

10, Freemasons Road,  
East Croydon,  
Surrey.  
29.7.41.

Dear Sir,

I am writing on behalf of Mrs Hunter, the mother of P/O W.G. Hunter, and I am sure that you will understand the reason for my letter.

As P/O W.G. Hunter has been reported missing, after air operations on the 25th, we wondered if perhaps you could help us to glean any scraps of information, however slight, about him.

If you could help in any way, it would be a great comfort to Mrs Hunter, who, as you will understand, is very distressed at the news.

I hope you will excuse the liberty I am taking in writing this letter, and I am enclosing Mrs Hunter's address in the hope that you will write direct to her.

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It is:-

Mrs Hunter,  
"Innisfree"  
123 Winifred Road,  
Croydon,  
Surrey.

I, too, should appreciate any news, as I am a friend of the family.

Thanking you in anticipation,

I am,

Yours faithfully,

(Miss) Thelma Chambers.

10, Freemasons Road,  
East Croydon,  
Surrey.  
11.8.41.

Dear Mr McLean,

Once again I am writing for Mrs Hunter, to thank you very much indeed for the way in which you answered my letter so swiftly.

Thank you so much for the photograph of Jim - we all appreciate it - and as I am having one or two copies of this photo, for his brother and sister - I wondered if you would care to have the original one for yourself, as I have no doubt that you would like to keep a snap of Jim.

Please accept my humble apologies for my mistake in calling you his 'room-mate'. You see - Jim and I are merely good friends, and I had only heard of you as 'Jock' - therefore I was unable to address your letter correctly. I hope that I am forgiven for my blunder - I realised the moment that I read your letter to Jim's mother, that you were definitely more than just a

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room-mate' - and I really am sorry.

We are all feeling very hopeful about the news now - especially as the father of Sergt Taylor also sent the newspaper cutting from a Northern paper, and we feel sure that wherever he is, he will be safe and well.

You will probably think it rather queer for me to write this letter, but I hope you will understand that Mrs Hunter is still very confused at the moment, and as I have known the family for as long as I can remember - and that is not as long as you may think - I thought perhaps it would help if I did some of the letter writing.

The only thing that is going to be difficult now, is waiting for the news to come through. It seems literally ages ago that all this happened - I seem to have lived in a perpetual state of muddle ever since - and yet I am glad that I can do something, however slight, that makes me feel as though I am helping - because I feel so restless just sitting back and waiting, like Mr Micawber, for 'something to turn up!'

(3)

There is one other thing that Mrs Hunter wondered if you would know. You see, Jim's belongings have all been sent to the RAF depository in Slough - and Mrs Hunter is rather anxious to have his personal belongings at home, as they are of great sentimental value. I wondered if perhaps you would know anything about this.

You must forgive me if I have rambled on unnecessarily in this letter - on reading it over - I find that I have written as though I know you almost as well as Jim - probably it is because we have one thing in common - we both appreciated Jim's friendship.

Please forgive me if anything in this letter sounds rather unconventional - I'm a very unconventional person, and I always write as I feel!

Thanking you once again for your kindness and sympathy,

I am,

Yours very sincerely,

Thelma Chambers

(for Mrs W. Hunter)

P.S. Would you let me know about the snap. Thelma

10, Freemasons Road,  
East Graydon,  
Surrey.  
3.9.41.

Dear Jack,

Many, many thanks for your welcome letter. I really did not expect to hear from you at all - and I want to say that I appreciate all you have done, very much indeed.

Mrs Hunter will be very pleased to hear about Jim's personal belongings - she has been rather worried about them, and it will be a great relief to know that she will receive them eventually.

I shall be only too willing to send you Jim's address the moment that I find out his camp number - but until then, perhaps you would like to write to him c/o the Red Cross Geneva. There is no definite guarantee that the letter will reach him - but I think it is worth taking the chance, because I am sure he would like to hear from you.

This is his address:-

Prisoners of War Post

KRIEGSGEFANGENENPOST

P/O. W. J. Hunter No 89835

British Prisoner of War,

40 International Red Cross Society,

Geneva,

Switzerland.

