

5 December 1942

Dear Haze,

Too late for Xmas now - I'm sorry but I'm a duffer of a correspondent. The Fella showed me your long letter to her which we were both pleased to get and to know that the brat is progressing well. Had a letter from Bill recently in which he gave me a rebuff about not writing you more often and I don't quite know why I don't - often I've got time - just sheer laziness I fear.

I've got a cracked rib at the moment from playing footy for the station a couple of weeks ago. I'm bloody mad because we've got some big matches coming off and I'll be out for another month anyway. At the time I was with the squadron and having a wow of a time although duff weather curtailed the flying too much for my liking. It was just as well I was sent elsewhere because I would have wasted a month really with very little flying and much pain as I scramble in and out of aircraft with this rib.

Which reminds me for some reason or another you seemed excited because I was a Flying Officer. Let me correct you by saying I'm a Pilot Officer and a P/O is the lowest form of animal life in the Royal Air Force and when I reach the exalted rank of a F/O I'll let you know. At present I'm back at one of the stations to which I've been several times before and don't know for how long - I was told 9 days and that made me fairly sure it would be some weeks. It's when one is told that's it for good or some months that one usually expects to be moved the day after arrival. Anyway I've been 2½ weeks this time and fully expect to be here for Xmas which will be a good thing. It's accessible, if only just, from London and as the Fella has 3 days off she may think it worth the effort to see her old man.

I'm in a little country pub and the only fink billeted in this one which suits me fine. The only trouble is too much food and fuss making - otherwise it's perfect with a private sitting and living room and colossal fires and beer laid on. I sleep on duty every second night and with a hellava damp and cold bedroom it was miserable in spite of a WAAF putting a blasted hot water bottle in the bed. I thought of an electric heater - had it laid on and have had it running under the bed for 2 weeks. The room is dry, the bed warm and although it feels as though someone is in the bed, to my regret there isn't, but McC sleeps well.

I hope to hell Bill gets my letter written the other day - some must have gone west and similarly his to me including a photo. It seems they've made a bit of a mess of his affairs - just poor old Muv's implicit trust in these useless parasites. Maybe I'll be back in time to have a go at someone for him. I figure it shouldn't be more than 2 years now. It'll still be a struggle but I don't anticipate any major setbacks. We'll crack those slippery Waps I think when we start bombing - they ain't seen nothin yet. They'll be bloody sorry old Musso ever personally asked permission of Hitler to be allowed to bomb London. Anyway all the squabbling will be in S. E. Europe. I thought I'd be bunged overseas long ago, still maybe yet. I wouldn't mind 12 months but I'll get a bit cheesed after that.

Had a long letter from Mrs. Bellringer all about Trev in answer to one I wrote her and she's asked for an answer - I wish she'd let the matter drop. It's very decent of you Haze to take on the K.K. [Katikati] business for me. You didn't say how you wished it done and damn me neither did Merv when he wrote, but I hope he gave you sufficient dough to have a good margin - if not let me know and I'll send some.

Before I forget will you see about increasing the insurance cover - with inflated prices that which was standing is inadequate. Merv can't give you a power of attorney I believe and it's not worth another being drawn up anyway - they're too damned expensive - so if you can manage conveniently without it I'd rather. I'm wondering whether you've managed to get any further with the transfer or is Quit still sticking a bit about it. If she is, well it'll have to be left till I get home, but sometimes when I'm stuck up in a kite in a foggy night and it's a question as to how hard we'll hit the deck and whether I'll know whether we hit it at all that the thought runs through my mind. Still don't get too worried about pushing the matter. Anyway let me know just how you're working with Merv will you Haze.

By the way I think I forgot to mention before about my being a godfather - what's it mean exactly and what do I have to do - get him a silver beer tankard, isn't that the idea. I figure I'll know all about these things in time.

Bye for now, love to you all now - oh Hell that seems terrible - from us both.

Cheers for '43. John [handwritten letter].