

**Letter sent to Dean's mother on June 18, 1945  
from Gordon Crawford, a member of Dean's crew**

Dear Mrs. Dean,

I expect you have been waiting patiently to hear from me to know exactly what happened to your son George. Well Mrs. Dean I feel it my duty to tell you the truth, as I'm sure you would want me to do, no matter how cruel it may seem.

In the first place we were shot down in very unfortunate circumstances. You may find it hard to believe but an American fighter mistook us for the enemy and although we recognized him, he failed to identify us and fired upon us and we burst into flames. All the electrical equipment in our aircraft was shattered leaving us no form of communication with other members of the crew as in our particular aircraft each man has his own isolated cockpit affording no movement whatsoever.

I know for a fact that George tried to bale out but whether we were too low, as we were losing height rapidly, or whether his parachute had been improperly packed I cannot say, but when he was found his chute was only half opened. I am rather inclined to believe the former. I think he left it too late, to make sure we got out safely, doing what was in his power to keep the aircraft in the air as long as possible.

Knowing your son as I did I feel sure that's what happened. I can say this truly, that I owe my life to him and I shall never forget that. I know you must be very proud of him as we all were to have him as our "skipper". We enjoyed every minute of his company and he was a great flyer, because he loved his job. His heart and soul were in everything he did and he was very popular with everyone on the squadron.

Now Mrs. Dean accept my heartfelt sympathy for your great loss, and if there is anything you would like to know or if there is anything I can do to lighten your burden please let me know and I will do all in my power to help you.

Yours sincerely,

*Gordon*