murray in algebra was just as fine...He says that he is no longer afraid of math. As for his reading, I can’t remove him from Benchley!

All’s so quiet here...James is asleep, M & A studying, Liza out working up some more club ideas with Rose, I suppose, Rama dozing. The only sounds I hear are the soft rustling of the palms trees and the chatter of Rosita’s (*Francisco*) little ones next door. Frank has built a swing for them and it is almost in our yard. I like to hear them chattering happily.

**Nov. 5, 1957**  
*EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”*

Bless you for sending Murray and Alice the *Scientific American*. They have had more science dished out to them than we did and in this age I want to know more about it. We are speculating about the Russian satellite with the poor dog in it. This is some age! What will future generations call it?!

**Nov. 9, 1957**  
*EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”*

Lucile and Bill Woelfl have asked us to a small beach dinner party tomorrow night. I am looking forward to it, as her other guests are people I like.

Liza went for a short time yesterday afternoon to a neighbor fandango. The music blared long into the night above the roaring of the wind and rain and is still going strong this morning.

The leaves you sent Alice are gorgeous, A.B. I can imagine the luxurious riot of color there. It will be a nice experience for M, A, and L. when they first go through a whole temperate climate year. I’m sure that they have forgotten many of the wonderful details of changing seasons.

**Nov. 19 (postmark) (*after Typhoon Lola)*  
*EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”*

...As for damage to the island, it was not as bad as typhoon Allyn. The buildings are better constructed now than they were then. The power crews are working twenty-four hours a day, so we should have electricity by tomorrow night. Times like these bring out the neighborliness. Our new neighbors brought us some bananas, which a Guamanian had given them from a blown-down tree. We gave them in turn some candles. The poor farmers suffered the most. Their crops were 100% destroyed...

**Nov. 23, 1957**  
*EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”*

Alice says she thinks we should get a new family. You don’t sound worried at all about us! I’m so glad you weren’t worried about the typhoon....It’s just a nuisance, that’s all....One of Alice’s teachers is an optimist. He lost his roof and his clothes were soaked, but he said they should be glad to have gotten a new pencil sharpener out of it! On James’ tour of inspection, he asked one Guamanian about his house. The fellow replied good-naturedly, “Not much damage. We just lost the walls!”
Almost everyone in the community was introduced and said a few words. The nicest part was the sweet treble of the children’s voices as they sang American patriotic songs and the Guam hymn. There was a sumptuous fiesta-style luncheon afterwards... It was really very lovely.

We’re planning to go to see a Gene Kelly show tomorrow night and to take the children to see *Tammy and the Bachelor*. We can go to one military movie free...

*? date (X-mas time, maybe 1957) JMS to EHS*

...the children went to the BPM movie and Erin and I went to a reception and later a dinner at Com Mar.

Christmas morning we opened our presents around our now traditional (for us) string tree... We have hundreds of poinsettia blossoms—they are beautiful.

(*Letters are Missing for nine months.)

1958

*Sep. 29, 1958  EGS to EHS*

...We are glad that she (*aunt Gladys*) said you were somewhat better....I like Knox’s (*brother who died in 1953*) philosophy for the downs. He said that he knew there would always be an up right behind....

Murray is very serious about his schoolwork. Alice is coasting along and Liza doing fine with her man teacher who doesn’t put too much pressure upon his pupils....Murray is enjoying his judo lessons and the boys who take him with them. Alice and Liza have found friends whom they enjoy too. Alice’s is her history teacher’s daughter, Judy Christiansen. Judy is very talented in painting and writing. Liza’s little friend, Laura Weinbolt, has been on Guam for some time and will probably stay, so we are well fixed friend-wise except for me, who am about to lose a very dear one, Melba Shriver. A new judge has been appointed to take Judge Shriver’s place. It is a great loss for us all. Melba has been like a sister to me for eight years.

