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Dear Mr. Kingsley

Thank you for your letter of way back in July, for which, I am sorry not to have replied before now. As I get older, less and less seems to get done.

I think that I must admit defeat regarding the "lost Church" at Harlaxton. Maybe it was but a dream? My memories however are very clear.

You have, slightly misunderstood, the Vicar's description of my Service life. I was in the R.A.F. stationed at R.A.F. Spitalgate which was on top of a hill on the other side of Grantham (on the A52,

I believe - and now an Industrial Site, (I am informed) Because of lack of accommodation at Spitalgate we were billeted at a site in Harlaxton Village. It could have been a "Radar Site", sited on a right-hand corner and on a raised bank on the left hand side. We stayed for three weeks, nights only, with day working at Spitalgate, which was used for training Pilots from single to dual-engine air craft. maybe the Parachute Regiment used it in their time at Harlaxton?

I have one good story that is worth repeating to your Students under the heading of COMMUNICATIONS - or how not to do. My very good friend, Dennis Peacock, and I were waiting to be sent on a Compass adjusters course and so were classified as "misemployed" a wonderful R.A.F. term with rather awful legal connotations.

However, we were assigned to the "Five

"Service" our main job was watching aircraft land and hope none crashed and caught fire. A boring job, but very easy, so complaints were not in order.

At 2AM, one night we were called to the Control Tower and told an aircraft had crashed up the Great North Road, (Now, the A1(M) which, at that time, went through the centre of Grantham. We were told to lead another Fire Engine, Ambulance, Rescue Vehicle and Staff-car (for the Officer) and that we would meet-up with the Grantham Fire Brigade in Grantham, having similar vehicles. So, about 10 vehicles hurried up the G.N. Road where we were told that we should see 'the fire' as the aircraft was beside the road. After 10 miles there was no sign of any crashed aircraft.

So we returned to base (No telecommunication in those days. It transpired, on our return, that the man in the Control Tower was a Scotsman, and up the G.M. Road to him meant going to London, whereas, our driver, was a Cockney, from E. London, and up the G.M. Road to him meant going to Scotland. Luckily for all, the aircraft had landed, fairly well, except for being "tail-up" in a ditch.

Military communications are now very "clipped" and precise, a lot has been learnt since those days. It is good to ponder ~~and~~ ^{on} these mistakes which are so simple and yet could have devastating results. I do hope that I have not extended your patience beyond reasonable limits.

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Because of my age and slight information I shall have to give-up the struggle to find the "lost Church", but any information to come my way I shall receive with interest. I shall try to contact the Parachute Regiment Association in the hope that someone has similar memories (or dreams) to mine.

Thank you for the kindness of yourself and your staff for welcoming me to Harlaxton Manor, it was much appreciated.

Yours Very Sincerely,
Reg Seabrook.

(REG. SEABROOK)