

August 31, 1905-

My dear Father:-

We have just heard of the peace declaration between Russia and Japan and we may visit Japan this year but I hardly think so. Those Russian ships interned here were not injured very much. There were several shot holes through the sides of above the waterline and one had her engine slightly disabled. They were magnificent ships of the type they represent (they are protected cruisers),

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and they are all new ones. Their crews were not trained properly for that fight and they had not had enough target practice. In fact they had no actual target practice. The officers were hardly the ones to put in charge of such fine ships. I've heard it said that there is more graft in the Russian navy than there is in some of our American cities. For instance if a bit of work is to be done on one of their ships, the captain lets the contract to whoever pays him the biggest prize, whether that

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man is competent to take the mark or not. Everything I've heard and seen about them is against them; actions, manners, and ability. Some one told me that these officers were formerly cavalry officers and that they had been hurriedly [sic] transferred. If that is the case there is no wonder at all their unpreparedness and other shortcomings.

This end of the war all seems very strange to me and everyone is surprised at the sudden change in Japan's attitude. Poor China must pay for the war in order to get what is rightfully her own property.

We leave Sept. first for Chefoo where we pick up the rest of the fleet and then go to Taku on the Gulf of Pechili. We will stay there as long as the "Taft Party" stays and if I'm lucky I will get three days leave to visit Tien Toin [??] and Peking. Peking is about seventy miles from Taku and on account of sandbars etc. we have to lie 14 miles out in the harbor.

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For the past two weeks the Taft Party has been entertained by the Filipinos [sic]. They made a tour of the islands and are now going home, stopping at China on the way so as to give all hands a chance to see some of that country.

Our class is gradually being distributed among the smaller ships in the fleet. We six are still on the Ohio and will probably remain there until next summer when the next class come out. Then we will be moved out to the smaller ships.

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This last month at Manila has been almost unbearable on account of the heat, and rain. And now that cholera has broken out, I am real glad that we are going north. We are anchored way out in Manila Bay now and I've been wanting to go swimming all day but the only thing that keeps me from going is that there are two twelve foot sharks cruising around the gangway right by the

ship, and I saw in the other days paper where some fellow went overboard and all that the sharks left of him was his shoes. We had one on a small line about the size of your little finger but he

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broke that with ease. The sailors are now fishing for him with piece of salt pork on a grapnel hook with about a three inch line on it. We went to Olongapo the other day. It is about sixty five miles from here and it has a beautiful harbor (Subic Bay). There is a Marine encampment there and it was intended to put a lot of government funds in building dry docks, etc. to make a naval station there. We anchored about half a mile from the shore and about two hours after we dropped anchor a pig swam off to the ship and the sailors hauled him aboard and were going to add him to our collection of pets, but the captain wouldn't see it that way. He could stand the billy goat, the three cats, the two white mice, the three monkeys, the pigeons, but he drew the line when it came to the pig, so he was sent ashore. There are lots of wind boars and deer in the mountains around here and they are hunted very little because the woods are full of natives who are trying

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to get a pot shot at you while you are hunting. That part lends some real excitement to the sport and makes it fair to everybody concerned because the boar will fight either one of us and the Filipino and I are going to take a shot at each other at first sight. Give me the first sight and when I come home I'll show you the bolo, etc. that I took from an Igorot that I happened to meet in the woods.

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Monday Sept. 24, 1905

We are at sea now about opposite Shanghai and about 100 miles out. We will arrive at Chefoo about Wednesday night. The first two days out of Manila were very rough, in fact we ran into the end of a typhoon and during that time the ship was very uncomfortable on account of the heat. Now we are in fine cool weather and at night it is cool enough to sleep below in the rooms. I have a small room to myself now and it is an

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improvement on the other plan. Now I can carry out my work much better and without being disturbed every minute.

Sept 6-

We arrived at Chefoo and will leave for Taku on Saturday. There all hands go to Pekin. From there we go to Shanghai. I am enclosing a fleet roster in which you will find every ship stationed out here, with all the officers aboard. I'll send one of these every month. I received a letter from Grandfather today and was glad to hear that Hugo Henke is on the road to recovery. He ought not to smoke another cigarette, and he ought to take systematic lung exercises. Be sure to make Otto and Dora do something of this sort because good strong healthy lungs are absolutely necessary to good health. I am glad that Otto has

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a gun. The copy of the "Buckeye" which I'm sending you will give many interesting things about the ship. It is published once a month from our little printing press aboard. This is the first copy out and as long as I'm in this ship I will send it to you. We have heard that the Missouri

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was ordered out here, to arrive out here about Oct. 30. If that's true we will have about six more of our class here, and among them, Church. Just before we left Manila, the cholera broke out there and I'm glad we left even though we did lie out in the Bay. Besides our ship here, there are two Chinese cruisers,

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the Hai Chi and the Hai Shen. One German cruiser SMS Hansa. One Austrian cruiser, the Kaiser Franz Josef. And we expect several British battleships in tomorrow. We see a great deal of these foreign officers because of the numerous calls required by naval etiquette.

I will enclose a few pictures.

My best love to Mother, the children, all of Aunt Augusta's family and Aunt Sophie's family on the farm and yourself

Your son

[signed]

Chester W Nimitz

Today received postal from Elsie at Berlin

“ “ “ “ Shoemaker of my class from Cherbourg France. Shoemaker is on the Brooklyn and she was over there recently to bring back Paul Jones.