

Vernon Leticia Pickering S<sup>2</sup>/c (CA)  
Sassachs 32 Recruit Center  
Company 3 Platoon 2  
N. A. I. J. C.  
Memphis (15) Tenn.



Miss Margaret Applegate  
RR 12 Box 120  
Indianapolis  
Ind.



NAVAL AIR  
TECHNICAL TRAINING CENTER  
MEMPHIS 15, TENN.

*Received  
Nov. 20, 1944*

Nov. 18, 1944

Dear Margaret,

This is the first time I have ever written to a girl that I have never seen before, so I don't know quite what to say. David Duval gave me your address and told me that you told him to have some sailor friend of his to write to you. I believe he has told you something of what I'm like. I know damn well he exaggerated.

I weigh 170 #, have blue eyes, and blonde hair. I think I'm just short of six feet tall, at least, so the Navy says. I am 18, just a month ago. Went to Georgia Tech for two years and took Civil Engineering while I was there. Was on the track team and threw the discus and javelin.

I was born in West Palm Beach, Fla and entered the Navy from Atlanta, Georgia. I was a member of the Kappa Alpha fraternity and was social chairman of it for a year.

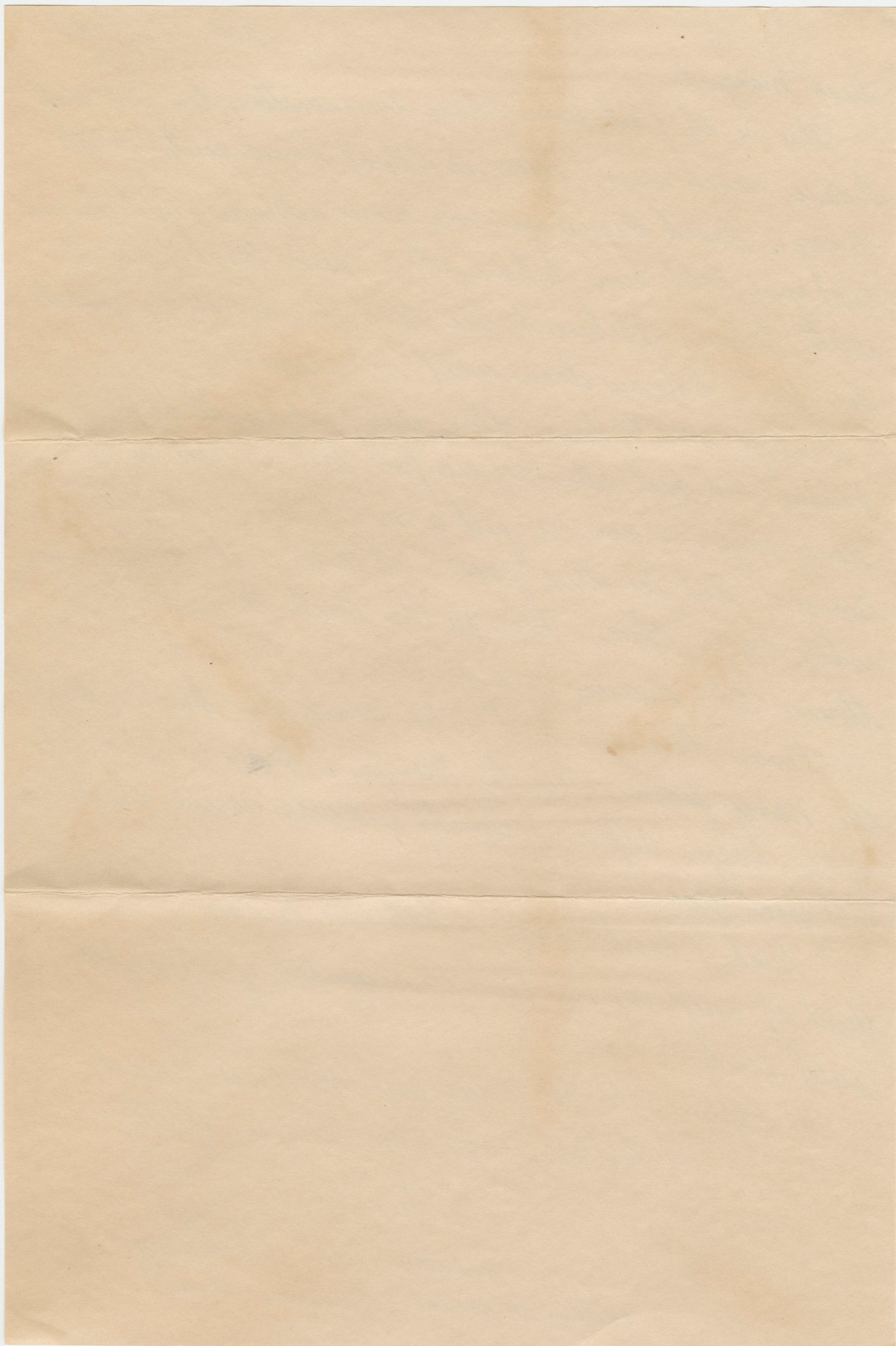
Now I don't know what else to say. I can't think of anything. I haven't a snapshot of myself I could send to you.