(2)

Thank you so much for enclosing those snaps, and the negative. They are all beautifully clear - and the views of the hotel are very good.

It certainly looks as though you are billeted in a luxurious hotel - by the way, do you appear in any of the photographs - we think you may be in one of the groups - personally I think you might be the one standing next to the one who is reading. Am I right? I must say I can't see much of you, whichever one you are! That all sounds terribly complicated - but it shouldn't take you longer than an hour or two to work out!

The view of the Bay reminds me very much of Tintagel and Trebarwith - I used to visit the North Atlantic Coast when I spent my holidays in Launceston, I don't know whether you know that district at all. It is a glorious place - and not far from Tintagel is King Arthur's Castle, where King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table, were supposed to live.

There is also the Hairpin Bend, by the River, where King Arthur was killed - but the part I like best, is the Bay of Trebarwith, where the smugglers' caves are, and the long narrow road that leads up to the cliff top, where it is unsafe to walk, on a very windy day, as there is

a danger of being flung over the top by the force of the gale.<sup>(3)</sup>

I would very much like to visit North Cornwall again, as I always have loved it, and maybe when this war is over, I shall be lucky enough to stay there for a holiday! The only thing that is stopping me now, is the fact that the area is restricted, and also that I am no millionaireess!

Do you do the same work as Jim, in the Bomber - or do you actually fly the Beaufort? I have seen several photographs of a Beaufort - they certainly are pretty hefty-looking craft.

Last week I managed to see 'Target for Tonight', at our local cinema. I thought it was an excellent film - and I found it very interesting, because even before the war, I used to be keen on anything concerned with flying.

I remember one year at Launceston, I saw Alan Cobham and his Flying Circus - and I was absolutely thrilled at the stunting, and I know everyone said at the time how wonderful it was to get an aeroplane to 'whizz' along at just over 100 m.p.h! It seems very strange to think of those double-winged Gloucester Gladiators, in comparison with some of our new crack bombers - especially the Flying Fortresses - I think they are a grand invention.

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Did you join the RAF at the same time as Jim, or have you been in it longer? I hope you don't object to all these questions, only you see I am very interested.

I quite agree with what you say about 'roll on that day' - I only wish we didn't have so long to wait - I would very much like to meet you - it may sound ridiculous, but I feel as though I know you already. You write such interesting letters - and every time we hear news of a raid by Beaufort Bombers - I can't help wondering if you are quite O.K. Silly - isn't it - but perhaps if you knew me, you wouldn't think it quite so peculiar - everyone gets used to me in time!

Did you take part in the War Weapons Week over the Camelford district - dropping leaflets, and imploring all the pretty girls to write by return - and in general, giving the entire population a real shake up?

I have heard a great deal about the mad 'goings on' of the RAF, from Jim - are you by any chance the one who was very fond of rolling in at the hotel at about 3 am, and after awaking the unfortunate inhabitants from their dreamless slumbers - inform them of the "simply wonderful" time you had!

I can't say that I blame any of you for having

a good time - I know that if I were in your place,<sup>(5)</sup> I would do exactly the same thing!

If you would care to carry on writing to me - please don't think that I shall object: on the contrary, I shall be very pleased to hear from you, and believe me - you can always be sure of an answer, if you are sufficiently interested to want a reply.

And if you do write - you might remember to enclose a snap of yourself, where I can see a bit more of you!

Now I must close, and may I thank you once again for everything, and may you have the very best of luck in everything you do.

Hoping to hear from you soon,  
I am

Yours very sincerely,  
Phelma.

P.S. You really need not bother to call me 'Miss Chambers' - I'm not at all fussy, and I am not one of those people who do everything they should do - I do as I please, and therefore I can appreciate people who are the same! Somewhat muddled - but quite true!

Phelma

10 Freemasons Road,  
E. Surrey,  
Surrey.  
29.9.41.

Dear Jock,

As I promised to write you as soon as we heard from Jim, and knew his camp number, I feel that I should let you know as soon as possible.

