

Reminiscences
about Hooded
Mergansers, etc.
Life aboard
ship & room mats
etc.

April 1-2, 1945

Dear Folks,

Happy Easter! So April is upon us! Well, that's all right with me. Actually with me hours may sometimes drag, but as a whole time seems to move pretty swiftly along. This time of year reminds me of walks along the railroad tracks beyond old Primer station and especially the one that just made the "Moat" country, one of my favorite haunts, an occasion that ^{also} brought a certain beautiful picture "to life." This picture is now, I think, my favorite of all Fuertes ^{pictures} and has been since then. The background of dead trees, obviously killed by flood, I'd noticed as very similar to the "Moat" country in general and had in fact made me wonder if the foreground could ever be duplicated there, until on a certain April 2 (1933, I believe) it was. A pair of hooded mergansers being glimpsed just beyond before they disappeared behind a point of land, which, however, soon provided a perfect ^{approach and} vantage point for seeing them in all their beauty at close range. The male, as handsome a duck as they come, was courting the dusky little female by raising and lowering his hood or crest, a pretty sight indeed. This was the closest I ever got to hooded mergansers (not counting the families seen several years later) except for one time in 1940. ~~when~~ I was walking by full moon light ~~and~~ beside a small pond near Ann Arbor, ^{when} a flock of

T. Richards