The lights will be going out very soon so I guess I had better close this simple epistle.

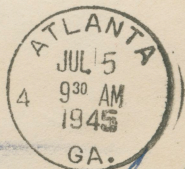
Sincerely

Vernon "Dick" Pickering.

address at present - Memphis Tenn.



Vernon S. Pickering S4c  
V-12 Unit Ea Tech  
714 Techwood Dr. N.W.  
Atlanta, Ga.



Free U.S.M.

Miss Margaret Applegate  
R.R. 12, Box 120  
Indianapolis 44  
Indiana

Received July 7, 1945

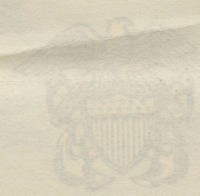


Rome, Georgia  
June 29, 1945

Dear Margaret,

Here is a very very late answer to your swell letter. An awful lot has happened to me since I wrote you last. Right after your last letter I graduated from that rest camp, ~~called~~ called 'boot camp'. I was among 173 fellows from my barracks to be selected for Aviation Radio training there at Memphis. I was lucky, or should I say unlucky, enough to be selected to become a Section Leader, which corresponded to my Petty Officer rating in boot camp, except that we had a little more responsibility and authority. I attended good old ARM school up until my thirteenth week, March 6th, at which time, I hate to admit it, I was washed out for code inaptitude. I flunked one of my weekly checkout tests in Watchstanding, which consists of receiving and sending on an actual circuit maintained throughout the classroom. Very realistic training that was, I was then sent to New Orleans, La for further assignment. At the time I thought I was slated to catch an LST on the West Coast but thru some stroke of fate I was transferred to a different command and stationed there at New Orleans as a Rigger. You probably wonder just what a Rigger is, so I'll try to tell you. We had to do with all of the splicing of rope and wire cable on the ships that came in there to be repaired and re-outfitted. We were attached to the Ship Repair Unit there. We also did quite a bit of stevedore work along with general dock work. I liked the work alright but didn't care much for the fellows that I was working with. They did too many lousy things to suit me. Most of them had been in four or five of the European invasions and were of the 'don't give a damn' attitude.

On April the 9th, they put out a circular stating that the V-12 program was again reopened for Navy men and that a quota of 2000 were to be selected from the Navy, in general, to be entered in the class beginning July 2nd. I put my application in, took all of the tests, passed them and am now home on a ten day delay enroute order. I am to report to Georgia Tech next Monday at 0800. I had to talk my way into passing my physical as I have what is called malocclusion of the teeth. In plain English that means my front teeth don't meet together as they should. Well the Lt. passed me and here I am at home waiting to go to school. I'm going back to my old Alma Mater, which is one of those breaks that any fellow dreams about. Being stationed at home where all of your old friends and your parents are. Thursday before I left New Orleans I was notified that I had a First Alternates appointment to Annapolis for next month. I sent all my papers in and was



