

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

Childress, Texas, 8 August 1943.

Autograph letter signed, 4 pages + envelope.

[Draft Created by Crowdsourcing]

Sunday Aft

Dear Dad, Bee, Don, Jim, & Barry —

It seems like ages since I've written you and so I've got lots to relate. As you can see I'm still here at Childress living one mighty gruelling life.

We now get up at 5:00 and work through until 9:30 at night. The weather has been so damn hot that sleeping is almost impossible. For the last three weeks the temp. has been up to 113 and 115 every day without a break.

Except for one bad week, ground school in navigation has been O. K. We've had three navigation missions so far. One to Chickasha, Oklahoma: the second to Roswell, New Mexico: and two days ago to Tulsa, Oklahoma. The missions have all gone well, and on the last one I flew a zero-zero mission — that is I split destination on my E.T.A. (Estimated time of arrival.) The missions work as follows. On the way out one student is in the back of the ship and does Dead Reckoning. That is he reads drift and the compass and directs

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the pilot accordingly. He's the primary navigator and gives all directions to the pilot. The other student sits in the nose of the ship and flies Pilotage which is flying by visible landmarks that he sees on his sectional map. It's really a heck of alot of fun. We fly in AT-11's which are twin engine, twin finned advanced bombardier trainers. They carry ten one hundred pound practice bombs. Nice ships that cruise around 160 or so. Only thing is they bounce around quite badly when you're in the back doing DR. On our first flight 18 out of 26 in our flight were sick. It took quite a toll on our next two flights too, but I'm lucky enough not to be bothered no matter how rough it's been. Hope it keeps up.

About three weeks ago we started taking bombing in ground school. We had to learn all about the sight itself which is a very complicated gadget. We also studied all about bombs, fuzes, and racks.

For the past three weeks we've been spending four hours a day down in the hangar working on the bombing trainer. It's a platform rigged up 10 ft. above the ground on rollers. One man drives it and the other bombs with the sight which is rigged up to simulate

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actual bombing conditions. We work down there so's to learn the bombing procedure before going into the air.

Tomorrow we go down on the line to fly our first bombing mission. For the first week we'll fly "dry runs" every day before we drop our first bomb. From now on we'll be flying every day including sundays. Fun but rough!

This grind is really something. Our flight has been lucky enough to lose only two men so far. One other is asking to be washed out because the strain is too much for him. A lot of us feel that way but we'd never quit until they forced us to, and I hope that will never be. Aside from the work here there is nothing to report because that's all we do. Week-ends are a non-existent creation not made for cadets. It's really rough and most of the time seems like a futile existence. I won't start philosophizing or I'll be rambling for pages. Please keep writing cause I love to hear from you all, even though I can write back. I miss you all and only wish there was some way I [*struck: I*] could get home, but in the

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cadets that's unheard of.

I've tried to reach you by phone the last few nights but haven't succeeded yet. I have another call in for tonight. Perhaps I'll reach you then.

Love to you all —

Bobby

P.S. Please be sure this letter goes the [*struck: r*] rounds!

[*envelope*]

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Class 43-15

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Notes:

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