

Reverse of envelope

MR J CARSON

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WILLESDEN

LONDON N.W.10

F/Sgt Cohen

Only to be opened in the event of my being reported missing

SATURDAY 5-2-44

Dear Mum and Dad,

I hope you will never have to read this letter, because it is only going to be given to you if I am reported missing on operations.

First of all, I feel I must apologise for being deceitful in keeping the true story from you. But now there is no use me trying to hide anything from you. So here are the true facts.

After my spot of bother before Xmas, I felt certain that I would not be allowed to go on operations for some time. Unfortunately I was wrong, as Group decided to give me another chance, and so on the 1-2-44 I was put in with another crew. Realising how you all felt about my going back on operations, I decided to report sick. The next part of the story you know, which deals with my air tests for air sickness.

However I went on my last test this morning and was not sick, and so when I reported to the Medical Officer this afternoon he told me that I was not bad enough to be

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grounded. I could not argue against his decision or the reports of the navigation section and the rest of my crew. So now I expect to go back to a squadron within a day or two.

Now once again, I will have to deceive you, as I hate the idea of telling you I'm going back on ops, so instead of that I will have made up some story or other, which I wanted to give you the impression that I was keeping safe and sound on the ground.

Please try and understand why I've had to be deceitful. Now at least, even though I'm on ops, I know that you will not have worried every time you hear that Lancasters have bombed Germany.

You see its bad enough having to go on ops, but it's a damn sight worse thinking of you all at home wondering if you will ever see me again. Or if my letters are a bit late, everybody thinking the worse.

Another thing I would like you to know is that I think I've given you a fake impression of life in the Raf. There is nothing marvellous in it at all. As for ops, no one likes to go on ops at all, least of all me. You might read an account in the papers by a crew that has just returned. Have you noticed how easy they said it was.

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Well that's just a lot of hooyey [sic] There is no such thing as an easy operation. Some may be easier than the next, but there are always some that do not return, and we all wonder whose turn it is next.

Don't think that just because I have been reported missing you will never see me again. Far from it, only one in ten chaps reported missing are killed. The rest are either walking home through France and Germany or either prisoners of war. Anyhow it will take a lot to kill me as I have to much to live for.

I'm sorry, but I can't write any pretty speeches about how much you all mean to me, in fact I don't think its necessary for me to write anything like that, as you know how I feel.

Anyhow once again, I'll say I hope its never my unfortunat luck for you to receive this letter. I daresay you may think this is a miserable letter but then I never have been a good letter writer, have I?

Well that's all.

With all my love.

David