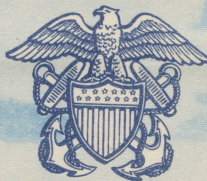
Home Georgia  
June 29, 1945

Dear Mother,

Here is a very very late answer to your swell letter. An awful lot has happened to me since I wrote you last. Right after your last letter I graduated from that great camp, called "boot camp". I was among the fellows from my company to be selected for Aviation Radio training there at Memphis. I was lucky, or should I say unlucky, enough to be selected to become a section leader, which corresponded to my Petty Officer rating in boot camp, except that we had a little more responsibility and authority. I attended good old ANM school up until my thirteenth week, March 6th, at which time I had to admit it. I was washed out for code insubordination, which consists of my weekly check-out tests in Wachsbanding, which consists of receiving and sending on an actual circuit maintained throughout the classroom. Very realistic training that was, I was then sent to New Orleans. In for further assignment. At the time I then had I was asked to catch an LST on the east coast but thru some stroke of fate I was transferred to a different command and stationed there at New Orleans as a Rigger. You probably wonder just what a Rigger is, so I'll try to tell you. We had to do with all of the splicing of rope and wire cable on the ships that came in there to be repaired and re-erected. We were attached to the 1st Repair Unit there. We also did quite a bit of stove-work along with general dock work. I liked the work alright but didn't care much for the fellows that I was working with. They did see many funny things to tell me. Most of them had been in four or five of the European invasions and were of the "don't give a damn" attitude.

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2

notified yesterday that I have passed the mental requirements for entrance to the Academy without any examination. Now all I have to do is wait to see if the Principal fails and then try to pass the physical exam myself. I'm pretty sure that I will flunk the Dental exam, but I feel that I would rather go up there and fail than not even try at all.

I guess that just about brings me up to date. Right now I'm staying at my folks place in the country, enjoying life and it's laziness to the fullest. All I do is sit around, eat drink iced tea, and read. Just living the proverbial life of Riley. The place is quite an ideal place to spend a weekend at on a house party. They have a log cabin up over the hill that is just made to order for about four couples. The old moon rises and shines just over the pine trees and it really is a romantic spot for anyone so inclined (Who isn't nowadays?). Tuesday I was out back cleaning a couple of brooks out, and got myself covered with red bugs. My arms and legs are just one mass of welts and sores, that itch like all get out.

I hope you will forgive me for not writing you sooner, but there is really no excuse so I won't try to give any. From your letter I think that you are a pretty nice girl and if you'd like I would sure like to carry on a correspondence with, I promise to write a little better than before. I mean it too.

Where is David now? I haven't heard anything from any of the fellows that went to Aviation Ordnance or Mech. Do you know what his address is? If so, would you please send it to me.

It's time for dinner, so will have to close. Write soon whenever you have time. Tell me a little more about yourself and what you have been doing.

Sincerely Your Friend

Vernon Puckering  
"Pick"



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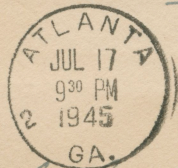
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 and what you have been doing.

Sincerely Your Friend

*Thomas D. [unclear]*  
*Dec 11*

Vernon Pickering A/S  
N.R.O.T.C. Unit  
Box #502 Ga Tech  
Atlanta, Georgia

Free



Miss Margaret Applegate  
P.O. 12 Box 120  
Indianapolis (44)  
Indiana

Received  
July 19, 1945



UNITED STATES NAVY

July 17, 1945  
15 p 0

Dear Margaret,

Was very surprised to hear from you so soon. I had a feeling that you would be away, or have moved from the same place I wrote to before. Very pleasantly surprised, tho.

There isn't such a whole<sup>lot</sup> of news or things to tell. All I can say is that this N.P.O.T.C Training is plenty hard, what with taking my engineering subjects and naval subjects. I have averaged studying about 6-7 hours every afternoon and night, since I have been here. Like it alot better than doing the work I was doing down in New Orleans.

