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Mountain View,
Ontario,
Canada.
24.1.44.



REGINA, SASK.

Dear Father & Mother,

Hope you are receiving mail more regularly now, I cabled back on the same day that I received your cable, you should also have received the "stamps" which I registered and sent by air mail over a month ago. None of the fellows have been receiving much mail from England lately, since last writing, I have had one air letter dated 31.12.43 and one airmail 30.12.43. two "Chronicles", the "Times" continues to arrive fairly regularly.

We have now completed all our exams here, and the results came out of the "Big White Chief's" office this morning, it was rather a pleasant surprise when I found out that I had the highest average in the Flight, I was quite satisfied with myself, but I certainly did not expect to be first out of 60 fellows.

I have now qualified for a pilots licence, and have completed the air-bombers and air-gunner courses, I expect to leave here at the end of this week and go to an A.O.S. to complete the navigator course after which we actually

graduate, we shall I ⁷ hope be real "gen" men
by then.

I will now write a rather belated account
of my travels during the Christmas leave,
I suppose its only natural for ones thought
to turn towards home at Christmas time,
and I'm no exception to the rule, but in
spite of this I really did have quite an
enjoyable Christmas, it was vastly different
from the quiet time one usually spends
at home, it was probably the change though
that made it so pleasant.

As you know I went to Chicago with
Harry Lloyd one of my chums on the same
course here, we left Belleville station at 14.35
on Thur. Dec. 23rd arrived in Toronto at 17.30
and caught the 20.00 hrs to Chicago, we had
intended to catch a train at 18.00 hrs but
it was so crowded with people going away
for Christmas that we couldn't get on.

We arrived in Chicago at 09.00 hrs on Friday,
it really is a marvellous city, the people
there as I believe I told you in an airgraph
are I found most hospitable, excuse me for
repeating this, but in all fairness to the
citizens of Chicago I feel that I must say
once more that I think they cater for and
treat their servicemen and any other Allied

3/
servicemen that visit the city far better than
any British or Canadian city that I have
yet visited, no praise of mine is high
enough to do justice to their efforts.
This seems to be generally applicable to America
though, of course I admit they have the
money which makes a lot of difference, one
of the banks that I went into occupies
seven stories of a skyscraper and has a
staff of over 3,000 and it is not the
largest bank in Chicago, this gives you
some idea of the wealth that goes through the
city.

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We stayed at the Y.M.C.A. Hotel a huge building
with over 2,000 rooms.

The skyscrapers along Michigan Avenue are
an amazing sight.

We went to the top of the "Board of Trade"
building (44 stories) in an elevator that travels
at 900 ft./min; I found Harry's criticisms of
various buildings in Chicago most interesting
especially as he was talking with some
knowledge of the subject, he was by the way
studying architecture at Liverpool University before
joining the R.A.F.


On Christmas Eve we went to the "Selwyn
Theatre" to see "Elissa Landi" in the play
"Tomorrow The World" a very interesting

Melodrama about a 12⁴⁴ year old German boy who had been educated by the Nazis and taken to America after his Father had been killed by the Germans in a concentration camp for working against the Nazi party, the boy is a faithful supporter of Hitler and the play is about an American families problems in attempting to re-educate him.

We afterwards went out to a party in the Variety lounge with Pat. & Tex. two girls from Chicago University, the Americans of course are big believers in co-education, but after seeing the life of some of the students and some of the distractions of Chicago its a marvel to me how they get any work done at all, I cannot imagine a bigger contrast between there and Cambridge for instance; I thoroughly enjoyed the party, though for they certainly know how to eat, drink and be merry.

On Christmas day evening we went to the "Great Northern Theatre" to see a farce "Unexpected Honeymoon" which was very funny indeed.

At night we went to another party in the Variety lounge which broke ^{up} around about 5 o'clock A.M. Boxing Day morning, it was almost 06.30 before we crawled into bed

so needless to say it was midday before
we arose on the Sunday morning,
In the afternoon I  went to a lecture
at the "Planetarium" REGINA, SASK. Where they have a
very intricate machine (made in Germany
incidentally) which projects onto a large
dome a complete representation of all the
known planets and constellations in the heavens
and by the operation of the machine which
is electrical by the way, they are made
to move relative to each other at any
desired speed, so that overhead you can
see how the heavens would appear on a
clear night at ~~any~~ any place on the
Earth at any time during any year.
In the evening we went to the "Studebaker
Theatre" to see Noel Coward's comedy "Blithe
Spirit" which we both thoroughly enjoyed,
after the show we went to one of the
down town night clubs, but as we intended
to be out of bed early on the Monday
morning we left about 1-30 A.M. and were
in bed by 2-30, we woke up about 8-O'clock
and were out bright and early at 09-30 hrs
well it seemed quite early at the time, all
the big stores were open so we spent the
morning looking round and shopping I posted
some chocolates and ties which I hope you


will receive in due course^{6/}

In the afternoon we went to the "Civic Opera House" to see the "Russian Ballet" a really wizard show.

At night we went to see a farce "3 is a Family" at the "Civic Theatre".

We left Chicago at 12:00 clock Monday night arrived in Detroit at 07.30 hrs. and after going through the customs etc, we left at 09.00 hrs and the train rolled over the bridge into Windsor Ontario, where you are again troubled by the Canadian customs.

We arrived in Toronto at 15.30 hrs. after a late lunch, we decided to catch a later train, as we wanted to see "Claudette Colbert" in "No Time for Love" The last train from Toronto was at 20.45 hrs we had just seen the programme through at 20.00 hrs but as the cinema was about 30 mins ride on the street car from the station, so we had a terrific rush to catch it, we made it though, so arrived back at Mountain View, feeling anything but refreshed, I must admit, but quite happy and ready to tackle anything with a will, yes I certainly think the change did us a lot of good, I'm sure that in the long run our work benefited by it.

Since then I have only ⁷ been off the station
 once, on the ground that is of course,
 and that was last week when we
 went into Belleville  one evening to
 see a show, just for a change from the
 exams.
 REGINA, SASK.

Hope you like the three ~~snaps~~ that I'm sending
 one of the boys managed to get a film
 and these are the result.

I don't think I told you but round about
 Christmas I received airgraphs from Auntie
 Billy, Mrs West, Mrs Strong, Loughborough and
 an air-letter from Mrs Chisman.

I haven't received the letter from Uncle
 Herbert that you mentioned though.

Edith wrote telling me not to get frostbitten
 as Cyril did, but I really haven't
 noticed the cold much so far, all the
 lakes round here are frozen over, it's a
 very dry atmosphere though so that a temperature
 of -4°C . here doesn't seem as cold as $+4^{\circ}\text{C}$.
 would in the damp atmosphere of England.

Thanks for the razor blades, I hope they
 are more plentiful in England now though,
 as I'm not using that type of razor now.
 I bought a new "valet" razor shortly after
 arriving in Canada, but it doesn't occur
 to you to write about these things though.

The tooth brush was ⁵very welcome, as I was still using the brush that I brought from England, Those "Widom" tooth brushes really are good.

Oh! yes I also bought a £ new watch just before Christmas, I had been having a lot of trouble with my old one, I don't think it was made for the rough wear they get in the air, or to stand the vibration of an aircraft, anyway it finally packed up, so I had to buy another one as they are essential in the air.

The new one I have is a 17 jewel lever and is supposed to be shockproof, waterproof, anti-magnetic and foolproof in spite of all this it has up to now kept very good time. I hope to get the other one repaired just to be on the safe side though.

I really must retire now.

Ever your loving son,

Ally

P.S. Please let me know in your next letter if the stamps for Mr Lee have arrived.