McGill.

20th Jan 74

Dear Dad & Mom,

I suppose that you'll be pleased to know that I arrived back in Montreal safely but not without hitch or delay though. British Airways were delayed four hours in take off, because when the stewardess switch the door from manual to automatic it fell off, an event which I am sure must have boosted the passengers confidence in B.A. Subsequently we had every British Airways' mechanic and his brother on the plane, each as surprised as the next. Did you know that British Airways have a specialist mechanic for each and every screw on those planes. Apart from a minor confrontation with the immigration at the Airport the rest of the journey was fairly eventless.

I am, by now, once more, deeply involved in the mundane affairs of University, however for some reason I am going to be working harder this term, I don't know why but I just feel that I am going to feel like working alot more this term. Maybe it's because the novelty of the University has worn off and now I can settle down to enjoying it even more and manage to fit in the work in a more productive way. I got my results the other day - 3 B's nothing exceptional, no A's but then no C's either. I suppose you are wondering why only three grades as I am taking five courses — well put your mind at rest the other two are full year courses and no grade will appear until May.

I had good time with John Drabble on Friday and Saturday. On Friday I put his bike back together for him — his fathers first comment was "if you are looking for John's bike it's over there and over there and over there ——." Anyway, despite a few minor set backs we manage to return it to a functional state and on Saturday set out to ride to Rugby. Four miles outside of Rugby we found its Achilles heel, the chain. Like the Titanic I suppose we had been doomed before we set out, and were stranded in the middle of along road through the country fields — so close and yet so far away. But, as in all good stories, the bike

had chosen to break down outside the only house along the length of that piece of road. Following the old adage — when in doubt call Mark — we called Mark, who happened to have just left for the barber. The net result was that Mark was summoned from the Barber shop to go collect the only two of his friends who could possibly be in such a predicament. Finally at 3 o'clock, as opposed to our ETA of 11 o'clock — getting as back as British Airways — we arrived at Rugby. We went up to see Tom who was too busy watching the rugby on Television to talk to us seriously. Anyway I saw Graham and some of my old friends and then after fixing the chain for John and saying good-bye to him, I went with Mark for a while and then left for London. One constructive thing that I achieved was the organisation of a car for the summer.

Has Dad sent his boat engine into HUP to be overhauled, if not tell to get his ass in gear and book it up — get Charles to bug him about it. Oh and even more important, has he started to save up enough money for my bike, don't let him forget. If you haven't already sent me the things I asked for, you could include my jeans jacket — Charles will know which is mine and he better get it right. It is now getting fairly cold — to say the least — the other day it was a brisk -19°C with a wind chill factor temperature averaging at -31°C.

Well I know that you don't want me to write too long a letter because it is keeping me from my studying, so I will bid you all fair well until May or when I next write, which ever comes first.

John

McGill,

18th Feb. 1977.

Dear Grandma,

I must wish you a Happy Valentines, a bit belated I know but it's the thought that counts, right Grandma. I hope it is now warmer in Bermuda. Thanks alot for the newspapers, I really enjoyed reading about the events that going on home back. I'm sure I have told you that since I have been here I have learnt how to ice skate — well as you must know, Grandma, it's an insult to go to a Canadian school and not know how to skate — and last weekend I went to Ottawa to visit Auntie Jessy and Uncle Tony. As part of the nations capital they maintain the Ice on the Rideau Canal in a skatable condition — it is supposed to be the longest outdoor skating area in the world — and I decided that it was time to accept the ultimate challenge and attempt to skate this. Ross and I went on Friday night and it was fabulous.

The family there is fine and all seem to be well. I saw Grandma and Grandpa Ross who tell me that they are coming to Bermuda on March 9th, so I suppose that you will see them then. Jessy and Tony took me cross country skiing on Saturday morning - something I had never and it was fun, a bit strenuous but a very enjoyable. They all send you their fondest love.

And now, Grandma, to something that I am sure that you want to keep a check on — How my work is going. Well in general fine. There is alot more studying to be done this term as we are getting deeper into the theory around the subjects. But an encouraging factor in all of this is that I managed to get 100% on an exam last week.

