

Descriptions of
Jacksonville base, etc.
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Jan. 10, 1942



Dear Folks,

None of us were sorry to leave Atlanta. The city's all right, but compared with this the base smells. Courses tended to be dull, recreational facilities were practically nil, food was poor, watches were grim, and altogether things were not good. Mr. Schiefflin does his best, but I guess his hands are somewhat tied. Things will doubtless improve as the base develops and the training program is smoothed out.

After leaving the Atlanta base we spent the first night in Atlanta, mostly in one hotel with a bit of revelry, and the next in Jacksonville resting. Jacksonville is a little more than half as big as Atlanta but is more interesting in having a water front - on the broad St. Johns river - and more interesting vegetation around it.

The base here is also on the St. Johns several miles south and upstream. It is

huge in area, ^{and,} besides planes, hangars, barracks and other buildings, has nice areas covered with pines, live oaks, etc., most festooned with Spanish moss, which gives them a fascinating appearance. There are a few birds too, for a change, some yet to be identified for sure.

We reported Thursday morning at 0800 and did little besides signing in, moving in and going to one code class. Yesterday besides the one class most of us had physical exams - thorough, but not too tough. I was afraid they might object to my apparently enlarged heart, noticed as we checked out of Squantum, but they didn't seem to notice anything. I was put down as Schneider 114, height 73.5, weight 177, eyesight 20:20, etc., etc. Apparently everyone passed, but some with trouble. We now can be sworn in as cadets. Bunko Baker, now apparently a lieutenant j.g., tried to get in touch with me yesterday, but failed. This morning we were inspected by lieutenant-commander Roger Cutler and some higher officers and sometime to-day we take the oath as cadets and fill out things just as if we never had.

Cadets are no longer seamen second class but just cadets or ^{rather} aviation cadets. They get \$25.00



U. S. NAVAL RESERVE AVIATION BASE
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

a month as well as \$1.00 a day for food, which is, for the first time, excellent. They rate blue officer-type uniforms, without which they can not leave the base. These lack stripes on the sleeve, but have a star on each. The hat is like an officer's, but has narrower gold braid. Such the Navy provides, but not until they get around to it or after some months. One therefore has to order another, which is none too many even when the provided one finally arrives. Both can eventually be converted to ensign's uniforms - all except the hat. The blues are of course semi-formal, for going ashore, a few occasions here, etc., the regular habits for everyday wear being unchanged except that a black tie replaces the habit one. Later on we wear whites instead of blue (warmer weather). Our civilian clothes are apparently "obsolete" for the duration.

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Well, now we've all been sworn in and

are now at least what most of us thought we were going to be immediately on starting training. Cadets are not, however, all the same. There are first, second and third class cadets, except for small insignias on the khaki uniform all indistinguishable in appearance, but have respectively completed their ground school, started their advanced base flying and waiting for a doing just ground school. We are of course in the last category and because of another bottle neck don't even start ground school for two weeks. We don't fly for a long time after all, apparently as much as two months from now. First class cadets have every night off, second class get Wednesday as well as Saturday, and third class get just part of week-ends (new seven day week may alter things), but nobody minds it's so nice here. With no ground school for a while we can go to free movies ^{on the base} every night, but will eventually have study hours.

Love to all

Toots