The first week I was here, they gave us all liberty every night until 11:30, because of rush week for the fraternities. My fraternity, Kappa Alpha, had about four dances, three house dinners and one swimming party. Everybody had quite a swell time. We didn't do so good in pledging according to the number of boys we rushed. We rushed 74 and pledged 21. Even so we were second on the campus in number being pledged. Phi Delta



UNITED STATES NAVY

Theta being first.

you know I was really surprised at how many of the girls I used to date are either engaged or married now. Boy, but ten months makes quite a difference. Makes me feel like an old man at my youthful age. Have to meet a whole lot of new girls, just so that I can have a date or two every now and then.

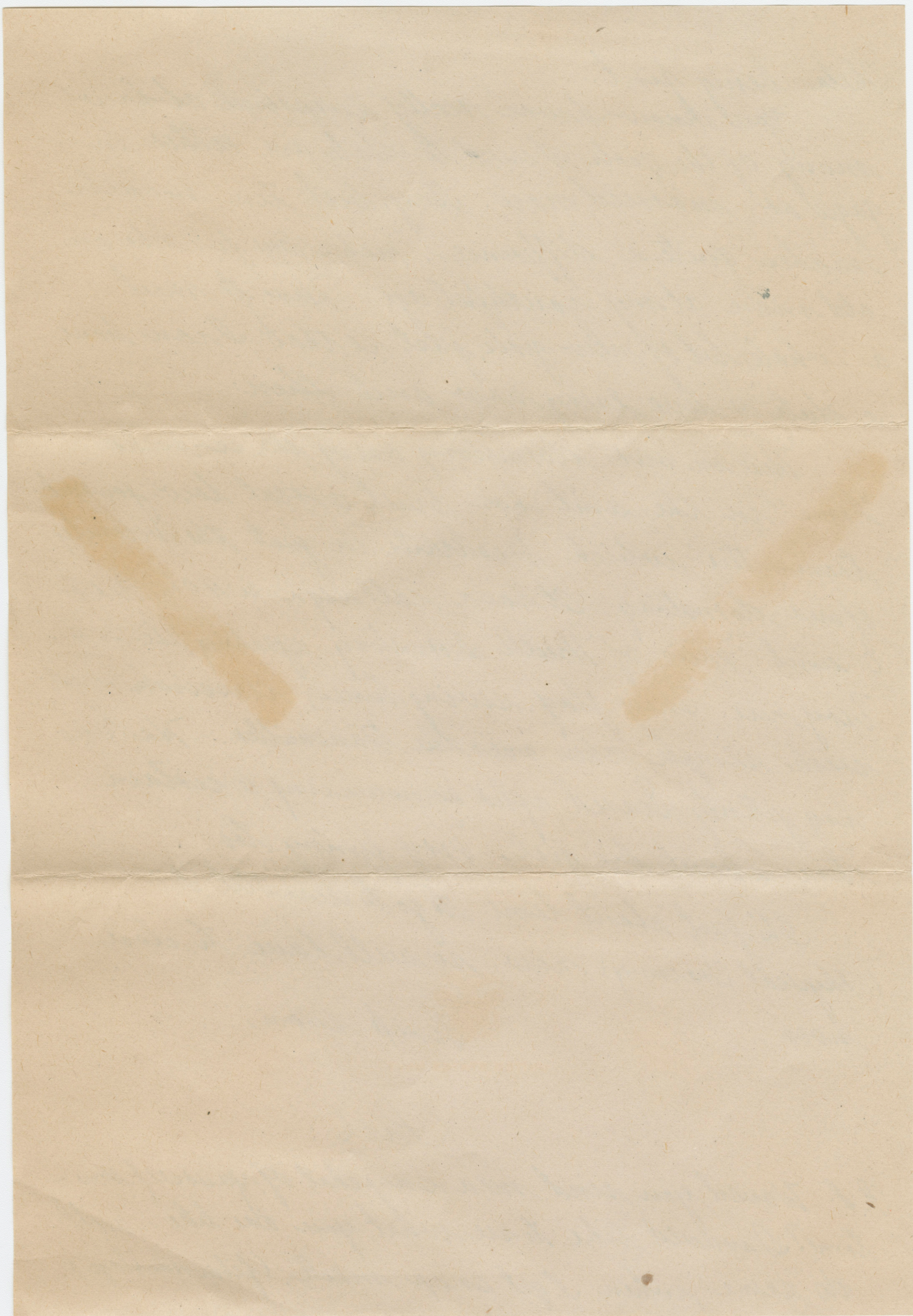
Here in our dormitory one of the ex-radio "hams" in the unit has built a real low-powered transmitter which broadcasts in just the vicinity of our dormitory. It has a call sign W4OK, R.O.F. E. unit, Voice of Howell Dormitory speaking, etc -- Very nice. They play swing tunes, classics and crack simple jokes over the transmitter. Had one boy plenty scared, after announcing a certain item about his girl. Very funny too.