I just had a call from Lisa Innes a few minutes ago. I was a bit surprised at first but she is here on a holiday with her Grandmother and they invited me to dinner tomorrow night, which I am sure will be fun. And tomorrow morning I have got a soccer match with the team I am playing for.

You don't have to worry Grandma, we don't attempt to brave the elements and play in the snow, instead we have turned our attention to indoor soccer, which in fact proves to be quite a challenging game.

Now that I am into my second term, I am beginning to get more involved in the University activities and meeting some very interesting people. I have been asked to work for one of the faculty newspapers. I am doing some of the proof reading and layout for the Commerce faculty. It is very interesting as I get to read many of ideas of people who try to have their works published and the layout is more mathematically oriented, it involves organising the paper as to where one is going to place the articles and advertisements, and making sure that there is room for them.

Well Grandma I have got to some studying and its getting late, so I'll see you soon in May

John.

McGill.

23rd February 74

Dear Dad & Mom,

Well here I am writing to our London address, as I was telling Mom in London I now have a Bermuda, Montréal and London address, a position enjoyed by only a privileged few. This is, I hope, going to be one of those shorties as I have exams and papers next week.

I have bought Charlie's transformer, however, I'm sure its going to cost as much to send it – did you realise transformers have solid iron cores. And while we are on the subject your man, with my things from Bermuda, in Montréal has not contacted me yet, so I don't know if I'll ever see the stuff.

Auntie Jessy and Tony and everybody seemed to be doing well. Grandpa seemed to be a bit slower, but I'm sure it has just been due to the fact that the weather has not been conducive to his recovery, and a little warm weather will get him going again. Otherwise, I skated the canal and it was fantastic. I did well even if I say so myself. And – and this will be a big surprize – I bought a new pair of skates. I had outgrown those others and they were not delivering the performance nor standing the punishment. These new ones are amazing and very well made, one-oo. Don't worry I hooked it up and the bill is not nearly of that order.

I received a letter from the Bank of Bermuda the other day talking about students abroad in Commerce and the possibility of summer and career jobs. I replied, but on the question of summer jobs I think I would rather work electrical, however, how beneficial and what sort of job do you think they would give me for the summer and how much would it pay.

Something I'm sure will please you, I've had a haircut, but then it was getting to be about time. Next weekend, right after my exams, I am going to Toronto to see a friend and it should be alot of fun. Lisa was up in Montréal staying with her ~~aunt~~ grandmother, Mrs McGuinness, and they invited me over to dinner on Saturday night which was alot of fun.

Anyway I had better leave you to finish off the flat so I'll see you in May

John

McGill,

11th Sept. 94

Hello Everyone,

I am back now and settled in. I have my fridge and phone (286-9181) and so things are beginning to look up. I flew also from Boston to Montréal first class and when I got here Dr Outerbridge - used to live in Bermuda - who was at the airport to meet Peter Gray gave me a lift to McGill. Not bad, hey.

I have managed to get the paper ready in time and so all looks well on that front. As soon as I receive those papers from you I can go back to work on these 10 credits. My adviser in the admissions says that there is now a glimmer of hope but I don't know how much weight to attach to that.

Say 'hi' to the rest of the family for me.

John.

McGill
13th Sept '44

Dear Family.

After receiving Dad's letter today I went down and saw my adviser in the Admission. I showed her the copy of the Transcript that he sent and after about 10 minutes she told me that the committee had reevaluated the terms underwhich I was accepted and that I would now be relieved of the burden of those extra 10 credits. So I'm down to a 90 credit course – or 3 years. It took along time but they finally came through.

How is the boat coming along? Has Charlie done the first clean of my bike yet? Don't let rust start to develop. I suppose Graham has gone back by now – don't let him forget to send me the Rugby stuff.

See you all Soon.

John.

McGill.

18th October 1977.

Dear Dad and Mom.

You know that you are getting well into the term when people start talking about Mid-term exams. These start next, however I only have two to do. Actually this term is going really well from the work point of view. I am enjoying all my courses - even the History course which I had previously thought was going to Hell.

