yet alive. He already had his Purple Heart but the U.S. Army now conferred the DSC upon him. The brass all came by to salute and take his hand, then Linda Darnell planted a large buss on his lips. Some general officer then announced that Waggaman was to be the guest of the Hollywood community that evening, dinner at the Brown Derby, cocktail dancing at the Cocoanut Grove, etc., and that his date for the evening was to be Miss Darnell. He got a three-day pass.

This was our last parade. We were notified that we no longer had to make them and that our weekend leaves were to be extended to 6 pm. It was great while it lasted. We came in half in the bag and then could taper off at our beer garden. No beer for cadets. Sometimes we went over the fence when night fell just to prolong the weekend. I was challenged once by a cadet sentry. I yelled, "Member of the garrison," and kept walking. It worked. Once I went over with a friend named Warren. We both ended up in a sugar-beet drainage ditch up to our knees. We stank but went to town anyway. Someone in Sta Ana always brought us back. We had a favorite spot and we'd have him slow down and douse his lights until we came to a section without a sentry. Then back over the wall or fence...

Hap Arnold always wanted enlisted pilots and finally got FDR's concurrence in 1940. It was in reality a peacetime or partial mobilization thing. There was the Flying Cadet program, wherein civilians with at least two years of college credits (this was a reasonable and reliable criterion in those days) could learn to fly for the Army and obtain a reserve commission, thereby ensuring the perpetuation of both tactical and officer pool. General Arnold insisted that there should be a Flying Sergeant program as well in order to provide a ready source of pilot personnel and, perhaps, reserve officers as well. I think the original intent was to commission enlisted pilots in the AC Reserve after a year or two in order to have another substantial tactical officer pool readily at hand. The EM pilot candidate needed no college credits but had to have at least a year in the service (originally two) and the same GCT rating of 115 required of flying cadets. The EM pilot could also remain on active duty w/o cramping the almighty budget. The war screwed everything up. There is nothing wrong in having enlisted pilots, of course, but the US public won't put up with it. Everyone has to be an officer. At this point and after the war commenced there was some justification in their reasoning. There was just as many qualified officer candidates per capita among the EM or aviation students as among cadets and by the end of 1942 it just didn't seem quite fair to make a distinction. And so all became aviation cadets, the sgt pilots were commissioned, and all cadets became officers upon graduation. I think Genl Arnold was always wistful about the whole thing...

To close, I should mention that we also had men in RCAF uniform with us in Santa Ana. They were Americans in training in the RCAF who decided to come to the AAF after the war started. It took about six weeks to get their transfers finalized and they had to wear their RCAF woollens all the while. West Point Cadets slated for AC trained with us at Ryan...

Best, Jim B.