We have had some pleasant evenings at the bridge table with the Tisdales....We also play bridge with our new neighbors, the Cunninghams. Occasionally another neighbor, Carolyn LaPlante, and I take off for an evening to see a movie. She and I take turns carrying the neighborhood children to the U.S.O. for a swim. The children love it as there are always other Stateside children there....

*Dec. 28, 1958  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”* (*thanks for gifts and more*)

We don’t see much of Murray these days except at mealtime, and even then he is like a passing cloud. A driver’s license changes the picture! Liza has grown two inches in the last six months, and Alice is quite a lady now. You will be surprised at the changes.

For the next several months I’ll be rather busy with library work, as I am acting chairman of the board until Melba’s return in March. We have the problem of making plans for the new location. The governor wants to move us into rather cramped quarters in the Congress building, so it is knotty, especially so as Lucile Woelfl, the chief librarian, is also away.
Dec. 29, 1958  EGS to “Mama, A.B. and L.S.”
(*Acknowledgement of news there and thanks for gifts)
Margie Daniels prepared a picnic dinner for her family and ours, and we spent X-mas day with them on the beach at Tumon. To me this was the nicest way to celebrate.

Yesterday was a solid round of parties, beginning with a fiesta dinner at noon, and after two eggnog parties, ending at a dinner at 11 p.m....The children went to a good many parties — more than ever before, and Murray’s driving is certainly a help....

? month, 1959  JMS to EHS
For the fourth weekend I’m having to stay in bed (*foot ailment)....Actually, I enjoy these weekends, for they afford an excuse from social engagements and give me time for much wanted reading. And as long as I’m off my foot, I’m perfectly well.

This morning Erin has taken our children and the neighbors to the beach. They’ve also taken Rama (our cat), who, although not as enthusiastic as other Siamese I’ve seen, swims with them once he’s put in the water.....

May 18, 1959  JMS to EHS
Probably the biggest news here this week, for us, was Alice’s winning the outstanding student award for the Junior class. She and the son of the Director of Education tied, and each were presented with one. This is the same as the one she got in the freshman class two years ago. The awards were presented at an evening PTA meeting before some 500 or more people.

Yesterday, Erin had eight of Murray’s friends over for a noon dinner ....After helping serve, I spent the rest of the day with a book on the beach.

Saturday night the Woelfli’s (she’s director of the library) had us to dinner at Top O’ the Mar; and to attend an amateurish little theater production.

June. 7, 1959  JMS to EHS
By now you will be enjoying the girls. We had a letter from Alice yesterday — saying they had made the trip without problems. Murray’s ship should arrive here today or tomorrow but will be here 5 or 6 days.
Although he can live aboard here if need be, we think he’ll leave a day or so before us (That’s a week from this morning.)...(*Describes selling and otherwise distributing belongings)...It’s all most exciting. We’re enjoying it as much as the parties which are being given us....At this time we expect to leave here a week from today and go to Seattle for two days with the Elvidges — leave there on the 18th for Chicago — to see the Sinclairs, and after a day, to St. Louis, then Memphis arriving about the 21st.

Jun. 14, 1959     JMS to EHS

...(T)his has been a long week. Now the packers have finished, and we’ll spend tonight in a practically empty house...We leave in the morning. Murray’s ship has been delayed 4 days after our plane, so he will stay with the Trace’s (Director of Education) until then...We’re all well, happy and anticipating a pleasant trip.
SECTION 5

AFTER GUAM
SOME POST GUAM LETTERS

Dec. 10, 1959  Holiday Greetings from Anita Elvidge to EGS and JMS

Alice will laugh at this, I am sure, but it has brought back such happy memories, I am sending it for you all to enjoy, too.

We hope you are all well and happy to be in Memphis – or perhaps you are not there! I think of you often.

Mrs. Agueda Johnston came for a little visit not long ago. She plans to remain some months longer with Eloise and her husband in eastern Washington....

1969  Bob and Hera Owens, Koror, Palau, Caroline Islands to JMS & EGS

(*Invitation to open ceremonies of the Palau Museum Bai and other news...)

