

November 13, 1944

Dear Mrs. Hamrick,

I don't know why I've withheld writing for so long, unless it's been that we're committed to security and that official channels are supposed to handle situations of this sort. Yet those curt, official cablegrams are so unfeeling and uncommunicative. It leaves the next of kin in the dark with no one to turn to, and in no position to relieve its anxiety. I'd expect a similar consideration if the inevitable happened. All of which doesn't tell you a thing. I'll do my best to recount all I know about Charles and his crew which isn't very much, but I hope it helps a little to explain the mystery that surrounds his situation. We were both included in THE FORMATION THAT STRUCK Merseburg on Sept 28 last. It was the roughest target as regards flak that I'd ever seen, enveloping us for a full 15 minutes in and around the target area. The lead took evasive action and planes were strewn everywhere across the sky attempting to avoid the barrage. My pilot informed me that he'd picked up a message on the radio from Charles' pilot, calling for fighter support since he'd been hit in two engines and was forced to leave the formation. At the time we weren't very far from friendly territory and I thought surely they'd be able to make it to an alternate field. At first it was rumored that they had landed successfully in Belgium, but it was never substantiated, although I inquired on several occasions at the intelligence office. I still have every faith in his being well and alive. His pilot was a veteran of thousands of hours in the air and extremely capable of setting the ship down under the direst of circumstances, if they had to crash land. Pity of it, there won't be any word as to whether they are prisoners of war for two months longer. If I'm still about by then, I'll send you word as soon as I learn the details.

If you're able to contact the other families of Charles' crew, perhaps what I've said may be of consolation to them.

Respectfully yours,

Julius

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