

A. INDUCTION: CAMP UPTON, N.Y.

Pvt. E. Goldgrabe
Barrack 1-L
ASN 32782776
1st Reg. Co1222RC
Camp Upton, NY

Feb 4, 1943

Dear Mom, Dad & Irv,

I hope you received my previous mail and that everything is fine at home. It's a rainy day here and I have no detail to do so I thought I'd drop you a line to let you know how everthing is.

Well, as you know we are waiting to be placed in a permanent camp and that should happen any day now. But some of the fellows here have been stationed here a long while (20-30 days). Some of the guys I came with have already been placed.

The exam we were given (IQ) when we arrived was fairly easy. I got a mark of about 125. All that is required to go to Officers Candidate School is 110. So when I'm placed I'll apply for OCS and maybe I'll get an appointment.

The routine here is simple. We get up at 5:30 am and go to bed about 9:30 (lights out). In between, we sometimes receive details. Yesterday I worked in the QM [Quartermasters] Storeroom. The job was a cinch. We emptied one truck (a trailer) and then sat around and chatted and drank Coca Colas for the rest of the morning. Today the barracks had KP which lasts from 4:30 am to about 7:15 pm. I was lucky I didn't draw it. They took about 90% of the barracks for it though.

Boy, you ought to see the outfits they give us. All wool from inside out, long underwear (2 piece), a winter & summer dress uniform, 2 fatigue (work) uniforms, a field jacket, a raincoat, 3 different hats, none of them are the Garrison hats though, an overcoat and a lot of miscellaneous stuff, socks, hankies, canteens, field outfit (cooking item) and other junk.

We have three heavy woolen blankets on our cots. We only use one though since there is so darn much heat we can hardly sleep. Believe me we're far from freezing. Even now we have most of the windows half open and I'm warm. Oh yes, the shoes are heavy cloghoppers size 10C. But they are swell in the snow or rain and especially for long hikes. Of course we have to keep the place clean here. We sweep and mop the barracks twice a day and the

beds have to be made just right. Even though everything is easy here I'm anxious to get into a regular camp, this gets on your nerves after a while and we aren't learning anything or doing anything to get credit for. Most of the fellows feel as I do and are waiting to be sent out too.

A lot of yesterdays shipment went to Conn. & Mass. Gunderson is still around although we aren't in the same barrack. He is two barracks down the street. This is a darn large camp and the place is crowded most of the time. Well I can't think of much more to say except that we also have plenty of hot water and nothing to bother us (much).

So long for now,

Eddie

P.S. Don't write to me here. Wait to hear from me again, I may go tomorrow and the mail you send now would have to follow after me slowly, so wait until I'm stationed. Unless of course I happen to stay here for a longer time than expected, but in any case wait to find out. This note was just to give you an idea of how things are here and to tell you Mom, not to worry at all--I suppose you've received my clothes. If not they'll be there soon.

Eddie.

B. MIAMI BEACH, FEB-MARCH 1943

Feb 11, 1943

Pvt. E. Goldgrabe
1143 Technical School Squadron
Flight 493
Basic Training Center No. 9
A.A.F.T.T.C.
Miami Beach, Florida

Dear Mom, Dad & Irv,

As you can see from the envelope I've been sent out from Camp Upton. Yep. I'm at Miami Beach, Fla. We left Upton Monday evening and arrived here last night. We came down via coach, the trip was fine and you know none of us have ever been far from home. The South is a great place. Some of the homes we saw on the way down were terribly run down. In N & S Carolina especially. But you ought to see Miami. It's like a wonderland. We are staying at the Greenbrier Hotel at Miami Beach. There are seven of us to a room and we have a bathroom in it. I'm in the Air Force Technical Training Command but I don't know how long I'll be here. The fellows here say that at the most it will be 18 days.

The Army has taken over all the hotels down here (the larger ones anyhow). The civilians are pushed around something horrible. Camp Upton was starting to feel like a prison. We didn't have anything to do but work and most of it was unnecessary. Even the food was starting to get lousy. But here-boy-the sun is shining bright and the food is fine. We can go swimming a couple of times a week if we care to. There is a lot of men stationed here.

I was very lucky. On the shipment [sic] here I was a super-- that is an extra man who will ship out if there is someone missing or sick. There were nine of us all together. I made it just by a nose because there were only three taken after me.

We made good time coming down. The only trouble we had was sleeping. We had to fold down the seats to make a bed. Two of us slept to a bed. It was rather uncomfortable but we managed alright. The train wasn't overcrowded either in fact we had several empty seats.

On the first morning we woke up in Richmond, VA. We travelled on through VA, N & S Carolina that day and night and we woke up in Jacksonville, Fla. Yesterday we came through Fla to Miami. Then we were picked up by a convoy of Army trucks and drove through Miami to Miami Beach. It was quite a thrill.

I don't know where I'll go from here after 18 days training, it may be north again or out west, or I might even stay here. This isn't a bad place at all as I said. And it isn't too far from home. I could make it if I had a 7 day furlough or if an Army plane was heading to NY. But I've a long way to go before I'm even eligible to get a furlough.

