

6 May 1943

My dear Hazel,

I feel so annoyed as I've just discovered that an airmail lettercard I wrote to you hoping it would take the same time in transit as an airgraph, has probably been sent ordinary mail after all, as I've just learnt today that they can only be sent by forces or to forces. Too bad.

Anyway, Haze, I intended writing in any case just to say that nothing further has come through. I'm not quite sure what I told you in my first airgraph, but anyway if I repeat myself here you'll understand. The plane must have crashed over the Bay of Biscay and not over Africa as you all thought at first. The bodies of two of the men have been recovered, one from the north French coast – the other place not given, apart from this really dreadful news nothing further has come through, and I'm afraid that I can't give you much hope as the position is as black as it could be – a crash at sea in the darkness of night, mid-winter weather, possibly no chance of getting into the dinghies, and probably a very long way from land. We've just got to face those facts however hard it is.

On the other hand there is John being John, his determination to pull through the greatest difficulties and the fact that surely at least one of them had some chance. As I've told you I am still hoping that some day I will receive news and it will be good news. It is now getting on for five months, and so their doesn't seem any possible hope of their being prisoners, as we would undoubtedly have heard ages ago... so the only hope is that they by some miracle reached France and are in hiding. I know you too won't have given up hope, Haze, and believe me I've thought of you very often and know how you must feel, especially being so far away and unfortunately not hearing any news for so long. I wrote, but mail is very erratic, and I was overjoyed when this service commenced as the ordinary airmail service seems to be almost as bad as the surface.

Have had your cousin Harry in London lately, he has just got out of the Air Force into merchant Navy. Quite a nice kid but no 'spark' after John and his energy and personality. Methinks George left you all a grand inheritance – after all what does money matter...

Cheerio Joan [signed].