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Tuesday evening

December 19, 1944

Dear Mother,

I returned from pass last evening only to find the airbase fog bound. I sincerely hope that the weather clears up soon so that we can help the ground troops break the German counter offense in France.

I visited London again on this last pass. This time I assumed the role of a gourmet and sampled wartime meals of London restaurants.

The Grovesnor [sic] House American Officers Mess serves the best balanced meals, the best prepared and the cheapest. (2'6, two and six, fifty American pennies). There is also

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a good bar and a nice reading room. The dining room of the Regent Palace Hotel offers poor sparse vegetable dinners for six shillings amidst elegant atmosphere. Lyons Corner House, a six story Horn and Hardart, offers much the same although better prepared and cafeteria style. Drivers serves very good seafood meals: oysters on the half shell, lobster, trout. In the small Pompeian [sic] Restaurant one can get a fine spaghetti dinner and small but excellent [sic] steak. At Prices on the Strand for a ten shilling note you get all the chicken you can eat. (No remarks).

But with your meals in London today you can get no milk and very poor coffee. Tea or beer are served, some wine, and water, if you ask for

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it. Tea at four is just another meal with everyone stuffing himself full of pastry, (hardly any sweetening), toast and tea.

Between bites, I managed to see the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace (no fancy dress during war) and a fair revue: "Happy and Glorious."

A new pass policy has been instituted in this Bomb Group now. Every twenty four days we get a two day pass and a two day stand down for training.

The mail situation puzzles me. Today I received your letter of November seventeenth, (refilled pen with Parker's Quink).

Five days ago I received your letter of November fourteenth. However I have received an impressive lot of Christmas packages. The last, except for one

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very good fruit cake, remains unopened till Christmas.

This will be my second Christmas as an Air Force soldier and, I hope, my last. But the enemy is strong and he may force our flight to continue past other Christmases. I sort of feel that I should stay in action here with the 8'th, at least until Germany is defeated. But I will come home and then we will have a real Christmas together.

Merry Christmas to you and all the family.

Love,

Lee