The homes down here are just as though you stepped into another world. All colors, white, green, pink and others. The hotels are high and of the same color. Nice green grass on the lawns, cool streams running between us & the ocean. The roads are all lined with palms and coco-nut trees.

On the way down the train stopped near an orange orchard and a few of the guys got off and collected several bag fulls of oranges. They were delicious. All tree-ripened--something we never get in NY. If I have a chance I'll send home a case. Its a long time to pay days here. But we don't spend too much money. On the trip south I spent about 75 cents. Not a bad trip.

Did you receive my clothes and insurance policy yet? I'm enclosing a copy of the insurance. Check it with the policy when it comes and see that it's right. Well its time to clean up the barracks this morning so I'll close.

Your son,
Eddie

Feb 12, 1943

Dear Mom, Dad & Irv,

I haven't had much time between lunch (just over) and falling out, so if this note is hastily written you'll understand why.

We are going for another physical exam in 45 min and classification tests. I hope I do well on it. If its possible I may try for Aerial Navigator. The fellows say all we need is 2 yrs HS math. I don't feel much like being a grease monkey. The Air Corps is a fine outfit. The squadrons walk through the streets singing songs and they all sound fine.

We eat well but I can't figure out if they are building us up or tearing us down since we are woke up at 4:45 AM down here. We have lights out at 9:00 PM though. We sleep in double decker beds. I have an upper and its pretty good. This morning I woke up and I couldn't see--I was so sleepy--I didn't wake up until we reached the mess hall. Believe it or not the morning was cold.

We have to eat out of our field mess kits and walk 8 blocks to the mess hall. That's OK but we never hardly get our own kits back after the KP's wash them.

Last night I got my GI haircut. You ought to see me. I look like a dope (as usual).

We also went to a drug store for Cokes. I ordered a large one and when I started to drink it another fellow and I laughed like the devil about them. Another guy with us said he should have warned us about the strong cokes down here. But the joke of it was they were just like ice-water.

We all have a nice time here but just the same Mom I would like to be home for a couple of days.

We have to get a couple of more injections today. But they won't bother me much.

Tell me is Irv helping out Carl with the troop? If so find out how we made out with our display at the Edison on BS Week, and if anyone has a picture of it send it to me.

I've tried to write to everyone but Irv was right when he said I wouldn't have much time for those things. The best I can do is drop them a card now and then for the time being, until I get a breather and am able to write letters.

Dad- we're not very far from Hialeah Race track but I think it's closed. I saw it though from the train and its a classy place. Don't worry I'm not going there to play the ponies. We also have dog racing here and Jai-Ali games-- but I don't have much time for anything.

When I get back home I know I'll be a different son since I'm learning to take better care of my clothes and to make my own beds, etc.

The drilling isn't bad so far but we really haven't started yet. I may be here less than the 18 days depending on my classification and on how bad men are needed in that branch.

The officers & men here are confident that the war will soon be over and we'll all be home soon--the officers are nice fellows. They treat us fine. Our sergeant is a young fellow who is strict at times but that is to be expected until we all are thoroughly trained.

I'm very happy that I made that shippment [sic] from Upton to here.

I expect to go to the dentist soon too. Here they do a good job on the teeth even putting in bridges if you need them--not bad eh!

I have a slight cold, brought down here from Upton but it's nothing to worry about.

As I said in my last letter I'm with six other fellows in this hotel room. Four of them from SI, one from NY (Long Island) and one from Richmond Hill. All of them are nice guys. Three of them are older fellows than the rest and have families home. Well it's almost time to fall out so until next time--so long and write soon---Your loving son,

Eddie

Sunday Feb. 14, 1943

Dear Mom, Dad & Irv,

Things down here are still as quiet as ever and as beautiful. The weather has been rather cool lately though. The night before last (Friday) we had an air raid drill at ten minutes after twelve. We all thought it was time to get up and we grabbed our mess kits and ran. Boy did we get a razzing from the fellows in our hotel.

Tomorrow we go to Headquarters to get classified as to what branch of the Air Corps we are to serve in. We get a couple of more shots Tuesday I think.

We were issued a gas mask yesterday and another summer uniform and helmet lining--more junk.

My regular basic training will start Thursday and last for the three week period I mentioned before--then I'll ship out of here and may go to Atlantic City or NY somewhere.

I went to the movies today for the first time since I've been. I saw "Reunion in France". It was pretty good.

We are off all day Sunday here while in Upton we had to work. Next week a couple of the boys and myself may take a speedboat trip around Fla (M.B.). We are not allowed to go to Miami proper--until we've completed our basic training...

We had an extra hours sleep this morning and it was welcomed.

I feel sorry for the officers down here. I watched one today and he had to salute about 60 times on a short walk down the street. I wonder if they have their arms massaged at night. We even have to salute WAAC's and Naval officers you know.

