

8 August 1942

Dear Haze,

Your two letters of May and June have just arrived together with the snaps of young Anderson. He looks OK to me although I can never tell much when they're that age – the Fella says it's a bonny kid anyway and I guess women know a bit more than men on that subject. So I'm a Godfather eh? Well whatever that means I'm only too pleased to be it – I've made enquiries since and ascertained that I should give him a beer mug or something. I must see what can be done.

I rather question your remarks about his being a McCauley because he arrived on the dot. I figure my name is McC. but as far as the dot part of the statement, I ain't so sure. I don't wish to appear critical but as yet I've been unable to ally curly hair with his being a sissy of necessity – you wait a while – it's character alone that will decide and curly hair or not I can hardly believe he'll be what you don't want. The whole process though must prove an interesting interlude in the life of a couple – as yet of course I wouldn't know it! I can well imagine the enthusiasm from the two sisters.

I see Andy has volunteered as a chemist – I hope for his sake they have lost his papers for good – tell him not to sweat too much about it – much happier life as a civilian! It sounds an interesting and worthwhile proposition that Anderson firm – much more satisfactory to have the show completely – I still imagine Andy has no regrets in giving up chemistry. My personal opinion is that Rae is wise to stay at her own job in Akld [Auckland] although of course I don't know all the circumstances, and the whole matter is no concern of mine anyway.

So far I've had only one letter from Bill and I think I told you he gave no news at all, so thanks for the gen. I felt sure you would have offered any help he required but as you say with Unc doing it; it was wise from your point of view to remain outside the sphere. I wrote Bill and told him to give instructions not to sell the car – it'll be worth much more as time goes on.

Yes, I'm feeling better these days – or rather I'm feeling lousy but I've not been near hospital again. It's just the hours that kill me – I go on at 1pm till 5.30pm, have two hours off and then on again, depending on the weather up till 6am next day – this for 7 days a week for weeks on end rather gets me. The C.O. and I take turn about sleeping on the job, but of course when we're operating we both work at terrific pressure, and it's rather a nerve racking business.

I've moved again in the last two weeks – still in Lines and attached to the same parent unit, but this specialist work takes us to odd sites. I've got a very good billet, although it costs me 50/- per week. The one drawback at this station is that we have to use transport which is a bind when coming off duty at about 4am. I'm tired out and I rest a bit in the day on duty because most of our serious work is done at night.

The Fella has been much improved since her operation thank God and I hope she remains so. Frank Gray from N.P. (the Fella's brother-in-law) arrived here unexpectedly about 3 weeks ago, and had 10 days leave in London. Fortunately the Fella had a spare room above hers and Frank was set – I managed to pull off my 7 days at the same time so we had a spot of fun – one night the three of us blind drunk – Hell what a night. It's lucky as there's a nice pub across from the flat so the Fella could slip across and attend to the fodder and then return to the pub.

She's always having someone arrive at N.Z. House – Bill Baird from the News often pops in and the other day he was telling Gordon Duff about it – he didn't register for a bit but later called on the Fella. Diana Wynyard at N.Z. House is the Fella's friend and is a relation of Wynyard at N.P. [New Plymouth] so the three of them went and had many beers and home to a feed. Apparently Gordon has been floating about for months and has been lonely when in London so now he knows where to go – he was at school when Diana's brother was head boy. I'm sorry I couldn't see him though – I simply never get home these days except on my 7 days.

I had  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour in a Master the other day with my C.O. and he let me take it off the second run. I've met a N.Zer from Napier and he gives me time in a Tiger too. That is the drawback in being all here – on the 'drome I can get days of flying but it looks as though I'm taped for this special work which is bloody interesting but killing and not so hot as flying.

Now for your second letter. Thanks for explaining to Quit about the Est. – I'm surprised at her mentioning it to Auntie and Unc but she should know best what she's doing. The point is that now we're all virtually square and any discrepancy which is bound to be small can be rectified when, yes when I return. Only I do like to have things straight in this sort of business.

Thanks for writing Merv and for seeing him when you go up – I wish to Hell he'd write me, bugger the man, although I guess he is a spot busy. As for Quit wondering how we transact business before she was 21, make it clear to her won't you that we were executors and by God if I hadn't have got moving years ago when I did we'd all have had it, as the RAF expression goes. I'm not annoyed with her at all as she has a perfect right to know now she's reaching the age when she can take an intelligent interest in things, provided she appreciates the position as it was then as against present day circumstances. I hope by now Merv has paid you all a further £35 each. You see, I was not aware of all the mix-up because, as you know, Muv was never exactly explicit with anything she even understood.

Andy must be doing very well with all his orders – I certainly hope so – you people will be retired by the time I decide what I'm going to do in this life yet. Talking of the cornet I realised a long held ambition a few weeks ago – I played the Holy City, and Lost Chord in a church to organ accompaniment – beautiful.

No I've never had my shoulder operation – if I were sure of it being a success I'd do so but I've seen four specialists and I'm not happy about their reactions, so if I go to the final man who is a Group Captain, he'll undoubtedly operate and I may not be able to get a guarantee that it'll be successful and, if it isn't, I figure it'll be worse than now. A nerve in the shoulder is to be removed, or moved, or some damn thing, as a result of wrong treatment for a torn ligament in 1940.

I'm glad you say the Fella writes a good letter – I've been selling her that idea for years in the hope that she may volunteer to do my correspondence – she is not easily convinced.

I've just had to remand a case for 24 hours for overstaying leave – I felt a hypocrite because we've done it so often, the only difference I was too careful to be caught.

Thanks for attending to Hett's letter – I guess I gave you her address but in case it's: R. Nickelsen, 28 Douglas Drive, Moreton, Wirral, Cheshire.

Well that's all for now so love to all of you.

Yours, John [handwritten].