

ROYAL AIR FORCE STATION,  
CHURCH FENTON,  
TADCASTER,  
Tadcaster 176. YORKS.

April 24, 1940

Dear Mike:

I was very pleased to hear from you again and am trying to reply to your letter as soon as possible but I get so little time that I haven't really had a chance to answer all my letters punctually. We moved half the squadron over to France a week ago and then after this Norway business they cancelled our movement order and brought us back here and since then we've been on duty twenty hours out of every twenty-four, so you can see what a hell of a lot of time I've got to myself. I get one day off out of every seven but as we're doing a lot of night flying and night patrols lately even then I really only get twelve hours to myself and I'm so damn tired I just fall into bed and stagger

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back to duty later. As there are only two operational squadrons in this sector and as we are unfortunate ~~to~~ enough to be one of them we can't get off duty regularly like army-co-op squadrons, or ~~cost~~ <sup>coastal</sup> ~~reco.~~ or bomber ones. At the same time we've got to be ready to move on twelve hours notice being a mobile fighter squadron so you see it's rather a tiresome job. We know definitely we are either going back to France or going to Norway in the next two or three weeks but don't know which - there are no fighter squadrons in Norway now and they are greatly needed there so there's just the off chance that we'll be one of the first. Our machines are all being specially re-equipped with armor plating, self-sealing tanks etc. and by the time they're finished we'll be the most modernly equipped squadron

in the service. The <sup>3</sup>squadron Helen's husband is in is  
due for a spell on a nice quiet sector of the French  
front when there is no enemy to speak of so I suppose  
she'll be glad to know that they're not going to any  
of the hot places. Army-co-op squadrons are figured  
the easiest meat of all to fighter pilots but from  
what I've been told of the place they're going to, slow  
as they're machines are they'll still be the fastest one  
in the sector so they should be able to blow quite a  
bit about themselves. I don't quite know why but Canadians  
as a whole are greatly disliked in this country and  
after watching some of the exhibitions they give when on leave  
etc. we can't really blame the English. I don't know perhaps  
I'm becoming acclimized or something but we really are  
an ~~ignorant~~ <sup>ignorant</sup> bunch of buggers when it comes to knowing how  
to drink or talk etc. Why the Canadians wear that  
little badge on their sleeve with Canada on it, I don't  
know, when you walk into a bar or cafe ~~while~~ in London  
you can spot the Canadians right off or if you can't see  
them you can hear them - shouting + swearing, drinking more

than they can hold and generally with the worst looking  
where this side of either of the two places. I'm  
sorry if I seem rather prejudiced against them but  
I think if you know anybody that's lived over here  
for any length of time you'd find he thought the  
same thing.

I was very pleased to see the photos  
you sent and must say that Olive certainly is getting  
to be quite a marvellous looking woman. You know  
you're damn lucky to have a gal like that and  
should feel proud as hell about it. You must be  
doing pretty well in your job - keep it up I always  
was pulling for you in your family and I hope you  
show them all up. Mother was saying in her last  
letter that you and Olive dropped in to see them  
every so often and how much she enjoyed having  
you come in. I guess, from what I can gather, that  
she has had quite a job around the family this  
winter and can quite imagine how she would look  
forward to a little entertainment once in a while.

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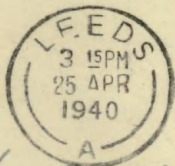
YORKS.

I don't think I ever gave her quite a square deal when she first came into the team but she sure earned one if anybody did. We had a rather unfortunate accident here the other day - one of our new Canadian corporals was leaning against the wing of one of the machines when an armorer inside the cockpit pushed the gun tit and blew the top of his head off. It sure made a mess of him, so now they've fitted a few more safety devices to our remote control button just to make it harder for us. Every time some dumb armorer pulls a trick like that they make it harder for the pilot to use the guns when he needs them. I was the first officer around after the accident and got one perfectly good tunic spoilt with blood and brains splashed all over it. Its too bad that you couldn't get a chance to get a real English drinking course

my capacity know is unlimited and I can actually  
go out and drink like a gentleman (almost).

Well, that's about all for now, say hello  
to Helen for me and say I hope it's a boy and if it  
looks like her it'll be damn cute. Write soon and  
in the meantime keep your nose clean

Bill



Mr. H. F. Pegler.

1221 - 5<sup>th</sup> St. H. W.

Calgary, Alberta

Canada.



From - P/O W. C. McKnight.  
c/o Canada House.  
London S.W.



P/O

# 41937

24.4.40

Royal Air Force

E. House

London S.W.





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