

The Catchings – West Letters

Eugene L. Catchings
and
Chloye Ann West

1947 – 1952

A NOTE ON THE TEXT

These letters are printed as they were written. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are the writers' own and have not been corrected. Gene spelled by ear—*surprised*, *didn't*, *memores*, *maniver*—and that ear is part of what survives of him here. Chloye, who studied journalism at Texas A. & I., spelled almost perfectly. The difference between their two hands is not an error to be tidied away; it is the record.

Eleven of the 193 letters here are by neither of them. Seven are from Chloye's mother, Grace Carpenter West Walker, writing from Woodsboro between May 1949 and January 1951. The other four are from correspondents who signed a first name and no more — Dee Jay, Clara & Carey, Billie Jeanne and Clara. They were kept with the rest and they are printed where they fall, because the sequence is not only what the two of them said to each other — it is also the news arriving from home while they waited.

Because the spellings stand uncorrected, no *sic* appears anywhere in this volume. Where a word would genuinely stop a reader, a modern reading follows in square brackets:

We just got over a few days of, war maniver [*maneuvers*], Boy am I glad it's over.

Where a word or phrase carries a rule beneath it, the writer underlined it himself. Gene does it far more than anyone else here, often setting the words in capitals and spacing them out letter by letter, and he saves it for the thing he most wants read.

Everything inside square brackets, set in this grey italic, is editorial and was never on the page. Round parentheses are always the writers' own—Gene and Chloye both used them constantly. Words

that could not be read are marked [*illegible*]; a reading we are unsure of carries a question mark, as [*Debose?*]. A small raised number sends you to a note at the foot of that letter, where something the two of them never had to explain to each other—a town, a base, a piece of Air Force usage, a song everybody knew that year—is explained for a reader who came later.

The writers knew. Chloye, in December 1948:

Have you ever seen handwriting such as mine? I swear it gets worse all the time. I always type the letters I write every one else. I'll take pity on you and type your next one.

Of the 350 uncertain readings marked in the working transcript, 345 were checked word by word against the original scans. Three could not be. Each has been searched for and the reasons are individual: an original that was never filed, a surviving sheet that does not carry the sentence, a hand that defeats magnification. Two more fall in passages the transcript never dated — written at home rather than posted, so they carry neither a dateline nor an envelope — and no original could be matched to them. All of these are printed exactly as the transcriber read them, and none is marked in the text as settled.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

October 21, 1947

Taft, Texas

Hello Ann,

I guess your kinda suprised to here from me aren't you. What did that boy friend of your's say. Say I heard you were going steady with him, are you?

Boy you better be glad we taken you home when we did you know where that bridge is about half-way between Woodsboro¹ and Sinton². Well a big knot come on the tire and we had a blow-out just this side of the bridge. And we didn't have a spare. We finally got a ride to Sinton and bought a second-hand tire & got a boy at the filling station to take us back up there. It was about 2:30 when I got home. Every time I go over there I have a blow-out. The next time I go over there if I have a blow-out I'll - Well I just hope I don't have another blow-out.

Well guess I had better be closing. Why don't you write me.
Write me!!!!!!

Anouther

Love,
Gene

My address is.
Gene Catchings
P.O. Box 583
Taft, Texas

P.S I don't know when I'll see you but I hope it's soon!!!

OVER

P.S.

I'm sorry Sat. night was such a flap. Next time we'll do better.

NOTES

1. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.
2. *Sinton* Sinton, Texas — the county seat between Taft and Woodsboro, on the road Gene drove to court Chloye.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

November 10, 1947

I hope!

[written inside the envelope flap:] SEALED WITH A SWIFT
KICK — Dearest Gene.

The great love I have to express for you
is false, and I find that my indifference toward you
increases daily! The more I see of you the more
you appear to my eyes an object of contempt.
I feel myself in every way disposed and determined
to hate you. I can assure you that I never intend
to marry you. Now our best conversation,
has left an expression on my mind which by no means
impresses me of the extremely high stand of, your, character
your temper would make me entirely unhappy.
And if you, and I were united I would expect nothing but
hatred of myself and you added to the everlasting dis-
pleasure of living with you I have indeed a heart
at your service I could not owe it to any one more
inconsistent or capricious than yourself and be
capable of doing justice to myself and my family
I think you are aware of the fact that
I speak sincerely and I hope you will do me the favor of
avoiding me. You need not trouble yourself about
answering this letter as your letters are always full of
will and good sense Believe me
I am so adverse to you that it is impossible for me to be.

Yours Truly,

P.S.

Dear, now start again and this time read every other line¹. I am mailing this to _____ which he in turn give to you.

NOTES

1. *read every other line* Chloye's trick letter. Read straight through it is a flat rejection; read every second line it is the opposite. The conceit circulated widely in mid-century letter-writing and autograph books.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

April 28, 1948

San Antonio, Tex.

Dearest Ann,

Guess you are kinda suprised to hear from me. Well – here I am again anyway.

You knew I was in the Air force didn't you? I got in two weeks ago thur. And now I sure wished I hadn't. All the shots and things you get here sure do make you soar. I can hardly now my arm is soar. – and It sure would be good to be home too. Sure do miss thing around there. I've been on restriction every science I've been here. Suppost to get off tomorrow. So you will have to excuse this pen writing it's one. I got a boy to get me from the P.X.¹ – & it isen't any good.

We had about an in. rain up here the other day – but it sure is hot here now. Most of the guises here are from the north. (*unreadable*) But they are all pretty good boys in this flight – Well enough about this place.

How have been doing lately? Mean as ever I guess – or are you. I bet you sure will be glad when school is out wont you. Just think – no more high school for you. That sure is good isen't it. Or did you like school? When is school out over there?

I guess you know. "Coline Glenn" don't you? Shes my cousin. You probably wont believe it but she is.

Say I way over to see you about a week before I joined the A.F. But you wasn't home. I sure was disappointed to – So I just went back to Aunts houses where my mother was.

If you ever find time I wish you would write me. Sure does make me feel good to get a letter from some one – especial someone like you!!

I guess I had better be closing for now. I have two fitig's to wash. That's something else I never had to do. (Wash Clothes)

We'll be sweet (if possibly) and ans. As soon as you can.

Love
Gene

My Address

Pvt. Eugene L. Catchings 18345617
Sqdn. BPH 2 light 2913
Lackland A.F. Base
San Antonio, Tex.

P.S.

NOTES

1. *P.X.* Post Exchange — the on-base shop. Gene buys pens, stationery and a radio from it.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

June 9, 1948

Taft, Texas

Dearest Ann,

Well, how are you getting along by now? Probably mean as ever.

Did you have fun Senior day? I was over their that day. And after I got their I found out that you should gone to Corpus.

How do you like this cold weather? Did it snow any up their yesterday? It snowed a little here. Not enough to talk about though.

It's been a long time science I've see you, hasn't it. Remember that boy that was with me that night? Well he was over their with me the outhur night. Why don't you answer this letter & let me know when you're not going to be doing anything.

Well I guess I had better be closing—be sure to answer this.

Love,
Gene

CHLOYE ANN WEST

August 19, 1948

[written inside the envelope flap:] Hi Handsome! – Please excuse this writing!

Dearest Gene,

This is quite a bit late, but you know the old saying. “Better late than never.”

I really was glad to get your letter and you had better answer this one immediately or it probably won’t get answered for five years. You know it’s much easier to keep a correspondence going if you answer promptly. Or so they tell me. I’ll try if you will.

I hadn’t heard you were in the air force until I got your letter. It came as a shock, I tell you. Oh well, you probably would have had to join up sooner or later any way.

By now you have surely recovered from the shots they gave you. No excuses will be accepted for you not answering this.

How are all those (damn) Yankees? Got tired of Texas no doubt so they just quit, packed up, and went home. ha –

What did you mean by that crack I’m still as mean as ever? Don’t you know better than that? I’m meaner.

Well, school is out! Hot dog! Now, college here I come. I guess I’ll never quit school until I get married. Like I said I guess I’ll never quit school.

I am now convinced that Coleen Glenn is your cousin. Took me long enough didn’t it?

It seems that I am never home when you come over. If you ever get a furlough look me up. I'll either be in Kingsville or home.

I am going to A.& I.¹ college at Kingsville to major in journalism. You'll probably be reading articles by me some day.

Glad to hear you are doing your own washing. Sure will make some girl a good wife. Dirty crack huh?

We are having a dance here tomorrow night. Too bad you can't be here. You probably attend more dances than I ever thought of.

I went to Taft² the other day and thought about you.

I always keep old letter so I had your address.

Do you know a girl from Sinton³ by the name of Happy Debose? She is my "Big Sister" at college.

You know I think I'm going to like that old college life. We have 2 dances, a lawn party, and a tea the first week. High school was never like that.

I went to El Paso a week in June for Grand Assembly of the Order of the Rainbow⁴ for girls. Really had a swell time. The last night the boys from Fort Stockton came over and we had a big dance.

I've been in Houston some of the summer. Really had a swell time. Lot of nice girls, you know.

I haven't been doing too much. Go swimming, occasionally, or to a show or dance. This place is definately dead. You know what I mean because you've been here.

Well, general, this letter is long enough to rate a nice, long, one in return. See what can be done about it and be real sweet.

(Ann)

Love Ya,
Chloye

NOTES

1. *A. & I.* Texas College of Arts and Industries at Kingsville, where Chloye studied journalism. Now Texas A&M University–Kingsville.
2. *Taft* Taft, San Patricio County, Texas — Gene’s home town, roughly 30 miles south-east of Woodsboro.
3. *Sinton* Sinton, Texas — the county seat between Taft and Woodsboro, on the road Gene drove to court Chloye.
4. *Order of the Rainbow for Girls* International Order of the Rainbow for Girls, a Masonic-affiliated youth organisation. Chloye attended its Grand Assembly in El Paso in June 1948.

September 19, 1948

Johnson of F.B. Japan

[written inside the envelope flap: Hi Beautiful! and on the reverse: O.B.R.] Dearest Chloye,

Well – I don’t quite know how to start this – but any way, here it is. As you said “better late than never”. But you can’t blame me kido – because I didn’t your letter until a week ago. You see – I’ve been gone from, Lackland¹ A.F.B. for about 3 months now.

I was glad to get your letter evend though it was three or four months old. I hope you answer this one sooner. (Second have – but I was just too busy) I’m going to school too. Radar school. I’ll be here for around 6 week’s (going to school) and then I go to, “Okinawa²” That, Okinawa – boy that a heck of a place. I was there 3 weeks before

I came here, I’m about 18 miles from, Tokyo. Sure is a lots of things there. (all kind of things) HA.HA. But Okinawa, there isn’t anything there. Not evend a pretty girls?!

Your probably in, College now but mabie your, Mother well send this on to you. Hope she does anyway! How do you like College? Bet you have lots of fun. Don’t give those poor boys there too much trouble HA.HA.

Say, Chloye – why don’t you send me a picture of you. (More than one if yo want too)

Sure had some fun today. (AIR FORCE DAY) you know I had an air show this morning. Then this evening we had a big rodeo: Anyone could ride it – so me and one of my buddies

signed up to ride. There was twelve of us riding. First place – won \$50, 2nd won \$35, 3rd won \$20, & 4th won \$10. – Well I'm \$20 dollar richer now! (Got a soar leg though.) I thought that I was pretty good though. Just think out of 12 people – I won 3rd place! HA.HA. My buddy didn't win any thing. (He came in 6th though) The horse didn't picth very much. Really was lots of fun. (But he Really did jar me up, the ground was pretty hard too.)

Boy its pretty cold over here at night. In about 20 more days well start wearing O.D. over here.

O yes kido I don't have to wash my clothes any more. You can give these Japs over here a package of Cig. and they will do just about any thing for you.

You know Chloye – Its funny the way I met you. Remember that, Blow Out, I had, And just after I got through telling you – you had a flat too! And then you ran off. Woulden't evend help me change tires. – haa that was back in the, Good old Days" though I guess,.

Well Chloye I guess I better be closing for now, you are probably tired of read this – anyway. (If you can read it)

So be sweet and answer soon real real soon!

Love,
Gene

P.S.

You better not wait a mouth to answer this letter hunny!

NOTES

1. *Lackland A.F. Base* Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio — the Air Force’s basic training centre, where Gene reported in April 1948.
2. *Okinawa* Gene served as a radar operator on Okinawa, which the United States occupied and administered after the 1945 battle. He calls it “the rock” throughout.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

October 11, 1948

Dearest Gene,

I'm so glad you didn't wait half a year before you answered my letter. I went home this week-end and your letter was there and had been a week. I suppose by Xmas they would have forwarded it on to me.

I certainly surprised to hear you had left Lackland¹. I'll bet you miss these good old United States. I bet I'd be as lonesome as heck.

What ever did you mean by there were a lot of things to do in Tokyo? I know the girls in Japan couldn't be as good-looking as the girls here. How about that?

College life, boy oh boy! Home was never like this. Have to study a lot though. But I'm not going to let my books interfere my education.

In your letter you spoke of my giving these boys trouble. You know me better than that. ha ha I really haven't been going with many boys here. I am now going with a boy from Aruba. If you don't know where that is, it's an island off the coast of South America. He was born in Rockport though.

I am going to send you some pictures as soon as we have a nice sunny day suitable to take some. Every morning now it looks like it might rain so everyone drags a raincoat everywhere they go and then it doesn't rain. Makes one feel like cussing.

Glad to hear about the rodeo. You can probably use all the extra money you can get. By the way, send me something from

Tokyo, even if it's just a post card. Remember I've never been there.

So — you don't wash anymore. What do you do in your spare time? ha.

I'll never forget all the flats & blowouts we had when we went together. It was fun though.

You know they say that when you go to college and start taking notes during lecture that it will ruin your handwriting; that is if you have one to start with. In my case I've always just scribbled so if you can't read this just come over here and I'll say it all in person. Much wiser that way, anyway.

I enjoyed your letter so much so try it again real soon. Be real sweet and give all the Jap girls my love.

Love Ya,

Ann

P.S. It didn't sound right when you called me Chloye. Anybody else it's, O.K. Bye Now!

NOTES

1. *Lackland A.F. Base* Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio — the Air Force's basic training centre, where Gene reported in April 1948.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

October 31, 1948

Okinawa

Dearest Ann,

Hope this finds you O.K. – As for me, I'm fine. Except for being mad.

I think I wrote you from Japan – while I was there going to school didn't I? Well anyway I finished the school & now I'm back on this rock. Boy I sure had fun in Tokyo – I was there for a week after I finished school. A whole week of nothing to do but run around.

And now I'm here on this rock – with nothing to do – O – I can go to a movie every outer night. An outdoor theater. It will probably be pretty cold this winter setting in it.

Well baby how are things going with you – learning anything? I bet your teaching the teachers by now?? Ha.

How is the football team there this year? Won on any games yet? (Probably haven't) Ha Ha

Say Sugar, I'm still looking for some pictures from you. How about it? Huh??

I'll send you some of me – the first time I get some good ones. That is if you want any of me. But I sure want some of you – see!

Boy it sure would be nice to be back in the States now – But in about 12 more months I guess I will be – I hope yep I'll be home for Xmas, Next Xmas that is!! Not this Xmas – but Xmas after next you know – Ha

Well hunny I can't think of anything to write – so I guess I should close – but then I wouldn't have anything else to do – So I'll try to think of something I guess!!

I guess I go up on the hill tomorrow & start to work on the radar site. You see on the end of this Island here there a real high hill, a lots higher than most of them. It's around 3 miles – Well anyway our radar site is on that hill. Theres a few hilles higher than this one – but not many, on this Island that is.

Well baby I had better be signing off for now – so remember & ans. soon hunny –

Love,
Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

November 8, 1948

Okinawa

[written inside the envelope flap:] “Hi Ya baby” – Hello
Sugar,

Well how is my little cutty doing by now – Mean as ever I suppose! Ha. Are you still treating the, College – O.K? How did A. & I¹. Come out in football this year – Win any games – I doubt it!! (Only kidding)

I started typing you a letter yesterday while I was working – Ore should I say, supposed to be working. No you see honey I work for 30 minutes & then have 30 off. I do that for 5 hr. & then have 24 hr. off. You see that radar operator is, pretty hard on a guy. Well any way as I started to say I didn't get your finished so – I decided I would write you this morning. Or start another one – Anyway – Hope I get this one finished!

Sure would be nice if I was there in the states with all that time off – wouldn't it. Especially if I was in Texas – Ha. Going to see some little girl I know –. Yep I sure would like to be back there now.

Say honey – I'm still looking for those picture you were going to send me. Surely it's not still raining there. Talking about rain – boy it sure does it's share over here. No need of me telling you how it rains over here though – You probably wouldn't believe it. Ha.

What do you think of this stationary sugar – ? It dosen't show me much – but you'll have to blame that in the P.X.²

Because this is all they have at the present time. Supposed some more in day after tomorrow – they said.

I bought me anouther, radio this one is really a good one. Short wave and every thing. Sure like it. “I may be wrong” is playing now –

Well it looks like it is going to rain again pretty soon. The wind is blowing pretty hard too. Boy will I be glad when I leave this place –

I wouldn’t mind being back in Tokyo for a little while – A person can have quite a bit of fun there – Now don’t get the wrong! No the girls aren’t as good-looking – but, well – Some of them are sure cute.

This place sure is dead. Wished I was stationed in Japan – rather than here.

I seen, Gen. Douglas Mc Arthur³, while I was there in Toky.

I have to be going for now sugar – so be sweet & don’t study, too hard!

Lets be in a hurry for ans. this – huh?

Love & Kisses,

Bye now!

Gene

NOTES

1. *A. & I.* Texas College of Arts and Industries at Kingsville, where Chloye studied journalism. Now Texas A&M University–Kingsville.
2. *P.X.* Post Exchange — the on-base shop. Gene buys pens, stationery and a radio from it.
3. *Gen. Douglas MacArthur* General Douglas MacArthur, then Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, headquartered in Tokyo. Gene saw him while on leave from Okinawa.

December 8, 1948

Dearest Ann,

Well here I am writting to you again – I don't know why. It certainly isn't my time to write. But I figured if I write you & you answered it – well I will get that many more letters from you – What do you do in your spare time? It's for sure you don't write to me! Or do you have any spare time – I don't know – but I think if I was going to college & you were over here – I'd write you once in-a-while –

I'm still waiting for some or a picture of you too –

I guess you know I don't have any of you – Sure would like to have some to sugar. As I told you before as soon as I get my films back I will send you some. I should get them about next week – but I don't think I'll send you any until I get some from you –

Tell me hunny, have you changed any cents I seen you? Your probably just as mean as ever – but I sure had fun – wished I could have gone with you more. Mabie in about 11 more months I can – huh?? I hate when I'm supposed to get back to the States.

Boy there sure is some hot music on the radio now – Sure would like to be back in the States, *[listening?]* to it – Boy O Boy. I'm on Guard now you see us radar operators have to take turns on guard. Well it's my time for it tonight. And you can play a radio hire *[here]* in the guard shack. I've got the phone right in front of the radio of the boy up in the D.F. van is

testing to it – Ha. Hope the controller dosen't cut in on us & hear it. Would probably be pretty rough on us. Ha –

Well that program is off now now – and we didn't get caught!

It sure is raining now – Just started. The bottom of a cloud must have fell out. It does that pretty regular here though.

I guess your getting ready for Xmas – wish I could send you something, but I'm afraide there isn't any thing over here you would want.

Yesterday was the 7th Aniversery of Pearl Harber.

Better be closing for now I guess – Have to fill out a few, Guard logs.”

Same,

Good Night Hunny

Gene

CHLOYE ANN WEST

December 29, 1948

Woodsboro, Texas

[written inside the envelope flap:] Merry Christmas! Happy New Year! Call this a book if you want to. — Dearest Gene,

I really owe you an apology don't I? I don't have any excuses for not writing except pure laziness. Thank you very much for keeping up your writing anyway. I'll try not to let it happen again.

You mentioned how I spent my spare time. I sleep it away. In regard to your statement concerning whether or not you would write to me if I was in Okinawa¹, maybe someday you will. I've been telling my family for the longest I was going to join either the Wac's² or Waves when I am old enough. As yet, they think I'm nuts. Could be — one never knows. Does one? Not when it concerns me any how.

I still haven't taken any pictures yet, really I'm going to. Just give me enough time. Don't you dare wait till I send mine before you send yours. That would be too chicken for words.

You asked if I've changed. Not so much that you wouldn't know me.

I have long hair now, and I gained some weight. I always needed that, though. I've gained five (5) pounds during the Xmas holidays. I am now a great 115. Hot stuff huh?

By the way how was your Xmas? Were you very lonesome? I thought about you if that will help any. I hope you weren't too lonesome. Besides you'll be home this time next year and just think of all the guys who won't. When you get here you had

better come to see me. I'd never let you hear the end of it if you didn't. By then, you should be ready for a good flat. Woodsboro³ probably won't fail you.

I wish you didn't have to work such awful hours. Honestly if I had any influence at all I'd see to it that you didn't work at such (decided against word) awful hours at night.

How can you stand that rain? I like it once in a great while, but that's all.

I have really been enjoying these holidays. College gets a little old after a while. We went to Houston for Christmas. I guess you knew that was where we were from before we moved to Woodsboro 3 years ago.

Say, Gene, do you remember Tommy Carter. He goes to A. & I⁴. He told me to tell you hi. So hi, honey.

Have you ever seen handwriting such as mine? I swear it gets worse all the time. I always type the letters I write every one else. I'll take pity on you and type your next one.

Mike Flint also goes to A. & I., don't we have a bunch of cracked kids though?

I think my parents sent me to reform me but I think they are going to give it up as hopeless.

Gene, can you remember what I was like when you went with me? Well, I'm not quite that bad now. Honest, I just have a hard time convincing people.

I'm a jitterbug⁵ fene [*fiend*]. I guess I could just dance every night of the week. I can't remember whether you dance or not. I don't think I ever went to a dance with you. We'll have to get around some when you come home. Hurry will ya', I'm going to be an old maid before long and I'll have to start acting like one. I guess you know I'll be 18 before long. Isn't that awful for

a girl, nowadays. All the girls are either married or engaged. I've got some prospects but I guess I'm too conceited to try to find one good enough for me. ha –

Well I've had on my pajamas Since about 8:00 & it is now 9:15 or 9:30 so I had better close till next time. I'm going to start writing every chance I get whether it's your turn (over)

or mine. May be that will help a little when you are real lonesome. Be sweet & don't do a thing that I wouldn't do.

Ann W.

HAIL A. & I.

(Doesn't that W look classy on there. It sounds like I'm just some business acquaintance or something. Wasn't meant that way.)

Write real soon!

I tried to find a baby picture of me to send to you as a joke. No luck whatsoever.

Tell all your buddies hi for me.

Tell them I'll give their regards to the States.

Bye for now & Lots of Love,
Bye Now! [*then, written on the envelope back:*] Write your address clearly at once so that I'll try to write it correct. I will next from y[*illegible*] old Institution of higher learning. Namely A. + I.
Chloye

NOTES

1. *Okinawa* Gene served as a radar operator on Okinawa, which the United States occupied and administered after the 1945 battle. He calls it “the rock” throughout.
2. *Wac’s or Waves* The WAC (Women’s Army Corps) and the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service, the Navy’s women’s reserve). Both were made permanent branches by the Women’s Armed Services Integration Act of 1948, months before Chloye wrote this.
3. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye’s home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.
4. *A. & I.* Texas College of Arts and Industries at Kingsville, where Chloye studied journalism. Now Texas A&M University–Kingsville.
5. *jitterbug* The swing dance of the 1930s and 40s. Gene writes it phonetically as “juta bug”.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

January 11, 1949

Ann West

Dearest Ann,

Received your letter yesterday afternoon. I was really glad to hear from you again. And slowly but surely, the postman did his job.

Say – I would like to see you now, with that long hair & weighen 115 lb. You couldn't be much prettier now than you were when I went with you though.

I wished I would have had a chance to go with you more when I was a – civilian! So I could have known you better – and had a little more fun.

No Sugar, I never went to a dance with you. I used to dance, a little. You'll probably have to teach me all over when I get back though darling. I know I'll be a little rustie. I'm sure there wont be any thing wrong with me that you can't fix up okay though honey.

So you remember that flat I had that, Sunday afternoon ea [eh]? And you wouldn't evend stay and help me fix it.

I didn't figure I would see you any more after that. I guess it was just luck that I drove down that certain street & you were sitting on that certain front porch. That's funny – you know it baby –

Gonna have to make up for a little lost time when I see you agin. And believe you me, I'm looking forward to it too honey. Just about ten more months. That time will pass fast darling, if I get quite a few letters from you.

No sweat about, Woodsboro¹ failing me with a big flat. It'll take more than that to keep me away. No sweat about me not coming to see you either, because I've already checked it as one of my most important places.

The Place!!!

Is that a college or an in-saine-solem [*insane asylum*]. With those, "Taft²", kids there – Ha. Ha. You can tell them hi for me too darling – But don't say too much more than that – Now don't get me wrong sugar I'm not jealous – just kinda like you – quite-a-bit.

Talking about rain – I don't know what I would do if it didn't rain at least evrouther [*every other*] day! Probably get home, "webb" feet when I leave here! But you could probably fix that too honey.

I don't think you want to join the Wac's³ or Waves – Because some time when you join things – you wish you hadn't joined it later.

It might be chicken of me to not send you a picture until you send me one. Well, mabie I'm a chicken guy. One never knows – does one? All kidding aside honey, I don't have any pictures yet. I'll send you some as soon as I get some. You better hurry up at get some made too. I'm looking forward of getting some pictures of you. "all kinds."

Well darling, I have to be closing for now. It's 10:30 – Past My bed time! And I have to go to work at 7 o'clock in the morning. So bye darling & Answer soon.

With Lots of Love,

Bye darling
Gene

623rd A.C.&.U Sqdn.
A.P.O.239 - c/o P.M.
San Francisco, Calif.

P.S. Say sugar,

Why do you use, Chloye so much. You told me not too long ago^[?] that it didn't sound right for me to Call you – Chloye. It dosen't have anything to do with some boy does it?

I know you College gals –

O, Yes.

P.F.C. Gene Catchings

A.F.18345617 Box 150

NOTES

1. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.
2. *Taft* Taft, San Patricio County, Texas — Gene's home town, roughly 30 miles south-east of Woodsboro.
3. *Wac's or Waves* The WAC (Women's Army Corps) and the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service, the Navy's women's reserve). Both were made permanent branches by the Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948, months before Chloye wrote this.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

January 17, 1949

Kingsville, Texas

Dearest Gene,

Here I am again – when you get tired of all this scribbling let me know.

I haven't heard from you yet so I take it for granted that you haven't as yet received my last letter, because I know that you would never delay a moment before you answered. ha – No joke, you are really getting good about answering.

I received your Christmas card January 3rd. I think it's wonderful how all of you manage to do things like that. It is really a clever card.

We all have really been working up here. Getting ready for finals you know. If I'm lucky I'll have 14 semester hours at the end of this term. Don't you wish you had to go to college? I'll trade with you – I'd love all those men, but then you wouldn't be there would you? That's not so good.

My psychology teacher has asked another girl and me to be in a moving picture for him. Can't you see us now studying mages and the like? Not for me. Since it will sort of guarantee me a good grade, I'm going to do it, though.

I'm going to Weslaco pretty soon with my room-mate. We are going to Mexico some night while I'm there. Some fun, huh? We are also going to "The Wagon" in Macallen.

Ann and I are going to take your pictures this week. By the way, I hope you won't mind if it has other girls in it. ha. Good looking, too.

Duke Shiner, a negro dance band, played here for the dance last Saturday nite. Some be-bop!

I'm playing records, now, and every time I write a sentence I have to get up and change a record. Pretty tiring. I'm listening to "Jealousy". Do you like it?

Gene, honey, I must close now as I am supposedly in bed with a sore throat.

Love Ya',

Ann

P.S. Hope to have a letter from you by the time you get this. Bye!

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

January 27, 1949

Okinawa

[written inside the envelope flap:] "Hi Baby" *[illegible]* –

Dearest Ann,

Hope this little peace of paper finds you okay. As for me – I'm fine I guess, would be lots better if I was there with you though. I'm glad you found time to write more often. I sure enjoy your letters. I think they are kinda getting me! (Is that good or bad)

We just got over a few days of, war maniver *[maneuvers]*, Boy am I glad it's over. No sleep, was getting bad.

That sounded exciting, about you going to Mexico. Be glad when I can do things like that again. When I get back to the States we'll have to have a few little trips like that. Would be lots of fun. Don't you think? I'll have about 45 or 30 days leave when I get home. And believe you me – I'm going to look you up honey – okay?

Say, I'll trade places with you – I'd just love to be with all those girls!! But then you wouldn't be there, so I guess we might just as well stay where we are for a few more months that is.

Honey, this letter may seem a little crazy. I'm lissing *[listening]* to, a murder mystery now & trying to write too. I have to write now to because I wont have a chance soon again. I have interior guard duty and 2400 & then have to work tomorrow. Kinda bussy –

How has things been going back there with you – Any new boyfriends or anything? Better watch em – I know just about what college kids are like, I think.

I'll be glad when I get those pictures you were talking about. Of course I don't mind if another girl is in it – just as long as she's cute – Ha.

I might send you some of me pretty soon – If you don't mind a few of my so called buddies in them!

Some good juta [*jitterbug*¹] bug music is playing now baby, wish you where here to teach me how to juta bug.

It would be nice if there was some way for you to come over here. If you were here, I could stay here for ages – couldn't we? So if you ever take a motion to do any thing about the service. Make sure you get to come to "Okinawa²" (the rock) Ha. No baby you just stay there and waite until I get home. We'll have to see if we can't give a few night club's a little business – right!!

Honey I have to close for now so take it easy – Better be hearing from you soon.

[*illegible*] Save ya cuddles

Bye
Gene

NOTES

1. *jitterbug* The swing dance of the 1930s and 40s. Gene writes it phonetically as "juta bug".
2. *Okinawa* Gene served as a radar operator on Okinawa, which the United States occupied and administered after the 1945 battle. He calls it "the rock" throughout.

February 3, 1949

Dearest Ann,

Well, here I am again – believe it or not. Hope this finds every little thing okay. As for me – I’m still kicking. And waiting for the day I’ll see you again. You probably didn’t even know I cared whether I see you or not – Well I do honey.

I haven’t heard from you in about 5 days – but I figured the more I wrote you, the more letters I’d get from you! (If you answered them) And you better –

How has things been treating my little baby? Or should I say how have you been treating things?

Not wishing you any bad luck, but I sure wish you were over here now. We would have it made. Or better yet, I wish I was there with you. Back there any way – Ha. Ha.

I got a few pictures from my mother yesterday. One of my car in it. Boy it sure brought back lots of memories – if you know what I mean! How do you like those studebakers¹ convertables? I think I’ll get one of them when I get back.

One of my buddies is planning on buying a plane when we get back to Frisco. That is if he can find one you know. Then we were going to fly home. Me pay half the *epp[illegible]* *[expenses]*, we fly to Taft² I get out & then he goes on back to Kansas. Won’t take too long to get home that way. I don’t know why I’m talking of that now though. Because it will be a long time before I see Frisco. Again. And then too quite a bit would happen that we don’t expect to happen.

I'm still looking for those pictures too honey. You know, I've just about forgotten what you look like. And that's bad. As soon as the films my Mom sent me get here, I'll take some pictures of this rock and send you some –

Well sugar I'm going to have to close for now & get a little shut eye. My mid-night shift is here & its sure hard to stay awake up there. So be sweet baby and answer soon & take care of your self.

Bye Now
Lots of Love,
Gene

NOTES

1. *Studebaker convertibles* The Studebaker Champion and Commander convertibles of 1947–49, styled by Raymond Loewy's office and among the most-discussed cars of the moment. (The transcript read 'studebackers'; the page reads 'studebakers'.)
2. *Taft* Taft, San Patricio County, Texas — Gene's home town, roughly 30 miles south-east of Woodsboro.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

February 19, 1949

Texas A. & I.

Dearest Gene,

I'm so sorry I haven't written sooner, but you know how it is with my letter writing. I take spells.

Was really glad to hear from you again. Don't see why you can't write more often, even if I don't.

How are things on the "rock?" I'll certainly be glad when you get back to the States, I can't even think of anything to write you but what's happening here. I don't know whether you're interested or not. Hope so for your sake.

Thanks for the pictures. (ha) They don't look a thing like you. No joke, if you don't send me some I'll just — what?

We haven't had a day of sunshine in so long. I can hardly remember what it looks like. Does it still rain as much over there?

College is just the same. Nothing different except the new dorms they're building. I'll be in one of them. I sorta hate to leave the naval base now, after all these months. Oh well, they won't have them completed until schools out.

I've cut all my classes today. Haven't felt too good, but didn't want to go anyway. Just like me isn't it? We are really having a tough test in Spanish, anyway.

Surely will be glad when they open the swimming pool here. I can hardly wait. If you remember I used to be a swimming instructor at a girl's camp. Love water. Do you think I might

like the rock. If you do, and you want me, I might just come over. Some fun huh? Well – I love to travel.

Speaking of Studebakers! Honey, if you ever got one you would have to marry me. Love those cars with a passion. Not that I would ever marry any one for his car. Ha. –

Well hon, that's all the news I have for now, will probably write again this week.

Love You,

Ann

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

February 22, 1949

"The Rock"

Dearest Ann,

Hope this finds every little thing okay. As for me, I guess I'm fine.

Today is "George Washingtons" birthday. We're having a dance tonight at the Service club. Don't know how it will turn out. But I'm afraid there wont be to many women there. Hope it turns out good though.

What have you been doing lately? Did you break your arm or something? Haven't been getting any letters from you. Sure miss them too. You said something in your last letter about taking a little trip. Mabie that's why I haven't received any letter. If so, I hope you don't have many more trips like that! Now don't get me wrong honey – don't want to deprive you of any fun. I'm still waiting on those pictures you were going to send me too. Hope I don't have to waite much longer. I'm just about forgotten what you look like. And that's bad!! What if I got to go home a little earlier than I expected & drop by to see you & wouldn't know what to look for!

Why, I'd probably ask you if I ran across you, if you knew where Ann was – Ha. Ha.

Wen. 23rd – Well here I am again. Diden't get to mail this this morning.

I didn't get to go to that dance last night. Boy was I j—ed off. At the last moment they told me I would have to work.

Things like that happen, to me – All time!!! Sure hated to miss that dance. But they'll be more. (I hope)

Sat 26th. Hi honey, here I am again. You know baby, I'll get this mailed sooner or later. I thought I mailed it the outhur day but I didn't. I'll get it mailed, by Mon. Any way. Well darling I'm gonna say bye again for now & hit the sack. Sure am sleepy.

Take care of your self & write soon. Be thanking of ya!

"I'd love to get you on a slow boat to China"

Lots of Love,

Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

March 14, 1949

Okie.

Dearest Ann,

Hope this finds every little thing okay. As for me – I suppose I'm fine. As good as one could be in a place like this, that is!!

Some time honey, I get to thanking about home & all the things in the States – I don't know. I guess you would just call it homesick. But I'm not homesick, would just like to be there with some of the good things. Like dances, girls & well need I say any more?

You know I never thought I would miss being around girls so much.

But now that I'm in the Air Force & over here. I guess I have a job to do before I go home. More or less!! Ha.

It dosen't do to thank of the past too much, over here. Would just about drive one one nuts!!! And if you thank of the future too much – the some thing. So the best thing to do is just keep your mind on your job. If you can. But some time (most of the time) I can't help letting my mind wonder once in a while.

Talking about that Conv. Stud. honey. I hope you like Mercurys too!! It will probably be one or the outhter. And you know, a pretty girl in a car – well over they go good together!!!

Well honey I've got to go for now. So be sweet darling & write when you can. I hope you get those letter writing spells quite often!!!

Love You,
Bye now.
Gene

P.S.

Don't remember wither I told you before or not but you can put Cpl. in front of my name now instead of pfc.

March 22, 1949

Dearest Gene,

You owe me a letter! Isn't that something for me to say? Bad as I am about writing. But it seems like weeks since I heard from you last. Got spring fever or something?

You know what — I've just flat come to the conclusion that I am not ever going to get any pictures from you. Isn't that a shame, too. I'd love to see you in your uniform. But guess I wouldn't have that and heaven too. No joke guy, I'm peeved. Well not really. Wish I did have them though.

How are you & things on the rock today? Gee but I'd love to see you. Bet you're still the best looking creature on two feet. Do I sound like I'm cracking up? Perhaps — one never knows, it could be this school. Just think in another 2 1/2 mos. I will be a Sophomore. Hot stuff!

I got out all your old letters the other day. It was really something to look back and see all the changes since the times I received your letter from Taft¹. But you wish you were back there, don't you. /over/

I'm not doing such a good thing writing this letter. After all, we citizens are supposed to be morale builders.

I finally dropped the Wave or Wac idea. Now I'm considering nurse's training. I'll probably end up in this old army yet. Just about the time you get out. My luck.

Gene, do you think I'll even get married and settle down? All the girls here are. Oh well, hell, who wants to follow the crowd, anyway. Guess I'll just have to wait for you.

Got to bring this to a fast halt as it is 11:50 P.M. and I need a little shut-eye. But then again don't we all. Mine is more or less beauty sleep. Doesn't seem to do a damn bit of good though.

I love you,

Bye for now & be real sweet.

Ann

NOTES

1. *Taft* Taft, San Patricio County, Texas — Gene's home town, roughly 30 miles south-east of Woodsboro.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

March 28, 1949

Kingsville, Texas

Dearest Gene,

Honey, I got your letter Saturday, but have been unable to answer until now. I am in the college infirmary with the mumps. I think I may get out tomorrow or the next day. Hope so anyway. This is one heck of a mess. You should have seen me. I was really a sight to behold.

The freshman class up here had a bathing beauty contest. You should have seen that also! All the contestants thought that they were hot stuff. Including yours truly. We are to go on now to another contest.

I went to a meeting the night I came over here. I bet that everyone there has the mumps in about 18 days. It would be killing because it was the planning committee for the "Freshman Follies" a pretty big deal up here. For the freshman that is.

Darling, your last letter has me plenty worried. You really sound blue. Don't be – it's pretty easy for me to say that though – since I am in the States. All you have to remember is that you have me. ha – That is, if you think you want me.

You know, I can hardly wait to see you. I don't know whether I have just made you into something you aren't or not, but I am rather anxious to find out. Are you eager, also? I hope so. I hate one-sided things. It would be pretty bad if I was in love with you. Or would it. Sometimes I wonder!!

I don't know why I'm doing all this rattling. Maybe it's cause I had lots of time to think, being here in bed for a week. If it's boring drop it.

I'm writing on my knee with a ther. in my mouth. Hope it doesn't make my temperture rise.

Well – I just have about 2 1/2 now, more of school. Oh boy! That is less I decide to go to summer school. I probably will. After all 14 hours aren't just to be laughed at.

Speaking of a new mercury. Honey, I'd marry you for either one. I don't know which I prefer. They're both out of this world. I may have a Studebaker when you see me. I have some money coming to me in August when I'm 18. I rather like the Tucker. Probably much too expensive for me.

Gene, baby, just when do you think you'll get back to God's country? In your every letter it sounds nearer. Maybe it just because you are so eager. That makes two of us.

I started reading some letter that I had saved for years the other day. I found the first letter you ever wrote me from Taft¹ and the first Xmas card. I even had the first letter you wrote me after you went into service. I love to go back and read them. It seems like ages. It has been 3 years. I was about a sophomore. Thought I was just about it too, didn't I?

Do you think you'll have a flat you're first date with me? I hope I'm not just presuming. You do plan to see me don't you?

Darling, they just gave me two pills to put me to sleep, and I had better close this before I had pass completely out.

Love You So Much,
Bye now.

Ann

P.S. Cpl. may I be one of the first to congratulate you! Luck always –
I still love you,

NOTES

1. *Taft* Taft, San Patricio County, Texas — Gene's home town, roughly 30 miles south-east of Woodsboro.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

April 3, 1949

Okinawa

Dearest Ann,

Hopes this finds every little thing okay with you. Things are fine here, I guess.

Say honey – I haven't heard from you in quite awhile. But I don't guess it's very hard to figure out. Your there with all those boys – Whats his name? You could at least write and let me know – if thats what it is!

Raining here now. Lookes like it's set in for awhile, quite a while!! Sometimes, I thank this island is going to wash away, it raines so much. Some weather!!

Putting in a cupple of pictures. Their not to good – but their pictures. That's more than you've sent! Sure would like to have some pictures of you. If it wouldn't put you to to much trouble.

I could send you some pictures of skules & all kind of bones. Not many bones are laying around now though. Once in a-while you run across a few in some cave or tunnel or something like that.

Sure have been loosing a lots of planes lately too. Only one of the crashes killed anyone though.

A funnier thing happened the other day – An F-80 (Jet) ran into the side of B-29 in midair. Boy that was a mess.

Boy it's really pouring down rain now. Wished it would stop raining so I could go get my clean clothes from my boy.

Well honey – I have to be closing for now & try & write my Mom a few lines. So be sweet & write soon.

Love,
Gene

P.S.

Don't forget those pictures of yourself home – Sure want some.

May 3, 1949

Woodsboro, Texas

Dearest Chloye, and Gene,

I would certainly put a medal on you if I was there for writing so often. Sure makes us happy to hear from you.

We seem to keep busy all the time; however we did have a nice trip last week-end. We were invited out to Pat Ruthersford's ranch at Austin, left here Friday and came back Sunday. Had a wonderful time but I came home just as happy, don't think I want to be rich I believe we are all happier when we work for things we have.

All week I have been trying to catch up at home it is a busy world. Don't you think so?

What does the doctor seems to think caused the trouble you had last week? We were so happy about the way you seemed to be feeling the last letters you wrote. Let me know how you are feeling real soon.

Gin is too busy trying to finish term themes, some home work in biology, Spring football practice, Juniors-Senior banquet and a dozen other things.

Hank's fancy turns to fishing he just finished building a nice ice box, has promised to build me one. I didn't know he had such talent.

Had a nice letters from mother last week, they are all getting a long pretty good.

I hope you can get the washing machine, they are one of the best investments any one can make.

Chloye take real good care of Gene - and Gene please take good care of Chloye -

Be sweet, we love you so much.

Mom

Love,

P.S. Hope you like the new house, let us know.

(Mobile)

May 10, 1949

The Rock

Dearest Ann,

Say baby – what’s the idea telling me, I owe you a letter! When its been about two mouths since. I’ve heard from you. Was beganing to thank you had found some one else. (Or someone had found you!)

Received two letters from you today, wrote the, 22 & 28 of March. That’s pretty old honey. It only takes about 10 days for an air mail letter to get here. Hope you don’t thank I’m too hard now – it would be lots better though.

Wished you would write me more often. I would write regular, but I thought you might not want to bother reading them. These last two letters sound like you feel the same way I do honey.

Ever since the first time I went with you – I wanted to be with you more. But I messed up & joined the Air Force & now I don’t have a chance to be with any one.

Honey you can quite woundering if it would be bad if you were in love with me. It would be wounderful! And talking about being anxious – darling you couldn’t be half as eager to see me as I am you. I’m tired of living on memories. So when I get back to the states – we’ll have to see what we can do about that. That is if I’m not just something you’ve built me up to something I’m really not. Just let me know how you want me sugar – and I’ll be that way.

It doesn't seem like three years have passed since I first meet you. Looks like we have lots of lost time to make up for. Thank we can cram three years into 30 days? That's how much furlow time I'll have when I hit the states. Want to spend all my spare time with you honey.

Darling when I start to write you – I intend on saying all kind of things. But when I start writting, I start thanking how had I want to be with you & how much fun we could be having –and some how I can't write. Now don't thank I'm an, “eager bever) HA.

Remember what you said about, anytime I got to feeling blue – just thank about you waiting for me. Well, that's what I'm going to honey, so don't let me down now. When you get to feeling blue – just thank about me being home in a few more mouths. Then our blue days will be over – for good I hope.

Darling, I thank you & I could make a pretty good go of it. Don't you? You sounded as though in your last two letters that, it was all left up to me. Well believe me darling – I'm willing to give it a try.

I'm not exaqually thrilled of the fact that, Mike, is going with you. I don't expeict you to just sit around & never go any place though – But will you promise me, you'll watch yourself when your out with a boy, wont you? You better!

About 14 guys are leaving this place the 16th for the States – wished I was going with them. My time is getting nearer each day though. Before you know it, I'll be seeing you. I'll get home before Xmas – that is unless something happens!

Honey you had better drop that idea of joining the nurses. You can do without that training. You'll just about go and do something like that & ruin both of us. A girl like dosen't need

to be in the Army or anything else like that. You'll make some man a good wife – And I thank I know who the man is!

All the kid I went to school with at Taft¹ are getting married now. Seems as though everyone will be “hitched”, before I get home.

How would you like to go to, Florida about next Jan. honey? I thank I can get stationed there when I get back. I have my choice of where I want to be stationed when I get back.

I didn't go to work this afternoon. It was raining too hard. Boy she got it made over here as far as working goes. I'm in charge of all 514's (Radar Operators) I go up on the hill when I want-a & stay in the barracks when I want to. But I like a little – loving once in a while!

Well darling – better sign off for now. Just about to miss chow – don't want to starve you know. So be sweet & take care of yourself–

Love & Kisses,
Bye Now
Gene

P.S.

Darling as soon as I get some pictures I'll send you some. Better yet, I'll have some made – just for you.

I would like some of you too! I haven't a one you know –

P.S.S.

I've made up my mind about the car I thank! A Mercury, Conv. that is!

I love you

NOTES

1. *Taft* Taft, San Patricio County, Texas — Gene's home town, roughly 30 miles south-east of Woodsboro.

