

June 11, 1944

Dear Aunt Gert and Uncle Abe:

Here it is the fourth day of the invasion, and this moment is the first that I have been able to relax long enough to write you a line.

For months past we were always conjecturing about when the great D day would finally come. We even formed pools. Everybody put in a pound, winner take all. Well, about midnight of the fifth we were all awakened and informed of the part we were all going to play the next day. We took off while it was yet dark and formed part of the gigantic air cover over the area that was to become our first bridgehead on the continent. When we ran low on fuel and had to return to our base, we immediately refueled and flew back, this time with bombs attached beneath our wings. Thus began the part we have played ever since the first thrust. We continually shuttle back and forth between our base and the area immediately behind the German lines. There we dive bomb and skip bomb bridges railroad marshalling yards and other targets which we think worthy of our talents. After we get rid of our bombs then we range up and down the countryside at tree top level shooting up German military convoys. So far our squadron has left many a French road littered with smoking and burning trucks, half trucks, armoured cars, staff cars, etc. Ammunition trains and trucks are the babies that you have to watch out for. When you shoot them up, there is always the chance that you might go up with them.

When we hit these convoys, our first pass usually catches them by surprise. Then they usually get their machine guns in action against us on our later passes and the air is filled with tracers. We're a moving target, however, and they are stationary. That gives us a decided advantage.

On the day of the invasion, the French people were wild with joy. As we flew in to straff German troops and convoys, French farmers in the fields would wave and throw their hats in the air, even though right under the noses of the wehrmacht.

Tonight I listened to a German radio announcer, and he said that the Luftwaffe attacked our ground troops, but I am convinced that that was just some more of the typical Nazi malarky. If the German air force is in the air in large numbers as they claim, they must be using a new invisible type. I haven't seen a German airplane up since the invasion started, and now should be the time when they should take to the air because it is to their advantage when they can catch us flying low and concentrating on ground targets.

Harvey wrote to me the other day. He said that the boys at his station favored the P-51 Mustang over the P-47 Thunderbolt. Due to loyalty to me I guess, he said he was holding up for the good old Thunderbolt or T-jug as we call them. Make no mistake, the Thunderbolt is a wonderful plane. I can well testify to that, having part of my wing shot off one time and still getting home. But as matters now stand, our group was recently equipped with Mustangs, and kid, do I love em. It's fast, and is so economical on gas that on one recent mission escorting bombers, we flew way beyond Berlin and actually got into a fight over the western border of Poland and then flew back. And it is small which is naturally an advantage on these straffing missions.

And now touching on that real important function of living, namely eating - those cookies were d-e-l-i-c-i-o-u-s. Consider yourself decorated with the Legion of Merit. Thanks loads, I appreciated it. I'll take off time from the war, anytime you send them. If necessary I'll eat them while blasting at the Hun. As one of the boys said after that first straffing mission on the 6th after he had shot up all his ammo, "Gosh, it's really open season on krauts, now, isn't it?"

Love to you all, I am

/s/ BOB

(Maj. Roswell Freedman O-424740  
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