The Training of an Airman in France and Italy


The peculiar experiences of an airman in training in France and Italy are given in the following extracts from letters written by Capt. Ted T. Hayes, a member of the New Hampshire military reserve.

Pelham Historical Society, Pelham, New Hampshire

When we are "talked" it means that we fly alone and have none in the front seat to correct our mistakes and save us from perhaps making a rather wooden out of a perfectly good machine. I have seen as many good planes smashed up in one day. So you see this is no minor matter of beauty of it is the pilot seldom receives a scratch and that is all the authorities seem to care about. Of course if a fellow is making progress and smashes up several times, he will shortly be eliminated as being too much of a hazard.

Next we go to the spiral class where we climb to a height of 599 metres. We stop the motor and spiral down to the starting point, leaving a point anywhere inside of a 150 foot circle. However, this circle looks like a freebie on a fly-fishing from 500 metres, after that we fly a very hard test which consists of two cross-country trips in the form of a figure eight, an altitude test of staying for one hour at an altitude of over 3000 feet, and flying 10 straight lines across country. Then comes morning run and aerochop after that it is hullo Dutch! But I'll tell you more in another letter, also some of the thrills I have had over there, but on a quiet day riding in an airplane is something to be looking for, and you can see much. Whole villages, farms, lakes and forests all spout out below one as good as sitting in a gigantic picture in a picture show of a beautiful night.

We had a novel entertainment the other night. Some Chinese laborer put on a show. They had dancing, dicing and sword drills or dances. Very good, and found it quite captivating and comprehended their idea of singing, and the interpreter got Chinese English all mixed up when he talked to us.

Wish you were over and tour the country with me after a day's work. I was the only one to take the automobile. I will admit that the sight is rather interesting. That the speed and skill of the men is certainly more than I expected, and certainly none of the French people to be everlasting always. Have just arrived at another destination, and the way had a chance to see a real French bed. The French bed always means at least 12 inches thick. The mattresses used for roads and buildings, an eye witness, and the richness of the emptiness for a home for some happy family. I say happy, for seems to be the joy of the French people to be everlasting always. Have just arrived at another destination, and the way had a chance to see a real French bed, and a French bed always means at least 12 inches thick. The mattresses used for roads and buildings, an eye witness, and the richness of the emptiness for a home for some happy family. I say happy, for seems to be the joy of the French people to be everlasting always.

Sundav I went to a charity feast at Chateauroux, and had the great pleasure of being present. There is a place here that is the best in the province, and the location is ideal for a field trip. I had a chance to see the town there than I have seen at any one time since I have been in France. The town is a place that is the Joys of the French people in the country. I say it is always a place in France where the French people are always happy. I say it is always a place in France where the French people are always happy.

It was on last Monday that we said farewell to the camp at Chateauroux and headed for Paris. Here we spent two days. The Place de la Concorde was filled with boche planes and cannon of every conceivable type and size, and being somewhat in our line of business was very interesting. The Palace de Glace has been taken over by the Y. M. C. A. and the night I was there, was packed to see a boxing match by the American sailors. Many of the exterior works of art in the city all wear their protection of sandbags. And, of course, the prettiest scenery of the world, the Alps.

The railroad must have some fortresses to build for in no case was beauty marred where it could be spared. It is true I didn't dare say that on the whole journey we passed through 400 tunnels all cut through solid rock, one of them being the longest tunnel in the world. We arrived in Rome the next morning. Only to spend 10 days in the city, but we hired some sea going hacks and two days seeing main sights such as Coliseum, St. Peter's, Vatican, and a host of others.

I liked Rome better than Paris. Saturday morning we changed trains a little way out of Naples and some one said it was the best looking city we were to see in Italy. It is the capital of the country.

For centuries past the Han has been making his pondering excursions into France, and I think this will be his last party. Another very noticeable thing here is the predominance of two wheeled carts. At one time they had a wheel tax in this country, but the farmers declared they could get along with only two wheels in the carts. The draft animals are always lined up single file in the hitch. We see some very good horses on the farms. I have seen horses in the shafts with a bull in the procession and a donkey leading the way. Dog carts are not at all uncommon either. It is a real sport to see a dog cart half loaded up. The road with three dogs hitched abreast and hastening every step of the way. And still another we have another combination, the lady of the house and a dog will the motive power for one of the carts. The 15 A. S. A. for me when it comes to knowing how to live. Peace seems to have been made in the air, but I hope not till I get a Hun. I would be broken hearted to think of being turned out at least one scalpel as a souvenier. Had my first trip today on the clouds today.

I spent an hour with a life and a quadrate and mother earth. The clouds were about a quarter of a mile below me and were so thick, they looked like big snow, only they were shaped more like waves than are like clouds in the sky. Climbing 1000 feet up through the cloud was just like coming up with water and seeing only unlimited amount of clouds in all directions. The clouds were so thick that I could pick out the land way before I could see it five minutes. And yes, it was some cold, wouldn't want to live more than once every five minutes. And yes, it was some cold,

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