It's just about time to go to dear old P.T (Physical Training) now, so will have to close now.

Write soon

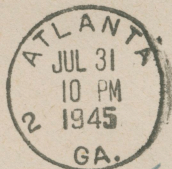
Pick

P.S. Would you send me a snapshot of yourself, some-time? I would like to see what you are like. Will do same, when I get snap made. (film shortage).

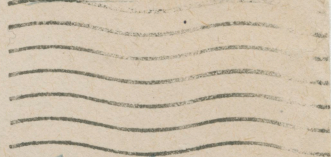




Vernon Pickens A/S  
N.R.O.T.C. Unit  
Box #502 SoTech  
Atlanta, Georgia



Free. 7157.



Miss Margaret Applegate  
Rural Route 12 Box 120  
Indianapolis (44)  
Indiana

Received  
August 1, 1945



UNITED STATES NAVY

July 31, 1945

Dear Margaret

That sure was a swell letter you wrote to me. Very, very nice. It was the kind that <sup>like</sup> to get, but very seldom do.

I haven't written David yet. I have been having quite a time here for the last week or so. I have been trying my darndest to pass all my work, but I always mess up my simple 8<sup>th</sup> grade math, and consequently mess the whole thing up. I am only passing eleven of my twenty credit hours. It kind of makes me mad too.

One main reason I have been in such a quandary lately is that I have been notified that I have an appointment to Annapolis and I am supposed to report to the Academy tomorrow for physical exam for entrance. As yet I haven't received the orders, so you can see what I mean. To top it all off, my mother is sick and I can't go home to see her. Home is only 70 miles away but can't get any leave to



UNITED STATES NAVY

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go home to see her.

It has been hot as all get out here for the last week or so. When it rains, it's just as if the bottom drops out of the sky for about an hour. Outside now, rain clouds are blowing up from the northeast. It's very welcome tho, cause it cools everything off.

