

Gatwick,
Surrey,
15-8-42.

Dear Mum,

The holiday is over, and here I am back in (parachute) harness again. I arrived at my new station a couple of days ago, and am just getting the atmosphere of the place, as it were. Our squadron's Officers' Mess is over-crowded at the moment, so I am parked out in the back yard in a most comfortable tent, which I have all to myself. As I expected, I am the only New Zealander in the whole outfit, and, indeed, they tell me I'm the first chap from any of the Dominions to be in the squadron, if that is any distinction to boast about. Consequently you can guess it is all very English, but I like the place and am quickly getting used to it.

As I expected, there were a couple of letters - both from you - waiting for me here, nos. 31 and 32, I think they are. Anyway, one of them had in it the clippings about rationing. It seems to be every bit as thorough as it is here, for clothing, but I hope you never have to put up with meat, butter and cheese rationing as they do here. Every time I think of Stotford Lodge I think, well, New Zealand won't lack mutton and beef in a hurry. " Still, I knew

you in particular would be hard hit when they took your tea away from you. Maybe after this war we'd better go to Ceylon to live, as you would always be sure of plenty there.

The last few days of my leave went off most satisfactorily. We managed to see two of Shakespeare's plays in the Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon, and as they were both extremely well-acted, that meant two well-spent evenings. The theatre is one of the nicest I have ever been in, and the seating is a miracle for comfort.

We got back to London last Wednesday, and wound up things at night with a visit to a Jack Hulbert and Cicely Courtneidge show, "Full Swing." They are a great team, and we thoroughly enjoyed it. Next day Tom went on to Northern Ireland, as he had still a week's leave left, while I came on to Lutwick, which is about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour from London by train. By the way, I don't think I told you that we spent our first few days in London with the Rev. and Mrs. Moffett again. They live quite close to the centre of things in the big city, and more than once we walked "in to town" without bothering about the buses. Actually transport in London is very cheap - about the only thing that is, these days. You can go an amazing distance for 2d. on either the buses or the famous Underground. The

Underground is, I think, a wonderful system; you pop down to a station, to which there are entrances in half-a-dozen different places, and are whisked off at a terrific pace in safety and comfort. The trains are electric, of course, and travel fast because everything underground can run in a straight line without having to bother about dodging buildings and traffic cops.

To-day I went flying for the first time since coming off leave - and guess what the aircraft was! Of all things, a Tiger Moth! Haven't flown one since I left Taipei. It was fun getting used to it again, which didn't take very long. It did seem terribly slow, though, after all the other types I have flown since.

I often wonder how you get on reading my writing these days. I'm afraid it is getting pretty dreadful, and my only excuse is that sometimes I've had to write in pretty cramped places with poor substitutes for a table. However, so long as it is not totally illegible that is the main thing. It never was wonderfully neat, but time was when it was easier to read than this scrawl.

Well, for this week I think that is just about the lot. Till some more news rolls along, then, love from
Arndd.f.