

Oct 4, '40

Dear Mom & Dad,

Clark Field Rd

I just realized today was your birthday, Mom, so the least I can do is write a letter and wish you a Happy Birthday even though it is a bit late. This letter should leave here Mon. morning, and you should have it about six days later if every thing goes according to schedule. You see the Manila paper publishes when every boat and Clipper is due to arrive or leave so we always know just when to expect mail, or to send it.

Yesterday I took the "fatefull" step and made out my application for the Cadet exam. Mon. they will give me the physical exam and then I'll know

2 (139) whether it will be worth while studying
for the written exam in Nov. I'll also
know everything that's physically wrong
with me even to the smallest detail.
I don't think they'll find anything
serious enough to stop me, I hope!

In case I have any specially good
news I'll send it by a method I just
learned of lately. There is an amateur
radio station at Port Stansbury, and
for ten cents they'll send ^{twenty words} a radiogram to
another amateur in the U. S. who will
mail it to you. You can do the same
from your end, because it is some sort
of an international understanding of
all amateurs to send messages back and
forth like that.

I still manage to keep busy enough
to keep out of mischief. After we got off
guard the twentieth of last month we
all went back to work on the line, (the

line is the team used to designate airplanes⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ that are kept ready for flying day after day, and all work connected with keeping them in shape. The last week though I've been on a gang - that is building a Non-Commissioned Officers club and have had to work a little harder than usual. We had to haul rock to a rock crusher and had to load it all by hand. I don't mind working a little ~~and~~ and everyone has to take a turn at the work, but it seems to me under present conditions that there ought to be more important work to be done. It also seems to me that they should get some "up to date" airplanes over here and enough officers to fly them. Maybe they have everything planned as to how they're going to take care of this place, and I imagine there's a lot going on here that we know little or nothing about, but even so there isn't much here to stop

44 (111)
Anyone who wants to come in. I suppose
that doesn't read very well for the
efficiency of the Army, etc. but they usually
get around to doing the right thing after
awhile.

I think world conditions right now
are just about the biggest mess possible,
but I suppose it's the same as it was
the last time. I'm quite 'up a stump'
as they say, as to what the future will
be like. Certainly nothing anywhere
will be too secure for some time to
come. Even after the world is at peace
again the readjustment will cause a
lot of uncertainty. There's not much
one individual can do though, so I
suppose it's a case of make the best of
a bad situation.

I seem to be hanging the crepe
rather thick; maybe I'd better get on
more pleasant subjects for awhile.

5 A couple of weeks ago J. E. Brown (usually
referred to as just plain Brown) and I went
for a ride up in the hills with one of the
Philippine ~~sergeants~~ sergeants in the Cavalry
where we get our horses. He really knows
all the ~~ways~~ ins and outs of the hills, and
showed me some pretty good scenery.
We followed a little stream up almost
to its source. It started out in a valley
just the other side of Fort Stanton that
was maybe a half mile wide. The farther
up we went the ~~more~~ narrower the
valley got and then ^{hills} higher and steeper until
we were riding along in a canyon not more
or than twenty feet wide at the bottom
and perpendicular rock walls about 300
feet high. It was narrow enough at the
top so that trees growing on both sides
practically made a roof over the place.
It was nice and cool in there too. After

^{8 PM}
143 We'd gone as far as we could up that way, &
we back tracked a ways and went up
another branch where we finally came to
the end of the valley, where it was possible
for the horses to climb up on the level
ground again. From there we could look
one way straight out across the main
valley of the island which, although it
looks perfectly level, is one long gradual
slope, and in the other direction was the
hills just as rough and rugged as can be.
The edge of the level ground is so abrupt
that it looks as though the edge was cut
with a knife. We rode back along the edge
of the canyon, and swiped a stalk of sugar
cane apiece out of the fields that grow
practically to the edge of the drop in all,
we didn't ride more than three hours, but
I think I seen some of the roughest, ~~it~~ ^{it}
even though it isn't the biggest mountains
to be seen anywhere.

Some of the places they take horses in this country would make you shudder. They'll make a horse go just about anywhere a man can lean himself without using his hands.

