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United States Army Air Force

Sunday evening October 31, 1943

Dear Dad,

Another phase of my aircrew training has been completed. At the end of my eighth month in the Air Corps I have seen service in Florida, Nebraska, California and Arizona and have had basic military training, college pre-pre-flight review training, pre-flight training and primary flying training. To my credit is ten hours of flying 85 horsepower Piper Cubs and 65 hours of flying 165 horsepower Stearman PT-17s.

This has been a grand experience. I have been trained along heretofore undeveloped lines, have seen much and have made many new friends. In many ways I have grown a little more mature. Naturally at times this life has not been easy but there is a job to do and this life is preparing me to help complete the job.

But my training is only fifty per cent completed. From what I know now the following is what

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is in store for me from November till March. At 1400 Wednesday, November 3, 1943, roughly 200 cadets will leave Thunderbird II for basic training at Pecos, Texas. (Rumor has it that some may go to Mintor Field, Bakersfield, California, for single engine fighter and some will go to Morano Field, Tuscon, [sic] Arizona, for two engine fighter training). Pecos is in the middle of nowhere but is supposed [sic] to be tops as a flying field. At Pecos we should fly about thirty hours in BT-13's and the rest of our eighty hours in two engine AT-11s or 9s. Then at advanced we should be able to choose our ship — B-25, B-26, A-20, B-17, B-24, B-29. Our instructors will now be army flyers. Basic will consist chiefly of step ups to more powerful ships, reviews of primary fundamentals, formation and navigational flying.

I wish that you and Mother wouldn't worry about me. My schedule leaves little time for letter writing so please excuse the lack of news. I am in great shape; flying training is perfectly safe. The only accidents in primary have been minor wing scraping ground loops. Our planes are tops; Mr. Newton put a Stearman into a spin, put his feet up in the air and his hands over the sides and after one more turn our ship leveled into cruising flight.

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I am glad that my PT was a Stearman for comments of boys who fly Ryans and Fairchilds say that they are hardly more than Cubs — safe, but not powerful, not capable of all manuevers, [sic] not requiring much skill to master and a huge jump into BTs.

Yesterday I was Junior Officer of the Day and so I have weather and aircraft identification tests for tomorrow morning. The J.O.D. makes loud speaker announcements and acts as office boy for the Commadant [sic] of Cadets.

I will mail some letters and my class book home soon. I received a letter from Ben yesterday. He seems to like Phillips Academy as much as Shirley likes Williamsport. He plans to enter Princeton if the army allows. Bill Virgin wrote that he was classified as a pilot at Santa Ana.

Penn came through against Army. That Army - Notre Dame game should really be tops. Creighty should bear the brunt of the attack now that Bertelli is gone.

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I'm studying weather now so I'll close.

Give my best to everyone.

Yours,

Lee