

Ens. GHW Bush  
USS San Francisco  
F.P.O./N.Y.C. N.Y.

Feb. 7, 1944

Dear Mum,

I was glad I finally got a chance to talk to you before showing off. I'm afraid I woke you both up, but I figured it was the only time I could get through.

I am writing this in the ~~the~~ <sup>my</sup> room while waiting for supper which for Ensigns is at 8 tonight. J.G.'s and above eat at 7, ensigns at 8 since the wardroom is so crowded with all officers present. We have to wear blues for the evening meal which is not the most convenient thing in the world but perhaps they'll change it after we get out for a while.

We didn't actually get to see us show off since we were at quarters, but we did see the land fade away. The first 8 hours or so the motion of the ship (quite a bit of roll and pitch on this class ship) had me feeling positively seasick but now I'm got of first sea legs I hope. A couple of the fellows have been sick and the weather is not what you'd call rough.

It is surprising how little free time we have. They always seem to be having general quarters, flight quarters or something. Then too we have our squadron jobs and our

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own plans to watch out for. We are required  
to supervise the loading of all ammunition which  
so is depth charges and to gun ammunition

~~Our~~ Our room is pretty nice. I am  
in an upper (the better of the 2 upper ones)  
with good length but very little clearance.  
The pillow is stuck into a rock, but the  
bed is not bad.

Clothes & garments are fine - they  
have a ship's store, guns in the  
wardroom, a few radios, movies at  
nite -

It is really quite a relief to  
actually be at sea - most of our  
time is spent flying or standing by in  
the ready room, but we do have time  
to go up on the flight deck and  
look around. Today the water was really  
beautiful. Quite a bit of it reminds  
me of our trip to Bermuda - including  
my ill feelings.

Today a damn nice thing happened -  
you'd have cried probably! My plane  
captain - the enlisted man who maintains  
my plane, connecting small items of repair  
etc - is an Italian fellow named  
Salvatore Versachi. He is a Seaman First

class - He reminds me a good deal of Abe  
in many ways. He doesn't know a great deal  
about plans but he's always interested -  
always eager to help. He is what you  
might call a simple fellow but simple  
without any trace of ludicrousity.

The other night he came up to the office  
when I had the duty and told me his  
mother was ill and that his sister  
said he should come at once. I arranged  
an emergency leave for him. My heart  
ached for the fellow as he stood there,  
twisting his cap in his hands. When he  
returned from his leave I saw him  
working on the plane and when he saw  
me coming towards him he got a little

flustered and embarrassed. ~~He said~~ <sup>He said</sup>  
I asked him if he got home and  
how his mother was and he ~~said~~ <sup>thanked</sup> me  
for getting his leave then ~~he~~ <sup>he</sup>  
said "Mr. Bush, when I left my  
mother was much better and she told me  
to tell you 'God Bless you!' - Well then

you can imagine how I felt. For a man  
to say something like that is not easy. <sup>Yes, then,</sup>  
I have uncovered a good deal from  
Versachi ~~perhaps~~ <sup>perhaps</sup> he is intelligent  
is nothing to brag about, ~~but~~ <sup>perhaps</sup> he is

not quite witty or exceptionally adroit in his work; but ~~he~~ he has a hearty spirit from which I can learn a lot.

(I will not add this yet but will add a little as time goes on till we get some place where it can be posted.)

2/10/44

Three days later and yet it seems like yesterday that I wrote the first part of this - in other words time has flown. Before I can aboard I didn't see ~~me~~ how we could have a full day but OK. This is literally ~~short~~ the first five minutes I have had. I have flown one hop a day regularly - the hops last about 3 hours. Also we have flight quarters every few hours and have to make to the ready room. We have to be in the ready room

(I know well where it is now) at 6 AM. The evenings are free after about 6 unless you have squadron work. I have had quite a bit of work with ordnance & photography to keep me busy at intervals. Today I went out on a photo mission. I had one Lighter with me. Had to

navigate out and back, and was mighty  
pleased to see the ship again - most of  
the boys are search and anti sub patrols.  
Today I had a close call on landing - my  
right tire blew out and I thought I  
was gone but I was checked in time.

The weather has been calm, sunny,  
warm, and all around beautiful. It's  
really warm - my only wish is that it  
were a wedding trip instead of this.  
My sack at night feels like

Simon's hat, I'm so tired. "The Rock"  
my pillow, has actually not softened  
but I don't even notice it. Bruce  
Righter gives us a lot of Air  
combat into usually before the  
hops - nearest land, fields, towns,  
enemy if any etc. You can tell Mark  
his doing fine.

