

748067

Dear All

I'm writing this on the beach today again
& by Jove it's warm.

Something fairly important happened this
past week - I along with about 17 others were selected
by the C.O. for posting abroad - to Rhodesia; its been
in the papers so I don't suppose it matters
so much if I tell you. There's a lot to go thru
yet, medical etc. on, & there's a fair chance
I don't get, so don't let it out yet. We were
picked some by good schools, families & so
on, some by good marks in Maths. &
Navigation. (I'm in the last lot, of course)
I'm still not sure if I want to go or not,
not that I have much choice of course; its a bit
away from home, & I shouldn't get back till
the war was over. I was measured for a
tropics & tropical clothes on Thurs. & of course,
when they asked my size in hats, I
couldn't tell 'em, having worn one, so I
rushed along to a haberdashery & got my
size - 7 1/2.

Other wise conditions are normal. I sat an
anti-gas exams throu the week & got 86 or so
An officer I met (he overheard the dialect) used to
ride with the L & S Hunt. He is a decent sort
I hear that Moquhart is an R.A.F. Special Police now,
in France. I wonder how his doing. How is Dan
Miller too. I hope he's doing O.K.

This is being finished in the "house" after tea;
my back aches a bit the sun was quite warm
this afternoon.

I fell asleep too, I think; & now I'm going
out for a walk, to part this

Much love
Charlie

748067
+ so on

Dear Folks,

Here we are still, & big things have been happening. As you see from the enclosed page of the Mirror, Sir K.W. has been visiting us, & every thing was very slick for him. Our Squadron was supplying guard at that time, & so they picked a very smart bunch of lads (19) to be inspected. ~~at~~, & believe it or not I was one of them. (Perhaps my new jacket helped). On the whole it wasn't just a picnic — we had to scrub out the Guard room in case he inspected that (he didn't), and then we couldn't smoke or anything; everything had to be all spick span & polished, & we had to stand around all day on pins & needles, in coals, caps, gas masks ready to turn out at a moment's notice. We got the "Guard turn out" about half-a-dozen times in the afternoon for gold hats. I never see so many. But here's the funny bit. When little Sir Kingsley inspected us he would be about the breadth of his page away from me, & I never even saw ~~see~~ him. You see, we had to

stand very stiffly to attention looking slightly up. & he was too small for me to see him! However I got sight of him later at the march past, which you see in the picture. There were 2,000 in it, with an army band going full blast, & it took place on the Promenade right opposite where the Guard was all lined up. It was well worth seeing. A cine-film was taken of it (Pathé I think) I'm going to look out for it.

Apart from all this excitement there's not much more to report. I got the M.O. all right. (I haven't cashed it yet) Thanks very much. Last night I was at a musical play - "Lilac Time," music by Schubert. It wasn't much good.

And we were at Battle one day & saw the Abbey there & the place where Harold was shot in the eye. But it wasn't up to much either. Jimmy Wallace, the bloke who's always got some illness, is just back from hospital for 3 days. They didn't operate on him but he couldn't leave it at ^{that} He had to go & catch tonights, so now he's got 7 days leave.

Lunchy bloke!

I haven't bought my camera yet. most everybody has one in the room. I've bought a new mouth-organ tho', but I can't play it yet. It's chromatic. (7 notes) I'm not getting on very fast with the chanter. It's still stuff to blow. I nearly blow my ears off every time.

And that honestly is all the news. The weather of course is OK. How are all the relations, + all the local inhabitants. I hope they're well at Leon Well Wynd. Oh by the way, when I was at Battle I met an air-man in a cafe who knew Shanks, Ashley House, in fact he stayed there once or twice. And of course I told you I met Jimmy Brough. Small world eh?

And that's all, again'

Buck Love

Charlie

748067.

Dear All,

Here's Sunday round again - a broiling hot day. I'm writing this sitting on the beach on a deck chair, with my jacket & cap off along with Tevioldale & Freeman. I've got good reason to have my cap off - some one has stolen it, at tea time, & I'll have to buy one. At present I'm going around without one, dreading to meet officers. We skipped church this morning & went for a swim instead (in the baths - the sea is still fairly cold)

I bought my camera last week - quite a good one, but I haven't seen the results yet. I'll probably send over a snap or two. Another thing I got was a Bible - & reeman, who used to work in Cambridge University Press, got me a 10/- one for the cost of postage. It's a beauty, but I haven't read much of it yet, - I haven't much time you see.

We are supposed to be getting an exam in armaments tomorrow (machine guns) but it mightn't come off I hope not, for I don't know much about it.

Thanks for the letters last week, - I got two on the same day from you, which is phenomenal. On the same day, too, I got a ginger bread from Mrs. Stew (the second she has sent), quite a mail, eh?

There are other 2 Lithia folks down here so far as I know — Jimmy Brugh is the ~~big~~ Pay boys, one Jock Kern (whom I haven't seen as yet). I'm told he used to be in Mary's class; he went to Alva, I think, & is now in the R.A.F. I mean to call on him soon. There are also a few Boersians & quite a crowd from Falkirk.

Thanks, by the way for these photos.

I have seen the picture "The Women" Effie talks of in London on my way down the river Humber just now. Yesterday 3 destroyers were rushing about on the horizon, firing away making a terrific din, & laying a smoke screen, but I believe it was practice shooting.

6 ongratulations, Effi on your new. I'm sure you deserve it by this. Your pay pack will be almost perfectable now.

What kind of writer is the latest one? Is it the final choice?

I'm glad to hear that the R.A.F have been getting socks boxes down here. I didn't get one - but I hardly need one - having pretty nearly everything I want.

