

France
Sept 14, 1944

Dear Mother, Dad & all,

Just had our lights installed in our tent today, so I thought I had better do a little writing. It will be quite some time before I get any mail, so I think maybe I can get caught up in my letter writing by then.

There isn't too much I can write about, but I can tell you about the French people and different little things I have seen and done.

When we landed at our present location, there were more French people to meet us than there are at the airport on a Sunday afternoon. They were just like a bunch of kids at their first circus. The M.P.'s had an awful time keeping them away from the airplanes. It seemed that everyone from within fifty miles was here at the field. Some walked, some rode their bicycles and a very small part of them had a horse and a shiny buggy.

Most of the people are poorly dressed and almost all of them wear wooden soled shoes. They are thick soled, and very shiny looking. I sometimes wonder how these little kids can lift them as easily as they do. You know how bony most kids legs are anyway.

About the first things the French kids learn in our language is to ask for gum and candy. They come up and say "candy" or gum chum? If they don't know anything else,

they know that. In one place we were, there were three little kids come in every day with a ten pound sugar sack, and I have seen them leave once without having their bags about half full of fruit, rations or something.

A couple days ago some of us went into one of the larger towns to look around. There, I saw automobiles running on charcoal, the first time I had ever seen it. They seemed to run alright but it sure looked funny with that big tank on the side. There isn't much to most of the towns. There isn't much to buy and nothing to do. It would be different if you could talk to the people and understand them but you can't. It really seems funny to see some of the boys with their French book trying to talk to some of the natives. Sometimes you find a kid that had some English in school and you can talk with them a little, but not much.

We have had it pretty soft so far, but it won't be for long. Yesterday three of us went down to a little creek to do some fishing, but we didn't do any good. It was fine while it lasted anyway. The other day I went down to the creek to take a bath and was the water cold! It sure felt good after I got done though. Yesterday I got up to fly for the first time since I have been here. It felt strange at first, but it sure was a wonderful feeling to be flying again. I'll be doing the same thing over here as I did back in the states; same plane

and all.

I thought maybe you would like to see a little French money, so I enclosed some in this letter. A franc is worth about two cents. The large 50 franc note is French currency and the smaller one is invasion money. It's all good money, but there is nothing like good old American dollars.

Oh, - I almost forgot to tell you. I had the most delicious French fried potatoes that I have ever eaten. I never cared much for them back home, but I believe I could have eaten a bushel of these. They tasted like they were fried in butter and they were just as tender. There was no hard crust and a soft center like most of the French fries at home. I just wish I could send you some.

Well, I guess that's about all for now so I will close. Take good care of yourselves and write when you can. If any one asks about me, tell them I'll write as soon as I can.

Louis.

P.S. I boosted my bond allotment up
18.75.

P.P.S. There is a John Muntha in our squadron from Texas. His father was from the North Side. It sure seems funny to have two of us in the same squadron.