We left Guam because of the political chaos. Gordon is District Surveyor, and I am English-speaking School Marm here in Koror. We looked for a quieter life, but haven’t found it. It is really beautiful here.

Jan. 13, 1978  EGS to Alice Stewart [on feminism]
I feel sorry for men in this age. We are trying to break the chains; their strongholds are being attacked.... It’s ridiculous that women have had such a struggle to win even small concessions -- the vote, equal pay, equal opportunity.... Still, I cannot see how we women are ever going to be released from the biological function and its concomitant dependencies. It seems to me that our burdens are only increased by “going out into the world”, taking on two jobs, rather than one.....When I think back on how Mama taught me (in good faith and with best intention) that a woman must always play up to a man’s ego and never let him know she is smart, I shudder.... I hope your generation will carry the cause forward...

March 7, 1979  Anita Elvidge to EGS
Your thoughtful note is greatly appreciated and enjoyed. And to think that all your young are college people! And we are great grandparents!

Ford is retired and John Veblen ...(is) in the old firm. Son John E. is the father of our great grandson and he and his family live in Paris, France, where he is an international lawyer with a British law firm there. Marthanna and John spent Christmas with them...

We are all fine but slowing down with the years. We live in a beautiful retirement residence on the shore of Lake Washington with many old friends. We hear from Emilie Johnson at Christmas, also, and are always interested in Guam....

Dec. 15, 1982  Frances Thomas to JMS and EGS

If this card looks familiar, it’s not surprising since you, Jim, made it 32 or 33 years ago. Memories! Memories! Best Wishes, Frances
March 1, 1984  Janell Ewing Davis, niece of Lucile Woelfl, Guam librarian to EGS
I am writing to tell you that Lucile passed away Tuesday, Feb. 28. I thought you might like to know that she received your letter and clippings and enjoyed them so very much.

August 8, 1985 Emilie Johnston to EGS
The church (*Mangilao’s Santa Teresita) is moving along....The road in front of it is being widened to a 7 lane highway. Can you imagine that!

The old dairy and entrance has been moved over to make a cross road with thet going to Anderson, and a traffic light has been installed. The entire road – for Barrigada to the Chalan Pago/Yona road is being widened – mostly to 5 or 6 lanes, but 7 in a few select areas. The connecting roads have already been widened. You would be amazed at the changes....

From the clippings you will notice that our governor – Ricky Bordallo – is moving his office to Adelup. The school was condemned as unsafe for children. Now it has undergone renovations....It will make a spectacular seat of government when he is finished with the project.

April 3, 1986 Emilie Johnston to EGS
Under separate cover, we have sent you a copy of the latest Pacific News Progress Report. I think you will find it most interesting and hard to find any of the old Guam that you knew.

We are presently undergoing a construction boom and things are popping up all over the place. New homes, apartment buildings, hotels, business establishments, etc.

April 27, 1987  EGS to ?  [re: Anne and Joe Lareau’s visit to the Stewarts in 1987]
Needless to say, every waking moment was filled with talky talk, talk of their children and ours and talk of our respective backgrounds before Guam. None of us ever bothered with this while on the island, which was just as well. We accepted new friends where we were in our life’s sojourn. Some may have been ex-pirates, ex-convicts, ex-whatever, but who cared? We were too busy enjoying the new experience of America’s farthest outpost and each other.....

Joe received a promotion to colonel before he retired from the Navy. He was a civilian in the Navy while in Guam because he was the only one who knew degaussing (defusing bombs), so he was called back into service for this purpose. Anne (third grade teacher of Murray and Alice on Guam) had been on a teachers’ tour to Mainland China....
POST GUAM YEARS

James Stewart worked as architect for U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development based in Atlanta, GA. Before retiring, he was chief architect for the department based in St. Louis, MO. He continued designing and decorating residences in Atlanta, St. Louis, Memphis, and, as widower, in Louisiana.

