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Pecos Army Air Field Pecos, Texas

Sunday afternoon December 5, 1943

Dear Mother,

Two years ago, on a sunny and yet snappy Sunday afternoon, I 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 I 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

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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. Pvt. 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-13s for a bunch came in today from Morano Basic School and they will be the first advanced students in AT-17s this month and in B-25s next month. I will be one month behind them. Rumor has it that we are in line for instructing or air transport

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upon graduation in March. I hope that I don't have to instruct.

Irony: We got paid Tuesday evening but then had to pay back fifty cents for our Thanksgiving dinner. Some inspecting brass has been here lately and so the quality of the food as [sic] increased 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 Minker 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

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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 Creighty and Wilmington.

Shirley has written some grand letters lately. Last week Mr. Wetstein, 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