

TELEPHONE,
BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER 144.
TELEGRAMS,
AERONAUTICS, BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER.



№ 6 FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL,
ROYAL AIR FORCE,
LITTLE RISSINGTON,
BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER,
CHELTENHAM, GLOS.

25/6/39.

Dear Mike:

It was nice to hear from you again and you don't know how I appreciate hearing from all of you occasionally. I don't really get a hell of a lot of news from home and it's damn nice to hear how everybody is and what's going on. I was real sorry to hear that you and Olive had split up and it made me feel pretty good to hear that you had fixed it up. You don't ~~need~~ ^{need} to tell me how it feels as I still feel the same way about a certain person as I used to - I think I've got it worse now than I had before and I'm still trying to forget the dame. The dames, or rather dame with others thrown in as a side attraction that I've been going around with over here is alright but they don't have something or other and I really don't give a damn whether she stays or goes bugger-off. I'm not getting much chance to go out right now anyway - I'm confined to camp again. It makes an even twenty-eight days now out of the two months we've been here. This time I got it for being A.W.O.L. on a weekend and not

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being in on time on the Sunday night so for another two weeks I'm here and can't leave the station. Beside that I got an extra three days of Orderly Officer and an extra day of Duty Pilot. The C.O. gave us hell for it and said we were rapidly getting a nice reputation and the A.O.C. is coming down to-morrow to find out what's been going on down here lately. Half the class or rather a bit more than half failed their mid-term exams and about half of those only got around 20% as an average. I was lucky and passed them all except one but I got an average of eighty-two even with the forbearance so they're not bothering me on that score. Our final wings exams are coming up on the twenty-seventh of July and after that I'll be a full fledged Pilot-officer (I hope). If I get an average of between seventy and eighty I'll be gazetted a Flying officer in another twelve months and if I get over that I'll be a Flying-officer in about six months. so as I'm not going out for a while (sigh) I'll be studying pretty hard for a while. Oh, I forgot, Jack Kytta was playing in Cheltenham last Wednesday and so being rather tired of being kept in I was persuaded to go and I walked right

in on the C.O. and his wife. ^(P) He didn't say a word but
next day he called me up and said if I broke bounds
again he'd have me up and give me a loss of seniority so
I'm decided to behave myself at least for a while. I'm
got two weeks leave coming up on the sixth of August and
I'm going up to Scotland for a week then I'm spending the
second week with Kit and his parents at ~~the~~ Blackpool. He's
got a swell cousin (him) who's a reporter on the paper there
so I'm hoping for the best. I don't know whether I've ever
told you about the beer here but it's damn good - you can
get a pint for fourpence (10⁹) and it only takes about six
or seven to get you peddled as an owl. Beer is also a
bloody good drink and in Gloucestershire you can get a gang
of about ~~four~~ five pence for about three bob. (pardon s^d) a
75⁹ approx.) We had a great hour done us this week (as they
say) we were one of the squadrons (training) selected to be in
the Royal escort when they came home. It was damn tiring
though, I flew for four hours straight and I don't think
I've ever been so tired before, I was flying number two in
the flight formation and I think it's about the worst position
to fly in a formation. If you slip out you run into number
three and if you slip in you run into number one. We've
also been night flying lately and we don't use floodlights
like they do in the civil aerodromes either, Flash paths, glim lamps

wingtip flaps on all we get. It's a real thrill when you
land you can't see the ground, just see when the aerodrome
is that's all, and when you try to land what you do is
point for the aerodrome and after you've hit the ground
with the wheels and bounced up then you level off and
land - altogether a nice business. We've had three
smashes already, one fellow got yellow at the last moment
and froze on the control column. He went clean through a
stem wall and then dug a very large furrow in the
aerodrome boundary with ~~out~~ ^{what} was left of the machine.
His instructor only got a broken arm but he didn't come off
so lucky and is in the hospital with a broken leg, several
broken ribs and several teeth missing. On top of that he's
got a court martial staring him in the face when he
recovers and I'll bet you couldn't guess the charge "For
destroying and causing excessive damage to one of H.M. aircraft
and a service aerodrome". We thought that was a hell of
a joke and especially as we have to pay for one-third of
any aircraft we damage - that's not kidding either and we
going on to Blenheim's next term, they're only worth £20,000.
I can see me paying for one-third of one of those. These
Blenheims are sure swell bites, they do 295 m/p/h ^{cruising} and are
wicked ~~two~~ things to handle. You can do everything in them you

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can do in a fighter and several others besides. They'll do around 500 in a dive and spin if you just think about it so I imagine I'm in for quite a thrill. We're also going to armament camp after our leave for bombing and machine gunning from the air. They put a target on the ground and we dive on it from two to three thousand feet, the idea is to pull out about five to three hundred feet up but if you don't all they do is fill in the hole and put a new target on top.

I've bought myself several new uniforms so if I forget to pull out I'll see what I can do about letting you have them cheap. Well, pip-pip for now and all the best to you and I love and incidentally I sent Roy several new photos if you'd like to see them

Bill



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