

Carlton Ville

Hertol Bros.

Herham

29th May 45.

Dear Mrs Stevenson,

On arriving home from
Germany my wife gave me your letter of
the 2nd inst. and it gives me great pleasure
to be able to write to you.

I'm afraid
my news is not good but no doubt you
must be anxious to know what I can
tell you.

On the night of Jan 14th 44. we
were returning from an op. on Brunswick
and just after we had crossed the West
coast of Texel (an island just North of Holland)
a fighter attacked us from below, his cannon
fire hitting and setting on fire our petrol
tanks in both wings. The fire spread

very rapidly and within a few seconds
our pilot, 7/Lt. Steven, gave the order for us
to bale out. The engineer 7/Sgt East was
first to leave the aircraft and I followed
him. (We were flying at approx. 14000 ft.
at the time) When I left the aircraft, your
son, Paddy (as we knew him best) was quite
O.K. and was himself getting ready to jump.
As far as I know, no one in the aircraft was
injured. When baling out my chute
hit me in the face and knocked me out.
The next I knew I was on the ground
and an aircraft was burning some two
or three hundred yards from me. I saw
what I thought were Germans approaching
it so I headed off in another direction.
The following morning I met 7/Sgt East
and we got in touch with a D. who spoke
good English. He informed us that
three bodies had been recovered from the

wrecked aircraft which I had seen. On the night of Jan 16th. I/Lt East and I were taken by the Germans and at their H.Q. they told us that 3 bodies had been buried that day. One had been identified by the identification discs and that was our pilot I/Lt Steven. The other two bodies were not identified and there were still two members of our crew not accounted for. When I was finally interrogated at Durlag Luft (NW. Frankfurt) I enquired as to what had happened to the other two members of our crew and the German intelligence officer stated that two bodies had been washed up on the shore of Yessel, neither of them having identification discs on. They were presumed to be the other two members of our crew. The Germans state that we were the only aircraft shot down in that

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once that night.

I'm sorry I can't give you any news further than that for if I did it would only be guesswork.

To presume your son as being dead is the only thing, but I couldn't say if he met his death in the water or in the blazing aircraft.

To you Mrs Stevenson & to the rest of his family I can only offer my deepest sympathy for your great loss. Paddy was a good friend, and a good navigator devoted to his duty and he gave his life so that we may all live in a better world. God Rest His Soul.

If there is any point which I have not made clear, or anything you would like to know I will be very glad

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To do all I can to satisfy you.

If you have a spare photograph of your son I would be delighted if you would let me have it as I do not possess one of him.

I remain

Yours truly

RL Brown 7/Lt.

