

Bob McLarrin Tells Of Parachute Jump

Bob McLarrin, who dated his letter Sept. 2, "somewhere in France," writes his father, Pat McLarrin of this city, some of his aviation experiences which passed the censor OK, as follows:

There doesn't seem to be much to write about so how would you like to hear about the recent jump I made?

We were at an airport somewhere in Italy. For several days we loaded planes and prepared for the jump. The planes were loaded and chutes fitted and everything was ready and we still didn't know when or where we were gonna jump. We knew exactly what the field was like and all the surrounding country but not what country it was in. On the evening before the jump we got the exact dope on when and where and other info., such as position and types of mine fields, big guns, etc. near the field. We even knew the position of the moon in the sky.

Just before supper I had a little free time so I went to try and find Ben Payne (another Coquille boy). His outfit was camped near mine. I found him and we had a bull session about the jump and our chances of coming out in one piece. We were both kinda scared, I think. We wondered what you and his dad would say if you knew where we were and what we were about to do. We bid each other good luck and I went back to where my outfit was and grabbed some sleep which I expected would be pretty badly needed before the night was over.

They woke us up a little before midnight and fed us coffee and sandwiches and those of us, who weren't going to jump, wished us luck, etc. We put on our equipment and started marching to the field and your truly was scared. Someone started a song and that really relieved tension. It was dark as all hell and someone flashed a camera right in my eyes. That nearly blinded me.

We sat down on the field for a while and then moved into our planes and put on our chutes and re-adjusted them. We sat and chain

smoked and shot the bull with the pilot for a while till it was time to warm up the motors and get ready for the take-off. The pilot went up and started moving the plane along with the long column in the procession toward the landing strip. It came our turn and the motors roared like you know what and those faithful horses started us down the strip, bumping along faster and faster and all of a sudden the ground was smooth and we were in the air. After we cleared the ground we unfastened our safety belts and relaxed. The plane circled the field and went into formation. We had quite a bit of time so some of the fellows went to sleep but I was contented just to smoke and watch below.

It's a damn funny thing but I wasn't the least bit scared from the time the plane took off. We rode and talked for what seemed hours. When we passed into France we expected ack-ack fire but none came up to greet us.

Ten minutes to go. We woke up the boys who were asleep and made ready.

Eight minutes and enough time for a few drags off a cigarette. The copilot came up and talked to me for a few minutes and wished me luck. I was jumping in last position.

Six minutes. Quite a bit of joking among us.

Three minutes. Stand up and hook up. Red light is on. Get the right position and stand there and watch the red light. Wait, wait, re-check your static line against the straps between your legs so you won't crush something. Try to fix your equipment hung all over you so it won't get caught in the door and spin you out. Watch that red light which seems almost alive and everything you can see. You don't hear the motors. Time has no meaning. Every muscle is tense.

The red light changes to green. I can't move for a second because the door load has to be pushed out. I am last man so I stand there and wait a few more seconds and can hear the men ahead of me cursing the heavy load they have to move. It goes out and the first man right behind it.

I breathe a prayer and try to keep up with the man ahead of me; he goes out and before I know what is happening, I'm falling through nothing. I can feel the rubber bands snap as my chute pulls out and tense a little for the shock that is coming in a split-second. Plop, the chute is open and I'm dangling in the air over enemy territory. That is a strange feeling to say the least.

I start getting out of my chute then so I can see the ground. I unfasten my reserve and hope to hell it hits some German below, and drop it. It falls out of sight and I can see down better now. There are three more chutes near me and I steer clear of them and start slipping back toward where the equipment should have landed.

There is the moon just where they said it would be. I still can't see the ground. It seems like I have been dangling in the air for at least five minutes. There is hardly any noise except some firing below. All of a sudden the ground is coming up, but fast. I stop slipping too fast and start oscillating. That tree doesn't seem big enough to do anything but break a leg or so.

Crash, and I'm through it, lying on my back on the ground trying to get out of my chute. I can just picture some German coming at me with a bayonet. At last my chute is off and my carbine ready for business. The only sound is crickets and an occasional blast of a big gun. I cut the string holding my shovel to my leg and my finger also. I stop long enough to put a band-aid on it, which I have in my watch pocket.

The moon is hidden so I have to use my compass to get my bearings. It is still dark and I'm alone. There's someone moving over to my left so I get close enough to hear them whispering in English. They aren't out of my plane so I continue on. At last I find one who is and we start working on the equipment. When daylight comes we are still working. The next part I'll have to skip.

That afternoon I pick out the plane Ben is in as he goes over. He is a little too far away to see but I wish him luck anyhow.

I had earlier found a Frenchman who could speak Italian and found out exactly where we were. That night we are in position so near some German that we can hear them giving fire commands. I am on guard late at night and some ignorant G. I. is digging a fox hole in gravel. Every time his shovel hits a hard rock it makes so much noise shivers go down my spine.

The next morning we make the Germans look pretty sad. The rest is strictly not to be written.

I still haven't seen Ben but I heard the casualties they had so I'm not worrying. He is probably within a few miles now but I can't take off to see him.