Some time in the near future we have hopes of getting a three day pass, and all four of us in the tent taking horses and a pack mule, and to our Philippine friend for a guide and going up to Mt. Panatuba. It's the highest mountain in the range between us and the China Sea, and is maybe twenty miles from here. It will take a little planning to pull that through, so it may take awhile before we manage it. In fact, if we had our way around here, we'd travel from one end of this island to the other and see every thing there is.

The week of before last, we celebrated organization day for the Squadron here. That is ~~the name~~ the official name for the organization's birthday. It calls for a big

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celebration and a good time for everybody. I think the high point of the day was a tug of war they had across the swimming pool. Even the Commanding Officer joined in that and got ducked. That would be about the same as the lowest employees of a big concern ducking the president of the board of directors. Anyway, everybody enjoyed it, and just about everyone got wet. They had prizes for the best nature costumes too, and the results were quite amazing. Then there was a lot of sports events and a horse jockeying contest. We had a picnic lunch at noon with a plentiful supply of beer. That capped the climax, of course!

I've been doing quite a bit of swimming lately and have improved tremendously. In fact, I quite surprised myself the progress I've made. Of course with a good big swimming pool about a hundred yards from the tent there's no excuse for not getting some practice.

Lately the P.X. here has been displaying a lot of things intended as Christmas presents, and I realized that here you have to begin Christmas shopping early. I've been doing a little thinking and came to the conclusion perhaps it would be best not to send Xmas presents because I won't have money enough to buy half the things I like to send. So, if I save my money till I can really buy some worth while things, I think it would be much better. Then too I don't know what you could send me. The more a person owns around here the more trouble he has taking care of it, and the Army provides just well with all that is absolutely necessary.

In Manila it is possible to buy all the famous products of China, India etc. quite reasonable at least as compared to what it would cost in the U.S. If I pass the Cadet Exam I should be on the way back to the U.S.

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by March and would be able to bring some of
those things back with me. So if there is no
events to change my plans, I'll let them
stand at that.

I've had a couple of letters from Catherine
since I've been here, but none from the
rest of the family. I've heard from some of
the fellows back at Chanute, and things
haven't improved any there in fact, the place
is getting in more for term mail all the time.
I suppose if I'd write more letters, I
could expect more, but ~~it~~ it seems
to be an awful effort to get started. I think
I do all right once I'm started though.

I guess that's about all the news to date.

Love

Bob

Sun. P.M.

Dear Mom and Dad,

I'd better write this letter tonight because during the week we don't have time to do anything but study. In fact, if we get caught writing letters when we're supposed to be studying we'll get "giggled". "Sigs" or demerits are given for any thing that we do that isn't quite the way they want it. Such as slout or slout in the room, not paying attention when we should etc. If we get more than six in one week we have to "walk the ramp" which is simply walking back and forth in front of the office while ordinarily everyone is allowed off the post. I haven't done any of it yet and don't intend to if I can help it.

I had planned on visiting the Larsons this weekend, but had no way of knowing whether I could leave here in time to catch the bus ~~about~~ so I called it off.

We're supposed to have three days off for the Fourth so I'll ^{go} up then.

As far as discipline is concerned this place beats anything I've seen before. Everything has to be just so all the time. Hancock College is nothing more than a flying field with barracks and school rooms for us. All the instructors, mechanics, and office personnel are civilians, and there's five or six Army officers here who actually run the place. It compares to nothing in the regular Army or in civil life either. Except for the fact that we're so busy all the time that we don't mind it, the place would closely resemble a jail. When we get done we'll have some good training, but it has to be good to be worth going through this for. We just never get a chance to relax around here at all.

