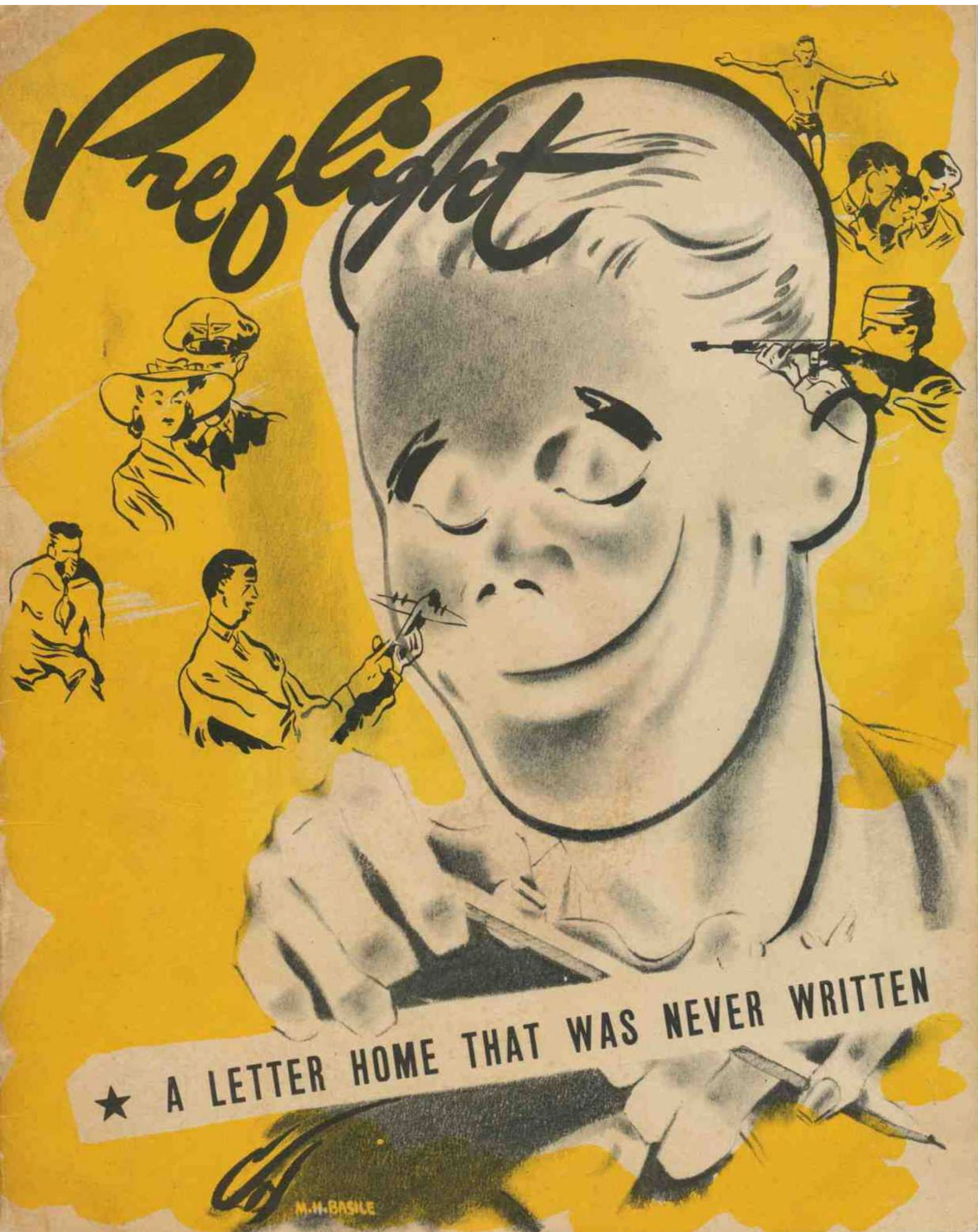


Preflight



M. H. BASILE



PREFLIGHT

Class 44-7



VOLUME THREE . DECEMBER, 1943 . NUMBER ELEVEN



CAPTAIN JOHN W. GARRETT

DEDICATION...

For his broad understanding and inspiring leadership, we dedicate our issue of Preflight to Captain John W. Garrett. A native of Virginia, he was graduated from Virginia Polytechnic Institute in 1937. While in college, Captain Garrett played varsity basketball and baseball.

After being called to active duty early in 1941, he first served in the infantry, being stationed at Fort Benning, Georgia. In November of the same year Captain Garrett was transferred to Maxwell Field and is now the Commanding Officer of Group VIII.

YES...



HE modern army, especially flight training, moves sometimes so rapidly that the average Cadet has no time to write the family of all the things he's experiencing. There are so many details that he would like to jot down and remember but succeeding events crowd them out of his mind and out of his letters.

This is an attempt to record the typical Cadet's moods, thoughts, and activities, save them for peacetime posterity and at the same time bring the family closer to their son who is in Class 44-F graduating from Maxwell Field.

The transition from civilian life to 'affairs military' is a stark change at best. Violent ties and shirts fade to an olive drab that is sobering rather than stimulating. But, wherever fellows live there is one inevitable, the bull session. It is a carry-over from civilian life. Some of the men propounded theories in college dorms, others shot the breeze at lunchtime in factory cafeterias. There are new faces but they form a friendly, cohesive group. The war and this training for flight knit them into a solid knot of determined men.

When fellows are subjected to a program that is as rugged and intensive as Pilot Training a fierce and burning 'esprit de corps' is formed. They are more than friends; they are buddies, pals, even brothers.

When the day's classes and activities slacken a bit they write letters to the folks or the girl, dig into homework assignments, shine shoes or belt buckles, or, if they are caught up on their work, just sit on the edge of the bunk and relax.

Then, like every bull session that ever was, one man ventures a chance remark and one by one the whole room puts in the traditional two cents and that American institution of airing opinions has Taken Off.

Us

SABER RATTLE



Corps Staff

Left to right: Aviation Cadet Corps Adjutant W. D. Forbes, Aviation Cadet Corps Commander M. C. Harr, Aviation Cadet Corps Supply Officer A. S. Lineberry.



Wing One

Left to right: Aviation Cadet R. R. Scott, Adjutant; Aviation Cadet G. M. Shoop, Commander; Aviation Cadet G. C. Clay, Supply Officer.



