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2011-2184-F

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OA/ID Number: 25832
Folder ID Number: 25832-008

Folder Title:
February 1944

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ENS. G.H.W. Bush
USS San Jacinto
F.P.O./N.Y.C. N.Y.

Feb. 7, 1944

Dear Mum,

PHOTOCOPY
GB HANDWRITING

I was glad I finally got a chance to talk to you before shoving off. I'm afraid I woke you both up, but I figured it was the only time I could get through.

I am writing this in the ~~even~~ of room while waiting for supper which for Ensigns is at 8 to 10. J.G.'s and above eat at 7, ensigns at 8 since the wardrobe is so crowded with all officers present. We have to wear blues for the evening meal which is not the most convenient thing in the world but perhaps they'll change it after we're out for a while.

We didn't actually get to see us shove off since we were at quarters, but we did see the land fade away. The boats & howls on so the motion of the ship (quite a bit of roll and pitch on this class ship) had me feeling positively seasick but now I'm got my first sea legs I hope. A couple of the fellows have been sick and the weather is not what you'd call rough.

It is surprising how little there is here. They always seem to be having general quarters, flight quarters or something. Then too we have our squadron jobs and our

our plans to watch out for. We are required
to supervise the loading of all ammunition which
is is depth charges and ~~to~~ gun ammunition
~~Our~~ Our room is pretty nice - I am
in an upper (the better of the 2 upper ones)
with good length but very little clearance.
The pillow is like onto a rock, but the
bed is not bad.

Clothes & haircuts are free - they
have a ship's store, games in the
wardroom, a few radios, movies at
night -

It is really quite a relief to
actually be at sea - most of our
time is spent flying on standing by in
the ready room, but we do have time
to go up on the flight deck and
look around. Today the water was really
beautiful. Quite a bit of it reminds
me of our trip to Bermuda - including
the feelings.

Today a damn nice thing happened.
I could have cried probably! My plane
captain - the enlisted man who maintains
my plane, connecting small items & repairs
etc - is an Italian fellow named
Salvatore Versachi. He is a Seaman First

PHOTOCOPY
GB HANDWRITING

class. He reminds me a good deal of Blue
in many ways. He doesn't know a great deal
about plans but he's always interested -
always eager to help. He is what you
might call a simple fellow but simple
without any trace of ludicrousity. ~~He~~
The other night he came up to the office
when I had the duty and told me his
mother was ill and that his sister
said he should come at once. I arranged
an emergency leave for him. My heart
ached for the fellow as he stood there,
tears in his eyes, nervously and anxiously
twisting his cap in his hands. When he
returned from his leave I saw him
working on the plane and when he saw
me coming towards him he got a little
thrust and embarrassed. ~~He~~ ^{He} ~~asked~~ ^{asked}
~~me~~ I asked him if he got home and
how his mother was and he ~~said~~ ^{said} thank
me etc ~~for~~ ^{for} getting his leave ^{home} there ~~etc~~.
Then he said "Mr. Butler, when I left my
mother was much better and she told me
to tell you 'God Bless you!' - Well then
you can imagine how I felt. For a man
to say something like that ~~is~~ ^{is} not easy. ^{Yes, Mr.}
I have known a good deal from this.
Versachi ~~perhaps~~ ^{perhaps} he is intelligent
is nothing to brag about, ~~but~~ ^{but} perhaps he is

not quite with the on exceptionally adroit in his
work; but ~~he~~ he has a beauty of spirit from
which I can learn a lot.

(I will not add this yet but will add a little
as time goes on till we get some place where it
can be posted.)

2/10/44
Three days later and yet it seems like yesterday
that I wrote the first part of this - in other
words time has flown. Before I came

aboard I didn't see how we could
have a full day but on the sea - This is

literally ~~about~~ the first free minute I
have had. I have thrown one hop a

day regularly - the hops last about 3
hours. Also we have flight quarters every

few hours and have to make to the ready
room. We have to be in the ready room

(I know well where it is now) at 6 AM
The evenings we have after about 6 unless
you have squadron work. I have had
quite a bit of work with ordnance &
photography to keep me busy at intervals.
Today I went out on a photo mission
I had one Ligier with me. Had to

navigate out and back, and was mighty
pleased to see the ship again - most of
the boys are search and anti sub patrol.

Today I had a close call on landing - my
right tire blew out and I thought I
was gone but I was checked in time.

PHOTOCOPY
GB HANDWRITING

The weather has been calm, sunny,
warm, and all around beautiful. It's
really warm - my only wish is that it
were a wedding trip instead of this.

My sack at night feels like
Simmons' seat, I'm so tired. "The Rock"
my pillow, has actually not softened

but I don't even notice it. Bruce
Lighter gives us a lot of Air
combat info usually before the
hops - nearest land, fields, terrain,
enemy if any etc. You can tell Mark
he's doing fine.

