

LETTERS JANUARY 1945

Xways Ludham
Gt Yarmouth
Thur 11. 1. 45

Dear Billee

It seems ages ago since you left me at Potter and there's not been anything very exciting going on in Ludham. After leaving you I got home to a nice big fire and a cup of hot coffee whilst the snow continued at intervals and so on all day. I had made an appointment to have my hair cut over the road but when I turned up she was too indisposed to do it but said she might on Thursday but on Wednesday sent her daughter over to say that she was giving up haircutting as she did not feel up to it in the winter time so on Thursday morning despite the heavy snow showers I went to the village to find Leon's barber at the Bakers Arms and got the job done then and there and so was a bit late for dinner. I was out for over an hour but fortunately before I went I said I might be some time otherwise "M" would have wondered what was up. The roads are dreadfully treacherous with a layer of fresh snow over a congealed surface below.

The accommodation was nothing to write home about and was in a loft, access to which was a dark staircase. He had a nice place he told me but the military took it over and he's got to make the best of it. But apart from that I got a much better job – Mrs Newton was always a bit amateurish, so I shall know where to go in future.

Tues the ninth was much about the same as Monday, snow showers and a very slight thaw. Did you listen to the Brains Trust. I thought it was a very poor effort considering the people who were there.

Wednesday brought more snow showers with North winds and over clouded sky.

Vera and Mrs Swanston came about 2.30 for an afternoons bridge but as usual when we interchange visits the weather is very unpropitious and so it was today. We didn't finish more than 2 rubbers as Vera was very particular about getting off early.

Thursday 11th A good deal of snow today and after allowing for partial thaws I should say that we have had about 3" since you went so unless the weather is very bad at Keighley you haven't lost much. M has made efforts at washing but the drying is difficult. Things on the line get stiff towards the end of the daylight. The average maximum this year is 39 and the average min 30 so you can see that it has been parky.

I did a bit of wood chopping this afternoon, had plenty of clothes on and did not feel cold and the Balaclava helmet which 'M' made me some time ago was very welcome, seeing that I had lost some of the natural protection of my head. We are still in the Lounge but will change over on Saturday when "M" has her Savings session.

The Blackout relax is rather curious. The powers that be gave notice that we should come under "Dim out" but did not give any specific date so Norfolk's Chief Constable took it upon himself to make it Jan 1 but even now the places adjoining the coast are restricted to blackout. After all it doesn't make a lot of difference and except for not being quite so careful the procedure is much about the same as before and the black curtains give protection to the plants at the window.

I have had a grand lot of calendars from Arthur (in Canada) who sent a lot over for Wilf to distribute. One of them is a young cookery book and another has a picture of Ely Cathedral. Arthur's name is now supreme on the calendars, the name of Jarvis which used to appear is there no more so I presume that the business (Stock and Poultry Suppliers) is now his own as well as the other things that he dabbles in you will get the idea from the piece of gummed paper that I enclose.

Friday morning brought your letter. What a scream about "Cows." P3 has evidently treated all alike and made it her paramount bit of news to all.

Your journey back wasn't entirely a joy ride and after all it was as well that you caught the early train. You must have made a merry party. Did P3 treat you to "Cows" just to while away the time. Apparently the snow has been pretty general but, to my surprise, it had nearly all gone during the night and I hope that we are not treated to much more.

Cheerio and best love Pa

Xways Ludham Norfolk
Tues 16. 1. 45

Dear Billee

I'm sorry to have to tell you that "M" instead of getting the better of her cold, from last Thursday onward her cough has been getting steadily worse and more distressing although this evening I think she is a little better but last Friday and Saturday night she suffered severely, almost the worst I have known her to have.

P3 turned up late on Saturday or early morn of Sunday about a quarter to one and although we went to bed we slept very lightly and roused up when she came in the front door.

We are in luck's way over apples and got a stone for 5/- from Riches and I brought the first half home on Saturday and the remainder on Monday, although nominally cookers they are nice to eat. Apropos of apples "M" tried the experiment of soaking some of the dried rings and made some apple jam and quite a success too.

