

! 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. <sup>helped by unbalanced tail wheel</sup> The last period in the primary squadron introduced us to formation flying, but not in Stearman but in little Ryan <sup>(NR-2)</sup> 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. <sup>these being</sup> Very easy to fly, we were given only one instruction flight before soloing them and soon were flying in three plane sections. Howie Turner, <sup>(2 classes or so behind me at Harvard)</sup> 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

rode in the front cockpit instead  
 of in the rear as we had in N3N-  
 and N2S-, and this made it  
 seem more real. After a little  
 practice formation with two other  
 boys came the check, but all this  
 amounted to was an instructor  
 following us to see if we got along  
 all right, which we did. Two of us  
 carried enlisted men in our rear  
 cockpits, our first real passengers.  
 (Above men I indeed). The near time ground school  
 continued right along in the morning  
 or the afternoon depending on which  
 week it was. Radio code was grad-  
 ually speeded up and for a while  
 was pretty tough. Code sent by  
 blinker was rather more difficult,  
 however, and there was a time  
 when I had to join the night radio  
 group to practice this and perhaps  
 regular code too. As I remember, we  
 had to be able to get up to <sup>(receive)</sup> a speed  
 of twelve or fifteen words a minute  
 with radio code and ten with blinker.

MORE  
 GROUND  
 SCHOOL

and we also had to learn to send code by key.

Navigation got progressively harder and relatively more important. Celestial navigation, which is used only in large planes, was, for unknown reasons, given to everyone whether they were to be fighter pilots or patrol bomber pilots, and I personally found it very difficult, principally because of the speed necessary to work out to complete the problems. Slips were all too easy to make, but hard to spot even when the "fixes" came out all wrong. On top of the celestial navigation course came the final and so-called "Practical Navigation" course, which was a necessarily absurd attempt at making problems as complicated as possible by combining all forms of navigation. Unfortunately this came along just when I was having most trouble flying, and the result was "double trouble". It took several reexams

eventually passing an exam I had had before

before I finally got through, though, curiously enough, I was never made to repeat the course as some others were.

All the time we alternated between flying and ground school we were second class cadets, an insignia on our shirts indicating as much, but giving us only Wed. night off as an added privilege. As a matter of fact I was restricted so much during April and May, either because of plumbing blinder or now, I seldom got "ashore" even to Tadmerville, while the beaches might just as well have been in Bermuda. Still, life wasn't too bad much of the time. The only required exercise besides drill was calisthenics before breakfast, so there was plenty of time for walks in the woods. With the Spring migration <sup>on</sup>, more and more birds began to be seen, and even the local residents with their <sup>heard more and more often</sup> songs, were becoming more in evidence. I had

SECOND CLASS

CADETS

BIRD

MIGRATION