Monday Feb 15, 1943

...Mom, never mind how the letters you write look, you could write them on paper bags and I'd appreciate them just as much.

I'm pleased to know that I am being missed, but don't worry, this thing will be over soon and I'll be back as quick as possible.

I took four more aptitude tests here today. Tomorrow I will be classified and I'll know where I will go to school. I hope I'm not going to be a mechanic, I don't feel like being a grease monkey. At any rate whatever training I receive you can rest easy that it will be the best. The Air Corps has the best trained technical men in Service today. The education they give us in these lines would cost us \$2000 on the outside.

We had a little trouble here today. Our hotel didn't pass inspection and we all are restricted to quarters for one week. That's pretty bad, especially in such a nice place.

I hope by now that we have finally established two way contact that our mail will travel a lot faster. You'd be surprised how we all rush to every mail call. I didn't expect any just yet, but I was happy when I got two letters. One of my roommates here, a fellow about 18 years old, was the only one in our room who didn't get any. I could see in his face that he was full of sorrow, but he doesn't feel too bad now because he heard from home when he was in Upton.

Another fellow here, Ray Hirsch who comes from NYC and seems to have a bit of money was homesick last week. I started talking to him and fixed him up pretty good (Eddie the philosopher). He and I are very good friends now. He always wants me to go someplace with him, or wants to go with me when I go out somewhere. I felt rather foolish doing it but when I finished and he told me he was better I felt good myself.

I signed the payroll here today. My first pay will be \$10. You see I'm not training yet and therefore not on soldier's pay.

One of the men in the hotel said he saw Walter Winchell on the streets down here today, watching the soldiers march around. I wonder where he's staying 9 out of 10 of all the hotels down here are occupied by the Army. In every vacant space (at one time) you'll find a Mess Hall. All the roads are military zones.

There is one soldier down here we all envy. He seems to be in every hotel and has signs saying (Keep out). His name is "Private Beach" (Do you get it?)

P.S. Don't worry at all about me. I'm perfectly all right and a darn side warmer than you are right now.

Feb 16, 1943. 4:00 pm

I was classified today and I am going to be an aircraft Armorer-- that is the fellow who loads bombs on the planes, puts bullets in the machine guns and synchronizes the guns with the propellers. It's an important job. Especially the synchronization part. I think I'm going to like it. We have a chart in the hotel giving the locations of the different Air Corps schools and the Armorer school is in Colorado. But I may get nearer home than that. I am also qualified to be an Aerial Gunner (by physical exam) and I may go to Gunnery school after the Armorer school, then I'll apply for OCS and probably get appointed (I hope) and become a Gunnery Officer. Either that or I'll apply for Aviation Cadet Training and learn Aerial Navigation. The possibilities now are unlimited.

We have two uniforms but all we seem to wear is fatigue clothes, except at supper, then we must dress in our summer uniforms.

The weather here now is very warm. We just finished a little drill and I [am] sweating to beat the band.

I would like to call you up some time but do you realize it would cost \$2.75 for three minutes after 7:30 pm.

I get paid tomorrow. I'll get all dressed up in uniform and go see the Captain and he gives me ten bucks.

The eats down here are fine. We always have meat at least once or twice a day. Coffee at breakfast and a cold punch or ade at lunch + supper. The only thing we haven't seen yet is butter. We don't get any at all here--but we manage anyhow--we use jam or something.

We have to march about 1/2 mile to get to the messhall (that's 6 times a day back & forth).

I expect a couple of more injections soon, tomorrow I guess. I'll be down here for a minimum of 18 days and probably 5 weeks before I go to school.

It's swell that Dolores & Dorothy are in a Service club. They will have a good time and make a lot of soldiers happy.

The only thing I dislike about the Army is the laundry problem. When we send it out it takes three days to come back and I hate to do it myself.

I really don't feel much like a soldier yet. I've done very little training and I'm as green as the

day I came in.

Well, I have to get dressed for supper now and I'll mail the letter then.

Love to everyone.

Feb 17, 1943

Dear Mom,Dad & Irv,

Today has been a very easy time for me as far as work is concerned. This morning I went for injections again. The arm is a little sore but I'm not sick. After that we had to get dressed in our suntans and go for our pay. You should have seen me--I had to walk up to the Captain, give a snappy salute and say Pvt Goldgrave, Edward B and then grab a ten dollar bill he threw on the table.

It was then I made a horrible discovery. When putting the money in my wallet I found that someone stole about 9 bucks I had in it. It must have happened during the night because I had it yesterday. Another fellow in my room lost five dollars. And several other rooms were robbed too. I forgot to put my money in my belt and that's the price I have to pay. I told the Sarg but he couldn't do much about [it] but he bawled out the Flight and warned the other fellows about leaving money around. It makes me rather short but I'll manage all right for a while at least since I got \$10 pay.

This afternoon for about an hour we practiced singing songs. We sounded horrible at first but we did improve a bit.

We had a marvelous lunch. It was a chicken dinner with ice cream for dessert. I don't know how it happened but I didn't question it.

