

Dear Anne~

... a letter telling you all
about "Life in Hamford!"

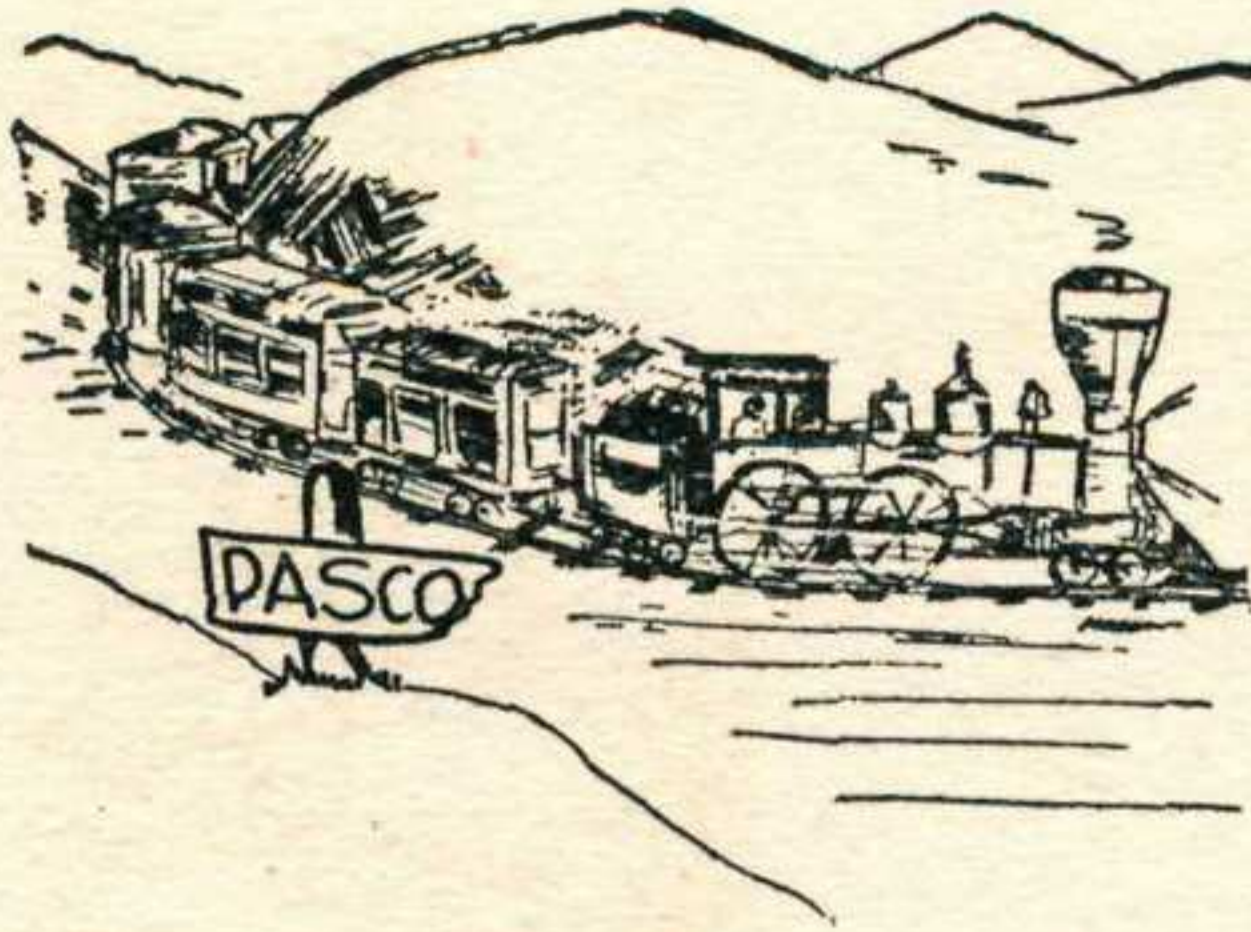


DEAR ANNE,

Since you're coming to Hanford, I know you're anxious to hear all about it. There's so much to tell you, I hardly know where to begin!

First of all—it's entirely different from any place you've ever worked before, so be prepared for that. But that's what makes it so interesting!

Don't expect everything to be perfect . . . there are wartime inconveniences here just as there are at home, or in any city. You'll have your ups and downs (especially at first, until you're familiar with your job and are settled in your room) . . . but by the end of the first two weeks you'll feel like a "veteran" here and be handing out advice just as I'm doing now!



