

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. Most of all, however, "Shorty" liked to do spins, which were the only maneuver I didn't care for at all.

SPINS

Certainly it was very easy to raise the nose of the plane and chop throttle and, after it lost flying speed and stalled, ^{to} put it in a spin one way or the other with the rudder; then recover, not by yanking

on the stick, as would seem logical, but by pushing forward on it and kicking rudder opposite to the turn of the spin, thus putting the plane in a normal dive, from which anyone could make a recovery. Too many of these in a row, ^{however,} was just too many, and while I never got sick in the air, too many of Shorty's spins one time caught up with my lunch just after a landing and a hasty retreat to the nearest convenience.

Between dual flights we soloed, and were allowed a considerable area of sky over Boston Harbor, from Deer Id. to Nantasket. The extremely irregular shore line together with the scattering of ^{mostly drumming} islands made these flights almost scenic tours. Making simulated emergency landings on the various ~~islands~~ islands was quite exciting.

One or two advanced instruction hops was with an ensign "fresh out of Pensacola," but Shorty gave all final

SOLOS
OVER
BOSTON
HARBOR

"final" checks. I remember having some trouble with my spot landings, which were made at the intersection of the runways, but in the end "Shorty" gave me an "up". That was on Dec. 5. We were due to be sent south Dec. 8 and had as much leave as there was time between our final check and that date, in my case only a long week-end.

DEC. 7, 1941

PEARL

HARBOR

"BOMBHELL"

News of Pearl Harbor came when Phil Field, a Squantum classmate, and I were playing hard ball in the garage at home, Ma interrupting us with the "bombshell". We received no call and reported to Squantum the next morning as scheduled. Our orders were unchanged, and after listening with hollow stomachs to the president's speech, we started mostly in twos and threes in private cars, for N.A.S., Atlanta, Georgia, being allowed three days travel time. What with some of the boys washing out and others dropping to the flight behind us we were down

almost to our original number. The ^{first} roster included "Ment" Barstow, "Art" Bishop, "Nick" Fanelli, "Phil" Field, "Tom" Flynn, "Fred" Hower, "Jack" Kellert, "Dave" Kersting, "Hal" Lanyon, "Mac" (John) Mac Iver, "Mac" (John) Mac Githray, ~~and Mac Campbell~~, "Roy" Merchant, "Bill" Millward, "Bird" Moore*, myself, "Bill" Ryan, "John" Tuse, "Bob" Miller, "Hap" (Harold) Langstaff and "Harry" Wheeler. "Cove" and "Tully" had washed out; John ^{Bob McLoughlin} "Right" and Ed Siezege had been dropped to the flight below us, but eventually caught up with us at Atlanta and again at Jacksonville. Hower and Siezege were the only others to wash out further along the line than at Squantum, which meant that 84% of the original group of twenty-five got all the way through, a seemingly high average. How many were eventually killed in flight operations I may never know. So far I've heard of only one, Lanyon, who was killed in an accident rather than in combat.

* BECAME HEADMASTER OF NEW HAMPTON ^{SCHOOL} EVENTUALLY. GEORGE FOOTE WAS ALSO AT SQUANTUM THEN BUT IN ANOTHER CLASS. KNOWING HOW TO FLY ALREADY HE BREEZED THROUGH, MUCH LATER TURNING UP IN DUBLIN, THEN HOPKINTON.