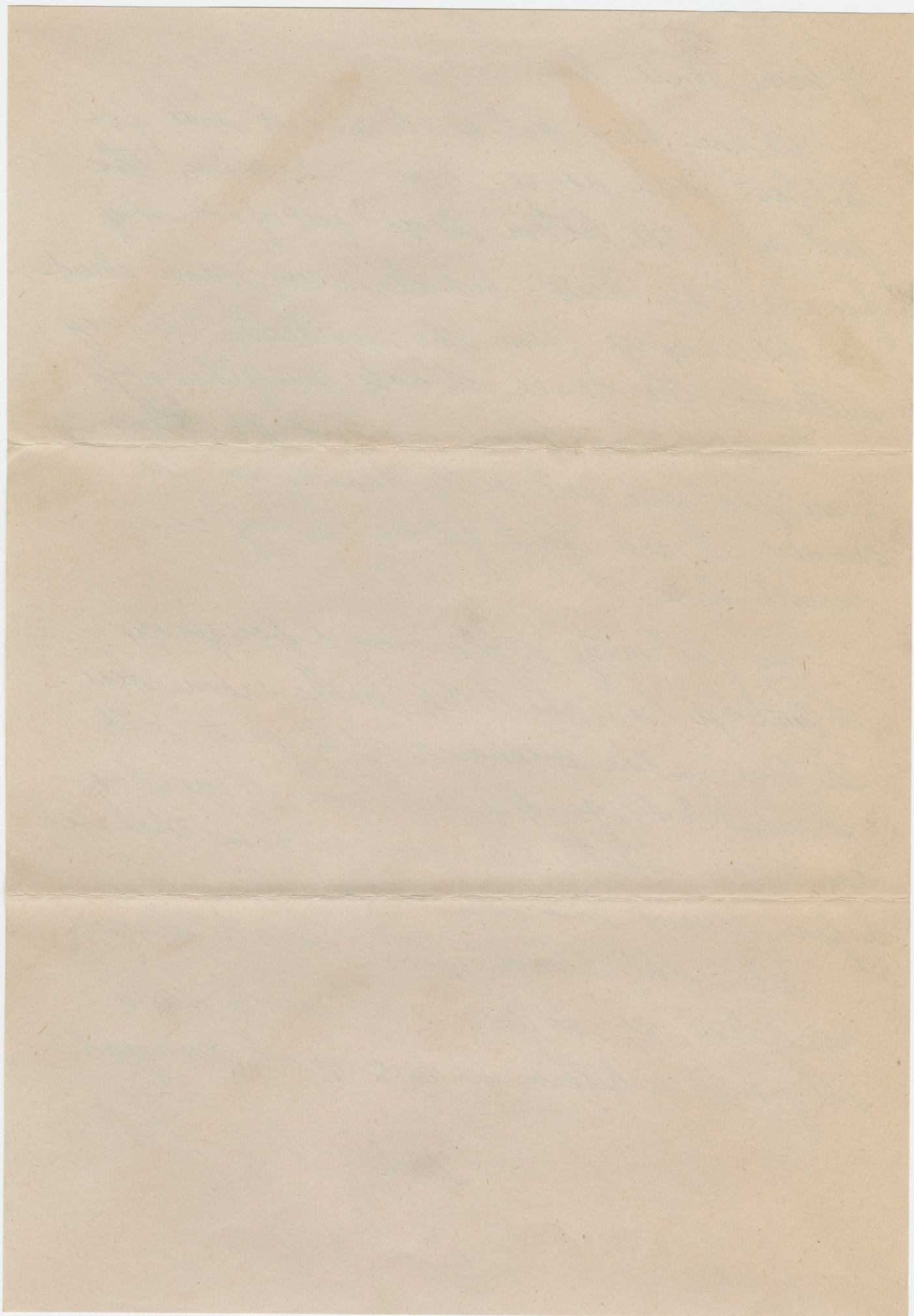
More power to you on your job. It seems to me that you are really raking in the money. I can just get by on my \$35 a month here.

My fraternity is planning a houseparty at Rutledge Ka, about 60 miles from here. The time is the weekend of August 18<sup>th</sup>.

It ought to be quite a good time. I went on one there exactly one year ago from that date before I went into the navy.

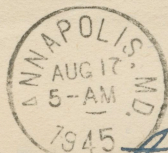
Well, it's almost time to go to Seaman-ship class, so be good and write soon. I'll get it whether I'm here or at Annapolis.

Pick.



Vernon Pickering Midshipman  
Rm 5107 Badcroft Hall  
U.S. Naval Academy  
Annapolis, Md.

Free



Miss Margaret Applegate

R.R. 12 Box #120

Indianapolis (44)

Indiana

Received  
August 20, 1945



UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

August 16, 1945  
9:00 PM

Dear Margaret,

Well, as you can see I'm now one of the privileged Midshipman. Privileged to get the ----- ridden out of me. Just think four long years ahead of me. But I must admit that it is kind of growing on ~~you~~<sup>me</sup>. I have just come back from a lecture on the winds and islands of the Pacific Ocean. Slightly interesting, but consisted of mainly a lot of simple stories to get some good laughs out of we plebes. So far, my schedule hasn't been too hard just that they give you very little time of your own. I must say that the last two days since the end of the war haven't been hard. In fact, they remind somewhat of my New Orleans Liberty rides. Except there isn't any place to go, and we plebes can't drag any gals. Of course, you know that is the rule, but three of us had dates down from Washington today. The tragic part of it was that we couldn't get down to the bus station in time to meet them. We