Remember — Norton's for office, school and home supplies. 3714

Letter, Poem From Service Men

Mr. and Mrs. Ira Baumgartner, of Riverton, have received the following letter from their son, Robert, Mo.M.M.2/c, who is still in the Naval Hospital at Corona, Calif., where his injured ankle is getting stronger and has less pain when he walks. The letter was dated Sept. 16, at The Mission Inn, Riverside, Calif.

They are very nice to service men here and I get so tired of the hospital that I like to get away once in a while.

Mother, the St. Francis Chapel here has the most beautiful altar I have ever seen. It is over two hundred years old and built in Mexico City. It is made of Mexico cedar, all hand-carved and covered with genuine gold leaf.

You might think the people who own this place are Catholics, because they named this chapel for St. Francis, but they are not. They are Congregationalists. They have symbols of many different denominations in the chapel but none of their own faith, which is most remarkable, I think. They welcome those of every faith. I am sending you some pictures of the Mission which I promised you in a previous letter. Hope you find them interesting.

Many famous people have stayed here. Some of them: Teddy Roosevelt, Pres. Taft, Chas. Dickens, Harold Bell Wright and Pres. McKinley. The song, "The End of a Perfect Day," by Carrie Jacobs Bond, was written here.

You would love the paintings and works of art here. A huge painting of Theo. Roosevelt, leading the charge in the battle of San Juan Hill, hangs at the end of the art gallery. When he was president it belonged to him and hung in the White House. No democratic president has ever stayed here!

They make a special rate of half price to service men. The tag in my room is marked four dollars but I paid two. Guess I am being a little extravagant but felt that I had to get away from that hospital for a little while. Sure get tired of it. I want to go to Los Angeles next week. Everything is awfully high down there.

I have to wear white uniforms and it costs me \$1.50 per week for laundry. They don't have any place for us to do them ourselves so we can keep them looking neat and I don't like to look sloppy.

Sure has been hot down here. The hottest was 114 degrees in the shade. That was about two weeks ago.

Dad, I hope you have good luck on your hunting trip. I could sure go for a backstrap steak from a good fat buck! This is not much of a letter but I hope you find it interesting. Please tell everyone "Hello" for me.

Mrs. Baumgartner also enclosed a poem written by Robert's shipmate, August J. Blumyer. They were together in the South Pacific when their vessel was lost some months ago but August now has a New York address, indicating he is across the Atlantic somewhere. The poem is titled "Just a Photograph," and reads:

Just a square of glossy paper,
It's only two by three,
But far from home out on the foam
It means a world to me.
For then I see a smiling face
And dancing, merry eyes,
That bring back tender memories
Of happy days gone by.
I'll put it in my pocket,
And keep it o'er my heart,
And there it evermore shall stay,
Till life from me do part.
And when I'm feeling lonely
And just a little blue,
I'll take it out and then and there
I'll have a talk with you.
We'll talk about the golden days
Of what we liked to do.
Just I and that bright smiling face—
A photograph of you.

I used my imagination to try to picture what a photograph of a dear friend would mean to someone far from home. This is the result.

Phone 222R, to Art Hooton for your electrical wiring and repair needs. He is located north of the ball park on the Fairview road. 521fs

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Dozen Divorces Granted Tuesday

Judge King in circuit court here on Tuesday granted divorces to the plaintiffs in an even dozen cases, as follows:

- Carl N. Wilson vs. Lucille F. Wilson
- Bertha B. Parker vs. Geo. L. Parker
- Thos. H. Offord vs. Wilma I. Offord
- Irene G. Monroe vs. Geo. R. Monroe
- Dorothy Pike vs. Edwin W. Pike
- Evas M. Rudberg vs. Lloyd J. Rudberg
- Eleanor Simpson vs. Claud Simpson
- Cleo Dorothy Lent vs. Gail E. Lent
- Margaret Leith vs. John C. Leith
- Clemma L. Parker vs. Walter Parker
- Thelma Stevenson vs. Geo. L. Stevenson
- Marjorie E. McGarvin vs. Donald P. McGarvin

Circuit Court Cases

- Sept. 15—Loren H. Guerin vs. Emma L. Guerin. Suit for divorce.
- Sept. 16—Martha J. Reisen vs. Nelson W. Reisen. Suit for divorce.
- Sept. 16—Ruth E. Russell vs. Fred H. Russell. Suit for divorce.
- Sept. 18—Carl Norman Wilson vs. Lucille Frances Wilson. Suit for divorce.
- Sept. 19—Maxine Braunan vs. Leonard L. Braunan. Suit for divorce.
- Sept. 20—Donald L. Adams vs. Helen Muriel Adams. Suit for divorce.
- Sept. 20—Martha Rachel Zimmerman vs. Wm. H. Zimmerman. Suit for divorce.
- Sept. 20—James Arthur Pratt vs. Nora Mae Pratt. Suit for divorce.
- Sept. 20—Mildred Dick vs. C. A. Smith Fir Co. et al. Suit to quiet title.
- Sept. 20—Florence M. Stevens et

al vs. M. N. Belleu. Suit to quiet title.

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WATCH OUT IF YOU DON'T WANT TO WALK!

New tires for all are still a long way off! DRINKS to care for yours!

The most crucial period of the entire rubber crisis is NOW for most "A" card holders. But if you follow these rules, you'll ride!

- Drive only when necessary; when the ride, keep under 35.
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