May 11, 1949

Okie.

Dearest Ann,

Guess I'd better drop you a few lines – since I haven't written you since yesterday!

And how does this find my little baby? As cute & sweet as ever I hope. (Probably as mean too!) Things are still about the same here. Nothing good ever happens.

Just got back from taking a shower, here on my bunk now. This lonesome little old bunk. You know honey, I was just thanking how nice it must be to be "hitched", If I was married & in the States now, I wouldn't have to be on a bunk like this, by myself & writting a letter to you – Would I darling?

Well honey – I'm going down to the N.C.O. Club for awhile. Theres supposed to be a bingo game there. Some pretty good prizes. Will finish when I get back – Bye – I LOVE YA!

Hi Baby, here I am again – Diden't win any thing at bingo tonight. Had a little fun though. Had a few dranks!

Just read your letters over again honey – wished I would get some new ones so I wouldn't have to read the old ones.

You know darling – it might be funnie, since I was only with you a few times – but darling I thank & really love you. I just wished I was back there so I could tell & show you how much I did love. Mabie some day I will be – Soon. That is if you call five mouths soon. It will pass fast if we continue to write honey.

I promise I'll keep up my part if you'll keep up yours.

By the way – do you still thank you'll have to write on me? I sure hope you do!

Well sweetheart, I better close for now – so be sweet darling & write soon – real soon. Can't hardly wait for your letters.

All My Love,

Gene

P.S.

Darling I'll send you some pictures as soon as I get some.

May 17, 1949

Okinawa

Dearest Ann,

Hope this finds every little thing okay. As for me – guess I’ll live.

Anouther dreay, loney day is gone – and am I glad. Will be good when 5 more mouth pass. Don’t you thank so honey. Then you’ll have a chance to see if I am just something you’ve built up, that I’m really not. Sure hope I pass your test darling.

Went swimming this after noon. Wasen’t much fun though, just a bunch of “G.I.” Seems a fellor needs a girl before he can have any fun. I know I do. I like to be around one once in a while any way.

Guess school will just about be over by the time you get this. What are you going to do this summer school? Hope you don’t run around too much – Save lots of that for when I get home!

Boy is it getting hot here now. Just about to burn up now. Between the mosquites & heat –well I might make it back to the States. And then the rain two or three times a day.

Don’t guess you ever see many of the kids from Taft¹ Sinton².

And what’s this about you and Mike Flinn? Lying to make me jealous? Ha.

Well darling – it’s getting a little late. The outhter boys have alread gone to bed. So I had better to do like-wise!

I'll close for now – will write again soon – (You better do like-wise) Ha. No kidding honey, write soon & often. Really love to get your letters.

Bye for now, and remember KEEP SMILING! Ha.

All My Love,
Gene

P.S.

Honey if you don't go to summer Sch. or change add. be sure and let me know –

“Good Night Sweetheart”

I LOVE YOU

NOTES

1. *Taft* Taft, San Patricio County, Texas — Gene's home town, roughly 30 miles south-east of Woodsboro.
2. *Sinton* Sinton, Texas — the county seat between Taft and Woodsboro, on the road Gene drove to court Chloye.

May 21, 1949

Okinawa

Dearest Ann,

Wished I could start this letter, “Just received your sweet letter today”. But as you know, I can’t start it like that since you haven’t evend written one yet.

You know honey, it seems you have to start off, apologizing in everyone of your letters for not answering sooner. As you once said, “It’s easier to carry on a correspondent if each one writes regularly! I thank you only write me when your lonesome, or broke up with some boy or something. Hope I’m wrong. Anyway I’ve only gotten about ten letters from you since I’ve been over seas & one of them was address to, Lockland. Dosen’t show me much. Diden’t evend get a letter from you Feb. Must have been doing pretty good with who ever you were going with.

Mabie I’ve just got you imaged to something your really not. Instead of you, me.

Those pictures you & some outhur girl were going to take – Thanks a million. Woulden’t take the world for them. I thank you look heavenly in them honey!

Hope I don’t sound too bitter darling – it’s just that it seems you could do lots better.

Boy is it hot here now. Suppose summer is here to stay for awhile now. Probably start having those, Typhoons in about anouther month. Those things sure are misery.

Here on my bunk writing you now. Wished I was back there. If it was this hot – evend go swimming! Then go to big dance that night. Probably get hot & sweattie from dancing – so then we’d have to go back to the beach, build a fire, & go swimming again. Sound logical to you?

Was you ever down at, Mathis Lake? Boy what a place. We’ll have to go down there when I get back. Have to go lots of place & do lots of things! Have a lot of lost time to make up for – right!! You better give only one answer honey. Yes! In fact, it would be a good ideal if that’s all you ever say when I get home – to question that is. Ha.

About five more months now honey & we shouldn’t have to write any more. To each outhur I mean. Because I should be home around the last of Oct. or first of Nov. Thank we can last much longer? Sure hope so.!

Looks as though it will start raining any minute now. And it probably will – it’s 4:00 & time for the afternoon shower. One thing I like about this rain, it’s cool while it’s raining. But is she hot when the sun comes out.

If I was in the States now tonight would be a big night. (Sat.) But as I’m over here. Guess I’ll just have to go to bed & dream of it.

Sure have some wounderful dreams of girls sometimes over here! Don’t suppose you’d know any thing about the life of a G.I. over here though. I’ll tell you about it when I see you again.

Better close for now as I’m running out of space. So been sweet, honey & write soon – if not sooner!

I love you

Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

May 30, 1949

Okinawa

Dearest Ann,

Hope this finds every little thing okay, honey. Things are still about the same over here. Dead as hell!

What a day this has been. As you know it's memorial day. We had a parade this morning & a speech. It was raining all during the speech. All the G.I.'s got sockin wet. We didn't really mind it though. Was a pretty good speech.

It's still raining & boy do I get lonesome on a ranie day or night.

You've heard people speech of wanting something so bad they could taste it. Well – honey that's just about how much I wan't to be with you. Mabie I can't taste it – but I can sure imagine it.

What are you doing about now? Going to summer school.

Say babe – It's about time you sent me some pictures of you in a bathing suit. And make them good! Some good, penups. Now don't tell me you can't. Just hurry up & have some made & send to me. No excuse will be excepted. You once said something about supposed to be moral builders – That would sure help. After all – what's a few (parden the expression) sexie pictures between friends. Were not kids any more.

I've though of getting married quite a bit. Don't know wither I've found the right girl or not yet though – & your sure not helping me make up my mind!

And for heaven sake honey, don't join any part of the service. That would be three years wasted, well not wasted exacually, but as far as you & I are concerned it would be wasted.

Received a letter from my cousin the outhur day, Colleen, remember her?

Speaking of kids honey – if we did happen to get married – And were too young to settle down with a family, right away. We would have to hold the kids away for a year or so. Don't you think so. We couldn't go out & have fun if you were a little – over weight. Now that dosen't mean we wouldn't have sexual fun – not by a long shot. Thats just the way I feel about it now darling – how about you? If you don't

Agree – you might could change my mind. So let me know what you think. Hope you don't thank I'm too forward in writting you like this – & don't.

Honey I have to close for now. So be sweet and write soon.

All My Love,
Gene

P.S. – Here's a little Corn honey –

“What they say the next morning”

Italian Girl – “Now you will hate me!”

Spanish “ - “For this I will love you always.”

Russian “ - “My body belongs to you; My soul will always be free.”

German “ - “After we rest awhile, we go beer garden, Yah?”

Swedish “ - “I thank I go home now.”

French “ - “For this I get new dress, Oui?”

Blond “ - “Boy, ah sho hopedis changes yo luck.”

Chinese “ - “Now you know it is not true!”

English “ - “It was rauther pleasant, really. We must try it again sometimes.”

American “ - “Jesus Christ! I must have been drunk.” What did you say your name was?

KNOW WHAT THE “CHINESE,” GIRL MEANT?

CHLOYE ANN WEST

June 1, 1949

Dearest Gene,

Well, baby, here I am again. I sorta turn up like a bad penny don't I?

School is out! I got home Friday night and have done little more than sleep and eat. Never thought a person could be so hungry for home-cooked food. Guess you are pretty eager for some, also. Wish I could fix it for you. When you get home you'll have to come over here so that I can do that little thing. How about that?

Gosh, did I ever get a shock when I received your pictures. I still remembered you the way you looked three years ago. I guess people do change though, don't they? I'm about half scared for you to see any pictures of me. You'll probably think you've been rooked by writing to me. Hope not.

I've been swimming over four hours a day for about two weeks and have acquired quite a tan. I've tried to get one like this for years.

I think I'm going to Florida for a while this summer. I'm also going to Mexico with the family. Sometime in-between I'm going to try to work. That should keep me pretty busy until school starts.

When, exactly, do you think you are going to get to come home? I can hardly wait. We've really got a lot to do in a short time if you are going on to Florida. How long did you sign up for anyway? A lifetime? Seems that way.

I saw Coleen night before last at the miniature golf course. She surely is cute. I guess you know that & us Horner really turned out to be quite the football star. Do you remember my little brother? Well he's not so little anymore. He's 6ft. 2in. and plays basketball like a professional. I think you just saw him once. The night I had my dates so fouled up. Why didn't you just kill me then? Maybe we'd all be better off.

I'm going back to Kingsville Monday to take my finals. I missed them before because I had an ear infection. It's O.K. now. Surely did give me one heck of a time for a while.

There's not really too much to write about except that I miss you and wish you were here. I hope you still feel the same way when you get back here as you do now. I'm scared it's just that you haven't seen a girl in so long that you just think you love me. Better not be that.

Well, sweetheart, I'm going to bed early and get some more sleep that I don't need. Be sweet, write soon.

Goodnight Darling — I Love You,

Ann

June 2, 1949

(slip huh?)

Dearest Ann,

Well here I go again – don't know why though, still no letters from you. Darling! You had better start dropping me a few lines – damn it! This old one sided romance in communication isn't worth a damn. Especially when I'm the one doing all the writing!

If your tired of reading this old stuff & it's taking too much of your time – let me know. I'll see what I can do to stop writing.

But believe me honey I wouldn't want any thing to happen now that I'm a, short timer, over here Four months at the most & I'll be

I'll be leaving this place. Boy O boy what a day that will be.

Honey you said you could tell a change in my letters, what way? Do I sound like I'm, craking up, or what? Ha.

You'll have to excuse this scriblin honey – just don't seem able to do any better!

Its been raining for the last two days & nights constantly. What a mess! When were together & the weather is dreary & raining – well it sure makes me fell senimental!

Some pictures of you sure would help make my mind up honey. Not that it isn't already made up – I'd just like to have some pictures of you honey. And as for pictures of myself honey, it's hard to get pictures made or developed over here. I know you could have some made easy though. If I don't get

some pictures, real real soon, then I'll know you don't even care enough about me to have your picture made & send. Now you wouldn't want me to thank that –Or would you?

Got me a burn hair cut today. You should see me. It's about 1/3 of an in. long.

Guess I'll go set out in the rain and see a movie tonight. Supposed to be a good one tonight. Wished you was here & we could get, "drenched," together! Ha. We could do lots of things together. Mabie someday we'll be able to anyway – think so?

We had a sqdn. beach party together yesterday – Just the boys from our Sqdn. Went down to the beach & drank beer. Had some sand witches. I mostly use the beer though! Don't get the wrong idea though honey – I'm a long way from being a drunkard.

Looks as though I have to close for baby, so be sweet & write soon.

I LOVE YOU

Love & Kisses

Gene

CHLOYE ANN WEST

June 3, 1949

Dearest Gene,

Received your sweet letter this morning. It had been forwarded from Kingsville. Look – once and for all – I don't like to write letters, but I had rather write you than anyone I know so I make a feeble effort. See, now that explains why I don't write more often. Since school is out I will probably have a lot more time. I'll try to do better anyway. After all, honey, I love you. Do remember that.

Concerning the boys, there never was any one in particular so how could I possibly break up with one? Relieved, Baby? Now, lets not have anymore trouble over something like that.

I think you just must be tired of Okinawa¹ and are taking it out on me. Why don't just wait five months and I'll give you all the lovin' it takes to make up for every day you spent in the army. To all certain extent, that is. ha—

Say, guy, if you don't quit writing me about all the girls you are dreaming of and how you miss them, I'm going to luain you. After all I'm jealous and you are only supposed to miss me. According to me anyway.

No, I have never been to Mathis Lake. I had several chances, but I was doing something else. I'm glad now, I'd much rather go with you. It sounds perfectly dreamy.

Gosh, I'm scared to say I'm lonesome after your last letter, but I am. I miss you so much. Five months isn't really so long – guess well manage it. Not too much choice is there?

A bunch of us went to town today and those traveling photographers were here. For a laugh we had some pictures taken. I am sending you mine. Sorta give you a reason for my not having sent more. Ain't I something? ha—

My step-sister is supposed to come in from Corpus sometime today. She lived there with there with her mother during school term and spends the summer with us. She is really a mess. Fourteen, and at the age that she wants to look and dress like me. Pretty tiring. Heaven only knows why she wants, too. Oh well, she'll learn.

If you think you are doing nothing at nights don't feel badly. I'm here where you think there's a lot to do, but nothing interesting enough to go to town for. I went out one night this week. My mother says I'll be sorry later if I'm not nicer to these boys around here but I'm planning on you taking care of that. To heck with the rest of them!

Darling, I must close. Be sweet. Write soon but don't fuss at me, please.

Love You Always,

Ann

NOTES

1. *Okinawa* Gene served as a radar operator on Okinawa, which the United States occupied and administered after the 1945 battle. He calls it “the rock” throughout.

June 8, 1949

Dearest Ann,

Received your most welcome letter this morning honey. (About time too!) No kidding I was about to give up hope. Guess you noticed & hadn't written lately. Because I don't like onesided correspondent. It seems the only time you get around to writing is when you are washed up with the boys around there. Better not be that way honey.

Say baby – you sure have a date to do a little cooking when I get home! If we can find time for such as that! Dought if I'll have time to eat when I get there. Ha. Although I am pretty eager for some home cooking – eager for a few outhur things also!

It doesn't seem like three years since we've seen each outhur. Guess we have lots of, long lost time, to make up for.

You might be right about me just thanking I like you. Suppose you'd better hurry up & send me some pictures of yourself. Help me make up my mind! –

All kidding aside honey – I don't believe I just thank I love you. True I have been away from an, American Girl. Quite awhile. Also true I still know what your like. Anyway, it wont take long to find out when I get home, wither we were ment for each outhur or not. Right? So don't worry about it darling.

Thurs. 11:00 AM.

Here I am again honey – didn't to finish this last night.

Will try and get it off in the noon mail.

Wished I could get another letter from you today honey. I have to read your old letters so much (because I don't get them very often) I just about memorized them.

You know baby – I hate to keep mitchen pictures in all my letters, But gosh honey – I want some damn pictures of you. Get some made while your in your bathing suit. Some good ones ya know!

Gosh honey – I wished I was home with you. This place is about to get me down.

A married man has it made over here though. Mabie if I ever to come overseas again – I'll be hitched. Or either have me a car. There's a few secretaries over here – need a car to get a date with one though.

I might go to Germany when I get back to the States. That is if I don't like the way things are going around home. Duty is pretty good in Germany I hear.

Well honey, if I am going to get this in the noon mail – I'd better be closing – So take care of yourself & write Soon! You should have lots of time to write now.

(And more too)

All My Love
Bye Darling
Gene

P.S.

Remember what I said about some pictures of you!

June 13, 1949

The Rock

Dearest Chloye,

Received your most welcome letter this morning. And from the way you sounded – I must have said somethings I shouldn't have. I don't remember fussing at you. But if I did you probably diserved it!

I'm sorry darling – I'll try not to do it anymore.

I guess I'm just jealous honey – you can't blame me though, can you? Your so cute, sweet, & all and me away over here.

Boy I must of really messed up in that letter. You say I told you about me dreaming of other girls. (That must have sliped!) No honey, you probably just read it wrong.

I'll admite – I did think of outhur girls when I first came over, but no more. Believe me honey, your the only one for me now.

Your picture is right in front of me now. O – if it were only you. I wouldn't be here writing now. Or should I say, "Trying to write?"

You don't know how glad I was to get your pictures honey. I thank you are lovely. No need for me evend trying to express my feeling for you sweetheart –

These pictures were taken down at the swimming hole. Not to good – but their pictures, a little, "Okinawin sulry," in the back ground.

That's a deep hole. Kinda like the old swimming hole back home. Where the "X" is on one picture, we build a diving board. About 10 ft. off the water.

You'll have to excuse the – bathing suits, honey. The boy beside me is a kid in this outfit. You can just stick this pictures away some place! Ha.

No need for you to be scared to tell me your lonesome honey. In fact, I want you to tell me all about yourself, like that. I sure am lonesome for you also darling. Isen't much we can do about it at the present though exceipt write.

Sorry I'm knocking you out of dates – Am glad you don't run around too much though.

You better have lots of lovin on hand when I get home honey.

No sweat on those boys around there. Theres no need of any one else being around exceipt, "you &I"! No kidding honey – I really love you. Just don't forget that in the next five months.

It's raining again – never seen so much rain before. I'll probably have, webb toes (like a duck) before I leave here. The sun hasen't shined in a week & a half. Just rain.

Have to close for now darling – be sweet & write real soon.

Love You Always,
Gene

June 23, 1949

Dearest Ann,

Hi honey – here I am again, believe it or not.

And how does this find every little thing with you by now? As cute, sweet, lovely, & mean as ever I suppose. Any way I hope as beautiful & sweet. Wished I was talking to you right now honey, instead of away over here just writing & thinking how nice it would be if I was there.

Boy has things been happen around here. Bad things! Can't tell you about all of them. This Rock must have the "jinks" Because in the last two weeks, quite a few distructive things have occurred. One boy was killed last night & anouther a brane concussion, both arms broken. He still isen't expected to live.

But enough about that stuff. In three or four mouths I'll be home now.

I should be home sometime in, Nov. I'll be right on down to, Kingsville to see you too honey. Do you thank you could manage to skip classes the first day I'm there. You better always be caught up in your subjects because – well you could afford to skip a day or so. Couldn't you?

You know darling – every time I start writing you, I get home sick & well I just wish I was there!

Fri, 24 – Hi honey, didn't get this off last night hope I get it off in the morning.

Well another days work is finished. Sure is a lots of work to be done now too. The typhoon we had three days ago kinda blew things apart.

Hasen't rained yet today – somethings going to happen! Ha.

Say – I bought me a camera this afternoon. So reckon I'll be able to send you some soon. By the way darling I'm still waiting on those pictures of yours. You are going to send me some – aren't you? You better if want me to come see you when I get home.

A kid ran a grader off a 50 foot bluff today. Just brused him up a little. He wasn't as unlucky as the rest of the guys, who went down hills here in the last week & a half. Only one boy has been killed so far though. Quite a bit goes on over here that you never hear about over the radio or read in the newspaper.

Did you the movie "Jungle Patrol"? Boy was that a misleader. Nothing like that ever happen in the Air Force. I've never heard of it at least & I've never see any thing like it, that's for sure. Those enlisted men, dancing with this damn & the Officers sitting back & watching it! Boy what a joke.

What has my little woman been doing all this time since your home? I know how dead that town is. But there other places to go. And also, if the right people are in that town – it probably wouldn't be so dead – Lets say a boy that's on Okinawa¹, now & a girl that's there!

Have to close again now honey – so be sweet & remember, "I'm always looking forward to hearing from you darling."

All My Love,
Gene

NOTES

1. *Okinawa* Gene served as a radar operator on Okinawa, which the United States occupied and administered after the 1945 battle. He calls it “the rock” throughout.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

June 27, 1949

Dearest Gene,

Well, Sweet, it takes time, but I did get around to it. I've been working all day every day and I'm always dead when I get home.

I am having a picture made for you. I can't let you go through life thinking I look like the one you have. You may not care to look me up when you get back here. How about that?

I talked to Colleen the other day. Now I know why you were so disgusted with me. She told me that you knew I was going steady. The reason I didn't tell you myself was because it's going steady with a different person every other week with me. That's really the best way until you decide to get married. Don't you agree? Besides if you really care anything about me you had rather I go with lots of boys instead of one or two.

My roommate & I went to a Bar-bi-Q and dance at the Beeville Country Club Monday. It was really a nice party. I was so tired I could hardly enjoy it. When I get a hundred dollars saved, I am going to quit. I just want some money that I can call my own and that I don't have to account for.

Say, baby, how old are you? Colleen and I got into a discussion about it the other day. She also showed me the pictures you had sent her. How about that? I think she even has more than I do. ha.

When you get back here I will be in school. Guess that means I'll fail everything. I know I won't study.

What in the world do you mean by saying you don't want any kids for about two years. If I may anytime soon I'm going to have them quick too. I don't want to be so old that I won't enjoy them. Besides I want about 5 and that takes time.

Well guess I'll stop for now. Like I said! I am dead.

Love You!

Bye!

Ann

P.S. Your last letter was to a gal named Chloye. Don't believe I know her. No joke, call me Ann, please?

I do know what the Chinese gal meant. Only in the other one I read she said, "I hope I have given you a new start on life! very funny no?"

July 5, 1949

No

Dearest Ann,

Well, baby, received your sweet letter this afternoon.

Also glad to hear your having me a picture made. If your cutter than the outhter picture you send me – boy, I'll sure look you up when I get back! Ha. All joking aside honey – the first place I go, will probably be to see you.

You know, it's kinda funnie how people meet each outhter, mabie make a date – Then not see each outhter for a few years & then start writting & anchous to see each outhter again.

How come we never went together any more than we did. I went over some and you wasen't home. Sure made me angry too. Drive all that way just to see you & your not be there. What a mean girl!

This weather over here! Will I be glad to get back to the States, and the things that go with them! Especially you darling.

Bought myself a movie camera the other day. Try to get a few good rolls of this Island & its people. You'll have to come over and see them. Mabie you can spend some week-ends with me or mabie I should say my, Mom & I.

We are going to have to do things fast when I get home. Don't know just how many days I'll take. Got 30 coming, don't intend to take them all though.

What are you majoring in, in college honey? What are your plans – if I may ask. That is if really have any. Now don't kid me!

So you and Colleen got together. And what was the gossip? You didn't believe me when I first told you she was my cousin did you? You see baby – I don't lie – often!

Say honey when in August did you say your birthday was? It is in August? I suppose, Colleen already told you though. Might not of been right.

Well honey it's getting late & I'm about ready for the hunk. Had a hard day. (I'm dead)

Love Ya,
Gene

P.S.

Sorry about the little saying I sent you, if you didn't like it, & your letter sounded as though you didn't!

About Chloye – That was just a joke too. I think it's cute, Chloye, that is.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 8, 1949

Hello My Darling,

How are you? I received your letter today and I have been so worried about you. I don't like the sound of what's going on over there. I'll be glad when you get back home safe and sound.

Mrs. Glenn was in the store about thirty minutes ago and we were discussing you. She said she saw your mother the other day and she said she had not heard from you in almost 2 mos. I guess by now she has. Anyway Colleen called her & read your letter to her. She is probably relieved by now.

We, my family, went to Houston over the week-end of the 4th I went to "Hot Wells" 4th with sixty-five kids. We had a swell time. Here is a picture of a cousin of mine and me. Don't we make a "fetching" couple? Wish (over)

it could had been you. Gosh, I wish I had you here now to put your arms around me. That would be heaven.

I just stopped and took out all the letters you have ever written me. I'm crying like a baby now. I miss you so much and love you so. Darling, what am I going to do? Write me everyday if possible and I'll do the same. We've just got to make these four months fly.

I enjoy your pictures so much and I'm glad you bought a camera. That should mean more pictures. My cousin took some of me on the 4th in a bathing suit but they didn't get past his friends. Baby, I'll get more.

I'm so tired now. I think if I ever get married I'll never do anything but keep house & cook. I don't like to work out. It

does mean money, though. If I save it maybe I can marry you. You reckon? By the way have you been doing any planning for the future? I hope so cause if we decide to get married I'd surely like to eat. Funny that you know.

My mother's talking to me & I don't have any idea what I was planning to write you. I've got a one track mind.

Darling, I'll write again tomorrow. Take care of yourself, after all I love you.

Always,

Ann

P.S. Have you heard the new song "Darling, hurry-hurry back to me"? It express my feelings exactly.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 9, 1949

Dearest Gene,

I just simply can't get you off my mind so thought I'd write again.

I received a wire from my roommate saying she would be down here at noon tomorrow. I am going home with her Tuesday. Weslaco – then Mexico. I want to get some jewelry and it's cheaper there. That's my weak spot. I love rings, earrings, and all that stuff. Someday I hope to have a diamond! Hot dog.

I wanted to write you again so I could mail it in town tonight.

What's been going on in your part of the world? I'm buying new clothes so I'll look real pretty when you get here. Failing pitifully.

Guess what! I got proposed to the other night. I let the poor guy struggle through it then informed him there was someone else. He has asked practically every boy in Woodsboro¹ & Refugio if they ever asked me to marry them. Darling, I hope I do love you – I am passing up some pretty good chances. But I really don't love them so it would never work. I must love you – I've never written to anyone so long & missed them so much. Please, please take good care of yourself until you get home – I'm so afraid that something will happen to you. I guess that's the way every one in love feels.

You mentioned something about Woodsboro's being dull. Thirty-one University of Houston football players are working

in Refugio. I went to school with some of them when I lived in Houston. No girl around here ever lacks a date if she really wants one. Once I would have gotten a buzz out of that now all I do is wish for you to come home.

Darling, I must close now & get dressed.

I Love You,

Ann

P.S. In case you don't believe me I'll say it again. "I love you"

A. W.

when you see me.

I'll be 18 in August. Few year older.

This picture is from the year I first met you. Thought you might get a "charge" out of it. My junior year I think I've improved. Hope you do

NOTES

1. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.

July 9, 1949

Dearest Ann,

Hope this finds every little thing okay honey. As for me, things are still dead as ever – If not deader!

Here it is 10:30 darling & I should be in bed. Couldn't sleep if I was though. Do you ever have times like that. Where you'd give anything to be with some one?

Tonight really is a lovely night here. Full moon, stars – All I need is you darling. Suppose we can arrange it to where I can have you some day? I've been thanking of it a little honey. How about you. Ever give us a thought? Are do you have time for stuff like that. You seem to be pretty bussy. Always to bussy to write any way. Wounder if you'll be too bussy for us to run around when I get home. And I should be there by the middle of Nov.

I'm trying to change jobs. Just about to land an, intelligence job. Boy I'll have it made if I can.

Shoot some, skeet this morning. Lots of fun. Did you ever do that? Don't suppose you did. Dought if you ever shot a shotgun. you know darling. Duck season will be open when I get home. We'll have to go some time. Lots of fun. Although, I suppose any thing would be lots of fun with you.

Taken a few pictures the outhur day. Send you some when I get one back. I can't send you a large one honey. No place over here to have one made. I could get one – sure would be lots of trouble though, also short on time.

I'm be glad when they finially come to an agreement on the service pay bill. Sure could use it. Ha.

Love one end out of my hut this afternoon. Lots cooler now. Had to put up screen, because of the mosquitoes. Their big as horses. A few carry mabie.

Change to the 20th Air Force a few weeks ago. Was in the 13th. Been in four different Air Forces. 1st, 5th, 13th, & now the 20th. Wounder which one I'll be in back in the states.

I've been thanking a little lately of staying in the States a few months, and then go to, Germany. Probably wont be any fun in the States. Probably get disgusted, at the girls, Duty should be pretty good in Germany! Ya know! A guy can have fun here once in a great while. He usually has to slip off limits then though.

How was today been a scorcher! The whole week has been hot. The next two months are going to be a little warm also –

Monday Morning July 11 Here I am again darling – and how is my little honey this morning?

As usual – today is really hot! Ha.

Seen a pretty good movie last night, “Northwestern Stampede.”

Going on, sick call this morning. Something wrong with my ear. Kinda soar! Hope it isen't fungus, but it probably is. That's bad over here. The climate & water and all.

Went for a little dip (swim) yesterday after noon. (Sure was a cute phlip gal there!) Wished it could have been you – Won't it be nice when

I get home & we can quit wishing! Or mabie I should have said. “So I can quit wishing.” Ha.

Well darling, have to go now – Take care of your beautiful
little self and remember – I'm waiting to hear from you.

All My Love,
Bye Now
Gene

P.S.

Don't work too hard! Just for that hundred dollar.

July 16, 1949

Dearest Ann,

Well baby, here I am again. Hope this little piece of paper finds every little thing okay with you. Suppose your still as cute, sweet, lovable & mean as ever. As for me – well, I’m still me!

Wished I was there with you now preshous – instead of over in this – place. How is the old night life any way? Guess I’ll be finding out in about three & ½ more mouths.

Kingsville is going to be my first stop baby – that is if your there!

Sending a cupple of snapshots honey. Don’t pay any attention to the girl. That’s my buddies. I just thought I’d have a picture made with it.

Now if I had one of you – that would be you instead of the outhur dame.

What would you say if I told you I was going to go up to Japan for 6 months after I leave here. That’s what I figured you’d say!

Tell me honey – how would you like it if I went to, O.C.S (Officers Candidate School) If I stay in the Army that’s what I’m going to do. When I complete this hitch I’ll be 20 & ½ & that how old you have to be in order to get in.

After I completed that, we could probably make a few plaines. If you figure a, Lt. could take care of you –

Say honey ever hear that joke about a card game & marriage the same? You’ve probably heard more there in, College (All you girls) than I’ll ever thank about hearing.

Read some of your old letters this afternoon. Kinda makes me lonesome for you honey.

Speaking of O.C.S. I guess if a guy makes his mind to do something, he can do it. The only trouble – I can't make up my mind.

You know if I went to O.C.S. By the time I got out you'd be out of college. Suppose that would be nice.

Darling – it's late & I'm getting sleepy. I went to the movie at eight. It's 10:30 now.

So be sweet honey and write soon.

Lots & lots of love,

Gene

P.S.

Haven't had a letter from you in quite a while sugar. So how about seeing what can be done about it!

July 18, 1949

Hello Darling,

How's my little sugar doing by now? I received a cupple of letters from you this afternoon, & boy was I happy when I seen them! You have to keep writing real often now sweet. Because I know you can.

I was slightly peined when I seen the pictures of you & your (so called)cousin, until I read your letter & you said it was your cousin. I know things like that are going on, but it kinda hurts to see it. If your sure his your cousin though – well, guess I'll keep the picture. I'm still waiting on all the outhur your going to send. "How Much Longer

Must I wait, Ann? You two do make quite a "fetching," couple alright. But I thank I could do better. Now don't get me wrong honey, I'm glad you sent them.

You wasn't a bad chick when I first meet you – was ya? I really like the little picture. Now all I need is a baby picture of you. Ha. No that isn't all I need either. I need lots more of you now.

You know darling – you've changed my whole life. I look at things different now, and I'll grant you – there for the better.

Just keep tell those – back there that, theres Some one else & I don't thank you'll be sorry for it. Some thing has been holding us together, In writting I mean. Imagine it's love.

So you've been talking to Mable, Wished there was some one over here I could discuss you with – better yet wished you were here.

Boy is it hot here! Been about to melt all day.

You wished that could have been me in that picture ea. Well I haven't been with any thing like he has his hands on in quite awhile, about a year Yep he was right in there.

Tell me – how would you like to get a picture of me lovin up some old dame?

Didn't have any trouble holding his hands down did you?

We'll – have to close for now & eat chow.

Watch your dates & write soon.

Just Yours,

Gene

P.S.

That new song hasn't gotten over here yet. Probably be here in a cupple of months. Anxious to hear it.

July 20, 1949

Dearest Gene,

I received your letter yesterday when I got back from the valley. It was really welcome as it has been over a week since I last heard from you.

You needn't be worried about anything Colleen or her mother have told me about you. It has all been good. We'll, as good as can be expected. Even my mother is impressed.

My roommate became engaged as of last Saturday night. Only goes to prove what I have been telling you. Everyone is getting married. Guess I'm just not the type. Too fickle maybe.

Well, I just got back. Guess what I did? I baked a cherry pie. It should be ready in about 10 minutes. Hope it's good.

I saw Eric today. It seems that I am forever seeing your relatives but nothing of you. I suggest that you change that.

I really had a wonderful time during my stay in the Valley. I visited my roommate and her parents. Wonderful people. I wish you could meet my roommate. Just think, I'll be back in school in about a month and a half. Seems impossible. Of course you'll be here in November. I'm going to quit work in about 2, or 3 weeks and start sewing. I've just bought a lot of clothes, but it seems like as the years go by the more clothes one needs.

My roommate is coming down over the weekend of the 30th of August for my birthday. Do you think you'll ever get to celebrate a birthday with me. On that day, I will be a woman. Hot dog! I'll probably never act any older. My friends would

probably wouldn't like me that way anyway. Would you like me any more?

In your letter you asked why we never went together more. It certainly wasn't my fault if you never wrote before you come over – now was it?

Why aren't you going to take all of your 30 days when you get home? I don't see what you gain by waiting. Until later to take them.

I am majoring in journalism & minoring in speech. Maybe someday I'll be a reporter. That is if no one will marry me. You know, I talk like I'm really anxious. I'm having gobs of fun being single & fancy free. Maybe you can change that. Anyway I got another proposal last week. Makes life interesting. Guess I'm just not in love with the ones who ask. What do you say?

Since you think Chloye is such a cute name I suggest that you name all your kids Chloye Ann. Sounds horrible.

Mother & I are home alone tonight. I was tired and didn't feel up to a date. No worthwhile boys, ha. My brother went to a hard ball game & my step-father is in Rockport. So – I baked a pie. Interesting huh?

Guess I'll take a bath and go to bed. Write me, baby, and be sweet.

Love As Always,
Chloye

P.S. Maybe next time I'll be in top form & will write more. ha! [*then, written inside the envelope flap:*] Tell all those lonesome guys "hi". Miss you, Gene.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 21, 1949

Dearest Gene,

Here I am again. Bless my little heart! I just got home from work and I wanted to send you one of these pictures so I got them today. They aren't so good but it does look like me. My mother says I look like a school teacher. Anyway it's my Vacation Bible School Class. The little boys circled were my favorites. Aren't they darling? Maybe someday I'll have a couple something like that. Hope so anyway.

Mother and I bought a dish-washer yesterday. We are really proud of it. No one around here minds doing the dishes now.

Believe it or not my pie was delicious. Wish you could have been here to enjoy some. Oh well, I'll make you some later. I'll do lots of nice things for you once I get to see you again. I imagine everyone will be glad to do anything you want to do. Just don't go too many girls. By the way, I meant to tell you a long time ago but I forgot. My brother talked to a girl who ran an elevator in a hotel in Austin who knew you. How about that? Don't say she a relative.

I want to write me more often. I try to write you every chance I get. You do have a little more spare time than I so, baby, write me pronto.

Are all the boys over there as lonesome as you seem to be? I hope they get a lot of letters from home. I try my best to keep you from being too lonely, but I'm afraid I'm only making it worse.

Well, give me credit for trying. Be sweet.

Love You,
Ann

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 22, 1949

Dearest Gene,

I'm blue so thought maybe I could snap out of it by writing to you. I sort a feel like you might possibly know what it's like.

Nothing much ever happen around here anymore. One has to look for all the excitement and that's no fun. There is a softball tournament going on in Refugio this week. It is to continue through next week. My brother practically lives there, but as of yet I have not been to a single game.

Mother really thinks that you have improved my letter writing. She says even if you are the only one who can get one out of me that's an improvement. How about that? Can't say too much about yours lately. It takes yours so long to get here. I got one day before yesterday dated July 6th wonder why they're so slow.

Our dishwasher was installed this afternoon. It's really a beauty. Someday I hope to own of my own. Some time-saver.

(over)

Well, in about another two weeks you will have three remaining months. Before you come home that is. Once you said that if we wrote more often it would make make the time pass more quickly. Has it helped any? Hope so!

I told you that my roommate is engaged, didn't I? Well, she is really full of plans. She's so happy. I am to be her maid of honor. Do you that I have never been to a wedding before? I always said I wanted mine to be the first, but I wouldn't miss Ann's for the world. Yep, she's an Ann, too. Ann Waller from

Weslaco. Do you have any girl friends there? If so perhaps I know them. Let me know. You had better not – I'm jealous as you so well know. Oh, do hurry & write and tell me who the girl in Austin is.

Listen, I want you to send me some more pictures. I enjoy them so much. In about 5 years from now you can look at them & laugh. That's what I always do with old pictures.

But then who wouldn't if they were in my shoes?

Tomorrow is Saturday and a busy day at the store. Cotton picker will be here and how I dread them. Well thats life. I imagine you hate a lot of things you have to put up with, too.

By the way, is there any improvement in the situation over there? Do let me know. I haven't as yet stopped worrying about you. I dreamed about you the other night. Do you know I can picture you right now just like I saw you the last date we had? I can remember every detail of the date. Even to the part of my crying at Sinton¹ Park. Wasn't that silly? I think that it was mostly because I was worried about getting home. Boy, but I was mad at you. Everything was (over)

O.K. though when we got home.

Have you heard from Colleen lately? Guess she still gives you the latest dirt! There just isn't any news, but maybe she will know some to tell you. She runs around in a younger crowd – maybe they do something exciting every now & then.

Before you come home from that Island you had better bring me something if it's nothing but a piece of rock. After all, I'll never get to go to any places like that.

Baby, it is now time for all good people to go to bed so I'll go take a shower. I'll go to bed after that & maybe if I'm lucky I'll dream of you.

I'll say my prayers for you maybe if you do that for me you'll
get to come home sooner I hope so, my darling. Write soon.

I Love You,

Ann

NOTES

1. *Sinton* Sinton, Texas — the county seat between Taft and Woodsboro, on the road Gene drove to court Chloye.

July 23, 1949

Dearest Ann,

How are you by now perechous?

“Gloria” hit here this morning – really given us all she has too. Blowing every thing away.

Wished I had some film for my eight M.M. Could get some good pictures. Trees kissing the ground. Quansits rolling up and blowing away. Boy, sure hope this one dosen’t take off!

Wont get any chow today – for the wind is much too high to get out in.

Will I be glad to leave this place, & get home to you, honey. Must be nice to be there where you can go out for a good time at night. In a few more mouths – we can – want we honey!

You know – some time I get so disgusted – just seems like I’ll never get to the States.

Have to stop now honey. The end of the hut is trying to blow in.

Sun. 24 – Hi babie, here I am & in one piece too. Boy was that some typhoon. Hope there’s no more until I go home.

Guess you’ll hear about it over the radio.

We’ll darling – I might as well close. Don’t feel like writing. Feel more like pulling all my hair out.

So be sweet honey & let me hear from you.

Love Ya,
Gene

P.S.

Don't worry about me honey. Wont do any good & besides, with both of us wanting to be with each outhter so much we'll make it –

I do love you honey, I'll prove it in a few mouths. You just sit tight write letters & I'll write & the time will fly (I hope)

I wounder how it would be to come home – you meet after I'm home for a few mouths, I mean

me at the door, or would you do that? Just as long as you were in the house it would be okay. I would play with our little son a little while before chow. Then after supper we could go for a ride, be nice & cool – just at twile light would be heavenly. Just being with you, alone will be heaven. You don't know how a guy feels over here honey. Its shouldn't happen to a dog.

Do you thank you need to keep going to college when I get home? I don't see why you should. Because if we get married you wouldn't work. Just learn how to cook & be a good wife! and Mother!

See ya honey –

I love You [and, separately, written inside the envelope flap in printed capitals: I LOVE YOU SO MUCH IT HURTS ME / I DO]

July 25, 1949

Hello Sweetness,

How is the world treating you? I have read all the newspaper & listened to the newscasts concerning the storm there on the island. I hope that by now everything is cleaned up & you are perfectly alright.

Well, I got two letters from you this morning – the first fine, the second – well I haven't gotten over it yet. I was so mad that it's just a good thing you were so far away. Colleen came in the store & I showed her your pictures. Then I told her that you didn't believe the boy in the picture was my cousin. Well, mister, she'll vouch for the fact that it is. She knows him personally. He graduated this year from Woodsboro¹ High School at the top of his class. If you'd like to meet him to satisfy yourself well that too can be arranged. I'm really hurt that you didn't believe me. What if I had gotten your pictures & not believed that the girl in the picture was your buddy's? That's possible – but I took your word for it. Maybe I just trust you & you don't trust me. Well, that's your privilege. (sp.) I'm pretty mad – guess I'll get over it soon.

Concerning the hands – just what kind of a girl do you think I am? You're certainly wrong if you think that. Well, now I've got it off my chest – I'll relax.

Do you still miss me? Gosh I really miss you.

I like the idea of O.C.S. It is really an opportunity I'd hate to see you turn down. As for Germany I think it's a lousy idea. I don't know why you think won't like the States & the girls –

that hurt my feelings. Baby, you shouldn't do that. I don't try to hurt yours.

I enjoyed your pictures so much. Next time leave the girl's picture out. You're handsome enough without it. When you get home we'll have to take a lot of pictures, especially since you don't intend to stay with me long.

I was going to send you a baby picture of me, but my mother all but had a fit. She wants them all. See how popular I am. With my mother!

Please – if you don't mind, don't doubt my word any more so that we won't go through this again. I love you too much for that.

Bye, bye sweet.

Love You,

Ann

P.S. Get on the hall with your letters – you're way behind. I love you –

NOTES

1. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 28, 1949

I hope I'm lucky & dream of you tonight –

Dearest Gene,

Well, I'm in a better mood than I was the last time you heard from me. I usually get over things like that after I've slept on it.

Ann, my roommate has decided to get married in September instead of December. She & her fiancé are coming down this week-end. Her fiancé's best friend is coming also. I won't say his my cousin cause he's not.

Say, the guy that lived next door to us & who delivered our mail asked me who the guy named Gene Catchings was. I told him & he asked me where you were from. After I told him Taft¹ it seems that you were related to him. The name Dub Homer. I guess I should have known, but you know me. I very seldom use my head.

The cotton-pickers are really arriving in huge bunches now. The store has been packed & I've been working like a fiend. I'm tired as usual.

I can hardly wait for school to start. You'll be home soon after that. Hot dog! I just hope that you don't make insulting remarks & doubt my word then. If you do it'll be "Katy bar the door." And that's no joke, son. Well, I've given my lecture for tonight. Aren't you glad. I know I must really scare you. ha.

There's not too much to write about – maybe there will be tomorrow. I'll close for now. Be sweet baby.

Love You Loads
Love Again,
Ann

P.S. Write me a nice long letter. Better still two or three.

Aren't you glad all your letters aren't written so lousy? I would be too. .

I don't know exactly when the pictures will be ready. They were made in Kingsville & they are going to send them to me. You'll get yours when they come. Don't get impatient because you will probably be so disappointed that you'll never want to return to the states. It sounds bad enough the way you talk now. Cpl. this is the end now.

Don't you think that this is decorative? No comment!

I had better have a letter from you this week. As yet, none.

Just exactly when are you coming home? Every time you write it's a half month later. You had better get here in November. Now you've got your orders. I think I forgot to tell you I still miss you. Forget Germany, I know some guys there now. They hate it, but on the other hand they don't go in for the "off limits" stuff! You were only kidding about that weren't you? You don't sound like the same guy I remember.

The End

You had better be because his the one I love.

NOTES

1. *Taft* Taft, San Patricio County, Texas — Gene's home town, roughly 30 miles south-east of Woodsboro.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

July 28, 1949

“Okinawa”

Dearest Ann,

I received your sweet little letter this afternoon. Must say I was glad to get it though. Evend though you still haven't sent any pictures. Whats the trouble – Aren't there any cameras & film in the States? I know it isn't a habit to go out taking pictures every day – but darn if it dosen't look like you could take a few.

Seems your getting lots of proposal – what are you doing with all those boys, that makes them want to marry you. Just as long as you play it cool and keep saying no – guess it's okay. If your saying that to make me jealous – well your getting your wish.

I don't mind though, & rather you'd write like you do than, always be lying.

Naturally what ever those people tell you about me is good. Ha. It would have to be.

You some times I wounder why we write each outhter. But then I thank I really love you.

So you suggest that I name all my kids, Chloye Ann – Couldn't do that honey – there would be too many Chloyes. Any way Chloye wouldn'd be a good name for a boy. And there had better be 3 or 4 boys any way. Guess a few girls would be okay. The first one had better be a boy though! Agreed?

I had lots of fun foot loose & fancy free when I was in the states also. Haven't had much in the last twelve mouths though.

Do you know that the 10th of next mouth will make 1 whole year since I've seen the States.

Got some pictures of a girl in a bathing suit today. Diden't have to good.

poses though. No sweat though I don't like her.

Honest honey – your the only one right now. Hope it remains that way when I get back.

These “lonesome” guys says to tell you hi. So – Hi. They sure would appreciate some good pictures too. (Me too Ha.)

Sitting here in the middle of the door in my shorts, sure is cool.

Have to sign off for now darling & take a shower & hit the sack.

Be glad when I can tell you good night personally instead of just wishing I was there.

Bye baby & let me hear from you!

Love Always,

Gene

July 30, 1949

Dearest Ann,

How are you honey, in the best of health I hope. As for me – well I’m still waiting to get home to you.

Received a cupple of letters from you this morning. Wished I could have gotten a dozen!

Glad to get the two though. Just keep up the good work darling.

So you like the two brats you have circled in that picture. Sure look mean to me.

Gee – darling, I wished I was with you right now. I’ve got that picture right here. (You lovely little creature)

Honey – how would you like to live on a ranch?

I’ve been doing lots of thanking lately. I could stay in the Air Force & do pretty good. But never could really plain any thing. You know how it would be. We’d want to do something some day & I’d have to work late at the base. Then to, I might be sent over seas leaving you would never work. So that eliminates the Service.

