



F/O Joseph W. Hays

(1)
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7-12-45

Dear Folks,

You might have guessed where I was writing my last letter from before I told you but I'll bet my bottom \$ that you can't guess this time. Go ahead try three guesses. 1. Nope, 2. Wrong, 3. Wrong again. O.K. I'll tell you. I'm in a B24 at 6,600 ft. half way between Branzay, England and ~~Edinburgh~~ ^{Edinburgh}, Scotland. The altitude is the reason for the pencil instead of a fountain pen. They have a terrible habit of leaking something fierce when they get to any altitude at all. We are on a practice navigational mission with the navigator and the automatic pilot doing all the work. I went on one of these things yesterday and twiddled my thumbs for five hours so this time I came prepared.

I had a swell time on my pass and 2/C.



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(2)

Day coming right in the middle of it didn't hurt my feelings at all. The good thing about it is that Tom and I had a date with two American Nurses the night V.C. Day was announced. We celebrated until the sky looked level. I'll bid you now.

We passed through London on V.C. Day + 1 on our way home and it was still so crowded you could hardly wiggle. I'm glad I wasn't there the day it happened. Tom and I got in camp at about 11:30 P.M. on the 9th and I've been flying ever since. The only way I know the war is over is that I read it in the paper. Like I said I got in at 11:30 and they let me sleep until 03:00 A.M. before they got me up to fly. We flew a low altitude tour over the Rhine Valley with a whole air plane load of paddle feet. All the ground-pounders in the Eighth Air Force are getting a chance to go on one of these tours to see what they have been helping us do with their typewriters and fountain pens. As tired as I was I enjoyed



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seeing those Co. cities. Most of those towns
just ain't anymore. What the Germans did to
London was mere child's play. I haven't
flown low over Berlin, Hamburg, Magdeburg,
Braun, Hamm, Nuremberg, or any cities outside
of the Rhine but the boys that have say that
they are just as bad, or I should say as good.

I told you that I would tell you when I got
20 missions in but since the shooting ^{was} ~~is~~ on
in this part of the war before I got 20 I'll
tell you what I finished with. I had 14
and didn't even come close to a Purple
Heart. We only got hit by flak once and that
was on the way home from a mission while
crossing the lines. Every German fighter I
saw had at least 3 P51s on its tail and it
was much to worried about them to think
about shooting at me.

As for my ~~of~~ immediate future ~~—~~ I
know nothing about it, and if I did I couldn't
say but I for one am optimistic. So optimistic
(start over on the back of the first sheet)

that I want someone to have my two summer uniforms cleaned and pressed and ~~also~~ also I want someone to go down town and buy me a new cap. I want a Bancroft Flighter, size 7 1/8. If you can't get a Bancroft just buy it. I forgot to say but be sure that it is a summer cap and don't send it to me, just keep it.

Ruth so help me I can't remember any of your questions but one. Its the one about the Air Medal. We are awarded the Air Medal for flying six missions and a Cluster for every six after that. That's not the only way you can get it but that's the way it happens 99 times out of a hundred in the 2nd Division anyway. Since censorship regulations have been relaxed I can tell you a couple of things. I'm in the Eighth Air Force, 2nd Division, 20th Combat Wing, 446 Group, and 707 Sq. I am stationed about 15 miles south of Norwich near a town called Bungay. Near a little town called Felixton but it doesn't even make the maps. Norwich is the word that

was cut out of one of my letters if
you hadn't already guessed. (3)

That about living you up to date ~~so~~
and besides Vinaki wants to read a
magazine so I'll watch the instrument
for a while.

all my love,

Joe