

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

2-2-42.

Dear Mum and Dad,

The mail system to this part of the world is entirely beyond my comprehension, as last week there arrived three more letters from home - two from you folks and one from Joan. It comes in the weirdest drils and drabs. The last letter was from Tiran, and was dated Dec. 21. Perhaps there will be some more in a day or two, but in the meantime I am somewhat worried because you don't seem to have received your Schick yet, father. Surely it can't have gone astray, as it was posted at the same time as the stockings and other rubbish. And by the way, I'm sorry you had to fuss about customs duty; that was an oversight on my part, as I posted everything in a great rush at Vancouver and evidently didn't take time off to label it properly. Better luck next time - I hope. The boys tell me that export of stockings from Canada has been stopped, so I guess there won't be any next time for them.

So the "Gerald-Tribune" thinks I am a Sergeant-Pilot, huh? Well, they were considerably premature as I am not likely to be one until the end of February. It's very sad, but last Friday was to have been Wings day, and

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we didn't get them. So now we just sit around hopefully for another month. In the meantime there appears to be nothing much to do except fly, which we do whenever the weather permits. January was rather remarkably fine - "a winter in fifty years" one Canadian called it - but there has been some not-so-good weather in the last few days. I know Dad will agree with me when I say that the rougher stuff is really good flying practice, though, because you can't have it smooth all the time.

To-day two of us, pupils both, were up with our instructor on instrument flying; I was at the controls while the other chap curled up in the back seat for a snooze. "Push the control column forward and wake him up," grins my instructor. "He looks far too peaceful." So I shoved the stick forward; the nose went down in a hurry, the pupil got left behind, and there was a loud crash as he hit the roof. He didn't know what struck him until he saw the two of us in front laughing at him. After that he did up his safety belt and sat very tight.

Hum, did you not tell me that I had a great-grandmother or something, named Eliza Day, and connected with the Day of Day's Bay? Because in our course here I have been

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chatting with a Peter Day, from Pukekohe, whose ancestors were also connected with Day's Bay. I told him that if all the facts were to come out he was probably a forty-second cousin. I'm meeting these possible relations everywhere; remember how my first instructor at Tairāhī was a Day?

So poor Henrietta is on a starvation diet. That's sad for the old girl, and for her owner, too. Perhaps you could hitch a sail to my push-bike, if all else fails. Just won't the roads be quiet! Maybe Henrietta has earned a rest, anyway, but I hope it won't be too long a one. Bothersome people, those Japs.

A bunch of Waafs arrived on station this morning. Just what they are going to do, no one seems to know, but if they improve the cooking I suppose their presence is justified. At the moment they have the same food as us, and if that doesn't make them want to take over the kitchen, well, I don't know what will.

I was in to see Henry Cotton in the city hospital again on Saturday; he is getting on fine and is propped up in bed surveying a row of painted toe-nails peeping coyly out from the plaster. He had rather a nasty fracture of one leg but will be O.K. in pretty quick time.

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Maybe father would be interested in one or two little items I don't think I've mentioned about these Cessnas of ours. They have two 225 h.p. Jacobs 7-cylinder radial engines, American-built, and the rated altitude for these - that is, the height at which they are supposed to give maximum performance - is 5,500 feet. They are not supercharged. Some of the 'planes are fitted with constant speed propellers - too tough to explain in a letter, but once you set the engines at a certain number of revs. you can throttle back a long way before the revs. fall off at all. The pitch changes automatically on the props and keeps the revs. up. Having two throttles to look after was a bit of a nuisance at first, as both motors have to be synchronized, but one gets used to it. The constant speed jobs cruise 10 to 15 mph. faster than the ordinary wooden-prop 'planes, so you can see that they are much more efficient.

Well, folks, we haven't been doing anything very exciting just recently, so consequently news is at a premium and I'll have to call it a letter until next week. Keep on writing - you should see us go for our mail - and if you get a snap or two taken, send 'em on.
Love from
Arnold G.