

163, New Barn Lane
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GL52 3LH
8th Oct 94.

Dear Margaret,

I am enclosing a photostat of an issue of West Republican newspaper which tells the story of our Lancaster. The copy was sent to me to pass on to Bob, but I feel that you might like to retain it among the souvenirs of Bob's flying days.

The article has an interesting origin too! About 12 months ago the local population wished to erect a memorial to the 7 aircrew who were "killed" in the crash. The German authorities had stated that all the crew were killed and their bodies buried: no one knew where their graves were or who they were and so for the 50th anniversary of this date enquiries were made in the press for information. There was a great deal of speculation but a Mr. Chen wrote and said that at least one survived (Davy); as he was the Resistance leader who helped him. There was a further letter from a Yves Bonnet

who stated that he was a lad of 15 at the time - he and his mother heard the gunfire and saw the lane in flames. The following day he and some friends cycled out to the forest and spoke to the German guards. When the Germans had left they then scrounged around the still smoking debris (believing that there were still bombs there!!) and collected several small souvenirs, this letter and address were sent by Mr. Chene to Derys who passed them on to me with the comment "You were the Engineer, you tell them what happened to us all -"

I wrote to Yves Barnet and gave him the story as far as the aircraft was concerned. He - in turn - wrote to two of his old school friends who are journalists and they, sensing a story, asked for my recollections after being landing in France - I supplied this information to Mr. Barnet together with such photos as I had. The article was printed to coincide with the 51st Anniversary - it was too late for 50th as far as 'D' Day stories

The article has been "journalised" to give it a French civilian slant - to emphasise how helpful the French were - but the facts have not been altered and I think that Bob and his family will treasure this story.

The French are very proud of what they did and are most conscious of the debt that they owe (at least the older generation is).

The story of the memorial proposed 50 years after all the search for the graves of the crew touched me deeply.

Both Jean and I are sorry that we did not meet - her back and leg are still "unrelaxable" but she is now undergoing a course in acupuncture which is easing the pain at least.

kindest Regards to you all
Eric and Jean Dickson