"ARRIVING IN PASCO"

I think the thing that worried me most before I came was that I'd be "lost" here . . . that everyone on such a large and important project would be too busy to care what happened to me.

But it's just the opposite, Anne. From the moment you arrive in Pasco (even if it's in the middle of the night) there is someone whose business it is to direct you or take you to the right place at the right time.

There will be a company representative at the station, for they meet all trains and busses. If you have to arrive after working hours, don't worry . . . you'll be taken to a special housing unit for the night.

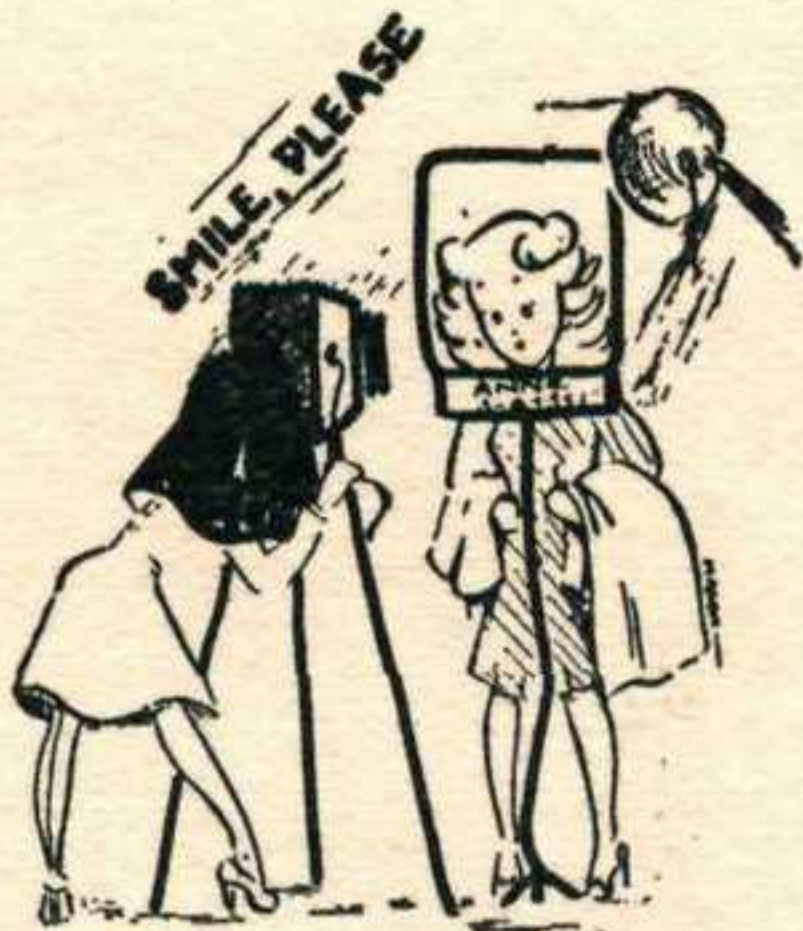


"WHAT TO DO FIRST?"

Your first stop in Pasco is the Reception Center, where you present all of your papers and are then issued a Washington Certificate of Availability.

Then to the baggage office to check your luggage before taking the bus out for Hanford. It will be delivered to you later.

It's a good idea to carry a small overnight bag with you, though . . . sometimes it's a day or two before your bags can reach you at the barracks. It will come in handy, too, if your other luggage was checked through on the train and doesn't happen to arrive when you do!