I’ve also eliminate a town job. Have to put up with too much & your not your own boss.

I thank out on a ranch would be ideal! Up around, Victoria. One of my brothers lives up there. I’m getting him to look around for me. I’m also having a dependesy, “Discharge” worked on. Wouldent that be nice – to be free (exceipt for you) in a few mouths.

We can talk about all that when I get home though. Just thought I'd let you know what I had in mind. Okay?

You mithined something about a girl in, Austin – Well Now honey, no need of you being jealous of me now. By the what did the girl look like. I did know a few girls from Austin – None of them ran an elevator at the time though. Tell me about her & what she told your brother & how come your brother talking to her & how did she get around to telling him she knew me?

Guess you're woundering why I'm up so late, well I just came in from the N.C.O. Club. They had a band & we went down and had a few shots & lesoned to the music.

Be nice to get to take you out to clubs & things again – wont it darling? Any thing I get to do with you will be heavenly.

Here it Sun. Morning sweet.

Dident finish this last night. Looks like today is going to be a fairly nice day,

The kind of a day I'd like to be out on a lake with Y O U.

You know what I would like to do when I first get back? Just get some thing that you could fix to eat, enough for about a week & go out on a river, lake or some place like that. Where we can just pittle around – fishing, swimming, going boat riding and things like that. Some fun huh?

But come to thank of it. Guess that's already knocked in the head, because it will be winter when I get home. Darn it.

I'll try to get my furlow from the 15th Dec. to 15th Jan. Be home when everyone is in high spirits. Ha.

I might get stationed in San Antonio. Over the week ends I could drop down & see you. That's when I first get there, before I take my leave. Draws that?

Can't get over that picture of you honey – Don't see why you don't send me more. You thank you want pictures of me, well just thank how much difference it is over here & how much more I want pictures of you.

Some of the darndest things have been going on over here the last week. Little stories you know – Different guys have. That's about all I've been doing the past week. After I get off duty that is – just lay around and read those stories. Some of them were pretty good.

Have you seen the movie, "Every Girl Should be Married." Well don't, might give you bad ideas!

Yes your letters are helping me honey – don't what could have given you the idea that they wouldn't? Just keep em rolling!

I'll be waiting to hear from you about the, Ranch honey. Let me know how you would like it.

My mom would be around quite a bit – to mabie help you out on cooking & different things like that once in a while probably.

Well sweetheart, have to sign off for now & go eat chow. So bye honey & my God be with you till we meet again.

Love Always,
Gene

P.S. I haven't heard any of those new songs baby. *[then, written inside the envelope flap:]* How long do you thank you can stay up when I first get home? / I LOVE YOU / YES I DO!

July 31, 1949

“Okinawa”

Hi Honey,

Here I am again, believe it not. I just wrote you a letter this morning. That goes to show you how much I love you and often I thank of ya. Thank I write often enough now. ha. How about that, you telling me, “I don’t write often enough, “Baby I write every chance I get. Your the one thats isn’t writting enough! Enough to please me that is. The only way you could write enough to please me, would be to write every day. Could you do that? I thank I could, if you will.

Sure am lonesome today (as usual) honey. It’s raining now, I get especially lonesome for you when it’s rainy weather. The radio playing that old dragie music dosen’t help any either. But for some reason I want to listen to it.

Say honey, here’s a picture of me. I was sound asleep that day (one Sunday.) One of my buddies snaped it. I dont see why I’m sending it to you – Mabie you’ll get a charge out of it. Ha. How about that!

Wounder what it will be like, when we first see each outhur. If your in College at the time I’ll waite & come down to Kingsville & be at the college just – well, you let me know what time to come out. I’ll call ya & you can meet me at that drugstore. The one on the corner you know. But I guess thats planning a little to far ahead isn’t it. I sure like to thank of that day though! Sure am wanten some lovin.

You'd better get plenty sleep before I get there. I've a feeling your not going to get any, Sleep, for a few hours after I first see you.

Me talking about where we'd meet – Ha.

I can see that, now. Me calling you. Then you get sick or some thing all a sudden & have to skip the rest of your classes.

What would you do if I didn't evend take time to call you. Just went right on out, checked up to find out what room you were in & have them call for you. I wouldn't hardly want to do that though. Unless we could meet in a pretty private place. And I imagine a spot like that is a little hard to find around there. Mabie I will get there on a week-end & you'll be home.

I wished there was something to do over here. (Besides work) If you were just here every thing would be okay – Or better yet – Me there with you!

Dreamed of you night before last honey – we did the usual things – and a little more. Then I woke up, boy was I tend off. Wished I could have slept for ever, if

I could have kept dreaming about you & I. Sure hope it comes true.

Do you know you've changed my whole life honey? I didn't used to thank the way I do now. Before I used to plan on where all I would go & how many girls, I'd go with & – But I guess I've already found the right one. In fact I'm sure I have.

You asked about the outhur boys over here & hoped they were getting mail, Most of em get it pretty regularly. When mail comes in & some guys don't get any. Well I know just how they feel – Sure feel for them to. You've been doing fine lately though darling. I haven't felt the least bit slighted. You only

started writting the last mouth though. So if you write every day, then you know you'd be doing your part.

Tell me honey – what do you do all day execept work in the store & think of me? Or do you think of me? I guess I must really have it bad. Because all I can do is think of you, How much lost time I've got to make up for – That is going to be fun though & done with pleasure!

Well sure it's getting about chow time. just want to tell you before closing that, I love you. And if you don't believe me, just ask me. Or either wait and see!

Sure would be nice if we were on our ranch this afternoon, wouldn't it honey? It seems like all I want to do on a rainie day is just lay around & be romantic! How about that.

Well as I said before sweetheart, so long & take care of your pretty little self. Remember that, I love you & let me hear from you.

Love & Kisses

Gene

P.S. A last word from me for now & $\frac{2 \text{ sweet} + 2 \text{ be}}{4 \text{ gotten}}$ } I know a little about arith. and that's how I've figured you out.

You said in two more weeks, I'd only have 3 mouths to go. How do you know when I be home?

Don't forget to tell me about the dame in Austin – Might be an old flame. Most likely a cusien or something though.

Just Me,

"LOVE YA DARLING"

"Good Night Sweetheart"

CHLOYE ANN WEST

August 1, 1949

Thinking of you

Dearest Gene,

I'm hot & can't seem to get my mind on doing anything so I thought I would write. It is 108° here, now, & if this keeps up I'll just go crazy. Yesterday was absolutely sultry. I guess it's pretty hot on the "rock" too.

I'm really glad that I have heard from you since the typhoon. (Can't spell worth a darn).

Ann & the other came down this week-end. We went to Corpus Sunday afternoon & saw some boat races, then went to a show, had dinner, & went home. It was so hot that I couldn't even think straight. Come to think of it. I never can.

My little step-sister is coming in from Houston today. She & a cousin. It seems like we always have so much company. I'll be glad when I have a home of my own. I'll just stay there alone & never have guests. Of course, my husband will be there with me. Ah ha —

I saw a good show yesterday. It was "Portrait of Jeannie." One of the few shows I've gone to lately. I can't seem to settle down that long. I'm restless — always wanting to be on the go. Maybe that's what school did to me. I guess I'd better start settling down as no one could keep up with me otherwise.

It seems that every time I get set to tell you something someone sends me off to do something. Now, it is coffee for my mother. We make it on a hot plate in back of the store & she

drinks it like a fiend. Can't stand the stuff myself. I like iced tea & milk. Regular country girl huh?

What have you been doing lately? Couldn't be working since you are on a nice four month vacation. Wasn't that sweet of the Army? ha.

Have you heard from Colleen lately? I see her practically every day, but haven't talked to her in some time.

Damn it's hot. Hope something happens, but not rain. Can't ruin the cotton you know.

Well, bye for now. Do be sweet.

Love Always,

Ann

P.S. Give me two weeks on the picture. Maybe more, maybe less.

August 1, 1949

“Okinawa”

Hello Beautiful,

Hope every little thing is okay with you. As for this place – just as bad as ever.

Got a letter from you this morning. Was reall glad to hear from you. Exceipt for you fussing. I’m sorry I doughated your word honey. I won’t any more. If you promise to always tell me the truth.

Glad you like the pictures. I’ll send you some of all I make. Sure would like to have some of you.

Sure I still miss you gorgous. I’ll continue missing & loning for you until I’m back in your arms again.

You know sugar – I’m all mixed up. Don’t know wither I want to stay in the Air Force, farm or what. All I know for sure, is “I want to be with you.”

Darling what makes you thank I don’t intend to stay with you? I certainly do intend to, just as long as I possibly can. Be there for 30 days. Then after I go back to where ever I’m stationed, I’d like to take you with me.

The only way I’ll volenteer to go to, Germany is for you & I do not get alone. And I certianlly hope I don’t have to volenteer. You wouldn’t want me to have to go to, Germany now would you honey. I don’t know why I’m talking like that, because we are going to get along joto (good) with each other. Right!

What would you like for me to be sweet? Mabie you can give me a suggestion. Rough neck, farmer or mabie the sirvice!

Here it is 11:30 P.M. honey. I just got back from the club. Started this, this afternoon, guess I finish it now.

Honey, I've a confession to make. I was writting anouther girl for awhile (all along as I was writing you) But I quite writting

Her. You are honest & truly the only one. Now I've promised I wouldn't lie to you – How about you? And darling, when I make a promise – I keep it!

Had a pretty good bond at the club tonight. Wished I could have taken you.

I sliped a, "whiskey soda" out with me. Aren't supposed to do that. I knew I was going to finish this letter to my honey though & I figured I might as well have something to sip along on. Ha. Wished I could be sipping along on you, Pardon the expression, just thought it was cute. Ha.

Honey do you know that about three & a half or four months from now I'll be home with you instead of writting to you. Before closing honey I want to tell you, that I love you & always will.

"I love you"

Love Always,
Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

August 9, 1949

Love & Kisses

Dearest Ann,

How are by now honey? Just as lovely & mean as ever I suppose.

Guess you was beginning to thank I'd quit writting. Never that though sugar. It's just that I've been so bussy lately. Had to put out a lots of clasified reports. Just about ran me nuts, every thing was so messed up.

Boy will I be glad when I get home – away from all this stuff. To where all I'd have to worry about is you – Ha. How about that?

Its been raining for a soilid week, and is things muddy & slipery. Sure get lonesome for you when it's rainie weather darling. I go to bed & lesten to the rain fall slowly on the on ten. Some day I hope we can be hearing it together. Be doing lots of things together!

The news sure dosen't sound a bit good, does it? We got a letter this morning [*struck out*] unitendefied planes.

8:30 P.M. Hi honey, didn't get to finish this, this morning.

Received a letter from you this afternoon. It seems as though it's a little warm there also.

Honey you said every time you started to tell me some thing, some one interupted & then you would forget what you were going to tell me. Why don't you tell people to leave you alone when you start writting me. Because I sure would love me to hear what you intend to let me know.

What gave you the idea I was on a four month vacation? Ha I'll tell you, it's a long way from a vacation. Don't have four month left over here anyway – I surely hope!

Just as long as the, Reds stay where they belong – it won't be too bad though. Bad enough like it is.

Did you have fun with Ann, & her friends?

Bought some thing for you the other day darling. As soon as I get a chance, I'll mail it. Have to go through a lot of red tape to mail a package

Might just wait and bring it home as I come. Don't know why I told you about it. Because I doubt if I can mail it anyway.

Speaking of just wanting to stay by yourself in a house of your own. Bet your boots if I'm the husband you want stay there alone!

Darling, better close for now. Want to write my Mom to night also. Be sweet (if possible) honey & remember "I love a gal from, Woodsboro¹ who answer to the name of, Ann" – "Good Night Sweetheart"

All My Love,
Gene

NOTES

1. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloey's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

August 12, 1949

Dearest Gene,

This will probably be the fastest written letter ever as I have to take a bath, dress, & be in town in about 40 minutes. It should interesting.

I received three letters from the other day, but this is absolutely the first chance I have had to answer, I've been trying to work, clean house, & sew. It's a pretty good job if I just don't crack up in the process.

Well, I am sending you the picture you asked for. Hope now that you will be happy.

My cousin has been visiting us for about 2 weeks. She is leaving tomorrow however. I've been trying to entertain her – getting dates, etc. Not the easiest thing these days. All the boys are sorta tied up.

I'm sorry baby, but I have already seen "Every Girl Should Be Married." I saw it last year at school. But – it didn't give me an idea one.

The ranch idea sounds swell. Either that or O.T.S. (Hopes that's correct.) Anyway they are both super!

My mother just came in so guess I had better jump into the bath-tub now.

Will write you again soon – probably tonight. Be sweet.

Love As Always,

Love –

Ann

P.S. You write me pronto

August 15, 1949

"I Love You"

Dearest Ann,

Hi, darling how is every little thing with you by now? Fine I hope.

Anouther, Typhoon just missed us Sat. night & Sun. Sure am glad it missed.

Haven't gotten mail if quiet some time now. Should get some tomorrow though. Those typhoons always foul up the planes & ships.

This letter sure is starting starting off messie, isn't it sweet. Just bare with me though – ha.

I've sure been thanking of you & home lately darling.

Wont it be nice when I can quite thanking of ya & just go see you. Some times I thank that day will never come honey. Seems as though I've been on this rock for – well years & years.

Can't quite emagen how sweet and nice its going to be once I get home. I'll probably have to pench myself every once in a while to see if its really me! Ha. I'll just let you pench me. Or better yet – just all time be kissing me.

You know honey – theres going to be about 45 days that you'll have to put up with me. Thank you

Can put up with my pestering you – ha Looks like my hopes for Sgt. was just knocked in the head honey. A new sop just came out. stating – A person had to have eight months in grade as a cpl. before being eligible for Sgt. And I've only been Cpl. 6 months. I was going in for it this month until that came up.

Now they want me to extend so I can get it. Not me though. I've got too much waiting for me at home. Be glad when I receive those pictures of you so I can em what

I've got waiting! Every one will probably want to come home with me then. Some of these poor guys over here, just don't know what pretty little old gals we raise down there in, "Texas"! And how sweet they are.

Well sugar its getting late & I'd better get some shut eye. So until I can kiss you good night (5 or 6 times) darling, I guess I just have to keep writting it.

Good Night Sweetheart & write me soon. Just in case you dought me – I love you.

(except a little for my "momie.")

All My Love,
Gene

CHLOYE ANN WEST

August 18, 1949

I miss you so much

Dearest Gene,

Here I am ta work again – but in about a week or two I'll be free again. I am going back to school Sept. 16th. Hot dog! What a life we intellectuals do lead. ha.

You asked how I knew when you were coming home. If you remember you have been telling me for about 3 months that it would be the last of October or the first November. Now do you know where I get those ideas? I will admit that you change it everytime you write.

By the way it has been quite awhile since I have heard from you. Found a new gal? That would be pretty rough on yours truly cause she loves you.

In reply to your eager questions concerning the girl in Austin, I told you all I know except that she is blond & thought my brother was pretty cute. He was up there for the state basketball meet & had on his football jacket. Perhaps she knew Woodsboro¹ & Taft² were pretty close together & asked about you. Anyway she certainly came to the right party because he had met you & knew we were corresponding. Don't worry too much may be she was just a cousin. I hope,

My mom is going to Temple Sunday & is leaving me at home with the car. Some fun, eh?

I'll have to work so I'll probably be so dead I won't have the energy to go any place.

You know, you wont even know Woodsboro when you get back. It is quite the place now. It is getting more modern everytime you begin to notice. I was amazed when I used to come home from school at the changes. We have a new football stadium, home etc. building, stores & all kinds of new buildings in town. Yes sir, quite, a place. Of course, Taft isn't doing so bad either. I love Taft. They really have some nice people. Don't see why some of them don't have sense enough to stay home. dig.

Well, baby, there is a girl here who says she'll mail this & your picture so I'll close.

Write me soon!

Love You,
Love Ya
Ann

NOTES

1. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.
2. *Taft* Taft, San Patricio County, Texas — Gene's home town, roughly 30 miles south-east of Woodsboro.

August 23, 1949

“Okinawa”

Dearest Ann,

I hope this finds my little woman okay – As for me, still kicking. This place is still as dear as ever too.

Some mail came in this afternoon honey – I must say I’m a little –T-ed off at you. Diden’t get a letter one. Better hit the jackpot next time honey. Sure feel bad when mail comes in & I don’t hear from you. Remember that –

Say – how do you like this stationary (the on the top) I was down at the, Photo Lab, last night. Started experiminten, you might say, and look what I wound up with. How do you like it?

Darling – in about 1 & ½ months I’ll be home – How does that sound to you? Boy – that’s going to be the happiest day of my like, leaving this rock & going home to you.

Sure hot here now, in between showers that is!

Yes honey I should be leaving here to the later part of Sept. or The 10th of Oct.

You should be ashamed of yourself, little girl. Me writting you all these letter and you not sending me as many, Ha. No, only kidding honey – Do wished you would write often though.

I sure will be glad to get home honey – But I guess it gets monotines to you reading letter & all I talk about going home. Thats just about all I can thank of now though –

Better sign off for now honey. Have to take a shower & these
hit the sack.

All My Love

Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

August 24, 1949

“Okinawa”

Dearest Sandy,

Here I am again honey. Hope every little thing is okay with you.

Raining cats & dogs now honey. Can't say I hate to see it though – Sure cools things off, especially at night.

In a way I hate to see rain – sure makes me lonesome. If I was only with you now – the lonely feeling could be taken care of. Couldn't it?

Sitting here now looking at your picture now (the one where you were about 16)

Gee honey – you were a cute little rascal then. Wished I had a good up to date picture of you. How about seeing what you can do about that –

I just killed a mosquit, No kidding, his legs were an ins & onehalf long. Boy theres some big ones over here. We have the reguliar size also, and lots of em. I'll probably be lost at night back in the States – want have to tuck a mosquito net in each time & go to bed.

A cupple of picture of myself honey. The big one doesn't look too much like me. My face is to long, or something.

Damn I wished I knew for sure when I was going home. Mabie, Sept. Oct. or Nov. Three months is a heck of a long time on this rock too.

Well – it stoped raining! But for how long I don't know.

Honey – it looks as though its time to sign off again. So be sweet honey & take care of yourself.

Yours always,

Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

August 27, 1949

A.W.

Dearest Sandy,

Here I am again honey – Want to thank you for sending me that beautiful picture. I really love the girl who made. It's right in front of me now. I hate to leave the hut now honey – on the account of I can't see your picture all the time. I was beginning to thank you wasent intending on sending me one. Have to admit though – you usually get around to things sooner or later!

I'm sending you a few snapshots – Darn if it dosen't seem as though every time I take pictures, I'm in fatigues. I'll try & get you one in a fully dressed Class "A" uniform some day. But then you would know how handsome I was – Ha. How about that?

In regards to your statement about some, Taft¹ people not having enough sense to stay home – Well I guess some body from Woodsboro² will just have to teach a certain guy from Taft, how to stay home. Once I get back honey, I don't thank there'll be any sweat on me leaving you again. Mabie I can call home, where ever you happen to be – a few months after I'm in the States.

Boy – did we have a down pour here this afternoon. Started at 1: P.M. & stoped at 8:30 P.M. Things were just about to float away. (Crusing Down the River on a Sun. afternoon)

Went wild bore hunting last Wednesday. Diden't get any bores – Killed a Habo instead. Six foot 2 in. long four inches in

dim. Sure would hate to meet up with one of them & not have a gun with me. I'd like to get a wild bore before I leave here. There's a few rough ones around. Especially up on the northern end of the Island. Not many natives up there.

Have you ever gone duck or goose hunting baby? We'll have to go some afternoon in Nov. I bet you'd be might cute in a pair of my, fatigues or Bluegens & carrying a gun. Have you ever shot a gun before? Or there's just thousands of things we'll have to do honey.

Darn honey – why was I so foolish & crazy to ever let them send me overseas? Why did I even join the service? You just keep that smile of yours for me & it will take a flow lot to take me away again.

Did you ever do much skying or ice skating? I'm going to try some of the Northern states out I thank. How would you to live in – let's say, Colorado, for awhile. Some nice places there, places for all kind of sports & well – places for all kind of things.

I was up until 1:45 last night. Down at the, Photo Lab, developing pictures. That's the latest I've been up since the typhoon.

Here it is Sat. night darling, and nothing to do. Not that it's the first Sat. night I haven't had any thing to do. In fact it's has been over a year now. Got lots of long lost time to make up for – don't we?

How do you like your new name honey – "Sandy" I was sitting here admiring your picture & decided I'd give you a nick name. Okay?

So your starting to college again the 16th. You'd better study hard honey. You might accidentally miss a few day around the

last of Nov. Do you happen to know when you'll have Xmas hollidays? And what do you planning on doing Xmas. Would be very nice if you'd spend it with me.

My family will want me to be home, all of my family will be home I mean and they'll want me to be there too. So what a lovely time for you to meet the rest of —. Ha!

Whats first on the, Hit Parade now?

Guess there will be lots of new songs out for me to hear when I hit the States.

Honey — by the time you graduate from this semester — I should be pretty well off. And able to take care of a wife in — a year or so, I thank I could be a right good father. Something to thank about any way —

It's getting aflow late now honey & yours truly is mighty sleepy. And I've just about come to the conclusion. I'd better close & climb in my sack.

Be sweet, Sandy & take care of your self —

Love you,
Gene

P.S.

NOTES

1. *Taft* Taft, San Patricio County, Texas — Gene's home town, roughly 30 miles south-east of Woodsboro.
2. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

September 2, 1949

How soon, will I be seeing you?

Dearest Ann,

Here I am all by my self on C.O. Damn but it's lonesome, 11:30 P.M. & I'm the only one around. Have to stay up all night to. Wouldn't be so bad if I was in the States, Could call you up, talk awhile, then lessen to the radio the rest of the night. Instead of setting here – drinking coffie and trying to stay awake. Wouldn't have any trouble staying awake if you were around – would I! I hope the Radio station stayes on all night tonight. It usually goes off at 11:30. They are expermiting now, or they have been for the last few nights – Mabie they will tonight too. (I hope) A radio is lots of company.

Glad I don't have to pull guard duty – those poor guys out there are getting a little damp, I'm flored! For it's sure pouring down rain now. Probably rain all night. No nights when the weather is good, I can pick up three stations in, Manila, One in Australia, Two from Japan. It's hard to get them in heavy weather though.

This station on Okinawa¹ (WXLH) just went off. Don't it – they arent staying on all night. I can get, Manila pretty good tonight though –

Speeking of Manila – would I like to be there right now. (Their playing “Hurry Hurry Back To Me”) Guess that could be dicated [*dedicated*] to me from you, couldn't it? If I could only hurry back.

How old do you figure a girl should be before she gets married? And do you think a girl going to college would quite & marry a – well lets say a, Cpl in the Air Force? This Cpl. has a good chance to make S/Sgt. in a year or so & once he makes S/Sgt. they will have it made. Or do you agree with me & say they shouldn't think too much of getting married until he made S/Sgt. I don't know though – my brother was married when he was a cpl. They made out fine. Had himself a a new car when he was a buck Sgt. I'm going to beat him a little. I'm going to have a new car as a Cpl. I hoped.

Could get us a nice apartment, I'm going to rent myself an apartment – when I get station in the States any way. Can't see this living on the base. So many things to put up with, And – they say to can live as cheap as one. In a case where a guy is already renting an apartment – all it would take extra *[extra]* is a little chow & clothes – He'd probably buy here all kind of things any way & all time be running around – Night Club and about – Spending more money than he would if he would just go ahead & marrie the girl he's so much in love with. Don't you agree? Now I hope the “Jury” doesn't have to say in conference too long to get the verdict.

Have you ever stayed up all night – now I mean by, yourself – no one else around. Just staying up. Kinda gets me to get up at 6:30 A.M. – Stay up all day, all night, & up until 2 P.M.

the next day – Well, that's what's in store for me now. Get off of C.O. at eight in the morning & had to go up on the hill until noon. Probably be 2:00 P.M. before I get to sleep. Wouldn't normally have to go on the hill the following morning from C.O. But this is emergency.

Seems like you're really been busy, the last few letters I've gotten from you honey – Hope you don't get too busy & forget about me.

Here it is 20' till 2:o'clock – Haven't fallen asleep yet.

All the radio stations have gone off the air. I can't read, that makes me sleepier than ever. Can't write all night, that makes me sleepy too. And the place doesn't need me - building, so – do suppose I can do that!

Don't imagine you seen the all States game at Campus, did you. It should have been played around the last of Aug. I just wonder how it came out.

I guess you heard about this new plane the Air Force has. I haven't heard much about her yet – Supposed to be a big one though. I thought the

B-36 was a big one – but it isn't compared to this new one.

We lost an F-80 here about two weeks ago. Typhoon, "Judith", was supposed to hit here, so they evacuated the F-80's to Manila. Then after they Typhoon passed by & the planes were coming back. One run out of fuel. The pilot bailed out 65 miles from here. We had radio contact & a position of where he was. Had all of that information – thanks to radar the pilot was rescued. There was a big meeting over that too. The pilot almost got court marshaled.

I think I slip down to the mess hall & try to make me some coffee right fast like. Mabie the O.D. won't come by while I'm gone. And if he does he probably won't stay much. Is this boring to you honey – I have to close any way & walk around a little more.

Be good & have fun – and if you can't do em bouth ____
____.

Love & Kisses,
Gene

NOTES

1. *Okinawa* Gene served as a radar operator on Okinawa, which the United States occupied and administered after the 1945 battle. He calls it “the rock” throughout.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

September 5, 1949

“Okinawa”

Dearest Honey,

Well – it’s me again honey, & I hope this finds every little thing fine with you.

It's a little warm here this morning. Would be nice to go for a little swim.

Today is, Labor Day do you know, but theres nothing to do. We got the day off. Sure wished there was something to do. I’ve got something to do alright. But that's kinda hard on a guy. Sit here looking at your picture & whatI could be doing if I was only home. But – I guess things can't always be rosie, can they? In a cupple more months – things had better be might rosie.

I missed chow this morning, slept right through it. Getting a little hungry now. It’s only one hour until noon chow though, mabie I live till then! Ha

You should see the little mustash I have now. If I ever get any film I’ll take a picture & sent you. I thank I look pretty sharp in one – Hot Stuff hum –

Hope my boy brings my clothes back today, I’m on my last suit now.

You should see the way they iron clothes over here. They have an iron about eight in. long & about four in. high, a smoke stock on it. They put wood inside it. Irons pretty good though.

I give my boy starch & soap, he has them fixed up pretty sharp. All these Okinawians try to do something for the G.I.'s so they'll give em cigarettes or soap.

Getting a cloud formation out side now – looks as though we're going to get a little more rain.

Guess your getting ready to go back to College by now. [(Tell all those pretty girls around there hi for me), struck out] Ha Ha How about that – No honey, the only one I want to say hello to is you. And if you don't believe me – just wait a cupple more months & see. Want to do more than just say hello too!

Well honey, I'd better stop & get ready for chow. Take care of yourself & let me hear from the one I love –

Always,
Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

September 6, 1949

“Okinawa”

Dearest Ann,

Hope this finds every thing okay with you honey, as for me – things are still the same, except I miss you more & more each day.

I guess you know just about what the main subject is over here – “going home”. Yes there’s 74 guys leaving for the States the 18th of this month. And darling – I’ll be among the next to leave. Doesn't that sound good! There's a boat pulling in the 23rd. But wither or not it's carrying, Air Force personnel is the question.

So – just pray honey, that it does and I’m on it! Boy I can feel it now – I don't like to feel the way I do now. Want to be with you so bad, but stuck away over here, thinkingmabie I’ll be on my way the 23rd of the month – Boy it's just no good.

Taken a few shots the Island to day, if any turn out good I’ll send you some.

Honey – I can't write you tonight – the way I feel I don't know – all I can do is sit & look at your picture & wish I was there.

So sweetheart, just keep your fingers crossed & hope –

Good night darling & write soon

All my Love,

Gene

P.S.

As my sisters' little girl say's – "I love you two big double hand fulfilled"

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

September 8, 1949

I hope you can read this scratchen.

Dearest Ann,

How is a little thing with you tonight darling, fine I hope. As for me – still the same old things. Except an amunition dump started blowing up this afternoon. Boy what a mess. Glad it wasn't a large one.

Didn't get any mail from you today darling – sure was disappointed. But I guess you've been bussy getting ready for college. You'd better start takeing a little time out here & there though & drop me a few lines once in awhile! See!

Sevendy Four guys are leaving for the States the 18th of this month – My turn should be coming up in a few more days. I've got a chance of leaving here the 23rd. Mabie. If not the 23rd, then mabie the 3rd of Oct. How does that soundto you honey? Sounds mighty nice to me.

Guess what honey – They tried to get me to extend my tour of duty over here. Boy what a laugh. I wouldn't extend six months for S/Sgt. They keep a guy here all his tour & then as he's about due to go home, tell him if he'll extend they'll give him anouther stripe. Was going to send me to school (Intelligence Specilest) But I just can't see staying over here any longer.

Well honey – have you been making any planes? Why don't you write & tell me a few things you thank about some times?

We got about 50 Negros in this outfit now. Don't know it's going to work out. Haven't had any trouble as yet. [written up

the left margin in block capitals: LOVE YOU DARLING] I
LOVE YOU DARLING

Guess I'll have the ford painted when I get home – Mom say's it's faited out a little. Get to look-ing good & then see how much I can get out of it. Sure want to get myself either a Mercury or Stud. Convertable – preferably a Mercury. I kinda like those 49's.

Well darling – it's getting late & I'm a little sleepy. Have a hard day tomorrow.

See honey, I at least drop you a few lines before I climb into my much needed bed. Ha

Well – Good Night Sweetheart, & write & tell me how much you love me – I know it's an aflow lots!! I love you that much anyway. (and always will)

Oddles of Love,

Gene

September 9, 1949

“Okinawa”

Dearest Ann,

Hope this finds every little thing okay, Sandy – as for me, every things still as dead as ever.

It's raining now, hard too. Hope I don't get web toes before I leave this place. And speaking of leaving – I should within the next 45 days.

Sending you a few picture honey. The one of me and the, 45 was taken right after a rain. You can tell my fatiges are wet in places. Me and my buddy had been out walking around (off Limites) While we were out there it started raining.

Haven't heard from you in about two weeks & a half now – whats wrong? Been busy with school I suppose.

I guess you noticed most of the pictures I send is in work clothes. Just every day life.

You know honey, the way I've been writing you is silly. Talking about getting married and everything I probably wont ever get married – And besides – I probably couldn't give you all the pretty things you would want, and you should have all kinds of nice & pretty things. I'm just a, measly little old Cprl. at the present – and with not more money than that, well I couldn't very well support you. I can get money from home. Don't intend on doing that though. But we can talk about things like that when I get home. If they need to be brought into considerations I mean. You will probably run across some guy there in, College & fell head over heels for him. Of course

now I hope you don't. Because I love you Lots. You don't know how much I do thank of you honey. It's only natural for me to thank of you more than you do of me though. I'm over here where I dont see stateside girls & your there where you see boys all time – go out with em & every thing. I am glad you write me once in a while though. For a few weeks there you were really doing well.

Now don't get the idea that I'm angry with you honey, because I'm not – just telling you how things are. I still love you as much as I ever did, and that an aflow lot!

Well honey I better close for now & get this to the mail room before he leaves with the mail.

Be sweet (if possible) and take care of yourself.

“Hope to see you soon”

Love You Always,
Gene

CHLOYE ANN WEST

September 14, 1949

Dearest Gene,

Well, darling, here I am back at good old A & I. It seems too good to be true. Now maybe the days until you are home will pass more quickly. I hope so as I'm getting pretty desperate. Maybe if I try real hard, however, I'll hold out. Keep your fingers crossed.

Baby, guess you are wondering what the heck – I've been gone from home two weeks & just got your last three letters when I got back. I went to Wesloco & got Ann, my roommate, good & married. I was sorta jealous of her. She is really one lucky gal. His parents gave them a new Studebaker & are building them a seven room home. Just about all I've ever dreamed of. Oh well.

The pictures you have been sending me are darling. I just love them. I could "mangle" you for not sending them sooner.

I am now living in Cousins Hall. It is supposed to be the best girls dorm. Ain't I one lucky individual? The rooms are real nicely furnished. Two twin holly wood beds, 2 dressers, one large study desks, & gals of other *[illegible]* things. We have a bath between our room & the one adjoining it. My suite-mates are both seniors. Yours truly is just a plain ole Sophomore. I'm still happy regardless.

Darling, I'll close for now as I have to go eat breakfast & I want to mail this on the way.

Be sweet - write me soon & don't you dare forget me, you won't will you? After you get home I won't give you a chance.

Bye now - sweet.

Love You,

Love Again

Ann

P.S. I'll try ever so hard to write again tomorrow. I don't ever think it will be hard.

September 21, 1949

“Okinawa”

Dearest Ann,

Well, honey, here I am back on, Okinawa¹ again. Been gone a cupple of days. Flew over to Iwa Jima. Boy, but I’m glad I’m not stationed there. You can stand in the middle of place & see the water on all sides.

Had a sweet letter from you waiting on me when I get back this afternoon. I see your back in college.

And as for you getting desperate – your probably only half as desperate as me, And I’ve always had my fingers crossed - about you waiting on me. Sure hope you hold out darling – Because it wont be much longer now. Thirty five days at the most. Sounds good to quite counting the months & start counting days – dosen’t it!

Looks like I changed colors in ink – had to refill my pen.

You said in your last letter, “you’d try to write me tomorrow”. Hope it wasn’t hard – for I sure love to receive your litters. In a way it's like talking to you. In a verry ood way though! Never the less – its only natural for one to want to hear from the one he loves.

I probably wont hear from you much now though, that your there, studying & going to dances & such. Promise me you wont forget me though. Who knows there might be a good chance for us to get hitched. We’ll find out when I get home.

Boy these last few days sure are dragging by. If I could quite thanking so much of you, guess they would pass quicker.

22-Thu 6 P.M. Just got back from taking a shower honey – feel pretty good now.

I'm going to try & write you every night from now until I leave this rock for the States. Do you thank you could do that? Won't be to many more days. (I hope) No kidding, I'll be comming back to you soon.

Seen a second Lt. today, fresh from the States. He had one of those new uniforms – Looked pretty sharp. Guess I'll try to get one when I get back.

Doesn't look to good outside. Sure cloudy – Hope another, Typhoon isn't brewing. Might be just a tropical storm.

Had quite a day on the hill today. Sure was bussy. Will be the same tomorrow. Have to go up with the, 3rd Photo & take some pictures of the hill. (From the air that is) Some at eight thousand & four thousand feet. Just expermiting more or less. Seeing how well they have the place camouflaged up to a camera.

This is an interesting job I've got. Doing all kind of secret things. (Under cover man ha. Ha.)

Are you living on the campus now or is this “Cousins Hall?” out at the Naval- Base?

How are you liking it there by now. Wonderful I imagen!

Got myself quite a, mustash now honey – want me to keep it until I get home? I thank I will!

Sure feel sorry for one of my buddies. He got a, “Dear John” from his girl a cupple of days ago. Thats just about like some girls, just about the time a guy is readyto go home – he get's a letter like that. What made it so bad, they were planning, big, on getting married. He was really crazy about her.

Well honey – I’d better close for now & hit the sack. Gotta get my - much needed beauty sleep!

Be sweet & let me hear from soon – & often.

Love,
Gene

NOTES

1. *Okinawa* Gene served as a radar operator on Okinawa, which the United States occupied and administered after the 1945 battle. He calls it “the rock” throughout.

September 28, 1949

Dearest Ann,

Hi honey – here I am again, feeling fine – except for being a little on the lonie & blue side.

Here on C.Q. now – I presume you know what that is (Change of Quarters. What I don't like about it – I have to stay awake all night. No dance music or any thing to pass the time. Is a good chance to catch up on letter writing though! Speaking of, dance music – I sure hear some about 10:30 to night. There's a little, "Arm Forces Radio Station", here on the rock. Goes off the air at 11:15 P.M. though. DAMIT. Then she comes on at 6:00 in themornings, except for Sunday, comes good program. Most of the songs are slightly old. Some of them sure makes me wish you were here, so we could get a little good out of em. I might be a little rusty on dancing when I get back – guess with you being my partner, it wont take long to fix that – hum –

Say honey – I hope you can make this letter out. This pen i have isn't doing such a good job of writing & spelling ha. Mabie it could be, because I'm a little tired & sleepy though. Suppose?

I played baseball this afternoon. First time in quite sometime! Us enlisted Men are going to play the Officers, Oct. 1st. Hope we beat them.

How is, A. & I¹. doing in football this year. Hope the you have a better team then you did last year. Because if I remember correctly – they didn't do so hot last season.

I would like to be playing for Texas U. this year. I doubt seriously though, if I ever will play for them. Guess I'll just get my - learnin - from "USAFI" in the Air Force.

I'm still kind of thanking of giving, "Cadates" a trial when I'm old enough.

By the way honey – when is your birthday?

Baby – I'm just (pardon the expression) a little – T-ed. off at you. And I guess you know the reason why – Just because your in College now – around all those - - - -, is no reason for you to slack down on writing to me. I might thank you've found your self some - - - & not evend come see you when I get home. Because I thank I – might be able to get a date or so with a few more girls around home – I doubt it, but you can't ever tell, I might be able to.

all kidding aside the honey – your the only one I want to go with while I'm home. That is unless - well, I thank you know what I mean.

Say – are you learning how to be a house wife. You'd better be. Can't even tell – Someone might be foolish enough to marry you some of these days! You know how these boy are.

It's a pretty night outside tonight. Moon - Stars, all I need is you!

Confidentially darling – I expeict to have all three of you in about 48 days. Mark the day & I'll bet you it wont be for either way from it – when I see you – in Person! No more letter writting for me once I leave this place.

I wanted to be home for Xmas this year – looks doubtful now tho – I'll be there for a few day before.

Say honey – did you read that book "Hell and Back", by Audie Murphy?

Well baby – have to close for now. Gotta go make a guy up.
Then I be bussy the rest of the morning. So be sweet &
remember - You'd better write!

Love Ya

Bye now

Gene

P.S. If you can't make this out honey, just send it back. I'll try again.

NOTES

1. *A. & I.* Texas College of Arts and Industries at Kingsville, where Chloye studied journalism. Now Texas A&M University–Kingsville.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

September 29, 1949

Psychology Class

Dearest Gene,

Well, baby, I'm in class right now, and I'm bored stiff. We are now discussing Psychology in college life. I don't think I need it - by now we should know something about the deal. At this moment there is a hot discussion taking place. There is one particular boy & girl who are at each others throats. What a life! Wish I could get that interested in one of my classes.

Have you heard any about the date you are coming home? I can hardly wait, I think about it constantly. Write me as soon as you hit the States. Call me pretty quick too because I don't want to have anything planned.

School this year is more fun or perhaps I have just learned how to study. Anyway my grades are showing a marked improvement.

I went home last week, and I had three letters from you. Guess you thought I just wasn't going to answer. You should always know better than that.

Yesterday I made a speech in my Radio Speech class and it was really a riot. When I stood there before that mike my knees all but buckled up under me. By now, I should be used to it. Being a speech minor and all - my one ambition is to be a radio announcer. I just hope I can make the grade. We are supposed to go down to the local radio station and speak over it soon. Maybe someday you can say I knew her when. _____
ha -

Went to the show last night. It was pretty good. Haven't been to many shows lately tho. Studying too hard. Joke of course. I never do that.

We won our football game last week 14-13. We played Howard Payne. This Saturday we play San Marcos, there. I think I am going. I love football. You mentioned the game tho. All stars played every year. I saw it this year but I can't remember who won. I thought it was the West, but my suite-mate says she thinks it was the East team. I'll check and write you again.

Baby, I must close. I have to wash my hair –

Write me soon –

I Love You,

Ann

October 1, 1949

“Okinawa”

Dearest Ann,

Hi honey – here I am again. Still alone & missing you more than ever.

Theres a new roomur out that the guys that come over the 10th of August might leave here the 3rd of Oct. Sure hope it's true – I've had about all I want of this place.

Got a letter from you in five days the outhur day. Wished all the mail came that fast.

By the way – you mithined of putting the picture I wanted in that letter. Gee honey it was really beautiful! — You absent little woman.

Hope you send it in your next letter. The only plane picture I have of you is the one of you when I first met you. Hope you dont thank I'm picture crazy honey – But damn, I would like to have at least one good one of you. After all, your supposed to be the one I love –

Boy is it hot here now. Wished I had a fan. Be fore long I'll be back to all of that stuf though (I hope)

We lost an F-80 this morning. The boy on D-F- fouled up. Was sending the plane away from the island instead of bring him to the Island. The pilot bailed out-ran out of fuel. They found him about four hours later. I'm afraid the kid that was on D.F. will catch it.

Got some pictures from my Mom the outhur day. Was taken at her birthday party. Boy my brother sure has a pretty car.

They was standing by it. Have to use that a little when I get home!

Sure would like to be with you tonight – Wounder what we could do – Mabie go to a dance some where –

Don't suppose you've ever been to. "Rabs" place in Robstown – have you? I was there once. Some place. The Bohemian Club, in Aransas – A person can have lots of fun in places like that – ha

Say honey did you, by any chance know any of the, Shafer boys? A cupple of em worked around there. They used to live by us on the farm.

Say I've got anouther aunt & Uncle in Woodsboro¹ - you probably didn't know about - The Belours. Know em? You should Carline, Shis married now though. A pretty cute cousin! I remember some of the fun her & myself had when I was about 5 & 6 years old, lived out on the farm. They come out a few times on Sunday, But now I don't suppose you want to hear about my past - (child life) with my cousin. So - so much for that.

Well honey, I guess now that I'll stay in the "Air Force". Go to O.C.S. when I get discharged. This of life shouldn't be too bad as an officer. That way we could be moving around a little. From State to State – Try to go to some nice island if you wanted to. I don't believe I'd like to stay in one place all time. See what the rest of the world has to offer.

Here it is 10:00 P.M. honey and I'm still writting. Seems that when I'm writing you – well it's kinda like talking to you in away. Speeking of talking to you. Do you have a telephone? If so send me your no. and I might be able to call you some day. Tell me when you are generally home. I'd hate to get every

thing lined up, call you & you not be home. Sure would like to hear your sweet little voice again.

Wounder if there would be a chance of you taking a little trip to California the last of Oct. I could find out exactly what day I'd get there & what place. Sure would be nice to have you standing out there waving as we pulled in to dock. Then have your company all the way back to "Texas".

But I guess that would be pretty tiresome on your part. Riding up there by yourself. I wouldn't want you to do that. But now if some of my folks drove up that would be super. Mabie my brother, wife & my Mom will drive out – if they do would you come with them? Can fix up you meeting them on all that. Course it might be kinda strange – I'm sure you'd like them.

Darling I guess you know I'm expecting a long letter in return of this though. It's been an awful long time since I've received a long sweet letter from you. Surely you not that busy. Do you have time to read my scribbles?

Guess I'll have to get myself one of those new Air Force uniforms when I hit Frisco. I hear they're supposed to be pretty sharp.

It's getting late sweet heart & I'd better hit the sack. So until the next time - remember. I love you

Write Soon - if not sooner

Love & Kisses

Gene

NOTES

1. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloey's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.

October 4, 1949

“Okinawa”

Dearest Sandy,

How are you today honey? As beautiful, sweet & inisent as ever I suppose. I'm still in existance myself, evend though that's about all.

Glad you've been writting so often – sure do enjoy your sweet letters! ha. ha. What a joke. Guess you've been kept pretty bussy though, haven't you. All those parties & dances. Well just as long as you don't forget me altogether – guess I can't gripe.

Have you ran across any of the kids from, Taft¹, by any chance. (the one's that started this year. FRESHMEN! I thank there are about 17 of them – That's including a married cupple. About 7 girls.

That little, Edna Carl Compton –

I almost went with her when I was going to high school.

Well – it looks as though I'll have to leave this little Island the 23rd of this month. Isen't that just aflow – having to leave here & going back to the damned old States. Ha. how about that honey? I was never so glad of any thing in my life as I will be to leave this damn rock.

If we stop at Hawaii, I'll see what I can pick up for you. I want to get you something from this part of the world – Nothing on this rock to get for you – unless mabie it would be some shells.

5, Oct. 49. Well here I am again. Will try to finish this tonight.

I wonder what my little woman has been doing – for I still haven't gotten a letter from you. Tell me – what do you do all day long, except thank of me! ha.

We're going to have to really step out when I get there honey – But we don't want to thank any thing about getting married –

One guy is laying over from me, really sawing a log now – ha Sure sounds funnie. Do you snore honey – ha. Guess you thank that's some question hum? I don't – snore that is!

You know honey – I thank we should go up toward Ft. Worth & Dallas some week-end went there's nothing else to do. We could really have a wonderful time up there. A pretty good size place & lots of things to do.

Even have to go on a fishing trip – Boy – there's just thousands of things to do, aren't there. How about that honey?

Have to close for now & get a little shut eye. Be sweet Darling.

I LOVE YOU

Gene

NOTES

1. *Taft* Taft, San Patricio County, Texas — Gene's home town, roughly 30 miles south-east of Woodsboro.

October 7, 1949

"The Rock"

Dearest Ann,

Well honey, here I am again. Surprised in hearing from me so often. Well these last few days are going a little slow. No need to go to bed early – can't sleep. Sure would be nice if I could go to sleep & dream of you.

The sun was out for an hour or so today. First time in four days.

I seen the list of names of those leaving the 23rd today. The orders are supposed to be cut tomorrow. Then Monday or Wed. myself & other guys will start clearing the base. My happy day is going to be when I get off that ship in California.

