

19 Oct. '44

Dear Fran:

First, how do you find the overseas adventure? As a neophyte, of course, you realize that now you're eligible for candidacy in the thousand-yard-stare league. Or perhaps you'll be too busy to reminisce on life back in the states for quite a while? After a year on this rock of paradise (I saw a travel poster reading: "Come to —, where romance still lives"!) I'm not doing badly — have hardly reached the 500-yard stage.

Fel mentioned that you're in Paris, no less. 'Z'at so? And is there anything to this story of your having flown all or part of the way? No doubt you've brushed the dust from the old "Mon Guide" (pronunciations by Bro. Bryan accepted "à Paris"?) and are well on the way to establishing cordial relations

with the sundry citizenry of the metropolis. Or, again, perhaps you're still too busy for such shenanigans.

Things down here are still very much the same — the daily routine of infantry drill or bayonet drill, half-ass classes, and the afternoon devoted to "supervised recreation"; all this intermittently tempered with trips to town, a detail now or then, and such. All in all, it's pretty dull, but compared to living in and out a fox-hole, it's a luxurious life. What with good food in town... the restaurants and Red Cross, beer or coke rations, and even fresh eggs purchasable from the quartermaster, the eating situation is satisfactory. Naturally, camp food is the usual... dehydrations and cans. But even so, there is fresh meat & fresh vegetables occasionally, and at times, we

enjoy feasts, like spaghetti or fish dinners, made possible through the Battery Fund. Ho-hum, pardon me while I reach for a tooth-pick!

Otherwise there's not much to look forward to. Movies every night of the week become tiring! However, I have finished that correspondence course in differential calc. successfully, and will try to polish off integral next. With plenty of time on my hands, I've found such studying advantageous, not to mention its time-killing qualities.

Couple of weeks ago, I finally got around to taking my 7-day furlough. Not that there's anything to see or do that hasn't been seen or done before, but a change of scenery and immediate environment is revitalizing. A group of 5 of us stayed at one of the private

homes in the capital city. For a buck per nite, some of the whites there ~~take~~ give lodging to servicemen. In this case, we 5 occupied a small cottage that this particular woman rents out. It's very convenient — we're by ourselves, we don't bother the people, they don't bother us. The seven days we spent walking about town, eating, ~~and~~ "bull-shitting," ~~and~~ seeing a movie every nite, and swimming in the salt-water pool there. Nothing spectacular, just a quiet, restful vacation. Practically so, anyway. It's true that I did more walking those 7 days than in all the time I've been on the island, and it's true that we did have one little "incident".

Notwithstanding the temptations extended by the half-dozen pubs in town, we kept respectable all the time. However, one afternoon, 2 of the boys had guzzled enough beer all afternoon to feel

pugnaciously plastered. Accordingly, while they were waiting to have their order served in one of the restaurants, in walked an inebriate (barely capable of self-locomotion) who started tousling one of the boy's hair.

"Hey! Cut it out, fella."

More vigorous tousling.

"Listen, cut it out. Don't be bothering me."

Still the coiffure-cuddling persisted.

"You're a — — pain in my ass. For the last time, go 'way."

He didn't, and in a moment, was lying on the floor, our boy on top of him, calmly choking him! Before the drunk turned purple, we finally pulled off our would-be assassin, and little damage was done.

In general, though, it was an uneventful vacation.

Have you heard from Duffy or Collon recently? The last I learned, Duffy had graduated,

and Colton seems to have
some kind of position in Wash-
ington, temporary, I think, in the
diplomatic service.

For now, I've no more to
add, but

Good Luck,

Eugene