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AIR CORPS TRAINING DETACHMENT
CAMDEN, SOUTH CAROLINA Southern Aviation School

Monday 1st Dec. 41.

My dear Mum & Dad,

Well dears, I've soloed at last, & thats something if its not everything Its a queer sensation to be up there all by yourself & believe me when youre solo that front cockpit sure looks empty. I went round for 45 minutes & I had a little trouble with the engine, it was turning over too fast & it took me four times round before I could get into land, anyway I finally made it O.K. & thats the main thing. The mechanics had to retune the engine afterwards. It wasn't at all ~~difficult~~ serious, but it just made it difficult to get on the airfield as when the ship got on the ground it was inclined to run right accross the drome before it stopped.

Still I mustn't get too confident as more chaps fail after they solo than before. About 8 chaps have been kicked out allready & altogether there are about 16 boys up for elimination checks, & as there are only 40 British boys here

that's quite a lot.

We had a good weekend this week. We went over to Columbia where we had an invite out. It appears that the people who invited us over, had come from England thirty years ago. Gosh they were swell people, they have some relations in Northampton, all actually they come from Leeds. We went there for tea & then they took us to a show & then back to supper, & they insisted we stayed the night as we had such a long way to go back. Gosh it made us feel homesick too, there were pictures of the King & Queen & even Queen Victoria too, all over the house, all the furniture & ornaments were English in fact it looked nearer to an English home than anything I've seen since I landed here, We had eggs & bacon for breakfast & afterwards we went for a drive round to see some of their relations over here. For dinner we had Roast Beef,

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yorkshire pudding, peas & potatoes & believe me an English dinner like that is a rarity in this country. & we enjoyed it more than anything we'd had since we landed in this country. Its funny, but although those people had been here for 30 years they haven't got the slightest hint of an American accent.

They were so good too as they even drove us back the 35 miles into camp, we asked them if we could do anything to repay them, & they said ~~that~~ we had given them more pleasure than they'd had in years, & if we wanted to repay them, the best way would just be to go over & see them again.

We had a good chance to have a ~~good look~~ at the country side yesterday, You've seen pictures of the darkies picking cotton in the fields of Carolina, well, this is the place, their are as many darkies as their are white men, the cotton picking season is over now, so they all get other jobs, till it comes around. Pretty soon they'll start sowing the cotton again & then the fields,

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will be one mass of colour with the niggers coloured dresses & clothes. It's a very flat sandy country here & you can see for miles & miles without seeing even one of the little wooden shacks that the darkies live in.

Well dear's the war seems to be going a bit better now doesn't it, at least that's how it seems from the news we get over here. So maybe it won't be long before it's over, personally I don't think it will see another year. I'm supposed to be over here for 30 weeks, but 30 weeks isn't so long really, so keep smiling & I'll be back sooner than you know.

I'm afraid I'll have to close now as I'm due to go out for flying in about 5 minutes time, so cheerio dears for the present, keep your chins up,

Your Ever loving Son,

Rowland

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