I'll call you & inform you on the day I'll be down to see you. And believe me honey – As soon as I get in that part of the country I'll be on down there.

I'm really anxious to see you again baby. I just wonder how much you've changed since I last seen you. I'm sure all the changes were for the better though.

Honey – when you answer this, I guess you needn't write any more. Answer this one though – write me a nice long letter – to read when I'm out on the deep blue – That's the way I have to do. Read your letters over & over, because I don't enough of em from you. Just so I get one last long letter from you.

Just thank honey – it's the last time you'll get to write me while (on "Okinawa¹". (Thank God)

Have to stand a “Stand By Inspector”, in the morning. First one I’ve stood in about three months. One of these days I’ll be the one inspecting instead of standing it ha. And while I’m inspecting – I’ll probably have to chew some poor enlisted man out because he has his radio on – Your program! Ha. How about that honey.

Well baby – guess thats’ enough dreaming for now – isn’t it! ha. I’ll go to bed hope I’m luckie enough to dream of you.

Don’t forget honey – That Last Letter on “Okinawa”, I’ll be waiting to get it –

I Love You,

Gene

NOTES

1. *Okinawa* Gene served as a radar operator on Okinawa, which the United States occupied and administered after the 1945 battle. He calls it “the rock” throughout.

October 10, 1949

“Okinawa”

Dearest Ann,

Just wanted to drop you a few lines to let you know I was scratched off the shipment of the 23rd. So you can disregard the part in my last letter tell about me leaving here.

Don't know just when I will leave now. So – when ever you get a letter from me in California – you'll know I'm on my way home.

The wind has been from the north all day today. Not cold, just a little cool. Mabie winter is coming a little early [*struck out*] over here this year.

I'm kinda glad I didn'tmake this ship. She's headed straight for the States – and as I said before, I wanted to go by, “Haiwaii” might as well see all these Islands as long as I'm over here – hadn't I?

It might make it a little longer before I see you, but not much. We've got lot's of long lost time to make up for anyway. Wont it be nice when I get back to the, States. Where we wont have to write these damned old letters anymore. Get a little lovin from you instead of just a letter!

How about the men in your life honey – ? Hope there isn't any yet. I sure would hate to see anything like that happen – No kidding!!

Where are some of the places you want to go when I get back? And some of the things you want to do!

Well – how is the old school coming along baby? How about the football team this year? I hope I get there in time to see a few games.

Guess I'd better close for now & get a little sleep. Your probably tierd of reading this any way.

Be sweet darling & let me hear from you!

Love & Kisses,

Gene

October 26, 1949

“Okinawa”

Dearest Ann,

Well here I am again honey. Been thanking of you all day – thanking how glad I’d be to see you & wondering if we would ever get married. Funnie things have been running through this mind of mine today. I have planes for us – I hope they work out.

Another “Typhoon” is expected to hit here tonight. I was hoping I’d seen my last one – Looks as though I’m going to go through another one before I leave here. I certainly hope she’s blown over by Sat. the 29th. Because that’s when we’re supposed to load on the ship. Will be just my luck to get held up three or four days on account of a damn, Typhoon.

I thank I’ll try to get stationed at, “Austin”, when I get to the States.

That’s supposed to be a good base there. Austin isn’t a bad town either. I’ve got three Aunts & Uncles living there. Ha. I guess I’ve got kin-folks just about everywhere!

I’ve got your picture right in front of me now – Gee, your beautiful darling – How I would love to be with you tonight.

I bet you’d really make a guy a wonderful wife honey. I just wonder who the lucky guy is going to be? Do you think I might have a chance???

The ship I’ll get on is scheduled to pull into California the 13 of Nov. And if this typhoon doesn’t hold us up – I’ll be home by Thanksgiving. How does that sound to you sugar? After as long

as we've waited it doesn't seem like too long a time, does it. At least it doesn't for me.

The wind isn't blowing too hard out now – although it's picked up in the last three hours. Raining, boy it has been raining for the last two weeks - day & night.

A night like tonight is the kind of a night I'd like to be in front of a fire place with you. Dam, why do I have to thank of things like that – especially with me being away over here & you away over there. Some care of though – I hope.

10:00 A.M. Hi honey – how are you this morning? As beautiful, sweet & innocent as ever I bet.

Well - I made the night okay. The typhoon passed 100 miles south of us at 4:30 this mornin. We had winds around 55 at that time. Things will be fine now – if, she doesn't turn around & come back. These things are bad about that.

We have about 30 guys here – fresh from the States – Boy was they scared. By the time they go through Six of em – they'll be used to it. Guys that come over here from the States sure look funnie. So white & punie looking.

Boy I hope the "Buckner" is on schedule. Sure want to leave this place – Sat too. Day after tomorrow!!!

What have you got planned for Thanksgiving baby – Hope your not planning on too much, because I'll most likely be there.

I'll write you when I hit California. That is if I have time. I Call you as soon as I get a chance.

Better sign off for now honey, So be sweet & take care of yourself.

All My Love, *[then, written inside the envelope flap:]* “See Ya Soon”

Gene

P.S.

Better be saving up some loving for me. Remember a few months ago – you said youd give me all I wanted!

–So Long Honey / I L O V E Y O U–

I Love You

April 2, 1950

Bilaxi Miss.

My Dearest Darling,

Well I'll be damned if I'm not writting to you again. Remember when I was on, Okinawa¹ I used to say I'd be glad when I didn't have to write you any more?

O darling it was so hard for me to tell you by this afternoon. I'm never going to do it again. I hope you never want me to again. Know you will have a good time though. Don't worry about a thing back here baby – please, enjoy your self while your there & take of Jr. too! Don't let her give you too much trouble.

Hope you made the trip okay baby – did you have any trouble with the bags? Wish we would have checked the big one.

I wandered through town, stoped in at the drugstore for a malt, waited about five minutes & didn't get any service – so I left. Didn't really want one any way. Just didn't want to go home! Didn't go to a movie, knew I couldn't enjoy it.

And you didn't help me much at the train– telling me what I could while you were gone. I'm sorry I was such a baby honey, but just couldn't help it. I've never in all of my life hate to see any one leave as I did you. But that's the way it's supposed to be – isn't it baby.

Hope you didn't forget any thing you wanted to take.

Wished you'd taken this one, "Japaness plum" that's here in the bowl with the lemons. Bet you didn't know it was in there, did you. It's all swlized up any way though.

It's still raining – most likely set in for the night. And you know us in this kind of weather. O baby I wished I could have one with you. My Darling I love you so very vey much. If I didn't love you, I'd never cry over you. Mabie if I wasn't such a baby I wouldent either, huh!

Baby you looking right at me now smiling, like you always do – only with a "WLOX speaker in front of you. Seems just like you should say something to me. Some thing real sweet & lovely

Darling i'm hoping and praying that you don't get sick while your gone, especially while your on the train.

Baby if you get a chance, why don't you go by, Mrs Belors'? Or at least call her. Then when you get back you could tell. Vernon & Jessey – imagen they'd be glad to know you seen her.

Tell mom, Gin & Hank hi for me & that I wished I could be with you & them now.

Just heard a joke over. Grand Old Opera²", baby. A cupple of Old timers went into a Grocery store, one of them got a buggy & the outhur one didn't. The one that did say's today outhur one – if your going to buy any gro. you'd better get one of them there push buggies, the outhur one said, No I don't need one – I'm only going to buy \$40 or \$50 worth. High prices!

Sweetheart I wished I was real slapy [*sleepy*] now – so I could go up & go to sleep. Then I wouldn't be so lonesome. O baby how could I ever say a cross word to you – as much as I love. you.

No one has come by & I'd just as soon they didn't. But in a way I wished Cary & Claria or Vernon & Jesse would. Guess I'll go over to Vernon's after Church tomorrow.

Darling, are you saying your pary [*prayer*] every night at eight. I hate when I say mine. That we can a least say them together each night. Evend did tonight although I hadn't gone to bed yet. I'll say another one when I go to bed. Guess your in New Orleans by now. It's ten after eight.

Tell mom for me how much we thank her for the things she did & bought for us in Huston. And I know how she felt you left her that day. Only she couldn't of hated to see you leave as had as I did.

Baby I'm going up & try to go to sleep now. Take the radio up – so I can turn it on at 5:20 in the morning! I hope, “Gunsel” wont mind! I'll write some more on this before I got to church tomorrow. Good Night my Darling – I love you so very much, I could never began to tell you how much I love you. Theres just no words to express it. Forever isen't long enough to love you darling – no matter how many years lie ahead. I'm going to try mighty hard to do my share of loving you too sweetheart and that wont be a bit hard to do. In fact I think I love you too much. Tonight at a eight we had been married three months & thirteen days. Their playing one of our songs now baby, “Open Door Open Arms”! Good night my wounderful one – I'm going to bed now & dream of you – I know. I hope “Gunsel”, is a good bed partner!

Palm Sunday, 8:55 A.M. Good morning my sweet one, and how are you this morning, I Guess you'll be entering Texas pretty soon,

Darling I hope & prayed all night last night that you make the night & trip okay. I woke up about 10 times. Every time I would reach for you – and darling - when I found you was never there, I felt the terrblest just like I wanted to die. One time I awoke about half way – I had my arm twisted around some way, I thought it was yours, I ran my outhr hand down it reach you & when I touched myself – O darling, you'd never know how I felt, I hope the rest of the night aren't like last night, I awoke at 5:20 this morning but couldn't evend hear the though of turning the radio on. I managed to fell asleep again. Got up at 6:45 shaved, took a bath, ate & now writting you. Tunned the radio on when I got up. Lestning to hymns & sermons. Dont thank I'll go to Church this morning baby – I couldn't sit there by myself.

You've only been gone sixteen hours darling – but it seems like sixteen days. I hope I can get my mind off you in school tomorrow. Baby I'd go nut – slap happy nuts if I had to stay away from you over a week.

Sweet heart Sweet heart, I've written you many a letters – but never before have I felt.. like this while writting. I thank the sweetpatota has evend stoped growing baby.

My darling – I going to close for now & walk down & mail these. Then catch a bus & go over to Vernon & Jesse's. I could never go to Cary & Claria's, them together & just me. That would never work. At Vernons the boys will be there.

Baby I must close now, I have to get away from this house.

While your away darling I hope you miss me more than youve ever missed anyone before – because I certainly do you.

O darling if only I could tell you how sorry I am for treating you like I did a few time – and how very very much I love & miss you.

Bye now my darling & write me as many letters as you want a to. I have to get at least one long one a day. I hope you sent me a telegram just as soon as you got there – so I'll at least know you made it & how you made it.

Bye now baby from
Your Loving & homesome
Husband
Bye my darling – I love so much –
Yours forever
Gene

P.S.

If you happen to see Freddie while in Taft³ – you might tell him we sure could use that \$1.00

Gene & Jimmy

NOTES

1. *Okinawa* Gene served as a radar operator on Okinawa, which the United States occupied and administered after the 1945 battle. He calls it “the rock” throughout.
2. *Grand Ole Opry* The Grand Ole Opry, broadcast Saturday nights from Nashville on WSM and by 1950 the biggest country-music show in the United States. Gene is listening to it on the radio in Biloxi as he writes; his spelling is preserved.
3. *Taft* Taft, San Patricio County, Texas — Gene’s home town, roughly 30 miles south-east of Woodsboro.

April 3, 1950

Hello My Sweet Baby,

And how is every little thing with my sweetheart by now? Fine & having a good time I surley hope. But I also hope your missing me more than anyone you've ever missed before, because I sure miss you darling. Baby I hope your happier about getting back down here, to me than any thing you've ever done before – that will sure be the happiest moment of my life. Honey I can hard wait. I sure hope you get here. Fri. I sure couldn't go Easter without you.

My class has K.P. again Thur. Don't wither I'll have to pull it or be off like I was the last time. I'd just as soon pull it. It will at least keep my mind occupied.

Waite until you hear what happened to me yesterday. When I left here yesterday, I went down to the P.O. to mail your letter. The Stamp machine was empty. After walking over about half of Biloxi¹ –

I finially found a place which had a stamp machine. Went back to the Post Office, mailed your letter & then walked down to the bus terminal. Got on a "Back Bag" bus. The damn thing didn't go across the bridge. It was around Ten O'clock then – so when the bus finally reached the bus terminal again, after going all over the part of town towards the Ocean Springs Bridge, I got off & figured I'd go on out to Cory & Claires. Got on a, "Handsboro" bus (paid 20¢) just as we passed, "Joe's Groc", I happened to glance out the window and what did I see *[illegible]* but Cory's & Clarias Car! So I get

off the bus walked back thoughtmabie they'd be in Joes – but they wasn't. I then came to the conclusion that they'd gone to Church. I left a note asking them to come by – they did. Wanted to know where you was, they thought I was fibbing when I told them. After they looked all over the place – they half way believed me.

Gill came by a few minutes before they did – saw him & myself went out had lunch & stayed until 9:30 last night. Guess you've heard from someone around there by now that Gill's car was wrecked. They was coming back from New Orleans. Another boy was driving.

Guess you also know this is, "National laugh Week", huh! It sure is for me. And I'd like to see the guy who said time flies. Right now I think he's the biggest liar ever lived.

It's raining now & has been all after noon. Just hard enough to sound good on the roof. Just enough to make it good and lonesome. And Oakley West is *[illegible]* which dosen't help matters a damn bit.

Vernon & Jessie came by for about an hour this afternoon. She heard Dave say, "He was going to have to handle your part of the program this morning & the remaining days of the week because you had gone to Texas.

Oklie is playing, "Have I Told You² lately that I Loved You".
O sweetheart

I wish she was here now so I could tell you.

I took that roll of film down yesterday. They didn't turn out as I should of known. Two negitaves was plain. One with you sitting in a little motor boat (at Bayside³ I guess) And the one with You, Claria & Cory standing on the beach in front of the Buena Vista⁴. Damn I wish they'd turn out.

O yea – you know these “flying sausers⁵”, Well, they really exist. The Air Force has them. They’ve been in experimental stages ever since 47. They didn’t tell us what they were going to be used for. Just that they weren’t coming from Russia or Mars. Their ours. Boy I was glad to hear that.

Baby I’m going to close for now so hurry home to Daddy, Momma!

I was looking for a letter from you today. But I didn’t. I can’t help but write you baby – because in a way I’m talking to you. I’ll always have to talk to & love you darling. I just have to. And I have to start pretty soon to. I can’t take much more of this.

Goodnight my darling & don’t forget to say your prayers. I love you so much my darling. If you only love me half as much, we’ll always get along ok. Better close now my love & go to bed. I hope tonight isn’t like the past two were. But with this rain I’m afraid it’ll be worse. Bye sweetheart & my god watch over & protect you until we meet again.

Your ever loving husband,
Gene

NOTES

1. *Biloxi* Gene was at Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi, in 1950. The bus routes he names — Back Bay, Handsboro — and the Ocean Springs bridge are all local.
2. *“Have I Told You Lately That I Love You”* Scott Wiseman’s song, written 1944-45. It was everywhere in 1950 — hit records that year included Gene Autry’s and a Bing Crosby duet with the Andrews Sisters. Gene hears it on the radio at Keesler Field and stops writing to tell her.
3. *Bayside* Bayside, Refugio County, Texas, on Copano Bay — a short drive from Woodsboro, and where several of the couple’s snapshots were taken.
4. *the Buena Vista* The Buena Vista Hotel on the Biloxi beachfront, one of the resort hotels along U.S. 90.
5. *“flying sausers”* Written April 1950, during the second great wave of American flying-saucer reports. Gene reports what his unit had been told: that the objects were the Air Force’s own, under development since 1947, and not Russian. Whatever lay behind it, the reassurance is what reached an airman at Keesler Field that spring.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

April 4, 1950

My darling,

Just woke up and had to write you. I dreamed about you last nite and that doesn't help my being homesick for you. Baby - I really know where home is now, it's wherever you are. If I thought I was lonesome for this place it's nothing to what I have been for you.

Got sick last night for the first time since I've been here. Baby, they are playing "Open door, open arms" on the radio now, and I'm howling like a baby. I love you so very, very much. I'll be so glad when I get home with you again.

Wanda & the baby spent the whole day yesterday with mother & I. Gene, she has the cutest baby, Wanda Kathryn - Kathy loves is what they call her. I can hardly wait till ours gets here. You know I don't think I'm going to be sick much anymore. Maybe 3 mos. was all.

I called your Mom yesterday. I'm going over there this afternoon. She seemed glad to hear about you & school. Darling, you are studying since I've been gone aren't you. Please do for me.

I got you a short yesterday. Shore is pretty, too - wait till you see it.

Wanda's giving me a "tour" today. We aren't going to cut my hair away, tho.

Baby, like I said I'm getting wedding presents. Hot dog! at least this trip was worth something.

I'm expecting a letter from you today - if you wrote me the night I left I should have one - Oh, I hope so, maybe it will make me feel better.

Baby, your mother say whether or not she would go to Biloxi¹ - I'll know when I get there this afternoon. Hope I can find the house without any trouble.

Sweetheart, if she doesn't go, can you come Gill? I hope so - it's such a long trip alone or a train.

Be sweet, darling, and let me hear from you soon.

Jine Pratt said to tell a fellow disk-jockey "hello"!

All my Love,
Chloye

NOTES

1. *Biloxi* Gene was at Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi, in 1950. The bus routes he names — Back Bay, Handsboro — and the Ocean Springs bridge are all local.

DEE JAY

May 3, 1950

At the Dorm

Dearest Chloye,

You just can't realize how happy I was to get your sweet letter and hear the wonderful news. Honestly I'm as happy as you, if that is possible!

I have been patient – by waiting for you to answer my letter of a few months ago. I'm really glad you remembered me.

I'm so happy that all is going so well and truly I'm glad that you learned to cook. Poor Gene had to starve but I'll bet it wasn't for long. I've bet the little wife really whipped out with the goods. Right?

Let me tell you about Gene and i. We had our first date January 19th and have been going ever since. We go to the beach, show, play golf, bowl and just everything. He so very much fun and truly the most wonderful guy in this world. I piest adore him!

Everyone here at school says to tell you “hello”. We all miss you so much but also envy you something terrible.

Heres some gossip: Imogene Frybig and Stew Bower are getting married May 27.

Dan Purcell is going steady with Agnes Nelson. (she just came here in February.)

Cristella Leston and Johnny Edgar are not engaged anymore. She went with Little George awhile but thats over too.

Lenna Moreland and Bob Lee broke up and she is practly going steady with Ken Vackey. They make a real cute couple.

Sally Bell and Frank Schneider date real, real often.

Rickey Yeager and Bill Walraven are getting married May 28.

May Lively is teaching fourth grade in San Antonio.

Jack Lesch won over a thousand dollars at the San Antonio rodeo!

Charlie Simmons is going steady with a cute little freshman. They had their first date the same night that Gene and I did. We had a big party at Pick's that night.

Gene and I went to Bandera one weekend. Frank and Sally went too. The football boys all had a party there. There was about ten or fifteen couples. We saw May up there.

Bobby Kock (football) and Cedar Martin are going steady.

Bobby Boles (football) and Katy Roberts are also going steady.

Darlett (McCain) Saxon is expecting in October.

Hayne McPeters broke his hand rodeoing but its better now.

Hell it's Wednesday, May 10 now and I'm just now getting this letter off. Maybe it will be just as newsy.

Gene & I went to the rodeo and round-up last Saturday and Sunday we went swimming and to the "T-" picnic. We sure had loads of fun. Had a date with him also Monday & Tuesday night.

Its almost four months since I first dated him.

Well, gotta go — Please write back real soon. I'll be here in summer school so keep writing here.

Loads of Love (to Gene too.)

Dee Jay

P.S. Dianne and I are trying out for cheer leader Friday -

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

June 8, 1950

Somewhere in Ala.

Dearest Darling,

Well baby I pulled out of Biloxi¹ at 7:06 P.M. And here I am now getting fourther away from you all the time. I'm not getting any happier about it either.

Stayed out with Cary & Claria all day. It just didn't seem right. It seemed that you should walk in any minute or either Callisfor *[call for]* me to come home. It was just torcher for one to have to stay around that place.

I got the light money back. had to pay \$1.06. I got our watches out. Sent all the boxes off. Cary & myself packed them, Claria swept. They sure were nice to me all day. I was glad I was able to stay there long enough to get all the boxes sent off. You should get them by the time you get this. I wished you could of been with me all day today.

Sweetheart have you ever tried to write on a train² – believe me it isn't easy. (as you can see I guess)

Well Presshous one I'll close for now & have my birth *[berth]* fixed. I'm pretty sleepy & tired. If I don't get a chanceto mail this in the morning I'll add some more.

So long for now honey. Hope you had a good trip home.
Good Night Darling “Say Your Payers”

All My Love,
Gene

P.S. I sure enjoyed our last night together. Is Rosie still sore? Jimmy misses her so much, and I miss you so very much. [*in block capitals down the right margin:*] I LOVE YOU SO MUCH.

NOTES

1. *Biloxi* Gene was at Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi, in 1950. The bus routes he names — Back Bay, Handsboro — and the Ocean Springs bridge are all local.
2. *writing on a train* Written aboard the Piedmont Limited, the New York-New Orleans express run jointly by the Louisville & Nashville, the West Point Route, the Southern Railway and the Pennsylvania Railroad. The letter is on the train's own printed stationery; Gene had left Biloxi at 7:06 that evening and was heading for Bolling Field. 'Sweetheart have you ever tried to write on a train,' he says a few lines later, 'believe me it isn't easy.'

CHLOYE ANN WEST

June 10, 1950

Woodsboro

Hello My Darling,

How are you & are you missing me & the baby yet? I hope that you aren't nearly as much as I am you. Baby, I'm so blue that I'll just die if you don't find me a place to live soon.

Well I got to Woodsboro¹ at 10:30 A.M. yesterday - Mother was frying chicken getting ready to go to the "island" for the night. They were to leave at 12:30 so I went too. We spend the night & fished some today. The water was too rough to really get anything tho. A few flounder & trout. When I said I was going fishing I didn't know that it would be quite so soon. I really got a tan tho - wait tilli get to D.C. I'll be darker than you'd bet. We didn't get back until late today so I just washed my hair, bathed, went to town to get groceries and now ready to go to bed. Darling, I hate to get in it without you. I've been trying not to cry much, but every night I do. Baby, say your prayers & ask God to let us be together soon. I have your sqdn. picture in front of me now. I just can't help but cry - Darling, oh darling I love you so much please don't ever leave me again. Take me next time - if you just hadn't started crying when we left (baby, I'm crying so now I can hardly write) it might not have been so bad - oh! it would have been too. Darling, I'm so glad you love me - how could I ever not be sweet to you.

The baby is fine I know - He's kicking a lot - I think he knows how his mommy misses his daddy - baby I'm so glad we

are having it. I was sick tonight - vomited once - but feel fine now - well almost - if you were here I would.

Baby, I know that you would wire me as soon as you find a place but please, please hurry - I want to be in your arms again and told how much you love me. Darling write me so I can mail these.

I love you, baby, - and miss you so - oh darling.

Your Always,
Chloye

NOTES

1. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

June 11, 1950

Woodboro, Tex.

Hello Sweetheart,

How's the one I love tonight? I'm fine and so is the little one.

Wanda & I went down to the river today - all the kids were there, Doreen, Florence, and all my old gal friends. I took down a big box of butter-beans & had them all shelling for me. I'm going to can them tomorrow for us. Aren't you proud of your little wife?

Tonight, Billie Jeanne, Florence, Doreen, & I went to Refugio & ate Mexican food. Sure was good - I really wished for you, my darling.

You'll never guess where I'm sitting writing this letter. In the bathroom - sure comfy too. Baby, I got the check from your mother to day. Vers has not heard from Jr. since he left Boston - that's where all his letters we're from so we don't know any thing yet.

I hope I have a letter from you in the morning (Monday)

as I am so homesick & blue. Darling, I miss & love you so much - I have gunsel but he's no help - I need my baby here with me to hold me tight & make love to me. Darling, our last nite in Biloxi¹ was heaven - I can hardly wait to be with you again. I know if you love me like I think you do - you wish the same thing.

Well, Sweetheart, I'm tired and sleepy (for a change) ha so I'll close for now. Goodnite Darling, Say your prayers - I love you, Chloye

NOTES

1. *Biloxi* Gene was at Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi, in 1950. The bus routes he names — Back Bay, Handsboro — and the Ocean Springs bridge are all local.

June 11, 1950

Bolling Field

My Darling Wife,

Well sweetheart I made it, here I am in Washington D.C. The train pulled in at 1:30 A.M. Sat morning. The car I was in stayed at the station all night, so I remained on it & slept until 6:00 Sat morning. Then came out to the base & signed in.

So about 10:00 yesterday morning I decieted I'd go in and look the town over. I just walked around. Had one meal ticket left so I ate lunch on it. Was pretty warm, just about the same as Biloxi¹. Got tired of walking, so I thought I'd go to a movie to kill some time. When I came out of the movie it was pouring down rain. It just didn't seem right baby, not being able to reach over & hold your hand – and have you “cackle out”. It was a Burlesq show – they told a few good jokes. Seense you wasn't in there with me, it seemed as though I should be able to go home & tell you about it. You & Cory & Claria. Baby it's hard enough on me during the day time – but o baby when it starts getting dark it's just like an aflow [*awful*] night mare. I start thanking of all the things you used to say & do & when I thank of the times you used to tell me you just weren't happy – I just can't hardly stand it. I just hope and pray I can always do things to make you happy & contented when we get together again.

All I did yesterday was check on apartments. I should be able to get a farley nice one for around \$48.00 I'm just waiting until tomorrow so I can check out here on the base to see if I

can get one out here. I hope I can, It should be a little cheaper. Want to check & find out about the hospitle too,

You know how we were talking about how strict this base would probably be? Well so far as I know now, it isn't half as bad as Keesler.

They have television here. Have nice City Buses also, radios in them. I'm in the service club now & they have a television set on. A baseball game.

I going to quit for now & go back to the barracks & finish this baby.

2:15 Here I am in the barracks. I've just looked over all our pictures baby – I'll be glad when I get those we take in Biloxi back. So I'll have some more of you to look at.

Darling I don't know how I was ever so luckie to get you. All I know is that the happiest days of my life has been since I've been married to you.

Honey pray every night that I'll be able to send for you shortely. I can't evend thank straight without you, let alone do any thing else.

Have you written Cory & Claria yet. I guess I write them this after noon.

A guy snaped a shot of me yesterday as I was walking down the street in D.C. Am having them sent to mom. They should arive around the 20th. She'll have to pay a \$1.50 plus postage to get them out. So if you still there at that time (But I hope with all my heart your not) go over & get one of each. One will be walking & one standing still.

I'm going to have to try & borrow a stamp to send this to you – so if mom should happened to call you tell her I'm here & okay & I'll write her as soon as I get a chance to get some

stampes. I still have two bucks & I'll most likely get paid the 15th.

When you left Thur. morning baby I couldn't hardly stand it. Then when I didn't leave until that afternoon - O darling was it bad. Honey I don't see how a person could love & miss someone so much as I do you.

How have you been feeling? Hope the baby isn't giving you too much trouble. I can't hardly eat a meal & every time I do, I just about through it all up.

Sweetheart when you start down here if you went by Biloxi you could stay at the Harrises for a day and rest up & then catch that 7:06 P.M. train out of there & it's a straight run to D.C. You wouldn't even have to change trains.

Just got back from looking for an apt. The wind has been out of the northwest today, was pretty cold last night & this morning.

Well baby we've been apart four day now. I don't think I can make it four more. I'm just hoping & praying I don't have to wait much longer than that.

D.C. might be a great place but I don't want any part of it if I can't have you with me.

This afternoon I went out looking for an apt. All I found was one room, had a bed, dresser & closet with share bath for \$30. a month. A two bed room house for \$125.00 a month. So baby you can see kinda what we're up against. I also found out this afternoon that there wasn't any housing area on the base. The only way we could stay on the base would be house trailer, they have a trailer parking area. That's what makes it so bad. No enlisted men get to live on base & there all of them has to rent in town & I guess that's why their so hard to find.

Should be able to find out a little more tomorrow though. You can rest assured baby, that if it's possible I'll find use a place.

Jimmy misses you baby and said to tell you hello – but he doesn't miss you half as much as I do. I hope you & Rosie are the same way.

Well baby doll, your worshiper is going to be expecting lots of mail from you very shortely. So please don't disappoint me. Honey I didn't intend for that to sound like I doughted you because I don't, because I love you too much for you not to write! Well darling I'll close for now, & as I said hoping to hear from you soon. Tell me everything baby, how much you miss me & love me.

Heres hoping to see you soon! Because I love you so very very much.

Your Husband,
Gene

Cpl. Gene Catchings 18345617
1100th CAS. SqdN. 1100th AB GP
Bolling A.F.B. Washington, D.C.

NOTES

1. *Biloxi* Gene was at Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi, in 1950. The bus routes he names — Back Bay, Handsboro — and the Ocean Springs bridge are all local.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

June 12, 1950

Monday Morning

Hello Darling,

Well, I'm just been working my little head off canning & cleaning home. I canned 7 pints of butter-beans & 3 pints of black-eyed peas. I got some tomatoes & okra from the garden - I am going to do them tomorrow. I am also going to go to Jacks & get some corns. How would you like to have a little short chow? I thought I might fix you a little of that.

Sweetheart I got your letter today - it made me feel so much better. I'm hoping to get a telegram in the next day or so. How about rushing it a little?

Tonight "Stanolind" is having a company bar-be-cue and dance at the Beeville Country club. Darling, gosh I wish we could go together. Remember how we used to talk about them. I told Hank (who by the way is in charge of the bingo) that I was going to sit there till I won me & you a bunch of worth - while gifts. Hope I can.

Darling, I'll just keep writing notes until I hear from you about your address. Please don't do this like you did Ann's. ha ha

Darling, I love you so - Be sweet & think of me always.

Yours, Only,
Chloye

June 12, 1950

Tells every one Hello for me and give them my regards.

Hello Precious One,

And how is my baby by now? Feeling fine & loveing me more than ever I hope. Because I sure love you more than ever. Today wasn't a bit better for me darling, so far as missing you. Ture the little time I was working I didn't miss you to aflow much but then when I get off I seem to make up for lost time. Because it seems like I should be able to go home to spend the rest of the afternoon & night with you. O baby you can imagen how aflow it is in this barracks. It wouldnt be so denvable if I didn't know & used to such a better way of living. Honey U certainly know now that being with you is my everything. It's really getting my [*goat, struck out*] staying around here like this.

I was on a little detail this afternoon. The Air Force is opening up a new office right in the middle of town. We had to go in and put three metal cabinets together. It would be nice if I was luckey enough to get assigned there or in the Penggoun apt Building¹. I don't thank I have any such luck though!

You see baby I haven't been assigned to my permanent Sqdn. yet. Will probably be about 5 to 7 days.

I wasn't able to check on apt. today honey & Neither will I get to tomorrow, as I'm on K.P.

They certainly didn't waste time putting me to work up here – did they? But I'm glad in away, because It helps me

keep my mind occupied. And I don't do any thing about & apt. until I grt paid any way.

Today has been a farley nice day. Do you know it dosen't get dark here until about 9:15. But we are two hours a head of you there in Texas. And speeking of Texas I'd just about give my left arm to be back there with you.

Has the baby been giving you any trouble honey? I surley hope not. This afternoon when I ate chow I felt as though I was going to through it up again.

Baby I've just got to get you up here soon. I'm tired of looking at your picture. It can't talk, kiss & hold tight like you can. And it wont sleep with me either It probably would but it couldn't half as lovable & bed companion as you, Nothing or No body could ever take your place with me honey. And I want you to know that's coming from the bottom of my heart.

I read over some of your old letters & it's simply heart breaking. Darling I'll be glad when I get some new ones from you – and better yet, when I get you to hold tight & love. Keep praying it wont be to aflowly much longer honey. I have to get you up here soon while you can still travel & it won't hurt you to much. Because I sure want you & that baby both in good shape when it comes. I wouldn't take any thing in the world for you two. Have you gotten much larger in the last five days honey? I hope you don't change to much before I see you again. But then I wouldn't mind if you have popped out in the last few days – would give me something to laugh at you about! No baby I couldn't laugh at you – it might hurt your feelings, but it would be more to love – wouldn't it? Not that I could love you any more than I do at the present though.

I have to get up at 4:30 in the morning for K.P. The sound of 4:30 evend makes me home sick for you baby. Remember the mornings when I'd have to get up at 4:30 and kiss you good bye & leave. Sometimes leave you feeling sick & then some time you'd get up & go down in that cold ketchin & fix my breakfast. Those days weren't to bad. Better than the last five have been.

Mom and Hank aren't going to like the idea of you coming up here, are they baby?

Have they said much about it yet? I wished there would been some way for me to of possibly brought you with me.

Darling, you know if I could find me a good job around where some where I'd get out of this Air Force. And if a war comes up I wouldn't have to worry about going over seas. Wouldn't have to worry about getting drafted either – because I'd have you & a baby, maby more than one. And baby you'd know I could lern to do the work of a college graduate. Don't you thank I could? Don't thank I'm bragging on myself or any thing like that, but I honestly think I could.

How is Wanda & Bill & their baby doing? Give them my best regards.

Baby I just had a brainstorm. If you could get the Red Cross there to believe (some way) that you needed me there real bad & quick I could get an emergency furlow. Try to get 30 days. That way I could look for a job. Wouldn't that be wonderful? Get the Red Cross there to get in touch with the Red Cross here on Bolling² Field and this Red Cross here will get in touch with my C.O. and in no time flat I would be on a plane for Texas. By the way baby if anything should ever happen and you need me quick. Go to the Red Cross there (as I told you above) Because

I can get home much quicker that way than if you sent me a telegram. So remember that. Will close for now hope to see you soon, so I can show you how I love you. Be sweet darling & say your prayers every night. May God be with you until we meet again.

Loving you more than ever,

Gene

NOTES

1. *the Pentagon* Almost certainly the Pentagon, then newly the headquarters of the U.S. Air Force, across the Potomac from Bolling Field. Gene botched the word on the page, struck part of it and wrote a correction above the line that the scan cannot resolve; the reading is left as transcribed.
(unconfirmed)
2. *Bolling Field* Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C., where Gene was stationed in 1951–52.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

June 13, 1950

Hello Darling,

I didn't get a letter from you this morning and I am surely anxious for your Washington address so Mrs. Dees said she would call me if I received one this afternoon. I did & was I pleased – I am on my way to town to get it now - and I hope to mail all these.

Baby, the boxes got here today \$11.32 - pretty high huh? I called the bus station and my ticket to D.C. will be \$30.01. I am going to Corpus tomorrow & try buy a huge trunk cheap & I can claim it as luggage (for free). That will be much better than spending a lot of money shipping to D.C.

I canned 10 fruits of tomatoes for us today. Are you glad?

Darling, I miss you so much - please hurry & find us a place to live.

I'll close now as I am anxious to get your letter.

So long for now my darling - be sweet & write me often .

Love You Always,

Chloye

P.S. I bought 2 baby dresses at the store. Darling how much money do you have? I'm worried about you. I have to pay Lester's \$20 & get the express out & buy a trunk. Hope I can do it all out of the \$40 check. I'll use my war bond to buy my ticket but I know it won't be enough. Well, baby I

June 13, 1950

Bolling Field

Hello My Darling,

Well another day has gone past honey, and it was a long one, Its 6:45 now & I just got off K.P. I was talking to a guy that's perment party here. If I'm lucky enough to get on the same sqd. as he. I wont have to pull K.P. That is after you get up here. I should find out the last of this or first of next week.

Darling, what have you been doing with yourself these last six days? I hope they haven't been as hard on you as they have me. Can't thank of a thing exceipt you & how much I want to get you up here, woundering if you've been sick – just every thing about you baby.

As soon as I get paid baby I'm going to get an apt. Evend if it only has a hot plate in it. You would live with me with just a hot plate to cook on wouldn't you? Just as long as we have a good bath room & bed. We could do with that until something better come along, I thank I'll be able to do a little better than that though.

Don't know what I'll do with myself tomorrow – I'll have all day off. For one thing I'll go down to Dorm Quarters check with the office there about housing. One guy was telling me he went by there & they got him a house close to the base the same day.

Darling I hope you wrote me a letter every day before you got my address, so I'll have all of em enough to make up for everyday.

Baby you get my mom know the reason I haven't written her yet is because I don't have stamps. Nor the money to buy any. I haven't evend had those films developed yet – because I want to have a little money to buy stamps to write to you – the one that comes first to me. Your my one and only in every thing baby, exceipt for my mom & she's second. The old saying – after you she comes first.

Baby the reason I'm writing so small because this is my last sheet of paper. Guess I'll have to make another trip to the service club tomorrow – I can get it free there Ha.

I'm going to take shower now baby & finish this when I get through. I had to start writing you when I first got off K.P. because I couldn't wait any longer.

Just got back from showering – feel a little more refreshed. Baby, "Sentimental Me" is playing now. The next time you hear it – just stop lesson to it & Daling pretend that's me singing to you. For it fits you & I too "T" at least it kinds expresses my feeling toward you. But no song has been written to expresses my feeling toward you yet. The kid in the next room has a radio. The part of the arracks I'm in has rooms, two mens to a room, pretty nice.

Have you gotten that letter I sent reguliar mail yet? If you have what

I said in there about a discharge & everything still goes. Any thing,, just so I can be with you & soon – very soon. You know how it is, don't you?

Although it is nice up here. Not many mosquitoes or things like that. But I thank it would be nice there to if you & I were together & I had a good, paying job. Know of any thing? Would Hank possibly be able to pull any strings?

Have you been fishing yet baby? I want you to be particularly careful at what ever you do baby. Remember you are carrying our little girl (Linda Paige) Or would you rather spell it, Paieg. I thank, Paige, loooks better – don't you? It is a little girl I want now baby, & shes going to look like you. Beautiful, sweet, & – well just Heavenly.

You remember how, WLOX? was reading these social security numbers & giving away \$25. Well they also doing it up here, only the amount is \$100. Wouldn't I like to win that?

Well darling I guess I might as well close for now as there isn't anything I can thank of to write except for, how much I miss you & want more than anything in the world to be with & holding you tight in my arms again – soon, very soon darling. So do all you can, will you?

I love you baby – to – to much Tell, Paige, goodnight for me.

Good Night Sweetheart & sweet
dreams.

All My Love & more to,

Gene

June 13, 1950

My Dearest Darling,

Well here I am again baby – your little lover & husband! How is every little thing with you by now? Fine I certainly hope. As for me – things are fine – absolutely fine. You know not all married men ever get this far away from their wives. I'll admitte it is pretty lonesome & you just feel like you can't live any longer, being so far away from the one you love & miss so much. Everything you start to do you think of your wife & how youd give any thing to be with her. But after all of that I'm pretty happy right now. As happy as could be exceipt you know why honey? You know why I'm so happy now, evend though I'm so far away from you? Ha Ha. Well I'll tell you. I (your little husband who loves you so very much) am going to get a furlow tomorrow. Thank I can get about 15 or 20 days. How does that sound to you? We have been apart fox six whole days. And that's just six to many.

I'm going to work out at some of the kids in the Grain. See if I can't get us a little extra money. And also look around for a job. If I can land a good one – then I get a discharge & we can live like married people should.

I'm going to try & get a hop out of here to San Antonio baby. If I can I might beat this better home. But if I can't – then I'll be a little longer getting there. I went down to Operations this afternoon & put my name on the list but there one about 50 ahead of me. If a lots of them get away tonight, then I'll have a good chance tomorrow.

You know what I'm thanking about now honey? Remember what Cary started to tell one night & then the next afternoon when I was helping him put his seat covers on, Claria went on & finished telling it? Ha Ha. Well I guess, we'll have to try it while I'm home. Anyway it would be better to did for the first time while no one is around, don't you agree? So we can make all the rocket & do any thing we feel like. That is any thing except, you bouncing me off into the floor board – that's out of I suppose you recall what I'm speaking about, don't you? After the baby comes I hope you still get as carried away – because sometimes (every time) I feel just like eating you up, bouncing you down on the floor & every thing else. It's kinda funny how you feel like that isn't it. I guess it's just love. Because I sure have a lot of that for you. In fact, I thank I could spend the whole 15 days doing nothing except making love to you.

The sun is going down now baby (8:35) and it's just like a ball of fire. Really is read, kinda pretty.

Well sweetheart I'll sign off now hoping to leave for "Texas" tomorrow. For My Darling Wife, baby & Texas, So this is so long for now – and remember – Keep Smiling

Love & Kisses,
Gene

P.S. Jimmy is sure glad I'm going to see you too. Tonight when I took a shower he & the twins didn't shrivel up. Every night in the post they're almost shrunk completely up, So long Baby I love you

CHLOYE ANN WEST

June 14, 1950

Woodsboro, Texas

Dearest Darling,

Well, Sweetheart, I just got in from Corpus – paid Lester's (aren't you glad that's over) looked for a trunk and let mother get me 2 dresses and a skirt. So you see you're little wife has had a busy day.

Darling I got your letter and it was so wonderful. The one you wrote on the train just didn't say quite all I wanted to hear, but the one yesterday did. Oh, Baby, I love you so much! If I had you here with me or if I were in D.C. I would be so happy. Darling don't even think about the nights I used to say I wasn't happy – that was just because I was homesick. You know I've never said it since – I've been so very much in love & so happy I can hardly stand it. You what you mean to me. I had (over)

never lived until you married me & made life so worth living. Darling, I miss you so – please hurry & find me a place so we can be together. Our heart could be so much lighter. (ha) No joke baby, do try hard. I know you will – if you can't find any thing else take the bedroom & share bath for \$30.00. When I get there we can look more. Try not to pay but 2 weeks in advance.

Well, baby, I'll close for now – I hope to hear from you tomorrow.

Love You,
Chloye

P.S. I bought 2 baby dresses yesterday a blue & white one & a solid white one.

Darling the baby & I send our love & hope we are with you soon. All My Love,

CHLOYE ANN WEST

June 16, 1950

C. C.

Hello My Darling,

How are you, baby? I know that if you are like me you are so lonesome & blue you don't know what to do. I am really alone now. Gin is on a ranch in Hunt, Texas, Mom & Hank went to Temple & took Billie Jeanne with them. I wouldn't go because I didn't want to miss your letters. I keep praying that everyday you will write & say come on.

Darling I am coming by bus. I will go from here to Dallas – then straight – on a limited to D.C. All this for \$30.07 & I am going to check a trunk with all our things. That will save a lot. Baby I have my war-bond plus \$5 (which should be about \$25. All you have to do is send some extra for the bus and meals. About \$10 should do it.

Sweetheart, can't you get it a partial payment to get your wife there? Why don't you try to find out.

When we went to Corpus the other Mom bought me few maternity dresses. She's also getting the bed, diapers & a blanket. Don't you think that's wonderful?

Darling try to find us a place soon. I don't care if it doesn't even have a hot plate in it. I could eat sandwich 3 times a day to be with you. Darling I missed you. Linda Paige misses her daddy too. She's (or he) really getting rough now. Your wife's getting quite a bit bigger too. I have on your P.T. shorts now & they fit fine. Baby, shall I send your shirts & things on to you or wait until I come? Sweetheart, you haven't forgotten you

promise have you? You said not much longer than a week – remember? We'll I've been home a week today.

Sweetheart, talking about my picture – I surely wish we could do away with those things & just be together. This is like when you were on the “Rock” only worse because I didn't know what I had then.

I called your mom yesterday & gave her your messages. Jr. doesn't think he can get Vera to N.F. I'm beginning to wonder if we are going to get me to D.C. I'm going to have to see a doctor soon and I won't be able to travel too much longer.

Baby, I'm sorry I didn't get a letter off to you yesterday but I really didn't have a chance.

Sweetheart, think of me always, love me always, & pray that I'll be there in your arms soon. Darling, I want to be so much. To have you hold me tight & kiss me would be heaven. Darling, I love you.

Yours,
Chloye

CHLOYE ANN WEST

June 16, 1950

Hello Darling,

I wrote you this afternoon, but I didn't have a way to town so I couldn't mail it. I hate for you to miss a single day without a letter, but you'll get two at a time. I didn't get a letter from you today. If you sent one regular mail. I'll get it tomorrow.

Sweetheart, you said you couldn't do anything about a place to live until you got paid – does that mean that I will be here until payday? Darling, please don't make me stay away from you that long. You know, I'll never let you leave me again – I'll always remember how it is now & no amount of talking will change my mind. Baby, I'm about to go crazy. Why don't you hock our watches to pay rent until the first of the month? I wish now I hadn't paid Lester's – that would have been \$20 more. But in a way I'm glad that we never have to worry about that again.

Baby, I got to thinking the other night about the time you said lets call it quits and it nearly breaks my heart. I know you aren't sorry you went on and married me because of the things you write me, but I do wish that we were together so I could talk to you about them.

Darling, is there any way you can borrow money – a G.I. loan or anything? You know we could pay it back. \$50 would make it wouldn't it? Baby, I don't want to be away from you a single day longer. If you don't write for me ever I think I'll just come anyway. You know we could manage somehow – even if I had to stay at the Y.W.C.A. & you at the base until pay day. We

could at least be together some. I'm really getting that desperate.

Baby, when I'm alone in a house like I am tonight can't sleep & all I think about is you. I'm so home sick – baby, I'll never be able to call any place where you aren't with me home. I dreamed the other night that you were overseas for 2 years & I wouldn't see you for that long. Darling, I can't look at your little picture without crying. I'm just ruining this letters with tear drops but baby I can't hold them back.

Darling, please do all you can & do it quick. I miss you so very, very much.

Sweetheart, jobs are so hard to find, I'm afraid for us to get out of the service. We'll talk about it when were together. Please, please don't let it be much longer.

