

The Seaman School
El Monte, Cal
Aug. 25, 1942

It is like starting in on another
life. I feel as if I had lived
reverse already to what most a
man's I guess I can take it.
Dear Mammie -
It was only two weeks ago, when I called on
the Selective Service Board in San Luis that it got thru
my head that it would be only a matter of days before
I would be in uniform, unless something unexpected
happens. In my county at least they are rushing the
older group thru so fast and with so little selectivity
that many will be in before the 28-35 year groups
is exhausted. I had my first physical exam on the 11th
with an IA classification and the second will be on Sept 10th. As far as I
know I am suffering from nothing more serious than
interia, which is indeed in an advanced state, but not
considered a physical defect by the U.S. Army, so I
shall probably be out of civilian life 10 days after
the 10th. The suddenness of it was somewhat of a shock
to me, as I had been, until two weeks ago, living in
the illusion that I would at least be exempt from the
armed forces this time. It is too late now to enlist
in any desirable branch before induction, but I
have been rushing around trying to get recommendations
for special service after induction. Fortunately I was
able to contact my friend Colonel Wm Mayer, Am. Military
Attaché to China who flew from Chungking to Washington
on Aug 1st and was in Berkeley for six days on the
return trip.

I am not attempting to dispose of my property &
possessions until after Sept 10th, since it still seems
fantastic to me that I could really be considered satis-
factory military fodder; and, as I couldn't bear to
sit up in Civilia painting pleasant pastorals. I came

concerning myself to special quarters where my peculiarities
of value, and I have also contacted Lipton here again to try to get some
recommendation out of him. The remaining my barriers
qualifications may

of both houses + pay \$15 or per month. There is little chance of getting a good rental as many houses in Avila are now empty. My father's house to be sold, and there is a

down here last week end to this but school to divert myself by experimenting with subnormals, Mrs Seeman, the director and proprietor of the school had been hoping for some while that some artist might come along to give them a 'lift' so she was delighted to have me. I am giving them out in strong doses, and I feel that one could in time produce interesting results with some of the inmates even tho they could never reach a very high level of expression. There are about 85 boys here ranging in age from five to forty five; mongoloids, epileptics, & delinquents of various types. Most of them can never be fitted for normal existence, many of them, especially the epileptics, are deteriorating. Most of the staff merely try to keep the boys occupied and contented, with the least trouble to themselves. Edmund is the only one who tackles the situation with a fervor and passion for teaching, and one other is keen about it from the psychopathic - medical angle. The others are just looking for their meager pay of \$50⁰⁰ per month. The place is not unpleasant: about 11 acres on the flat plain 12 miles east of Los Angeles, and about five miles from the mountain range which rises up toward Mt. Wilson and Mt. Baldi. The cloister-like arrangements of the low white one storey buildings have some fine old trees about them. There is a 3 ft deep swimming pool, and five aged circus horses for the boys to ride. And the food is plentiful and wholesome. Quarters for the staff are very restricted. I have been lodged in the hospital room which is the best, aside from Mrs Seeman's suite. I expect to stay here thru next week, but if you write please do so via Avila. When I get my 'call' I shall send pictures and personal

Sept 30, 1942

P.S. to 8/25/42.

Since writing the above I find that I can enlist (having been already O.K'ed by the Commanding Officer) in the 907th Engineers at March Field (about 50 miles South of L.A.). The unit is a branch of the Air Force, consisting of engineers, topographers, photographers, camoufleurs, etc. Their activity is that of advance scouts for the Air Force in proposing, locating, planning and constructing air fields (landing fields) in the areas of military operation. I have also been recommended for the 638th Engineers at Fort Ord (near Carmel) which has a much larger division of camoufleurs, since it serves for all branches of the Service, other than Air Force.

I am sending in my request to be released from the draft on the grounds that I am enlisting in the 907th. However this is not yet irrevocable and I am still going to make inquiries concerning the Intelligence Service as suggested by Lepton Close.

I am enclosing a post card photo of the stairway of Handforth Hall, sent to me quite recently by May Bradford (the Australia girl who was one of our party in Kashmir). I think it should be kept with the colored view of the exterior - which you have framed.

I hope that the comparative neatness of this page will excuse the messiness of the last.

Thomas