

mon frise,

I hardly know where to start this epistle. Perhaps chronological order would be best, but I think perhaps I better give vent to my emotions first.

George, this is on the level, I never dreamed anything like this was possible in the army. Everything seems so swell and so perfect, that I can't help but parallel this to the fattening of a turkey before the kill. In any event, it's been wonderful so far.

The barracks, with double decker beds, is immaculate. Fluorescent lights and a two way communication system make for efficiency. The whole camp is immaculate. Perhaps because of its spaciousness. It's laid out well and I seem to be centred perfectly. Within a four block radius, I have the main P.X., photo studio, restaurant, two theatres, book store, soda fountain, gymnasium and post office. So you can readily see what I mean.

The food, how shall I describe it? Think of mom's European style of cooking, and imagine it strictly Americanized. They give you all you can eat, and everything just perfectly prepared. Last night we had

steak for supper; great big T-Bone steaks. We eat family style, with several cadet innovations, but nothing like what was depicted in letters I received from Maxwell Field, an Alabamian pilot fac. flight camp. Of course, I have to pay \$12 extra for this chow, but it's worth it. I'll lose money now while I'm here these next nine weeks. As a student, instead of a cadet, about \$23 will be taken out of my pay every month. But when I get flying time, I'll really make up for it.

It seems that the whole training schedule for Bombardiers has been changed. Instead of the original 21 weeks, it will now take at least 33 weeks. I sure like this idea. Here's the schedule. 9 weeks of free-flight here, then either six weeks of gunnery school, or 18 weeks of bombardier and navigator school. I don't know which training will come next. This is almost 9 months of training, and you can readily understand what I mean! -

The train ride took 101 hours, but riding in a Pullman, and not being crowded, made it most enjoyable. I must confess a strong feeling of homesickness and melancholy

overcame me on the train. Traveling so long, impressed me more and more with the great amount of mileage I was putting between home and me. I feel better now though, after being so well set up.

The scenery was dull and void most of the trip. Texas affording little but huge open, barren plains, and now and then, thousands of oil wells. New Mexico offered quingols and filthy shacks, and cactus. Arizona looked pretty scenic from the train. Lots of odd looking cacti, and really pretty were the high mountains in the horizon. But prettiest and best of all was California. After riding about 4 hours in California, I saw groves of orange trees, with oranges hanging in aggregate form - But what topped the trip off was this sight, one I saw only in the movies. Mountains, great big huge high mountains, capped with snow and the peak of which was in the clouds. So make it more emphatic, it was raining, but the sun shone - yet only certain mountains were sunned. God, this sure looked pretty.

This could have been a marvelous trip, but Ivan was on my mind constantly. I guess you know what I mean when I say I

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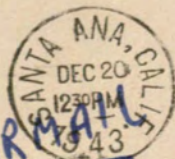
miss her. If it weren't so far away, I might be tempted to have her come out here. But the cost, and only nine weeks in this camp, I know it just can't be done. However, if I get located in a fairly decent spot where I take my 18 weeks of Bombigator (Bombardier and Navigator) training, I think I'll have her come out to me. All my training will probably be in the West. Probably California, Utah, and New Mexico.

It's a week since I received mail from anyone, and I really am anxious to get some news.

I hope by now something has developed for you, and that all goes well. I wish I knew more about what you were doing. I know nothing about your branch of the service. Play your hand though, and keep both eyes opened for an opening.

I'm running out of words, so will close now. Hope the news from Florence is good, and that you haven't had any flu trouble. Every year this time, the army suffers with these respiratory diseases. So be careful! —
With that fraternal handshake uppeest —
Hasta la vista Bob

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