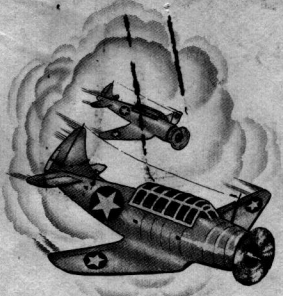


Good trip  
to Clearwater,  
or next coast.  
Good birds +  
shells



U. S. NAVAL AIR STATION  
DAYTONA BEACH  
FLORIDA

Oct. 13, 1943

Dear Folks,

They assigned me to a new outfit under another full instructor (at a guess several years my junior, but with the Navy loss to his credit) before we had finished up the last outfit. Apropos of this job of mine and the closing remarks in your last letter, Ma, there is considerable comfort

in the thought that if<sup>2</sup>  
it turned out that I got  
only one good chance to  
dive-bomb an enemy ship  
or something and made  
a great big miss, my  
training would still not  
have been entirely in  
vain.

Well, despite the new  
outfit they let me escape  
for a day and a half  
before going to work again,  
and I picked out a spot  
on the Gulf Coast for  
a real change of air -  
clear water, which is just  
northwest of Tampa.

3  
Thought almost the most  
accessible nice spot, it  
involved a night each way  
in the train as well as  
changes at Jacksonville,  
there being no east-west  
trains to speak of in  
the peninsula, and like  
a fool I went by coast,  
the coaches turning out  
to be the uncomfortable,  
old-fashioned kind. Still  
I had a good day's outing  
around the off-shore  
islands, several miles  
east on 1: bicycle (hired), 2:  
foot (bare, on beach), and  
in 3: rowboat (almost got

4  
stuck when tide went way  
out while I enjoying "2").

I saw two new birds  
more or less as expected,  
Cabot Tern and Cuban  
Snowy Plover, both <sup>summer residents</sup> common  
on the Gulf, but absent  
from the east coast, as  
well as six marbled  
godwits, which are rare  
shore birds breeding in  
the very middle of the  
continent. They are huge  
for shore birds (almost  
crow size), cinnamon in  
color and have long legs  
and long, slightly upturned  
bills. I also collected all

5

The shells I could conveniently carry and brought my collection up to more than fifty identified species. Where I got most of them and saw the godwits (I forgot to mention at very close range) was on an island several miles long that is supposed to have one family living on it, but not a soul was seen except a man fishing for crabs who helped me get my boat from the mud to the water.

already, by pure coincidence  
along comes another day off.  
but I think I'll take it  
easy and perhaps look for  
more shore birds and shells  
on the New Smyrna side  
of the inlet south of here,  
which will involve a  
short train ride and only  
a few miles by bike.  
More about this later.

Love to all

Toots

P.S. I almost forgot to thank  
you, Ma, for Dr. Barber's book,  
which arrived yesterday. I expect  
to be through it in no time.