So far I've spent nearly six hours in the air. That doesn't sound like an awful lot, but it's amazing how much can be

learned in that time. At present we're practicing take-off and landings, and the next step, which will come between 8+10 hours, will be to fly solo (alone). Before now, we have learned a lot of different kinds of turns (climbing, gliding, steep, steep, medium etc) stalls and spins. A stall is simply pointing the nose of the plane up a little so that it gradually loses speed until it's ready to fall, then you point the nose down steeply to regain speed. It's important because in landing the plane has to be handled in such a way that it is stalled just as the wheels hit. They teach us spins so that in case we ever do accidentally get into one, we'll know how to get out. Actually with the planes we have it's harder to put them into a spin than it is to get them out again. When the instructor does the maneuvers and I had time to think about it, there was quite a sensation to ~~the~~ ~~the~~ but

when I'm doing it myself I'm too busy thinking what to do next to pay any attention to how I feel. After I've done some maneuvers, and done it right, and the instructor made his approval, is when I get the feeling that it's all worth while.

According to Catherine's reports Bechy is doing fine. I certainly wish I could be sure of getting home soon and see her and everyone else.

If you have some very excellent cookies or something, you could send a few. I'm sure they'd be appreciated here. Not too many though because we aren't supposed to have any food in our rooms and whatever we get like that has to be consumed right away.

Incidentally, the food here is really good. Well balanced diet and well cooked and plenty of it.

How is everything going around home? Also what have you heard from Mom lately?

P.S. Please send me my blue suit. I might have got a chance to wear it around here sometime. Bye



June 41
Wed. P. M.

Dear Mom and Dad,

Best Wishes for Father's Day, Dad.

They keep us so busy around here that we don't hardly have time to keep track of the days. We start out the day at 5:45 and have about five minutes to dress and be out for a half hour of exercises before breakfast. After breakfast we have about half hour to clean our rooms up (and I mean they have to be clean). They arrange it so that one day we fly in the morning and have classes in the afternoon and the next day it's the other way around. We're supposed to have an hour off at noon for dinner, but we always seem to have to eat and run for the next class. Anyway between flying and classes and an hour of drill from five to six we're busy until supper time at six.

In the evening we have from seven thirty to nine 'quiet hours' for study and lights out at nine thirty. That doesn't allow much waste time, and we aren't allowed off the post except on weekends.

We usually get in about a half hour flying time each day. There's one instructor for every five men. Mr. Lancing is my instructor; he's a middle aged man and the type that doesn't say much. So far he's been taking things pretty slow and step by step, which is ok with me. I think I'll be able to get along with him fine.

For classroom studies, we have engines, mathematics, and maps. They are all quite easy for me even though they do have to teach us a lot in a short time.

The school itself is one of the best in the country. It has a perfect safety record, and if one passes the course here, he is almost certain of passing the more advanced schools. They do have to 'wash out' (flunk)

a higher percentage to get that record. the fact just about half of the fellows get through here where other schools pass as high as 75 or 80%.

Margaret and Phil were down to see me last Sun. I couldn't get off the post, and they couldn't get on, so we had to sit in the car by the gate and visit. That wasn't so ~~convenient~~ convenient, but even so it certainly was good to talk to some of the family anyway. Weekend after this, I'm going up to visit them if nothing interferes. They have a new Dodge which is plenty nice. Phil still uses the old Chev. to go to work though.

Last Sat they took us downtown to have our pictures taken, and they let us run loose for about an hour. Santa Maria looks like a very nice town and they treat the Cadets swell. When we go to cross the street we even have the right of way, every one stops for us.

This weekend will be free to leave the post, but I don't know what I'll do. I won't even know how to act with civilized people around. After being so busy here all the time, I'd like to find a nice comfortable seat somewhere and relax just to see what it feels like. Radios are allowed here, but we never get time to listen to one and neither do we have time to read a newspaper very much. Consequently we don't keep track of world events very well. I do know that things aren't getting any better fast though.

That's all the news for the time being.

Love
Bud



Nashville, Tennessee
June 43 (324)

NEW CASTLE ARMY AIR BASE
WILMINGTON, DEL.

Late Afternoon

Dear Mom + Dad,

I know you've been wondering why I haven't written before, but this simple little mad house here keeps us on the run not doing much of anything. This deal we're on is an extra priority job, and when the Army tries to do something in a hurry it's always a mess.