Baby, I still sleep with your letters under my pillow (rather your pillow). I still haven't change the pillow slip & I'm not going to until I'm with you again.

Darling – the baby & I miss our daddy & hope to see him soon. All my love – Chloye

Mrs. Chloye Catchings

CLARA & CAREY

June 16, 1950

Biloxi, Miss

Hello Gene,

Received your letter and was glad to hear that you made the trips O.K. Guess your more settled now and liking the place O.K. Glad to hear that it's not as chicken as Keesler. Let us know what your doing.

It sure is lonesome here now that you and Chloye are gone. Don't seem like the same place. Sure Miss both of you. The house is still vacant. Lot of people have been out to see it but most of them have two & three kids. Bet you wish you had it up there. Any way I hope you find a place without two much trouble. I know you want Chloye with you.

Your sure having some experience with the people up there. Must be plenty of queen ducks there ha ha, I've been reading about all the Homosexuals they have in the state dept. maybe your running into most of them.

Well, we found a small watermelon on you vines yesterday when it gets ripe I'll let you know and you come down and we'll eat it ha. They are looking good.

Mr. Book and I went fishing again yesterday. Went out on the front beach. Didn't have any luck. He caught one speckle trout about 10 inches. Guess we'll try it again next week.

We got a little rain this morning but didn't last long and now it's hotter than ever, getting hotter every day.

I'm still not doing anything. Haven't done a thing all week. My nurse is going on a 15 day leave Monday so is they don't put me to work guess I'll have plenty of time off.

When you write Chloye tell her hello for us and take care of herself. Not to ride any bucking broncos, ha. Guess I'll hang up for now but write and let us know what your doing.

Clara & Carey

Love

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 2, 1950

Woodsboro, Tex.

Dearest Darling,

Well, you've been gone from me since 7:22 this morning and I'm as lonesome and lost as if you had been gone a month.

I came home from the bus station & told Mom I thought I'd sleep awhile. I woke at 2:45 P.M. She said Hank was beginning to get scared – I guess he thought I was dead. I think I was just so tired I couldn't go any longer. I hope you get caught up on your rest soon.

Mom & all thought you looked so sweet this morning – and as always your wife did.

Baby, I'm so sorry I woke down like I did when you left – I tried so hard not to, but when I saw that bus I couldn't hold it back. I guess you know how I love you and how it hurts to say goodbye by now.

I hope you didn't starve before you got to Houston. I'm so sorry about your breakfast.

I'm going to Taft¹ tomorrow – I think Mom is going with me – I can hardly wait to see your pictures, I know they will be out of this world I want one, anyway.

Be sure, darling, to send Clara's & Cory's letter on to me if they have answered it yet and I will do the same with the one they send here. I know you'll want to read it.

Baby, my cousin & his wife from New Orleans came home over the 4th so Mom, Hank, & I are going into town to see them & mail this. I'm glad I know your address this time, at

least I can write to you until I hear from you. This letter should be there when you get back to D.C. maybe it will make you feel better.

Darling, write to me often & do try read hard to find us some place to call home.

I'm going to get Hank to see about the big crate and I am going to have things ready when I hear from you.

Baby, Hank said that man in Driscoll really wanted to see you – too bad we didn't get to. If you can possibly get out tho, Hank says he knows you'll get something, it may take a couple of wks but I guess we have the time to spare. ha –

Well, Sweetheart, I'll close for more, say your prayers & think of me always –

I Love You,

Chloye

P.S. Paige says goodnite to her daddy. Love, Paige & Chloye & (Rosie)

Mrs. Chloye Catching's

Woodsboro², Texas

NOTES

1. *Taft* Taft, San Patricio County, Texas — Gene's home town, roughly 30 miles south-east of Woodsboro.
2. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

July 2, 1950

c/o L.H. Walker

Hello My Darling

Didn't go through Dallas baby, – Will catch a bus and of here
at 8:15 tonight. I have a feeling I can send for you soon darling.
Hope so anyway? The trip has been fine so far, Bye now.

Love,
Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

July 3, 1950

Woodsboro, Texas

Hi Baby,

Well here I am again honey. Way down in Alabama! How's Paige been treating you? Its a little warm down here, although the buses are air condition. As long as your amides one it's pretty good. Baby you want to be rested up, so if I can't get out & have to send for you – you'll be ready to leave, See you soon darling.

All My Love,

Gene

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 3, 1950

Woodsboro, Texas

Hello Sweetheart,

Well, I am on my way to Taft¹ – thought I'd let you know. Mom & I want to see your pictures & we thought that we would visit with Mom & Vera for a while. Wish you were going to be there. Do you? ha –

I wonder where you are today. I hope you sent me a card from Dallas. Or somewhere along the line anyway.

Didn't do much today – mostly loaf – did do a little washing. I hope you get your clothes done up as soon as you can. If you don't – I'll do them as soon as I get there. I hope in about a week – I hope in about a week – I know you'll try real hard because you love me – I hope. Of course, I know you'll miss me – do I sound conceited?

Well, darling, I must (kiss from the way Dwayne) go now – I'll add on to this in Taft.

Baby, I just saw your proofs and they are so good. The one I choose makes you look just like a little devel. It is so cute. I ordered an 8 by 10. I'll let you see it in about a week

Mom just went to baby-sit but came back cause the lady doesn't want her until 7:15. I guess we'll go back through Sintin – I forgot about the Bayside² road being worked on.

Darling, I'll close for now, write me soon, say your prayers every night, & love me more than any thing in the world.

Paige loves her daddy and says to tell her daddy hello.

Goodnight my darling I love you.

Yours,
Chloye

P.S. Saw Freddie down town, didn't talk to him, tho.

Write so soon.

C.C.

Dewayne kissed the other envelope until there was nothing left, they say
he looked for you Sun.

Mrs. Chloye Catchings

Woodsboro³, Texas

c/o L.H. Walker

NOTES

1. *Taft* Taft, San Patricio County, Texas — Gene's home town, roughly 30 miles south-east of Woodsboro.
2. *Bayside* Bayside, Refugio County, Texas, on Copano Bay — a short drive from Woodsboro, and where several of the couple's snapshots were taken.
3. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

July 4, 1950

Hello Darling,

Getting closer every day baby, Will arrive at D.C. at 2:55 this afternoon. Nice weather up here. But the news isn't looking any better. Guess Gin is home by now. Hope you can read this honey. Tell everyone hello for me baby, & keep your fingers crossed.

Mrs. Gene Catchings Woodsboro¹, Texas

Love you,

Gene

Cpl. Gene Catchings 18345617
1100th Personnel Processing Sqdn.
1100th Air Base Group

NOTES

1. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 4, 1950

Bolling A.F.B. Washington, D.C.

Dearest Darling,

Well, Sweetheart, I hope you had a nicer 4th than I did. I did not do one thing – I did iron a little and took a short nap, but that is absolutely all. I know you were awfully tired – I bet you never want to see another bus – I sure wish I were on one right now, hurrying to be with you, my darling. Baby, I hope the first letter I get from you from you tells me to come on.

Did you get in trouble for being late? I've been worried about it. I hope not, darling, I love you too much for anyone to get after you.

Mother and I had a nice visit in Taft¹. We stayed until 10:00 last nite ate supper & all. I don't think we would have left then if I hadn't suggested it. Mother really seemed to have enjoyed it.

I still can't get over your pictures – Baby they will help me. I can look at you every nite when I go to bed & see you first thing in the morning. Oh, Baby, I want to be with you so much – no one can ever make me as happy as you can and I want it to always be that way.

Sweetheart, be sure & write your Mom, she wants you too so much. I gave her your address last nite, but I told her not to use it until I checked – because my memory is not so good – but I dropped her a card today & told her it was correct. I never thought I could remember it.

Baby, how do you like this picture I enclosed? I know ours couldn't be anything but cute, tho. I hope you said I may be here when the baby comes. Baby, I didn't get married to live away from you. I know you didn't either.

Sweetheart, don't forget to send the insurance money to Box 12- Golf port, It is overdue now. \$3.56, isn't it?

Baby, I hope I have a letter or a card that you sent me from Dallas or someplace, by tomorrow. I want to hear from you so much – better still I'd like to have you tight in my arms, and kissing you like you've never been kissed before.

Sweetheart I miss you. Write me and say your prayers every night.

Love You, Baby,
Chloye

P.S. Paige send her love to her daddy. C.C.

NOTES

1. *Taft* Taft, San Patricio County, Texas — Gene's home town, roughly 30 miles south-east of Woodsboro.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

July 4, 1950

Bolling A.F.B.

[written in the margin: Have you sent the ring yet baby? Don't forget it!] My Dearest Darling,

Arrived here at 2:00 this afternoon honey, & beginning to get tiered of that bus.

How is every thing with my darling wife? Is your hip still giving you trouble? If so go back to Refeguo & get it pulled again, because your going to need to be in good shape when you start up here. Be sure & always take your pills baby. Because they'll help you out a lots.

I didn't go by, Dallas coming up here. From Huston I went to Shreveport La. Had an hour lay over there. Was the longest lay over all the way. The only trouble the darn busses stop about every mile or so from La. to Virginia. Picking up negroes out in the country. But at that it only took 55 hours to get here. Right now I've been gone from you 59 hours. 57 really, because this is, Eastern daylight saving time. Two hours faster than there.

Darling do you miss me half as much as I do you – I don't see how you could. Because I miss you so much I can hardly stand it. Get your gloves before you come here.

Baby I'll send you a telegram when I find us a place, & that wont be very long if I have any luck at all. And then when you get to Huston. & find out for sure what time you will arrive here, send me a wire & let me know so I can meet you. O Baby keep your fingers crossed. & pray until your up here with me.

Darling be especially careful on your way up here. Getting in & out of the bus & walking around. Always watch where your stepping. Because I would just die if anything happened to you on way. I'll be worried until you get here baby. Get all fifty of the dollars from mom, because you'll need it coming up here. Don't forget Dr. Gillin Woodsboro¹ (the bill)

Get your glasses before you room up here Get your glasses before you room up here

Darling I wont be myself again until I can hold you in my arms & hear you whisper, sweet nothings. The feel and sinsation of your kisses.

Baby I know this is foolish but I just can't help it, guess it's because I love you so very much – but promise me you wont ever evend look at another boy while your away from me. There will most lockely be lots of em on the bus on your way up here, and if you have to sit next to one, watch him & act as though your married will you baby. I would just die if anyone else ever laid a hand on you.

Try to sit as near the front as you can baby. Because the busses are air condition & it is cooler near the front. But don't sit in the first seat directly behind the driver, because not to much of the cool air hits there. Sure lots of fireworks going on up here. Don't see what their celebrating. I sure don't have any thing to cold about.

Every thing is closed up here today (it being the 4th) or I'd be down at head quarters seeing about apt. now. It shouldn't take to long baby so be ready to leave at any time.

This base sure is crowded now. When I was here before they only had single cots, now they have cots on top of them. And at

that I got top the last cot this afternoon. If any more comes in tonight, they just have to stand them up in corners.

You don't want to wear anything white when your start up baby, for it would get aflow to dirty.

Will get your letters tomorrow. And expecting some new ones from you too.

Loads of Love,

Gene

NOTES

1. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 5, 1950

Woodsboro

My dearest darling,

I was so glad to hear your voice on the phone tonight, but, baby, why didn't you ever tell me that you love me? I hope that you still do. I kept telling you in hopes that you would, but you never did.

Sweetheart, I hope I can get all those signatures. It will sure be hard to do that quick, but I guess I can. It's too bad that you didn't go ahead and get them while you were here.

Darling, I do so hope that you will be able to get out. Won't it be wonderful to live like people should. I know that you'll be able to get a job if you do get to come back and really look – not just play at it. You really didn't have much of a chance while you were here.

Darling, I can hardly wait until we are together. It had better not be long because I don't want to have this baby by myself. (All alone that is. ha)

Baby I'll close for now and I'll write more tomorrow when I send the signatures.

Goodnight, Baby, say your prayers – I love you,

Chloye

P.S. I got the list out tonight.

July 5, 1950

Washington, D.C.

Hello My Darling,

Received three of your old letters & one new this morning baby. I knew I'd get those old ones & was hoping I get a new one also – And my little baby didn't let me down.

Honey I didn't get to find out a darn thing today. All day long they've had me on little pissey ass details. If that's all the Air Force needs me for – then they don't need me. Baby do you thank you can get somebody for each of those letters? You have a list of all the ones that have to be written & signed don't you. I know you'll be tickled to do this. Well baby, you can't do it to fast for me. The sooner the better. I wanted to send you a telegram telling you get the letters signed.

and send them to me – but don't have the money, you'll start on them just as soon as you finish this letter wont you baby?

Hank would be a good one to get to sign that employment one. By him being the Superintendent. Tell him he wouldn't have to worry about me holding him to it just because it has to be signed by a notere republic. It's just something that has to be done before I can get out. I'm sure too I can find something – that is when I get out.

They might not want to let me out. Theres sure going to be a lot of stunk raised on Bolling¹ A.F.B. if they don't. They'll either let me out or make me s/sgt.

You just get those letters to me as quick as possible baby, and remember they all have to be signed by a Notere public. I thank withen in two or three weeks time after I get those letters I'll be on my way home, to the one I love so very much. I'll be looking for them by Monday Please don't let me down baby.

I might get paid Fri. I don't have but a months pay coming & can't get it. Now do you like that? That my dear is the old U.S. Air Force. It seems like some time in here you have to have three or four months coming before you can get it.

I'm going to try & get that \$20, for extending a year before they find out I'm trying to get out.

If they knew I was getting out soon, I couldn't get it.

How have you been feeling baby? Fine I hope. Tell Paige & Rosie hello for daddy, & that daddy will see them again soon. And this time never to be away from them again.

Rained up here last night & again at 5PM today. It's 7 now. In two more hours it will start getting dark.

Baby please hurry on those letters, because I can't stand to be away from you much longer.

Will close for now sweetheart & hope for the best. Darling I miss you so much.

Gene & (Jimmy)

Love Ya Always,

NOTES

1. *Bolling Field* Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C., where Gene was stationed in 1951–52.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 6, 1950

Nighty night, Darling.

Darling,

I hope that you appreciate me cause I've really been busy today. I went to see Mom & Hank's lawyer in Refugio this morning and he fixed up all the forms for me and signed one. He notarized the one I signed, then I went to a doctor & then to the president of the bank in Woodsboro¹ & he signed one. Mom & I went to Taft² this afternoon but I didn't get to see Jack. I talked to Oma & she said she would send him to town to take care of the last one. I hope he will. I left a special delivery air mail envelope (addressed) and all the other papers and asked Vera to mail them tonight after Jack comes. Darling, I'm sorry I didn't get them off this afternoon – if I had seen Jack I could have Milton wouldn't do it. He was afraid to get involved.

Darling, try hard to get out – I sure have done my best – I hope it's right. I even had the doctor's signature notarized.

Baby, I miss you – I hope to get a letter from you tomorrow – I got the Ala. card today.

Sweet dreams, darling, say your prayers and think of me always.

I Love You,

Chloye

P.S. Night from Paige & her mom to her daddy.

NOTES

1. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.
2. *Taft* Taft, San Patricio County, Texas — Gene's home town, roughly 30 miles south-east of Woodsboro.

July 6, 1950

Washington, D.C.

Hello Sweetheart,

Received your letter of the 3rd this morning baby & you don't know how good it made me feel. Please make sure I get one or two every day from you baby. I'd probably die if you failed me.

Glad those pictures turned out good. You know it may be the last ones of me taken in uniform. (I hope)

So DeWayne kissed my letter ea, I sure do like that little pelt. Feel sorry for him & Vera too, a little boy like that needs his daddy around just as much as I always need you around.

Didn't get to find out a thing again today baby, I'm sure getting feed up with this kind of doings. Being away from isn't bad enough, I have to sweat out going to the Far East also. You'd be suprised how many men are being shiped over. By the way baby – Don't let any thing I say in any of my letters, about what is going on up here, ever be know to any one exciept you. You may thank you can tell mom, but don't, It could go rough on me if I told you something & it got out. Security you know. They're really clamping down on it now. A lot of things that happen up here I want you to know. But no one else baby.

Things really are popping up here. I've never seen so many planes on a base this size before. All kind of planes. And you'd be supressed what they have in & on em.

I'll be glad when I get assigned. You see honey that's whats holding us up. I don't know now wither I'll evend be assigned

here or not. If I got San Antonio or something like that, I might stay in if you just as soon I had. But I believe I'll get out baby. To where I know I can spend the rest of my time with you, the one I love.

Just got back from chow Baby will I be glad when I get back to where I can sit down to a table with you & enjoy sitting talking to you & enjoy your good cooking. Had some of the sorriest red beans I've ever tried to eat tonight. Evend the K-Rations we had during typhoon on, Okinawa¹ beat them. Had some good old, Watermelon though thats & milk was the only thing going after.

Sweetheart every day when I get off work & until the time I go to work the next day – I miss you so much I can hardly stand it. Dunning working hours it isn't too bad. It was just ment for you & I to spend all our spare time together darling. Pray that it will be that way soon – real soon.

Honey that telephone call last night didn't turn out like I wanted it to. We didn't evend get to tell each outhor how much in love we were.

I've been longing to hear your sweet voice so bad. And last night after I finished that letter I got to thanking – that would be a good excuss for me to call you. I hope you got all the letter signed today. There was five all together. One from you, a doctor, employee & one each for two dis-concerned persons.

Rained most of the day up here. Slow drisle all day long.

Baby if I can't get out, & get stationed up here you can look for a telegram from me very shortly after I'm assigned.

How about that ring darling, your still going to send it aren't you. I thought I'd already have it by now.

If I don't get paid tomorrow I want have any money for stamps and evadently I'm not going to get paid. My records have been missed placed someplace. That's why I'm being held up here so long as a casual I thank. Just my pay record, not my outhr ones. Their here.

Well sweetheart I'm going to sign off for now – so be sweet my darling, say your prayers every night & write me every day (or night) Sweetheart I love you so much. Some thing has to happen soon. I can't go much longer like this.

Love Ya Always,
Gene

NOTES

1. *Okinawa* Gene served as a radar operator on Okinawa, which the United States occupied and administered after the 1945 battle. He calls it “the rock” throughout.

July 6, 1950

Hi Baby,

Just finished taking a shower. I'm so lonesome for you that I thought I'd write again. As writting does help a little. Some times I believe it only makes it worse though.

You remember that navy jet that flew over the house Air Force Day & whisled so much. Well six of em just came in & lit here. Talk about screaming – they were doing it.

Just about all the guys out of the barracks have gone into town. That dosen't help matters much.

Darling have you heard that song "Good Night Alive."? I can't hardly lessen to it.

I haven't evend taken my clothes out of my baggages. No place to hang them up. And any way I'm expecting to leave this place pretty soon.

Baby when I get out of the service & get home, I thank I'll quit something. I was sitting in the laterine this afternoon, just before taking a shower & the smoke from my cigarette amazed me. I just sat & watched it.

When I went to the mess hass this afternoon I sat my tray on a table, & went to get some milk. I started back to my table & passed it up. It took me about a minute to thiank where I put it down. You see – I'm just lost up here without you. I know I'm not that absent minded normerly.

Darling I'll be so glad when I get home. at this time of the day we can be together. Baby all I want to do for about a day after I get home is just sit & look at you, hold you tight, kiss

and make love to you. Tell & show you how much I love you. I just can't seem to find the words to tell you how much I do love you darling.

You remember how every time we've apart, we write & say, "Never again," Darling every time I write it & I want it to be that way so bad. But as long as I'm in the service – their will always be anouther time I'll have to tell you good bye, and life isn't long enough for me to be letting you good bye sweetheart. I may be selfish – but I want you with me every single day.

Well baby I'm going to close for now & read until I get sleepy. It's still an hour & a half before dark.

I have to get up at 4:15 in the morning to go on – guess what? Yes that's it K.P. I hope it is the last K.P. the Air Force gets out of me.

Good Night Sweetheart & pray to God for us to be together very soon. O My darling I love you so much.

Yours Always,
Gene

P.S. Pat Paige a couple of times for me (also Rosie)

I'll be so happy when we can sit around together & play with our little one. Wont you?

July 7, 1950 I love you & I miss you! I love you & I miss you!

CHLOYE ANN WEST

[undated — between July 6, 1950 and July 7, 1950]

Woodsboro

My Dearest Darling,

I hope that by the time you get this you will have already received all the letters that you needed. Darling, I told everyone down here that you had already seen your C.O. and he advised you to hurry – if there was any chance at all. So don't you write your Mom & tell her you haven't seen anyone. Please! I thought if I told them that, that Jack or someone would sign it quick. Please don't think I did wrong, baby – I did the best I knew how.

I received a letter from you this morning & I went into town this afternoon to see if one had come in on the 2:50 P.M. train. One had so now. I won't have one tomorrow morning, hope I do in the afternoon, tho.

Darling, do you really think that you can get out? Please don't let me get my hopes up just to have them dropped again. I want you out so much. I wish we could just live like hermits the rest of our lives – I feel like it would take that long to satisfy me. Sweetheart, please don't ever think about me looking at any other boy. You're my husband and I love you more than any thing else in the world. You're not thinking about what Betty Jean Shirley told Dee Jay are you? ha. No joke darling, I don't want either one of us ever to have to worry about any thing like that it's hard enough just being apart – much less having to worry about trusting each other. Darling, I

never cease to trust you — please believe in me like that. I love you so very, very much.

Baby, did we send off the film that we took indoors in Biloxi¹? I guess it just didn't turn out. I wish they had — they were taken when you and I were all alone. It seems so long since it's been like that doesn't it? We will be again soon I know — I hope & — I pray.

Darling, write me every day or even twice a day if you have the time. I write you every day, but I can't always mail them the day I write them. You know I'm always thinking of you & loving you tho don't you?

Goodnight, baby, say your prayers & send me a kiss (not the other kind) ha.

I want you so much. Take care of yourself, Baby, My hip is so much better — I thought you'd like to know.

I Love You, Always

Chloye

P.S. If you don't hurry home soon there may really be a Paige to say goodnight to her daddy.

NOTES

1. *Biloxi* Gene was at Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi, in 1950. The bus routes he names — Back Bay, Handsboro — and the Ocean Springs bridge are all local.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

July 7, 1950

Washington, D.C.

Dearest Darling,

Well, Baby, here I am again. Missing my sweetheart as much as ever – in fact more so.

Received your letter of the 4th this afternoon. Honey I was worried for awhile, because I have been getting your letter at morning mail call. I knew I'd get one from you this afternoon though. Good this I did to, because I was beganing to feel mighty low. Thought 4:30 never was coming. Also got a letter from Mom written on the forth. So I guess she didn't waite for you to check on it, no need for my darling to check on any thing – because she has a wounderful memory. Every thing about her is wounderful! (Evend her husband!!)

Honey, the picture you sent me was a darling – wasent it? So sweet & contened looking. I can hardely waite until ours gets here sweetheart. When I get to thinking about it I get so excited & anchous I don't see why it takes nine months. I guess so people like use can prepair for one. ha.

I wished I had some money so I could buy some stamps & write Jimmy. I know how he feels about mail. Hope things blow over in time so Vera can still go up. I don't believe this will last to much longer. I really don't believe Russia will jump into it. Because she will have the whole world to fight. The "United Nations," you know.

I was on K.P. today honey, & boy did I eat – all day long. Wasen't a bad day at all.

Also found out to day that I wont get paid until Wen.

Fourty Cpl's. on this base & Andrews A.F.B. (That's on the outhur side of the river & down about 14 miles) can make sgt. this month. Theres only 500 cpls. So you see what a chance I have of making sgt. Evend when I am elegeable for it, in Oct.

Baby I guess we'll have to buy use a double picture frame now, or had you rather just by two single ones. I want to get your picture in another frame – one with a glass in front to protect it. You always need protection – honey evend your pictures do.

I wrote the insurance Co. when I found out I wasent getting paid today. Explained it to them. Mabie they'll hold on to the Policy for use.

Don't guess you've heard from Cory & Claria yet. If it didn't mean being away from you longer. I'd go by & see them when I get discharged. Mabie theyd come down to visit with us in Texas on one of his furloughs. If they get stationed in, El Paso.

I'm so tired of hearing air planes rooving – I thank I can crack up if I have to lesson to it much longer, [*Sh, struck out*] So you keep praying baby & things are bound to turn out.

I have all day tomorrow & the next off. Don't know what I'll do. Only have 30¢ & I'm going to use that to buy stamps.

Have you been thanking about that, "island" much lately honey, I have. When I get home I'd just like to spend a couple of days out there – just you & I. So you kinda be fixen it up baby –

Honey – why does things like this have to happen to you & I? Why couldn't it happen to someone who didn't love each other so much?

Baby I'm sending you this picture of you & I. It isn't a very good one of you. Would you send me that outhur one of you & I?

I thank I'll go on sick call money & get my teeth cleaned, tonsles taken out & eyes examined. Wished you were up to visit me while I had my tonsels out. Get all those little things taken care of before I get out.

Sunday 5:30 Well baby here I am again. Two whole days without any mail from you. And youve had to go two days without mine now to, because this mail room isn't open on Sat. & Sun. So mail can't leave out.

I hope the letter with all those outhur letters is here in the morning. Mabie this time next week I'll be just about ready to come home.

This time last week I had been away from you ten hours. And it seemed like 10 days – now it seems like months.

9:30 P.M. Hello Honey – guess you wished I stay with this letter & get it finished, don't you?

Well I've been talking to an M/Sgt. All day today. He just came in from Colorido day before yesterday. Then tonight he wanted me to go into town with him to see a movie. "Auntie Get Your Gun". He has a 50 [*pontiac, struck out*] Poentic, one of these hard top conv.

His married, had to leave his wife in Utah with her family. He's waiting to get assigned & find a place to live. We saw the movie, then dropped into a drug store & had a coka – then came back to the base. He was stationed here before. Pointed out some of the large & important buildings. I'd to go into town with him some day when we had time to look around. A T/Sgt. wanted me to go up to New York Sat. morning with him &

come back tonight. I didn't have the money so I didn't go. I'd like to see New York while I'm up this close. It's only about 225 miles. But I'm not because I don't want to spend that money. I'd couldn't enjoy it anyway, knowing you wasn't with me to enjoy it also.

Well sweetheart I'll sign off for now & get a little shut eye. That's all I've been doing seems I've been up here – "Sleeping" & Longing for you BABY.

July 8, 1950 I didn't get to mail you a letter yesterday I'm mailing two now, Baby, take good care of yourself and love me always. I love you so much.

Love Always,
Gene

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 8, 1950

Woodsboro

Hello My Darling,

How are you, and when are you coming back to me? Have you found out anything yet? Baby, I hope when you do that the news will be in our favor – I want you here, safe with me so very, very much.

I didn't do much today, we really gave the house a good cleaning yesterday so there wasn't a whole lot to do. I ironed a little and I'm going to wash my hair when I finish writing to the one I love.

Today is Sat. I hope you received the letters like you wanted to. I tried hard – they sure better have made it – now if they will only do some good.

Paige hasn't bothered me a time - in fact she doesn't even kick much. They tell me the happier the mother the better the baby does – at that rate ours hasn't a chance.

How can I be expected to be happy with you so far away from me? Darling, I miss you so very much. I hope you miss me – it just wouldn't be fair if I were the only one. I know I'm not, tho.

I haven't gotten my check from mom yet – today is the 8th – I guess I'll get it Monday. You sure had better be coming home or I'll have to wait another month to come up there. \$16 – Mom, \$7 - glasses, \$2 - Dr. Gill, and I bought 2 crib sheets to be put away until I get the check. One is pink the other blue – how about that? Darling I have got to start seeing about baby

things – I can't wait until it's too late. Shall I go on and get the little shirts & receiving blankets. I hope you say yes cause that will take up part of my time. \$25 isn't enough to get to D.C. or any way is it? Darling, try so hard to get out. Paige and I need you here with us so badly.

Goodnight for now my darling, I love you – Chloye& Paige

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 9, 1950

Woodsboro

My Dearest Darling,

Well, here it is a beautiful Sunday morning and no you to share it with. If we were in Biloxi¹ I guess we would still be in bed, or maybe we would be going to church. Most likely be in bed! Don't you wish that we could be?

Mom, Hank, and I are going to go to Robstown & eat lunch and then drive out to the Stanolind Oil Camp there and see some people we know. The Finley's etc. I haven't seen her since you and I got married.

Darling, I hope I have a letter from you tomorrow saying something about you're getting out. This waiting surely is bad for me – remember when we were waiting for your orders? has – that all seems so long ago to me. Time just drags when you aren't with me – baby, does it for you? Please don't try to pass any with someone else to kill time –

I know I don't have to worry about that tho. I hope –

Baby, Paige sure is getting to be an energetic little thing – kicks all the time and last night her head was like a little grapefruit. You sure had better be here when she comes – Darling, I don't want to go through that by myself.

Sweetheart, I had better start dressing (wish you were here to help) and get ready to go to Robstown. Baby, try hard & write me soon what is taking place.

Baby, don't ever stay away from me so long that you forget all about me and don't ever stop loving me. Darling, I'd just die – I love you so much.

Be sweet, always say your prayers, and take real good care of yourself.

I Love You, Darling So Much – Yours, Chloye Guess you can use \$5 and these stamps till you get paid huh? It's from the check).

NOTES

1. *Biloxi* Gene was at Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi, in 1950. The bus routes he names — Back Bay, Handsboro — and the Ocean Springs bridge are all local.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 10, 1950

Woodsboro, Tex.

Hello Darling,

I'm on my way to town now, Mom & Vera are here & they want to know what the news is from you so I sure hope I have a letter there.

Darling, I got a letter from you this morning – so sweet – and so very much like my Gene.

Baby, I will write a long letter tonight and tell you how much I love you – I did not want to make a trip to town and not have a letter to mail you tho.

Will write tonight darling – So long for now.

All My Love,
Chloye

P.S. I gave Paige & Rosie the little pats. ha

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 10, 1950

Woodsboro

My Dearest Darling,

Well, here it is bedtime and I don't feel like I could sleep a wink. Darling, I miss you so much especially at this time of the day. I love it in the morning before we get out of bed when I'm with you, too. I hope with all my heart that it won't be long until we are together again.

Sweetheart, you don't think that you are fixing to go overseas again do you? It just doesn't seem fair for us to be separated, we've been together so little. Baby, I could be with you constantly for the rest of my life and still feel cheated – I've had you for so short a time. You & I were just beginning to settle down & find out what a marriage really is. At first, when we had our little ups and downs I think we were just getting adjusted to married life don't you? We had changed so much. We have had very few cross words in the last 2 or 3 months. I've been so happy – Darling, I want you always to know that you have made me the happiest girl in the world. Our baby will always know what a fine father & husband its daddy is, too. I can hardly wait until we are alone again in a little place to call ours and have the baby. We should consider ourselves the luckiest people ever.

Sweetheart, I do so hope that you will quit smoking. I haven't smoked since you left. We could buy so many little things for the baby with that money – couldn't we? It is time we really started thinking about that little one – Oh darling – I

want it to look just like you and to be like you in every other way possible. I can hardly wait to see you with your own little girl or boy. It just doesn't seem possible that you and I are soon to have one.

I'm going to Corpus tomorrow to see the Dr. — I surely hope my records are there from Biloxi¹. Vera is going to meet Mother & I in Gregory and leave her car there wish Mom would go, too. When I went to town this afternoon I didn't have a letter from you. I figured you didn't have any stamps so I sent you a book & \$5. Please don't spend it on cigarettes, darling, There won't much left to the check after the bill to Dr. Gill, my glasses, and \$16 we owed mom. I still have to get you picture and I want to get some baby things in Corpus tomorrow. I sorta wanted to get a permanent in my hair so it would be pretty for you & the baby, but I hate to spend it when I need so much for the baby. I hope you get paid soon — baby, I know you won't just throw it away. Save every cent of it you can. By the way — at the rate I'm going I guess I'll be *unreadable* for a baby shower. I'd know exactly at what month they give them.

Darling, I hope this letter wasn't too long — but if you are like me — I can't get one long enough.

Say your prayers, always and try hard to hurry here to me. Baby, I love you and I can never tell you how much. I hope you know.

Be sweet and write me often (every day or more).

Yours Always,
Chloye

P.S. Nighty night from Paige, daddy. We both love you so. Chloye

NOTES

1. *Biloxi* Gene was at Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi, in 1950. The bus routes he names — Back Bay, Handsboro — and the Ocean Springs bridge are all local.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

July 11, 1950

Bolling Field

Hello Sweetheart,

Baby I'm kinda down in the dumps this morning. Guess you will be too when you read this. Darling I hate to keep disappointing you like this. It's almost enough to make me, just down near to cry. Everything looked fine yesterday as far as the discharge is concerned. But today things look aflow bad baby. I could still get the discharge. I'd be under a worse strain, sweating out getting drafted though. Sweetheart you know if I found a good job, & just about the time we was really getting all set – and I was drafted. It would really be hard.

I'm really between a rock & a hard spot darling. I want to be with you so bad – but I really thank it's the best to stay in.

Today is the day for your check up at the base. I hope you went darling.

I won't get assigned to this base, I don't believe sweetheart. So there still a good chance of me send for you when I get to my next base. It might be some place on the West Coast.

I'm having my duty mos. changed from 631 (intelligence spec.) to 514 (Radar) Rather I'm trying to. I was talking to the C.O. yesterday about the discharge. I thank I got on the good side with him – he seemed to like me. So this morning I was talking with him again & he's going to past in a good word for me down at the classification board. You see honey, they re sending a lot of 631's over to the Far East (Japan, Okinawa¹ &

Keora [*Korea*]) Just keep your fingers crossed that I can get out of it baby.

Their sure pushing things up here now. Are pushing ten times as many men through this processing sqdn now. Ten times as fast. I'll know by tomorrow where I'm going. You just keep on writting me here though & the letters will be forwarded on to me when I leave. That is until I can give you my address.

Well sweetheart I'll close for now & sleep until noon. I sure am tired.

over

Always,
Love you darling,
Gene

P.S. Tell Paige hello for her daddy & to be sweet to her mother. Because her daddy loves her mother so very much.

GC

NOTES

1. *Okinawa* Gene served as a radar operator on Okinawa, which the United States occupied and administered after the 1945 battle. He calls it “the rock” throughout.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 11, 1950

Woodsboro

My Dearest Darling,

Here it is night again and my baby so far away from me. I wonder how long I can go on like this – I hope I don't have too much longer. It has nine days since you've been gone, tomorrow will make it ten and that's the longest we've ever been separated, baby. I hope and pray I hear from you soon telling me you are getting out and will soon be here, close to me, for the rest of our lives. Darling, I want that more than anything in the world.

I didn't get a letter from you all day today. Darling, please try to write me every-day – don't ever forget me – I love you so Baby, you aren't forgetting me are you? I couldn't stand that.

you're my everything and without you I would be lost. Darling, don't ever forget that we were made for each other. We had to be – God must have known I needed you.

Baby, I don't cry much anymore – just when I'm writing and when I get in bed at night and think about you sleeping on my pillow and yet you aren't close to me. Baby, I hope you say your prayers every night – I do. Oh, Sweetheart why are we wasting so much valuable time? What if they do send you overseas? I could at least have had these days – Oh darling, please don't let them do that – I'd die – I'm slowing doing it any way being away from you. I just don't know what to do – I can't seem to think Sweetheart, hurry home – please!

Right now I feel like my heart will break – I'd give anything to be able to hold you in my arms and look and feel you the rest of my life. Baby, remember how we were in San Antonio the day we were together after being apart. I just couldn't look at you enough. It will be twice that bad when I see you this time.

Right now I'm having a few pairs in my stomach – may be just indigestion – I hope (since you're not here) but maybe our little girl or boy has decided not to wait any longer. I'm sure it's not that tho – I think the pairs would be different – anyway you'll know because I won't mail this until tomorrow.

Went to Corpus today and got some baby things. I didn't get to see a Dr. cause my records weren't there. I'm going to go to a Dr. here until

I get a card from the naval base telling me my records are there. I just want to see a doctor because it's been so long – I'm scared not to.

I got a notice of an insured package this morning – I think it's a late wedding present. I told Gin to pick it up and bring it home. He went to the show and hasn't come in yet. I'll tell you what it is when he gets here.

Darling, I'm going to go take a bath and then I'll write more.
10:10 P.M.

Well, Baby, I'm back. I surely do feel better, too. I can still think of one or two things that would make me feel better. Can you? Isn't that a foolish question – I know you miss me, but I surely do wish you would write. I hope the only reason you haven't is because you didn't have a stamp. Isn't there someone you could borrow one from when you run out?

By the way, Darling have you ever put through the allotment for the insurance? I hope so – is it paid for this month?

Sweetheart, I'm so tired from the day in Corpus – I think I'll close for now and try to sleep. I sure didn't last night – I couldn't quit thinking about you. I don't ever want to either. The pairs have stopped – I guess it was just something late – I hope you are taking good care of yourself for me – Darling, if I thought you'd come in now – I believe as I tried as I am I'd get up and make you some (bisquits)(sq.)¹ & gravy. I wonder if I'll ever learn to make em! I hope so for you, baby. Well, I'll close for now.

Say your prayers and love me always.

Bye for now,
Your Chloye –
All My Love.
Chloye

NOTES

1. (sq.) Chloye's own query about her own spelling, written in parentheses immediately after the word she doubted. She uses the device once before, on 25 July 1949 – "that's your privilege. (sp.)" – and those two are its only appearances in the correspondence. Whether she wrote sq. or sp. here cannot be settled: the second letter's descender runs into the descender of "up" coming down from the line above. The transcriber's reading is kept.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

July 11, 1950

Bolling, Field

My Dearest Darling,

Diden't get any mail from my honey today. You didn't fail to me did you sweetheart. It's just unbavable up here when I don't hear from you darling. Maybe it was due to Sunday. I just read all your old letter baby. My darling I want so much to be with you. Hope I'm sent to my new station imeddiately so I can send for you, before much longer. Also hoping my mos is changed from 631 to 514. Because I'm afraid I do something drastic if they tried to send me overseas. I just couldn't go over & leave you. Sure afraid I'd awol.

I should find out tomorrow wither they changed my mos & where I'm going. If they make me keep the 631, I'll either stay here or go over seas. You can be sent over seas with having a year in the States, during war time.

Sweetheart I've got so much to tell you when you get to wher ever we're going. How much I love you & all.

Just thank honey, your going to get to travel some more. Aren't you excited – wounder where you'll get to go now. Not every body gets to see as much of the world as you will. If we go to Florida – or maybe, Vera, will take you down.

By the way, I got those notarized statements Monday. They were all fine.

It is raining again up here, Hasen't missed but one of rain all the time I've been up here. Usuall in the evening.

Remember how I would come home from the base in Biloxi¹, when it looked rain. To be with you.

By the time you get this letter I'll probably be on my way to the new station. Hope so any way. Don't know just where it will be, most likely on one of the Coasts though.

Baby if I stay here. I'll take you to see a burlesque movie, then hurry home with you? ha. Do you think that would fix up Rosie or would any thing like that bother you? Remember the one I told you about me seeing when I was up before? It didn't bother me. But it probably would have if you'd been with me.

Baby I don't believe we'll ever have a cross word when we're together again, do you? We'll know how nice it is to be with each other & enjoy each other.

Jimmy hasn't started sinking yet sweetheart. How is Rosie. Tell her hello for Jimmy. I hope their together real soon – dont you baby?

Has the baby been giving you any trouble? I hope not.

Closing now baby hoping to have a letter from you tomorrow. And to see you soon. So you be getting ready to travel.

I love you so very much, darling. Good Night.

Yours Forever,

Gene

NOTES

1. *Biloxi* Gene was at Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi, in 1950. The bus routes he names — Back Bay, Handsboro — and the Ocean Springs bridge are all local.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 12, 1950

Hello Darling,

Well, I got a letter from you this morning and was I glad. I'm glad you enjoyed your trip into town and also that you didn't mind K.P. Doesn't sound much like you tho.

I'm glad you didn't go to N.Y. We just don't have the money to do things like that – we've got to think of our baby – soon too. Darling, when you get paid why don't you send that money home and let me put it in the bank? It would almost pay the Dr. for delivering the baby – and we have to save for that.

I'm going into town now & see if I have a letter from you. I want me saying you have rec'd the letters and what has developed since. I surely hope I got one on the 2:50 train. So long for now, Baby – I love you always, Chloye

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 12, 1950

Hello Sweetheart,

How are you, darling? I hope you are as well and happy as you can be except for being away from me. I'm feeling better than I have in the last 2 or 3 days. I weigh 117 now – and my arms & legs are getting big too – I know you'll be happy to hear. ha.

Have you heard anything yet about your discharge? All I do is just pray for the best, I guess that's all we can do. Send me a wire if you do get one & let me know immediately. Knowing Woodsboro¹ I would probably get a letter first. No slam on the old home town!

I'm going into town tomorrow and spend the day with Dorothy. We are going to make some baby clothes. Aren't you proud of your little wife? I do want to tho, I think they will mean more to me.

I forgot to tell you in my last letter that Mom went to Austin. Jack, was going to hire his cotton pickers as she went along with his family. I think it will be good for her. She has really been worried about you. Baby, be sure and write her. She's been crying quite a bit Vera said – she thinks you are fixing to go overseas. Sometimes I'm afraid of it too – but darling I pray that you don't. I cried & worried about it at first, but it didn't seem to help the situation so I quit (almost). I cry just being away from you now. Baby, I hope that you don't. It would break my heart to think of you doing that just try hard to get out & I'll make you the best wife a man ever had or best

trying. I want to you to be a good daddy too & be right here with me through it all.

Well, Darling, I'll have to get some more stationary tomorrow as this is all I have. Guess I'll be forced to close & tell you how I love you & wish that you were here with me.

Goodnight, Darling, Say Your Prayers, I Love You,

Chloye

P.S. I better have a letter from you in the morning about those letters or else.

I love you so much.

I LOVE YA BABY

SO AFLOW MUCH!!I'll get the insurance off tomorrow.

NOTES

1. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.

July 12, 1950

Bolling A.F.B.

Hello Darling,

How is every little thing with my sweetheart today? In a-1 condition I hope.

Received 3 letters from you this afternoon honey. Sure was tickled.

Every time I get a letter from you darling it makes me want to be with you so much. I'm going ahead and put those letters in. If I get out & get drafted – it will just be bad luck. And if I get out & dont get called back it will be good luck. I'm going to take a chance anyway. I believe a guy has to take a chance

Tell Paige & Rosie hello for there daddy. every once in a while. Like when we got married, that was taking a chance wasn't it – ha. You know I'm kidding baby. I loved you so much & still do it wont even be a chance.

Were having a big inspection up here tomorrow? Have to kind fin up a little.

Rained a gain all day as usuall.

Darling I have to cut this one short & start getting ready for the ins. as it's getting late.

Oyes [*Oh, yes*] I received the \$5.00 & stamps thanks a million. I'll get paid tomorrow.

Good night sweetheart & my discharge. should be here
withen a month anyway.

Always,
Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

July 13, 1950

Bolling A.F.B.

My Dearest Darling,

Received two sweet letters from you this morning baby, Really enjoyed them. You mithined something in one about it might be to long, Darling, the longer the better.

Sweetheart if you don't need all of this you could give some of it to Mom. Start paying back that \$200. I hate to owe anyone money.

Honey I'd kinda hold off on the babies things a while, if you thank your going to get a shower. Will probably get most of the things she'll need from it.

Go ahead & get yourself a permanent. Just so you don't get your hair cut off. I like my darling in long hair.

Hope you are still feeling okay, I don't have to worry about doing any more jitter bugging do I?

Sweetheart I have to cut this short too as I have to go to work in 5 minutes. Will try to get you a long one tonight.

All My Love,
Gene

July 13, 1950

Hello Darling,

I forgot stationary today so I had to use this old stuff of mine. It's better than nothing tho.

I received a letter from you today and it made me almost sick with disappointment. It was the one saying you were going to stay in the service because you were afraid you would be drafted anyway. Darling, I'd much rather have you here with me a month's then have you drafted than to have you stay in. You might not be and at least we would have some time together. I wish I could change your mind. If I thought you could really get out & didn't I'd be hurt badly. I just can't understand your feeling like you do. Do you like the kind of life we've been leading this past two wks? Well, I surely don't. I want you near me. – If I didn't I wouldn't love you much. Baby, please think it over. Please for both of our sakes. If you do decide it's best to stay in of course I'll be eager to go where ever you are. Darling you know that – it's just that I love you so much that I don't agree with you almost staying in.

I also got another letter from you this afternoon. You said you didn't get a letter from me on that day. I write every day so I don't know what could have happened.

Darling, I'm so tired. I made a blue outing gown for the baby today. It was pretty easy but it took one 4 hours. It has draw-string sleeves and one at the bottom so the little thing can't possibly get cold at night. Darling, do you think we could let the baby sleep with us sometime? I bet it would like that.

I'm going to close for now, I'll write tomorrow before I mail this. Darling, be sweet, say your prayers, and love me always. Think over what I said in the first of this letter. It means so much to me. Goodnight, Darling.

Love You, Chloye

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

July 13, 1950

Washington, D.C.

Hello My Darling,

Well here I am again baby. Howe's every little thing with my baby this evening? Fine I surley hope.

All leaves & passes were frozen here today. The only way a guy can leave is for an emergency.

I guess you know where the Red Cross repersentive there is, don't you? If any thing ever happens that you want me home in emargency, the quickes way is for you to notify the Red Cross there – Give them my address & every thing & they will do the rest. Always remember that baby.