Today we had some exercise  
on the flight deck in the sun - baseball  
catch. Capt. Martin joined us.

He is a fine man and well-liked.  
We have had the usual number of  
crackups, but all in all it's been pretty  
fine -

I hope to hear from you soon -  
when we write ~~post~~ that is.

Well, Mum, I'll close for now -  
I'm sunbanned, happy, healthy,  
miss you all, miss Bar,  
and anxious to ~~get~~ <sup>get</sup> back.

Sea life is fine - in fact it's my social  
status were altered I could think  
of nothing I'd like better - perhaps I'll  
get sick of it later -

Much much love,  
you ever loving son,

George

Dearest Mum,

2/13/44

Just back from lunch with plenty of time for a letter, since I flew this AM and don't have to fly this afternoon. (There has been a slight delay - just pushed up topside for an abandon ship drill. It was interrupted by one of the frequent rain squalls which are prevalent around these parts.)

The hope this AM was most interesting - a group familiarization attain. We flew for 2 hours looking over the countryside. It is mountainous and beautiful. It was terribly hot up in the air today. We have to keep our hatches closed to avoid excessive fuel consumption so the old sweat just poured out. It was a lovely morning for landing aboard and all planes landed safely. I have had only one mishap and that was a blown out tire on landing. A bit scary - no damage however.

So far I haven't been ashore, ~~but~~ I think our section will make it next time. There isn't much to do thy way, but it will be fun to see the place.

Lost with I had a deck watch - rather breeze. How I wish this were my wedding trip - maybe someday we will come down the way. I got a letter from Ben two into ago and one from you yesterday, so I feel right at home practically.

Luckily I haven't been burned too badly. Some  
of the new have real some looking burns.

Life aboard is really O.K. Some of the  
ships officers (not many fortunately) seem to resent  
the presence of the air group - It is a long  
standing problem, but here it's not bad. Most  
of the ships officers are really swell. They treat  
us damn well, too. It's just one or two who  
are perhaps so small or envious that they  
resent our being on their ship. The air officer  
Commander Hale is really a marvelous fellow.  
All the pilots are crazy about him. He is  
fair and understanding and will do anything  
for us.

We no longer wear blue at all. The  
uniform is khaki without the blue breakfast  
and lunch.

I hope the visit to Barnwell was a  
good one. Your letter mentioned your being there  
today - but I'll send this to Grove care for  
satellite sake.

Much love, Mum dear -  
Pop



Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> 1944

Dear Mamma,

I received 2 letters from you a couple of days ago and was so thrilled to get all the news. I laughed for hours over "Little Orvie's" acting up in the car - also practically cried at the thought of him, lying on his bed crying cause you were leaving. I know how he felt, Mamma, I do so love to hear all about John and Buck. They are good boys - Barbara wants to have children just like you she says. Your letter informed me that you were off to So Carolina so as I write this I can picture you having one of those heavenly picnic lunches, having just finished mowing down a nice big corn - hope that's correct. Your V-mail letter took the same as average air mail - it came <sup>on</sup> the same form that you wrote it - your regular handwriting. I guess they just photograph certain ones to certain places. I have gotten quite a few letters (about 5 days service) so I feel quite happy. Barbara has been her usual sweet self about writing. I do hope she is out of school or can get out when I get my leave (if I do.) It would be agony to have 3 or 4 days and have her way away. I am so excited for P.S.B. Jr. - such good news.

I hope they let him off so we can see Beth and trap her.

Now for a little news from here. I am fine, feeling terribly healthy, well sunburned, love the flying although it is real work - I have gotten in a lot more hours than I expected. The days have all been beautiful and clear except for the rain squalls which occur off and on and last only a few minutes.

I have spent 3 weeks ashore at the air station there; 2 weeks at the beginning of this week, back aboard for Wed. and the last week ashore. The first time we were sent ashore, after circling the ship waiting to land. We landed with no clean clothes - just flying suits. We were there two days checking our plans etc. we did our own work on our plans with a result that when we returned here we were filthy - bathless, shaveless, etc. Luckily some of the guys had a little money so we bought a few things on the base, paint for our make and bed etc.

The base is quite large - our quarters were ok - mosquito nets over the beds etc. The wind is from one direction only so they built the buildings with screens instead of walls - then on the side where the wind is from you can drop curtains down to keep the rain out. Nights were cool, but days scorching. They have an open air

theater on the base which is really swell. Last night however  
it poured for 3 minutes off and on - so we sat thru  
the whole show completely drenched. Same for Tues. morn.

We went into one of the cities Tues. afternoon.  
Just went in for a short while. It was fun as

We had to drive 16 miles in an open truck to get  
there. Had a good drive to see the land.