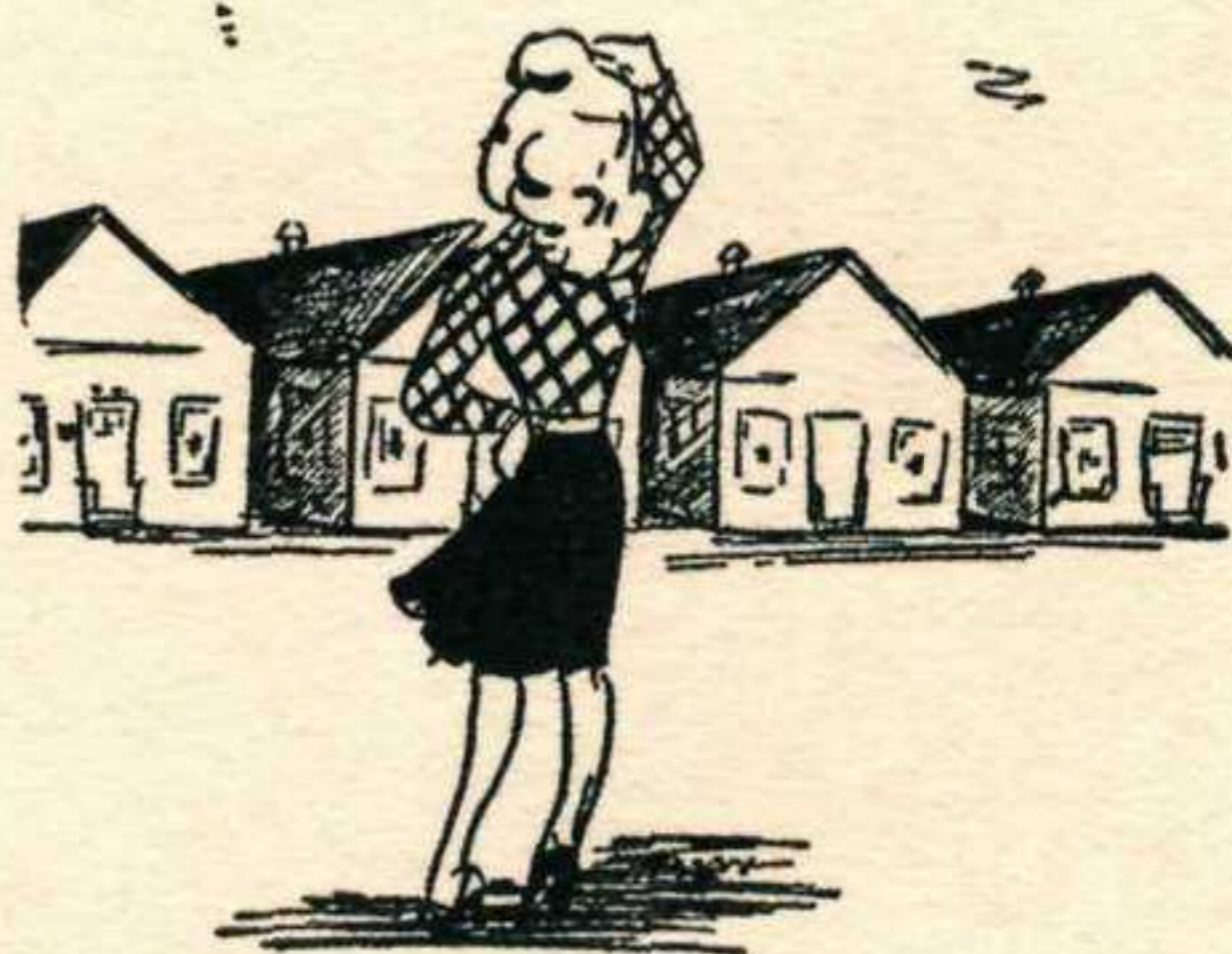


"SIGNING-UP"

The company bus brings you directly to the Employment Office in Hanford, where you will be interviewed. Yes, interviewed, Anne—not just "tossed in" to a job to fill a vacancy! As nearly as possible, they try to place each girl in the job for which she is best suited.

After you have been placed, you will be sent to various offices for the Sign-Up, as they call it . . . a medical examination, finger-printing, photographing, insurance data, etc. The picture is for the Photo-Badge you'll be wearing here in Hanford.

Sounds like a lot of red tape, maybe . . . but it's all very important, and besides, it doesn't take long.



"THE BARRACKS"

Your barracks room will be assigned to you the first day. It may be a temporary one, and it may not be near ours, unless there just happens to be a vacancy. Sooner or later you'll probably be able to move near us, though . . . they're anxious to work out arrangements like that when possible.

The barracks aren't half as grim as they sound . . . but don't expect anything palatial, either. They're one-story buildings very much like the ones you've seen in army camps. They're clean and comfortable, and have all kinds of conveniences you wouldn't expect to find on an emergency construction project like this . . . even air-conditioning!



"ROOM 16"

There are two girls to a room in the barracks. The furniture is maple . . . and includes two single beds with innerspring mattresses, two dressers, a table-desk and two chairs. Separate closets, too. Also a mirror and a "pin-up" lamp for each girl.

Sheets and army blankets are provided. There is daily maid service . . . even "morning call," so don't worry about having broken your alarm clock. And all this for just \$1.65 a week . . . room rent and services, too!

A housemother is in charge of each barracks. She keeps things running smoothly, takes care of the daily mail deliveries there and is a good counselor when you need one.



