

No. 4 S. F. T.B.,  
Saskatoon,

23-12-41.

Dear Mum and Dad,

Christmas is just about here and there is considerable jubilation in the camp as after some uncertainty we have finally been given  $3\frac{1}{2}$  days clear. Having nowhere within striking distance to go Thor and I will be on station and will take a look at the countryside. Last Saturday for the first time in our six weeks here we had enough leave to see Saskatoon by daylight from the ground level, but in one afternoon one can't see everything so we should be able to fill in the time.

We were walking down the street on Saturday night when a large and totally strange Canadian policeman dashed up to us, asked us if we had any place to go for Christmas dinner, and insisted that we go to his residence - all three of us. So that's that. Actually there have been more Christmas invitations from the countryside than there are New Zealanders to accept, so our welcome hasn't worn out yet.

Since my last letter we have started night flying. We do 12 hours of it here and it's not bad fun when you get used to taking off and landing on something that's not there - as far as you can see. We had an advantage in having a couple of

hours' experience at home before we came here. The city of Saskatoon is a wonderful sight from the air at night, being just a blaze of lights - probably a very different proposition from the show Hastings will be putting on now there is definitely a war on in the Pacific. We had a lot of fun with one of the boys the other night, after we had been flying at another auxiliary 'drome a few miles south of here. As soon as you got in the air you could see the lights of the city, and just had to steer for them; but no, this chap wasn't a bit happy when he had to bring a 'plane back and dashed around trying to find what course he should steer. The boys went into fits every time "210°" was mentioned for days after.

It's going to be literally a "mildly" disappointing Christmas unless some more snow falls shortly, because although there's plenty on the ground right now there still isn't going to be quite as much as we had hoped for. I mean, if you're going to have a snowy Christmas you might as well do the job decently, eh? It's astonishing how quickly we have become accustomed to living in a climate of perpetual frost, because temperatures have very seldom crept above freezing point since we arrived. Right now it seems like quite a mild day, and the temperature is  $24^{\circ}$  above zero - which means  $8^{\circ}$  of frost.

It's significant that here they announce the temperature over the radio rather more frequently than the time, so we are kept pretty well up. The coldest day so far has been about  $30^{\circ}$  below, I think, but the Canadians keep on saying "Wait till it gets to 40 below," as if that is something. We are waiting.

Contrary to your expectations, Mum, I didn't fall and break anything on arriving here, but one of the chaps had a spot of bad luck while skating over the week-end, as he fell and fractured a bone in his hand. It's a wonder I haven't broken a bone in a much more difficult place, in view of the wear my trousers seat is showing.

There's a really posh hotel in this place which I must photograph and send in this way to show you. It easily outdoes anything I've seen at home in bigger cities, and is a beautiful building. It's run by one of the railways.

I think this will have to do for just now, so love from

Anda f.