P3 defaulted on Sunday and although due at the farm she stayed at home and did a bit towards cooking the dinner. I was first up and found that she had not gone so roused her only to find that she was having another day to get over her trip.

'M' had about a couple of hours in bed during the afternoon and in the evening seemed a bit brighter. We had our tea a bit earlier and finished before I blacked out.

On Monday I went up to the village in the afternoon and among other things I made enquiries about cloches – Knights said he had some lists but he could not find one just at the moment and I saw him on Tuesday and said he'd get prices and sizes and let me know. I also wanted a length of hose to enable me to empty the Ideal Boiler in case of further leak in the hot water tank and was fortunate in securing a length from Brook's which had been damaged by fire but have just been able to get a piece long enough to reach out of the back door. A bit of "Freeman's

Leon came in on this Tuesday evening. "M" would have been just as pleased if he had not, but it's the first time he has been here since you went

Your letter came Tuesday morning or was it in the afternoon it was very late. Thanks for your good wishes for 18th May we'll be able to celebrate the 50th and the war in Europe be over by then. Russia is making good progress after 6 months rest on the Polish front and the drive into Belgium and Luxemburg is being pushed back but the length of the lines of Communication both in the East and West is a powerful factor against Russia and the Allied Armies. As regards coupons I daresay we should be able to rake up a few if you say what you want.

Glad to hear that the rash is somewhat better and it looks as if your surmise about the holiday was right. Sixty cases wanting attention is a pretty bad case of affairs. Is it likely that some girls didn't know what was wrong. I think I wrote once before that I had a doubt about K being an educational authority on its own and I'm still wondering whether you would not have been better off under West Riding.

What a girl she is with her cows but she evidently is heart and soul in her work or cows would not be uppermost always in her mind. I wonder what Miss E. thought about her and whether she entertained her with cows.

I expect that Dorothy will be glad to have your letter after it is finished. Evidently Bert and Carrie were pleased to hear from me judging by the prompt reply received on Christmas morning.

There are one or two things in your letter that require "M's attention and she will be sending to you later. It is now 10 pm Tuesday 16th and Leon has just settled himself in a chair in front of the fire and I wonder when he will think of departing. I know "M" will not want to wait up till 12 pm

I don't suppose I shall find much more but I will not close this up until tomorrow morning.

Wednesday 17th "M" if not any better is certainly not worse this morning. The Women's Institute has had to be cancelled as far as she is concerned. It's a bright day and she would very much like to get out but its not good enough.

Cheerio and best love
Pa

P.S. 'M' is lying down this aft.

Crossways
Ludham
Gt. Yarmouth
19. 1. 45

My dear Babs

First of all I must say how sorry I am about your Mac. I did not realise you had left it behind, until your letter came and since then altho' I packed it at once, it has not been posted till today. I have had such a bad time with this cold which was really an attack of bronchitis that things have been very much at sixes and sevens here and with the exception of as little cooking as could be got on with Pa has had to deal with everything. Phyllis 3 has helped when she could but you know how limited her time is and it's no use depending on her for much. I suppose I should really have had a week in bed but still I'm feeling a lot better now and well on the way to normal, which is as well for since Wednesday Pa has developed a cold and unless I am much mistaken Phyllis has one on the way. She has been coughing a good deal today. She is lucky in that she has a half day off today, but has spent the time by the fire, for the weather is about the worse specimen so far, with a heavy fall of snow about 4 pm.

I hear you wrote to Vera last weekend, she was very pleased to have a letter from you. The W.I. meeting was on Wednesday when Mr Ainsworth gave a talk on "Assam." Vera says it was interesting but in her words, "He didn't seem to be able to put it across" and spoke in the same tone all through, Pa took all the stuff I usually deal with up in the morning for her to see to and when I asked how the meeting went off, "Rotten, what I call an ell of a meeting" for there was so much to deal with. One thing she knows now what I do. She said she missed me very much.

