

Robert L. Stone to Jacob Stone, Beatrice Stone, Don Stone, and Jim Stone

Childress, Texas, 27 June 1943.

Autograph letter signed, 4 pages.

[Draft Created by Crowdsourcing]

Sunday

Dear Dad, Bee, Don and Jim —

Was good to talk to you this morning and tell you about my whereabouts. Had quite a bit of excitement after I wrote you from Wichita Falls where we were held over for 9 hours due to a wreck down the road. We sat up all night and finally pulled into a cross roads on the tracks at around five the next morning. Upon inquiry we were told it was the town of Childress. It's a small place with a main street quite comparable to Bloomingdale. It's a dry town run by church people so that you can't even buy beer. No kidding it is really an incredible setup and I can't describe how miserable it is. Open-post means nothing here because we're restricted to 25 miles and so nobody goes to town, because there is really nothing.

Pretty soon some G.I. trucks brought us out here to the field which is really something. It's very flat desert country which is dusty as anything and extremely hot. We

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live in single story barracks that aren't too hot. The food isn't comparable to Ellington but it's not bad. About the only good thing so far is the fellows. We have a class of about 120 and the're [*sic*] really great guys.

Starting with our class the course has been changed from 12 to 18 long weeks. We will graduate as "Bombagators" (Bombardier-Navigator). In fact, the first thing we take up is navigation which is meant to be mighty rough. The upper classes say that the work here is really tough and washouts are frequent. All our officers have told us the courses and flying are incomparable to anything we've ever done before. Incidentally are C.O. is a captain who's hard as nails and known to be a stinker. The discipline here is very strict since they turn out [*inserted: good*] officers as well as bombardiers.

Our course is so tough and keeps us so busy that we never have a minute to our self. This time I really mean it when I say you won't hear from me because I know we'll have no free time. I'd really appreciate it if you'd tell all my friends that I'll really appreciate mail but won't be able to write back, as much as I'd like to. Please ask everyone to write because it's really lonely

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and mail will be especially welcomed. I hate to lose contact with everyone but writing will be an impossibility from all indications.

The day we arrived we were issued a lot of new equipment [*sic*]. Each man got a waltham wrist watch, a stop watch, a series of complicated computers and dials, bombing tables, a lawyers brief case, rulers and compasses, a drawing board, lots of tech manuals, and a box of books and small gadgets none of which mean anything to us. It was just like Xmas opening box after box of instruments etc.

Just had a thought. One of the boys has a camera here, most illegal of course. We thought we'd take some snaps and send them home but unfortunately we can't get film. If you could get us some "xx 828" Kodak film I'd really appreciate it. If you can send some, wrap it in a box that has nothing to do with photography because we'd be in a real mess if detected.

Guess I've told you just about everything that's happening so far. I hope you'll understand the setup here because it's going to be rough and getting through will be a real [*struck: ly*] accomplishment. Please write often because it's really lonely out here and I do mean lonely. Be sure to send any letters I write you on to Don

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and Jim.

Lots of love —

Bobby

P.S In case my address is blurred on the envelope and you didn't quite get it on the phone.

A/C R.L.S 12120188

Class 43-13 Sqdn 7 Flight D

AAFBS

Childress, Texas.

Notes:

The letter is written on Army Air Forces Bombardier School, Childress, Texas letterhead.