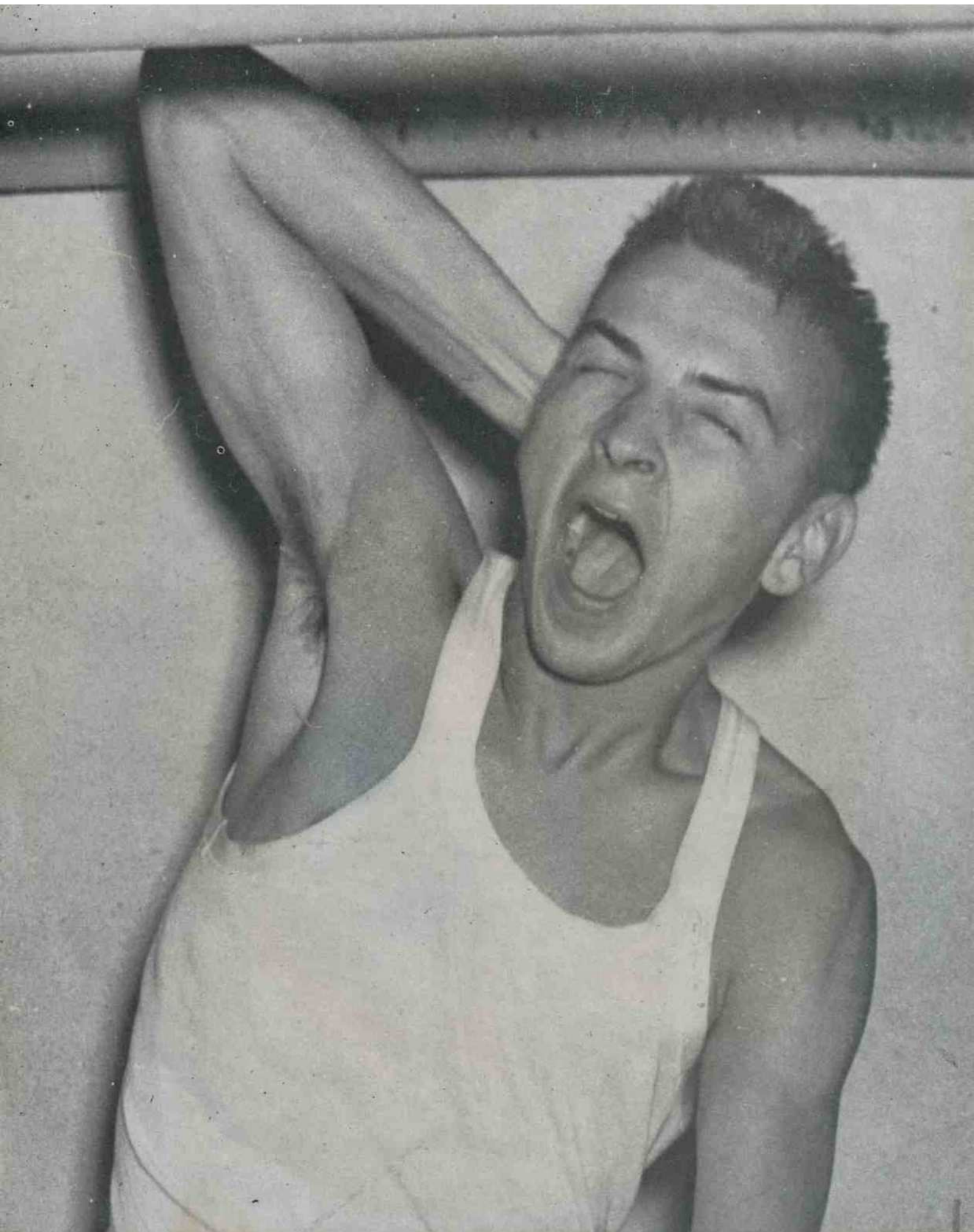
Wing Two

Left to right: Aviation Cadet A. M. Boland, Adjutant; Aviation Cadet S. W. Mills, Commander; Aviation Cadet C. R. Mordecai, Supply Officer.

Class of 44-7
U. S. Army Air Forces
Corps of Aviation Cadets
Pre-Flight School for Pilots
Maxwell Field, Alabama

Dear Mom . . .

In the few letters that I've managed to write home I've told you that I was busy, but I've never told you just how busy or what we were doing. A few of the fellows and myself have gotten together and written this. It will tell you all about me and the fellows I bunk with. Here it is . . .



ALIVE AT FIVE

"Ooohh," groaned Jack, "if only this were 1842. There would be no such hour as 0515. Life would be blissful serenity. Sleep, eat and then a little more sleep."

Misery laden words from a fellow sheltered to the ears under a comforter and blanket. At the end of his bed there was an open window but no sun shone through it, just bleak shadowless moonlight.

The loudspeaker on the wall was vibrating a metallic version of reveille. Cadet schedule ignored the fact that this was no hour to get out of bed. It was cold and oh, so early. The chickens of Alabama hadn't even begun to think about today's O.P.A. egg quota. If you did get up, (and that was inevitable) and looked around you would see a dead planet.

That is, everywhere but at Maxwell.

"Okay Dick, let there be light, you're the nearest. Flip the switch and, while you're up, be a decent sort of egg and close those windows."

"I appeal to you, fellows. We've been here almost two months now and every blessed bitter morning, I've been saving your thin skins from frostbite. Let's toss to see who gets up this time."

"A good democratic idea, Dick, but you can see the hole in it. By the time the question would be settled we'd be late for roll call. You wouldn't want to see your buddies gigged just because you were being selfish."

"Oh, Nuts. I say one word and you fellows make me feel like a criminal. It's not fair."

Resignedly Dick thrust a foot out of bed, shivered, then exposed the rest of his once warm physique to the all too fresh air and started the day.

"Come on you Sleeping Beauties. I've done the dirty work." The chief light snapper onner and window closer went around the room mercilessly yanking blankets from their protesting owners. "Up and at 'em. It's a beautiful day in Stalingrad."

"You can take that beautiful day stuff and go plumb to Staligrad with it, Mister 'Eager'."

"Say Doug, old man, have I mentioned the fact that you have the most beautiful bags under your eyes that I have seen in many a day? Don't tell me that you haven't gotten used to the Army system of 'early to bed and early to rise makes Cadet Stock the best of the buys'."

"Very clever rhyme, buddy, but let's look at this thing logically. I used to go duck hunting. I didn't practice sitting in a water-logged rowboat nor did I get up every morning at three o'clock so as to lessen the pain and shock on the day of the hunt. Don't get me wrong, I'll shoot Japs on a 24-hour basis and get more satisfaction out of it than bagging all the ducks in Massachusetts. But this practicing for fifteen months is making a mental midget out of me. The Romans had the right idea—couches for chairs. I guess I'm just a Horizontal King at heart. The Burma road is rugged but nothing in this screwy world is as agonizing as groping for your socks with both eyes closed. Man, that's murder."

