

NASHVILLE ARMY AIR CENTER
NASHVILLE, TENN.

Dec. 9th. 1943

Dear George,

Certainly by now, you must have received the letter I mailed to you. Your post card reached me Sunday, so perhaps your anxiety to hear from me caused you to be impatient. I answered you at least within one day's time, and if I'm not mistaken, on the same day. Today I received your letter, and today it gets answered. George, have no fear, your letters to me will always be promptly answered.

It is not easy for me to understand exactly what you're in, or what you're doing. Basic training lasting only 4-5 weeks, can't be too hard to take. It won't be easy, but soon it will be completed, so just do your share of bitching, and carry on. I think you'll do well on the range. Too bad you have to fire the Springfield instead of the M2, which I consider the easier handling weapon. I think after your week on the range, you'll

know quite vividly how distasteful the army can be; especially if you live out on the range for that week. Chalk every thing up to experience, and keep that sense of humor uppermost.

You will soon learn, if you haven't all ready, that half your army career will be spent waiting in line. Oh you'll find out many things; things that will be worse than this, but don't let them worry you - you'll run out, and those order-giving morons, will one day take orders from you. George, if you don't hit a captaincy at least, something is wrong somewhere. If I had your brains, I'd be a captain now myself.

It is true you have more to come home to than I, but I've had about 18 months to think, think, think. Your desire cannot possibly be greater than mine to be back home. If it were, you couldn't stand it. Believe me, this desire to be home is no childish whim I have; I would do, and will, given the opportunity, anything to get a

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C.D.D. or a M.D. This happens only in dreams, so let's just make up our minds that the spirits you have laid aside for us to forget on, will be two or three years older when we get to them. —

Have no fear about me ever writing Mom and Pop what goes on. It was only after I was appointed cadet, that they really knew how tough I had to work. — George, when you're home, I could let-go in my letters to you - Mom and Pop got no news you did. You realize that you have to let your hair down now and then, — so should such a desire hit you — write me. If I'm pined-off about my own headaches, I'm liable to write you to tell your troubles to the chaplain — like a good soldier should. But no doubt, I'll lend an ear. George, just remember, one can do himself some good by assuming an air of bravado. It kids himself into being

two other guys. Oh, you'll learn - your heart will break many times, but you're a stiff, so don't worry about. Our natural instinct and bringing up comes to the front and always keeps us plodding along —

Fran wants to come down here, but she knows it can't be, for now. She sent me a cigarette case, and identification bracelet for my birthday and X mas presents. They are beautiful, and I'm nuts about both of them. She's a pretty good soldier, and I know she's taking it on the chin plenty - but she always comes up for more. ——— nuts! ———

Well, now we'll discuss me. — I can't understand why myself, but I qualified as a bombardier. Only ten of us out of 200 men qualified as bombardiers, so I know it is to my credit; yet I don't know how I like the idea.

Here's the story as I see it. I got in this deal mainly to stall seeing combat. I had never visualized any classification but pilot, which would last at least another nine months. Besides, one

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Can wash-out of pilot training easier than either bombardier or navigator. I really didn't know myself whether I would purposely wash out or not. I may not have made it if I tried. In any case, I'm now going to be a bombardier. This training lasts 21 weeks, with perhaps a month added. Washing out is more difficult, and frankly, I think I could make this quite easily. Well, in about six months I can be a 2nd lieutenant. This could mean combat fast, and of course, there's always a myriad of ways to stall even as an officer. My eyes can really be a God-send, as I will become an officer even with the bad vision of my eyes. This could ground me very easily, especially when I get through with them.

I still don't know what to do. So far I've been extremely lucky, and so I think I'm going to let the fates decide my setup. As a bombardier, I'd earn \$325 a

month, and that sounds too good to pass up.

Bombardier training takes place in Santa Anna, California - Carlsbad, New Mexico, Ellington Field, Texas, and several other such equally distant from New York places. I'd get a furlough after being commissioned, and Fran would then live with me, no matter where I am. It's really too early in the game to know what's what. 21 men out of the 30 I came down here with have washed out here. — See what I mean!

I had K.O. Monday, and it ain't funny. I ate plenty; I guess you still can't stomach G.I. chow yet. Maybe you'll even lose some weight.

What a life, eh George? —

Sent Mom & Pop⁸ 15 as a Xmas present. Stores in town are all closed when I get there, so had no alternative. — Keep plugging, and stick to your guns. —
With a handshake in mind — Bob

A/s R. Stoff

Sg. L-1

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on Release

Pvt. GEORGE STOFF

~~6th. BN. (PORT)~~ CO. H

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