

outstanding subject of which was radio code. It was somewhat of a surprise to find "dots" and "dashes" called "dits" and "dahs". A little listening, however, made the reasons seem obvious.

We started to fly as instructors and planes became available. My instructor turned out to be a first lieutenant in the Marines, Lt. Hoey. Despite red hair he was a quiet, understanding sort of person, though perhaps a little too easy going. About all I can remember about the first flight was his saying, "You take over," or the equivalent, and my hardly daring to move the stick. The air was pretty rough and throwing the plane about a bit, and of course it felt as if one had hardly any control over the plane at all. Subsequent "hops" didn't seem so bad. On one of my first flights Mr. Hoey flew me over our house in Groton, but I seem to remember no one to wave to.

Those with no previous flight training (a few in our group had had

FIRST
TRAINING
FLIGHT

one or both of the (C.A.A. courses) were supposed to get at least ten hours of dual instruction before being allowed to solo, and then it was only after being checked. Flying "straight and level" presented no problem, so we spent the greater part of the ten hours practicing take-offs and landings. For most of this we used a dirt and grass field at Harrover (Clark Field), so as not to congest the main field at Squantum, where the checking and soloing was done. Those not on the first flight went to Harrover by bus. We usually spent most of the day there, having a little informal ground school or playing touch football when not flying, and lunching in the village. Of course we had to learn how to make turns, at first in level flight and then climbing or gliding, and we ^{were} also instructed in how to make emergency landings, simulating these frequently.

The check at the end of the

Ten hours were very much dreaded, as a number of candidates in each flight usually failed them and "washed out" as potential naval aviators even after being given extra time. One needed two good "up checks" or "ups" or three passing "ups", including one from one's instructor, to get by. It was all right flying with the latter, but when the time came to perform for a stranger, for some reason the "mental hazard" seemed tremendous. Lt. Hoey passed me all right, and I managed to satisfy the next man, an old timer, after a fashion. The second stranger, however, proved to be a different kettle of fish. When I made a sloppy take-off, he shouted something like, "What are you trying to do, kill me?" over the goosport or speaking tube, and since these were one way affairs I had to sit there and take it. Already tense, his remarks made me more so, though it's quite likely that everything he said was justified. The

result, of course, was a grim "down". I had a chance to pull myself together on a fourth check with "Shorty" Arnold and might have done so had he given me a little encouragement and not just snapped out criticism or sat grimly silent in the cockpit ahead of me, but either the pressure seemed too great or I was too demoralized or something to perform well enough.

The authorities did decide that there was enough promise to allow me a couple of extra hours of instruction with another instructor, an Eric Morrison, known for his nasty temper, being the new man I was assigned to. He, however, was probably just what I needed if a rather strong dose. At the end of the two hours he gave me an up (he could be quite pleasant on the ground), and then two other check pilots passed me all right, and I was ready to solo at last. The

last check pilot, however, decided that there was too much cross wind for me to handle safely and wouldn't let me go up that day, which was almost over anyway. The next day my old instructor gave me a warm up, but he also decided that the wind conditions were too unfavorable for my inexperienced mediocrity to cope with, so I got no further. The third day I was given another warm up, all these being semi-checks, and, of course, had to get the same man that had given me my first "down". Sure enough he wasn't satisfied, and indeed I again did badly with him, so another man had to be called. The latter turned out to be the same man that had decided not to let me solo when I was first ready, and though my performance this time was close to border line, he let me go ahead. Ten checks or warm ups was probably at least a local record, but I didn't let that

FIRST SOLO

worry me when there was no one in the front cockpit to worry about, and though my first solo landing was puny and almost off the end of the runway, I felt on the whole at ease and as free as the breeze.

"ADVANCED INSTRUCTION"

For some reason we were the first flight at Squantum to get any advanced instruction. This came after several hours of soloing, and I dived if I didn't get "Shorty" himself as instructor. He showed me how to do spot landings, make flippers, or very steeply banked turns, get into and out of spins as well as improve on my emergency landing procedure.

SPINS

Most of all, however, "Shorty" liked to do spins, which were the only maneuver I didn't care for at all. Certainly it was very easy to raise the nose of the plane and chop throttle and, after it lost flying speed and stalled, put it in a spin one way or the other with the rudder; then recover, not by yanking