"Speaking of the little game called murder and not mentioning any names, Ben Jackson, somebody in this otherwise bearable barracks has developed a very nasty habit. Some Eager Beaver is getting up and putting the light on to see if it is time to get up. You, Mr. Beaver, are out of line, out of order, and just fresh out of friends. Alabama, beautiful though she may be, happens to be very ugly when you catch her before she has time to put on her morning make-up. As I used to say in old Chicago, do you dig me, Mister?"

"This chin music must come to a whoa boys, there she blows."

Assembly call opened the doors of the rooms and flooded the street with sleepy but bustling activity and the Cadets were answering reveille roll call.



Cal's heavy bony frame uncurled luxuriously on an upper bunk; his hand expertly turned up the collar of his overcoat, still buttoned from reveille formation.

"Hey, you loafer, drag it out and get this junk off the desk so I can find my collar stay."

"There's the deciding opinion from your own bunk mate, Cal. Go to work on him, grappler. Rout him out with one of your famous spinner throws."

"Gentlemen, please," the reclining form pleaded, "You must realize the essential unfairness of your attack. You compel me to defend my peace and serenity. In the very act of defense I lose my objective. You've put me into an altogether untenable position. Very unsporting. Your dastardly attack is akin to—"

"Cut the oration. Go outside and get the mop. You're the only one who's still got his coat on."

The supine figure remained motionless. Grappler moved ominously toward the bed.

"Look out, there's the flight lieutenant!"

In a fraction of a second Cal plummeted from his upper. Arms and legs akimbo, he began to visually align his shoes by the bed post. The comforter lay in a heap where it had followed him in his disorderly descent.

"Why am I so persecuted?" he murmured.

"Get your barracks bag out of here so I can sweep. That's an order."

"And clean these mush letters off the desk."

"What's your fever, beaver? We've only got morning classes this week. That means a free period after chow to auction off this Sunday stuff. Let's go back to bed."

"Fellows, look at Jersey. Exercising before breakfast!"



"I'll soon be stronger even than you, grappler. Just one or two—"

"What do you want to do that for, Jersey. that's not pilot stuff. I suppose you'll do that when you get your bar, too, huh?"

"You're kidding pal. Your wrestling in college taught you how much endurance and coordination means when the fight is on. You'd be doing sit-ups yourself if you weren't so afraid of looking eager."

"I've been doing a little thinking about that myself, Jersey. When we were civilians we sometimes ridiculed the fellows who really plugged at their work because we thought they were forgetting how to have a good time. But here in the Air Corps it's different because we're not working directly for our own personal profit but all for one thing—victory."

"You're right, Bill. No one ever called a combat pilot eager because he double-checked his guns and engine himself before taking off."



Studies Studies Studies



"Dit dah dah—dit dah dah—dit dah dah—"

"OK Phil, we get enough of that in class every day."

"Gee fellows I just have to get that W down pat. I've messed up on three 8 word checks now on account of that letter, the only one that bothers me, and I'll swear we get one in every five characters."

"I held a sneeze for twenty letters and then missed my quota by about three characters," broke in Scotty. "How am I ever going to get by that check? I can see myself two months from now, taking code for the third time with a groove in my skull where the earphones fit."

"Don't let it worry you Scotty, we've got three weeks left and we should get eight words easily before that. How about visual code? Every time I get a good start some braintrust moves his head between

me and the light."

"What I don't understand, Phil, is how you tell the difference between three dots and a dash, it's like twenty-five and sixty cycles in electricity, too fast for the naked eye but a good job for the imagination."

"You really have to mind your business or you get lost—but good," chimed in Phil, stooping to gather his books from the bottom of his locker.

"I guess that's probably one of the big values of code, making yourself concentrate."

"Code doesn't bother me much, it's a pretty concrete subject that takes concentration and memorization. Now a subject like maps and charts where you have to use your imagination gives me—"

"I don't know, those dits and dahs come at me pretty thick and fast."

"He's right though, Scotty, there certainly is a deuce of a lot to remember in maps and charts. A fellow wouldn't be of much use as a pilot unless he knew it."

"In half of those navigation problems I drew the course line the wrong way. I can see myself wondering why they had suddenly disguised the airfield to resemble Victoria Falls. Is there any way that they can radio gasoline to your plane?"

"That's a good question."

"How about the fliers who have to travel over the water where there are no landmarks? They really appreciate the meaning of longitude and latitude besides knowing what a compass is good for."

"I guess there isn't any doubt about the importance of maps and charts in our curriculum, but I wish there was a simpler way of changing nautical miles to statute miles."

"Simpler way!" exclaimed Red, "I don't see how it could be made any easier."

"That's right. The Army has the knack of breaking the most complicated subjects down so you can do the figuring quickly and easily."

"Amen to that," Phil remarked jestingly, "I sure was relieved when I found out how easy co-ordinate, grid north, and true compass rose are to work with. They scare you when you just name them but actually using them in class makes everything a lot simpler."

"Say, I've got to find out how many times you salute a four star general."

"You didn't expect a laugh on that one did you?"

"Well, after all, why do they give a course in customs and courtesies, to teach us how to smile at a Jap over the sights of a fifty calibre?"

"At Ease, Scotty. That course is the basis of all discipline, how to show proper respect to those

Studies Studies Studies

Studies Studies Studies

who have proven themselves capable of leadership, capable of winning the war with the least possible casualties. We sometimes criticize those who are chosen to run the show but they have had to prove themselves and if they let down they don't last. They're responsible for your actions and it isn't hard to see that the success of their job depends primarily on the success of yours. Their job is coordination, the most difficult in the Army."

"I agree with you. Scotty is a little off the track."

"What I like is the way things run in together here. Have you guys ever noticed the way the math ties in with maps and charts?"

"I don't see how you could help but notice it. It sure made me feel foolish when I remembered how I had griped about having to add decimals and do long division. I can imagine now, the great Scott, with two years of math, having to do that stuff. I'll never forget what a hard blow that first test was. I was just over-confident—thought I knew too much I guess."

"Well, the purpose of the course isn't to teach you that math, so much as it is to develop accuracy and speed. You know you don't have all day to figure things out when you're boiling along in a fast fighter job."

"One thing leads right into another all right. The last thing we had in math was navigation problems done with vectors and what's one of the first things we hit in physics? Vectors."