U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development

Atlanta, Georgia

St. Louis, Missouri

Memphis, Tennessee

James & Erin Stewart, St. Louis, MO

Background: James and Erin Stewart
Insert: with Lee Thorbjornsen Stewart

with Eliza, family, and friends

Sketch by James Stewart

with Westie named Stewart

Homer, Louisiana

in Memphis

with Murray, Alice, and family
Erin Stewart earned a master’s degree, then worked for Goodwill Industry, training people with disabilities. She later worked as a Compliance Officer for the Wage and Hour Division of the U.S. Dept. of Labor. She worked on one of the earliest cases involving equal pay. Family was always central to her life.
Stewarts on Guam 1948-1959: Impressions of Alice Stewart

My father, “Jim Stewart” he was called, died in 2008 and my mother, Erin Stewart, died in 1987. Both had been active in the civic life of reconstruction Guam. In his final years, when he moved to live beside us, my father related to me a little information about their Guam years, 1948-1959. I also have a few documents that fill in some details.

In 1948, my father was hired as a Guam Planning Commission architect, papers show. I believe he was classified a Navy civilian; when, in 1950, the Organic Act was passed, he became an employee of the Government of Guam. My father related this story to me. On at least two occasions, a Washington D.C. resident visiting her family in Memphis saw his homes featured in the Memphis Commercial Appeal. She invited him, when he was working in Baltimore, to apply for a job assisting island planners who were helping rebuild war-torn Guam. He was to bring to the interview the next day his design of a city plan. A first for him, he researched city planning at the stately Baltimore library and sketched out a plan that night.

Ten days after his arrival on Guam in September 1948, my father wrote home that “This is the most interesting and beautiful place that I have ever seen….National Geographic colors couldn’t do it justice….Though there are over 100,000 people here, the island is 50 percent jungle. There are many perfect roads through the jungle where one can see the ground covered with poinsettias, wild coffee (clusters of red berries) and ferns. Through this, blue and lavender morning glories climb the trunks of coconut palms, mango, and breadfruit trees, and there’s an occasional patch of heavily laden banana plants or flowering hibiscus. Even the clouds here are more colorful than I’ve ever seen anywhere.”

It’s not hard to see why my mother was eager to follow my father to Guam almost a year later, along with my two year old sister, myself almost six, and my seven year old brother—“Forty-niners” she called us.

The Planning Commission architects were quite accomplished, my father said [Jim Drought, a Frank Lloyd Wright student and friend, and his assistant, Frank Kelly, a Walter Gropius student]. They emigrated within months of my father’s arrival [Frank Kelly returned as Guam representative of Richard Neutra and Robert Alexander, who were commissioned into 1953 to develop plans for Guam and Government House]. My father was then Government of Guam’s acting planning commissioner. Planning was soon placed under the Dept. of Public Works. The job entailed, as I interpreted my father’s description, working with a large network of people from the civilian sector and all branches of the military to repair the war-torn island – planning roads, schools, utilities, health centers, indeed, in at least one case, a whole village. I believe that case may have been Umatac. It was a village which he thought best to reconstruct on high ground, but the people, he said, wished to resettle on the culturally and historically rich bay. The legislature, too, had its own thoughts about building projects, understandably centered around cost, while my father was concerned about structural integrity as well, and, always, about aesthetics – my childhood impression. (I found no confirmation of this impression in my mother’s letters or my parents’ papers.)

My father enjoyed his work, loved living on Guam, enjoyed his many acquaintances there, and enjoyed designing religious structures and many Liberation Day parade floats. Because of his place in the network of people with a reputation for getting things done, which included the Rotary Club, he was asked to help organize the Guam Symphony Orchestra; he did so and served as its first president.