Today we had some exercise
on the flight deck in the sun - basketball
cats. Capt. Martin joined us.

He is a fine man and well-liked.
We have had the usual number of
crackups, but all in all it's been pretty
fine -

I hope to hear from you soon -
when ever it's possible that is.

Well, Mum, I'll close for now -
I'm submerged, happy, healthy,
miss you all, miss Bar,
and anxious to ~~get~~ back.

Sea life is fine - in fact it's my social
status have altered. I could think
of nothing I'd like better - perhaps I'll
get sick of it later -

Much much love,

you ever loving son,

George

1. Dearest Mum,

PHOTOCOPY
GB HANDWRITING

21/3/44

Just back from lunch with plenty of time for a letter, since I flew this AM and don't have to fly this afternoon (There has been a slight delay - just pushed up to slide for an abandon ship drill. It was interrupted by one of the frequent rain squalls which are prevalent around these parts.)

The hope this AM was most interesting - a group familiarization attain. We flew for 2 hrs looking over the countryside. It is mountains and beautiful. It was terribly hot up in the air today. We have to keep our hatches closed to avoid excessive fuel consumption so the old sweat just poured out. It was a lovely morning for landing abroad and all planes landed safely. I have had only one mishap and that was a blown out tire on landing. A bit scary - no damage however.

So far I haven't been as happy, ~~but~~ I think our section will make it next time. There isn't much to do they say, but it will be fun to see the place.

Lost with I had a deck watch - rather this AM. It was busy and calm, with a soft warm breeze. How I wish this were my wedding trip - maybe someday we will come down this way.

I got a letter from Ben two weeks ago and one from you yesterday, so I feel right at home practically.

Luckily I haven't been burned too badly. Some of the men have real some looking burns.

Life aboard is really O.K. Some of the ship's officers (not many fortunately) seem to resent the presence of the air group - It is a long standing problem, but here it's not bad. Most of the ship's officers are really swell. They treat us down well, too. It's just one or two who are perhaps so small or curious that they resent our being on their ship. The air officer counsel Hale is really a marvelous fellow. All the pilots are crazy about him. He is fair and understanding and will do anything for us.

We no longer wear blue at all. The custom is khaki without the blue breakfast and lunch.

I hope the visit to Barnwell was a good one. Your letter mentioned your being there today. - but I'll send this to Grove Lane for safety's sake.

With love, Mum & Dad -
PJB

Feb. 18th 1944

Dear Mom,

I received a letter from you a couple of days ago and was so thrilled to get all the news. I laughed for hours over "Little Orvie's" acting up in the car - also practically cried at the thought of him, lying on his back crying cause you were leaving. I know how he felt, Mums, I do so love to hear all about John and Buck. They are good boys - Barbara wants to have children just like she says. Your letter informed me that you were off to So Carolina so as I write this I can picture you having one of those heavenly picnic lunches, having just finished mowing down a nice big covey - hope that's correct. Your V-mail letter took the same as average air mail - it came ^{on} the same form that you wrote it - your regular handwriting. I guess thy just photograph certain ones to certain places. I have gotten quite a few letters (about 5 days service) so I feel quite happy. Barbara has been her usual sweet self about writing. I do hope she is out of school or can get out when I get my leave (if I do.) It would be agony to have 3 or 4 days and have her way away. I am so excited from P.S.B.T. - such good news.

I hope they let him off so he can see Beth and trap her.

Now for a little news from here. I am fine, feeling terribly healthy, well sunburned, love the flying although it is real work - I have gotten in a lot more hours than I expected. The days have all been beautiful and clear except for the rain squalls which occur off and on and last only a few minutes.

I have spent 3 weeks ashore at the air station there, 2 weeks at the beginning of this week, back aboard for Wed. and the last week ashore. The first time we were sent ashore, after circling the ship waiting to land. We landed with no clean clothes - just flying suits. We were there two days checking our plans etc. we did our own work on our plans with a result that when we returned here we were filthy - bathless, shaved, etc. Looking some of the guys had a little money so we bought a few things on the base, paint for our make and bed etc.

The base is quite large - our quarters were OK - mosquito nets over the beds etc. The wind is from one direction only so they built the buildings with screens instead of walls - then on the side where the wind is from you can drop curtains down to keep the rain out. Nights were cool, but days scorching. They have an open air

thrust on the base which is really weak. Last - covered
it poured for 3 minutes off and on - so we sat thru
the whole show completely drenched. Same for Tues. morn.

We went into one of the cities Tues. afternoon.

Just went in for a short while. It was fun as
we had to drive 16 miles in an open truck to get
there. Had a good chance to see the land.