"How well I know, I never realized that physics took in so many different subjects."

"Here are some screwy things about it, though," mused Phil. "I still can't see the difference between mass and weight."

"Now you see it, now you don't."

"You wouldn't be referring to aircraft identification would you, Phil?"

"Nothing like that—"

"How am I ever going to get by that blitz tomorrow? Believe it or not I called a Seagull a Mariner the other day. All I saw was blue and I took a guess that it was water and not sky. Say Red, you seem to be doing all right in that line, what's the secret, where's the hidden silver lining?"

"There's no silver lining, Scotty; I used to follow that stuff back in civilian life and the answer is in knowing the airplane as a whole. The instructors do the best they can by a bunch of boys who are unfamiliar with the plane. You know high tail plane, bite in the belly, divided canopy, Curtis tail and a hundred distinguishing features. He figures you are going back to the barracks at night and fit those facts into a mental picture of the ship as a whole. So what happens? You go over there looking for a single detail; when you're looking at an unfamiliar canopy you should have been looking at the Bristol tail and vice-versa. It's your fault, for after all most of us will get through the course okay. We are pretty tired when Close Call is over and it's tough to sit down and beat your brains out over a bunch of silhouettes that begin to look like polka dots after a half hour or so."

"Speaking of polka dots, have the rest of you tried sighting that wooden gun at gunnery school yet?"

"Seriously though fellows, they do give many good tips that help improve your score at the range."

The call for classes came over the public address system.

Scotty hastily sealed an envelope, and flicked off the desk lamp as the others filed out.



Studies Studies Studies



THANKSFORGIVING

The door slammed and the Charge of Quarters rushed in, a bundle of papers under his arm. He threw several on the desk.

"Dig that guy, a get-up like a newsboy and yet no hawker call like those 'Bama Journal pedlers."

"Yeah, chum, and this is free," retorted the CQ."

"Well, I ought to get a free copy, I named it."

"The heck you say," replied Jim, as he scanned the issue. "The name happens to be 'Flight Prelude', not your brainchild, 'The Eagle's Bugle'. What corn you raise!"

"You mean I won't get that gilded twenty-five dollar bond prize they offered? Didn't I even get honorable mention?"

"Neither, Ray, but your name is in the paper. Here is mention of your terrific exploit last week in the squadron football competition."

Val looked up from his chair at the desk. "You know, fellows, this is a far cry from those mimeographed sheets we had when we first arrived and 44-F deserves a lot of credit for having taken the initiative and founded such a fine weekly as this."

Readin' and Writin'

'Flight I-Mail' drifted through the window.

"If I were sure there'd be a letter from Jane," Dick moaned, "I'd tear out there in a moment, but it won't be there, so what's the use."

"Let's relax, pal, Smitty's out there already for his daily haul. How he ever rates so well with all those women I'll never know!"

"No Scotty, I don't think you ever will—that is unless you give up a little of your shut-eye. You've got to give to get you know, even mothers get tired of writing to a void."

"I'm not grouching, so muffle your motor. As long as I'm kicking on all eight along the bunk line I'm happy and feel no lack when contact with the past is broken."

"You're either kidding or you're one in a million, Scotty. I know I've got to have my memories refreshed or my morale takes a nose dive."

"It's about time for another one of those packages from home, John Boy."

"By golly, you men certainly would take a guy for his shirt if you thought you could get away with it. Precisely two days ago there arrived from home a package that under normal circumstances would supply a safari approximately a week—lion bait included; and here you are at my feet begging that I—"

"Take it calm, John," Scotty interrupted, "merely expressing a subtle type of appreciation and adding a slight desire for the future."

The door banged open and Smitty bounded in with the packet of mail.

"Dick rates today, looks like a number one scoop. Lovely aroma too, ah, the flowers that bloom in the spring—"

"Give me that letter, you reclaimed Romeo."

"That's the appreciation I get for braving the ravages of that mail mad crowd! From now on I'll cater and deliver only the mail for one Jerome G. Smith."

Utterly disregarding this outburst, Dick had retreated into the arms of Cupid, practically exemplified by bare bed springs, and assumed the appearance of a baby lamb blissfully admiring his image in a water trough.

Smitty slapped the other letters on the desk, "Say, Val, you got a V-mail letter here with a San Fran. A.P.O. return address."

"That's from my brother. I haven't heard from him since I wrote about six weeks ago. Toss it over."

"Here, Val. Boys, sit still. The rest of these epistles, written in feminine script, are mine. Mary—about time she wrote, and yes Joan, she'll be first, no, Ginger first. Then Joan and lastly Mary. There now."

"What a guy!" John shook his head. "Quantity but not quality I'll bet. Look at Dick—that's the kind of letters that count. I'll take mine few but powerful."

When Val finished reading he sat up. "Fellows, this letter really has something to say. Let me read it to you."



Print the complete address in plain block letters in the panel below, and your return address in the space provided. Use typewriter, dark ink, or pencil. Write plainly. Very small writing is not suitable.

No. 310352-A



[CENSOR'S STAMP]

To A/c Val Henderson
Sgt. M-3 - flight I
Maxwell Field, Ala
U. S. A

From

St. William Hoyt
(Sender's name)

H.P.O. 993-1/2
(Sender's address)

Postmaster, San Francisco

California 10/21/43
(Date)

Dear Val -

I was amused by your stories of Preflight life. You may think that fellow has to keep on the ball at Maxwell, but over here everybody is playing for keeps and being "on the ball" is really a pretty serious matter.

Just the other day while escorting a bombing mission, we were caught in a dog fight. Very early in the encounter my engine was hit and I was forced out of the formation. Just then a zero got on my tail and started to follow me down. He would have got me for sure if Chuck Donovan hadn't come to the rescue and shot him down from above. Chuck saved my life, and because of him another plane and its pilot were saved for our country. That's what they mean when they tell you about teamwork. When we speak of team work over here we are not thinking in terms of winning another parade, but in terms of life and death. And another thing, Val, that physical training is really important. Over here a man wouldn't be able to stand up under the strain if it weren't for the conditioning.