Stood retreat this afternoon. You know sweetheart, every time I'm in a parade or retreat or any marching with a band & the flag – cold chiles just run up & down my spine. I don't know why, because I've never really fought for the flag. Guess it's just because I'm (and you too) going through so much for her now. It just means something to some soldiers, that no one else can understand.

Baby you don't have to worry about me going over seas, because they don't send men who's wives are pregnant over. See what Paige is doing for us.

Sure has been hot up here today. But now the wind is blowing pretty hard & clouding up. It has to rain before the day is over. It hasen't failed yet.

Sweetheart, you don't ever have to worry about me passing time with another girl. I can't even look at a girl, because it only makes me miss you more.

Your picture is looking right at me now darling. Your smiling, but yet your face seems to be so sad. I'm kinda low now myself baby. I do every day along about this time & of a morning. Am going to be stationed here too, so there isn't much I can do – towards seeing you soon. Haven't started my job here yet. Will start it

Monday. And from Monday on – I'm going to be after them for a transfer. This, Capt. Dodson', I'll be working for seems to get an aflow nice guy. Pretty understanding I thank. Just keep praying for the best honey & things are bound to turn out.

I'm going to have to wash out some socks & underwear before dark. Can't send clothes to the G.I. laundry in this Sqdn.

Sweetheart, while we're apart lets save as much money as we can. Buy all the things you need, but don't spend any foolish. Not too much anyway.

My darling, I just got back from the day room. Watching TV. Really a lots of it up here. I stoped on my way back to the barracks & turned the radio on, in the day room, & looked through a magazine. Heard some pretty good "Hill Billy Music". also heard, America. O baby I'm so home sick to see you. I don't know how to take it much longer. I don't know what to do. I thank I'll go see the, chaplin, in the morning. Don't know what kind a guy he is, wither he'll help the troops or not. He has to do something though – that's all there is to it. I hate to go see anyone about anything personnel. But I hate worse to stay up here like this. Guess a good talk with him

wont hurt top matters any. Darling I love & miss you so much. People who love each other so much shoulde n't have to be apart like this. It just wasn't meant to be that way. Theres a roumer all discharges are going to be stoped the 15th, exceipt medical. And today is the 13th. I thank mabie he can help me get a transfer closer to home, if nothing else.

Sweetheart I'll close for now & hope I'm lucky enough to dream of you tonight. I have quite a few times. It only makes matters worse when I wake though. So Long for now darling & keep praying for us to be together real soon, because I love you soo terrible much honey. I do & always will. I could never stop loving you & I hope the same for you.

Forever,

Gene

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 14, 1950

Hello Baby,

Well, here I am again. Mom & I cleaned house all day – it sure does look nice I wish you were here to see it.

Darling, I'm wondering what you've done all day and whether or not you're still in D.C. I don't know whether to hope you are or to hope you're not. I sure know I don't want you going overseas,

Mildred & her bay just came in and I was trying to write on the back porch so you can imagine what is happening. I can't think straight.

I'm on my way to town now - Gosh I hope I have a letter from you.

Mother wants us to go to Houston next week. I don't know whether to go or not. I'm afraid if I did you would write me something important – I know how Vera felt now.

Well, Sweetheart I'm going to close now. Be Sweet, my darling – I love you so very, very much.

Say your prayers every night and think of me always.

Write & tell me if I should go to Houston or not. We would probably be gone 3 or 4 days.

So Long for Now Baby –
Love You So Much,
Chloye

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 14, 1950

Woodsboro, Tex.

My Dearest Darling,

Well, I didn't write you last night and haven't had a chance until now to write today. I received your letter this morning and was so happy. Baby, I'm so glad you've decided to go on and get out. You'll never know what it means to me.

I hope you hang on to every cent of your salary and next months also because it certainly will be needed when the baby comes. You said you had \$40 coming for this (June) month and with July's pay check that should pay the Dr. and the hospital bill. I surely do want us to be able to swing that.

Mom, Hank, and I are at Aunt Sue's house now – that's whose stationary I'm using. Some better than that I used yesterday isn't it?

Baby, what do you do to pass time? I don't do anything – I don't even go to a show because I don't want to spend the money & besides I don't enjoy movies by myself. I'll be so happy when you're here with me. I won't care if I never go any place – I just want to be with you. I hope you feel the same – Of course we will want to show off our little girl or boy won't we? Gee, I can hardly wait. I'm like you – why do we have to wait 9 mos. If you're with me tho I can wait forever – I was so glad I would have to go through it without you. I should have known my baby better than that shouldn't I.

Well, Sweetheart, I'll close for now – I hope you will be real sweet and write to me every day. Darling, don't waste a minute

getting here to me & our baby and I'll love you twice as much if it's possible.

I love You, Darling.

So long for now.

Yours Always,

Chloye

P.S. Today is Sat. so I guess I'll have to sweat through tomorrow to hear from you.

Goodnight, Darling.

July 14, 1950

Bolling H.F.B.

Hello Little Darling,

Sweetheart, I have some more wed tape here for you to go through with if you want to be with. I know this is getting monotines as hell to you & the people around there to keep doing all this nonsents. It isen't really nonsents, because it will get us together. And I'd just about do any thing to do that. I have to have some more, notarized statements. This is to get a transfer from this base, to a base closer home. And the quicker I get these letters or statements – the quicker I get a transfer. I know if you want to be with me half as had as I want to be with you – you'll have these letters to me in no time. Have to have letters from three (3) disinterested persons. Stating they thank it would be better for me to be stationed to a base closer home. Giving a few reasons why. These also have to be notarized honey. Also have to have a letter from you. Heres the list: #① Three (3) disinterested people. #② One from you. #③ And you also have to go to the red cross there & they will write a report. Now wither or not you will mail that red cross report or not, I don't know. I thank most likely they will mail it them selves.

I hope that's all clear enough to you baby.

I hope this is all of this kind of stuff you have to do. Just have all the letters stating it would be better for me to be stationed nearer home. Might have some things in there about , living expenses being to high up here, for me to get by, if I had you up here.

I know you can get all that taken care of baby. Just do as good on these as you did the other & we'll be together in no time. Wont take long for this transfer to go through once I get those letters from you.

Looks like rain up here today – as usuall.

How is every thing & everyone around there?

I should be back in that State soon. Wont it be wounderful to live together again darling. Like married couples should.

Will sign off for now honey – so do your stuff!! I love you sweetheart & hope to be with you soon. This base dosen't want to turn loose of men, but with all of those letters – They just about have to. Bye now baby.

Love ya Always,

Gene

July 16, 1950

Bolling A.F.B.

Hello My Darling,

How is every little things with my baby today? Fine & enjoying good health I hope. As for me, I'm fine. Except for being so lonesome for you.

Hope I have those transfer papers from you by the time you got this.

Baby I didn't a letter from you Fri. Whats the trouble. Surley your not playing out on your husband.

We had fried chicken today for lunch. Pretty good, for army cooking. Wouldn't beggin to compare with my honeys though.

Sweetheart, have you ever heard that song, "Goodnight Irean"

Well, it just about get's me every time I hear it. Shouldn't I don't guess, because I never heard it with you.

Baby, do you know what happened to me? While I was out Fri. cheaking on that transfer, a [*jig, struck out*] jij-a-boo – moved into my room. Now don't you laugh dog on ya. It isn't funny. Gosh they stink in hot weather when they sweat. Have to thank of some way to make him move, I guess. I can smell that raskle as soon as he steps in the hall.

Sweetheart – did I just hit a streak of luck! a guy walked in & asked me if I could use some extra army clothes. Naturially I said I could. He's getting discharged or in fact he is discharged & is catching a hop today & couldn't carry all his clothes on the plane. Said he couldn't use them anyway. So he gave me

quite a few. I've taken to the guy quite a-bit. Diden't know him until I came up here though. But I can always use extra clothes like that around home. If I can't theres plenty of people there, that can.

Sure did work up a sweat a while ago. packed those clothes & washed out some of my under ware & some socks. When I get my transfer & we get to living together again. Mabie we can buy us a washing machine.

Got myself a new watch band yesterday. a streatchable one. Pretty sharp. Have you gotten your permanent yet. Baby if they have to cut your hair to get a permanent – don't get one. Just get a Tonie instead. I don't want your hair cut.

You know sweetheart, all the time the sun isen't shinings up here it's down right chillie. But it can get aflow warm when the sun is shining.

Well baby I'll close for now, as I have to finish packing my bag. I move to the outhur end of the field tomorrow & start to work in on of the hangers.

So be sweet my darling & take good care of yourself & Paige.

And I hope to be seeing you soon. Expeicting those papers from you Thur. or Fri. So long for now sweetheart

Yours Always,

Gene

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 16, 1950

Hello My Darling,

The family and I are on our way into town pretty soon to go to the show. It will be the first I've ever seen since you've been gone. "Curtain Call at Cactus Creek" is the name of it.

I received your letter yesterday afternoon with the \$20 in it. I wish you had sent about \$15 more because every cent of it is going in the bank for the baby. I don't think you and I need much spending money do you? I surely hope you send the other on – that leaves you \$5 plus the \$5 I sent you. I don't see how you could need more than that. I know you could use it, but do you need it? Baby, I told Mom you wanted me to start paying them back, but they know we'll have to have over a \$100 for the baby so they want us to just go ahead & save it. Darling, do try to be conservative. I haven't spent a cent except for the things I told you – I know how much more I'll need it later on. I'd hate to think I was saving and you were buying beer etc. Baby, please don't do anything like that and let me down. It's both of our responsibility. I hope this is not a lecture to you, but I just want to remind you. I do trust you and I know you'll do what is best for both the baby and me.

Sweetheart, today was another old long Sunday. I always miss you so much more on Sundays – if it's possible. What do you do to make them pass – I know you must get so awfully lonesome. If you were here I'd guarantee you that you wouldn't have a dull moment. Does that sound interesting? If so always look forward to that when we're together again.

Well, Baby, the family is about ready and I have to put on some lipstick so I guess I'd better close for now.

Darling, I love you so very much.

I hope I have a nice long letter from you tomorrow – until then so long – Be Sweet and say your prayers.

All My Love,
Always –
Chloye

P.S. So long from Paige & Rosie All of us miss you so much

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

July 16, 1950

Wadlington, D.C.

Hello Precious One,

Well darling here it is 9: P.M.& just about dark. The time of the day I hate to see, of the evining & every morning. Every minite is a dreadful one, when I'm away from you. Will be so nice when I can kiss you again every morning & tell you I'll see you at noon. Then kiss you again & eat lunch with you & kiss you again & say, I'll see you around 5:30. Then kiss you again & eat lunch with you & kiss you again & say, I'll see you around 5:30. Then to come in again & spend a wounderful evening & night with you. O – baby, I love you so much. I'm glad I was luckie enough to get such a wounderful & precious girl as you for my wife. I should be the happiest & thankfulest guy in the world darling. I am the thankfulest & will be the happiest when I'm with you again. And then in Oct. when we get our little one – O baby, I'm so anchous for it to get here. Girl or boy either one. Just so it looks & has ways like its mother.

Can you feature that darling? You a mother – & me a father. Not every one is luckie enough to have such fortunate at 19. I'm so thankful we went ahead & got married.Maybe we don't have the best of every thing. But we aren't going without food any way. Speeking of money, will you send me \$5.00. Send it in your next letter, so I'll get it before I leave. I'm going to need it get some babies washed. Don't want to send them to the G.S. cleaners, because I wont be here long enough.

Some boys in the next room are talking about marriage. It's funny how stupid some people are. I didn't live until I married you darling. I'm only existing, now – the only time I can say I'm living is when I'm with you. I hope I can start living again real soon.

Sweetheart, when we were together again & start to fuss with each other, let's just stop & thank of the times like this that we've been apart & how much we missed & longed for each other. And thank before we do or say things things, and if it's going to hurt the other one, don't do it.

Sweetheart I'm getting a little sleepy now, so thank I close & dream of you. I have had some wonderful dreams of you, in

this lonely old cot of mine here. Wake up so disappointed.
Goodnight now Sweetheart & sweet dreams.

Yours only,
Love, E.C. [*then, written inside
the envelope flap:*] My darling I
love you so. And I hope you all
the happiness in the world. Will
try my best to give it to when I'm
with you again. / Good Night
Sweetheart / Just want to say
again, "I love you"

Gene

P.S.

Looks as though it's really going to rain. Lightning & thundering & an
afflow looking cloud in the south. I thought the sun shining today was
good to good be true. I hate rain when I'm away from you. Goodnight
again, My one & only.

July 17, 1950 Mom & I are getting the ring tomorrow – bout time huh. I
really wanted to wait until you got home but God only knows when that
will Be. I hope it's soon.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

[undated — between July 16, 1950 and July 17, 1950]

Woodshow

Hello My Darling,

I'm so ashamed of myself for not getting a letter off to you this afternoon, but Mother and I sent the afternoon in Bayside¹ visiting a friend of Mom's. I didn't even go to town at all today.

I receive two letters from you today – one which asked me to get some more letters together. Honestly, baby, if I got them & they did give you a transfer (which I doubt) you probably wouldn't be there a month. I'm really getting fed up with this red tape the Army makes you go through. If your discharge doesn't go through I want you to write me at once and I'll come up there. I don't see any point in messing with this transfer deal. Do you? Honestly, if we did that, they'd never give up till they thought of some more damn silly nonsense. But you'd better hurry and find out something – I don't want to have this baby without you – either you get out or get me up there. Well, enough said about that.

I guess by the time you get this, we will have been married seven months. It just doesn't seem like it, does it darling. I hope we're married 70 years if it's possible. The one month we've been apart has seemed that long to me. Baby, my pillow slip surely is getting dirty – you had better do something & do it quick. Baby, tell me truthfully if you think you are going to get out. I thought you said all you had to have were the letters. Well, you've got them – I surely did my best and I know you are too, baby.

By the way, the lady we visited this afternoon surely did give us some cute baby things. She had them for her last, baby. I wish you were here to help me enjoy the baby things – honestly sometimes I wonder if it's worth it when you're by yourself. I know I'd just die if you weren't right there with me – Darling I want you near me so much. Please write for me at once if you don't think you're getting out.

You know I won't be able to make that trip too much longer. Darling, I'm getting bigger everyday – you don't know what all you're going to have to love until you see me.

Sweetheart, I hope to have a very encouraging letter from you tomorrow – (I get one, one day & the next is bad news so I never know what to think or feel). I do want the truth tho.

Goodnight., my darling, I hope I dream of you tonight. I did last night – I dreamed you wrote & asked me for a divorce (that you loved a girl in D.C. I dreamed I called mom & asked her not to sign a marriage license for you. I woke up crying & shaking like a leaf – I hope tonight won't be like that. Sleep tight, Baby Say your prayers & love me till you & I are both dead.

All my Love – Always
Chloye

NOTES

1. *Bayside* Bayside, Refugio County, Texas, on Copano Bay — a short drive from Woodsboro, and where several of the couple's snapshots were taken.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

July 17, 1950

Bolling A.F.B.

Hello Darling,

Hows my baby tonight, fine I sure hope. Received two letters from you this morning, of the 13 & 14th. I had three days with out any though. Dont have mail call on Sat. or Sun, and I didn't get any Fri. Also got a letter from Oma this afternoon. I wrote them, thanking em for signing that letter, & this was the answer. Ol Jack is a good boy, baby. I've always liked him better than Milton.

I hope those letters for my transfer is on the way up here. After I get them, it wont be long before I'm on my way to be with the one I love. Baby, I do love you – so much. I hope were never apart again.

Sweetheart, you want to go to that Naval Base for your check ups asmuch as you can. Save all the money you can. Because we'll need it to pay a month rent in advance. Don't want to have to bonny [*borrow*] any more money. And when I come down there I wont be paid for this month yet. So we'll hope to use the money you have from that check.

Darling both of your letters today were so sweet. I could read your letters all day long. I read them over & over. I can hardely waite until I get home so I can hear you say all those things instead of reading em.

You said you got a package, but you failed to say what it was. Holding out on me?

What about that ring – gotten it out yet? You never say anything about it. Don't send it to me now because I won't be up here long enough.

Have you heard any more about your class ring. Guess I'll be taking a week end trip to Ghristle

City shortly after I get home, if you haven't. He should of sent it when he found out you were married. I kinda want to see that, egg head, anyway.

Has any more fumioles been down to see you or called?

That formeir (the one in Christle City) is the one that slapped you one time isn't he.

The more I thank of it, the more I think we will go to, Christyle City. I need to practice up a little on my, old (631) M.O.S. anyway.

If you happened to see Mom any time soon – you can tell her hi & that I'm doing fine. Guess I'll write her tomorrow. Have written quite a lots.

Well darling I'll close for now so take care of your self & Paige & keep saying your Prayers. I love you lots sweetheart.

Always,

Gene

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 18, 1950

Woodsboro, Tex.

Dearest Darling,

Well, Sweetheart I didn't get a letter from you today – surely do hope to have one this afternoon bringing some good news –

What are all the latest developments? Am I coming to D.C. or are you coming home? I hope it's the latter, but either one will suit me fine.

I went to see Dr. Kootze this morning – everything was fine. I weigh 115 lbs. so now I'm back to normal.

I'm at Dot's house now. You remember her – my cousin. She's the one who is expecting in Dec. She said to tell you hello.

I got my driver's license renewed. I know you'll be glad to know. If mom & I go to Houston I know I'll want to drive.

Darling my gown for the baby turned out real cute. I'm inspired to do a few more – doesn't sound like me does it?

Well, Sweetheart, I'll close for now – Be sweet and write me soon.

All my love, Always

Love, C.C.

Chloye

P.S. So long for Paige – She loves her daddy too.

P.S.S. Dot want's to know if they are drafting guys whose wives are pg.
Be sweet & write me.

July 18, 1950

Hello my Darling,

Sweetheart, I rec. two of the sweetest letters from you today. Except for one, in which you we're hurt in, because of my staying in the service.

Darling as for the baby sleeping with use sometime. I suppose we can arrange it. We'll probably have her so closed to us all the time, it wont evend be funny. Where it gets big enough to get around good – do you think I could take it to work with me some morning? I bet it would really like that.

I was assigned to my sqdn. here today. I'll be working in hanger, at base communication (Radio Mech.) Darling the work is fine & I really have a swell guy over me – but I don't like it because I'm so far away from you. Sweetheart I hope I get those letters from you this week. Then the next week I should be leaving here. I hope & pray that I will – Baby, I can't stand this much longer. I want so badely to be with the one I love. You don't know how it is, being away up here without the one you love bing with you. Just talking to the boys all time – believe me it isn't fun. The only thing that's fun to me is being with you. (I haven't had any fun in so long, it seems like years & years) Each day seems like a week & each week a month.

When I moved over here today & I was hanging up my clothes & making my bed & every thing – I thought of the times when we moved & darling it hurt me so – because you were always there with me before. When I signed in the, orderly room, they asked me if I was on seperate rations –

baby I wanted to tell them yes so bad. Sure hate these lonely ol barracks. The barracks are nice & all the guys seem to be pretty good – but none of it adds up to my darling. All I can say for it, Tis a hell of a life for a guy who loves her wife as much as I.

Hasen't rained up here today, some things wrong. Really had a down pour yesterday afternoon. This place (the weather) reminds me of Ohinawa.

Saved up the legs on a pair of fatigues & a set of stripes last night. Going to put a new pair of stripes on one of my shirts tonight. Have three to put new ones on.

Have a small table in my room now to put your picture baby. Better there than it was on my wall locker. Have curtains on the window.

I hope our girl dosen't fall in love with a service man when she gets big – don't you darling. I'd hate for any of my children to have to go though with the things we are now.

Say baby, I think Vera is leaving the end of this month, you'd better get over there before she leaves & get our wedding present. Don't let her get away with that!

Sweetheart my bunk mate here got a letter from his girl this afternoon, when he opened it, I smelled something & about time a hand full of powder fell on the floor – I sure got a laugh out of that. These poor single kids. I'm sure glad I'm going back to a wife who is having a baby in Oct. Rather than going back to just a girl friend.

Darling will sign off for now so be sweet & write me every day. I love to get your letters so much.

Love you always & you love me always as much as you do
now.

Yours Forever,
Gene

My address:
1100th Maintenance & Supply Gp.
Box #695
Bolling A.F.B. Washington, D.C.

P.S.

Darling I bet you a kiss & a — that I'm with you two weeks from now. If I
get those letters this week that is.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 19, 1950

Woodsboro, Tex.

My Dearest Darling,

Happy Anniversary, baby! Isn't it tho with us so far apart. I hope by our 8th one we are together again – and I don't mean year.

Mom, Vera, & Jessie were here yesterday when I got home from Dorothy's. Brought your big picture over to me. Baby, was I ever glad to get it – at least I have something of you now. The pictures from D.C. came in too, I paid Mom \$187 for that – don't know when I'll go over to get them.

After they left yesterday mother said Mom said they were afraid if you got out you'd just get drafted again & would have lost your rank. Also that you might not get back in the Air Force – some other brance of service. Have they been writing, you that or did you write Mom?

Which ever way it was, I don't like it one bit. I should mean more to you than the Air Force, being a cpl. or anything else. I'm tired of being by myself. When you wrote and asked me to get the letter for you to get a discharge I was happy to do it – I thought you would soon be home. You sounded quite sure – and now all this.

Well, if mom & all the rest want you to stay in they can just get you transfer. I just want you, darling, and I want you quick. This isn't getting you & I any nearer. I don't see why you don't work on the discharge more – you give up too easily or maybe you just don't write me how hopeless it is. From now on, no

matter what, I want the truth (good or bad). Is it impossible to get a discharge? I don't see why it would be, but I'll never understand the Army anyway. Don't want to be given the chance either.

Sweetheart, I know all this sounds awful, but it's the way I feel – I just don't know what to do. Have you ever turned in those letters or was my time just wasted? You wrote and told me you were turning them in and were going to just take a chance. I hope you did, baby, I hope you did.

You know, I don't know whether I'll ever have another baby or not. I never know where. I'll be when this one comes & I think a baby deserves more planning than that. Don't you?

Darling, can't you see why I'm writing all this? It's about to break my heart because I don't want to hurt you, but how else can I tell you what I think. Baby, I love you so very, very much. You're all the world to me & always will be – I know you wouldn't ever write me a letter like this and I hope I never do again – it's too hard on both of us – Oh, darling, I want you and a home and our baby so much. I'm crying more like I always do when I know I'm being too hard – baby why am I like that? I love you & yet I can write you things like I just did when I should write nothing but real sweet letters.

My next one will be, baby – just try to forget this one, but do think about some of the things I mentioned will you?

Baby, I'm going in to town in a little while and take the baby things that were given to me (or to us) to be cleaned. I want to be ready for that little one when it gets here. Baby, do you think you'll be here by then? If not please let me come to D.C. and be with you. I don't want to be away from you then. Or ever, as far as that is concerned.

I received two letters from you yesterday. One of them said something about you being home in a couple of weeks – was that with a discharge or with a transfer. I hope you aren't disappointed in me because I didn't get those papers. Baby, I practically ran the tires off the car to get the other papers signed and it didn't do any good. Now you want me too again. I would have to go to Corpus to see about the Red Cross. I wouldn't mind at all & you know it if I could just see that it would do some good. Another thing, darling, I don't exactly feel as good as I did when you saw me last. The bigger I get the worse I seem to feel – Oh, I don't feel too bad, I just don't feel real good. If you were here I bet I would.

Well, darling, I'll close for now – please don't quit loving me ever and write every day. By the way, you say you miss a day with my letters. Count the days we've been apart, then count the letters. I bet there are more letters. Baby please try hard to get home soon.

All my Love, Always
Chloye

P.S. Bye bye from Paige to her daddy. Baby I wish I could talk to you –

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 19, 1950

Woodsboro, Tex.

Hello My Darling,

I just couldn't go to bed tonight without writing you again today. I just hate my self for that letter I wrote this afternoon, but please, baby, don't you hate me for it. I don't know what got into me, maybe it's just nerves or something that's been building up for a long time. Whatever it was, sweetheart please forgive me – I love you so much – I don't see how I could ever hurt you. You're always so sweet & gentle with me never a cross-word and it seems like all you ever get back is just the opposite.

If I don't get with you soon I'm afraid I'm going to just crack up. Darling, I just sit around & worry – I've got mother thinking I'm sick. I am heart sick and I guess that's the worse kind isn't it? Darling, if you're not home by the 8th of August, can I please come up there? I want to be with you so much I know I can't be happy away from you & I don't ever want to be. Baby, just think – if I had come to D.C. when you went back we would have had almost a month together. That may mean an awful lot to one of us someday – especially if anything should happen to one of us. Baby, I think about things like that all the time. With you in service & me expecting it could so easily happen & it would mean so much to have every possible minute together. If it's 60 years I want it that way. So darling please, please let me come if you don't see any way of getting a

discharge. I promise not to complain & darling I'll make you a good wife – I swear I will – I just have to be given a chance.

Sweetheart, I love you so much – Oh if I could only hold you close & forget all this loneliness – and yet I don't ever want to forget it will make me a much better wife if I remember what it's like to be without the biggest part of me. Darling, you are the biggest part of me – you made some changes in me that have certainly been for the better but I have so many faults I seem to need you more & more every day. I'm so glad I'm married to you – that's something no one can ever take away from me – and I'd just like to see them try.

Darling, it's late and I'm so terribly tired I'm going to close for now and hope & pray you will hurry home or either let me come there. Oh, baby, please do something one way or the other – I can't go on like this much longer.

Goodnight, Baby, say your prayers & God bless you always.

All my Love,
Chloye

P.S. Tear up the other letter I wrote today. The sooner we both forget it the better. C.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

July 19, 1950

Bolling, A.F.B.

Hello Sweetheart,

How's my darling this evening, fine I surley hope. Except for being so lonely for you baby, I'm fine.

I didn't get a letter from you today darling. When I moved from that other sqdn. Yesterday, I told that mail clerk to keep my letters & I'd come down there every day & pick them up. Didn't get to go this morning, so I went this afternoon. Got a receipt from the insurance co. He said I got a cupple of letters this morning & he sent them on to my new sqdn. So I wont get them until tomorrow. Sure makes the evinings hard when I don't have a letter from you darling. Because I just sit & read them over & over in the evenings. Then hit the sack & dream of you. – Speaking of hitting the sack. I sure hate to go to bed – every night. I hope you don't you don't hate it as bad as I do.

Sweetheart I was talking to the Sargent Major in the orderly room today. He said it would take a month for that transfer to go through. Unless you write the Congressman or senator. So if you don't have any thing else to do & want to write the Congressman – it sure would speed things up. You might explain to him that I want to stay in the Air Force, but the living expenses are to high for me to afford at this base, at my present rating. Explain your condition to him. Might also add it would be to convenience of the gov. if I was stationed in San Antonio, to where I could be with you and wouldn't always

have to be worrying about you (you being in that condition.)Mabie I'll get to start writing free pretty soon.

Baby I would worry about you even if you weren't pregnant. I love you so much, I can't help worrying about you.

Darling please don't ever get so lonesome that you want to go out with some other boy to pass time. There's a guy up here who thought he had a sweet little wife during the war. He was away from her three years & when he came back, she had been going out with other guys. But I know I don't have to worry about my wife doing that. I have a lot of confidences in you darling and I hope you do me.

This is one way to find out if you really love each other I guess. I know I sure love you darling. I knew it before we were separated but I see how nice & lovely it really was. Have lived both ways & I'll take living with you. You come first to me baby, above every thing. And I want you to always remember that you always will. I'll love you forever darling, no matter what.

My barracks is right beside the flight line & boy is it noisy.

Had an easy day today Sure don't work in this sqdn. I learned how to preflight & base flight a plane today. I like this kind of work. The only reason I don't like this place is, because you aren't here with me honey. If they gave me, general, to stay up here without you, I wouldn't take it. Nothing means as much to me as being with you darling. Hope you feel the same way, know you do.

Sure is cold up here when the sun isn't shining. Especially at night.

Have been doing some more sewing sweetheart – wish you were here. ha. But I don't mind it really. It at least passes the time. You'd be surprised at all the sewing I've got to do.

I suppose you heard the news tonight, about the States swinging into war time productions. Doesn't sound too good does it. I hope our baby isn't borned during a war. Sweetheart don't you worry about me going over seas, I won't have to go. I have nine chances out of ten of staying in the States.

About that congress deal, you know election is coming up pretty soon. So I'm sure he will really work on it if you write.

Darling I love you so very much. Hope it isn't too long before I get the transfer. I want to be with you so badly. That's all I can think about, getting back to the one I love so much.

Did you see Vernon & Jesse while they were there? Hope you did. They sure were swell to use in Biloxi¹. Ol Vernon is a hard guy to beat.

It's just about to get dark here now, hope I can get to sleep without crying. Do you think it's silly for a guy my age to cry. I do, but just can't help it. I just love you too much darling – that's all there is to it. Your eyes, hair, face, arms, legs ti--, ro---, every thing about you I love baby. Your talks.

By the way, how are your toe nails? Hope they got okay and your hip, having any more trouble with it? Hope you've seen the Dr, at the Naval base by now.

My darling I'm going to close for now & pray for the best. It looks like I'm in this Air Force for 12 more months at least. Guess you heard the news. It has been like that up here ever since I got those letters for my discharge. I got the letters one day & it happened the next. I just didn't want to tell you that. Now don't you worry about any of that sweetheart. Everything

will be OK for use, soon as my transfer goes thru. Good Night
Sweetheart & always remember how much I love you.

Your Husband,
Gene

NOTES

1. *Biloxi* Gene was at Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi, in 1950. The bus routes he names — Back Bay, Handsboro — and the Ocean Springs bridge are all local.

July 20, 1950

Bolling Field

Hello My Darling,

Hope this finds every little thing okay with you. I'm fine – except for the same old thing – So lonesome for you. Gosh, I hope I get those letters from you tomorrow. You don't know what it's like, waiting for something like that & not getting it. I feel like I've been here for years & years and am never going to get out. I wished I'd called you, it takes so damn long for letters. But I didn't think you'd know what to put in them if I just called, besides it takes about \$3.00.

Got a letter from Mom today, she didn't say whether or not she seen you when she was there last Monday or not. Don't guess you were, neither of you said anything of seeing each other. Why don't you go over there some time & spend the night with her. She was telling me she has been aflow lonesome & blue since we left. Said she went to see you, thanking maybe you'd visit her for awhile. Said De Wayne still went around looking & calling me. I didn't think he would remember me this long. I guess that little boy just got to liking me. I sure like him. Can hardly until I have one of my own, pardon me – Our own. Mom said my picture was out in the show window. Can't say my picture was never in bright lights. ha Remember how the window is lit up at night?

Had a down pour up here this evening. Was really hot all day long. Especially in those planes. I like this job I'm on now, real interesting.

Sweetheart I'm going to close now & crawl in my sack, get a long nights sleep & dreaming. Maybe I can get away with this short letter this time, since I wrote a long one last night. Bye now baby & always love me. Because I will you. Good night sweetheart – say your prayers.

Next Page

All My Love,
Gene

P.S.

How come some of my letters are mailed in, Refugio, & you never say any thing about going out there?

E.C.

This is my last stamp. Hope I get that \$5.00 from you soon. If you want any more letters.

July 21, 1950

Hello Honey,

Received a couple of letters from you just now. The ones saying you weren't going to get those letter for my transfer. Can't say that I blame you. I didn't want to ask you in the first place. But it was a way. Don't do it now tho, because I'm going to put in for 754 shool. It's in Ill. Scot A.F.B. Maybe it will come through before shipment for overseas. You wanted the truth so here it is – I'm sweating out being sent over right now. Have been lucky so far, because I have move over seas points than most of the guys in the shop.

That's the way their taking the guys, the ones with the least amont of points go over first. As soon as they get it down to where I'm in the bunch one with the least amont of points – I'll be next. Headquarters called this morning & want five more 754's. They got two them. Will pick three more this after noon. But I'm sure I wont be one. In fact I'm sure I'll get the school.

I can't send for you to come up here, because just about the time you got here, I'd either leave for school (which is eight months) or for over seas.

If I do get school. I can send for you when I get there.

A new A.F.R. came out about a week ago. The only thing that will keep a guy from going over seas, is for his wife to preg. & the doctor knows she's is going to truble having it.

And for what Dot, asked it depends on how old he is. Pregancency wont keep him from being drafted.

Have to close now for I have to go to work in five minutes.

I love you darling.

All my Love,
Love you so much.
Gene

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 21, 1950

Woodsboro

Hello Baby,

How are you, my darling? In love with me I hope & are you missing me? I certainly do miss you – I'll be so awfully glad when we are together again. And it won't be long I tell you – if I can help it.

You might as well put in for separate rations for next month cause you'll surely going to have a wife there. I'm coming if you say I can, and you better, before I am seven months pregnant and that will be around the 8th of August that I'll be leaving here. We can manage I know, so you had better be on the lookout for a place to live. Try not to pay over \$40.

Mom & Hark got a birth announcement from Ann & Ed yesterday. They had a little girl who was born on the 5th of July. 5 ½ lbs. Today they got a letter asking for our address. She told Mom all about the birth. The baby was 3 ½ wks. early. They had to operate because Ann developed some kind of fever & her blood pressure was real high. She is going to have to stay in bed for six more weeks. That really scares me – I don't want to be away from you – I'm afraid something will happen – that's one of the reason I'm in such a hurry to get to D.C. Baby, please don't fail me – look hard for a reasonable place to live & I'll love you forever, which I will anyway.

Well, darling, I'm at Aunt Sue's with mother now & I want to mail this letter tonight so I'd better cut this short.

Darling, goodnight for now. Be sweet & write me what to do.

I Love You,

So Long – Chloye
Chloye

P.S. I rec'd. such a sweet letter from you today. It was written the 19th.
Goodnight for Paige – she really loves & misses her daddy.
So do I, confidently – as of course you know.

July 21, 1950

B. A.F.B.

Dearest Darling,

Baby was I ever lucky today. Rec. four (4) letters from you. Two this morning & two this afternoon. Two of them got me a little hot under the collar, but I love you so much, I soon got out of it. You know the letter you mailed in Corpus the 20th, I rec. it today. Is the fastest I've gotten one yet. I like it that way. The news isn't so old when I get it. Also rec. the \$5.00 & believe me it was just in time, as I out of clean unaforms & need a hair cut.

The most important part in this letter darling is this. You can get our things packed & get your self ready to come up. Try to get the \$50 from Mom in advance, before the 8th I mean.

I love you SweetheartBaby you'd better sit down before you read this. Don't want you fainting & falling on the floor!

Monday after next is pay day for me & I'll pay for an apartment on that day. Most of our lonely days & nights are over.

I'm sorry I've been writing you letters like I have. Guess I seem crazy. Seems as though every letter conterdicts the one before. Well darling those letters expresses my feeling – that's just the way I've been. Not knowing what to do. Trying every thing possible to be with you.

To tell you the truth, I was pretty disapointed & angry when I wrote you that letter today at noon. Every thing I said was true, except for the fact of me going over any ways soon. I

talked to the Capt. who is in charge of the shop this afternoon. Unless things really get bad, & I mean unusually bad – I'll be here for a long time yet. Evend if it's only six months – that will be six months of happiness. As if you stayed there & me here it would be six months of lonisness.

You have things packed & when I send you a telegram to come up, I'll put the address of the apt. I get for you to send the things to. I hope you have enough money to get a ticket, send the things & enough to buy gro. for the month. Because it will take all of mine & then some for rent. Hold on to every penny you don't have to spend – I'm doing the same. Also know you are. When you get my telegram & check on the schedule, find out exactly what time you will arive here. Write me an air mail letter & tell me what time you will

IF YOU ONLY KNEW HOW MUCH I LOVE YA!!

arrive & I'll meet you. Send it to my address here on the base.

This means two more weekends to waste, without you my darling. I hope & pray it's only two more. Sweetheart I love you so much. Hurts me terribly to be away from you. I surley hope you are the same funny darling. From your letters I know you do miss me.

This is the letter I've been wanting to write for a long time & I know the one you've been wanting to receive darling. I hope your as glad to get this as I am to write it. For being with you my darling is my every thing. You might drop the Navel Base & card & let them know your coming up & that this hosp. will be writting for your records. This is really a long nice hosp. up here. Some of the best doctors in the world in it. And you'll have one darling.

Don't bring the things we don't have to have up here such as some of your books & things like that. Pack them good & leave them in the garage. It really gets to cold up here during the winter, so bring all your winter clothes. Will also have some after hot day while we're here before winter. Try to bring two bed sheets with you. To use until the baggage you ship gets here. So long for now darling & I'll be seeing you soon. Be ready to leave when you get my telegram, because I want to be with you so very much.

Your Loving husband,
Gene

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 22, 1950

Woodsboro

Hello My Darling,

I received the letters from you this afternoon and you seemed to be so disappointed in me. Baby, it really broke my heart – I could just kick myself for not getting the letters for you – it was the least I could have done. Please, darling, forgive me – don't hate me for it – I'll know better next time.

In your letter today, you said you were sweating out going overseas – this came as quite a shock because of what you had been writing in the past. Oh, darling, they can't take you – I want & need you too much. It just isn't fair. If I'm here when the baby comes is there any chance at all of you coming here. Baby – I know I'll just die if I don't get with you soon. Right now I feel worse than I have since you've been gone. I know it's because I let you down when you were depending on me so much – but, sweetheart, it seemed so hopeless to me. Oh, I hope & pray you get the school at Scott field. Will it be soon enough for me to get there before the baby comes if you do get it? Darling, in your letter you sounded as tho you didn't ever care whether or not I get to you –

Baby, please – please don't ever get like that. I'm not even my self away from you & never will be.

Darling, I'm so lonesome tonight. I wish I had you here so we could talk & get things straightend out – All I can do now is cry – I love you so & I'm afraid you're going away from me – I guess it's my fault for not being what you expected in a wife.

Darling, as much as I hate to say this don't I ever feel tied down to me if you don't want to be – I'd hate to have you stay with me because of the baby

I always want it to be because I'm first place.

I know you still love me – you said so in your letter – besides you just have to. Baby, when you get this letter don't let it make you sad – because I know the only reason I wrote all this is because my conscience hurts me so. If I thought you'd changed I wouldn't even tell you.

Baby, I love you so much I hope you can arrange it so we'll be together again soon. Try hard!

All My Love, Always

Chloye

P.S. Mom and I are going to Houston tomorrow – will just be gone Sun. & Mon. so I won't miss out one of your letters.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

July 23, 1950

BA.F.B.

My Darling Wife,

Today is another horrible day for me Sweetheart. Nothing to do except sit around & think of you.

Washed my fatigues & under ware yesterday – wasn't much to that tho. Because we have a, Bendix washer & dyer here in the barracks. Sewed two sets of stripes on.

Darling, when you come up here, don't bring any of those army clothes of mine. Just leave them there & Gin, can use them. Tell him he can have that pair of one piece fatigues, and they can use any of them any time they wish to. You might bring that fatigue jacket that's cut down. The one made like my O.P. jackets. Leave every thing else of my army clothes.

Sweetheart, I hope the weekends pass this slow when you get up here. If they do – we'll have lots of time together, I'd like to see you try to get out of tuching distance of me when I'm off duty & home with you. I don't think you'll evend need to sleep in your pajamas. ha. Some nights it's kinda hot up here. Something tells me their all going to be hot after you get here.

Baby if you could leave there next Sunday Morning, the same time I did. You'd make good conections all the way up & would arrive here around 2:00 P.M. Tue.

Has any of the boys around there joined up yet?

In one of your last letters you wanted to know if Mom & them wrote me to stay in. I'll let you read the letters shes

written, one since I've been here. She doesn't advise me on anything any more.

I don't like for you to get like you was when you wrote that letter darling. I know it was just your nerves. You had every right in the world to write me like that. But it hurt me. I know exactly how you feel about the whole situation. I am the same way. I can hold my temper tho. Always think twice before you say or do any thing. Just think how you would feel if some one said things like that to you. Some one who you love as I do you baby. Don't get me wrong in this letter darling, I'm not angry with you. Have already forgotten about that letter.

Sweetheart, your really going to have to take it easy on your way up here. I'd just die if anything happened to you on your trip. And you've never been on a long trip. Wished we'd been able for you to of came up with me.

You know honey, I was reading in the paper today – where they think people will start living 120 in 1980. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could live to be that old. I'd love it if I could spend it all with you. According to statistics, we've only got 46 more years to live. That isn't much longer. That's only on earth tho. We are going to have to live such a life that we know, we'll meet each other again. Because I want to spend the rest of my life with you & then for ever & ever darling. We can do it can't we baby? As long as I'm with you, I can do anything.

Better close for now darling, so long for now & say your prayers every night & all the way on your trip. Darling I love you so very much.

Always,
Gene

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 24, 1950

Humble, Tex.

My Dearest Darling,

Well, here I am back from a busy day in dear old Houston and I'm so tired I could drop. Mom and I made all the wholesale houses as usual and you know what that's like.

How have you been today, Sweetheart? Do you miss me as much as I miss you? Last night was awful – I slept in the little room that you & I had when we were at Grandmother's. Remember the "Bride's Quilt"? Grandmother wanted to know all about how you were. I'll be glad when we make these visits together, won't you?

Baby, last night I dreamed that Vera called me & wanted to know if I had heard the latest news. I told her no & she said you were going overseas & 7:15 that night. I kept waiting for you to call and you never did. I woke up so heartbroken – Oh, baby I'll be so good when we're together again, & I won't have to worry every minute.

I got some things for the baby – darling. I have to go on & get them – I can't depend on getting a shower, besides I like to chose my own things. I wish you were here to help me. I never have anyone I talk to about the baby. I don't like to – except with you, after all its our baby. It won't be much longer now will it? I'm so glad – at least I can hope to have you then, even if you have to come down again from D.C. or from Ill. Please don't be any place where you can't come to be with me. I don't want you to come until I get out of the hospital tho cause I

want to be able to be with you & have you with the baby. Gosh I hate to think it'll be that long before I see you again. This isn't my idea of being married & I know it's not yours.

I'm getting my hair done tomorrow & darling I promise you it won't get cut. Is that a deal?

Well, Sweetheart, it looks like I'm running out of space & I haven't even told you I love you, but of course you know it. Don't ever forget it, baby, & don't ever stop loving me.

Write everyday – I'll have them when I get back. We are here for just 3 or 4 days.

All My Love,
Chloye

July 24, 1950

Hi There Sweetness,

I received the letter from you this afternoon, that you thought I was disappointed in you. I'm sorry they nearly broke your heart. You know I wouldn't do that for anything. Suppose mine doesn't matter tho. You can forget about the, transfer letters, it would of just been one of the best things of our army life, that's ever happened to us. I'm glad it just seemed so hopeless to you.

Glad to hear of Ann & Ed's new comer, just keep your fingers crossed that we don't have any trouble with our's being formed. Baby I hope it gets here O.K. & you stay O.K.

Honey do you know that I just can't figure you out here lately. You leave me to think two different ways of you. "Don't ever feel tied down to me if you don't want to be." Tell me, just what am I supposed to think of things of things like that, just laugh them off & keep going I guess. I didn't think much of the first few letters I got from you, in that order. But I'll be darned if they all aren't getting to be like that. Guess it's a good thing I'm getting you up here pretty soon. Because I don't like to get letters like that. "Don't have to be that tied down to you". I know I don't have to be. I knew it before I married you. And if I hadn't wanted to be tied down to you, as you would say, I wouldn't of married you. Maybe your the one that thinks your being tied down. Well if you do feel that way I'm sorry. Because I'll be pretty hard to get untied from. I thought you knew by now that I love you & how much I love you. If you don't know now – just wait until you get to D.C. & I show you.

Darling I do love you so much. Remember about Seven months ago when I said, "I do", Well I wasn't just saying it to be talking. Those words came from the bottom of my heart. And my part of the deal still goes. I love you much more now than I did then. Then, I didn't know it was possible to love one person as much as I do now, It's wonderful how one person can love another one so much. I wonder if any other husband loves his wife as much as I do you.

You know if Vera is going to Ho. pretty soon & you could ride as far as Biloxi¹ & stay over night with the Harris'es it would fine. If you think so, drop me a telegram. But she would probably have a cow load. Guess that wasn't such a good idea after all.

You just be all packed & ready to come when you get my telegram. And don't forget to let me know what time & on train or bus you will arrive.

Will close for now darling, remember always how very much I love you. Good night baby & say your prayers. See you sometime next week.

Forever yours,

Gene

P.S. Tell Paige hello for her daddy, & that I'll be with her next week. Rosie too!! O, by the way – You to baby!! You especially.

I love you with all my heart and I hope we can be together soon.

NOTES

1. *Biloxi* Gene was at Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi, in 1950. The bus routes he names — Back Bay, Handsboro — and the Ocean Springs bridge are all local.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 25, 1950

Houston, Tex.

My Dearest Darling,

Well, baby, we are going home tomorrow and back to your sweet letters. There can't be too many to suit me – I hope there's about three or four or more – good news, too.

What have you been doing since I heard from you last? I hope you've made some progress in getting the school at Scott Field. If we can just be together, I don't care where we are you and me & baby makes three – doesn't that sound wonderful, baby? It doesn't seem possible does it? Our own little girl or boy. Oh, I can hardly wait. By the way, Aunt Margaret gave us a beautiful blanket for the baby. I picked it out at the wholesale house and she paid for it. It is pink trimmed in blue satin on one side and solid blue on the other. Also the package I told you we got in Woodsboro¹ about two weeks ago was from her. It was the cut-work tablecloth Mother told us we were to get. It is really expensive & pretty – I'll be glad when you & I can give a big dinner party & show it off.

Darling, I'm going to drive down the street & mail this. I don't know anything about the mail service in Houston, but I hope you don't miss a day getting a letter.

Goodnight for now, Sweetheart, I love you so – Say your prayers & please don't ever stop loving me.

