

Monday

May 15, 44

Dolores, Darling;

This morning we start in training. It's going to be a pain in the neck I know but I am prepared for the worst so I don't particularly give a damn.

Yesterday, after I finished writing to you, I ate and then went in town with Bob. We stopped off at the main U.S.O. where we wrote letters. I caught up on a lot of my correspondence. The U.S.O. is really a gigantic place. It's the former high school for the east side of town and is a five story building complete with gymnasium and swimming pool. They have a soda fountain, a little theater and all sorts of game [scratched out word] rooms. They also have a tailor shop which I am going to utilize to have my new sun tan trousers taken in around the waist.

After writing letters we went out for a walk around town and saw the sights. It is a nice town and it very clean for a place that size. The Rock River runs

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thru [sic] the center of town. We saw some motor boats being rented there and are going to rent one some Sunday to go for a ride. There are a couple of small parks in the city which, altho [sic] they are not very large, are very nice. We decided to go see the picture "The North Star" – a very good picture about the Russian guerrillas – which was shown in a very nice theater. I almost sat in a lady's lap trying to get my seat because there were no ushers and it was hard to see in the dark. They had advertised the picture as "That mighty epic of the sea 'The North Stay'", despite the fact that there were no scenes of the sea in the whole thing and the nearest connection with anything nautical that I could see was the [scratched out word] name of the heroine which was Marina. They do things the hard way here.

Our supper was eaten at the USO where for free we got spaghetti, meat balls, buttered rolls, olives, pickles, cake and coffee. It was all very good but I burned my

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tongue on the coffee.

We played shuffle board for a while after supper. It's the first time I ever played it and it was fun. Bob and I played doubles with some fellows who had played quite a bit and altho [sic] we lost the rubber 2-1 we had the consolation of knowing we were the first ones to win a game from these boys in several weeks. The scores were quite close in all three games.

I saw Mrs. Domergue in town with her husband Saturday nite. [sic] You remember them at MSC don't you? She has moved out here now and is going to live here in Rockford. Howard Gold has his wife here too. She's quite attractive. I was introduced to her for the first time Saturday nite [sic] at the Hotel Faust where we had stopped to get a few drinks. This hotel [scratched out word] is quite nice but too garish for my tastes. It was built in 1928 and is typical of the architecture of that period. The lobby looks like the interior of a Turkish harem with arabesque designs all over. The bar is

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quite nice tho. [sic] I met an old character there, a man of German descent who had come to this country in 1880. He was retired and just spent his time kicking around from bar to bar drinking beer. I had quite a time convincing him I wasn't German myself. I don't know what there was about me to make him think I was German, maybe he was trying desperately to find a fellow country man.

The great majority of the people here in Rockford are Swedish. I never saw so many blondes in all my life. Almost everyone is fair haired and grey or blue eyed.

The calisthenics stand is being moved across the street so I guess we'll be out there calisthenicking. Yep, there goes the whistle. I'll be back soon Sweetheart. By for now. Here's a nice big kiss Darling. I love you!! I love you!! I love you!!

After a little drill

I don't know if this will or will not last long but this first hour was really enjoyable. We had a little calisthenics and then did an hour of drilling. Our sergeant in

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charge was a very nice fellow and we had a break after every five minutes. I feel sorry for any rookies who came in contact with our company because they will be spoiled for the duration. We have a bunch of boys here who are old army men and expert in the art of goofing off. We'll get our work done but will also have a lot of fun in the process. The fellows bunking the other side of my bunk are good boys from Arkansas and Oklahoma and are really comical.

It's raining to beat the devil now. We had a lot of thunder and then it just cut loose. I hope we don't have to go out for that eleven o'clock class. I'd just like to sleep right thru. [sic] They told us this morning that our training would probably not start until June 1<sup>st</sup> and that, at present, all we're doing is marking time. They don't even have weapons for us. What I like about the Army is the fact that, when they do have us in a spot like this, they still refused to give us furloughs. We could have nice two weeks furloughs and enjoy ourselves but instead we have to just hand around and go thru [sic] a lot of stuff that

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is boring to say the least. We had a lecture on military courtesy this morning. I guess that, since this camp is primarily for basic [scratched out word] training, they are very strict on such things as saluting, etc. It's all a pain in the neck as far as I'm concerned – but then so is the whole army and I'll really be the happiest boy in the world when all this stuff is over and I can get back to you. I emphatically do not like the idea of being separated from you at all Darling.

The fellows in here are having a discussion on how to stop babies from crying. It seems a couple of them are fathers and are exchanging a little advice and confidences. Very entertaining. It seems that one of them's idea is to just give the baby a spanking to make him cry real loud and then he exhausts himself fast and just drops off the sleep. Another one said that that would be a good idea if he could lick his wife but that he was afraid she'd beat him up if he tried spanking his baby.

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We just had a nice little lecture on the skeletal and circulatory systems of the human body. It was very fast and just skimmed the subject. We'll probably be getting these lectures from now till doomsday.

It has now stopped raining and the sun is our nice and hot again. These tents are like ovens when the sun shines down on them. There are 18 men in this tent now. All the others are the small ones which hold six men each. I sort of like this big tent tho. [sic] It isn't bad at all.

All these officers of ours are good skates. They try hard as the devil to be nice to us. I hear that the commanding general is on the ball and tries to keep all his men likewise tho. [sic]

Tonite [sic] Manny is trying to get Bob and I to go with him to a dancing class here to learn the rhumba and some other dances. I may go and then when we're together again I'll teach you the fine art of the rhumba. I haven't made up my mind whether I'll go or not tho. [sic] It all depends on how I feel.

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Gosh, it's hot today. I think I'll lay down my pen now and get a little rest before starting out on the afternoon round of courses so goodbye Dolores Darling.

All my Love and Kisses

Freddie