You may think that I've changed quite a bit to be talking like this. Those parties and good times mean more to me now than they ever did, but I've acquired some religion, too. We flyers have a religion all our own. It's not only faith in what we are out here risk ing our fool necks for, but faith in each other. It's a wonderful feeling to know that the men you are bound together with are men you can depend on when the going is toughest. Well, old man, don't get sick on that Thanksgiving turkey and thumbs up - Bill

V...-MAIL



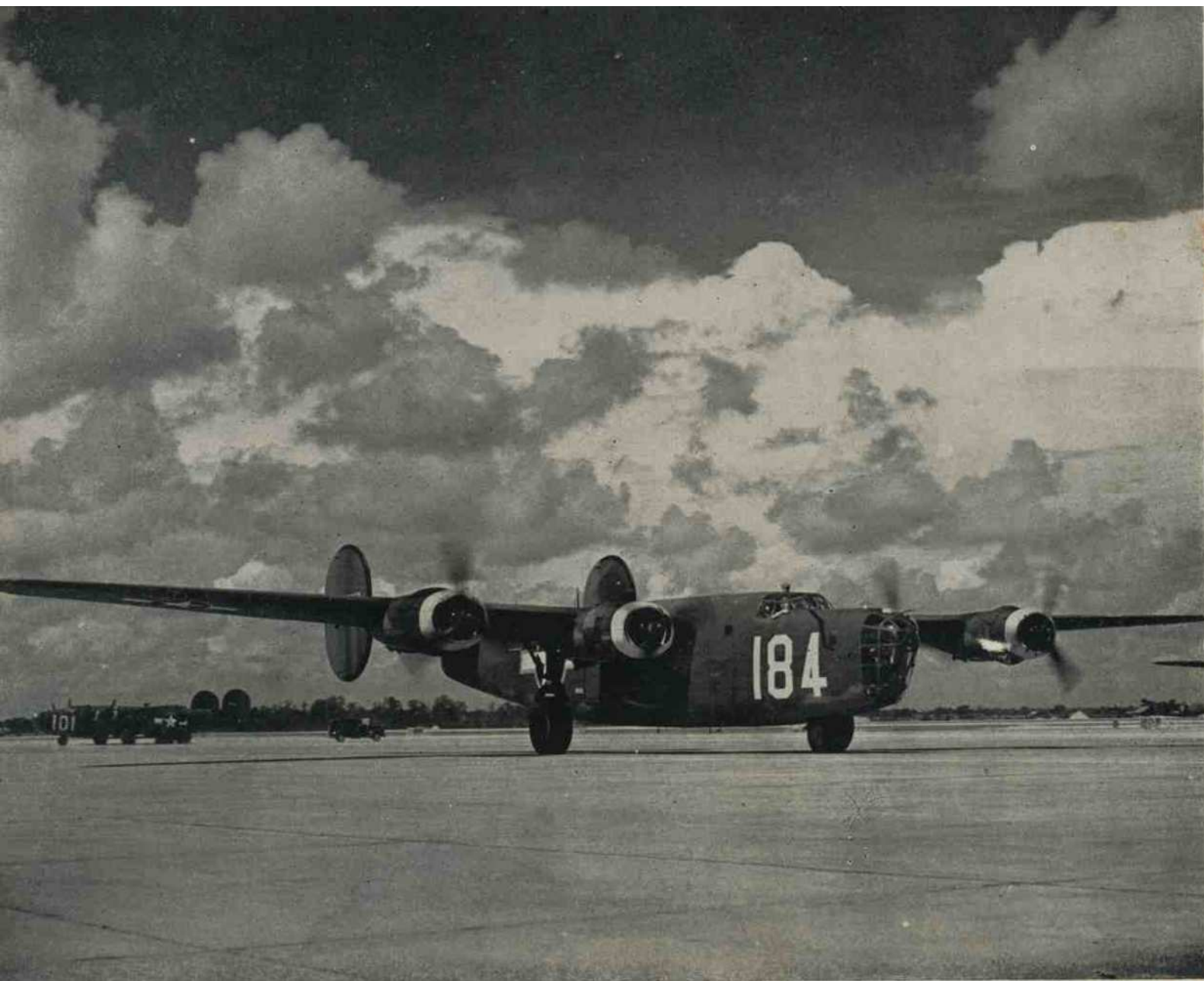
SONG ON SUNDAY

"Fellows, I think he's got something there. Although we don't speak of it, I think every fellow feels a religion deep down inside him. I know that I feel it and I believe in God," Val said as he put down the letter. "Before the war I never thought very much about it, but now I realize how much my faith means to me."

"For instance, how do you suppose that there could be a cooperative bomber team functioning if each and every one did not have faith and trust in each other? Knowing that they have common ideals at heart they can work confidently toward their goal, no fear ever entering their minds, alone or severally, that another will let them down. I had this feeling when we were all together in church last Sunday. I felt closer to these fellows than I have ever felt to any group, and it was in church that I realized the true power of our common bond."

"By the way, Val," put in Dick, "how come you were over at the Chaplain's office?"

"Well, to tell the truth I wasn't over there on a religious matter. I was plenty worried when Sis wrote me about mother's accident. We talked it over and I began to feel sure that everything would be all right since the Red Cross had verified that her condition wasn't serious enough to warrant my coming home. Then our conversation drifted around to the subject of religion in the Army. You know, since I've talked to the Chaplain, I feel a lot more confident about the future."



The story of Maxwell Field might well be the story of military aviation itself. From the fields of cotton it became first, in 1910, an experimental field for Orville Wright. Then the Army took over and what started as an airplane Engine and Repair Depot became not only the headquarters of the Army Air Forces Eastern Flying Training Command but the site of a huge Liberator Pilot Transition School and the Pre-Flight School for Pilots where thousands of young American aviation cadets learn the fundamentals of aviation as a prelude to their going aloft.

PRINTS CHARMING





AUSTIN HALL



BASE HOSPITAL





HOW WE LOOK FROM THE HOME PLATE

FLIGHT HOUSEKEEPING

"Let's have a little cooperation around here fellows; Ray closes up the desk and piles everything on the floor; Phil cleans the floor and sweeps everything into the latrine; Dave cleans the latrine and deposits everything in the sink; and there the vicious circle ends temporarily at least for Bill deigns to clean the sink."

"A very pretty little speech Al, but all you do is clean brass, a five minute job at best."

"Well, it's a good thing the doorknobs aren't flat or there'd be something on them."

"Look at the spots on the mirror, Bill, if the inspecting officer ever looks in there he'll think he has the measles."

What's the use of cleaning it someone always has to do a close-up job with a razor after I get through. If I have to get gigged why waste energy doing it. C'mon fellows there's no more time to play around, inspection starts in ten minutes."

"That's lots of time," announced Bill, "I've a record of cleaning that sink in 2:31.6."

"Yeah, and I guess you got the record number of gigs for it too."

"Say fellows, is this Bon-Ami or glue? "I can't get it off the window."