All My Love, Darling [*and,
written inside the envelope flap:*]
Love you, Darling and miss you
like he(!!). [*illegible*] permanent
today, didn't get [*illegible*] Looks
swell. [*Ann?*]

Chloye

P.S. Goodnite from Paige or Gene Jr. I want it to be Jr. baby – I love you
much as *unreadable*

NOTES

1. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.

July 26, 1950

B.A.F.B.

My Dearest Darling,

Rec. your letter this morning of the 24th. What all did you buy. Your always telling me you buy things, get packages from the Post office, but you never tell me what you get. Don't you think I care. I'm not getting the pleasure of helping you pick them. Seems you could at least let me in on a little. And you could talk to your Mother about our baby.

O – darling I wished I was there or you here. I'm getting so fowled up. This is a hell of a life I'm living. A married man just can't live up here like I'm having to. I want to be with you so much my darling. You think you can't Can't talk to any one about the baby. I can't talk to anyone about any thing, Just worry my head off. Always woundering what your doing & how long it will be before we're together. How long I'll get to stay here after you get here? All kind of things such as that. I wished this war was over. A guy whose in the service & married, just isn't the same guy in time of war. Sweating out going over seas, woundering what his wife will do all the time hes over. You know 95% of the guys who went over seas during the last war, that were married, didn't find the same little wife he left. Just to many timptations for pretty girls in the States, when their husband are over fighting for them.

I clicked the pay roll today. I'm not on it. Guess it will be a few days after the first now, before I get paid. But I'll get it some time next week. So it will be sometime next week before I

can send for you. I want you to be here before the 5th tho. Baby please be ready to leave when you get my wire.

I had to go through 100, Radio Facility Charts, today & make corrections. Kinda have a headace now. Isen't from work I don't think tho It's from longing & wounding about you so much.

Raining here now, as been all afternoon. Has been pretty cool the last few days.

Sure is pretty stationary you have have honey. How much did it cost?

Well baby I'm going to close now so finish this when I get back. Sure hate to go to these darn mess halls. When I eat I like to be able to look & talk to you. Darling, we're going to have so much long lost time to make up for.

Hi Sweetness – miss me, I sure do you darling.

Baby after I came back from chow last night a buddy of mine here wanted me to get down to the MCO club. They were having a hohawaiin [*Hawaiian*] dance down there. I didn't go, because I knew how much more it would make me miss you, to see everyone dancing & me sitting there missing you so I could hardly stand it. So he went down, got a case of beer & came back to the barracks. Kinda reminded me of Okinawa¹, three of use sitting in the barracks drinking beer. There were a many cases of beer drank in our hut on Okie, all hours of the day & night

Baby I'll close & get this in the box, just about time to go to work. I'm going to check on my pay again today. Keeping after

them until they get on the ball. So long darling, I hope your here next week. I love & miss you so.

All My Love,
Gene

NOTES

1. *Okinawa* Gene served as a radar operator on Okinawa, which the United States occupied and administered after the 1945 battle. He calls it “the rock” throughout.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 27, 1950

Woodsboro

Hello Baby,

I didn't get to write you yesterday. We spent the day in Houston shopping and then I drove home; it was late when we got here so I went to bed. I didn't get up until late today & then I took a long nap this afternoon. I think I was just worn out from the trip.

Wanda called this morning and wanted to know the latest from you – I told her, I hoped to be leaving soon. Baby, even if I don't get a shower I have everything for the baby & it just cost \$20. Of course I got it all wholesale. It would have been twice that if I had had to pay retail.

Darling, when you find a place try not to rent it until after the 8th. I won't leave until then at all & that way we won't have to pay but 3 wks. rent in advance. When you do find a place, darling, write me – I get your letters overnight & a telegram in Woodsboro¹ takes that long or longer. I surely hope you can find a place for about \$45 and just pay until the 1st of Sept. on it. Then we can pay a month in advance then. I hate to have you pay a week extra for nothing. Be sure & put in for a separate rations & try to get the \$20 for extending. Vera told me she & Jr. were going there D.C. when she met him & I could go. I hope it works out that I can & it won't be too much longer. She said it may be the 15th but that wouldn't be so bad would it?

Baby I love you – I can hardly wait to be with you again. It will be so much easier to come now than to wait until the baby comes. I can hardly see me feeding it on a bus by breast & changing it's diapers. I'd arrive with a 3 week washing; knowing babies.

Little Gene or Paige would probably hate being away from their daddy, anyway.

Well, darling I must run into town with this before the post office closes as I don't want you to miss another day.

Sweetheart, forget what I said about being tied down – I want you to be – if it's to me & it is.

Bye for now – I love you.

Always,

Chloye

P.S. Keep saying your prayers until I get there. I hope I don't have the baby on the way. ha.

NOTES

1. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

July 27, 1950

B.A.F.B

My Dearest Darling,

How is my baby tonight? Fine & enjoying good health I surley hope.

Sweetheart I hope so much we're together this time next week. Don't you.

I put in a full day today. Pretty tierd. So I think this will be a short letter. Just because it's short darling, don't think I don't still love you & miss ya as much as ever. Darling – I do long for you so.

Guess you made your, Huston try's okay. Hope you had fun.

I'm pretty sure I'll get paid Monday. If I do – you can look for a telegram from me. If you don't one (you'll know I wasn't paid. Because I'm going to send for you as soon as I get paid.

Darling, it's so lonesome up here without you. This old barracks & all its surrindings. Nothing to do on the weekends. The hoby shop burned down. Guess that put an end to our baby cabnet. I wanted so much to make it. Maybe they'll build another one soon enough.

Hope we don't have to hard a time getting by when you get up. We're going to really have to play it cool, baby. I know you'll help in every possible way tho.

I'm sure lucky to have such a wounderful wife. Makes me love you so much darling, because I know you love me & are so good to me.

Darling I hate to close now. not writing a longer letter. I'm so tierd & sleepy tho. You understand, don't you baby? I hate to get a letter from you this short tho.

Nothing to tell you really – except how very very much I love you. And how I love to have you with me, and soon. I know you hate being away from me as I hate being away from you.

Goodnight my darling – always remember how much I lone & miss you. If I was only with you tonight, my love.

All My Love Darling,
Gene

P.S. Tell Rosie & Paige hi for me. You know I've been thinking about calling that little girl Patresha Ann. I want her to have one your names darling. Well so long baby.

G.C.

I'm bringing the ring with me – finally. I'm also coming myself. Just try to keep me from it.

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 28, 1950

Woodsboro

My Dearest Darling,

Well, I didn't get any mail from you today, but I guess I shouldn't complain because I didn't get into town to mail one to you. I did get one letter from you yesterday which was mailed in D.C. the 24th. That was Monday – I wonder why I haven't gotten any since then – I usually get your letters overnight.

Mom & Vera came over and spent the day with Mother & I. Vera brought 2 pair of bootees that she had made – baby, they are so cute! I showed mom the things I got in Houston – she said she would love to see you face when I showed them to you. She thought I was smart to go ahead & get the necessities. Baby, people have really given us a lot of cute things too. Little jackets & caps to match. Oh, I'll be so glad when I can show them to you – it will really make it seem real.

I'm getting packed & I'll be ready when I hear from you saying when to come. Make it soon, my darling, I surely am getting eager. Do you know that our baby will be here in 2 ½ months. Gosh, it just doesn't seem possible.

Darling, how was I ever lucky enough to get you when I'm so selfish & stubborn? You're so kind & gentle – I hope some day you can make me that way. If I ever get with you again I know I'll really be able to appreciate my sweet baby – you – not Paige, I'm talking about now. I hope I'll be able to show you how much I love you.

Baby, I'm so excited about coming, I know I won't be able to sleep. By the way, how long do you think it's possible to sleep on one pillow slip? ha

Darling, I'm just going to bring the things we need most. Sheets, blankets, towels, dishes & my clothes and of course the baby's things. I can check all of them free of charge on my ticket. I'll let you know exactly when I'll arrive because I sure would hate to get there and not be able to find you – I'd just about go nuts – I want to be able to step off the bus & right into your arms. I know I'll be dead so we can go to the apt. make the bed & go to sleep. ha – No joke if you don't hold me close forever & ever I'll die. I feel like I can't go on if I can't be so that I can reach out & touch you. For days I'll probably just stand around & stare at you remember how I was in San Antonio and I had been away from you just 9 days then. I thought at the time that they were 9 of the longest – but I really know how long they can be now. But not for long – I'm so glad you want me with you – Baby you must really love me to put up with so much.

Well, darling, I hope I have a letter from you in the morning – Sat) and I hope it says leave Mon. nothing could make me any happier.

The reason I didn't get to Town today the road from our house in is torn completely up – a new highway is coming then

–

Well, Sweetheart, goodnight for now – and sweet dreams. Find us a place soon, baby.

All My Love,
Chloye

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 29, 1950

Hello Sweetheart,

I received a letter from you this morning. You sound sorta angry at me in it. You said I never told you what I bought and you seemed to be worried about what I'd do if you had to go overseas. Baby, you aren't beginning to doubt me are you? I don't think I'd like that – when you married me you were supposed to trust me – I know you do tho, it's just being apart that makes you even think about such things. Believe me Darling you will never have to worry about me being true to you. I love you so much, I could never even look at any other man.

As for the things I got the baby they are as follows:

4 dozen diapers 6 gowns 4 cribs sheets 2 pads (mattress protectors) think we'll need eqs? ha –

6 receiving blankets 2 wash cloths 2 pair of “fancy pants” like the one's Wanda's baby had.

That's all I bought – the sheets & diapers really do cost, I'm glad I could get all the things wholesale I saved \$20. I told you Aunt Margaret gave us a blanket and Mrs. Roland, a friend of Mom's gave us 3 sets of training pants with shirts to match, a shawl, a beautiful woven mosquito net, a little jacket (2 jackets & cap. She also gave some socks. She *[illegible]* them for her baby but I had them cleaned & they are like new. Aunt Margaret also gave the baby a jacket with cap to match. Vera brought over 2 pc. Bootees – Mother had already given me the high-chair cover & a blanket and I brought 2 shirts & 2 gowns

in Corpus a long time ago. And Mrs. Roland gave us a little dress & blanket grips (they are little white ducks & they hold the blanket over the baby at night. I already had the dresses you saw plus the one. Dot gave me Easter so you see our little one is really fixed. All we have to do now is get my gowns, but I want to be with you when I pick them out. Mom is ordering the bed.

It will take it from 2 to 4 weeks, but I guess that will be plenty of time. If it comes (the baby I mean) any earlier we can let it sleep with us – we won't be doing anything anyway – ha – It's seems such a pity doesn't it after all the time we've lost too.

Well, baby, take it easy on the beer – we sure can't waste money & do write me soon.

I'll be ready when you send for me – I hope it's not time for the baby then. I thought for awhile today it was on its way. I was pretty sick. I had mother sorta worried & Hank was about to tear his hair out. O.K. now, tho.

Well, Honey, I'm going to town to mail this & hope to have a letter from you. Send for me pronto –

Love Always,
Chloye

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 30, 1950

Hi Baby,

Well, I just woke up from a long nap and I'm still about half asleep. Gotta take a bath in a little while and take this to town and mail it so maybe that will wake me up.

I rec'd a real good letter from you yesterday afternoon. you said you would send for me as soon as you got paid - that's really what I like tohear - but be sure you have a place to put me - oh aren't you worried about that? I hope you've already found one & set for me by the time you get this letter. Baby, don't disappoint me - please. Any place will do until I get there, and then we can both look.

Won't it be wonderful to be together again? I'll probably feel sinful sleeping with a man after a whole month, ha

But I get back in the habit quick enough. Don't you? Just think, we won't even be by ourselves long - that little baby of ours will probably demand all of our attention. Oh, I don't guess so - they sleep so much - hot dog! I'll get to use the excuse that I didn't want to disturb the baby so I slept, too. Do you think I can get by with it?

Darling, I had the worst dream last night about the baby. Someone was trying to kill it because it had some little thing wrong with it. I woke up shaking all over and turned to where you should have been, but you weren't there to hold me close.

That's an awful feeling you know it? Maybe this time next week everything will be different - I'll be in D.C. & we'll be together. It seems too good to be true. I hope I can leave here

either Friday & get there Sun. evening or leave here Sun. like you did & get there Tuesday. Try to make it as soon as you can - I know you will without me telling you.

Mother & I told Ver & Mon we would come over for lunch today if Hank & Gin went back to the island, but they didn't so I called mom yesterday after-noon & told her we couldn't make it. She and I talked quite a while. She seems to be fine, hasn't heard from you in almost a week.

By the way, Mother & I are taking Gin & Hank to Corpus Tuesday to go fishing so we thought we'd go out to the Naval Base & see if my records ever came in. If they haven't I'm going to just forget about it & let them do it all again at Walter Reed. Don't you think it would be best?

Well, Baby, I guess this will be all for now, I hope I have a letter from you when I get to town. Mrs. Dees always takes them to her house for me on Sat. & Sunday, which really makes it nice.

Say your prayers, darling, and send for me soon. I will be anxiously waiting for a letter or a wire. Don't call me collect cause we'll need the money. So long, Sweet

Love You, Darling,
Chloye

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 30, 1950

Woodsboro, Tex.

Hello Darling,

Mom, Hank & I just got back from Refugio. We mailed your letter and then Hank took us to a movie. It was “My Foolish Heart” all about a guy in service who left his girl behind and when he sent for her to meet him to get married, he got killed. Darling, I thought I wasn’t going to be able to sit thru it I’m so glad I’m already married to you. That way I know you’re really mine. Baby, I want it to be like that always. It will be too won’t it?

I didn’t have a letter from you this afternoon, but it was Sun. maybe I’ll have one tomorrow morning. Oh darling, I hope the next I hear from you will be tell- ing me to come on to D.C. If you don’t send for me I think I’ll be the most unhappy person in the world, but I know you will because you said you would as soon as you got paid. Baby, make it soon – I’m going to try to get everything packed in the next two days. I will be ready to leave anytime after that. Ready & so eager to be with you my darling.

I miss you more & more each day even tho I am to be with you soon. Do you feel like that? Like every day is 3 or 4 times as long as it should be? I hope the bus trip won’t seem long, but I could put up with almost anything to be with you Baby, if you don’t send for me this week, I think I’ll just come on anyway – I know I would if I wasn’t afraid you’d be mad at me. But

please – do this for me – send for me immediately, so unhappy without you.

Sweetheart, I'm going to close for now, I'll add more to this before I mail it tomorrow.

Say your prayers, & sweet dreams – Darling close your eyes & think about the way I used to kiss your eyes when we were together, then look at my picture, doesn't it seem like I'm looking at you & telling you how much I love & miss you? Darling, I do love you so much and I want to be with you in the next few days. I hope you get paid tomorrow so that all my dreams will come true.

All My Love,

Chloye

CHLOYE ANN WEST

July 31, 1950

Hi Sweet,

Well, I didn't get a letter from you this morning, maybe I will later on today. I hope I have a wire within the next 2 or 3 days. I surely would like to leave here Friday so I could be there Sunday. We can go to bed when I get there & stay there until you leave for the Base Monday. Does that sound O.K. to you? It really sounds swell to me – I need some loving and bad. By the way, is Jimmy still normal? Size that is!

Well, Sugar, I guess I'll close for now & hope to hear from you soon. I've got about a million things to do before I'll be ready & I sure want to be ready when I hear from you.

Wire me soon & I'll write when I'll be arriving. You'll get the letter before I get there I know. So long for now.

Love You,
Chloye

August 1, 1950

Hello Darling,

How is my favorite husband today? Sending for his wife I hope. It will be a month tomorrow since I've seen you – I hope I won't have to wait much longer.

I got the blankets, & linens packed today. I'm going to get all my clothes & your shirts ironed tomorrow & get them packed. The baby's clothes are ready & the pots & pans. I'm not going to bring the whole set of dishes – just enough for you & I – then we can buy some cheap ones at Krees or somewhere. Don't you think that will be best?

Oh, Baby, I miss you so much – I hope that you are as anxious to be with me as I am to be with you. I'd die if you ever changed toward me. I worry sometimes about being away from you for a very long time. Remember Louise Bush in Biloxi¹ – she didn't get to stay with her first husband but about 3 months then he went overseas. When he got back he didn't love her any more & there she was with a little baby. Gosh, I know that you would never do me that way, but I know I don't want to be away from you one day longer. I want a home & I can never have it unless I am with you. I know that you feel the same way tho.

Have you heard from Mom lately? I guess she really missed you since we got married –but you know I wouldn't take anything in the world for being your wife. It is the most wonderful thing that could ever happen to any girl – you're so

sweet & loveable. Darling, I love you so very, very much – I hope I'll be able to show you when we're together again.

Baby, I'm going to rush down to the Post Office & see if I have a letter from you & get this in the mail.

Oh, I hope I have a wire, letter or something telling me to come on soon. Please don't let me be disappointed.

Darling, say your prayers every night & think of me always

—

Love You,
Bye Now,
Chloye

P.S. I hope your letter won't be this short, but I'm afraid the P.O. will be closed if I don't hurry.

NOTES

1. *Biloxi* Gene was at Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi, in 1950. The bus routes he names — Back Bay, Handsboro — and the Ocean Springs bridge are all local.

August 1, 1950

C.C.

Hello Sweetheart,

How is every little thing with my baby by now? I rec. your letter today telling about all the things the baby (Paige, not you) had. Also about you being sick. Baby, I sure hope nothing happens. I'm afraid that trip is going to be aflow rough on you. And speaking of the trip, I still haven't been paid. Just as soon as I do, I'm getting a place & send for you darling.

Sweetheart you aren't angry with me for not writting the last few days are you? Baby,

I'm telling you – they have really been working us boys up here. Theres so many planes coming in & going out of here. I'm about to go nuts from hearing those darn engines roaring constantly. When we finially get to go to bed at night & you go to sleep, hearing planes roaring & of a morning when you awake, their roaring.

The mess hall I eat in is closed for repairs & we have to go to the opposite end of the field to eat. Makes it a little unhandy.

Baby I wrote the above today at noon. Is now 20 till 7 P.M.

I got off a quiting time this afternoon for a change. We got three more new guys in the shop today. So now I'm not the new'est one.

Baby the good news I found out this afternoon is – that I'm getting paid tomorrow. Don't know just how much though, that's the trouble.

Sweetheart I taught of a fast way for me to notify you to come up. Now get this honey & don't fowl up. When I find use a place to live, I'll call you on the phone (Person to Person) and ask to speak to "Linda Paige Catchings," All you have to do, is just say she isn't around right now. Tell the oper. she's gone to town or some thing. You know how it's done.

So baby when you get a phone call from. Washington, D.C. asking to speak to, Linda Paige Catchings, you leave for Washington, D.C. and honey, please don't waste any time. Dosen't matter what time you arrive here, I can meet you. I hope you can be here before Sat. That way we can have the week end together.

Best you tell Mom, Hank & Gin what to do, in case they answer the phone. We don't want any slip ups on this, because I wont have the money to pay for the call. That way you'll also get to hear how, Linda Paige, sounds over a phone. ha.

My darling I love you so much, you can't get here any to soon to please me. Everything will be so much better when you get here.

Sure is hot, has been for the past two days. Sweats just running off me now. Be wonderful when you get here & we can sweat together! ha.

Some people just don't have a sense of humor do they honey!

Baby when I first started this letter, I thought today was Mon. but its Tue. So I guess it will be Sun. before you can get here. Darn, almost have to spend another week-end by may self. I can get Monday off tho, maybe you should get this Thur. morning. I'll probably call you Thur. also. Or call Paige rather. Hope you can leave Thur. afternoon.

Darling it's getting a little late now, not late but I have to catch up on some sleep. Might have to work late tomorrow night. Shouldn't new men.

Goodnight my Darling & be there for my phone call. See you Soon – real Soon.

I Love Always, Don't forget. When I call & ask to speak to Paige – You'll know that's your clue to come on up.

Write me & let me know when to meet you. Will be looking for you in about three days, after I call.

G.C. & Jimmy Bet Jimmy will really be glad to see Rosie. And of Course Gene will be simply thrilled to death to see, "Chloye"

Fancy Haha?

"See Ya,"

So long darling

Gene

CHLOYE ANN WEST

August 2, 1950

Woodsboro

My Dearest Darling,

Well, today makes four days since I've heard from you – I wonder what's wrong – are you sick or did you just decide I wasn't worth it? I hope that it's not either one, maybe I'll get a letter this afternoon. I'm sure going to drive to town and find out. I hope and pray that there is one there. It's not at all like you not to write – don't you love me anymore? I know you do trust I'll still feel a lot better when I find out what's wrong.

I worked all day long today. Got all our table- cloths done, your shirts, the curtains, & my clothes. I'll get them packed either tonight or tomorrow. Anyway, it sure won't be long – you can bet on that.

What has my darling been doing? Looking for apartments & trying to get paid I guess. I hope you put in for separate ration this month. By the way, did you know you're little wife will be 19 years old this month & you can't say that I should respect my elders, anymore. Hot dog – now I'll be as old as you. When I'm a mother I guess I'll think I know it all huh daddy? ha –

It doesn't seem really possible does it? It will seem a lot more so when you get to see all the baby things and especially when you see me. By the way, Wanda said yesterday that you'd be real proud of me. I did gain weight on my arms & legs. Now maybe all the guys won't say you've got a brave wife will they? ha –

Mother just come & borrowed my fountain pen to write a check so I'm using your Parker.

Well, darling, there's not much news, except that I sure do want to be with you soon & that's not news – it's old stuff but – it still goes.

I'm going to dash into town now & hope to have a letter from you.

By the way, I called Miss Waven & asked her how much I could check on my ticket to D.C. She said everything I wanted to because you had bought a ticket from her, too – so I won't have to ship a thing – that will help a lot.

Well, Sweetheart, write me soon & please keep loving me.

Love You Always,

Chloye

CHLOYE ANN WEST

August 7, 1950

Hello Darling,

Well, I'm well on my way to D.C. and am fine. I don't think the trip will hurt me at all.

I'm in Shreveport, La. now so I guess I'll arrive in D.C. when you did. No one has told me yet or I can't say for sure.

I hope you can meet my bus – if you can't I don't know what I'll do. Wait at the station until you come I guess –

See you soon,

Love You,

Chloye

P.S. I'll be there at 2:25 P.M. for sure. I checked Tares.

October 14, 1950

Woodsboro, Texas

Dearest Chloye, and Gene;

I almost refuse to write a letter with pencil, but I have waited so long to write I won't let that stand in my way this time.

So much has happened since I last wrote to you but every thing seems to be running smoothly again with us and I feel as good as ever; however I am trying to take good care of myself since we had such a scare. Roy is working every Friday and with Hank, and Gin's help I manage pretty good the other days.

Had a card from Mrs. Findley she said they had such a nice visit, I'm anxious to see them when they get back.

You ask about the Taft¹ ball club, they are rated first in class schools in south Texas Woodsboro² is rated seventh, but Taft has a much larger school they just dropped out of class A last years. Woodsboro lost their first game last night Refugio 20 Woodsboro 12. We were picked to win even by many from Refugio. I think they have only won two games.

Gene, Hank went fishing today second time since he quit but he thinks fall fishing is too good to miss.

Uncle George is still not doing too well. I know a brain tumor is a very serious thing and I am so worried about him. I just hope and pray that he will be alright.

Hank missed his guess about the baby, but he comes home from the office every morning to see if we have had any news. Of course we are getting anxious to hear.

Jesslyn is home for the week-end, just back from a vacation in Florida by plane.

Let us hear from you soon.

Lot of Love;

Mom

NOTES

1. *Taft* Taft, San Patricio County, Texas — Gene's home town, roughly 30 miles south-east of Woodsboro.
2. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.

GRACE CARPENTER WEST WALKER

October 23, 1950

Woodsboro, Texas

Dearest Chloye, Gene and Baby;

We are so very happy for all of you. Can't tell you who is most excited about it at our house, but Hank would run anyone a close first.

I am in Refegio trying to do a dozen odd jobs because I don't like to make the trip too often.

Wrtite all the news as soon as you feel like it. When Gene called Sunday the O'Donnells were at the house and in less that ten minutes the entire camp delegation was there, all so happy for us, and for you and Gene.

Take good care of the baby, Wish you were not so far away, but we are so glad you are together. I do hope Gene dose not get transferred.

Called Mrs. Catchings Sun. the first thing she said was "Oh wouldn't you love to see all of them." She was as happy as could be.

Aunt Gale wants me to hurry and have a piece of cake, it is almost time for her to go back to work so I won't keep her waiting.

Let us hear real soon.

Mom

Love

November 17, 1950

Woodsboro, Texas

Dearest Chloye, Gene, and Paige

Think of all of you so often, and yet I am so careless about writing. I stay pretty busy, but that is such a poor excuse because it takes very little time to write.

Wish we could see the precious baby, I wake up at night thinking about here. Is it cold there now, and do you have plenty of covers?

I think the little crib is real nice, have never seen one like that before. Dora Emily brought her bassinette for us to use and I really do appreciate it.

You would be real proud of the house we have had the sofa and two chairs slip covered, turned out just beautiful pretty as new furniture in fact. Eva Rowland is making the curtains for the back porch (so pretty) and now that everything is nice and clean I am going to hang the kitchen curtains.

Ella O'Donnell was here today said she was going to send the baby a gift. Oh yes, Allen's address is 912 Eleanors Street.

Uncle George is not doing at all well, he went back for another operation today. I haven't heard how he came through yet, but I am afraid he is not going to get over it. I think Aunt Margaret has about given up hopes. Kathryn has a little girl named her constance call her "Connie" I would love to go home for Thanksgiving but it would hurt me too much to see George. So glad we had such a good visit with them last summer.

Write us news about your self and the baby often, we are always so anxious to hear. Everyone ask us about you.

Hank is getting ready for bed and I have a few more things to do. Write soon.

Mom

Love,

December 18, 1950

Woodsboro, Texas

Dearest Chloye, Gene, and Paige;

We were so glad to get your letter, I had worried so much after the letter I had written you was returned to me with the wrong address.

Wish we could all be together Christmas; however I am so glad Gene does not have to leave. Congratulations Sargent we are so proud for all of you.

My! how the baby has grown, I am sure she gets excellent care. Do you put cotton in her ears to keep them dry when you bath her? I believe that ears trouble could be avoided if we were careful enough.

Hank and Gin have gone to a quarter-back club banquet tonight. I think we have something planned for every night this week, my days are pretty busy to. We expect Aunt Maude and Billie Jean Friday or Sat. Aunt Maude has not said that she could come but we have written her, and Hank is going to call tonight. We just don't want her to stay alone through Christmas, it would be so lonely.

you ask about uncle George, these just isn't any good news about him. I think most brain tumors are caused from head injuries, the doctors say that a head injury in childhood is probably what caused his trouble. The tumor was slightly malignant, his head does not heal and he is semi-conscious. All we can do now is hope and pray for him.

Did you received a baby gift from the Pres. Church? I have been told that they mailed you one; however when they called me for your address you were living on Terrace.

I hope our Christmas package reaches you in time for Christmas. Hank mailed it last Sat. However I am a little worried about Gin's package, but will mail it early in the morning. Billie thinks you all will be here. I know she is going to be disappointed.

I am sending a check for the baby, am afraid to buy her anything since I do not know what she needs.

Please tell Ann how much I appreciated the letters I received from her recently. She has been so sweet to write and I have been so careless.

I am getting tired, think I had better go to be.

Hope you have a very happy Christmas, our thoughts will certainly be with you.

With much love Mom

P.S. If the gifts don't fit we will exchanges for the right size.

Dec. 19

Florence Mason called this morning wanting your address to send the package I mentioned from the church so I'm sure you will get it soon, I was afraid they had mailed it to the wrong address.

December 30, 1950

Woodsboro, Texas

Dearest Chloye, Gene, and Paige,

We received the lovely Christmas gifts, I was admiring Billie's dainty set, and Gin's useful gift, but we all agreed that the picture was the sweetest thing we ever saw. I wish you could have seen Hank's face when he saw the picture. Thanks a million we are all more anxious than ever to see the baby.

Christmas was real nice, and very busy in our house hold, but every one helped so good. The day after Christmas one of Billie Jeanne's girl friend from Eagle Lake came to spend a week with us we have enjoyed having her. George Jason is coming next Wednesday to fish two or three days, so you know I'll be pretty busy for the next week.

Dot has a darling little six pound boy born on your anniversary, the ex-rays looked bad and the doctors decided to operate, but there were no private rooms available and they put it off a day. She pleased them all and had the baby without any trouble (feet first) the night they were waiting for a hospital room.

Aunt Margaret has moved Uncle George home but he is not any better, Andrew saw him Christmas day says he just lies on the bed semi-conscious. It just breaks my heart to think about him.

It is almost lunch time, I had better get busy. Sure hope you received the two packages, and two letters in time for

Christmas, we mailed them early. Did you get a package from Billie, and one from Gesslyn?

Write soon.

With much love, Mom

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

[undated — between December 30, 1950 and January 21, 1951]

Hi My Darling,

Wish I was here with you right now. Been's I'm not you just kiss Paige & yourself good night for me & I'll see you before you leave in the morning – I hope.

Sweetheart I love you & Paige so much, It's hard for me to have to leave knowing I wont see you until morning. Just say your prayers & dream of me.

Why don't you write Mom a letter tonight, & I'll add a few lines tomorrow.

Have to go now darling so be sweet & act like a little angle tonight. Because you are my little blue eyed angle.

I kept Paige today. I'll keep her tomorrow also.

Bye Honey
Your Hubby,
Gene

GRACE CARPENTER WEST WALKER

January 21, 1951

Woodsboro, Texas

Dearest Chloye, Gene, and Paige,

I can't seem to settle down long enough to write seems I keep busy most of the time.

We were invited to have dinner today at the carpenter's, Jesslyn was home for the week-end. Sue cooked a lovely dinner and we enjoyed being with them so much.

I had my share of company this week, the O'Donnell's and the Horner's for fish dinner Saturday. Jack Rowland's mother was here and I had Eva, Mrs. Rowland, Judy, Jack, and Keith Hoffman to spend the day Tuesday.

Keith's family have moved to Beeville, and he is going to live with the Pete Michna's. We all like him a lot, and he spends a lot of time with us. He and Gin are doing real well with their basket ball. Would like to send you the news papers clippings, the San Antonio fight came and took pictures of the team and are running a story about them each week, so far they have won seventeen games no loses. Aubrey Dean and Gin made the all-Tournament team at the Pettus Town.

I thought Hank had written you, the baby is due Feb. 17th. I'll be so glad to get back to normal have had so much trouble with upset stomach, and indigestion, but every one seems to think I look good.

Will try to send your clothes this week just your haven't been able to get around to doing that yet.

You have been so good about writing, but you have not mentioned the letter I wrote and enclosed a little check for the baby's Christmas. Did you received it? I can't figure out just what happens to the mail going into Washington we seemed to get your letters alright, for instance the toaster was mailed five days before Gin's package and you wrote that you received the package from him first.

Give the baby a big hug and kiss for me write soon.

Mom

Love to all,

P.S. Write Dot soon, her name is spelled Gregorcyk.

June 22, 1951

Washington, D.C.

Hello My Darling

Well hows my sweetheart & Daughter this morning. Other than a little lonesome, I'm fine. We landed in Huston & Little Rock yesterday, then non stop form Little rock to Virginia. Then I caught a ride to Richmond & from there on to D.C. got in there some time around 4 this morning. That was about 140 miles.

Baby this place is just like a picture post card now, I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw it. The beans are just right to cook, the radish & lettuce are also ready. The beats didn't come up. Tomatoes plants are loaded with green ones.

There was lots of mail on the table – all bills!

Fowlers are at Church now. Haven't got to talk to them yet.

5:15 P.M. Fowlers was glad to see me & ask all about everything. Then he wanted to know if I was going to be here tonight said he wanted to talk to me then – you know them on their Sunday. How is little Mary doing?

Sweetheart I've been trying to get all these bill together. I can't find nothing from Clean Rite, or the Car. The only that was in the dressor was Seors. How much do we owe Clean Rite? The milk man saw the car in front this morning & stopped – Our milk bill is \$39.80. Have really gotten some treating letters from the gas, lights & car co. The gas bill is \$7.01 & lights \$5.53. And we owe Fowlers about \$130, for rent & baby-sitting.

I wish you were here – now. this old house is absolutely dead. Don't know why I feel the way I do when I'm away from you. Bound to be Love – & so much of it. And yet when I'm with you, you can make me mad so easily. How come? Darling we say this every time were apart, but this time it has to stick! When we get together again – we have to be good & sweet to each other. Life is too short to live it the way you & I do, and our little daughter is much to sweet to be brought up in such a home.

I'm going to the Field Monday morning & get them started on the transfer. Don't know how long it will take to find out. But sweetheart if I don't get it – you get up here as quickly as possible, Pete & Marie & Fowlers sure want to see you – not saying anything about me.

Tell Mom & Gin I'm sorry I didn't get to see them before I left. Did Gin get the \$2.00 I left on his radio Tue. night for him to go to Huston on?

Must close for now darling – Don't forget how much I love you & Paige. Her little baby bed looks so empty.

Love & Kisses

Love

Gene

P.S. Had a big rain here this morning. And now it is 91° – a little on the warm side. Sure miss that Gulf breeze!

“Roses & Violets”

By the celebrated artist

CHLOYE ANN WEST

June 23, 1951

Lillian Grow

Hello Darling,

It's late & I don't want to wake anyone up trying to find a pen so you'll just have to put up with this pencil.

I hope you had a good trip home. I'm glad you left fast like you did, it made it seem easier. I surely did hate for you to go. I miss you so much. Does it make you sad to be away from Paige & I?

She's looked sad to me all day. When Gin comes in a room & speaker she looks up real fast & sees it isn't you & looks away again. She's been calling her "daddy" all day.

Mother & I got all the wash done today. It surely was a big one, too.

Mom said for me to send you that billfold if you could use it so I'll do it Monday.

(over)

Have you learned anything new about the transfer yet? Be sure & let me know so we won't have to be apart any longer than we have too.

Have you seen Pete & Marie? I'm going to write them.

Tell the Fowlers hello, you be sure & take care the garden.

When you go to the office (Room 1034) tell Mr. Beckman I would have written but my sister went to the hospital after the funeral & I haven't had a spare minute.

Baby, be sweet & careful & don't work too hard. I bet you got lonesome when you saw Paige's bed & tenda didn't you? I hope you miss me too.

Say your prayers & love me always.

Tues. 26, 1951 This is old after your call but we don't have any stationary. I'll write again tonight. I'm coming home.

Fri. or Mon. Prob. Fri. Love, Chloye & Paige

Love You,

Chloye

BILLIE JEANNE

August 3, 1951

Dearest Chloye, & Family,

Well, am in Woodsboro¹ now visiting Grace we finally moved into town yesterday, but will take us probably a week or longer to get straightened out! Since Ginger and I both won't be here this Fall, Grace is going to get some school teachers to stay with her! I think that will be nice, since she & Mary Elaine would otherwise be by theirselves!

The house has 8 rooms with (including) two bathrooms which is really long nice!

I may be your neighbor pretty soon since Mother is getting married & moving to Maryland! I'll probably go with her though I hate to leave Texas!

Mary is really getting cute now and is no longer the quiet type at all!!(ha) The other day she broke a dish and knocked a glass out of my hand so guess we will have two lady fullbacks in the family!! (ha)

How is my little niece! I guess really keeping her mama busy!

Well I've never seen Gene but am going with a boy who looks just like him according to Grace, Dech, Mildred, Aunt Sue and a lot of other scapple!

Dub mistook Tommy's picture for Gene and so did Aunt Sue so you can tell Gene he has a double!!

Maby someday I'll be lucky enough to meet him! (ha!)

I forgot to tell you but Grace already has a couple for the house, she said for you to be sure and write soon because she will be pretty busy for a while to have much time to write!

Ginger received a letter from Ann Tinker and from her letter she doesn't know of Daddy's death! I'll either write or tell her or maby you could do a better job of it since you know her better than I!

Am sending you check in this letter – we have an idea that you could use a little of it!! (ha)

Well, will close for now, be sure and give Gene my regards & kiss Paige for me!

Write soon Billie Jeanne

Love

NOTES

1. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye's home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.

December 22, 1951

Bolling A.F.B.

Hello Sweetheart,

Wish I could be with you now darling, but I guess that's like, Liman's little girl wanting him to get her that Moon. Does little Paige miss her daddy? How about Paiges' Mother?

I wound up getting here by train. We got into Hansas City 7 A.M. the 20th. Every thing grounded. Finially I transfered to Continentil & got as far as St. Lues. Then every thing north & east of there Started having zero weather again so I got a train the rest of the way on in.

I sure am burned up now – I don't have to go to work until Wednesday witch is the 26th. If I had known that this little sure wouldn't have reported in here untill then. And then People ask me if I'm sure I want out of the service.

The Baby bed & tenda will leave here Wend. They can't pick it up until then.

December 24, 1951

Hello Darling & Paige,

Well – here it is Xmas Eve baby. And believe me, it really seems like it. I still haven't turned my hand for a lick of work.

It will be after Xmas when you receive this darling – so how was Xmas? I hope you had a happy one. And

Come April the 13th I hope you & I have a very happy New Year together.

Pete & Marie were glad to hear we made the trip home okay. Said they were worried. I spent the first night I was here with them & most of the next day (22nd) I fixed the bed & tenda to be shiped. I'm going back over there the 26th to have dinner (at night) with them. Their check didn't come so I loned them \$10. until Wen. As I don't need any money here on the base. Did you get the Xmas Card from them? I think they sent one.

Honey – did you all get Paige that little rocking chair?

Most all the Ice & all the snow is gone now. The sun is shining bright now, has been all day. Looks like people here will have another Xmas without any snow. I myself saw enough snow on my way up to last the rest of my life I do believe. In lots of places it was 12-18 in. deep in Pa. Car covered up, all the bodies of water were frozen. It has to get pretty cold for a river to freez & all the ones we passed were.

Well Sweetheart – tomorrow is Christmas. I hate to think of it. But you know – after new year's

I'm sure the time is going to just fly by. It will only be 3 ½ months.

Sweetheart, I'm awfully sorry I forgot our anniversary – but I did. Just had too much on my mind. This little card I'm sending now is quite appropriate I think, since we're apart now. And believe me darling it's true.

I guess my little girl will be talking pretty plain by the time I get home for good. She will almost be 18 mo.

How is Mom, Gin & Mary getting along. Tell them all hello for me. I sure love them all. It's kinda funny how me marrying you makes me love them so much.

They sure have the Base decorated nice. You remember the big tree, rave & manger they had last year by the railroad tracks. That's there again. And our Sqdn also has a good scene. In that recent lot by the orderly room.

Dec. 25, 51 Well, Darling here it is Christmas Day & a day. Out-side of Okinawa¹ Christmas of 1948 – this is the worst, I've ever had.

We had a good lunch today but eating isn't every thing to me! Sitting around in the day room all day can get mighty motiness. Tomorrow I work, for the first time since I've been back. Look maybe that will help. Also tomorrow night I eat dinner with Pete & Marie. And the baby bed & tenda also should be on their tomorrow. I'll get to see what kind of bills' we have tomorrow also as it will be the first time for the mail room to open!

Yes darling – about 110 more days & we'll be together again. Maybe I won't be completely nuts. By that time. Although I have had more of this barracks than I can stand right now. I know it's hard on you too darling staying there.

Well baby I'm going to close for now – hoping to hear from you aflow soon. I'm expecting a letter from you tomorrow but I hate to, because I know I wont get one.

O – by the way today was a warm sunny day, until about 3:30 & it's be raining ever since.

Tell everyone hello for me & if you haven't already – call my Mother & tell her I got here okay. Squeez little Paige for me.

Love,
Gene

NOTES

1. *Okinawa* Gene served as a radar operator on Okinawa, which the United States occupied and administered after the 1945 battle. He calls it “the rock” throughout.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

December 28, 1951

Washington, D.C.

Dearest Chloye,

I received your first, or I suppose it is the, written on the 21 & 23. Sure was glad when I got it too. You have to remember Darling – your letters are all I have of home. Wish you knew how much I would love to have you & Paige here with me. You are going to have your mother snap some of you & Paige aren't you? – & soon! Speaking of pictures – I'm sending you one. We had to have these made the other day for identification cards. They make one extra so am sending it to you. That face looks like one that should have numbers in front of it doesn't it?

Boy is it cold here. One day since I've been back was nice & not too cold. Can't say much for the other days tho. And this dam barracks has you freezing one minute & burning up the next. When the fireman get the furnace to going good a lot of that cool dust comes into the rooms as the heat dues. If I can find me a reasonable room for rent – I'm going to take it. Because I know I can't take this for three & a half months. Why I'd be completely nuts.

I have picked myself up a nice big cold. I took it on the way up here on that train. And the barracks hasn't helped it one single bit. Tomorrow (Sat.) is a regular work day then we have Sunday Mon, & Tue. off. What am I going to do?

Setliff sure did [*get, struck out*] rolled up to today. He just about [*got, struck out*] the whole section in deep water. He told off the wrong man at the wrong time. It sure surprised me.

Well, a lot of us we didn't think he had it in him. We can put it this way – He either fixed things up good for us or else we're really had it.

Some of the boys are worried about overseas. But that's one thing I don't have to worry about now darling. That's worth a lot – isn't it.

Lesson Sweetheart, if you get a job in Refugio – be careful how you drive. Because you know how dangerous it can be. Always be on alert darling. Everything you do – be on the alert. Take good care of Paige – but don't spoil her. Texas is leading in deaths in automobile accidents over the holidays so far. So never let your guard down darling – never let it down on any thing.

Sweetheart this cold has me feeling awful. So I'm going to clean up & hit the sack. Hope I will be able to drop off to sleep. With all the noise & me thinking of you and Paige all the time, it's hard for me to sleep.

Bye for now darling,

Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

December 30, 1951

Washington, D.C.

Hello Darling,

Well here it is Sunday again & I've been gone 10 days. Funny, but it seems longer than that to me. Guess it's because I love you so much that I miss you the way I do. It appears strange to me how anyone can fall so deeply in love with someone in such a short time. Mother nature is a wonderful thing. Say I just figured out why it comes strange – Mother nature (she's a woman) get it! ha ha. Women do funny things. But it's sure wonderful, I could never love any one as I love you sweetheart. I don't know what I would do if anything ever happened to you.

How are you liking it around there by now? I hope you are getting along with Mom okay – because if your not, there's certainly something wrong with you. She is just as sweet, kind & good as any human could possibly be darling. Some boys squawk about their Mother in laws – but I certainly can't. I have one of the best. That's what I can't figure out sweetheart, how come I was so lucky – getting you, Paige & well – just everything. Speaking of Paige, I'm anxious to see some pictures of her. She's such a little darling. I want you to watch that temper of her's tho (and yours also) it seemed to be getting pretty bad. That's one thing that I can't stand. A kid with a temper.

Well four more days and I start K.P. Isn't that something to look forward to? Look forward to getting off it. The cooks will think it strange – me not taking anything home!

O – guess what sweetheart I wish you were here – I know you'd get a charge out of this. Roan (4 star) is going to Alaska. Remember when he put in for transfer any where in the states, but he wouldn't go over seas. Well he leaves about the 15th of Jan.

Sweetheart when I get home in April, we'll go away for a week or so – not see any one or anything – be like a honey moon. We never actually had a honey moon, so let's have it in April – what do you say?

The weather is lousy up here. Don't guess I'll ever shake this cold off. I'll certainly be glad to get back to that Texas weather – where I don't get a cold every time I turn around.

Major Dodson is getting out about the 3rd of Jan. I'm going to get his address & he & I can go fishing sometime in Galviston.

Well Sweetheart – about to run out of space so will quit for now. This is all you desire any way! ha. Give Paige a big kiss for her Daddy.

Yours,
Gene

January 1, 1952

Washington, D.C.

Hello Darling,

Here it is a new year & the first day is almost gone. I will sure be glad when it's first 3 1/2 months are gone. I believe sweetheart – that will most probably be the happiest day of my life. Getting to be with you & Paige & be out of the service! All of that at one time!!

Today was the last holiday & am I glad. Tomorrow we go to work under normal work days. Time should fly by that way. So for it's been dragging.

I spend yesterday with Pete & Marie stayed untill 8:30 last night & came back here & hit the Sack. What a new years eve it was – just as boring or Xmas. Do you remember the Xmas & New Year that we got married? That's the kind I like.

Well – I guess this is the first New Years Day that I didn't eat, Black-eyed Peas, And it's already kinda worrying too! ha.

O – darn I just thought – day after tomorrow I go on K.P. Why did I have to think of that? Until I thought of that, I was enjoying myself writting this. Maybe this will be the last time I'll have to pull it. With my luck I'll get it again tho.

Sweetheart – I wounder what it would be like to hold you in my arms again. The way I sometimes got to do – & kiss you. Remember how little Paige used to laugh when we would kiss & carry on in front of her? If I could only do that right now. Sweetheart I do miss you an aflow lot. We can't get together to

soon to suit me. How about you? Ask Paige what she thinks about it.

The weather was good up here today. For a change! Until today it has rained almost every day. Speaking of rain theres an aflow lots of it in my heart right now, & the best I can make of the forecast – it will be the same until about April 13, 1952. Withen a few days after that, the sunshine is expected to out – and how!

Baby I was going to the bills as I'll be paying them the 4th Clean Rite isen't amoung them. You'd better check & see if you have them. They must be at that end some place. If you have it just go ahead & pay it. That was I can pay the bank & Sears off faster.

This barracks is getting me more & more each day. Sure am going to get me a room if I can find a reasonable one.

Sweetheart I had the best dream last night. You wanted to come back to D.C. I told you to leave Paige with Oma & Jack. You come up & we were having the best time – & then I woke up, damn it.