My father left a spread sheet on which he listed his contributions to specific building projects [developing design criteria with sketch plans and estimates; supervising preparation of final plans and (where work was contracted) of contracts; overseeing construction, etc.]. Among contractors were architects in California and Hawaii, with whom my father worked closely. They were frequent guests in our home. The long list of projects includes twelve villages, interim and permanent schools and the interim junior college, employee housing, the jail, the hospital, and other public buildings. Richard Neutra was architect for the Government House. My father worked with Governor and Mrs. Elvidge to further adapt the
structure to demands of a tropical environment, and to furnish and landscape the home. He won praise from Richard Neutra among others for his furniture designs. My father also designed the Guam Daily News building, several business buildings, the Capuchin friary, and several churches, including a church in Mangilao, the foundation of which, he said, was built too large, “destroying proportions” (he was always sensitive to aesthetics). From his spread sheet, it seems my father was involved with just about all public development, and much private development, on Guam during the early reconstruction period. Reading the long list of projects, it is surprising to read in a letter my father wrote to his brother, that ninety percent of his work was “untangling red tape”. After we left Guam, super typhoons struck the island, with wind speeds that exceeded limits in 1940s and 1950s building specifications. My father wondered how many of the buildings that he had principally or cooperatively designed were left standing.

In telling about my mother, let me start with George Washington High School, which was, in the 1950s, a row of “elephant Quonsets”. I remember there, when we students were asked – so very often -- to choose from a long list the occupations of our parents (for federal funding purposes, I suppose), students of Chamorro background would bristle at the category “housewife” and insist that the mother be classified “self-employed”. That really impressed me. I knew that my mother, too, was indeed much more than that category implied, and I followed suit, responding that my mother was “self-employed”.

Among her civic involvements, my mother was an active member of the Women’s Club, served on the Nieves M. Flores Memorial Library board, and was Governor Elvidge’s appointee as co-chairman of the Parks, Monuments, and Museum Committee at its start in November 1953 and committee chairman by the time of the Museum’s dedication on May 29, 1954. I believe the Women’s Club and the Guam Historical Society were most instrumental in launching the parks, monuments, and museum project. As with the Guam Symphony, laying the foundation for this historic project took the cooperative and hard work of many people from many sectors of the community. My own small contribution, at age ten, was sweeping layers of dust from the Plaza de España’s Garden House, which became the museum. I’ve always admired my brother for removing a dead cat from the house without complaining. Later, when my mother assessed the high school curriculum as insufficiently college preparatory, Governor Elvidge instructed her to research the issue. Others on Guam, too, were concerned about upgrading the curriculum. By the time my brother and I entered high school, in 1956, we could opt for a college prep curriculum, with courses in Latin, Spanish, algebra 1 and 2, geometry, calculus, history, civics, graphic art, music, and more. I had little opportunity to talk with my mother about these years on Guam, but my parents’ papers, including my mother’s letters home, tell me this history.

We children enjoyed a rich life on Guam, surrounded by vibrant, talented people and wonderful fields to romp through on the old experimental farm in Mangilao.

“Where are you from?” was a question we were often asked on our return stateside. “Nowhere, everywhere,” was usually my answer, because I believed people would not understand if I gave my heart’s answer “Guam.” When my sister and I were in our thirties, in the course of some conversation, my mother remarked, “But of course you are Memphians.” My sister and I looked at each other in consternation and said, almost in a single breath, “But, no, we’re from Guam.”

A couple of decades later I stumbled upon an article about “global nomads.” Intrigued, I read and I discovered at last a description of our roots. A global nomad, the piece said, is “an individual who, having spent a significant part of the developmental years in a culture other than the parents' culture, develops a sense of relationship to all of the cultures while not having full ownership in any. Elements from each culture are incorporated into the life experience, but the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar experience. In other words, our roots are not in a place but in each other.” How wonderful it’s been to have gone through life a “global nomad” – and it all started with growing up on the beautiful island of Guam!

Alice Stewart, Homer, Louisiana, Sept. 2011
Guam "a mountain top on the crest of a large wrinkle in the earth's crust" Duty GH, Captain U.S. Navy, Coordinator, 1960 Navy Relief Appeal, Glimpses of Guam, 1960
APPENDICES
Map in JM Stewart papers, Caption:

"Compiled from Third Air Reconnaissance Photo Squadron Photographs and Road Survey
U. S. Navy--PPO Guam, M.I.  FEB 1947"  (insert is a modification, showing post-1960 highways)