got there late and they didn't think we  
were coming so one of the girls got them  
dates with First classmen. We couldn't  
locate the girls and when did they had  
the Firsty's with them. My buddy managed  
to talk to his girl, but the rest of us  
didn't. In fact, they were blind dates.  
They gave us about 3 hrs of liberty  
Wed. & today. Went swimming in the  
River both afternoons. Had alot of fun  
too.

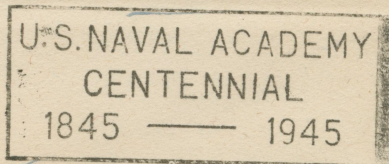
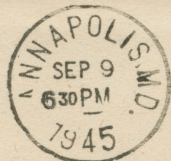
It really was swell to get the final  
word about the war. We went out to  
here. You will probably see pictures  
of what we did. I was one of the fellows  
pushing some of the Captain's daughters  
up to Secunaseh's head.

One of these days I will send you  
a snap of me. Don't be surprised by  
what I look like. Won't do more than  
scare you to death.

Just about Taps so write soon

Jace  
Thronon

Vernon Pickering Midshipman U.S.N.  
Rm 5107 Bancroft Hall  
U.S. Naval Academy  
Annapolis, Md.



Free

Miss Margaret Applegate  
P.O. 12 Box 120  
Indianapolis, 44  
Indiana

ACADEMY

Received  
Sept. 11, 1945

UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

Sunday morn

Dear Margaret,

I figured that you were going on your vacation that is why I didn't answer your other letter any sooner. You really sounded as if you had a swell time. Maybe next summer I can write and tell you of a little vacation I am going to have, either before or after, our cruise next summer. I imagine that we will be going on a three months cruise either to Europe or to the Pacific. This summer the Youngsters (3rd class) went on a cruise to the Caribbean-Cuba, and Puerto Rico. One of my fraternity brothers who is a third classmen told me of some of the liberties that they pitched down in San Juan. The people there had a dance and a big shindig arranged for the Midshipman that hit that port. This buddy of mine had a date with this native girl and really had a big time at her house. They almost missed the liberty launch going back to the ship, but he said that it would have been worth it. Don't get the wrong idea, tho, They just had one heck of a good time at the girls house- big chow, dancing and a might bit of browsing.

The latest 'word' that we have on Christmas leave is that we are going to get eleven days leave. You know that will be just about the longest time I have been home in a little more than a year. I'm planning to stay at home for a few days and then go over to Birmingham, Ala., for a couple of days then head back for good old Atlanta, where all the Peaches are. Fruit and otherwise. Then we are supposed to get a thirty day leave sometime next summer. I will probably go to Miami for a good part of that. You know that is the country that I was born and raised in. West Palm Beach is my birth place; lived there for five years, and after a four year interval in Boston, I went back to Florida and lived in Miami from '35-41. That is when Dad was called into the Army out of the Reserve and he was ordered to Atlanta. It took me two years to get to like that place, but sure love it now. Quite a lot of my old pals ought to be out of the service and back home by then and what a time we ought to have. Know quite a few of the girls that still live in Miami Shores. Plan to do a lot of fishing and bathing on the good old beach there. Have you ever been to Florida? If you haven't you don't know what you are missing. I'll admit that the prices are a little high for tourists, but I think that I could manage.

Reading your letter, I notice that you call me a privileged Midshipman. That reminds me of a little stunt the First class pulls on us. They make us brace and then tell us that we ought to be proud that we are Middies. Then make us act and feel like d---- fools. Maybe when we are no longer Plebes, we will feel that that statement is really true. Now all we can look forward to is that day when we can climb Herndon monument and say that we are "no mo' plebes". That will be the day of rejoicing for us.

Well, the time has come again to close. Just about time for Chapel so had better close now. Write soon

Your Friend

Vernon.