How are you making out with the fuel? Is dad still holding both jobs? How are the animals?

I go to the drill field tomorrow at 7:15 am. I expect it will be pretty hard at first. Our Sergeant says we have a fine outfit and it should turn out to be one of the best ones down here. He is a swell guy. Only about 25 years old. He comes from Bayonne.

I sent out laundry this morning--Quite a bit and it only cost 42 cents--the rates are cheap!

You are probably wondering what my address means--the 1143TSS means 1143 Technical School Squadron. The Flight is like a Company number. The AAFTTC means Army Air Force Technical Training Command. The BTC #9 is Basic Training Center #9. That's all there is to it.

I hear you can't get shoes at home any longer without ration books. I think from what I hear soldiers in uniform can get them at any time. Another lucky break for me.

One of my roommates here formerly was an Assistant Professor in some college. He comes from Four Corners and looks very familiar to me. But he is a jerk. He is about 32 years old and is always in the bathroom--every ten minutes when we are in the room. He takes vitamin pills and

drinks Milk of Magnesia like it was soda. You would really have to see him to see the joke. He is tall and thin and his name is Dalrymple. Boy does he get kidded a lot. On top of that he plays a little flute. Not very well but good enough for all of us to get a laugh out of.

Well I think that's all for this letter and it looks like plenty for today.

Your loving Son.

Feb. 20, 1943

Did you get my letter complaining about mail? If you did forget about it because I just

received about ten letters today and your package.

Don't worry about my job here in the Army. If I become a gunner after Armorer training it will all be practice here in the US somewhere. It will take a long time to get trained that way and I don't want to go overseas any more than you do. Don't forget I will apply for OCS after graduation and get a longer training yet. Do you see it my way?

I sleep as sound as a rock (when I sleep) the time seems to fly by. I just close my eyes and a whistle blows to wake us up (no bugle). I don't think I'll blow another blast on a whistle when I get back home. I'll just use mine for an ornament.

The food is good but as a rule the preparation isn't too good (at times). Every morning we have eggs (or sausages), fried potatoes, 1/2 pint milk, bread & jam & fruit with cereal. Dinner varies to pork chops, chicken, spare ribs, meat loaf or anything. Supper is usually light, hot dogs, beans or something like it. We never have butter on our bread though. Oh yeah coffee at breakfast and a cold drink at dinner usually water at supper.

Yesterday I didn't write because I had KP. What an ordeal that was. We got up at 2:15 am and got to the mess hall at 3 am, worked all day. Morning I washed the dishes (mess kits) of the fellows, there were seven of us washing each one doing a certain job but there must have been 3000 mess kits at each meal (3). Then I made a salad. I fed lettuce into a cutting machine which shredded the lettuce, then put tomatoes into the lettuce. Big bowls about 5 gallons each. Rolled up my sleeves and put my whole arm in it and just mixed it up. In the afternoon I scrubbed the floor and washed dinner kits, then carried some cake (large trays) into the refrigerator, while there we ate about six pieces. We also had about 8 slices of ice cream then supper dishes to wash and more mopping and cleaning. These mess halls are kept immaculately clean, we quit work about 7:45 pm and got to the hotel at 8:15. Got my mail, read the letters and got to bed by 9 pm. Not much time for any writing was there. This morning (Sat) I got up as usual at 4:45 am and ate & cleaned up the hotel room. Fell out for drill at 7:15. Went to the drillfield and got back at 11:15.

This afternoon we had to parade before the Colonel. It took about 2 hours but we actually marched for about 2 minutes.

We are restricted until Mon and I have to stay in the hotel until then except for meals and church tomorrow. I am going to go there regular now.

Don't be surprised if it takes me along time to get a stripe. Don't forget I'm in the Air Corps not the infantry-- and it's a darn side harder to get even a PFC here--it may take time but I'll do the best I can.

The layout here is great just as Uncle Dan & Dolores said. You can't find more beautiful surrounding [sic]. Miami itself (when I saw it) is a little artificial looking because of its exact and fabulous landscaping. I wish you could see the place.

Thursday night we all went out (the eve of KP) (no sleep bed at 10:30 pm). We went to a show "Action Overhead". All about incendiary bombs. Actually burning them in buildings and fighting them. Showing us how to put them out under different circumstances. The show was good and it was topped off by planes flying over (air raid) and dropping flares and supposedly bombing buildings erected on the field. There were about 100,000 men watching it. The C.D. agencies were shown and how they operated in emergency. But we had to go to KP on Fri and we lost 1.5 hrs sleep by it. I'll make it up tonight and tomorrow morning. Sun we get up at 5:45. Not bad.

When I get home I won't be able to sleep until 11-12 in the morning anymore. I'll be up at 6 o'clock at the latest now.

We are all griping about our drilling and the way we are treated. Even now the fellows are griping about this morning. But we all really like it remember its the soldiers privilege to gripe.

