



U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES
TRAINING DETACHMENT
CLARKSDALE, MISSISSIPPI

11-20-43

Dear Folke,

After a bad start I'll try to get a letter written. We have open post tonight but I decided that since I was so far behind with my letter writing I'd stay at home tonight, catch up with my writing, go to bed early, get up in the morning, and go to Helena, Ark., with two or three boys to sell some of my friends over there. Besides that I want to cross that river. My first set back was, that I found out I wasn't eligible for open post tonight anyhow because I had a tour to walk. I got this tour for signing my name improperly to one of the many forms I have to fill out everytime I go up in an airplane. Every error made costs one tour, 50 minutes of walking, this was my first error and last

I hope. Any how I walked my town, came to the barracks to ~~look for my~~ write a letter. After hunting for my fountain pen, giving up, listening to the radio a while, getting into a hell session, hunting for my fountain pen someone and finding it, I am at last ready to start writing the letter.

You know I've said all along that this is where the real work as well as the fun would start. I wasn't wrong on either score. I love to fly, but that doesn't hide the awful truth that it is hard, especially when you do it the army way. We had civilian instructors but they have been told by the army how to instruct. They won't stop at anything less than perfection on any maneuver. All the while we are being taught new things faster than we can possibly learn them. That's the Army's way of doing things and in the end it gets results. Back at Maxwell I didn't think I'd ever be able to identify any air-plant at $\frac{1}{10}$ or $\frac{1}{25}$ of a second especially when they gave us two new ones



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every day. But the day the final examination came I knew all of the planes. Any fool could get that steep though if they would just sit through class and concentrate a little bit. This flying is a little bit different, some got what it takes and some ain't. I think I got it, but I can't be too sure yet. I have 7 hours and 47 minutes with 13 landings. It is impossible to even start to think about soloing until I get 11 hours and 30 landings. It'll be at least a week and half before I can get all of this work in and maybe more so don't look for the proclamation of the great day for a while yet.

Any asked about the weather here, so far it has been good, except early in the morning I can't see the horizon because it is so hazy.

The ⁽⁴⁾ horizon is a very important landmark
in keeping the wings level, and holding a
constant altitude. This, of course, adds to
the difficulty of flying. She also asked
about my progress, ducking etc. Everything
that happened to Jerome will happen to me
except that will be a proportionately one month
later. Brother asked what the P.T.
in the P.T. 23 stood for. It is primary
trainer and not pursuit trainer. In my
next phase I'll fly B.T.'s or Basic
Trainers, and in my next A.T.'s or advanced
trainers. I don't remember what anybody
else asked except about this problem of
Xmas presents. I am half way like
Eric on the subject. I'm not giving any
but I'm not saying I'll refuse to receive
any. I can't give any hints as to what I want
because I don't need a thing, especially I
don't need luggage, I think that, that ~~the item~~
has been mentioned three times, that is why I mention
it in particular. I don't need a watch now



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and when I do need one it will be a
U. S. watch that I'll have to have. The only
thing that I really want can be supplied by
that General who has his offices in Ft. Worth.
It is a FURLOUGH. Naturally that is
out of the question unless you can invite him
out to the house, feed him a home cooked meal
and have a heart to heart talk with him.
And if you do, Papa, don't call him Dr.

It is my bed time if I am going to get up
early in the morning and go to Helena so I'll
quit.

Mama, send some of the tid-bits of news that
I mentioned to the rest of the family because I won't
have a chance to write any of them for a while. Papa,
I haven't had a report from you for quite a
while. And Mama, Cadets at Primary get just
as hungry for cookies, cakes etc. as Cadets at C.T.D.,
Classification Center, and Pre-Flight.

Look at the new addition to my address.

Tell every body that asks about me hello and
find out Billy Welch's address for me too.

Now that I am really through I'll
sign off.

Lots of love,

Joe