There is plenty of chatter going on about the W.V.S. Canteen arrangements for most of the helpers object to Kate who is still carrying on under Mr. Adcock. Some of them it seemed wanted a meeting and Mrs Brown was very angry, but of course they cannot call it a W.V.S. Canteen if Mr. A is managing it. Its just a private canteen with W.V.S. voluntary workers. Mrs S is a bit concerned about it all. but it seems that she doesn't want to upset Adcock.

I had a letter from Dick which I am enclosing, please send it back. I have told him that I agree with the idea of £20 but that it should be taken from the balance of the money that Grandma left for Arthur's benefit and not from Arthur's effects which means £5 each from A....., J....., Charlie and myself, for personally I would rather see A and J find that amount and I don't think Charlie B. will mind much.

Sat. Have had your letter this morning. I do hope the Mac arrives soon but I am not too hopeful as P3 had a parcel that was sent off last Monday that reached here Friday and have now had no books so far this week, altho' the list was posted last Sunday later. Anyhow I am sending in addition, my cape mac. I shall not need it – also my coupons if you decide to buy a new one. You may find that the cape will answer the purpose for the rest of this winter. Phyllis's Xmas Book from her mother and father is "Music in the Middle Ages" 25/- . She is very pleased with it.

Well the snow has laid all day today, but the afternoon has not been at all bad, but Pa says the roads were when he went to the village. I have not been out since the end of last week and until I feel a bit better I am best indoors. I'm glad to say that Pa's cold is not too bad altho' I think he would have had a turn in bed had I been alright.

You will be amused at the cutting from the W.I. Mag: "More About Cows" I have not heard again from M. or Sally so far. Miss Hacon is back at the Cottage on her own – but no one sees very much of her. Thanks for the fruit which is on the way. I am well off now for Mrs Whone got 1 lb of Raisins with my book while it was up there and I had the allowance from Throwers last week. 1 lb of Sultanas and ½ lb Prunes. Now I must go easy on points for the next 2 wks. We will remember the 4/7, it is scarcely worth sending it for we can square it up when you come. Mrs Smallwood has just been telling me that "Smiths" have promised me 1 pr of sheets (Cotton) from their new quota and they are to be £5 per pair. It makes me think again about putting washing out, for I am sure that they last longer with no boiling and no soda so I shall hang on. I was intending to fix up with Mrs Debbage this week. I shall "Wait and See" how things go.

One good thing – it looks as if the Russians may soon mop up Germany and that will be a step in the right direction altho' things won't be cheaper for a long time I know.

Leon talked about coming here tonight, Sat. Really I hope he does not. Still he is not much trouble as far as that goes.

I will leave this now till tomorrow. I may think of something else and if posted today it won't go out.

Sun night

Leon did come in last night but he does not make much diff: after all. Got up today to 5" snow and 9 deg frost. Phyllis has to turn out at 5.30. I was due back to breakfast at 9. on Sunday morning too!! Anyhow I got up before 8 but she did not come in till after 11, and then had finished for the day. I was glad she was able to stay in for she has a nasty cold and cough. I'm glad to say I feel a lot better today, better than I have done since you left a fortnight ago

. I hope it will last as I have plenty of arrears to pull up. Have done up the Cape Mac. with Pa's coupon book. Please yourself about the Mac. This is the end.

Much love and a kiss
Mama

Xways Ludham Norfolk
22. 1. 45 Tuesday

Dear Billee

I didn't realise until I looked at my diary that it was so long since I posted to you. Things have been a little out of the rut and I have found plenty to do without bothering about the garden. However P1 is making splendid progress although the cough is not quite gone and at times is quite distressing. Today is the first time that she has been outdoors and she took advantage of the sunny and warm weather to sweep the snow away from the front door. She has already told you that there has been a fall of 5" with drifts in places of a yard and upwards and added to that we had the coldest night that I remember since we came to Ludham 15 deg. F.

We had a little snow last week and some night frost but on Saturday I took my spade with some misgiving and tried to get up some Parsnip and Leek. Much to my surprise the ground was beautifully soft under the 1/2" of snow. I've heard that snow keeps the ground warm but this was the first time that I had experienced it.

I had a day or two when I thought I had contracted a similar dose to "M"s but it did not fully develop and beyond a little phlegm I'm none the worse for it and I 'm very glad that I was able to do all the going out that was required to be done.