Now listen Mom, you go out to the show every chance you have. Someone has to tell me about them when I get home. Think of me occasionally there if you want to but by all means enjoy yourself. Don't think too much of me being in the Army. Imagine I'm at a military college in Miami Beach not in the armed forces maybe that will help.

Sun Feb 21, 1943

Dear Mom, Dad & Irv,

I haven't done anything so far today but write letters. I've written Aunt Inga, Tillie, Pete and now you. I can't do anything else. I am still restricted until Mon. night. So I didn't go to my boat tour today or go to the show (good picture too "Yankee Doodle Dandy") or get a picture taken. I gues two of them will have to wait til next week.

We had a turkey dinner today. It was pretty good. Ice cream for dessert. The turkey isn't as good as you make it though.

We were talking last night of home and how long it will be before we get there.

All of the guys seem to come from pretty nifty neighborhoods and are fairly well to do. They are all swell guys though.

I don't think I'll be home until I've finished both basic and school. But when I get a furlough I'll head home as fast as I can. I may be lucky enough to fly since it is possible to get on an Army bomber or pursuit plane headed for NY and make it in a few hours. But maybe the trains will have to do when I come. So don't get tired of writing or of waiting because I'll be home sometime.

The sun here is very hot today. I am in my room writing because we can't go anywhere else, but the sun is gradually getting me tanned and I feel great. This is a darn good life.

A big crowd came in last night from Penn. They are dressed in civilian clothes yet. They are Air Corps candidates. They volunteered in December and were just called.

I went to church this am and I'm enclosing the program. We were permitted out until 11 am and we stopped for coffee and doughnuts.

I went out to supper last night (sneaked out & back) and had a sandwich. It was good for a change and I'm not hungry now so I won't go to supper tonight. We nibble on cake, candy & crackers in the evenings and talk and write our letters. It's purely a social time.

It's pretty expensive down here to stay. About \$20 or \$25 a day for a single room.

We sing a song down here that's pretty good. I don't know the tune, I think its original but the words are:

The shoes in the Army they say are mighty fine, you ask for number 7 and they give you

number 9 (Oh I don't want no more of Army life---gee Mom I want to go home)

The bread in the Army they say is mighty fine, a bun fell off the table and killed a pal of mine [chorus]

The coffee in the Army they say is mighty fine, it's good for cuts and bruises and tastes like iodine [chorus]

The pay in the Army they say is mighty fine, They give you \$50 and give you 49 [??]
[chorus]

The chicken in the Army they say is mighty fine, one fell off the table and started making time [chorus]

There are more verses but I can't think of them.

Well I guess this is big enough for today--so until tomorrow.

Mon Feb 22, 1943

Dear Mom Dad & Irv,

I just received your parcel. Thanks a lot for the candy, etc. I and my roommates will make good use of them. I already started on the potatoe [sic!] chips.

It's very warm here, the hottest day we've had since I've been here. We had our regular drill this morning and this afternoon we had another parade, it was a bit better than the first but just as short.

When we got back to the hotel we were notified that all the men whose names begin A through L will be on guard duty tonight. That's me. Darn it, the first night I'm not restricted in a week and I have to go on guard duty. We will be on in 2 hrs and off 4 hrs. I go on call in 15 minutes.

I am sorry this letter is so short but I have to get dressed for GD.

Feb 24, 1943

1:22 pm

Dear Mom, Dad & Irv,

I just received another letter of the 22--it's swell to get mail isn't it Mom? You ought to see everyone rush for mail call here. Boy do we look forward to it.

It's too bad things are so lonesome for you all at home. I guess conditions are pretty bad, aren't they?

I just came back from chow. We had a chicken dinner today with ice cream for dessert. We get it twice a week down here.

I have all the tough breaks. Yesterday I didn't feel like going to breakfast so a sergeant asked me to lend my mess kit to one of the new fellows who didn't have one. So I let him have it and it hasn't been returned yet. The Sarg can't locate the guy and in the meantime I'm using the Sarg's mess kit. But I am going to raise the devil tonight and see to it that he gets me either that one or another. I won't pay for it either.

Our drill is getting a bit complicated but I'm still ahead of them. I know the movements they are teaching. But I have to drill as much as if I didn't. We drill about 6 hrs a day in the sun. We have a 10 minute rest period every hour and it is indeed welcomed.

When I was home I couldn't see getting up at 6 o'clock, but now by six I've gotten up, had roll call, gone to the mess hall & back (12 blks) and started to clean up the room and myself, all by 6 o'clock. Six here is very late. We fall out for drill at 7:15. It's quite a long day but the time goes fast. It doesn't seem like it but today is my sixth day of basic, only 12 more to go. Don't get too hopeful over the news I sent yesterday about going to Hartford or Atlantic City. I expected to see a lot of horseback riding down here, but it's all bicycles. I saw some swell looking horses on my way down here. Virginia and the Carolinas. I saw several breeding farms and the horses looked pretty good. I'm looking forward to having a few good rides while I'm training. If I go west I ought to be able to do some.