It will no longer be necessary to write to him c/o the Red Cross at Geneva, as he is now in a permanent camp. His address is:

Pilot Officer W. J. Hunter RAF No 89835

British Prisoner of War No 3648

Oflag 10c (Coy 3)

Germany.

His family received a letter-card from him on Saturday, 27th September, and it had been posted in Germany just over a month ago.

I thought perhaps you would be interested to hear that Jim was shot down on July 25th, and he and two other members of the crew were picked up uninjured. He did not mention the names of the other airmen, so I am afraid that I cannot say which men, other than Jim, were saved.

He said that he is just beginning to settle down to camp life, but he seems to miss the long walks and cycle rides that he used to have, and he is very anxious to receive letters from any of his friends.

If you know of any other people who would perhaps care to write to Jim, without expecting a reply, as letters are very restricted, would you mind informing them of his

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address, as neither Mrs Hunter or myself know the addresses of his friends in the West Country. If, however this is going to take up too much of your time, it may be less worry for you, if you sent me the names and addresses, if you know them, so that I can communicate with them.

I am sure he will be very pleased to hear from any airmen at the station, as a welcome change from an overwhelming supply from members of the opposite sex, which, I rather gather, he will receive!

I am afraid I must tender my apologies for my last letter to you. You see, we were all so pleased to hear of Jim's safety, that I was somewhat over-enthusiastic when I wrote, and afterwards, when I thought of it, in the cold light of sanity - I realised that I had written a terribly effusive letter. Believe me, I am very sorry - I have calmed down considerably now!

We had some really excellent enlargements from the negative that you so kindly sent, and Mrs Hunter was immensely pleased with them.

I expect Jim will miss the friendship of the airmen, and also that he will find his camp very different to the luxurious hotel where he was billeted. However, I think that it will make things easier for him, if he can feel that his friends have not forgotten him.

Hoping that you will find time to acknowledge this letter, in one of your very few spare moments, so that I shall be satisfied that you have Jim's address, and wishing you the very best of luck in everything you do, and happy landings,

I am,

Yours very sincerely

Thelma D.M. Chambers

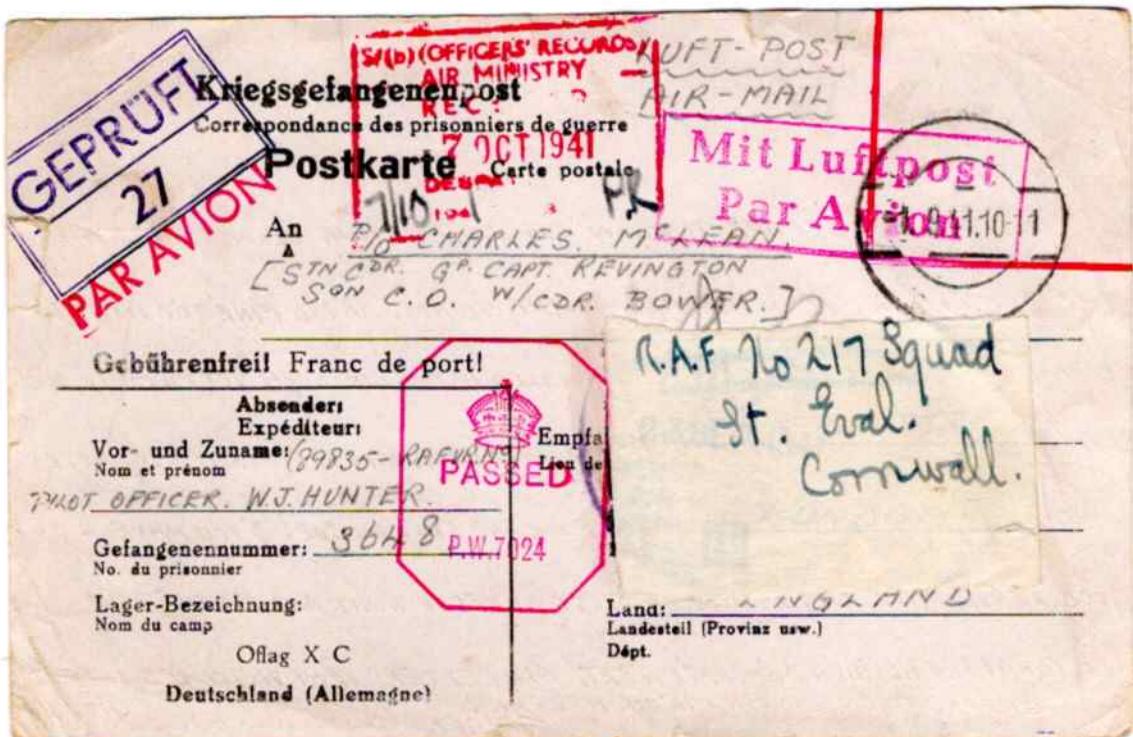
**Kriegsgefangenenlager**  
Camp des prisonniers **Oflag X C**