Love,
Gene

January 2, 1952

Washington, D.C.

Dearest Chloye,

Got a cupple of letters from you today. One written the 24 & the other the 27th, I also got our electricity bill – the darn thing was \$32.53. I went by the bank thinking there was some money in there – well there was – \$2.32 How much did you say you put in that day?

I moved off the base today – couldn't stand that barracks any longer. Those people in there were nuts – crazy. They – why it's impossible for a guy to get a minutes peace. I'm not about to put up with that outfit. I sharing a room with Wilson – \$18.50 a month. That isen't a bit bad. And I guess he'll be gone half the time – he's gone over to see his girl friend now.

Well baby my K.P. starts tomorrow night. Don't know how often I'll be able to write you during that five days sweetheart. You know how K.P. is. Sometimes rough – sometimes easy. Let's just hope this time will be easy, By the time you get this letter I'll be on. So at 6 o'clock each night you can think of me starting to slave.

Sweetheart are you gaining any weight yet? If you do – don't gain to much. I haven't gain an ounce yet myself.

Darling what you were saying about the night you were down town & Coleen saw you. Things like that dosen't hurt a thing in the world. Just as long as you always act like your married & make the ones around you keep the facts in there minds. I dont think you would ever do any thing you shouldn't.

Now some of those “num nuts” around there will probably get a few ideas. Lesson darling, if any of em do & mitchen it to you – you’d better set them straight right away. I’m a pretty jealous man about my wife don’t know wither you know it or not. When I get home I better not find one person who has steeped out of line. You can tell I’m might be a little small – but size don’t mean a DAM THING. I’d better not find out about any thing that’s unordinery.

Can Paige say Daddy any plainer now. Imagen she can. I sure would love to see you girls. Darling – why do I miss you so much.

To day was a pretty rough day at the shop. Just after all the hailday, a lots of equipment was brought in. Then after work I put my things in Wilson can & be moved me up to here. Got everything put away, he took off & I started writting you. So when I run out of space here, I’ll clean up & go to work to bed. I work all day tomorrow (because of so much work to be done, & some guys are still on furlong) & all night tomorrow night on K.P. So I suppose I’ll sleep most of the next day.

The weather sure does sound good down there. Wish I could get out without an overcoat, must best have the windows open.

Bye for now sweetheart.

Yours Forever

Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

January 5, 1952

Washington, D.C.

Hello Sweetheart,

Well this my fourth night of K.P. So I guess it's been about four days since you've heard from me as this is the first chance I've gotten to write. As you can see I started this the other day – that darn fountainpen I got went on the blink (Ball point) So I had no way of finishing. Tomorrow night will be my last night. Then I'm going to start looking for me a part time job. Have to get one, because we still owe lots of money. And I sure want all these D.C. bills paid off when I get out of service. I'm going to drop that ins. we took out on Paige up here. If I can just get my ins. deviden check it would just about do it.

Sweetheart – do you miss me as much as I miss you. Evend when I'm asleep I wake up about every hour & reach for you. If you haven't done that darling I hope you don't – because it's an aflow feeling. Then it takes about 20 min. to get over that & go back to sleep.

Boy have we had some weather. About four thirty the outhur day as I started to work it began to snow. By 6 O'clock it was four ins. deep & the snow turned into rain, it rained all the rest of the night, talk about slopy it was over your shoe tops the next morning.

10:A.M. 7 Jan.

Well honey here I am again to finish this time. I was so tired while I was writing the outhur side of this, this morning. I had

to get up now so I can get to the bank now. See if I can deposite enough money for the amount of check I have to write.

Here it is Monday & I haven't gotten any letters from you since last Wen. Sure hope I get one today baby, It's getting rough.

Sweetheart if I could only be with you right now. Darling – I miss you so much just constantly – not just ever so often. I don't know now why we ever made this discussion.

I'll bet that little Paige is really a little darling now. Is she getting around any better? I'll bet she's running your legs off.

Have you been back over to Moms yet? Are just exactelly what are you doing?

O – sweetheart, to be in warm weather, I Sure hope you are enjoying it. It's been aflow damn cold ever since I've been back here. Sweetheart – when you make enough money for the trip up here. Why don't leave Paige with someone & make it. You & I could just rent a sleeping room, you work, & we could eat our meals out. Wouldn't that be fun for three months?

Love,
Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

January 8, 1952

Wash. D.C.

Hello My Darling,

How's my little oil woman doing by now? I'd like to make a guess at how many shares you own in the co. by now but I'm afraid to!

I just now got in from my last night of K.P. Didn't feel like I could go to sleep right away, so here I am writting you – because I love you so much baby. Don't you know it would have to be love to work all night long & come it a 6 o'clock in the morning & write a letter.

Now that I will be working under normal schedule again, I'm going to look for me a part-time job this afternoon. That damn phone call last night coust me \$3.45 – but it was worth it to hear your voice.

Tell me all about your job Sweetheart. Your working hours, days & every thing like that. And baby when you start getting paid – send some of the money up here so I can make double payments on your bills. Tell me all about the set up you have Huston. I'm not exactly sold on the idea of a negro keeping Paige all day long with Kent around. No telling what he will deciede to do to Paige.

Pete was habtised sp. the outhter night. He was tickled to death about the whole thing. Patty was all shake up because Donald was supposed to come home for Xmas – & he didn't. Marie was down with a cold (to much celebrating) I think. ha ha And Suzan is just as big a pest as ever. That little mac. (of

Jerry's & Moins) is sure getting big. Marie Called Moin, "Chloye" the other day & Moin says "Marie for heavens sakes – I'm not Chloye." Marie said she was forever calling her your name.

Well darling – guess I get a little sleep now. So remember how much I love & want to be with you. I wish Paige would have made some sound on the phone last night. Tell her how much her Daddy loves her – for me, will you?

Love You Darling,
Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

January 9, 1952

Washington, D.C.

[written up the left margin: I'll get some ink tomorrow!] Hello Darling,

Received your sweet little letter yesterday afternoon. Sure did enjoy it sweetheart. Write like that more often.

Sweetheart money, I can't send. So we'll just have to pay for storage on those crates.

What did you do with the Station Wagon? I hope you didn't drive it to Houston. How far do you work from where you live? And what section of town do you live in?

Has anyone around there said any thing to you about me a job? It's going to have to be an aflow good job. Because I'm making \$227.50 now tax free. And if I re-enlisted – look at the bones. I'd be Staff. Would have over four years, so there's \$7.50 more a month. And around \$28.00 for Staff. No hostople bills. I'd say around \$450. per month. Sweetheart I know you probably think I can never make my mind up. Well I have a lot to think about. I have to support you & Paige. I'm here I know I can.

Was over at Petes & Marie's last night. The thing they said was tell Chloye their mad at you. Pete said he knew as soon as you left, you'd forget all about them. That was also the last thing they said when I left – "Tell Chloye to write us! He wants me to go to the fights with him tomorrow night, but I can't, I don't have the money. Just like last winter remember, where I wanted to go – no money.

I'm just about over that cold. Just a little cough left. I'll probably get a new one tomorrow.

I was down at the shop yesterday afternoon, Setliff saw me & holored "well how was the furrow" (K.P.) then he started looking me over. Thought he was going to say I need a hair cut. Then he said, My god getting fat as a pig, But I not. Can't tell a bit of difference.

Well baby doll I'll close for now so kiss Paige for me & be good.

All My Love,
Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

January 12, 1952

Washington, D.C.

Hello My Darling,

And how is every little thing with my two little girls by now? I hope your missing your daddy – because your daddy is certainly missing you two. Well sweetheart, one week from today & I will be gone for one month. Seems to me 1 year at least. Sweetheart do you think you can stand it for three (3) more long months? I don't think I can. I love you to much to be away from you this long, when theres no need. I know that's what we decided, but darling some times people make the wrong decision. Sweetheart, when I'm away from you like this theres only one thing that keeps me going. That is knowing your all mine & mine alone. I'm married to you. And with the little girl you gave me – no one could be prouder of his little famely than I am mine. That's one thing that's mine – all mine! And I hope and pray darling that you & Paige will always be mine & just mine.

Honey, all these days & nights (especially nights) I've been doing a lot of thinking. I've decided I haven't been treating you at all night. Your much to beautiful & sweet to be treated the way you have been. And I could kick myself in the set for not giving you the love & kindness you desire. So for I haven't lived up to a thing I said before we got married. My darling I only wish you were here now, so I could be showing what I mean, instead of just writting to you. Sweetheart, I do love you so much. And I'm going to show you when we get together again

– like you’ve never been shown before. And that little, Paige, she’s going to have the best Mother & Father in the world, because she’s the sweetest little girl in the world.

I wish the people across the hanger would get on the ball & get a flight to Houston. Because I’m getting aflow home sick for my family. Darling it certainly will be nice to have you warm your feet on me again. These nights are mighty cold up here. I stay cold all night long! How close is your room at, Aunt Margarets to any one else? And what condition is your bed in? Sweetheart, I can hardly waite to see you again. And that’s only natural because your so beautiful & sweet & me being so much in love with you

Say how come I haven’t heard from you since Wen? It’s hard for me to keep going without your letters. If your job is doing that – you’ll just have to quit. Your husband is supposed to come first remember. From now on darling, your certainly going to come first with me. Yes my wife first. I wish you would come back up here so I could prove that.

Sweetheart, I hope you’ve been doing some thinking also. But I dought it, because you have Paige & all kinds of other relatives there with you. But I don’t have anyone. Darling do you think it’s fair. The way you treating me. You’ve punished me enough. Now why don’t you come on home? Give me 10 good reasons why you shouldent & I’ll give you a hundred why you should. Love & lonesness should be reason enough. Money helps out, but love is more important. And I know my sister Oma would be tickled to take care of Paige for awhile.

I’m going to move back on the base Monday. It’s to lonesome in this room for me to stand another day. I can save a little more money that way also.

Sunday 13 January 1952 How's my little darling? Well tomorrow I move back in the barracks. I will be exactly three months from now & then I'll be on my way home, to see & be with the one's I love so denniably much.

I also hope I get a letter from you tomorrow – I'd darn right better!

Darling, what have you been doing with yourself besides working. I'll bet little Paige is glad to see you of an afternoon when you get home. But after all, who wouldn't! I know I would just love to walk in every afternoon & have you waiting to greet me. Soon it will be that way again darling. I wish I could work day & night & get out in half the time. Well sweet I'll close for now. Kiss Paige for me.

All My Love,
Gene

January 12, 1952

Dearest Chloye,

Received the letter of the 24th from you just now. It got here on the weekend & the mail room is closed Sat. & Sun. You said you hadn't heard from me in three day. Then you asked if I was sick. It's strange you ask that. Any way, guess you've received my letter explaining by now.

I didn't go to chow this noon. Not hungry, so here I am writting you. When a guy is as lonesome as I am – don't see how one could have an appetite. I can certainly feel for people who love each other as I do you, and have to be apart.

Sweetheart – I think I'm going to try and have my appendix taken out. Because after you get out of the hospitle from that, I would get 14 days sick leave. If I was sure I could make the trip home afterwards, I sure would try to have it done.

You ask how I pass away time. Well never before in my whole life (put together) have I done so much reading! I try to keep from just sitting around & thinking of you all the time, but it's mighty hard to keep from doing. I read your letter over & over. I'm still waiting on that picture of you & the one of Paige. How long will I have to wait?

Sorry to hear about your hand darling. You be sure & do as the doctor instructs, because fungus can become serious. Take good care of it & get it well – because I don't want have to do all the dish washing when I get home! ha. All kidding aside darling – I would do anything just to be with you again.

I suppose our little girl is talking a blue streak by now. I sometimes wish I didn't love you two so much, then it wouldn't be so hard on me being away like this. Now wasn't that an awful thing to say! Was only kidding of course.

I haven't seen Pete & Marie since I got out of the hospice. Have you written them yet?

I have K.P. Thurs. night. We only have it one night at a time now. Comes around about every twenty days.

Tell every one hello for me darling & in 2 & ½ months I'll see them for about a week – then you & I are going on our honeymoon! We'll stick around about a week for me to be with Paige.

All My Love,
Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

January 15, 1952

Bolling Air Force Base

My Dearest Darling,

I sure was tickled this afternoon Sweetheart. I rec. three letters from you. One written 21st of Dec. (When you didn't know my address) one written 3 of Jan. (You knew my address but failed to put Bolling¹ Air Force Base in the address.) Now you aren't getting that old be absent minded! Sweetheart, please let me get letters every day from you, they help me so much.

Living like this couldn't possibly pay off in the long run darling. But as you say we have to do it now. Just keep praying that these three months will pass fast now.

That about, Uncle Allen sounds interesting. Will have to have a chat with the old boy.

The Xmas gifts sound nice. You have always wanted a Canaster set any way. I'll be glad when we can remember people like that at Xmas. Wont you honey?

Sweetheart – don't you worry your pretty little head about me being a good boy. With you & Paige waiting for me it would be impossible for that Sweetheart. I'm acting exactly the way I would want you to.

Sweetheart this time sure is dragging for me. The only place I care about going off base is Pete's & Maries. And I can't be bothering them all the time. They've really been nice to me tho. By the way honey, have you written them yet. Take time out & drop em a few lines baby, they sure want to hear from you.

I sure am tired tonight sweet. I try to work hard every day, that way I eat, clean up, write you & then I good & ready for bed.

Darling I wish I could tell you how much I lone for you. But on this paper it's impossible. If I could only wake up in the morning & it would be, April the 13th.

The boys here on the base are bending over back-wards being nice to me. It's really supprising. It also makes me feel very good. Evend to Setliff & those guys. Guess all the married guys know what it's like & I don't know why the single guys are so nice. But it sure makes a guy feel good.

Sweetheart I'm evend getting 35c hair cuts now. And the chow – well it could never compare with yours. But I'm about to get use to it! And the bed – well I wont evend mithen it – but it's horrible. Keep saying your prayers until we're safely together again sweetheart & don't let Paige forget her daddy..

Love You,
Gene

P.S

NOTES

1. *Bolling Field* Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C., where Gene was stationed in 1951–52.

January 17, 1952

How about some snapshots darling?

My Dearest Darling,

Had to leave the mail room with a sad heart again today honey. Certainly hope I don't have to tomorrow. I can always read your last letter over & over I suppose.

Today was another nice warm day honey. Just a little cooler than yesterday. Will probably ice-cycles hanging from every thing in the morning. ha.

I got my income tax return form the other day darling. This time we should fill out a joint account. But how are we going to? Have you received any thing from the *[struck out]* place you work up here yet?

Three more days & I'll have been gone one month honey – with not quite three left to do. The time is slowly dwelling down. If it knew how anxious I was to be with my darling wife it would fly by.

I wish I would get my insurance money, so I could get some of the small bill's paid off. Sweetheart, the extra money you get, send it to me, so we can have them paid before I leave. Because you realize I'll only draw \$68 now that I'm not on separate rations.

Sweetheart, the guys in the barracks don't like my shoes. They shine to much, it makes theires look bad!

I guess my little daughter is going to have a mouth full of teeth when I get home. Sure hope she cuts them fast so she

wont be sick to long. Is she any better yet? Keep me well informed on that.

Stalmaster ask me again today if I was going to re-enlist. I just laughed at him. Then he told me the only reason he enlisted this last time was 11 years. I'm only loosing 4.

This mail room is closed on Sat. & Sun. So I sure want a letter from you on the Monday. Two days is long enough to go without your letters. Too long!

I'm going to iron all my babies tonight. You know my paints & shirts. Wished you were here to talk to me while I do it! ha. Get what I mean? Also have to do some sewing on my one pair of my fataguies, the spliting at the seems. Four years of wearing you know.

Well, honey – looks like this all until tomorrow night. In the mean time you be on my mind. Especially at night, that's when I miss my love most of all darling, Just always keep in your mind, how much I love you & I'm yours – all of me. You've really have a bargain. All I expeict in return is You – All of you.

Always,
Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

January 17, 1952

B.A.F.B.

Hi Sweetheart,

Well I got your little letter wondering what kind of a husband you had. If you don't care any more about me then that – well it makes me feel real good.

Got a little colder here today. I figured it would, sooner or later. Supposed to get colder tonight & tomorrow. Also rained from about 10:30 A.M. until – well it's still raining out now.

I have fireman tomorrow. Have to keep the fires going two building. With coal you know. Also have to run a buffer over the entire barracks floor in the morning, clean the latrine & around the outside of the barracks. Isen't that something for a married man with a child to be doing. Now use your head – do you think for one minute I could actually be serious about staying in the service.

Don't guess you've written Pete & Marie yet. I only get little notes from you every other day. All of them are written around mid-night. Why do you stay up so darn late? If you want to gain weight, enough sleep is just as necessary as food.

Pay day I guess I'll send the rest of the things we left at Pete's, home. That I won't have to send them C.O.D. might just as well send them to Houston, hadn't I?

They have a guy on the radio now for crime investigating you know Every question they ask he, declines to answer on the ground he may incriminate himself. The lawyer has ask about 35 questions. The man's name is Emil Werring. It's a riot.

I sure will be glad when April rolls around. That's all I can think about. Getting back to you. Sweetheart, I don't want to ever be away from you as long as I live – once we get together again. You can't imagine what it's like for me here. I'll tell you one thing it's worse than a nightmare. Don't just think I'm feeling sorry for myself either.

Do you plan to continue working when I get out? You & I are going away for about two weeks darling, you know. We are even getting rucked on Feb. darling 29 days, usually only 28. Sometimes I think the world is against me. And when my wife gets angry with me – then I really think the world is against me.

Sweetheart, do you remember some of the wonderful times we had in Mississippi. When we were first married. That's the way I want it to be again. Only this time not end so soon. If you can remember.

Darling before I forget it again as as I have the last few letters. I want you to send me that picture of you. The one in the evening gown, with the bangs hanging on your forehead. Please do it right away honey. That would help me so much. I'll be expecting it by next Fri. How about it honey going to let me down?

Sweetheart, what kind of a car are we going to get. I think a Chev. would be the most economical. Have you checked on anything like that? We want to get it before we go on our honeymoon! Because I won't be getting a business right away, I'll have to work for someone for a year or so. Maybe I'll work for an oil company & go to a television school at night. Then when I complete the school. Switch over to a T.V. shop. Then after I got onto the ropes of how they operate, get a shop of our own.

Like the idea? Lots get a bel-air Chev. Do you think Mom would do that? In fact, maybe if I can get home for a few days before my time is up. We could borrow the money & buy the car & you could use it until I get out. Then it would have a few miles on it (kinda broken in) & we could take off on our honey moon. How about that.

We'll – all I know to say is that I wish I was with you more than any thing in the world.

By the way, have you heard the speech, “Churchill” made before Senate. I heard it today.

What kind of guys work in the office you work in? Are they, or have any of them gotten smart or any thing like that yet?

How about all the old boy friends you had around there, Seen any of them yet? You do remember how you some times said you were going home & look around and about how many of them would love to have you. How about it?

Well between writing & talking to guys that dropped in its 1030 P.M. now so I'm going to hit the sack.

Goodnight my darling & always remember, how much I love you & Paige.

All My Love
Gene

P.S. Don't forget to send The 8' by 10' picture of yourself.

January 18, 1952

B.A.F.B.

My Dearest Darling,

Have a little break here sweetheart so, thought I drop you a few lines & mail it before 4 P.M. when they send mail out. That way you'll get & extra letter. Isen't that sweet of me?

Darling I have missed you just as much today as any other. Guess I'll be loning for you the whole time I'm up here! ha. No kidding honey I do want to be with you so bad. Sometimes I get to think of you & nothing will take you off my mind. No matter what I try. I hope you love me just half as much as I do you darling.

The sun is shining beautifully today baby. If the wind just wasn't blowing so hard. It would a lovely day.

Well – just got back from the mail room as it opens at three. No letter from you. Now it wont open again until Monday.

Roan left today the tour of duty there where he is going is 18mo. I'm just glad it's other guys doing it – & not me.

Guess I'll go over to Petes & Maries tomorrow. Go out to the market & things like that with them. And I certainly hope you have written them by now, because every time I go over they want to know why you haven't written them. They thought we were at least good enough friends to write each other once in-a-while. If you haven't written yet, How about doing that for me right away, And while were doing favers – don't forget to send me your 8' by 10' picture right away also!

Man – I sure don't like this firemans job – I don't believe I mitchened last night, it's a twenty four hour job. Started at t7 his morning & get off at 7 in the morning. Ha. Just thought, don't guess I'll go to Petes & Maries, I'll sleep. Well guess I go over there Sun.

Tue. 10: P.M. B.A.F.B.

Diden't get this Fri. afternoon. Had to stop & go do some work. Since then I've been resting & eating good food I ate mid-night chow Fri. Something didn't agree with me – A little touch of toe main poisoning. That & a little cold really had me feeling rough. Went to the hospitle 3:30 A.M. Sat. morning & got out this after noon. I feel fine now, like a million bucks. But Sat. & Sun. I thought I would of had to of gotten better to die. Have you ever had that? Well, I hope you never do if you haven't.

Had two letters waiting for me this afternoon when I got out. You sweet little thing. I sure do love you darling, also miss you an aflow much.

Sure am glad to hear Paige is feeling better now. I certainly hope she hasn't lost any weight. She was so perfect – form – How was I so lucky to get you & Paige both.

Baby there's a guy here now that was Okinawa¹ with me. We have been talking ever since chow about it. He was back over there again in 51 for 12 months. He's been telling me how its changed. The people have started businesses of their own now. They've started re-building their villages. Says there isn't very many grass huts left. Getting back to like it was before the war. Have schools for the kids and every thing.

Nothing new has been going on around here. Still the same old stuff.

Pretty chillie right now. Snowed for about two hrs. this morning, turned to rain after that & rained the rest of the day.

Well darling, the lights well be turned off in a few minutes, so I have to close, because I sure want to get this in the mail in the morning. So good night sweetheart& until the middle of April, remember how much I love you. And see how much money you can save. You should send me your extra money so I can get these bills paid off.

Sweetheart I will I could go into the bed room now & you be in there to love the way I've been wanting to love you this past months (Lesson to me – go into the bedroom – I'm setting in my bedroom on my bed now!)

Bye baby & take good care of yourself & little Paige. Because I love you to much for you not to.

All My Love,
Gene

NOTES

1. *Okinawa* Gene served as a radar operator on Okinawa, which the United States occupied and administered after the 1945 battle. He calls it “the rock” throughout.

January 23, 1952

Tell Paige hello give her a big hug for me.

Dearest Chloye,

How is the kid doing by now? Fine I hope. Suppose you know youre going to have to watch how you talk to your elders now. Yes today I am a man. Now kid – I want to hear nothing more of your wise cracks! Now that I'm a man honey – I feel like I can love you lots more & lots better. That is if I ever get the chance to! It seems so long since I've been with you. We certainly are going to have a lots of long lost time to make up for.

We are getting 25 new men in the sqdn. in the morning. Sixteen new ones are moving into this barracks. Sure crowded now. They moved all the beds in today. Getting that many men in could only mean one thing, as soon as we get them check out – there will be a big shipment. I'm sure thankful I don't have to worry about it.

Having a clothing inspection Sat. morning. Hope I can get away with what I have here. I'm sure I can.

I was called over to the orderly room today, for something I told a doctor when I was in the hospital. I was hurting so bad I didn't realize what I was saying I guess, because I don't remember telling him what he said I said. I remember griping about chow & a few other thing. Any way they let it go that I didn't realize what I was saying.

10:15 (same night) Just got back from Maryland baby. The C.O. came over to the barracks, Maryland State Police wanted

volinters to look for a little girl that was lost in the woods. We had only been out there about 30 minutes & she was found by some guys from Andrews. Sure was glad too because it was aflow cold.

Chloye you watch Paige every minite. Don't ever alow her to be outside unwatched. Kids can do things to fast.

Well darling, the lights will be put out in a few minites so I'll close, as I have to get my bed made.

Darling I love you so much. I hope I can stand this for three more months. Its not easy being away from two people you love as I do you & Paige.

All My Love,
Always,
Gene

P.S. Sweetheart, don't forget to send your big picture & the snapshots soon.

CLARA

January 24, 1952

Tucson, Ariz.

Dearest Chloye, Gene, & Paige,

How are you this Morn? We've been thinking & talking about you for a long time & I've been meaning to ans. your letter, but it seems as if I'm always pooped & when I do have a Minute to sit down thats just what I do flop –

It was such a Nice surprise hearing from you kids again. We were about to think you had forgotten us.

Hows Paige? Bet she's a darling sure would like to see her. I think it's a shame we haven't exchanged snapshots of the Children – De Wayne is just the image of Carey & Mean that isn't the word to describe him. He gets into every thing – Climbs on the table & beds. He keeps me jumping all day long.

We're sweating out school again. Carey think he might have to go back to Keesler for 955 – I sure hope not

We don't want to leave here. We have a 2 bedroom house a big yard. Carey has just finished building a picket fence to keep De Wayne off tho st. I've already planted my flower seeds. You can imagine how nut off I'll be to leave.

We had a sweet Xmas this year. We didn't go home so we had the fun of triming our own tree & playing Santa Clause. That was the biggest thrill of all.

Chloye, was sure sorry to hear about your Step-father. We were home in June.

My mother was sick. She came back with us & stayed until now. I really missed her for a while after she left.

Yes, Carey remembers Rodney quite well – says Hello –
Please kids, don't wait so long to write. I know how you hate
to do it, but it's nice hearing from you. Hope some day we'd be
stationed together again.

How's about going down to Ginny Lynns for a beer & maybe
a trip to Flo. Huh?

Clara + Family –

Bye for now –
Love to you all

January 25, 1952

B.A.F.B.

Hello My Darling,

I got the letter you wrote on my birthday sweetheart, today. And the clippings, I just imagian those exact word coming from your own sweet little lips.

Well – we have our clothing inspection in the morning. I found out what all we are supposed to have. What I don't have here, I'm borring from guys who have extra. I'm short 3 shirts & a pair of gloves.

Was supposed to snow this afternoon here – but it didn't, it was too cold. Guess you've about forgotten about this kind of weather.

Darling – I hope once we get together again, that we never have to be apart. I'm going to do my best to avoid anything like this from happening ever again. If I could see you now I would never turn you loose. So plan on the time.

Sweetheart, I'm tickled to death you getting picture made of Paige & sending to me. But don't forget to send me the big one of you either. I hope I get em soon. I know Paige has changed a lot. Just be sure & don't let her forget her Daddy!

Suppose you've been hearing all the news. Wars breaking out all over it seems.

I don't know why but practially every one in this barrcks thinks they can sing. But – on the other hand, guys have to do something.

I have a dental appointment Monday, so I going to have my teeth cleaned. Then I can say I use cologates!

These new guys we have here sure look blue. I wonder if I looked that way my first part of my hitch. I know I do now.

What do you think of the new Chev's honey? I think I'll work in grain before I get a job. That way I can make a few fast bucks first about to pay for a car I'm thinking.

Guess this is all for now darling – so tell Paige how much I love her & don't you forget yourself.

All My Love,
Gene

February 1, 1952

Bolling A.F.B.

Hello Sweetheart,

Well, as the days & nights pass time grows nearer for us to began living & loving again. The only trouble is, we are growing older too. Darling I miss you much. But almost a month & a half has gone by since I last saw you. Maybe I'll be able to struggle through the next 2 1/2.

Seem I'll never get a hop to, Houston. We have lots of planes going to San Antonio – If we could only work something out.

Received a letter from, Oma yesterday. She sent me a print of the fish with us standing by & one of Paige & Connie. That little darling. She looks like she woundering just what in the world is going on. Does she miss her Daddy much. I suppose she's already forget me. I'll forgive Paige, because she's so young – Just don't let her Mother forget me!

I'm actually to tired to be writting you now. But since I haven't in a day – I am.

I'm working for, "Leavitt," tonight. He called the barracks about 9:30 so I figured I might as well sleep down here at the hanger as the barraks about 9:30 – So I figured I might as well sleep down here at the hanger as the barraks & get a few bucks for it. Well – it's 1:45 now. I finished work at 1: o'clock. I miss you calling me when I work at night honey. Remember how you used to call & we'd chatt about nothing? Maybe we didn't realize it then, but it was wounderful.

Sweetheart I'm going to close for now, as I'm working tomorrow too (the week-end) I'm off Mon. & Tue. Sure wish you were here for me to spend my days off with – If I do get to Houston some week-end, do you think maybe, Aunt Margaret would leave us along for, well most of the time?!!

Love You Always,
Gene

February 5, 1952

B.A.F.B.

Dearest Chloye,

Hope this finds every little thing okay with you & Paige. As for me, I'm fine.

Margret Whiting is signing, "might a well be spring." You knew the Song? Will that's almost the way I feel, not exactly tho. I'm other words – I'm just all fowled up. In fact, so damn fowled up I hardley know what to do any more.

I guess I'll quite smoking. Just about have to. Diden't paid enough this month to buy smokes. I don't see how the damn pay section flowes up so much. By me getting off seprate rations – well, I'm so – right now I don't want to evend talk about it. Just have low moral – no mail from you in six days now?

I know, I haven't written either. Well I can't write everyday without a damn thing to write about. Have been expecting that picture of you for two weeks now. What goes with you honey? I don't understand it. Surley that isn't asking for to much. The past week I've been so, that I just don't want anyone to say a word to me. The less I see of all these so called people here the better I like it.

I close now & write when I'm in a better mood.

Love,
Gene

P.S. If you do happen to get a chance, how about sending that picture?

February 5, 1952

B.A.F.B.

Hello Sweetheart,

Hows my little darling tonight? Frankley – I'm woundering if your dead or alive, as this is exactly the seventh day since I've heard from you. That's one whole week – one forth of a month. Speaking of days – I only have 67 days left. Thats two months & one week. I think I'll possibly get my discharge two days early! How about that?

Say honey – do you work on Saturdays? You'd better write & let me know a little of what you do. Do you ever go to Woodsboro¹ on weekends? You never mitchen it if you do. What if I come to Houston some weekend & your in Woodsboro that would be adorable! Don't get excited now sweetheart & start looking for me – but I may be in San Antonio this coming Fri. afternoon. Supposed to leave here Fri. morning & leave San Antonio Sun. afternoon. That would give us Fri. night, Sat. &

Sat. night together. Now Sweetheart, since I don't know wether you & Paige will be in Woodsboro or Houston – When (that is if I get to go) I get to San Antonio, I'll Call Woodsboro or Houston & ask for you. If you're there I'll talk to you & if your not, then I'll know your at the other place & then that's where I'll go. So say a prayer & hope I make it. I'm so anchous to see you two – sure hope I can make it. The weather is supposed to get bad up here – if it does, that will stop the trip. That's what I'm afraid of.

My Darling, “Eddie Fisher’s,” “Trust In Me,” is playing on the radio now. How about that being, Our Song? When you hear it – pretend it’s me pleading to you.

The way I scribble in some of your letter is pitiful – hope you forgive me honey. You know I am. And the spelling of some words too.

So long darling – I hope to be seeing you soon.

*[written inside the envelope
flap:]* Hi ya Baby!! – All My
Love,
Gene

NOTES

1. *Woodsboro* Woodsboro, Refugio County, Texas — Chloye’s home town. Her family had moved there from Houston about 1945.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

February 6, 1952

B.A.F.B.

Hello Baby,

Here's a cupple little items your going to have to take care of sweet. Guess you received the letter telling how my pay was cut down upon my moving back on the base. Then this month I was even short on that.

This is my lunch hour so have to cut it short.

Love Ya,
Gene

CHLOYE ANN WEST

February 7, 1952

My Darling –

How I wish that I could be with you this Valentine's Day. But since it is impossible we'll just have to dream of the days. When we can be together again.

I love you so much. This card could never express all my feelings for you, but it gives you an idea in a very small way.

Be sweet, Darling, I love you Remember that – and be mine always.

Love You Darling,

Yours –

Chloye

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

February 11, 1952

Bolling A.F.B.

Dearest Darling,

How my little wife tonight? Fine I surely hope. Guess you know by now. I didn't get the hop this past weekend. I guess I had my hopes up a little to much – because it sure hurt when they changed the flight plain – the plane went to Florida instead. Well – at any rate we only have two months left – that isn't to long – is it Sweetheart.

Honey – just where will we stay when I first get out? Untill I get a job & everything. Sweetheart, I get so excited when I think of getting out. Just walk out of the gate & know I don't have to come back. And then getting home to you & Paige. By the way – you haven't spoken of Paige in your last few letters. Dosen't she do cute things anymore? Won't it be wounderful when we three get together again? Hope this time we're together for good.

Have you gotten over that temper of yours yet? I sure hope you have. Life could be so much happier without it. You know what it does for you & I. Don't you love me enough to drop your temper? huh?

Received your, Valentine this afternoon honey – made me feel good deep down inside.

Have you heard, “Eddy Fishers, Trust In Me,” lately – I haven't since the other night when I was writting you.

I was paid \$10 today – they claim that brings me up to date. According, to my figuring it didn't – so the finance cleark here

in the orderly room went up to the finance office with me. We talked for a few minutes there – with no satisfactory – so we went over my pay record together & found out it was right. They took out some money for some of my clothes, that should have been done three months ago. Maybe it was for the best tho. because I can do without it better now than we could have three months ago.

I purchased myself three “T” shirts this afternoon also, because I was in bad need of them.

The wind is blowing like mad up here. You know how it can get at times! It blow the door open & then shut real hard last night & broke two pains of glass out. Every one went straight up in the air when it happened. For a second I thought a plane had missed the run way. You know how you are when some thing like that wakes you up.

I have fireman again this Wed. Guess I’ll have K.P. in another week or so.

Well Baby guess I’ll sign off for now.

Lots of Love

Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

February 14, 1952

B.A.F.B.

Dearest Chloye,

Well, here it is Valentine's Day honey & I'm all alone. With my Val. 1800 miles away. We have one constalation anyway – this month is half gone. So now we only have two months left of loneliness.

Having a little snow out here at the base now. Supposed to snow more tonight.

I was fireman yesterday & a few of the guys got a little fired with me – & only because the hot water ran out & they couldn't shower or share – I told them any man could shower & share with cold water. Well I shouliden't of said that. Because three of em tried to take my clothes off & put me under the shower with cold water. But they didn't succeed. After we quit rascling around, I was so sweaty – I went up to my room felt so sticky that took my clothes off, went by their room felt room & said, O.K. you kids lets go take a shower. So now they call me, "shake em up Tex." Ha. O – we have our fun. That water was aflow cold tho.

Well, I had some clothes in the washer just now & went down to take them out. The thing had broken & didn't rince em out. Had to do it all by hand.

Any more people say anything about a job? It wasn't be much longer now. I'm practely there.

Had a transit B-25 come it on one engian this after noon.
Ran off the end of the run way & broke the engian mounts on
one side, but no one got hurt.

You know baby, I'd like to get set up on a farm. That's what
I've always wanted. And then to a farmer dosen't get drafted.

Well darling I close for now. Don't you work to hard & – say
is Paige trained yet. She should be.

Love You Darling,
Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

February 19, 1952

B.A.F.B.

Hello Baby,

Received your letter written on Valentines Day this morning & way glad to hear from you again. Sure wished it would of had some money in it tho. I'm busted & have been for quite some time. I bought myself some "T" shirts & socks this month – Have to buy some more next month too. I sure hope the next letter I get from you has some money in it.

I'm eating a hard-boiled egg while writting. Just got back from mid-night chow & I snitched a cupple egg to eat here in the shop. I'm working nights now for 13 days while, "Leavitt," is on leave. Every night so far I've had lots of work. More than ever before. The other night I worked until 12:45 & then at 3 O'clock (while I was sleeping away) I got a call & had to go out on of transit – & boy was it cold. You know how it is here when the wind is blowing – rugged!

I wish I could think of some way of making some foot money when I get out – if I get out. I think I'll work in grain – Get enough to get a car. Has your mother ever mitchend financing us with a car?

Well babe it's aflow late & I'm tired out, so guess I'll sign off for now.

Good Night Sweetheart
Love,
Gene

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

February 26, 1952

B.A.F.B.

Dearest Chloye,

You may have a little trouble reading this – because it's so cold here I'm trying to write & shiver at the same time. I got off a little early this afternoon as I go on K.P. tonight. Came by the Orderly Room on the way to the barracks – I'm getting underpaid again this month. You said you were sending some money about two weeks, don't know what happened – but I still haven't received it. So I borrowed ten. Baby your going to have to send some this month as I'd wont get enough to pay the bank & the ten I borrowed. Plus I have to buy some shorts & "T" shirts, toilite ordicales – wont be able to get any thing until I get money from you. I don't want to keep borrowing money from these guys & they darn sure wont loan it to me when I can't evend pay back what I've already borrowed. I'm going to do a little checking up on that dam insurance dividine tomorrow.

Haven't been anything new going on here. Going to have another Air Raid (dry run) some time this week.

Well I'm going to get a little sleep now, before going on K.P. So take care of yourself & try to get that arm of yours well so you can do a little writting

Love,
Gene

March 8, 1952

My Dearest Darling,

Hope you are in a better mood than you were by the time you receive this. I got the sweet little letter, you wrote after talking to me, yesterday afternoon. I answered right after I read – but I didn't mail it & I'm glad & didn't.

Sweetheart – I don't know what I would do if, some day I got a big fat letter out of my box from you, I'd probably pass out with delight. Right now it would undoubtedly be the best thing that could happen to me. If you would just stop & think a while, it shouldn't be hard to realize it isn't half as easy on me as it is you. Darling, I love you & little Paige more than any thing in this whole wide world. And I miss you & Paige more than any thing in this world. Here I am 1800 miles away from the ones that mean the world to me. I guess some times I do things I shouldn't, or people think I shouldn't. And then on the other hand – I've put up

Roses Are Red Violets Are Blue And So Am I From Thinking of You with a lot of thing – well just things that some people probably could never understand. Some people don't think of others & love other enough to realize how they must feel & what they are going through with – & for what? So some day maybe what they are doing & go through will make it to where they can live like they dream about living – & so others who follow us won't have to go through the same things.

March really came in with a bang here. Had snow for the first few days. Has been aflow all this month. And there at home people probably have all their crops planted.

Sweetheart – I hope I get to come home soon. All I have to do is just close my eyes & I can see you – but Paige, I can't imagen what she must look like now.

14 Mar. Hello Darling. I received your letter of the 11th this morning & was trelled to death to hear from you again. Although I almost dropped over when I found it had no money in it.

Sweetheart, these people have me shoke up. If you have to borrow money, do it & send that Sears payment in. He called me last night. Said he had to have it by the week-end, I told him about being short paid – well he couldn't help it. So I talked for awhile & told him I'd call you & see what you could do. I have to call him back this afternoon. I'm going to tell him you have the money on the way & he should receive it by Mon. or Tue. Please act on that right away darling or their going to have me. I went down to the "Air Force Aid Society" this, but they wouldn't do a thing.

Sweetheart – why do we always have so much dificulty over money. That's what causes us all our trouble & mysery & believe I'm sweating now: They aren't kidding.

I Love You Darling We have a big change to make on buying things on credit. Until our income growes quite a lot, we aren't running up this many bills again. It causes to much worry.

This month has been cold every day. We are also having the March wind – and cold! Wow

Haven't seen Pete & Marie in quite some time. Don't have the money to leave the base. ha. Isen't that something.

Remember here while back when was sick – well last week a guy was the same way & then night before last another guy got it to.

Well baby I have to close now. I've written this during my lunch hour & it's time to return to the hanger. Try to let me hear from you more often darling if you can possibly write any thing and I'll try to do the same.

All My Love,
Gene

P.S. Don't forget to send me those pictures you were telling me about on the Phone.

March 19, 1952

Hello My Darling,

Received the letter containing the check & bill day before yesterday. Boy just in the nick of time.

Sounds like your having nice weather down there. You'r not just kidding we're still wearing of our blues – Overcoats & all!

My tonciles acted up a few days ago. So I got on em about taking em out. Guess they will do it in the morning. I kinda dread it! ha

Got a letter a letter from Oma today. Said they had finished all their planting. That sounds funny, because it is still so cold up here. Says, Vingil has to have his foot operated on because of a bone that was broken in Prision Camp. Jimmy is second on the list to be shiped out again, he sure gets moved around, dosen't he?

You know babe – when I get out, I'm going to miss this life. It's all I know, getting in a 17. That's pretty young.

The guy that was on “Okie.” with me got is discharge this past Sun. We gave him a big send off. He's going down to Airyona to re-up. Likes the weather down there.

I was going through my things the other day & found the – never mind, just now looked for it & couldn't find it.

Well, I'm beganing to believe I'm not going to get any pictures of you & Paige.

Going to go to bed now babe so good night.

Love,
Gene

P.S. I found it again, the registration Card for the wagon. Put it some place where you can get easy, but wont loose it. When you drive the car your supposed to have this.

March 23, 1952

My Darling,

Sweetheart – I'm missing you so much these days. It's almost unberable. I have so much to miss – guess thats why I'm so blue.

Thur. & Fri. sure were nice days. Spring exactly came in with a bang. That was the first warm days of the year, all day yesterday it was cloudy, then last night & today it rained – but still warm. Don't evend need a jacket, except at night. Hope it continues this way until I leave here now and that isn't much longer! What a miserable life the past few months have been.

Diden't get my tonciles taken out the other day. They were still infected, so I had to take three more penicelin shots. Tomorrow I go back & bet the dr. take another look at them. Hope they will take them out.

I have K.P. next Sat. Guess that will be the last time – of course I really regreat that!

How are my little girls doing? Do they miss their daddy as much as I miss them? I would like to see that Paige noise & point to it. Image she's saying quite a few things by now – isn't she?

I did a little painting Fri. Started repainting the shop. You know it was a creamy color – now it's green. Sexy huh? ha I was kidding with Stalmaster told him he was supposed to waite until after April 13th before he started that painting. Said he had to get something out of me before I left!

I've been getting so damn much sleep here lately don't think I'll have to sleep for three months when I get out.

Sweetheart maybe in May when school lets out, we can take Mom down to Florida to Jimmy & Vera. Since he is second on the shiping list she will probably want to see him before they leave. It's real nice around St. Pete. You almost got to see it once, didn't you babe? Ha. Did you ever answer that letter of Cory & Claria? You never sent theirs to me. Damn it – you never send me any thing. Get on the ball woman!

Well the flag was just taken down, so guess I'll close & go eat the cold cuts we'll have for chow. Boy to get back to your cooking will be worth a lot – let alone getting back to you – hummmmm

I love you doll, Sweetheart, heres a small tockon of which I want to express my love for you on the day.

And may the good Lord never have us separated on this day again. Darling I love you so much – This dreaming alone is hard.

over To The sweetest wife & little mother in the world.

From the Luckest & Proudest Hunsband & Father in the world.

Gene

March 24, 1952

Hello Darling,

Just send you a telegram, know you probably hit the celeing when you rec. it. It wasn't for me, & I'm certainly hoping you send it. About a week ago, Owens, his wife & little baby were out one night. He started to pass a car & the car swang out at the same time & side swiped naturally. The money is for him. As much as he's helped me out, I certainly hope you sent the money as soon as you got the telegram. I dought wither you'll have it or not, but I think you could of gotten it. Well I'm just going to keep hoping you send it. He needs it tonight.

It's still raining up here, has been since Sat. Remindes me of the monsune season or Okie. Still hasen't turned cold tho.

So maybe Spring is here to stay. Hope so anyway!

What's new with you darling, haven't heard from you in so dam long. And the next letter I get from you I want those snapshots to be in it! see

Well baby – 20 more days – how about that. Then I have to get out or either re-up. I can't decide which one to do.

Going to cut this short so I can get it in this afternoon mail.

Love,
Gene

March 26, 1952

Hello Babe,

Well, how are tonight? Hope you & Paige are okay. How did that cold Paige had ever get? Hope she's over it by now.

Had a little colder weather here the past two days. At least it didn't rain today tho. I knew that nice warm weather was to good to last.

28 Mar. Well darling, maybe I'll get to finish this tonight. A cupple of guys came in & started talking the other night. When they left I was tired & sleepy.

Sweetheart I wish I could see you & talk to you. I only have 15 days left to do now, I'll get S/Sgt. if I re-up. Darling I want to join up again, I'd have to make an a flow lot of money on the outside to clear what we will in here. And when I'm 37 I can retire. Think of all those things

When I make S/Sgt. – you know that first three grader, & I'd pretty well have it made.

Darling I think I may take the eight days I have coming & go home & talk things over with you. Because we have to use rasoning with this. Neither one of use can be hard headed.

Well honey – I can't write, can't sleep, can't eat, can't sit still, can't do a damn thing – except walk around & try to calm down.

All My Love,
Gene

P.S. Give Little Paige a great big squeeze of kiss for me.

EUGENE L. CATCHINGS

April 7, 1952

E.C.

Dearest Chloye,

Hows every little thing about my baby now? Things look mighty fine to me – with only six days left before I’m through with the service. Although it will probably be around 16th or 17th before I get to see you. Or I may be lucky & see you around the 15th.

That Paige – I’m afraid I wo’t evend know her. If you could of only taken time to sent me some pictures of her & write every so often & let me know the little new things she picked up.

Boy will I be glad, to leave this place. The past two nights were down to 35° & 45° during the day. You remember the large celebration they had last year at “Cherry Blossom” Well – they had the celebration – but the weather has been so cold, that there isen’t any Cherry blossoms out yet.

I smoked one cigarette today. I’m trying to quite – hope I do.

I think the guys are giving me a little party Fri. night. Guess I’ll have to get enough to last for quite awhile. How about that baby)

Well sweety I'm gonna close for now – By the way, no need to write me after Wed. because I wont get mail after Fri. the 11th

Lots of Love,

Gene