Just now there are no especially good rumours about one being sent anywhere, so I shant trouble you with any. It must be pretty soon though!

And now I'm sure you'll agree that all the news I can think up for this week. It took a bit of brain cadgelling, to get as much written as I did.

Lots of love to all

Charlie.

XX

P.L. I've got slightly hoarse again but I
think it's getting better

C.W.

10 May '40

Dear All,

The news this time is fairly important. There's a posting definitely going to Rhodesia now. & our are going this time, & I by reserve, that is to say I go thru' the same procedure as everyone else, just as if I were going, & go right to the boat. I only sail, however, if some one is injured, missing or dies etc. The chance of this is remote however, but I'll go next time, (which may be within a few weeks) as sure as eggs is eggs.

I have received all my equipment now, — pack holster, water bottle, lanyards, calva tunic & so on. I've also been measured up for tropical kit (linen) & a topie. I think I told you this. I don't know yet what leave I get, if any. Mine will probably be after this first lot leaves. As I said, there's very little chance of my going this time.

Ted Fairdale is going to try to go with me next time. I hope he manages. We should be a lot safer out there — this war looks like spreading even more — we've just heard on the radio this morning that Holland & Belgium are now involved. And there's no black-out or gas masks. Of course it's a bit warmer, but commissions are practically guaranteed. We expect to go farther out East, when we're trained, so I'll get leave even less often than here.

Oh, there's one very important thing — I haven't been thru the medical yet, & I hear it's pretty strict. I'll let you know how I get on.

Another thing I've got is a pair of black shoes, I had to buy these out of stores. They're a very stout pair.

We've just come back to the room after a talk from the G.O., about the Dutch affair. All leave has been cancelled & there's to be greater preparedness for all sorts of disturbances.

It's still pretty warm down here. I'm getting quite brown.

Enclosed Mary will find her photos. Thanks for letting me see them, she must have enjoyed herself to the same degree. Williams by the way, his regards. I also enclose one or two I've taken.

I'll write again Sunday.

M. G. Lear (your loving son)

P.S. Aren't the ferries swine?

748067

Sunday.

Dear All,

Probably the most important thing to happen last week was Dick Freeman's posting to Prestwick. He left yesterday, & we had quite a night out on Friday. That leaves ^I in our room now, all Scots. I've taken one or two photos on my camera. I've sent a couple on. I'll probably send some more later.

How goes the Garden now? I've seen one or two fine ones down this way, spring really is coming in now. Last week ^I had a swim in the sea, but it was a bit cold. It'll be a while before I go in again.

How is Ian Miller by the way? Has he lost all his gear again? Be sure to tell me all about him next letter. Is Robert W. still home, too, & how's his father getting on? I heard somewhere that Urquhart was in France. One or two of my other friends are going to Prestwick too, one has just come in to say good bye - a Glasgow boy. Most of them are sorry in a way to leave.

Oh here's a great piece of news — I was on charge last week, up before the b.o. I think I told you before I was flat begt — my job being to see that the place is clean & so on. Well some one had a dirty room, so the orderly (who does the cleaning) I were immediately put under open arrest. However I managed to persuade old Thomas (our C.O.) that I was absolutely blameless, & the charge against me was dismissed. It was a rotten moment for me I ~~can~~ can tell you. The orderly got a weeks flat cleaning. I think the Permanent Staff Sergeant who did the cleaning has a grievance against me corporal & tries to take it out on the fb Flight which is why I ^{was} in the soup; nearly.

I was sorry to hear of poor J.S. as you say he must feel it. How is Captain W.W. taking it?

You were asking about a Bible I had at home, I didn't take it down with me. And I haven't got a new cap yet. I have a loan of one at present — a dirty greasy old one. I hope to get a new one Weds.

Well that's almost everything I can think
of to say. Invasion goes on just the same. We're
getting Anti-Gas lectures, ~~so~~ on Friday we were
put thru' a gas chamber. We've had Anti-Gas
Clothing for a while. By gone it was strong
stuff. We wept for hours afterwards.

That's all for now.

Much love.

Charlie

Dear Alr

I've got word now that we're all to be posted on 29th, but as yet no one knows where. This excepted, nothing new has happened. I've gone thru the usual routine - Navigation is slightly harder since we passed the exam. I have found that I made 92% in it.

And now I'll try to answer your letters. I hope Mary & Alister have got over their ailments. What did master A. want to put a Pussy Willow in his bag for? It reminds me once that I shoved an orange up my nose. I think Aunt Mashie got it out with a hairpin. How is she now? And was Mary's ankle well enough to go to the party? Here hoping it was.

So poor little Sir Kingsley got the hoof out of the Air ministry. He got a look at me just in time, eh?

For want of news I'm enclosing another photogrp. I know I look bloody sad, but its quite a good one of the room. The blur in the front right is the window ledge it was taken from. The funny looking smudge just above it is me, in greatcoat waiting to rush down 11 flights in 2 mins (record)

+ sadly contemplating the prospect of an hours
drill. You can see our bracket in the corner too.

Thank you. Alibb for your letter, you certainly
have got your ideas about spelling. Shows your mental
going. I hope the "Doc." didn't ill treat you. And
the poor holly tree, how is it?

By the way, the girl I met in Bletchley has
asked me to return a photo she sent me as she
can't find the negative, + hasn't a copy, so will you please
send them down to me if you can find them. I don't
know where they are.

Today (Sunday) I have been out
at the gliding club & saw quite a lot of good
flying. It was sunny with a wind on, + I've
got a bit red in the face. I was also showing
gliders about - fairly hard work. There were
more big shots flying about too. All this was near
Eastbourne.

And that's all this week

Much Love.

Chas-

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X X
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