"Why don't you try rubbing the other side a while?" Dave suggested..

"And don't get in the mud out there."

"Why mothers get gray."

"Say do you put the 'Sir' before or after when the Inspecting Officer asks a question?"

"Don't worry about it, when he asks you won't think about it anyway." I know, I'll put it both before and after then I can't be wrong."

"I can't understand it but everytime they come through this room they pick on me. You fellows could be in pajamas and they wouldn't even notice it. I stand there spic and span looking like Mac-Arthur except for the stars and they immediately begin looking me over for a spot, a button. Even a flaw in the material seems to aggravate them. I shave till I look like a new born babe yet they find a hair somewhere. They gig me for everything except my mental attitude which at the time they can't quite fathom, thanks to my Stonewall Jackson face."



"Maybe they'll bring Mr. Pearson, the psychologist through, and get you for that too Bill, you do seem to be the henpecked cadet."

"That's a new one Ray but it seems to fit."

"Dave, you'd better check those radiators again, Bill has a nasty habit of stacking his correspondence in there. Remember that dirty sock in the corner last week. We policed this place for an hour and never saw it. Naturally it was the first thing they noticed, they seemed to be looking for it. Maybe it did belong to them, we never did find the owner . . . You had to take the gigs Dave, you should have checked the serial number with the Locator files, it might have come from higher up you know . . . Let's get



TOURIST

sensible, can't you just see me taking a dirty sock down through the proper channels. I'd probably wind up writing a military letter to the G. I. laundry."

"Ray, you'd better put a 'Don't Open Till Xmas' sign on that foot locker. I'd like to help you clean that out sometime. It'd be like the old days of cleaning out the attic at home. You run into a wealth of material you've forgotten you ever owned."

"I don't know what I'm going to do about it fellows. I never could find room to keep all my stuff, it used to take a moving van to get me home from college."

"What you need is a letter of introduction to the waste can at the end of the barracks. Have a look at the ledges above the doors, gang, and see if there's any dust. That's a favorite spot."

"Maybe we'll have a short inspecting officer who can't reach that high. No such luck I suppose."

"Bill, if we depended on your ideas we'd all be tripping the light fantastic in the circle of retribution on Saturday night."

"T-E-N-HUT."

AIR CONDITIONING

"Say Bill, who won the Burma Road race?"

"Rogers. He's an eager beaver, they'll bury him at the end of the obstacle course yet."

"Oh, I don't know about that Bill, you're always the last man in the last flight at P.T. and every one in front of you is eager in your estimation."

"Anyone who goes through that fouled up piece of nature in 10:47.1 rates my approval," mumbled Ray sleepily.

"By the way, are you on the relay team?"

"Yeah—it'll probably cut short my stay unless Maxwell has a local morgue."

Bill discontinued his letter to his girl abruptly. "Ray, you're crazy. They work you like Hades six days a week, double time you to P.T., give you three minutes to change and fall out for chow, run you through all the countryside one day and over Hell's half acre the next and, when they want





AISLE OF ANGLES

a track team to puff out the pride of the Squadron, a few suckers like you take the bait. —Me, I'll do what I have to and the rest is sack time."

"You may or may not have the right angle Bill, but if I'm ever forced down in African jungles I know the shape I'd want to be in. The guy that did it in double time here might have a chance. Here's Dave and Hal now. Say, did you sign that gig sheet, Dave?"

"Gigged again? That's two tours now. We stayed over to work out on the bars after P.T." Bill rolled over uncomfortably. "An hour of calisthenics and you work out on the bars for an hour."

"By the way Bill, you played hockey in college, didn't you? Were you pretty good at it?"

"I wasn't too bad, made first string my last two years."

"Wasn't it a lot of work," Hal retorted, rather disgustedly.

"Yeah, but it had its payoff."

"Certainly not financially."

"Well, in a way, scholarship you know, but that wasn't what I meant. I was thinking of bright lights, crowds, trips, winning and knowing that you were better than the next guy."

"What's the matter, is the competition too tough here or do you have to have glory tossed at you before you'll exert yourself." Ray sat up and waited patiently for an answer.

Bill was on the spot. "Oh, I don't know fellows. I always heard that in the Army you did what you had to, waited to be told, and let it go at that. Right Ray?"

"Strictly G.I. You're supposed to be officer material. What do you think our C.O. was doing out on the obstacle course with us today? He doesn't have to do that, and today wasn't the first time, you could tell that from the way he went over it. He's in tip-top shape. I can imagine your physical condition if you had a silver bar."

Bill cracked his throttle and stood up lazily. "You know, if it didn't take so much ambition I'd like to play some touch football. Do they need any experts for the game Sunday?"

"You wouldn't give up open post time to play football," ribbed Ray.

"I might be pretty good at it."

"Sure. We need backfield men. C'mon out tomorrow after P.T. With a couple of good backs we'll easily win group competition. That's the spirit Bill."

"What do we do at P.T. tomorrow boys, did anyone see the torture schedule?"

"Dumbbells" someone announced laconically. "The consoling part is that your arms go numb quickly and you don't feel the pain."

"Not mine. I'm going



UNDER THE BALL



IN THEIR STRIDE

to take a shot of novacaine before I go over there again. I wonder when we get the broomsticks. You fellows just can't imagine how the discovery of those complicated implements changed the course of the whole war."

"Don't be bitter, my boy, they sure develop your coordination. It took me quite a while to straighten out some of the maneuvers and I'm not exactly a mental degenerate."

"Not exactly," came from the corner.

"Dave, drag your indefatigable self off that beautyrest and get out that candy you pilfered from your girl friend. By the way, in the next letter tell her we all love her, maybe we'll get a repeat performance."

"OK, OK, you beggars, what's the matter with your girls? Besides I've exercised enough today and it's a long way down from this top sack. Remind me to see the supply sergeant about a ladder."

"I'm sure he'll oblige" remarked Bill. "He'll probably take you to P.T. in a jeep if you ask him."

"No, I'll walk thanks. That'd be like going to the gallows in a wheelchair."

"Friday we go over that perverted plumbers and carpenters paradise."

"Those aren't obstacles, they're physical improbabilities," said Dave, "and I can't see how anyone pancaked over that stretch in 1:25. They tell me Superman left town after that one."

"Funny", remarked Bill, "how this place changes a fellow. I believe I've left the G.I. stage, though at times you merciless rebels discourage me. I actually volunteered for a detail last week

though I'd lose face if certain people heard about it. I really didn't come in last on the Burma Road either. For some reason I just couldn't be the last one. Sometimes I think the rides you fellows give me are dead serious."

