

"Lorraine"
Le Bigard,
Forest
Guernsey C.I.
20/3/89

Dear Mr. Holm,
Please accept my apologies for taking so long to reply to your last letter, but I had to accompany my wife to hospital in Southampton, where she underwent a major operation. I'm glad to say that we are now back home, and she has made a splendid recovery.

Now to deal with your queries, the full bomb load was still in the aircraft when it crashed, and the load would have been either a 4000 lb or 8000 lb. blast bomb and also many incendiaries. I really cannot remember exactly, but that was the type of ~~load~~ load we usually carried. I do not know whether I mentioned it in a previous letter, but the attack

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was very sudden, and was, I think, from a cannon-firing night-fighter. My aircraft went out of control very quickly and the order to abandon aircraft was made by me. Unfortunately the inter-com. in the a/c then failed for reasons unknown, so no instruction was given to jettison bomb load. The crew left the aircraft, except for Sgt. Cawley, who was, I think, killed by the cannon fire. I managed eventually to straighten the aeroplane, and exited, head first, through the front escape hatch. By this time the aircraft was quite low, as I very soon landed in a field, without injury. I had observed the plane hit the ground and explode, and there was a photograph in one of your newspapers of a man standing in a window, his head ~~be~~ bandaged, and I gather the plane had landed and exploded nearby.

I hope that this letter has clarified the ~~A~~ situation

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I hope that you can now go ahead with your writing. I would like to say that in my opinion, this particular raid went very wrong, and that a considerable ^{number of} German night-fighters had been alerted, and were in fact waiting for us to arrive, but that is another story.

As requested I enclose copy of log book page, and I think, that, what really mattered in those war days is whether or not luck was on your side. The odds against surviving a tour of operations were very high, and in fact my tour finished ~~at~~ on my seventh sortie, and as I may have mentioned before, I escaped from a few more accidents without injury. Lucky old me!!!

I must finish off now, but please let me know if I can be of further help. There are no notes to you, but I would appreciate a copy of your writing in due course.

Sincerely yours
Doug King