I was talking to our Sarg about furloughs. He said after 4 mo. you are eligible for a 10 day furlough, after 6 mo a 15 day one. By the end of 4 mos I should have completed my schooling and it should be easy to get a furlough.

I was going to see Yankee Doodle Dandy last night but I was too tired to go to the show. I have to do a lot of washing tonight... I hate that job But I can't afford to send those...items out.

I bet you would love it down here. It is really swell. But when you're not here for a vacation, as in my case, it isn't so hot. We might as well be anywhere. The weather though is swell and that is important. I am gradually becoming brown, especially in the face and I feel good to.

I had a dream that I came home (last night) I had a swell time until the whistle blew and I had

to get up.

Mom please don't listen too much or believe every bad rumor you hear about the Army. Of course it's no picnic, we are all training hard and we all gripe a lot but we all understand. The morale of the Army is rather high I think and if bad rumors start hitting us we may lose our morale. So squelch all the rumors you can.

5:30 pm

I just this minute got into my hotel room from the drill field. Boy you ought to see me. I'm sweating like the devil and am very dirty. We had a hot time this afternoon. PT was 4-5 pm in the hot sun. At least I got some sun on my body.

I am going out to eat again tonight. It costs about 65 or 75 cents for a sandwich, coffee or drink & dessert. Prices are high.

Feb 25, 1943

8:35 pm

Dear Mom, Dad & Irv,

Sorry to write so late today but I was on KP again. Today however I had a little better detail. In the morning (fell out at 2:15 am) I was on ice box detail. I had to clean out the iceboxes. That is, GI scrub them. Rather chilly in there to [sic]. In the afternoon I was in the stockroom. It reminded me of my days at Roulston's. It was pretty good. I didn't work very hard but the 18 hours got me and I'm rather tired.

I got 5 letters from you (one from Dad to) tonight. Very welcomed. I'll look forward to your packages. Thanks for the cash. I sure can use it. When I go out to supper I spend the dough you send me. I buy cigarettes for 13 or 15c per pack.

The rumor of our being shipped out of here is very strong. We expect to go around the first of the month. I hope it is north, nearer home. So if you don't hear from me around the first to the fourth you can guess I've been sent somewhere.

I'm so glad everyone looks forward to my mail. It makes me feel pretty good. I'll try hard to please all of you while I'm in service and Mom, I'll try to pick a "safe" branch if its possible.

Feb 26, 1943

I just (11:10) came back from the drill field and on mail call received your package (candy). Thanks. A package of a lot of stuff from Aunt Ruth & Pip. Thank them for me.

We are going on another parade this afternoon and I have to get dressed soon. KP was tough on me last night. I felt rather tired.

Irv is crazy, my guard duty lasted 2 hrs from 9-11pm. The most we could get would be 24 hrs, 2 on & 4 hrs off. It was a cinch.

I haven't been swimming yet or been on the beach even. I just don't care a heck of a lot.

My Sarg seems to think we have a good outfit here. He is a swell guy. If I happen to finish basic here the Flight will have to parade before the Colonel and drill. If we pass ok other wise we have to start the 18 days over again. Next week I guess we will go on the rifle range and learn the Manual of Arms.

Yesterday on KP, one of the fellows was cleaning dirty pots and an Aviation Cadet came over and said hello to him. It was his office boy back home, here he is washing the office boy's pots. Some let down.

4:30 pm (after parade) I just returned from the parade grounds and it was torture today. The weather was very, very hot and we stood and marched in the sun for about 3 hours. I am very warm now but I expect I'll survive. A couple of guys went AWOL and skipped the parade. They have to wash the hotel lobby with toothbrushes tonight. Should take them all evening.

Feb 27, 1943

I just finished lunch and I have some extra time now so I thought I'd start a letter to you. Today thus far has been very easy. All we had this am was our regular drill. The same as we've

already had.

I was out a while last night souvenir hunting, but all I could find there was stuff priced around \$5-30. A little too expensive for me. The items were beautiful though. A lot of them imported from South America.

It was chilly here this morning, in fact about the same as it was during the last cold snap. How was it at home?

This afternoon we are going to have PT on the beach. The fellows who want to can go swimming for about 5 minutes.

If anyone at home has the idea that I'm seeing a lot of the beach and the sites they are crazy. We are kept busy most of the time and in the evening from 6-9 pm we are free, but we are to tired or want to get back here to write letters...

I am wondering how long it will take to adapt myself to home again when the war is over. The life here keeps us pretty busy. You'd better be careful, because I'll make an inspection every day and make sure the beds are made right and everything is clean (of course it always is).

We have a new addition here in the mess halls. They installed ""juke" boxes and they sure are worked.

Did Irv get his license plates? I want to be able to ride around a little in the car with you to see the folks, etc.

Shoes (civilian) are rationed here to. In order to get a pair we have to get permission from our Captain.

I just got back from the beach but there was no PT. The instructor didn't show up and our Corp let the fellows in swimming. I just lay on beach [sic], then the rest of the squadron arrived. The corp expected to get the devil but we were excused because of "shots".

