

and hence the cockpits and those in them, were on the outside of the spin, the centrifugal force giving an almost terrifying pull to one's blood and all one's insides.

Well, all these on top of each other were just too much for me, and though others had difficulty^{too}, a goodly percentage in fact washing out, many of the boys sailed through without a down. One had to hand it to them, but only to demoralize oneself some more. Friend Boland did his best, but every time he tried to help me through a stunt, he couldn't budge the stick from its ^{because I had such a grip on it.} wrong course. ^{I was trying the handle.} Down^{*} followed by Squadron time, which was almost automatic if needed, came as expected, and though an Eric Bayler, who took over the "problem boy" at this time, helped out considerably, it wasn't quite enough. Having failed to get through with extra time really put me on the spot. There was a slim chance of getting a second period of

NEARLY
"WASHED OUT"

extra time or "Board" time, but that meant waiting around and eventually appearing before the Board at the main station and dressed in white. At this point in the game I hardly wanted another chance, having lost most if not all the little confidence I ever did have, but in spite of the poor case presented, the seven man board of lieutenant-commanders and up came through. The secretary told me afterwards it was a 4-3 vote!

There was nothing to do then but to try once more, this time coached by an Enr. H. G. ^{a fellow Bay states} ~~land~~, a two periods with him and three by myself, counting solo warm-ups before each check, just got me through, a "down" being followed by two "ups". I did get to the point of being able to perform each stunt or manoeuvre after a fashion, but my performance during checks was never up to what I could do by myself or with my

instructor, and it was only by being greatly encouraged that I ever passed the second check and only by the grace of God and the kindness of the check pilot's heart that I ever passed the ^{third} ~~second~~. He was very critical when I slipped to a spot just short of a circle and glided the rest of the way in straight even when I hit the circle every time, the idea being to slip all the way in, and, of course, he didn't like it when I nearly put us in an inverted spin trying to do an Immelman!

NIGHT
FLYING

It was somewhere in April that we all had our first night flying, regardless of how far along we were otherwise. For me it came between the 20 and 33 hour checks and so was actually a respite from stunting, though all it amounted to was one hour of instruction and one of solo. The dark didn't seem so bad until afterwards when one of the officers

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 FIRST
 FORMATION
 FLYING, IN
 FIRST
 MONOPLANE

observing landings said that I had landed on one runway and taken off on another, weaving at the intersection. ^{helped by unbalanced tail wheel} The last period in the primary squadron introduced us to formation flying, but not in Stearman but in little Ryan ^(NR-2) low-wing monoplanes, which permitted much better visibility. Though powered with only a 125 H.P., five cylinder engine, they cruised at about 80 knots or around five faster than the NR-2s, but they were poorer climbers. ^{these being} Very easy to fly, we were given only one instruction flight before soloing them and soon were flying in three plane sections. Howie Turner, ^(2 classes or so behind me at Harvard) by the way, gave me my solo check, which, however, consisted only of spot landings (with throttle) and wing over, the latter being performed very nicely by the little NR-2 even if they did put-put rather at the top of each. Both when soloing and when riding with instructor we