The Rugby will be all over when we go down to Boston on November 5th to play against Harvard. The whole season is geared towards the preparation of this most prestigious match. The newspaper is coming along well. The general consensus around the faculty is exemplified by the fact that Montréal businesses are now coming to us asking for advertising space.

Before I forget could you get Dad to send me a photocopy of all my scholastic documents - from Saltos, 'O' levels, 'A' levels etc - and in a large envelope so that they won't be folded. I need them for something I am trying to do. How is Charlie's monster machine doing - I hope that once it is painted he manages to get the engine working. I also hope that he is keeping my Suzuki well oiled - tell him to use cans of WD-40.

I would imagine that Henry is having a ball playing with fibreglass and our boat - anyone want to lay odds that it is still on his slip in May. Nobody has mentioned my house on Long Island - I hope it didn't collapse. How is Grandma doing? And Auntie Carol and Julie? What about Uncle Graham? - sounds like the ending of "as the world turns"

Anyway I'll see you all at Christmas

John.

do the same thing

P.S. I noticed that I got a carbon copy half letter last time - if I had more than one mother I could!

McGill
28th Nov. 1977

Dear Mom,

I know that at first glance you will think that I took the bait because of my obsession to have a car in England. On the Contrary, I know that the chances of the garage being filled with a car that I will be allowed to drive are remote, especially if it just happens to be someone else's Rolls. I can just he manual chuckling in the back ground - how right you are, hammer.

I might arrive a day late in France because I might have an exam conflict - but I'll make my way there somehow. Mr McKay Smith (or whatever) called me a couple of weeks ago and told me to call him on the following week about dinner. Well, subsequently I lost the number and have heard nothing else from him.

I suppose that it is expected that I make an excuse for not writing - I have been trying to make up the deficit that playing rugby has left in my studies. I think I will be relatively successful - I had better be. The first snow came on Friday and because it was so late this year, I'm sure that it's here to stay. We went from Autumn to Mid-winter, literally, over night.

I have written a big notice up on my board to get you those ski glasses, but as yet I haven't been down to look. I hope that my bike has no rust or dents Lyle and give it a really good once over before you leave. I have sent him $10 dollars of my money to cover the balance for the past months - I hope he doesn't understand the implications of the depreciated Canadian dollar - otherwise I will still be in debt.

By now preparations must be under way for your

departure in 2 weeks. Oh by the way why don't you send me the phone number of Ski d'or again so I'll have in case of trouble. I don't know why I ask, you know I'd probably never use it even if I was in trouble, but just for the old security blanket effect you better send it anyway.

How is Grandma enjoying GreenAcres. It must be a big change for her. And how is Valerie doing? As dad says she must be 'par-laying' by now.

Is the party in Ski d'or going to be the same again this year - are there any new comers? I have been skating this year already and found that I could still remember most of it - a few smacks here and there but not much.

Anyway I'll see you all in a few weeks

John.

- I feel like I'm setting up a Charity Fund - because I know exactly where the money is going to go. - Charlie's bike.

McGill
21st May 1978

Dear Mom,

It was very nice to hear from you the other night - I was a bit disappointed to hear that, after 8 months, my "cookbook" had progressed no further than to include Chili and Shepard's pie. As you must have realized it was pretty much a 'please send money' call but I was running fairly low.

Something I forgot to ask you (you would probably have forgotten anyway so I guess it is better that it comes in writing) and that is to send me about 4 photo copies of all the documents required for the scholarship applications. Such things as birth cert., O'level certs. and all of the other required documents one must have in order to apply. I want to have them all myself so that I can collect them all together and send them in as a folder to the various committees. (don't fold them either and put a piece of card board in to keep them straight).

I am not particularly thrilled to hear that the boat is arriving in our backyard - I at least hope it leaves before I get home. Say "hi" to Grandma and Grandpa for me and I hope that they are enjoying Bda. Wish Graham and Charlie good luck on their respective exams. I had a small disaster filling up the water bed but not too serious

See you soon John.

P.S. don't forget those papers!! - you'll probably have to ask Dad.