Datum: 19<sup>th</sup> AUG. 1941  
date

DEAR JOCK,

THOUGHT YOU'D CARE TO KNOW I'M P.O.W HAVING BEEN SHOT DOWN ON  
THE JOB. COLLINGS IS IN HOSPITAL-SLIGHT WOUNDS. HE DID FINE JOB IN GET-  
TING US DOWN. SGT TAYLOR'S O.K., APPLEY-KILLED IN THE AIR (SOFA). NOT MUCH TO DO  
EXCEPT SLEEP. MANY GOOD TYPES HERE INCL. BARRY, M.G. WILL YOU ASK IF MY NOTES  
ETC. CAN BE KEPT FOR ME? HOPE ALL ARE O.K. AND STILL ON JOB? DO YOU HAVE A  
GOOD LEAVE? GIVE MY REGARDS AND BEST WISHES TO WINCO AND ALL THE BOYS.

SEE YOU AT THE REUNION DO-THAT'S ABRT! ALL LETTERS VERY WELCOMED INDEED.  
CHEERS JOCK. - JOIN ME IN A BEER! I'M YET NOW THAT  
GINGER William James Hunt.



10, Freemasons Road,  
East Croydon,  
Surrey.

23.10.41.

Dear Jock,

You will probably be very surprised to hear from me so soon after receiving your letter - but I felt that I must write and thank you for your exceptional kindness.

It was really very good of you to quote Jim's card to me, and I assure you that you need have no qualms of conscience on my behalf, about hearing from him, because, as far as I am concerned, I do not expect to receive any news direct from Jim.

You see, I am really only a friend of the family, although of course, under the present circumstances, I am willing to do anything possible to help Jim, to try and make things brighter for him, as I realise how dull his existence must be.

However, on thinking it over, it is perhaps inadvisable to tell Mrs Hunter this news at the moment, because when I last visited her, she was feeling rather upset, owing to the fact that she has received only one letter from Jim, so far.

Mrs Hunter despatched a parcel to Jim, about three weeks ago, and she is hoping that it will not be too long before he receives it. I was pleased to hear that your card took only seventeen days to arrive in England - it shows that the service is being speeded up somewhat, and this will establish a closer contact with home.

(2)

I expect you will be interested to hear that Oflag 10C, is situated at Lubeck, on the Baltic Coast, between Kiel and Hamburg. We discovered this by referring to a list of the Prison camps in a copy of the 'Daily Mail'.

It must have been a very unpleasant experience for the entire crew of the Beaufort, to be shot down upon the sea, and I was particularly sorry to hear that Appleby was killed, when he was within such a short distance of safety.

Although you say that you dislike moving from one airport to another - don't you find it interesting to see the different parts of the country? And yet I suppose you have little time to become acquainted with your surroundings, and you doubtless find it rather difficult to settle down quickly in fresh quarters.

I shall be very interested to hear which airport you are to be stationed at, in Kent, as I am a Telegraphist in the G.P.O. and I circulate the government telegrams to the various aerodromes in the British Isles.