March 1, 1943

Dear Mom,Dad & Irv,

Today I have been in the Army one month. It seems like a long time sometimes but on other occasions it only seems like a few days.

We had quite a busy day. This am we had an hour of regular drill and then two hours of instruction on rifle firing and dry firing. I grouped my shots pretty well and would have made a good score if the gun was loaded. It was quite a bit of fun. I can't qualify for a marksman medal here because the range is 147 yds long and the targets have a 20" bullseye instead of a 10" bull. But we won't use a rifle much here anyhow.

We had a parade this afternoon and Rickenbacker was present. It was a tough grind and then to top it all off we had to go to PT after the parade. When I got back to the hotel I found I was on KP again tomorrow. Get up 2:15 am again tomorrow.

Yesterday we took several photos of the gang. I also took a stroll around MB and enjoyed myself. Then I went to the movies. I saw Deanna Durbin in "The Amazing Mrs. Halliday" pretty good. It seemed funny to be in the movies again. We were walking along the boardwalk here and some fellow caught a small "squid". It's the first time I ever saw one of them, even a small one. What horrible looking things they are.

Yesterday I stopped in for one beer. Boy it sure hit the spot. It was the first time I had a chance to get around the place and I really enjoyed myself. I was looking at fruit baskets, but they ran a little high. But if I ever find a good place where I can get a good quantity for a little dough you'll get them in a hurry.

Mar 2, 1943

Dear Mom, Dad & Irv,

Today as you know I was on KP and I had a bit of hard luck in one way and good luck in another. Again I was in the storeroom but this time the job was quite a bit harder. However I didn't mind but for chow we had chops and one of the bones got into my bad tooth and I bit. Boy

did I jump. Well the pain stopped and I thought nothing of it, but later this afternoon it started to bother me again. So I went to the Lieut. and got his permission to see a dentist. When I got back to my hotel though they told me I'd have to wait until tomorrow. So I guess tomorrow I'll go on sick call and have the tooth pulled. They say the dentists here are good so I don't mind.

All the fellows are out on another parade today. I guess they are pretty hot by now.

Well I have about nine days or so left down here. I guess they will go pretty fast.

The mess halls here are supposedly serving Emergency portions. But I don't notice much of a change in the food.

Once again last night I went out to eat. The restaurant started to get crowded and I was last to finish my meal so the fellows said they would wait outside. No sooner did they get up than three lieutenants sat down at my table. At first I felt funny then I felt pretty good thinking I was dining with three officers. Not bad eh? even though it was an accident.

5:35 pm. Nothing new has developed except that the fellows came home from the parade worn out (as usual). They seem to effect them badly. I don't mind them half as much.

P.S. Tooth much better, but I won't tell the Sarg, else I'll go back to KP. I'm a "Goldbricker" now.

March 3, 1943

Do you remember those two horrible looking lower teeth I used to have in the back of my mouth. Well they are no longer there. I had them pulled today. The dentist did a swell job on them. Better than I had done at home. My mouth is still numb but I don't think I'll feel any bad results. If I can get good dental treatment while I'm in the Army I will be quite satisfied.

I went on sick call this A.M. to have it done. There were so many on it that the officers got angry and tonight we have to take an examination for punishment. They seem to think a majority of the fellows were faking illness.

Boy did I get stuck today. After I came out of the hospital this AM I went to a small place to eat. I was about four miles from the mess hall. So I ordered a ham and cheese sandwich. Can you imagine what I paid for it? I guess not. Well it was 40c. Some gip eh wot?

Everyone had to go on a special parade today. There is a General visiting the camp and they paraded for him. Well you should have seen it rain while they were out and also before they went out. One good thing about Fla though is that it can pour and pour for about 20 min. and 20 min later you wouldn't know it rained at all.

I just signed the payroll, in a few days should get \$30.

I also just took the Guard Duty test (for being sick) it was a cinch.

Mar 4, 1943

This morning was a very cold one. We wore our flight jackets and were still cold. All morning it was pretty bad.

Also this morning eleven fellows went on shipment [sic]. I guess I will follow shortly (maybe). Don't stop writing here, the mail will always be forwarded.

Drill this morning was the same as always. We did have a lecture on chemical warfare & gases. It was very interesting.

One of the fellows just came in and said the whole hotel has been restricted again. I hope it's only a rumor.

Yes, Mom, it does seem like a rather long time since I've been away but I guess when I finally do get home it won't seem so long.

Yes I do see the comics on Sunday. The papers here aren't the same but the comics are larger and everything is the same in them as they are at home.

5:45. Just returned from the parade. There was a visiting General at the post and we had to wait from 1:45-4:00 for him to come to the review.

Mar 5, 1943

12:00N. It's a lovely day here today. Bright and warm. The morning drill was regular, as usual except that we had a lecture on Military Courtesy and Discipline.

