

June 6, 1942

Miami Beach, Florida

Dear Mother,

We all arrived Miami Beach safe and sound. Left Camp Devens at 2pm Wed. and got here Fri. afternoon at 1:00. It sure was a tiring ride and the heat is terrible. The address will be just like what is written on the outside of the letter, although I don't know how long we will be here. If I pass all the examinations which we get in the first two days all I'll have to stay is eighteen days, boy I don't want to stay here any longer than I have to. This might be the most beautiful spot on earth but it's also the hottest. I'm sitting here writing in a cool room and the sweat is boiling right off of me. We only stood outside about an hour and a half yesterday but my face is burned redder than a beet.

This place is really blacked out. They take out the electric light bulbs. We are dismissed at five PM to go to supper. We can check out of the Hotel and go down town but we have to be back at nine forty five and in bed at ten.

There are four in a room here at the Beacon Hotel, and there must be 30,000 soldiers in Miami Beach we have a bath and shower between the four of us.

There is more doggone rules and regulations in the Army than I ever saw in my life.

Coming down on the train there was fifteen cars with about 200 men. The train stopped at least fifty times but we were not allowed to get off or even open the window and speak to anybody in the station. The curtains had to be pulled after dark and lights out at nine. We were first going to bed when we pulled into Grand Central Station and somebody opened a curtain and read the headlines "Japs bomb Alaska". He caught hell for it but we were all glad he did do it. Of course we didn't know where we were going til we got here and everybody made some guess. Some of which were pretty wild.

We woke up the first morning in Virginia. That would have been the ideal place to have camped. The hills there are beautiful. We went to bed that night in South Carolina and woke up in Florida. What a place, all level on one side of the tracks it looks like a desert. On the other it looks like a swamp, but still the towns are just what they picture them. Beautiful hotels and houses surrounded by palm trees.

Virginia soil is red but Florida is white sand and they don't seem to grow anything down here to amount to anything.

All we do here is drill and the boys sing as they march. I suppose it's to keep from dying of the heat. We get a chance to go in swimming every day but I guess that don't help much.

We've got so many clothes that we don't know what to do with them and they said we have a lot more coming. The food is not wonderful but there's plenty of it. We had milk three times a day in Devens but not here. We can't go over to Miami without a pass, but we can go around the beach here and this ought to satisfy anyone who can stand the heat. Well I've got to go to work so will sign off.

Your loving son,

"Bill"