Sunday afternoon

December 5, 1943

Dear Mother,

Two years ago, on a sunny and yet snappy Sunday afternoon, Dad was returning to Conway after a good roast beef dinner and an hour of rearranging the fraternity furniture from the pledge formal of the night before. As Bill Virgin and Dad came up the walk Professor Fink rushed from his house next door and shouted, "The Japanese have bombed Pearl Harbor."

That moment changed the whole course of my life. At first there was a period of intense excitement and anxiety - What was going to happen? After the New Years a nervous calm prevailed but war became more real. Shocking defeats hit the U.S. and her
allies, coffee, sugar, gas and oil were
rationed, bond drives and civilian
defense organization, the draft, the
college acceleration program and college
reserve brought the war close by
December, 1942. Then I was called
in February, 1943, for Basic training
as an A.C.C.Pot. in Miami Beach, Florida.
I passed through College Training,
Pre-Flight and Primary training and
December, 1943, finds me in Basic Flying
training at Pecos, Texas, with the
future looking bright for a U.S. victory
by this time next year.
I have been putting this
letter off all week in the hope
that I could get some definite
news on the course of my future
training. As it looks now I
will probably get a full eighty
hours in BT-13's for a brand new
in today from Merano Basic School
and they will be the first ad-
vanced students in AT-17's this
month and in B-25's next month.
I will be one month behind then.
Rumor has it that we are in line
for instructing or air transport
upon graduation in March. I hope
that I don’t have to instruct.

Prong: We got paid Tuesday
evening but then had to pay
back fifty cents for our Thank-
giving dinner. Some inspecting
brass has been here lately and
so the quality of the food has in-
creased amazingly.

Thanks for digging for my
Christmas list. I am going to
address some cards this afternoon.
Enclosed you will find some
money with which I wish you
would get something for Shirley
and Julia for Christmas. And don’t
forget Grandmother Minkar either.
Fruit cake, cheese, crackers, peanut
butter, toll house cookies, etc.—I
like them all. Nothing but white
in handkerchiefs please. Socks,
underwear, writing paper and a
watch are all I can think of in the line of gifts for myself (or a writing paper pack.).

I am afraid the boys in my barracks are getting tired of hearing about Creighly and Wilmington.

Shirley has written some grand letters lately. Last week Mr. Metstein, Mr. Boykin, Ben, Bill Virgin, Ralph Lower, Julia and Professor Thompson wrote. This morning I received a letter from you and a letter from Grandmother Jones.

Say hello to everybody for me.

Love,
Lee