Anyway I'll try to explain the whole situation. We were transferred from Wilmington down here to pick up airplanes and equipment, and then go over and join an outfit that flies cargo and transport all the way from the West Coast of Africa to China. Just where we'll be, I don't know, but we'll be flying good four engine equipment over pretty well established routes. Other than that

fact that will be there for anywhere from six months to a year and living conditions are rather queer sometimes and some place it shouldn't be too bad a deal.

By "we", I mean a group of pilots, navigators, and radio operators from Wilmington. There'll be a few from other places, but not so many. We didn't come as crews, so I don't know for sure who'll be with me. Lt. Kim, navigator on my last trip, is here, so I'll try to keep him with me. Other than that, I don't know any of them except the pilots.

They make us straighten out all our personal affairs before we leave. Cheerful bunch of creep hangers. I made a power of attorney for you, just in case something should come up while I'm gone. I don't know what it would say, but you never can tell. As I said, the



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other night the Berpes will take care of the car until I get back or as long as they're at Wilmington. If they have to break up house-keeping, Pat will bring the car home to you along with some winter clothes and other odds and ends. There's about \$300 in a checking account in the Wilmington Trust Co. which I'll just leave there as an emergency fund in case I come back broke. Other than that, there's insurance and bonds which take care of themselves. All except the Metropolitan policy, and ~~if~~ if you'd take care of that until such time as I can square accounts again, it would be the simplest way.

This whole move came at the wrong time to suit me. For the

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last four years I've figured the same as I did when I first got in, not plan anything about a permanent mode of living until the whole mess was over and done with. After this last trip, I'd changed my mind, everything seemed to point that I'd be based at Wilmington for the duration and I started to plan that way.

The more I've traveled and jumped around from place to place, the more I've wanted to settle down and plan some future to this life.

I'd had a few dates with Janet Keith, a Wilmington girl that works at the base there, been out to her house a couple of evenings, met her folks, and generally gotten pretty well acquainted. She is one of the few girls I've met who consider life anything but a song and dance, and had similar ideas to mine on most subjects. In short, I thought



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I'd found the ~~one~~ ^{one} girl for me, and I know Janet felt the same way ^{about me}. We both had the same idea; let time and closer acquaintance prove or disprove our first impression when this foreign job came along and knocked everything into a cocked hat for awhile. We'll be writing to each other, and when I get back, we can start in again where we left off.

Ordinarily we'd get some time off before we'd leave on a job like this, but since it's such a hurry up business, we haven't a chance. Right now they don't even know where our airplanes are, but they can't let us go for fear the planes would be come while we'd be gone. I would like very much to have a few uninterrupted days at home, because just like

you said in one of your last letters. There's a lot of things we could talk over. Maybe we could do some of it by letter writing; not that it's so satisfactory that way, but it's better than nothing. I have ~~some~~ hard enough time expressing a lot of my ideas in words let alone try to write them down. On this new job we'll have by definite time on and off, so maybe I'll have time enough to put a few of my ideas down on paper. Someth^{ing} tells me I'm going to do a lot of letter writing while I'm away.

Next thing I'd better do is find out what our A.P.O. number is going to be so that someone can write to me.

Now I'm Turner gave me a book "The Prophet" by Khalil Gibran to take with me. I've read some of it, but it's pure extra concentrated philosophy and requires, or more

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aptly, provokes, a lot of thought.

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I've been working on this half the afternoon. I think I'll take time out to eat and then come back and finish this page now that I've started it.

Sat. Evening

We went down to eat oh; then came back and sat outside on the grass where it was cool. It's been well over 90 the last three days, just conditioning us for what is yet to come, I guess.

Kung, another navigator and myself have a cabin here in a tourist cabin place. It's a very nice place, cool and clean, and the bus runs right by here going to the airport or town. Two more of the pilots and their wives have cabins here too, so we all get together and worry about the situation.

I think I've said about enough for one time. You might try writing to me here just in case it's several days before we

leave. I should be getting some mail
forwarded from Wilmington pretty
soon too. C

Love
Bud

P.S. I'll let you know what our
future address will be as soon
as I find out myself, and you'll
hear from me some more before
we leave the country.

