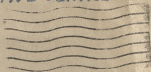


ON ACTIVE SERVICE



Mr & Mrs North,

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98 Sqd. 139 Wing

B.A.F.O. R.A.F.

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B.A.O.R.

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Monday Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>.

Dear Father & Mother,

The weather here during this last week has also been typical for November, cold and miserable with either fog or continuous drizzle.

So it has been a week of lectures and more lectures, it improved a little on Wednesday though so we got a few hours flying in.

I nearly got another trip to England but as the visibility was less than 2,000 yds it was scrubbed and the chaffie went over by land and sea - I really cursed the weather - but such is life.

The G.C. decided last week that we were too far away from the dome and not readily available (the Convent is 3 kms. from flights) so we have now moved our mess into a large house on the edge of the dome, it was

used by the Germans as an officers mess, the building is quite palatial with large chandeliers in the dining hall and the usual well equipped German bar, we are billeted in small bungalows built round the main building by German slave labour, and they are not so hot - really very built in fact.

We have already found many pitfalls around the drome thanks to the ingenuity of these slave workers who made things as difficult as possible for their German masters, the damn lighting for instance (the electric lights sunk into the ground on the sides of the runways for night landings) keeps fusing due to defects purposely built into the lighting system for the benefit

of the Germans, the bungalows have proved no exception, its amazing the tricks they got up to even apparently under the most efficient supervision, the drains from the bungalows we find are all built slightly uphill so they keep blocking, the ceiling in my room has had to be propped up to prevent it collapsing altogether.

I'm afraid it is going to be very cold this winter, all the rooms are fitted with stoves - but we <sup>have</sup> nothing to burn in them, for unlike the Germans who kept everything for themselves we let the civilians have the small amount of coal that is available, and have to manage ourselves with the odd oil stove.

Sunday was a really miserable day, cold and wet, so we had our downhead service in one of the hangers and observed the two minutes silence at 12 O'clock so as to coincide with the English time, the service was very short though as everyone was very anxious to return to the comparative warmth of the mess.

As our rations have recently been cut we no longer get supper in the mess, so we like to make a hot drink in the billet before we retire to bed - some of the boys have had oxo cubes sent over ~~was~~ rolled up in papers etc, as you are not allowed to send food over here - as you know I'm not too keen on oxo but could you

send something over please.

I should like some coffee or Ovaltine but I can see no method of getting it over here.

I hope some one will get a trip to England shortly and be able to bring something back with them.

If you can send something over like oxo, anything that can be made with hot water, would be very welcome.

I wonder if you could also send an English Rover Scout badge for a Belgian R.S. I have become quite friendly with, he would very much like one and I said I would try and get him one.

I should also like some copies of the "Neyzer" and if you can get one a copy of the "Scout" to show him.

I hope this letter doesn't seem too full of wants?

I have to go and see about tomorrow's flying detail now.

So cheerio for the present.

Ever your loving son,

Alex