

Harvey Letter.

Lt. Warren "Syd" Harvey was the commanding officer of Patrol Squadron Six (VP-6) at Fleet Air Base, Pearl Harbor, and the command pilot aboard the PBY that was sent to search for Earhart on the evening of July 2, 1937. In this letter to his mother, Lt. Harvey describes the aborted mission.

The available photocopy of the letter cut off the ends of some words. They have been restored in gray.



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July 24, 1937

Dear Mother:—

Your recent letter to us and the birthday cards to the girls were much appreciated. We have wondered for a long time whether you had seen our colored movie and how you liked it. It was our first attempt in colors and at first we were a little skeptical how it would turn out and were pleasantly surprised at most of the scenes.

I am glad Norma and Ernest heard my one big broadcast. It being quite late at night there I doubted whether any of you would hear it. I seemed to get quite famous as a result of my flight when I thought that I would be ridiculed for turning around in the face of bad weather. In any event the

flight never had much chance of success because of the distance involved total lack of any facilities in that area and total lack of information as to where to look. My prospects for cracking up were about 10 to 1 after searching for a little over 10 hours. I would have had to land down there by sundown in the open sea which had heavy swells with numerous white caps showing. There is no anchorages available either for a plane or ship so the Itasca would have tried to take me in tow for several days until our small tender could arrive to hoist me on board. Even the tender would have broken the planes hull, because the plane was bigger than he available

space. So in view of those prospects
my orders on leaving here were
not to hesitate to return if any
adverse conditions were encountered.
I attempted to get through or
around the storm for over two
hours - couldn't get through and
it seemed too big to go around.
I went about 370 miles to the
west - over my course to get
around - Having encountered heavy
rain, snow, sleet and ice I
had to give up, when my fuel ran
low to the point that I could
just get back to Pearl Harbor back
a 30 knot head wind which is the
prevailing wind in this area.
As it turned out the average wind
on the return trip was only about

15 knots, therefore I had gasoline to spare when I landed here. It was a hazardous flight - in the face of the existing conditions - coupled with the fact that it was a single plane flight out of all shipping lanes and only one ship in the 1650 (nautical) miles between here and Howland. If I had gone down enroute it would have been four days before the nearest ship could have gotten to me.

Needless to say I am glad it's behind me

We are all well and working hard - including the girls who are busy as bees every minute of the day - Love to all
Haven