There's also another bond enclosed
that can be put with the rest of them

Sept 10 '43

Dear Non + Grand,

All 'three' of your letters arrived about the same time. Actually only two but there was two copies of the first one. That was "blow to my morale, after sweating out the mailing, getting one letter and thinking all had not been in vain, Then to find it was the same letter as I'd had two days before. All my spite is for the mail system though. I'll be glad to get any letters you write, even two or three copies. Just to show you how your poor little letters look when they get here I'll send you the extra copy.

This romance business is quite the problem just at present, liable to continue that way for some time yet. Janet works there on the post at Wilmington, her home is in Wilmington and she's the only child in the family. Not quite 21 yet, 5 ft 7 or 8" - weight 75? or thereabouts, brunette. That's about all the vital statistics, and as for getting lyrical I'm afraid the surroundings here discourage that. The whole 'heck' of it is we just had time enough to fall in love and not

actually get to know each other - when the Army pulled this little deal on me and spoiled everything for the time being. She's waiting for me, and all that and certainly intend to get back there, but this idea of getting your love affairs spread from one side of the world to the other isn't one bit to our liking. Anyway, the future looks brighter.

I've been giving considerable thought to that suggestion Frank made. From all indications there's just two outs for me when this phase is over, either flying or farm - and I believe I'd much prefer a good steady job flying. It's only recently since I left the U.S., that my qualifications would justify my putting in an application to any airline. Whether to write worded after I'm back in the U.S. and apply in person or try to send a written application from here is the big question. I'd appreciate any suggestions and information Frank can give me.

As usual I can't tell anything about what goes on here which is just as well. Living conditions can just barely be given that term. All in all

I'm quite bitter about everything. That's one reason I haven't been writing very much; I don't like to write a continual sob story, and anything else is a military secret. Lately I've gotten to a state of mind where nothing matters much one way or another, and I seem to get along better.

I've never seen a country like this, all the natives go around with an unhappy, hopeless look on their faces. I don't blame them any either. All of us get the same way, usually you get a bunch of men together there's a little humor in the crowd somewhere, but everyone here looks and acts like a lost soul in a forgotten corner of hell. That is very near the truth too.

The only good news we've had around here is that Italy quit. Now if we can persuade Germany and Japan to do the same without too much time and trouble, I'll feel this ordeal here hasn't been all for nothing.

Well, I ought to be ashamed writing a letter like this, but, no matter what my intentions are to start with, I always end up in the same tenor.

I'll be seeing you some day when it's possible to return to a normal life and state of mind.

Love and

Forrest Dale (376)
Oct 29 49

Dear Mom & Dad,

The Army is getting rather fancy with their office paper don't you think? I guess it's a case of take what they can get over here, and the results are quite unexpected sometimes.

I've been pretty busy the last few days for a change. Doing more flying and longer hours on the briefing job. Quite a bit of the time it means getting up at 7 A.M. and it doesn't take much of that to complicate the sleeping hours. The weather has cooled down to a point where it's comfortable though, and everyone feels better than when all we were doing was sitting around sweating.

I had a chance to fly quite low over some of the medium high parts of this country the other day and it's quite pretty. It's rough country, steep hills, terraced for farming with quite a lot of woods. All the leaves had turned color and with some evergreens, green hillsides and

some red dirt here and there, it added up -
to some very nice scenery. It would make
nice resort country if it wasn't so far from
anywhere.

Living conditions have improved a lot
around here lately too. More buildings have
been added, so instead of three in a room and
one on the porch, there's just two in a room
now. Some fellows have gone home too,
which gives the rest of us hope that someday
we too can go. The food is rather questionable
at times, ~~even~~ in awhile they'll overdo them-
selves and really have a good meal, like
roast duck the other day, and then the next
few meals we make up for it. The idea
is to eat enough when it's good to carry
you over the rest of the time.

I thought I was going to get a lot of
letters written this morning and then some
business came up that took most of my
time. The trouble with everything around
here is you can't write about it. It's pretty
hard to write at all without saying something
you shouldn't.

Love
Bud

