

No.23 Squadron
RFC
British Expeditionary Force
France

April 25th

Dear Mr Furniss

I very much regret to have to inform you that your son was missing on the 22nd of this month. He went out on an offensive patrol in company with several other machines.

They had a big engagement with German aeroplanes several of which were brought down, but your son and another pilot failed to return.

These two were with their Flight Commander Capt McCallum. In the engagement these 3 got separated from the rest of the machines and were outnumbered by 2 or 3 to one and had to fight their way out. Capt McCallum alone returned badly wounded in the leg and is now in hospital. Your son was not seen by Capt McCallum to have been shot down and there is a possibility that his engine had been hit forcing him to land in hostile territory. I have been hoping to hear news of him but so far none has come through. We all most sincerely hope that your son is alright. It is of course impossible to give an opinion under the circumstances and we can only hope for the best. Should I get any news I will of course let you know at once.

Your son was a great loss to the squadron. Although he had only been out with us a comparatively short time, he was promising extraordinarily well as a pilot. I know he would have been one of my very best officers

Please allow me to tender you and your family my most sincere sympathy in which all officers of this squadron join.

Your son's kit has already been sent down to the base and will reach you in due course

Yrs sincerely

JBT Leighton

(Comdg no.23 Sqd)