

Letter sent by Paul to Sister Violet
2 weeks before he
died

Paul called Strait
"Punchy"

Sunday Nite,
Le quatorze mars.

Hello, Sweetness:

Comment ça va chez ma petite chérie? I have been sleeping most of the day cause there was a low overcast, and I got no sleep last night. That was on account of I was in town visiting with our brother name of Punchy. He wangled a day off from army and came to Jax. I met him in early afternoon as soon as I could get off from flying, and we were together until two a.m. He had to scoot back and I had a watch to stand at 4 a.m. But we had a nice visit. Went to U.S.O. dance, picked up a couple of cuties and their mother and took them for a snack afterwards in their Packard. Punch goes up to Belvoir to engineering training long about the time you get this. He looks ruddy and very well. If you should get home for Easter or sometime soon you would probably see him. He will be there for a good while, long after you come down from school.

I found your letter in the Ready Room when I got in before dawn. I liked the Psalms particularly. Ma gave me a copy of Science et Santé avec la clef des Ecritures and I have been studying French some. Might pick up some religion in the process. Really the language therein is so beautiful that I shall read it often. Found Psalm 23 on page 578. "Le Seigneur Dieu est mon berger. Je n'aurai point de disette. Il me fait reposer dans des pâturages verdoyants. Il me mène le long des eaux tranquilles." etc. etc. Good stuff. Also liked your hymn and could hear you singing it.

Tomorrow, our squadron will move from Cecil to Lee Field, which is about 20 miles southeast of here. Our flight is now getting on schedule regularly and we should fly whenever weather permits. That will be a welcome change from many weeks of waiting. We are flying Wildcats, not the newest Navy fighter, but very reliable. I may get to fly something hotter and more powerful before the scrap is over, but one can go as fast as he dares straight down. I tried it. Hot ziggity!! Like a bat out of heaven! It is a very good little ship.

Most of my fighter buddies went to another station a couple hundred miles south of here. That included all of my regular flight. But there are other fellows whom I have known well ever since Anacostia and we have bull-sessions.

Most of my buddies who have different types of duty, the bombers and scouts and such, were left behind at Pensacola or Miami, but we may meet in action. Still the seven comparative strangers with whom I will fly here will soon become close buddies. It works out that way after leading and following and flying formation, dogfighting, etc. This whole organization is made up of the finest boys in the country. When I go on to final squadron I should be flying together with my old roommate, Dick Cowgill, a W. Va. boy. The way things are going now this phase of training will last about 6 weeks longer. Then I would go to Chicago for a couple of weeks, being able to visit around for a couple of days on the way up. After that would come my 15 days leave before going to the West Coast. Allowing for the usual delays, that would come around the end of May. You should be home by then I hope.

Well, Honeychile, I have to pack my box again right quick. You be happy and joyful too. I am.

Much love,

Paul.

You write a mighty nice letter.

*Derm's list at Princeton
France spent time w/ Grandone after his death.*