The vegetation is thick - country side green and
typically tropical. The natives all yelled "Hi;

Toe" as we passed. We're 'Toe' or 'Chief' to
them. Little black fellows Bush's age without
a stitch on but out onto the road and
wave - yelling 'Hiya Toe'. I got tired of waving
back. The sights were interesting. People carrying

bushes etc on their heads; Old and young
alike going barefoot; Women with bracelets
up to their elbow and smoking big black cigars.

In town we wandered around looking for
conveniences etc - but none could be found. Most
of their wares are imported and overly expensive.
The same things you can buy at Macy's, only
costing more. We didn't dare eat any of the
products for fear of disease - the disease
rate (mostly venereal) here is stupendous. ~~As~~
So yet I haven't visited the smithies spots,
but intend to when I rate liberty. Haven't had
one yet but perhaps we get it tomorrow.

Some of the natives, though black as pitch,
speak admirable English. One fellow was on the

estimated we he had 4 sons, all by different women, and
asked if they'd shoot him in the States for that! He used
such words as "diplomatic" and others as a regular part
of his vocabulary.

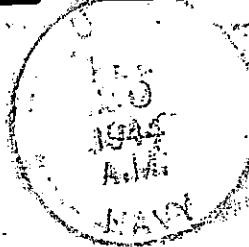
I don't like chewing on sugar cane - tried some
and it was too sweet.

Well, Mum, that's about all for now.
I miss you all and love you all very much
asked - ever devotedly,
Pam

PHOTOCOPY
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Ens. G. H. W. Bush USNR
USS San Jacinto
First Post Office
N.Y. City
N.Y.



VIA AIR MAIL



Mrs. P. S. Bush
GROVE LANE
GREENWICH
CONN.

U.S.A.

2/22/44

Dear Mom,

Not much news so this will be a very short letter.

Everything is going along O.K.
Still flying quite a bit - weather still beautiful and clear and awfully hot, especially when flying. On the flight deck it's not bad but in the air it's really warm. Our rooms are nice and cool however so the wits are most comfortable.

Did I tell you I saw Jimmy for a few minutes the other night - He came out for a visit. He is third I think - He met Comdr. Hale, our air officer, and several others. He had a look around air plot too. He said he hopes to get to Greenwich on his leave.

This searching for things I am allowed to tell you is most difficult.

Oh yes went ashore the other day for liberty. Went into town and it was ~~was~~ very swell and dirty. There was little to do so we (5 of us) went out to an officers club. From there we wandered over to the municipal playing fields and watched

AIR³⁰
MAIL

the natives playing cricket and handball.
This was such a refreshing change
~~compared~~ after town. Here all the natives
are in white ducks & flannels and white
shirts - all clean & smart. whereas in town
it was just the other way around.

After a good dinner at the
Officer's club went in to town again
and heard some of the native
music. It was really fine. They make up
the songs as they go along at times.
They sing on all subjects, and the
music is a style all of its own.

Riding in to shore on these little
wherry barges makes me think of
the good old "Tomboy" days.

Can't wait to get back to you all
and Ben - I will call you as soon
as I arrive - I hope to get a letter.
We have been having very good
news on the hangar deck.

Well, that's not what I do for now.
My love to all the family,
ever devotedly,

Harry

Sat Feb. 26th

Dear Mum,

Got 4 letters (2 from Bessie, 1 on the train, and one from home) from you today - also one from Ben and Dad, so I feel well caught up, and generally very happy.

I laughed till tears came to my eyes over the "parachutist". It's the funniest thing I have ever heard. I can just picture Buck ready for the hop - ^{can} think of the things running thru his mind (well so to remember trying first that) then to have it break - Oh Mum I honestly have never laughed so hard at anything. I wonder if you have been getting my letters - I hope you have.

The flying has been going along pretty well. Beginning to get back a little confidence in my landings which I lost for a few hops. The last few have been O.K.

Tomorrow we vote liberty and I imagine I'll go into town

AIR³⁰
MAIL

PHOTOCOPY
GB HANDWRITING

even though it will be Sunday -
Had a chat with Ed Brewster
today. He is a damn nice guy.

Today we had a dress inspection
on the flight deck - whites. It sure
was hot up there. Afterwards we had
an squadron picture taken.

I ~~am~~ never received my bank
deposit slip for last month's \$143
allotment. It should have gone to the
bank. The one this month will come to
you. With you please deposit it in
my account. Also ~~the~~ ^{could} you ~~with~~ ^{please}
ask the bank about my January's
allotment. ~~He~~ It probably
arrived, but I'd like to know
for sure.

Sorry there's so little news, but
I'll see you before too long -
Much love
Murdock
M