

Boring!
More agonizing
about likely
failure to get
wings, but
something re
birds near end.



U. S. NAVAL AIR STATION
JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

April 24th + 30, '42

Dear Folks,

Any pride you may have
had in my aviation career has, I fear,
been unjustified, and any worries
I've had have proved only too
justified. Though they probably didn't
help much. The truth is that I've
probably washed out as a flier, having
got a "down" an "up" and then yesterday,
unluckily a very windy day, another
"down" - all on "Squadron Time", and
though I've asked for more time, it
is extremely unlikely I'll get it.
What then?

Well I must be prepared to try my
hand at something else. Naturally my
feelings are mixed. I'm disappointed
in myself and somewhat humiliated
at the prospect of not being allowed to
finish something I planned to finish
just because I'm not good enough.
but there is also a sense of relief
from the strain of something I found
difficult and fatiguing. As I see it,
the reasons for failing are a combination
of slowness to catch on and extreme

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nervousness during checks, so not only was I not very good at best but tense as well. With a number of down one is apt to lose confidence even if one knows one can or thinks one can get by. but the question is will one get by. Navigation has undoubtedly taken it out of me not a little every morning or afternoon we've had it, there having been a daily quiz, which I've usually nowhere near finished hence failed, for the last several weeks.

With the general importance of navigation and the trouble I have with it, making careless errors again and again, but apparently unavoidably because of numerous tables, measurements, etc., as well as being just plain slow, maybe it's all just as well I'm not destined to be a naval aviator. That I could get by I still consider a possibility if they gave me more time, but it's undoubtedly questionable.

I haven't had much of a chance to consider other possibilities, but have compiled a list for suggestion's sake. It follows:

1. A.V.S.
2. Coast Guard
3. Army Air Corps - Bombardier
4. V-7
5. Submarine School



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6. Regular Army
7. Naval Intelligence
8. Marines
9. F. B. I.
10. Lighter-than-Air (Latham) - Navy
11. Gliding

Of these the first is most likely, I guess. A high percentage of fellows who wash out of flying here are offered A. V. S. (Aviation Volunteer Service - I think) commissions, which result into ground school teaching or any of several odd jobs. But this need more investigation.

Pa, thanks for news, checks (is that actually wrong?) and amusing chipping about Francis Russell.

Am amazed that Squam is well up. I thought it would take several years to recover.

Your wildflower notes remind me of last spring, Pa, when I was frantically collecting them by the dozen. You ^{and Ma} and Nance take a look at my collection sometime. It's fairly

representative and is in the cupboard
below the one where the shells are.
There are a few spring wildflowers
hereabouts, but neither they nor the
bird migration is much in evidence.

Almost a week later
Apr. 30

Dear Folks,

This is extremely embarrassing.
I thought I had finished and sent this
letter last Thursday or Friday I guess it
was, but just now found it in the
bottom of my box. You'll probably get
the postcard first and won't make too much
sense of it, which is why I'm bothering
to send this. You can see what a fix
I was in, having failed to get through
on Squadron time and that now with
Board time about to begin, whenever the
red tape is cut. The pressure is greater
than ever and the danger of washing
out ^{far} from over. Frankly when I
appeared before the Board I was
~~expecting~~ ^{expecting} to be turned down for more
time and resigned to the fact that
I should have to look around for
a new job — because "Board" time
is almost nonexistent these days.
Not only that, but I actually got
to thinking that maybe it was all



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for the best since both flying and the most important of the ground school subjects, ^{navigation} have been giving me more trouble than almost if not any combination of things ever have.

Oh dear! It is mostly a matter of speed. In time almost anyone could learn to fly fairly well, that is in a group such as is here. It is only the exceptional ones that don't have any real difficulties and don't need any luck to get by. As far as ability is concerned I still think I'm at least average, but I must get more easily upset in "checks" if my interpretation of my flight record, all pretty much in black and white, is correct. Being, however, definitely slower than average in navigation has made everything tougher, and any exam I don't finish gets me in a terrific sweat, and this probably got me more tired, discouraged

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and generally fed up than I should have been otherwise.

Well, I haven't flown for a week now and navigation, except for Sunday re-exams, which will continue for a while, worse luck, is over. These last two weeks of ground school include gunnery, theoretical and practical (on the range rather than in the air), and ship and plane recognition and aren't so bad, so one is more rested at this end as well as from no flying. I've proved myself capable of getting an "up," but need two before getting two "downs." The difficulty consists of more or less respectably performing five things: pylons, small field procedure, spot landings slipped to a circle, wing-overs and stunts, not mugging any, and all when "under pressure," but unless it turns into a jinx, I should get by this time. If not, then there's a least one thing I don't have to worry about any more, and can look around for something more secure, more suitable for me and less wearing. I'm naturally hoping that this is the main hump.



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as it is apt to be, causing more trouble than any other does to the average cadet, and not just a "snoll." Other things being equal those that enjoy flying the most doubtless do the best, but most of us frankly get very tired of it. Solving can be fun, but one hasn't time to just fool around and do what one wants to. It all should be much better when one is through ground school and gets occasional days off. Lately I've been restricted week-ends for not passing blinder, which hasn't helped matters, but night radio is the place to meet the boys, hundreds of them, even if it is rather a farce.

I have finally got my Florida bid list over 100, but it would be double that if one had been able to get around more. The ^{station} ~~base~~ list stands at 60. Mockingbirds take the

place of robins and are every where. In
the woods are many kind of wood peckers,
summer tanagers (all red), cardinals
- along borders - painted buntings, white
eyed towhees, bobwhites, quail catchers,
titmice and many others. Instead
of whip-poor-will there are chuck-wills
widows - yet to be seen.

Hopefully, love
Toots

P.S. This is amazing. When letter finally gets
off, it comes back from Tax because of having
"Mass." omitted, something I've never done
before. Even so there is no new news except
that I had my first instruction hop, with a
new instructor, my fourth, Eric Hyland, whose
picture was in the Herald last Sunday. I should
be through "yellow perils" at least by middle of
next week - regardless of success or failure.