My dear Dad:

You have got to pull me out of a hole. Doe, but I'm in an awful fix. Here I have 27 letters, piled up in front of me, a few of which have been answered (not many) and all the rest patiently awaiting their turn. Now my difficulty lies in trying to read over all these letters, pick out those which are unanswered, answer them, giving also some news of the current events. If you have never had a similar experience, then you can't appreciate my situation. So now, just as when a little kid, I am coming to you with my troubles. We've been busy, Dad, awfully busy. Why I have even carried a letter unread, around with me for half a day before I could even get a chance to read it. A simple and interesting incident of our every day life is as follows: We were sitting out in front of the hangar, while planes, gradually dropping from the evening sky, and rolling up to be refilled. Their days work done, and pilots wandering off, with a few more hours to their credit. Our turn has been up nearly an hour and a half, and we have lost
sight of it. Conversation drifts to what might have happened, and finally we decide that there has been a crash. A few more minutes and the flight sergeant comes running out, takes the time board and then goes up to the Flight Commander. We know now that there has been a crash, and naturally, start to pack up our things. In a few minutes, a "tender" (a light, covered motor truck) is seen to drive up, with a trailer attached. Few words are said, but we pick up our tool boxes and necessary rigging, stow them away in the tender and pile on to the trailer for a joy ride. (?) We learn, from the driver, the name of the town for which we are headed. It may be a matter of a few hours, or it may be an all night job, but it makes no difference. We go off smiling.

Once outside the camp, we strike out across the country, at a beautiful clip, and the beauty of the passing scenery is intensified by the clouds of dust and gas fumes, which escape from the exhaust. Laughing and joking, we spin along, now on the crest of a hill, and a few seconds later, down in a quiet little
village, where the people are beginning to retire for the evening. We stop at a small square, in the center of a hamlet, to inquire the way, and immediately we are surrounded. Old men and boys, women and girls, anxious to have a chat with a Yank. By this time, however, the sun is sinking rapidly, and we must make haste, if we are to accomplish anything, so covered with dust and smiles, we say good night, and once more, we hit the road. From the top of a hill, we can see a group of women and children, gathered about a heap of twisted wire, sticks, and linen, down in a meadow, maybe a mile or two away. This, is our destination. We find a gate in the hedge and drive through, only to be greeted with a series of smiles, curious glances. Surely we are a mess. Grey, with dust from head to foot, but always smiling. In a few moments, or hours, as the case may require, we have removed the twisted wires, taken out the sticks, and separated the various parts, so as to make transportation easy. Our next job is to load the wreck onto the trailers, which is accomplished...
...
in a systematic manner. It is fairly dark, now, and the crowd has left, taking with them everything, which they were able to remove, without tools, and get away with, as souvenirs. By the time we all hitched up, again, it is dark, and fairly cold, so the boys just scramble up on top of the wreckage, or wherever they can find foot hold, and start home. Cold, tired, and hungry, we arrive back in camp, well after midnight, but our work accomplished. The wreck is tucked away in the hangar for the time being, and if everything else is all right, we head for our tents. Still smiling. That smile, and spirit, dad, is going to win this war.

With love and best wishes to all. I remain,

Affectuately

Richard.

Edward P. McElligott.
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England.
I had dinner with the [illegible text] last night and found it very pleasant. I hope to have some fruit dishes tomorrow.

I'm sending the [illegible text] I was asked to bring. I have some more [illegible text] on Tuesday.

I'm looking forward to seeing you tomorrow. I was told [illegible text]

Thanks.

[Signature]
Mr. John E. McElligott
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