"RUB AND SCRUB"

Each barracks has a large washroom with complete plumbing facilities . . . even bath-tubs! Also a laundry room with basins, ironing boards and electric irons (very much in demand—so bring your own if you have one!) Don't forget clothespins . . . also towels, washcloths, hangers and an ample supply of your favorite soap flakes, shampoo, etc., in case of temporary shortages in the stores here.

What else to bring? That's up to you . . . but knowing how you like to fix up your room, I'll list some extras that are nice to have: a radio, a can opener, dresser scarfs, curtains, rugs, bedspreads and pictures.



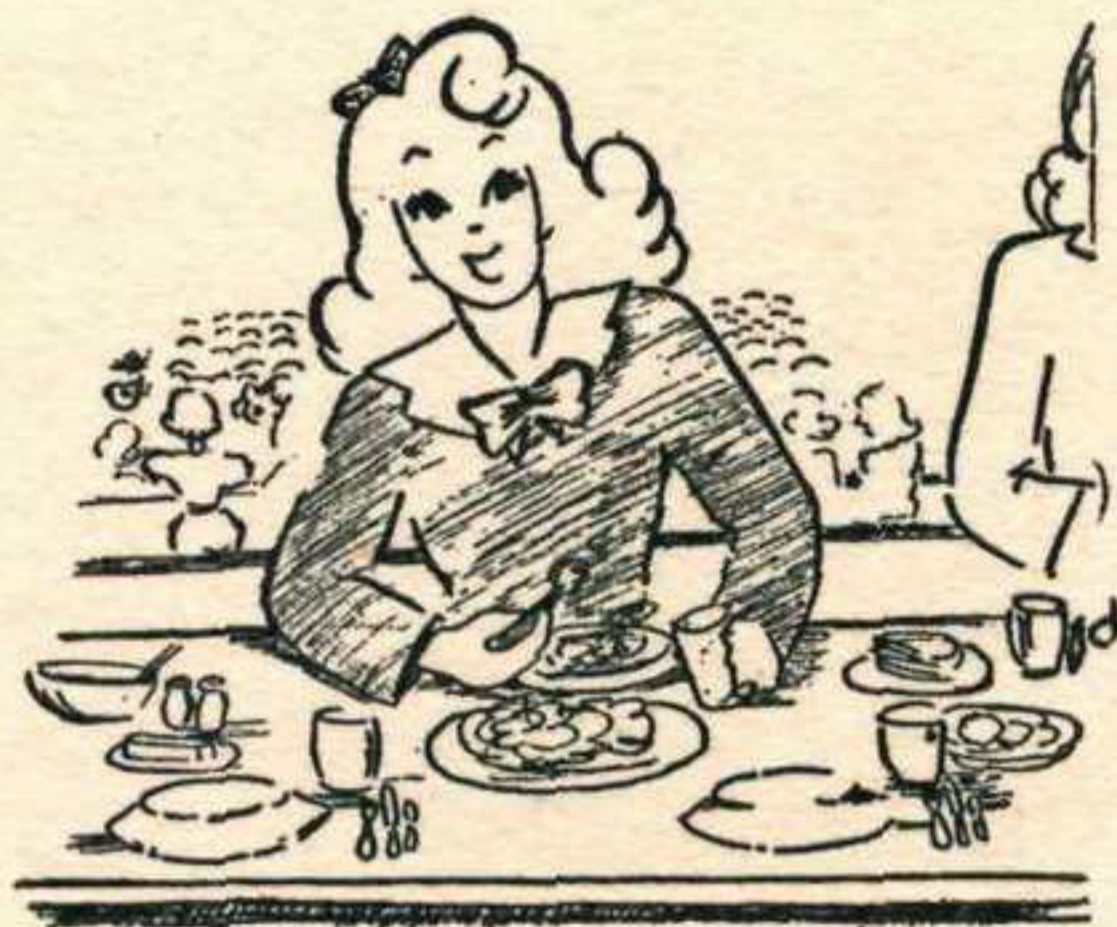
"REPORT AT 8 A.M."

There is an Orientation Meeting the first day before you actually begin work . . . so that you and the other girls who are newcomers that day will know something about the history of the company and its policies.

Then you'll report to your supervisor—your job has begun! The offices are well-equipped, well lighted and comfortably heated . . . and humming with activity.

Friday is pay day each week—but not your first Friday, as the first five days' pay is held for you until you leave.

There are excellent medical facilities here, Anne, so don't worry about that. A staff of doctors, dentists and nurses maintains a first-aid station, a clinic and a hospital.



