

Anchorage Alaska
January 24th, 1941
Temp at midnight 6° below Zero

Hello Everybody:-

Will attempt a letter in the early hours of a work day, it is just eight o'clock and we are having one of our glorious sunrises, you all are probably fed up on my talking about them but they are gorgeous and inspiring to us all. Two weeks ago at the time of the full moon, it was still dark when we came to work except for the full moon shining brightly, don't think for a minute I am the only one that talks about the beautiful sunrises and sunsets as everyone does, in the afternoon as the sun goes down as the sky changes we watch for the different effects on the mountains. No wonder Sidney Laurence was a success as a painter here he surely had all the inspiration an artist could want. One thing more on the weather and I'll sign off, I have mentioned the double rainbows and full circle rainbows you see from planes but last week I saw my first rainbow caused by fog, it was very foggy, but no rain just moisture in the air and it caused a rainbow. Things never cease to happen in Alaska.

Now for the skiing, a week ago Friday night the ski club piled into several buses and drove out to Lake Spenard. The lake is about two miles around the edge and frozen solidly so that ten or fifteen cars were on the ice at one time, covered with six inches of snow and on this I had my first try at skijoring. You say that with a roll on the "R". Imagine flying over the snow at forty to fifty miles an hour on skis back of cars?? First we tied two fifty foot ropes on the back of the trucks then added lead lines about eight of them, forming a fan spread as soon as the truck started, then about twenty people held on to the rope, after the first hundred feet the number drops considerable and if you are able to jump or ski around the ones falling in front of you, you are off for a good ride. The trucks turn and twist over the snow and the skiing or skijoring is grand. By taking the end of a lead line you can swing around and traveling faster than the truck you can catch up to the front seat or driver's seat. It is real fun but tiring, you do not pull yourself on the rope as once you are in motion you hold the rope lightly and just glide along. On the first trip around six returned, the second I was the only one, third – two of us and after making six successful trips around the lake I rested. Later tried my luck back of a Packard and I mean really had a ride. The gang then gathered in the Lake Shore Inn and had "Gwuenwien" a spiced drink and all danced the "Shoddach" and had a fine evening.

The only other exercise I've been getting is bowling and skating. Think I have just about accomplished skating with the figure eight and Dutch Roll. Was skating Saturday afternoon, skiing at Independence Mine again last Sunday. That is the place I had my first real ski trip which I wrote about, Sunday we had a car take us up and skied all the way down – seven miles. Was up at 6.30 Sunday and back at 3.30 in the afternoon, then after a short nap to dinner with the gang from Leesburg, Virginia and to the movies, rather a full day considering everything. Then to-morrow am going on another ski trip to the Mine, the skiing is grand there, the first part of the trip is rolling and you ski down a hill and gain momentum enough to go or glide up the next slope. There is about three or four miles of this before the sharp descent down the mountain, Am anxious to try my luck again particularly the little ten foot jumps that appear before you have a chance to turn and you land in a huge snow drift.

Howard L. and Willoughby Filer papers [guide](#)
uaa-hmc-0476-15

That is about all on skiing without repeating my other trip.

Now for the Fur Rendezvous which is from February 18th to 22nd, all the trappers bring in their furs, the natives and all have ski meets, basketball games, boxing, sled competition with dogs etc. I haven't seen it all yet so will wait to describe later. However, we are in training now for it, I mean the men. Starting the first of the year everybody let their beard go and to me it is a pleasure as well as fun, you should see your Uncle Howdy now, whiskers all the way around. Some have goatees, some chin whiskers, others sideburns and everything imaginable, but me just all the way around. Before I shave will send you all a picture and I hope to wear one home when the time comes.

Nothing on transfers as yet but you can never tell, Capt Neil is or has been relieved of duty and is waiting his orders, other transfers will not be known until he moves and knows definitely the new setup.

Guess this is all the news for now, nothing ever happens here, Oh, I nearly forgot we signed up for conscription on the 22nd of January but will not get our numbers until the 1st of July so we have no worries that way. Heard they had another inauguration in Washington. We missed mail and didn't receive any for 12 days but then I received 14 letters and was sure tickled, it is hard to answer something you know is coming but not here yet, evidently most of you thought I was badly depressed when I wrote the letter on sickness but I had to put out some bad news or you wouldn't believe all the wonderful things and sights we do have. At present we are in a middle of an epidemic of measles, imagine approx. 100 soldiers at first and they average 20 new cases a day but now it has struck town and I have three out of the office either quarantined or sick. Will mail this to-night before I get the measles.

Dear Aunt Clara

Will write and answer your letter shortly. Good news from Pat, she is working and loves California. Hope you are spending the winter in Florida as I know you enjoy it. Love to all,
Howdy.