"The standards are high here," broke in Dave, "I'd like to be sure of that gold bar and silver wings. It's been a long drag and I don't want to hit the skids now, or any other time."

"Wait for me Mar-y-y" . . . At ease, Prima Donna, you'll burn out your intake manifold, so—you're the one who ruins our formation singing . . . Ruins it? It sounds like a homesick angel, now. Of course, there's always the front line soprano who starts the song and gives the poor basses in the rear something to work for. C'mon in Hal, what a timely moment for our illustrious song leader to poke his warbling larynx into our little symposium . . . Well, Maestro, good to see you again. We were just discussing what Army Regulations term "singing in ranks", though sometimes we wonder if Regulations haven't missed a beat . . . Defend yourself "Emmett", you're officially responsible for the unpropitious offspring of our attempts at harmony . . . You call me Emmett? You didn't mean to say you're disappointed in our singing? How crude. You would accuse me of not earning my merit badges . . . No, I give you due credit, you have them all making noise if that's what you want, but I'd hate to be responsible for what it could be mistaken for . . . Well fellows, seriously, there's little hope of ever making a Squadron of Aviation Cadets sound like Phil Spitalny's chorus but you'll have to admit that there's really something to this singing in ranks. It sets up a beat and keeps the whole Squadron in step, just as if there were a band playing. It does away with the Officers having to yell their lungs out counting cadence all the time . . . I agree with you Hal, it does help. Another thing is what singing, bad as it may sound, can do for the morale of a bunch of boys. Back in the old college days every time a group of fellows congregated they started to sing purely for the enjoyment, and this singing in ranks isn't such a far cry from "the good old days." . . . "Thanks, Ray, I was routed. I'll stand up for this singing anytime. Our C.O. likes it and it's a big item in Squadron competition. Frequently a group of lusty voices have put a Squadron out in front."





PARADE

The last notes of retreat vibrated over the speaker as Roy remarked, "Last night my folks arrived for a visit. Dad certainly was impressed by our parade ceremony. When that cannon explodes civilians realize that what they are witnessing is serious business."

"Quite right," put in Bill, "but you know that when you're in ranks you have to show a certain sense of humor—your feet get numb, your nose itches but you just have to stand and take it. The best way to get through it is to observe and enjoy. I remember one day when our Supply Sergeant lost his hat on 'officers' center'. It was quite windy and the flag whipped around and knocked his hat off. He was so disconcerted, he couldn't pick it up but went out to salute the reviewing officers uncovered. You can excuse a man for this but when it happened two days in a row the squadron couldn't help calling this fellow a first rate 'sad sack'."

"Yes, I know," Ray replied, "but Mom was really thrilled by the beauty and precision of the white gloves and sabers. She never fully realized the ruggedness encountered in this Cadet Training. You know it was less than a year ago when all of us were probably more interested in a new plaid sport coat or a polka dot tie than we were in the heaps of ashes in Europe. I overheard Dad's conversation with our C. O. last night after parade. There's no kidding, this pilot training is limited to a select group in the first place and only a select percentage of them make the grade. Personal integrity and self-discipline, it seems are the basic characteristics which our officers here at Maxwell demand. We were all pretty surprised when we arrived at Preflight. The stories that we heard were not exaggerated for our day is packed with duties both mental and physical that indeed make our bunk a welcome spot at night. Above all we are on our own for the first time in the army and you can easily see which fellows have the stuff to make good. When visitors see our parade they at once become aware of the solid foundation under this whole program. Men at rigid attention, the saluting of the flag in perfect coordination, and the precision steps past the reviewing stand indicate that every motion is geared by teamwork and a purpose that one day soon will clear a pretty foggy world."





GRAND PIANO

"What do you fellows think of the story on the Rec. Hall I've been writing?" asked the voice as he began to read aloud. "'——'" A beautiful autumn evening with a full moon was having its night and the stucco structure spread its yellow wings as though sheltering a prize brood.

Within, to the accompaniment of everything from a recorded edition of Stokowski's Beethoven to the Cadet Dance Band, the wandering soul could find in one room or another whatever was needful to satisfy that yearning for relaxation and pleasure.

He might have been playing ping-pong or waiting for the loud speaker to announce that his long distance call had come through, but he wasn't—he was peacefully indulging in a tall milkshake at the soda bar when he looked up and found not only the familiar olive drabbed figure of Aviation Cadet Psmythe, but two charming girls . . . "

Smitty held up his hand with a threatening gesture.

"Hold! Do you intend to tell that you would have the gall to set the scene of a paltry love story in our sacred Rec Hall?"

"It is possible, you know," came the quiet rejoinder.

"But since you must dabble in Romance, couldn't you find some place more fitting, such as a subway station?"

The Voice set his manuscript down and registered reproach.

"Look," he said, "We have one of the largest and best equipped Recreation Buildings in any camp anywhere. We have an open air Starlit Terrace, and all the luxuries a soldier could ask for. All it needs is a soul-shattering romantic novel to make it famous. I am merely trying to do my bit for its glory. Catchwise?"

Hot Shot rocked back in his seat and looked the group over.

"Speaking of fun, frivolity and recreation, you boys may think you've seen the whole story of this business of Open Post, but let the old voice of experience inform you that you're sadly mistaken."

"You don't mean that girl you were out with Saturday night? . . . Don't tell me, I saw you down at the Cadet Club way back in that dark corner. Seems as though every time a friend of yours went by you managed to drop something and bump heads under the table."

"Now, let's not be too harsh on a fellow. After all, it's a cadet's duty to be always a gentleman and show a good time to those poor little ladies in distress, is it not?"

