DETACHMENT MEDICAL DEPARTMENT (SC) 23/MED/mcd
ARMY AIR FORCES TECHNICAL TRAINING SCHOOL
Gulfport Field, Mississippi

December 7, 1942

Lt. Col. I. M. Gage, M. C.
24th General Hospital
Fort Benning, Georgia.

Dear Colonel Gage,

I certainly enjoyed the receipt of your recent letter and learning that all goes well with the Tulane Unit. I, too, have missed you and have frequently longed to express to you certain tribulations and to hear you express in your inimitable fashion the best means of disposing of them.

Since arriving here I have had a number of interesting experiences and learned many broadening facts. I have been orderd to Washington, Atlanta, and several other places, have been invited to give some talks at several station hospitals, and on one occasion invited to Camp Shelby to operate on an arterio-venous aneurysm. By the way, you would have been interested in this case. It was a traumatic (stab-wound) arterio-venous aneurysm of the brachial artery at its bifurcation with four communications between the artery and vein, one of which was between the artery and the superficial (median basilio) vein. It was an easy dissection and for once everything went off beautifully as a demonstration and Colonel Reed (Chief of the Surgical Service there) has since told me he has completely recovered.

I certainly regretted not seeing you in Atlanta recently. Turner was there and we had a pleasant visit. He told me how well everyone was doing. I flew up to the meeting in an AT6C at night and there was a full moon--it was a beautiful sight. I am sorry that you did not get to the meeting for several reasons, for in addition to the fact that I missed seeing you, there were several surgical papers presented that would have interested you. Some of these were on the wonderful results on the "new" excision and primary closure method of treating pilonidal sinus. I was so mad that in the discussion I told them that this was all well and good and that I thoroughly agreed with the speakers, but that there was really nothing new about the method and that under your direction, and as a result of your studies, we had been doing this for the last seven years.

Our hospital here is a typical army type of approximately 900 beds, however, we have not received all our supplies and therefore are not in operation but expect to soon. In fact, we had hoped to be operating by this time but I have now learned that in the army you develpp patience and waiting becomes part of the program. We have a fairly good surgical service organized with Harry Morris in charge of orthopedics. Jerry

Schroeder in charge of general surgery, Roy Kleinsasser, in charge of septic surgery, a former Tulanian, in charge of G. U., and a boy by the name of Wilson (excellent training) in charge of E.N.T. You can see that Tulane is well represented and that we have a nice group of fellows.

We have been very fortunate as far as our living accommodations are concerned. We have a nice cottage right on the beach with a big yard for Mickey to play in. The house is relatively new with good appointments and hot air heating. We are really more comfortable here than in New Orleans. Diana has gained a little, developed better color, and feels so much better. I certainly wish you and Jane could visit us.

I'm going to mess now. Remember me to all the fellows and my best to you.

Sincerely,

Michael DeBakey,
Capt., M. C.,
Chief of Surgical Service.

P.S. You will be interested to know that Ernest is at the School of Aviation Medicine learning to be a Flight Surgeon.