By the way have you noticed Venus just lately. It's a brilliant object in the SSE and easily seen before sunset and later in the evening after dark – it's almost dazzling.

On Friday afternoon between 4 and five we had a very heavy fall of snow with about 50 yards visibility and almost a gale of wind, Fortunately it was soon over but took your breath away while it lasted. Saturday was clear and bright and I went on my now usual crawl to the village. Something had gone wrong with Hall's supply and all that I was able to get for the weekend was an oxtail, very nice for soup but not exactly a weekend joint.

Leon came on Saturday evening and was very interested in the electric clock and we took it down as far as we could get without special tools and had to give it up. The alarm clock came in for some attention but as I could not get the alarm turn buckle off. I was unable to get it out of the case, so that effort came to a bad end.

On Sunday we woke up to heavy snow but it finished up during the morning with the aforesaid total of 5 inches. As it gave every indication of being a cold night I looked round for the wherewithal to combat the frost. Turned out carburettor heaters lamp and stove, and saw that all paraffin requirements were met and just as well for my thermometer registered 17 deg or 15 deg of frost (I've a faint idea that I mentioned this before)

Today, Mon has been a lovely day but cold with a max of 31 deg. Of course the country and Crossways firs look delightful in the bright sunshine. We have actually had a snow plough at work out in the road which piled up the snow at the verges. When I went to the village there had not been enough traffic to make the road slippery but before the end of the day I expect it will be like glass as the plough did not take off more than half of it. As a result of last night's cold plants on the dining room boards caught the frost, they were mainly the largely Cyclamens and I'm wondering whether they will get over it all right. They will all come into the lounge tonight where we have a fire.

'M' has felt like doing things and this afternoon did quite a good spot of washing, but of course there was no chance of getting them dry. P3 is sleeping soundly on the couch in front of the fire. She has been reading – I don't say studying – on Physics and shut eye prevailed. She has a bit of a cold but won't admit to it much.. She has a pretty cold job. The sheds seem absolutely useless against snow which blows in everywhere. Snow is bad enough in the open but inside is a proper nuisance. The fuel problem in Ludham is acute. Some people in the Council houses cannot light a fire for want of coal and Newton says he can't get any for them. I have been 3 times about coke and my stock of coal is getting sadly depleted but hope to get some more after the

end of this month and still have a few logs to burn up. Your registered letter arrived on Sat morn and most of it concerns M so will leave it at that. The postage to Canada is 2 ½ d first ounce and each additional ounce 1d. The address you gave would be sure to find them.

Cheerio and best love
Pa

Crossways
Ludham
GT. Yarmouth
Norfolk
Wed 24. 1. 45

Dear Billee

Your letter came this morning as did your parcel also. Thank you for the contents and the travel book looks as if it is very readable and here again I must leave it to P1 to comment of several items therein.

We are still getting some cold reading at night 17 deg of frost ad 15 degrees followed last night by 7 and its quite a business to keep water in the pipes from freezing
This day was quite nice and sunny and although the temperature remained below freezing it was nice in the sunshine and "M" ventured on her first time out, going as far as Halls but found the road very slippery and treacherous. She was not too brisk on her return but soon recovered and did over half an hours ironing before tea.

P3 has had a nice afternoon for her half day and went to catch the 2 pm bus to Norwich but is not back yet 8 pm although she should be back very shortly. She is going to bring back (that is if she can get them) a couple of books 'Weather' and 'Norfolk Villages', the former for me and the other for "M"

Thur 25. 1. 45

Another bright sunny day after a very hard hoar frost – about 12 deg – and everywhere exposed is living with hoary rime, The Myobala Tree looks a picture and it is not showing signs of thawing even in the bright sun.

I had a surprise packet this morning for my brother Arthur at Red Deer, Alberta sent a package of tea, coffee, cocoa and an 8oz tin of "Spork" the latter very acceptable. but the tea and coffee packets had been damaged and a nice mixture of the two made the outer covering. The cocoa and Spork being in tins escaped damage. Also enclosed was a cushion cover with a plan of the new wartime road from Edmonton to Fairbanks in Alaska. A nice souvenir of a huge undertaking for war purposes. Well I can't stay any longer I want to post this today in the hope that you will get it on Saturday.

