

A Love Letter from a Sailor

The following letter was written by my Grandfather Max in 1910.

He was a serving in the Pacific on the US Navy Ship, *The West Virginia*.

At the time he wrote this letter, his ship was docked for repairs at Mare Island Shipyard in California.

He had left his girl, Bertha, behind in Colorado, but her father had forbidden his fifteen year old daughter to write to a sailor.

Luckily, Max's brother, who was serving on the same ship, agreed to pass letters back and forth between the young couple.

Only one letter survives, in an envelope which has this message from Max hidden under the flap:

"I bet you a kiss you don't find this?"



USS West Virginia, Mare Island, CA

4 August 1910

Dear Bertha,

Received your most kind and loving letter which found me well and happy. Would have sent an answer with my brother, but I was working when he wrote his, so I wasn't able to put a letter in with his. But then I know you won't get mad, will you? Well, you said hurry up and come home, you are waiting for someone to take you out. I will be the happiest little sailor boy there is when the time comes, when I can come home and we can go out together. We can go out to White City or City Park and have a nice boat ride.

But gee I will get awfully jealous if I find out any fellows are taking you to the circus although it won't be so bad as long as they don't kiss you before I do. You tell Esther that she can't take no bite out of me as long as you have any objections. I get awfully lonesome when I think of you and home. And I don't know any girls here so I have to a good little boy for nine more months.

You said I would have to do the cooking when we get married. I think it would be best if we take turns cooking the meals as things would taste so good when little Wifie Dear would cook them.

Say Dear, you better send me that picture or I will get my brother's girlfriend to steal one and send it to me. Well little Lovie Dovie, it is almost nine o'clock and I haven't got my dream-bag swung yet, so I will close this time hoping that I will be able to write more next time.

Forever Your Loving Sweetheart, Max

XXXXXXXXXX OOOOOOOOOO "W.R.T.C. Kid!"

Note:

From the Personal Collection
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"Bertha Marguerite Allen
was born in Golden, Colorado.

The granddaughter of Cornish immigrants,
she married Maxwell Hunter in 1915
and they were married for 35 years."



USS West Virginia 1910



Mare Island Naval Station