Maybe when you are in Kent, you will be able to visit Mrs Hunter personally, at Woodmansterne, as this part of Surrey, not far from Croydon Airport, is almost on the borders of Kent. In which case, I might possibly meet you, as I spend most of my Sunday afternoons at "Innisfree".

Thank you very much for sending Jim's address to his various friends in Devon, and also for taking the trouble to write to me when it was past midnight - as I am sure you must have been very tired.

(3)

Mrs Hunter was well pleased with the enlargements of Jim's photographs, and the negative made a very clear copy. She is quite well, though naturally worried about Jim, but I think that when communication becomes swifter, she will be less anxious.

When you hear again from Jim, I wonder if you would mind just letting me know any fresh news that he has, as we shall all be pleased to hear, and if I hear any news from Mrs Hunter, I shall be only too pleased to write and tell you, if you would like me to do so.

May I assure you that I appreciate everything you have done to help me, and I wish you the very best of luck in everything you attempt.

Cheerio for now Jock, and happy landings,

I am,

Yours very sincerely,

Thelma

2

10, Freemasons Road,  
East Croydon,  
Surrey.

28. 10. 41.

Dear Jock,

Yes - I'm afraid that it is me again. I don't expect that you have received my last letter yet, that is of course, providing that it is redirected from Shivenor - and I am also taking a chance with this letter, in the hope that it will reach you, as I am not sure of your new address.

That sounds very involved doesn't it - but with a bit of sorting out - no doubt the meaning will become clear!

I had to write and thank you for visiting me on Sunday, although at the time I'm afraid I didn't have much to say for myself. It all happened so unexpectedly, that for about the first time, as far as I can remember - I was, metaphorically speaking, practically knocked speechless!

You may laugh at this - in fact, doubtless you will - but when I opened the door to you, there really wasn't any need for you to tell me your name - I knew the minute I saw you, that you were Jock. I know it sounds silly, and I can't explain how or why I knew - I guess it's just one of those things!

I realised, when you had gone, what a great deal of trouble you had taken, to travel so far out of your way, just to see me - and I want you to know that I did appreciate it, and I enjoyed your company very much indeed. I was sorry that you had to leave so early in the evening - I hope we didn't

(2)

make you too late in arriving at the airport.

I arrived home on Sunday evening, to find my Mother suffering qualms of conscience, because she had not forced you to stop for a while to have some refreshment - you see, she did not realise how long you had been travelling. She wishes me to apologise for this - and also to say how pleased she is to hear that you arrived safely at Woodmansterne - after the somewhat hasty directions she gave you!

Mrs Hunter was very pleased to see you - it made a very pleasant change for her, and I think you eased her mind somewhat, as I know she felt very worried when she thought Jim was in hospital. I agree with you Jock, that he cannot be in hospital, as his camp address is not a hospital one, and I can't think how anyone had that idea.

You may be sure that you will be welcome here, whenever you have a short leave, and can manage to travel up in the time, unless of course you prefer to spend the time in Kent with your friends. Only we thought you might like to visit us occasionally if at any time you have nowhere else to go. Mother says that if you don't mind the inconvenience of a small house, we can manage to put you up for the night - and believe me you will be very welcome.

I hope that you did not get the wrong impression on Sunday, when Mrs Hunter mentioned Jim's young lady. I am his friend, and I would do anything to help him in any way - but it was Miss June Meadows that Mrs Hunter was referring to, and I thought perhaps I had better make that clear, as if you write to Jim, he will probably wonder what has been happening in his absence, if you mention my name!

(3)

How do you like your new station? I expect you will find it rather dull there, as it is a restricted area, and consequently there is not much activity in the neighbouring towns, but I expect you will be able to make your own entertainment.

I hope you managed to arrive at Manston without any mishap on the way, with your car! It is just as well that you had your LAE with you, to take over if anything went wrong! However you will be able to practice your driving now, if you have the petrol.

Well, I must stop now, as it is past 11 pm, and about time I retired for the night.

Thanking you once again for everything you have done, and best of luck always,

Happy landings,

Cheerio for now Jack,

Yours sincerely,

Thelma