No parade to go to today. We go back to the drill field again. We have just been notified that we are moving from our hotel on Sunday. That means a slight restriction Sunday until we are all settled again. One of the fellows in my room is on shipment. I imagine I will be on soon too

[sic]. Don't let that stop you from writing and sending things though because shippments don't mean you are leaving right away. Sometimes you wait a week.

Thanks for the dollar in the envelope. You can't imagine how swell it is to get them. I'll look forward to your package. I imagine it is something. The last lot of cookies were just finished up today. Everyone thanks you for them. You see, we all share everything we get. But I naturally ate most of it.

Today was our 11th day of training. Time is really going fast. I am now looking forward to my school. I know most everything in my basic. But we have to be reviewed and inspected by the CO if we stay here to finish basic although we probably won't be here that long. I hope I'm not worrying you in saying I expect to be shipped. You know I'll write every opportunity I get. And if I go any distance I'll write every day on the train so as to keep you up with me.

PS. I wish I had a couple more bad teeth to be pulled so I could get out of KP but I guess I haven't unless I say I lost a filling, but that means drilling and I don't know which is worse.

Mar. 6, 1943.

Just decided to drop you another short line today to let you know I received a package of candies and crackers from you. They are swell and delicious.

I don't think I'll be leaving here today at least it is now 4:15 pm and I haven't been notified.

All I did today was sit around in my room or hotel and sleep a bit. That's all I'll be doing until I receive notice to leave. It does give us a chance to rest up after our Basic Training.

As I sat here today I naturally thought about home. About having breakfast ready when I got

up. And going to Roulston's and you telling me to go to bed it's after eleven, etc. I wasn't homesick mind you but I just happened to drift to those thoughts.

I hope it will only be a short time before this War is over and we can all get back home again.

I figure I'll see another part of the US this shippment and I am at least touring the USA at the expense of the govt. If we do travel any great distance we should leave here on pullman cars. With diners. That is really luxury. We aren't herded into cars as you've heard but we each get a seat and a place to sleep. Sometimes the food isn't too good traveling but that doesn't last long.

Today we had fried chicken and as you know the flight I'm in was on KP. Well I never had so much to eat in a mess hall yet. I had double portions of everything and four pieces of chicken. I was almost busting when I left there.

Mar. 7, 1943

As you can see by the postmark I'm still at Miami Beach however this morning we did change hotels. We are now living at a slightly larger one called Ocean Spray. I am split up, that is the fellows I was rooming with are in other rooms. I am in mine with two Sergeants. I won't be here long but I hope I like it while I am.

I was down to the shipping clerk today and he said I won't be here long, maybe until Tuesday.

At this hotel I am on the fourth floor and have a front room overlooking the sea. The view is grand.

I hope my telling you I am leaving here will not bother you. I may you know end up much nearer home and as it is I can't be much further away.

Some fellow here said that a Lieut. told him that the fellows who leave here to go to a Technical School may possibly get a Private FC rating. He said that it wasn't official but that there was a good possibility of it.

Oh yes you ought to see the nifty beds we have here. Regular hotel beds with two big thick mattresses on it. Boy I should sleep sounder than ever.

While I'm on shipment I can't go out of the hotel at night at all except to check in with the shipping clerk at 9 am & at 1:30 pm. Then I check in with the hotel Sergeant at 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 pm. The reason for that is because they want us for shipment at any time and we have to be ready. Tomorrow morning I have to give back my GI overcoat, so I guess (maybe) the place I'm supposed to go can't be too cold.

My money is starting to run very low now so I will have to send for some as soon as I arrive at the school. Don't send any in the meantime.

Mar. 8, 1943

I am still at Miami Beach but I'm very near leaving. This morning I went to clothing issue and turned in my overcoat & 2 sets of fatigues. They issued me a mackinaw and two sets of fatigue coveralls. All I have to do now is wait.

Yesterday I had to stay in the hotel all day, but last night I managed to get out and go to a USO Center across the street. It's a swell place. We read magazines and listen to records or piano music and occasionally a hostess would come around and bring us cake or fruit. I was only there an hour but the place made me feel very much at home.

The war news certainly looks good doesn't it. If we keep going on this way it can't last much longer.

Gee I hope when I leave here I'll land a place nearer to home. I'd like to see you even if it was only for an hour. I guess you feel the same way to [sic].

Well I guess that's all for now.

Mar. 9, 1943

Dear Mom, Dad & Irv,

I left Miami Beach last night at about 7:30. The train left about 11:00 for ----- . We are travelling on pullmans this time so I guess we're going quite a distance. My writing is very bad because of the train lurching from side to side.

When I awoke this am I was in Jacksonville, FLA. We are now in Georgia heading about NW. I think we're going to Denver, Col.

The countryside is full of pines although most of the land is either swamps or sand.

At Jack. I had to stand a 2 hr. guard duty to keep fellows from one car to another. It was O.K. because we were delayed there about 3 hrs.

Here is some good news that you can tell everyone-- I am now P.F.C. Goldgrave. Yep. I received it when I left M.B. It didn't take as long as I expected nor was it hard to get. At least it's something to show for 1 mo. in the Army.

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