

Wednesday, 29 November 1944

Dear Frank,

What the hell is the matter with us? I haven't heard from you in a coon's age; I know I haven't written you although I've been meaning for months — "not right now though, I'll write Frank tomorrow or next Sunday. That's it, next Sunday I'll write a nice long letter." Then "next Sunday" rolls around and I'm on pass drinking up my hard earned dough. — you know how it is. But today it's raining in California, we're doing nothing, so I decided to try and start the ball rolling again.

There's not much to tell about myself. After finishing the map reproduction course at Ft Belvoir, I shipped to Leonard Wood again, to a casual company. For 3½ months I was batted around that post from casual company to casual company. All that time I spent doing details — from G.I.ing officers mess, to collecting garbage, to working in a warehouse or the sawmill. It was pretty rough, mostly because we all knew that we were just wasting time. In October I had a 17 day furlough (called your home twice, but no answer either time), which saved me from going mts. Finally at the beginning of November, I squeezed myself into a good deal. I stood C.R. one day, and had the next to myself. This went on alternately day after day, with a 3 day (60 hour) pass every other weekend. But before I could enjoy the first pass ~~my~~ my orders came in to ship (here) to Camp Beale.

However, at L Wood I learned a lot about the gentle art of squeezing the most into a weekend pass. Ken Masters (my pious friend and drunken companion — a swell lad) and I went to St Louis via thumb every weekend. Traveling by thumb and sleeping free at Tent City our expenses were cut down to a minimum — enabling us to spend every weekend in pleasure seeking. I met quite a few nice girls, and it's surprising now to note that most of them were 25 or older. Only one made a lasting impression, however, Anna May, a 27



year old blonde with a striking resemblance to Peggy Zimmerman the blonde I used to go with at Purdue. She and I could talk to each other with the utmost ease and frankness on any subject introduced — from the price of beer in China to sex. The barrier of age was forgotten; altogether it was an intriguing relationship, by no means dispassionate. Needless to say I hope someday to return to St. Louis and reestablish our friendship.

The trip out here was long (3½ days) but far from dull. Most of us were Easterners, and the sight of snow-covered mountains and bare deserts was entirely new and thrilling. I never thought I'd be interested in scenery, but I spent a considerable number of hours scrambling from one side of the train to the other for fear of missing something. The "mountings" were tremendous, and in the desert we saw mirages — a lake, an upside down mountain suspended in mid air. A short layover in Denver provided a nice break in the trip — Denver is a good town.

I've only been here at Beale for four days. It's a typical army camp, though more spread out, and the buildings O.C. in color. As you know, this is a replacement depot. We are here for equipping, classification, physical exams etc. We should only be here for about 10 days, so when you write address it to my home (50 Garden Rd, Larchmont), and the folks will forward it.

In the meantime what about you? Where are you? Still within limits of U.S.? What are you doing? Peggy? (Why?)

And all sorts of questions — write and give me the dope.

Peter Dolan is in Infantry OCS at Benning. Dave Morgan, Engr. O.C.S. Ken Woodward still at L. Wood, as far as I know.

And brother Bill is in the Air Corps. He finally was called.

Right now he's taking basic training at Keesler Field, Miss.

I haven't heard from or written to Ed in quite a while.

I'm not sure exactly how I feel toward Janne. Since our "fight" last winter, we've both sort of tentatively feeling around in other fields, but at the same time trying to keep a hold on each other. I'm not sure I've made that clear, but that's because I don't know my own state of mind. The only sure thing is that right now I miss her like blazes.

I don't know your address now, or your home address (I lost the invaluable little black book) so I'm sending this to my home and the folks will send it to you and thence to you. So don't be surprised at the Larchmont Post Mark. Also I might ship CBI from here via N.Y.C., and if you're home I'll get in touch with you. Let's hear from you soon, and here's a luck.

Your Buddy, Jim