

**Desert Training Center
California**

Dear Luella,

Received your letter and was glad, etc. So you're going to Business College now. That's fine - How do you like it and how are you getting along by now? You mentioned that you were trying to carry too many subjects at one time. What did you decide to do about that?

We're still out here in the desert. It has actually cooled off considerably here during the last couple of days. And it has rained?! Something we never expected out here in the desert. Since it has cooled everybody is feeling 100% better. That terrific heat which we were abruptly subjected to in first coming out here really knocked me out. I was sick in bed for about four days even running a fever. And not daring to think of food for days. But I am definitely and fully recovered now and have again a passably bright outlook on life. When I wrote my last letter home, I was just coming down with the "desert sickness" as it is called so that explains it's sad, melancholy mood when that was written let me tell you.

The band out here has been kept busy doing what you might call drudgery. KP. has become an inevitable task, as well as other menial labors too numerous to mention.

We have done some playing too. The first week we were here we went to a miniature city some 100 miles distant a place by the name of "Palm Springs" A very beautiful village located on a cool irrigated oasis at the base of a towering mountain peak. The name "Palm Springs" was appropriate. Walking down beneath the shade of high date palms with large clusters of dates and the orange trees covered with small, green fruit reminded me of the lush atmosphere of a green house. This is a place of exclusively rich people. A winter vacation ground. Shirley Temple owns a winter home here which was duly pointed out. And Mickey Rooney owns an Inn on a downtown street. The band played for a parade and band really thrives in the evening. All in all it was a mighty relief to get off the burning desert and see a place like this.

There are a couple of snapshots which Ruby says you have which I wish you would send me. One where Lowell and I stand beaming, and one of you, Margaret, somebody else?, And I. Taken in Rudolph's yard. Remember?

Went down to the 357th Inf. yesterday for a visit with Church Morgan. We had quite a conversation. I'm afraid I had to do most of the talking. Following a transcription of dialogue to give you an idea.

Me “how are you getting along these days?”

C . “ok”

Me “how do you like the desert by now?”

C. “pretty hot”

Me “heard from home lately”

C. “yep”

Me “anything new up there”

C “nope”

“how do you like the way the war is going”

C (a grunt)

15 minutes silence

Me (after fifteen minutes of brooding silence I cheerfully make a new start)

“are they working you hard out here?”

“nope”

(here I took five minutes to explain what we had been doing since we got out here – and got as expected no response)

(Ten minutes more of complete silence)

Well, I’ll close for now. Write as many letters as possible to me out here as I can really appreciate them here. Tell Wendell a letter to him is forthcoming. Like to hear from the young brats, Archie and Duane. How about it A and D?

Virgil.