

Includes use
of leisure time,
including much
reading.

Description of
country side: A
well above average
letter. T.B.



NAVAL AIR STATION
JACKSONVILLE

June 1, 1942

Dear Gandy,

I promise to be a better
correspondent now that ground school
is over. With a little more leisure
time one has more opportunity to
write, read, exercise and generally
amuse oneself hence has more to
tell about in letters. I must admit
I'm not very good at writing to
anyone except parents - or young
ladies. if there are any with whom
one is, shall we say, on more than
friendly terms, or thinks one is!
Ground school isn't the only thing
that's over. There was what I
thought until very recently a very
nice young lady in Detroit, but
she got married last Friday or the
Friday before! Ho hum! Besides

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letter, which, incidentally, I enjoy writing almost as much as getting. a fortunate situation indeed. I try my hand every now and then at writing now on my Thesis and a little in a sort of diary. The trouble with a Thesis is that it has to hang together, as they say, and the trouble with a diary seems to be that one writes in it less and less often.

Reading I find a very satisfactory way to pass leisure time provided I'm well started on a good book. Benchley's books, thanks to you, I read a smat of now and then and find nothing less than delightful. Evidently it has much that his movies don't have, though the reverse is of course true too. There is a small, but not too badly balanced library here on the station, which I make use of now and then, a Cronin and the last Buchanan being the latest accomplishments. Those



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pocket books are useful too and gave me a chance to reread "Pride and Prejudice", one of my very favorites, and finally read "Wuthering Heights". I try not to miss good Saturday Evening Post serials or the weekly news in "Newsweek" and "Life".

Most happily too exercise is becoming more habitual. There are two nice swimming pools for as much of a "workout" as one wants and quite an area of woodland to stroll in. I've pretty well identified the local avifauna, having in fact found about 85 species on the limited area of this station. The minority rather than the majority, however, being hitherto unfamiliar to a New England ornithologist - because so

many are just southern representative
(or vice versa) or just migrants bound
for the north. The vegetation even
to a forester is still very baffling,
but to become even familiar to it
would involve making collections,
looking things up in books all
the pictures of which look the same
at first, etc., etc.

"Generally amusing oneself" seems
to mean just one thing with many
of us now - going to town (about
15 miles away), having a nice steak
dinner and then going to a good,
bad or indifferent movie. Some of
the boys are of course somehow
able to find attractive girls to go
out with, and some aren't particular
and just find girls. The beach,
more than thirty miles away, is
now unfortunately more remote
than ever, but one hopes to visit
it now and then.

Meanwhile there is flying and
plenty of it, in a variety of planes and
information or not.
Love to all
Toot

P.S. Any advice about books or anything would be most welcome!

P.P.S. Since this is not strictly part of the letter, I hope you'll forgive the change. As is so often the case when having finished a letter I remember something else I wanted to say.

You spoke of Spring and asked how the country around here compares with New England. It doesn't. If there were hills, the countryside would be quite attractive, but there aren't any. The highest point in the whole state is less than 400 feet above sea level. Florida, next after Maine and New Hampshire, has a greater percentage of its area in forest land than any other state, and the country around here is probably more or less representative. There ^{both} are ^{both} isolated farms and large farming areas and of course cities and towns, but the latter are smaller, more widely spaced and much shabbier than most of

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own. The hills of the land,
however, is covered with forest
or woodland of some sort.
Little of this is, because of
past cuttings, impressive. There
are large areas of river bottom
hardwoods and also uplands
of hardwood called hammocks,
but badly-burned pine-lands
occupied by trees resembling
our pitch pine, but with
larger needles and usually
badly scarred ^{from} ~~for~~ naval
store operations, are the most
extensive type. The sea
beaches are magnificent, but
the vegetation along them is
scrubby. Rivers are slow,
winding and very muddy, and
lakes, common in places, are,
because of muddiness and
ill-defined shores, unattractive.
It is interesting country, but
attractive only in spots.