"LET'S EAT!"

The mess halls up here will remind you of the one at Joe's camp, Anne. Long tables with benches . . . and everything served family style. (Saves time!) That word "family" reminds me . . . the pastries are so good they're almost in the class with "what Mother used to make."

All three meals are what your Dad would call hearty ones, with plenty of meat, vegetables, and salads. Yes, rationing applies here as everywhere else, so the menus are planned accordingly. There are news and music broadcasts during the meal periods.

You can buy a ticket for 21 meals for just \$9.37. It is punched at the door for each meal, so you won't have to pay when you're not there.



"WHAT SHALL I WEAR?"

Just what you would for a job anyplace else . . . but keep in mind the fact that cleaning service may take as long as two weeks sometimes. Suits are ideal (have plenty of washable blouses!) . . . also sweaters and skirts, and tailored dresses you can sponge and press yourself. For summer, cool cottons . . . but be sure to bring a lightweight coat with you.

Don't forget your comfortable walking shoes; also a lounging robe or housecoat. Slacks are not worn at work. You'll want to have some date dresses with you, and hats for special occasions. (Most of the girls wear head scarves for everyday, though.)

In planning what to bring, remember that your only storage place will be in your room!



"THE SHOPPING PROBLEM"

Yes, it is a problem here, Anne . . . remember I warned you not to expect things to be perfect!

There is a large Sears Roebuck store in Hanford, and a ready-to-wear shop. There is a beauty shop, too, as well as a drugstore, grocery, bank, laundry and dry cleaning agency, express office, post office and Western Union. Others will be added as soon as possible.

Just now, they're all busy trying to keep up with the demand, and you'll probably have to do some waiting in line.

There is daily bus service to Pasco and Yakima. Spokane is several hours from Hanford, and Portland and Seattle are within a night's train ride.



"ALL WORK AND NO PLAY?"

No! There are all kinds of activities. You're a movie fan, I know . . . so you'll be glad to hear that there is a fine theatre in Hanford.

Frequent dances are held, with a good orchestra providing the music.

There is a library here, with reference books, newspapers and magazines as well as fiction and non-fiction books.

A swimming pool has been built in the river nearby, and life-guards are on duty there throughout the summer season.

The Red Cross activities are well organized and include first aid, sewing, surgical dressings, and home nursing.

There are interesting things to do, here . . . but don't expect to find a Country Club atmosphere; it's far from that!



"OPEN HOUSE"

... is held at the Women's Recreation Hall every evening. This barracks building (known as 11-A) has been converted into a clubhouse where you and your friends are always welcome.

The lounge is an ideal place to read, write letters or sew. Then there's a card room, with tables and cards for bridge, Chinese checkers, Backgammon, etc. There is a fine dance floor, with juke-box dancing every night. Singing around the piano is another popular pastime.

There are also a number of organized activities, such as gym classes, a bridge club, crafts groups, a mixed chorus, etc. Occasional informal programs are held on Sunday afternoons.

There is a real welcome waiting for you at the church services, too. Both Catholic and Protestant groups have Sunday and mid-week services.



"SO THIS IS HANFORD"

. . . a regular community in itself. It's semi-desert country—low, rolling hills with sage brush but very few trees. But picturesque . . . in it's own way.

The winter weather is cold, but not extreme. There is occasional rain or snow, and lots of fog. In the summer the temperature sometimes reaches 110 degrees, but its a dry heat and not as bad as it sounds. The nights are cool.

One of the first (and most important) things you will notice here is the emphasis on safety. The company is sincerely interested in the welfare of it's employees both on and off the job.

Its reassuring to know that. It means that extra precautions are taken everywhere—in the offices, in the mess halls, in the barracks—for your protection. You, in turn, will learn to practice "Safety Through Personal Effort"—our safety slogan for 1944.



"AN IMPORTANT WAR JOB"

Yes, there are inconveniences, as you can see . . . and Hanford is what you might call "isolated," compared to some places . . . but after all, it's not like having an A.P.O. number!

It isn't an "easy life" . . . but it isn't too hard a one, either. You won't be "roughing it," for a very sincere attempt has been made to care for the everyday needs of the personnel here.

Come prepared to do your best, and to be a good sport about things . . . and you'll have the satisfaction of knowing you're doing your part to bring Victory sooner, in a war job that is vital to our country.

See you soon!

as ever
Ruth

ELEUTHERIAN MILLS HISTORICAL LIBRARY