The vegetation is thick - country side green and  
typically tropical. The natives all yelled "Hi  
Joe" as we passed. We're 'Joe' or 'Chief' to

them. Little black fellows Bush's age without  
a stitch on them out onto the road and

wave - yelling 'Hiya Joe'. I got tired of waving  
back. The sights were interesting. People carrying

baskets etc on their heads; Old and young  
alike going barefoot; Women with bracelets

up to their elbow and smoking big black cigars.  
In town we wandered around looking for

conveniences etc - but none could be found. Most  
of their wares are imported and overly expensive

The same things you can buy at Macy's, only  
costing more. We didn't dare eat any of the

products for fear of disease - the disease  
rate (mostly venereal) here is stupendous. ~~As~~

So yet I haven't visited the smelting spots,  
but intend to when I rate Liberty. Haven't had

one yet but perhaps we get it tomorrow.  
Some of the natives, though black as pitch,  
speak admirable English. One fellow on the

informed me he had 4 sons, all by different women, and  
wished if they'd elect him in the States for that! He used  
such words as "diplomatic" and others as a regular part  
of his vocabulary.

I don't like chewing on sugar cane - tried some  
and it was too sweet.

Well, Mum, that's about all for now.  
I miss you all and love you all very much  
indeed -  
ever devotedly,  
P.M.

Ens. G. H. W. Bush USNR  
USS San Jacinto  
Flt Post Office  
N.Y. City  
N.Y.



VIA AIR MAIL

MRS. P. S. BUSH  
GROVE LANE  
GREENWICH  
CONN.



U.S.A.

2/22/44

Dear Mum,

Not much news so this will be a very short letter.

Everything is going along O.K. Still flying quite a bit - weather still beautiful and clear and awfully hot, especially when flying. On the flight deck it's not bad but in the air it's really warm. Our rooms are nice and cool however so the nites are most comfortable.

Did I tell you I saw Jimmy for a few nites the other nite - He came out for a visit. He is third I think - He met Comdr. Hale, our air officer, and several others. He had a look around air plot, too. He said he hopes to get to Greenwiche on his leave.

This searching for things I am allowed to tell you is worst detriments. Oh yes went ashore the other day for liberty. Went into town and it was very swellly and dirty. There was little to do so we (5 of us) went out to an officers club. From there we wandered over to the municipal playing fields and watched

AIR MAIL

FD-302 (Rev. 1-25-60)

the natives playing cricket and handball.  
This was such a refreshing change  
~~compared~~ after town. Here all the natives  
are in white shirts & trousers and white  
shirts - all clean & smart. whereas in town  
it was just the other way around.

After a good dinner at the  
Officer's club we went in to town again  
and heard some of the native  
music. It was really fun. They make up  
the songs as they go along at times.  
They sing on all subjects, and the  
music is a style all of its own.

Riding in to shore on these little  
liberty barges makes us think of  
the good old "Tomboy" days.

Can't wait to get back to you all  
and Ben - I will call you as soon  
as I arrive - I hope to get a leave.

We have been having very good  
wolves on the hangar deck.

Well, Mum, not what I see for now.  
My love to all the family,  
ever devotedly,

Bob

Sat Feb. 26<sup>th</sup>

Dear Mum,

Got 4 letters (2 from Bannell, 1 on the train, and one from home) from you today - also one from Bob and Dad, so I feel well caught up, and generally very happy.

I laughed till tears came to my eyes over the "parachutist". It's the funniest thing I have ever heard. I can just picture Buck ready for the leap <sup>can</sup> think of the things running thru his mind (well so I remember trying just that) then to have it break - oh damn I honestly have never laughed so hard at anything. I wonder if you have been getting my letters - I hope you have.

The flying has been going along pretty well. Beginning to get back a little confidence in my landings which I lost for a few hops. The last few have been ok.

Tomorrow we vote liberty and I imagine I'll go into town

AIR MAIL



even though it will be Sunday -  
Had a chat with Ed Brewster  
today. He is a damn nice guy.

Today we had a dress inspection  
on the flight deck - whites. It sure  
was hot up there. Afterwards we had  
an squadron picture taken.

I ~~am~~ never received my bank  
deposit slip for last month's \$143  
allotment. It should have gone to the  
bank. The one this month will come to  
you. Will you please deposit it in  
my account. Also ~~to~~ you ~~could~~ please  
ask the bank about my Tammy's  
allotment. ~~It is~~ It probably  
arrived, but I'd like to know  
for sure.

Sorry this is so little news, but  
too long -

I'll see you before  
Much love  
Mudlow  
1952