

Cassina when
playing with
a large insect?
2 others playing
with each other.
- long description

Feb. 23, 1943

Dear Folks,

That's good
news about Skipper. I hope
that it means he is
definitely on the road to
recovery. If so, how
remarkable!

Those of us who
have been instructors for
only a scant two months
still don't know what
the immediate future
holds in store for us.
The present situation.

which is to be replaced²
by one for fighter training,
will be disbanded in a
very few weeks at the
most - as soon as the
last students have
completed the course.
Most of the "older"
instructors, which include
of some ensigns, are getting
orders to report straight
to new squadrons to
be attached to new
ships, so it's quite
possible the same may

happen to me. The two
other likely possibilities
are to go through
operational training then
report to a ship or to
do the same continuing
as an operational
training instructor. The
second possibility wouldn't
be a bad deal, but
I don't know how
likely the best would
be since authorities
obviously prefer men

with fleet experience as
the instructor in the
most advanced type of
training. Of course they
could send us back
to Miami - as pre-
operational instructors,
as we've been here, or
they could make us
primary instructors -
grim thought. Going
straight to the fleet
with ^{only} our present
experience, even to be

supplemented by ^{war} fleet
training at Norfolk or
San Diego or somewhere.
might also be a little
grim.

News about Arthur
Gardner ^{was} interesting.

Conclusions drawn from
his remarks seem
logical enough. I must
admit I'm glad I
didn't sign up for V-7
— to get stuck on a
cruiser or a destroyer.

A carrier will be bad

enough for a land-loving
landlubber.

The publications I
referred to on the back of
that envelope are the
ones Pa mentioned -
Wilson's bulletin and a
publication from Mich. -
to be saved, but not
sent here please!

Tell me more about
the cold spell - official
low temperatures in
Boston, New Haven,
N. Y., M. T. Washington,
coldest spot in the

East (Owl Head, N.Y.)

The Die situation
sounds typical. I wrote
her what I thought was
a nice letter shortly
before Christmas, but
didn't get an answer
until this month, so
I guess the long-haired
one and the whole
post war world is
"right in there."

The word just came
in this minute that we
are to get operational

8

training (probably at
Leit Field, 15 mi. west
of N.A.S., Tex.), and
since the order (seen
and just reported by one
of the boys) says nothing
about instructing, it'll
probably be the fleet
after that. I just hope
they don't treat me
quite as regular
students (white cap
cover, practically no
liberty, etc.).

The head of N.A.S.

Tex. by the way, is a
 Captain Price, just
 nominated to be an
 admiral (rank - ranks
 with major general
 because of no naval
 equivalent to brigadier),
 but as such he'll
 probably go to the fleet.
 There's already another
 admiral on the station,
 and there are several
 captains, so you see
 we rate more than a
 commander.

I'll try not to break
any bones so you'll not
have to come to Florida.
Should I perhaps
break a few?

Life is pretty easy
~~(for the time)~~
these days. (The schedule
is easy, ~~(for students left)~~) and on top of
that great accumulation
of smoke from forest
fires have cancelled
many hopes.

On my last day
off I bicycled from S.A.
Argentina to Atlantic

Beard, around 33 miles.

It's getting so the old
legs are suffering here
and here. I had hoped
to ride most of the way
on the beard, but it
was too soft at first.

and so until I got on
the beard at Pointe
Vada for the last
seven miles, it was a
rather dull ride
(except by the S.T.
at Argentine ranches,
where there were a good

12
many birds). New
bird (totally new one
for me) are reserved
these days, though
there are still a good
many to see if I knew
where to look and how
to get there. The other
day I did see my first
red-collared wood pecker,
but that should have
been long ago. I'd
like next to see a
swallow-tailed kite
and then a wild turkey.

but just a few days ago
I saw something even
better

While walking down
the road just below
here looking for birds
I stopped to watch a
pair of Florida (subspecies
of cardinal) were playing
with a large insect
something like a Mayfly
^{apparently}
now letting it escape,
now catching it again,
almost like cats with
a mouse. That is it -

self was an interesting
sight. All of a sudden
I noticed a commotion
going on just across a
hyacinth-clogged creek.

It was not more than
150 feet from the road,
and in a moment I saw
that it was two animals
apparently fighting each
other. It couldn't be,
yes, it was two others.
They weren't really
fighting, but playing

like two ^{very} large puppies
and roared energetically.

Actually they were as
big as medium-sized
dogs, only longer and
with much shorter legs.

Their broad faces, sleek,
wet, ^{dark-brown} fur and clammy
antlers made them

almost resemble seals.

What delightful

animals, and what a

wonderful time they

were having, and quite

oblivious of the almost

constant procession of
 trucks working on a nearby
 project rolling noisily by,
 and the roar of planes
 almost directly overhead
 that had just taken off
 a nearby runway and
 were not yet much
 above the treetops.

Creeping closer with
 binoculars glued to my
 eyes I watched, fascinated.
 The others, probably a
 mated pair, were
 tumbling all over each

other, almost cat - a -
 cat can. Every so often
 they ^{and rested a moment} ~~washed~~, and once
 one of them, now half
 in the water, caught a
 fish only to let it go
 a few moments later as
 casually as he had
 caught it. As I got
 within roughly 100 feet,
 they began to notice
 my presence, sniffing
 the air suspiciously,
 but obviously they

were not really alarmed.
 After a bit both animals
 slipped into the water.
 There to disappear under
 the hyacinth, their heads
 to suddenly pop up in
 another place. They
 gradually eased up the
 weed away from me,
 and when they began
 to disappear around the
 bend, I left them,
 quite envious of their
 happy existence.

P.S. Many happy
 Pa, Boots following - late.

Love to all
 T.R.