



farmland in Blans, where he spent several hours wandering before he approached a large farmhouse, Ballegård, and knocked on the front door. Rear gunner John Fell also landed in ploughed fields and sought help from farmers in Rufas, near Ullerup. Livesey and Fell were both taken as prisoners-of-war.

Ron Pilgrim, the bomb aimer who had gone out the front escape hatch, landed in a rhododendron bush in the backyard of the local vicarage a kilometre to the north. The current vicar, Lis-Ann Rahm, told *The Weekend Australian Magazine* she believed the airman then sought refuge in the barn, and while the clergy of the district wanted to look after him, police instead alerted the German occupiers. “The pastors were trying to decide what to do, but in the end

For nearly 18 months, his parents held out hope he was alive

the decision was taken away from them when the Germans arrived,” she said.

Willy Simpson, the pilot, who had been last to leave the plane, landed on the roof of a telephone exchange, injuring his head. He tried to negotiate with the locals, who spoke no English, and by 9.20am the Germans arrived and transferred him to Dulag Luft, near Frankfurt, for interrogation. Like the others rounded up, Simpson would be held there for around two

weeks before being allocated to a prisoner of war camp.

For nearly 18 months, Tree’s parents held out hope the second oldest of their four children would be found alive.

But in July 1945, Livesey’s sister Alice Yates sent a letter to Tree’s sister Annie Gagliardi in Brisbane. In it, she thanked Annie for a cake sent across the seas to the UK, indicating a warm relationship between the two families, before moving on to sobering news.

“Well Ann, I told you Bill had written to the Red Cross about Johnnie, today he got a reply,” the letter states. “I said I would let you know Ann if we got to know anything. Well, I am going to keep that promise, although it is not pleasant news I have. I am going to put the