

Tuesday 5/11/44

Dolores Darling;

I've started my three weeks hermitage and it really isn't bad. I'll be able to catch up on all my correspondence at least. Last nite [sic] I wrote three letters – excuse me it was four – besides the letter I wrote you yesterday afternoon. At this rate I'll be receiving mail at a terrific clip before long.

This life here is really terrific & I really mean it. Why this morning I actually had to drill for a while. Of course the rest of the morning I just slept. I've never had such an easy time anywhere. It's even better than the Air Corps in that respect I'll never want to do any work.

An officer here gave us a nice lecture which was intended to send morale soaring to the heights.

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He read us a stirring speech by Gen. Mark Clark which was a morale builder upper if I ever heard one and then asked for comments – that was his big mistake – He was kept busy for the next half hour apologizing for the Army and telling us that he didn't know why the army had sent us here and we didn't know why but that "somebody surely must know". At the end of the morale lecture he crawled away, one very disheartened first lieutenant. I think he was probably more bitter about the whole thing than we were.

A captain also gave us a lecture this morning. To sum up his speech he said that he realized the army had goofed off in assigning us here as they had in assigning him here but that he was sure that we would all have a lot of fun goofing off together for the duration of our time together. All the officers spend time apologizing for our

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being assigned to the medical corps and trying to build up the air corps in our esteem. Got to leave now for our afternoon program. I'll be right back sweetheart.

Nitetime [sic]

We had a very easy afternoon one which was quite full of laughs. A major gave us a talk on the care of patients in a hospital. He stood on a stage with about five lights shining right in his face. He finally remarked that the lites [sic] certainly were bright and some fellow in the back of the class piped up "Yeah! Just like a burlesque aint [sic] it?" All the rest of our classes were held outdoors where we could recline in the nice green grass and really sleep well. Our last lecture was one on knots and we did not even have rope to work with so the

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class was dismissed early. One of the knots on the knot board we had there was a bowline on a bight. The lieutenant when asked why it had that particular name said that it probably was because one rope came up behind the other and bit it – and they gave him bars.

From what one of the officers said the other day I may end up as an automobile mechanic yet. I am listed as a bombsite mechanic on my card of specialties so they may figure that a mechanic on bombsites or cars must do the same thing. I'd sort of like a job like that if I could get it because I'd

probably learn to drive a car if I did that sort of work. I'll have to learn one of these days because if we live in the country we'll have to have a car to get to the city.

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We were supposed to attend the grand opening of our meeting tent tonite [sic] but at the last minute they gave us our choice to either go to the guard opening or take off – I guess you know what I did. They suddenly realized that they could not crowd a couple thousand men, a band, a refreshment counter and Colonel McConky all in the same tent. I figured the tent wasn't big enough for the Colonel and myself so I came to the Service Club to read and write. I'll go back early, shower, shave and go to bed so I'll be all rested up for our hike tomorrow. We have another 9 3/10 mile hike. It will probably rain tomorrow because it is raining now. I don't mind tho [sic] because I like to march in the rain, if only they'd let us go bareheaded. I'd

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like it even more.

Foot lockers were issued today and I was quite sure I got one, and a good one. Now I'll be able to empty out my barracks bags and live like a human being again. I hate to live out of a barracks bag.

One of the boys in our company – an A.S.T. from MSC with the rest of us – is really funnier than the devil. He is the one who let the lieutenant know he wasn't too pleased about braving to wake him up last week. A fellow who was in Captain Tripp's class with this fellow – Turetsky is his name – said that every time the Captain told a joke Turetsky would shout "The kid's a card, guys!" I can just imagine his doing that. Tonite [sic] as we were standing out on the sidewalk a flock of soldiers just coming into the camp came along. They all

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had stripes and most of them had campaign ribbons and service stripes on. Turetsky looked them over and then very naively made the question "Rookies". What a queer variety of looks he got from those fellows.

The Camp Grant band is giving a concert here tonite. [sic] They're really an excellent band. At the present time they are playing "Temptation" which is a nice number. They just finished a very nice arrangement of the Russian Army's Cavalry song. They're about to sign off now after having announced that there would be no band concert next Tuesday.

We really have to drill for an hour every morning because we're in a parade next Tuesday and they're trying to make

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a crack outfit of us. I think that we'll look as good as any other outfit out there and probably a lot better than most of them.

It's funny but army bands never finish their programs by playing the national anthem, in fact when they have a band concert the anthem is never played, yet all the civilian bands make a hobby of playing it.

Just think Darling. Three and a half more weeks at the most and we will be together again. Gosh, I miss you more than ever now since I saw you [scratched out word] Sunday. I want to be with you all the time. Won't it be wonderful when I can see you again? I love you Sweetheart.

All my love and kisses

Freddie