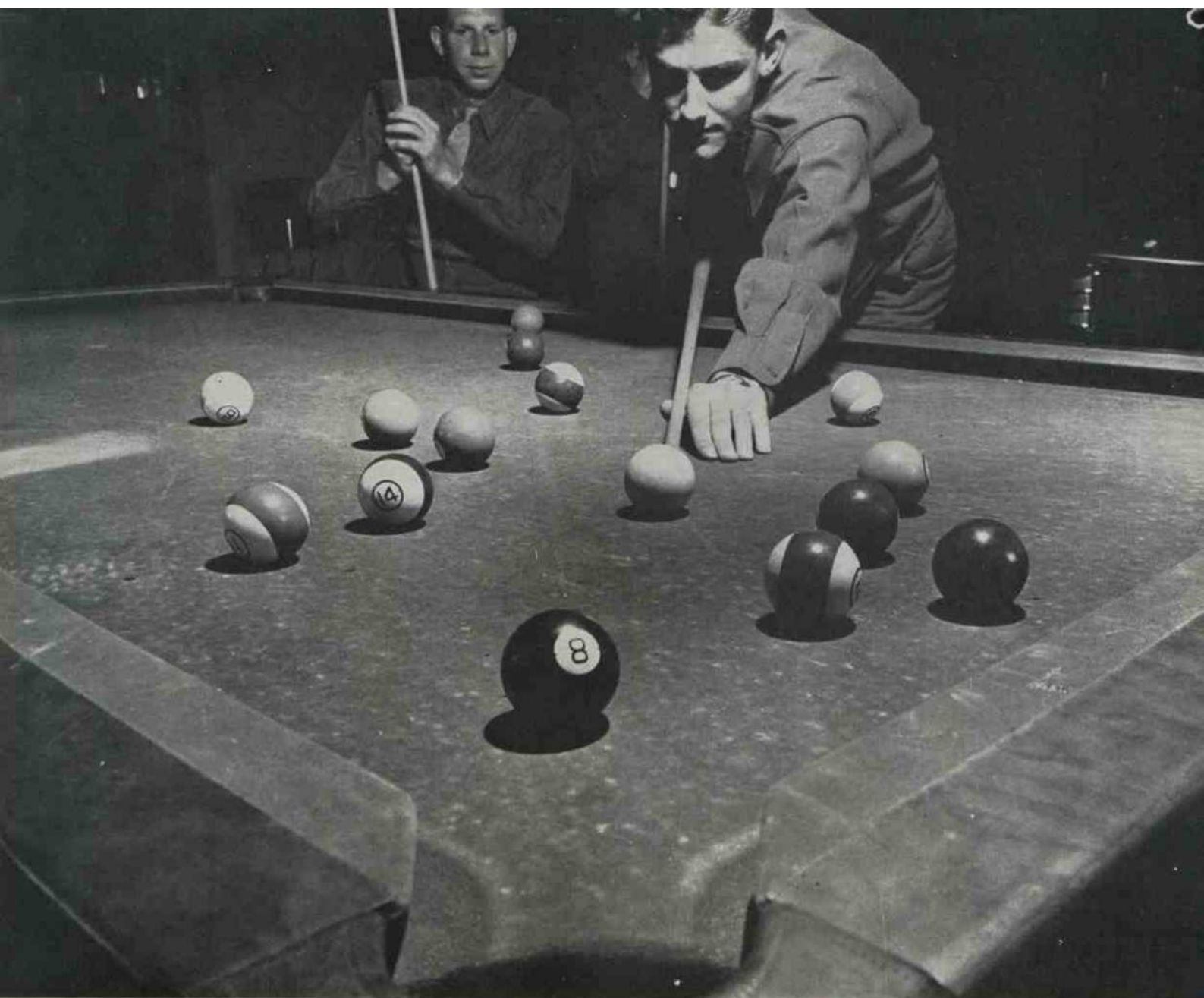
He looked around the half moon of eager faces with a paternal gaze.

"Why my mother knew her mother when they were kids."

"Well, what do you know! And I suppose your sister and this little gal played hop-scotch together. Look, friend, if you must escort the family heirlooms around town, I wouldn't take time

WITH TWO DIPS OF VANILLA





" - - - - - " ?

out to boast about it. Why I had a perfectly delightful time last week end with a damsel from the Date Bureau."

Hot Shot looked slightly hurt.

"And to think of the lovely couple of rounds of golf you would have missed out on. By the way, that golf course out at the Standard Club is not at all a thing to be sneezed at. You ought to go out there sometime and try it."

The Straight Shooter inched forward.

"You know, I've heard that it costs a good twenty dollars for a date from the Date Bureau."

"And who told you that? Some guy who wanted to be shown around town? Strictly between you and me, any fellow who wants to have a real evening can do all right over at the Rec Hall, if he's willing to substitute personality for dough."

"What's that again?"

"I'm referring to what is known as 'dating eligible Montgomery girls.' You go over to the Date Bureau, describe your wants, get the girl's name and telephone number . . ."

"Yes, but where does all this personality stuff come in?"

"Well, for crying out loud, it's simple enough. You can do it just as well anywhere—it's not what you do that's so darned important, the whole thing hinges on the question of do you bubble? Does your soul flow out through your eyes? Do you dare relax for a moment and make things interesting?"

The huddle paused for a moment to absorb this rare snatch of dignified wisdom. Then,

"I'm going to town tonight and I don't have a date."

"That's just a tough situation, kid. You know, if there were only some way I could take over your open post for you, I'd gladly give up my barracks to you for the evening . . . that is," he added hastily, "my ten cubic feet. I'm sure that if worst come to worst there would be a hospitable movie house which would welcome me and my cash. Maybe I wouldn't have to stand in line."

"And you could spend a glorious couple of hours with Hedy Lamarr," said somebody. "Geel!"

"It seems to me you've overlooked something in this open post business," broke in The Voice, propping his head in one cupped hand as he leaned out of the upper bunk. "You always have the privilege when you're in town on a Saturday night of sleeping in one of our hosteleries, y'know. Boy, I can just see myself sinking into solid comfort for a long snooze without a bugle within miles. And think of going to meals without The Double and 'Soupy'!"

"My boy," Hot Shot remarked, "you simply inspire me. From now on you may refer to me as Doctor Hot Shot, author of 'Ode to a Feather Bed', or 'Where did I leave my hotel key last time?'"

"And after you had had your comfortable night's sleep," Casanova broke in, "I'll meet you in church. Maybe we can even make it breakfast—better yet, brunch. At least we all get out Sunday." He heaved himself to his feet, slipped the remains of his cigarette into a handy coke bottle, and picked up his books in preparation for an evening of study.

*You see Mom, we're busy but we still
find time for fun. I feel better than I ever
did and hope the family feels the same.*

Love,

Jimmy.

the Staff

- roger alley
- dick yoder
- bruce jones
- art locker
- al boroshafsky
- jim mead
- bert huberman
- al becker
- george berryman
- hank gallagher
- horace belin
- matt basile
- don frederick
- mahlon pfeffer
- don sarris
- j. f. nolan
- brad lang



MEMORIES

BY A. C. J. F. NOLAN

Someone once said:
 "You can't get blood out of
 a stone."
 And the Wise Man answered:
 "Ya' ever been to Maxwell, bud!"



KISS THE
 CURLS GOODBYE! LOOK
 PROUD MISTER!

