

Dec.5/45

Dear Francesca,

I thought you might like to hear about my trip in a plane to Winnipeg. I had to wait ~~to~~^a long time for it to come - so it was a good thing that you and Mummy and Roger went back to Ottawa. It was almost dark before we got in, and then it went away right to the other end of the airport before it started. The pilot raced the engine tremendously fast to make it warm, the way Mummy does with the car - only she oughtn't to. Then the plane started to whizz along on the ground, much faster than our car can go. After what seemed a long time it suddenly left the ground and bounced up into the air. All at once the fields and roads began to get very small, just like looking at toys on the floor.

I could see the road that you and Mummy went home along, only I could see almost the whole road from the airport to Ottawa, and the cars on it looked like tiny little ants. Before we started, the sun had set below the horizon, that is, the farthest away that you can see; but when we got up in the air, we could see the sun all over again. This is because the world is round like an orange, and when you are high above it you can see a little way round the corner.

Ottawa looked very dark in the evening, and the Peace Tower was so small you could hardly notice it. The plane turned to the West, which is the direction the sun sets in the evening and also the direction of Winnipeg from Ottawa. So if you look towards the sunset before you go to bed, that will be where I am staying. Beyond Hull the Ottawa River is all frozen over and covered with snow, and we could see it stretching away into the North, where Father Christmas lives, like a broad white path. The snow out in the country was very clean and white, and the fields looked like tiny pieces of sugar icing. We were about half a mile up in the air - about as far as from you to the Peace Tower. From this height the roads and railways were tiny thin threads, and an engine and train looked like a little worm running along below.

There was a baby in the plane not much bigger than Roger, but he didn't seem to notice what was happening until the stewardess brought him something to eat. Then she brought us all tea and a chocolate bun. Everything was in cardboard cups which were put in holes in a tray so that they wouldn't spill if the plane bumped about. It was quite dark when we got to Toronto, and I phoned Margo and Mrs. Thompson and sent them our love. Then we got in again and started on the next part of the trip. They gave us supper in

the plane, but it was rather a miserably small meal in little cups. However, the air got very bumpy and the plane bounced around in all directions, so that some of the people probably wished they hadn't had any supper at all! By now there were 3 children in the plane, the oldest about your age, and I wished that you had been there to enjoy it, for I'm sure you wouldn't have minded the bumping.

During the night we landed at a place with the funny Indian name of Kapuskasing. There are great forests all around it, and they cut them down to make paper out of them, in the way I told you about when we were living in Hull. In fact, the paper of the Times, which is printed in New York, is made right up in Canada at Kapuskasing. On we flew again, right into the middle of the night. Sometimes when I looked out I could see bright sparks from the engine (like sparks out of the fire) flashing past the plane and disappearing into the darkness. And if you looked out of the window very closely, with your hands against the glass, you could see down below enormous lakes and rocks. This is a part of Canada you will learn about when you grow older. It is called The Great Canadian Shield - an enormous shield of rock covered with thousands and thousands of lakes. Hardly any people live there because there is no earth, and so no farms or animals, and people can't grow any food. But some of them dig for metals in mines, and some trap wild animals for furs.

Long after midnight we saw the lights of Winnipeg - thousands of them twinkling like stars on the ground far below. The plane came into the airport, and we all tumbled out of it feeling very sleepy and went off to the hotel and so to bed.

This letter is going to go to you by plane, just the way I have been telling you about only in the opposite direction; and that's the way I shall come back just before Christmas. Ask Mummy to take you to the airport if she possibly can.

Till then, my love to you and be a good girl and get dressed every morning in time for Stanley to take you to school,

