

Wednesday

Dear Mother;

Strange things happen in the Army. Not the strangest but nearly so, that so far has happened to me is my present situation. Here I am on field manoeuvres; supposedly roughing it in true Army style, writing to you from the heart of a National forest on a typewriter. To increase the strangeness of the situation I am in a large tent, one of two fellows, listening to a radio and doing close to nothing all day long. So that you won't jump to any unwarranted conclusions about my days activities, I will say right off that my main problem is parental. I am the proud father of (no not what you think) five squealing, crawling baby pups; age two days.

You see I happen to be one of a group of five who are staying behind at our base camp. We have to watch out that a few supplies and things left behind aren't stolen or wet. The rest of the regiment has trickled out at all sorts of odd hours of the night by batteries for parts unknown. You see we are in the middle of some sort of war games although the closest to a game has been cribbage. The place of storage is at Headquarters and as yet that particular battery hasn't moved out yet. They have been ready and on the alert now for two days. Suddenly, perhaps late tonight, a call will come and they will sneak out, all dark like and everything.

Back to the puppies. It seems that a prolific mother has again been prolific and the world is now four little blacks and a white more populated. The mother is a world-worn beagle hound, the father unknown. They are cute little tikes, with shut eyes and yawning mouths. However during the heat of the day they cry all the time. It really gets hot here, 120 in the semi-shade the other day. I've never been so hot and felt so all dragged out before. At night though it cools off and is fairly sleepable. The water situation is the most bothersome. There is very little opportunity for washing and the water is always chlorinated and usually warm; not very thirst quenching. Now that our regiment is due to leave we eat about five miles away in another regiment. The food is the same all over the Army, so it really makes little difference. It is rather remarkable to think about thousands of men all eating the very same rations. They are not very good though and it is rather remarkable to think about thousands of men all throwing away the very same rations.

These war games are really something. I suppose somewhere, somebody really knows what is going on. We have no personal contact with the 'enemy' at all. An anti-aircraft regiment is partly defensive and experimentally offensive. Hence we are in a 'no mans land' when it comes to our proper function. This particular forest is filled up with men from many other regiments but so far I have not been able to talk to them. However I am sure they all talk English and think the same things about the Army. Incidentally you may have read the article about the Army in Life. I suppose you have been reading various other articles and no doubt you have made some sort of an opinion about the Army. The best thing to do is to forget any opinions and wait until things get ironed out a bit. It is impossible to tell right now just what will happen and in spite of the extension I believe that something will break so that we can be out soon. I won't even go into the subject of furloughs. More when these manoeuvres are over.

I received your letter and two cards. The little fellow is cute and I have him in my field bag. The address is still the same. We don't know where we are going from here.

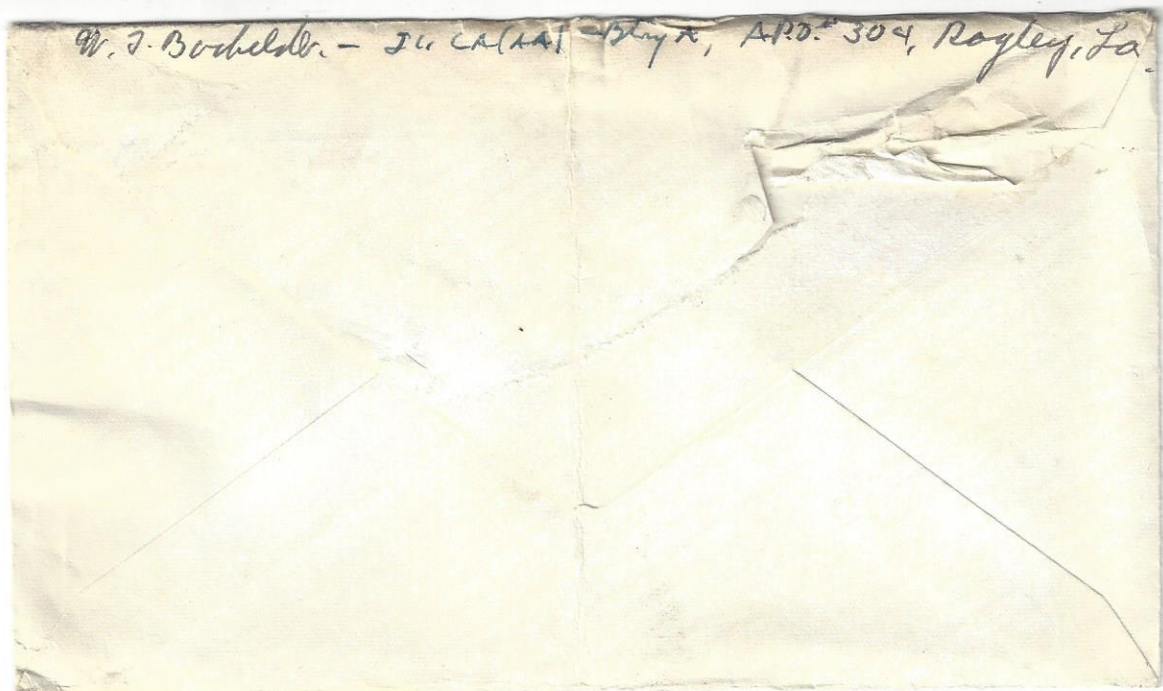
Lots of love to all,

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VIA AIR MAIL



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