Cheerio and best love
Pa

Crossways
Ludham
Gt. Yarmouth
25. 1. 45

My dear Babs

Well Pa has written to you today but I expect you will like to hear from me. Thanks for the parcel which came in very good condition. I hope by the time this reached you that you will have got the 2 Mac's and I'm sorry I could not get the first off sooner. From what we read in the paper you must be having pretty bed weather, as we are here, for this is the coldest spell we have had since we came here. I am glad to say my chest is much better and I am feeling a lot more like doing things. So far I have only been out once since the 13th but hope to get out again tomorrow. The roads are in a pretty bad condition, still everywhere, looks lovely. P has said once or twice how lovely the trees in the garden look also that she likes this weather. She has a bad cold but it has nearly gone now.

The book she brought from Norwich for me is the one we saw when we were there and Pa has given me the 10/- for it for a Xmas present. I think it's a lovely book to have and I'm sure you will think so when you see it. She also got me a copy of "Edible Things" 2/-. I have been going to get that for sometime. When she came back from Keighley, she brought me 1 lb of raisins, 1 oz which she had made while she was at home and ½ lb Sugar. Then you sent 2 lb sweet oranges. M and I bought 2 lb Seville oranges – 8 pts at Throwers so I am well off for and fruit but desperately short of pts. Still that can't be helped. I shall manage till the next period. The p'cl from Arthur Goodey contained 1 lb Tea, 1 lb Coffee, 1 lb Cocoa, ½ Spork (good name that) and the cushion cover. A very acceptable little lot. I don't even know his wife's name but we must both write to him and try to think of something we can send in return. Of course there is not much village gossip, as far as I know. The collection of things for bombed out people took place last Sat: I offered to turn out some warm clothes but was told neither clothes or money was wanted so let it go. I only sent them a meat dish. I dare say I could have found up something more in the way of crockery but did not feel like it last week. Mrs S tells me that they had a nice lot of stuff and she and Vera spent yesterday afternoon sorting, listing and packing. They seem to have done all the work in connection with it.

I now have plenty of maroon wool and will send you some but get on with Miss S's jumper. I have sent a p'cl of socks and gloves off today and shall not be sending again for a bit. We shall soon have half term here.

Much love and a kiss

Mama

Crossways Ludham Norfolk

Wednesday 31 Jan '45

Dear Billee

I suppose that you are beginning think that I have forgotten how to write to you but somehow or other the time has slipped away and the evening time when I usually write seems to go like lightening. For instance on Monday, we went out along the hard slippery road to play whist with Vera and Mrs Swanston. I had some extraordinary luck with my cards and at the end of 3 Rubbers with different partners came out about 3000 up. The journey there was not too bad but the road was ice bound and on the homeward way there was slight fine snow which developed into a considerable fall and with a high wind it drifted in everywhere even in the back door which was locked. In the garage there was almost as much snow inside as out and the bungalow roof leaked like a sieve and after the thaw, wet patches made their appearance in nearly every ceiling, the lounge being the worst

There were 4 parcels to be posted this morning and 'M' went to post 3 of them directly after breakfast and I took a big one of knitting later on. The road was in a shocking state with a thick layer of slush and rather treacherous in places.

Last evening, Tuesday. When I intended to write Leon came in, and although he said he was not stopping it didn't take much to persuade him to stay. P3 had a bath in the morning and went to bed early, had she been a bit late no doubt Leon would have obliged with the pumping.

Today is the first day for over a fortnight that we have had the Ideal going owing to shortage of fuel. The shortage looked like being serious but 3 cwt of coke turned up. As regards coal I have cleared the garage and only have the reserve outside the back door and I'm trusting to Newton to bring me some as soon as February is in but I'm afraid I shall only get 1 cwt at a time. Oil is running very short, only ½ gallon left and I had to see Thrower and see what he could do about it after he had served his priority customers for February. However he managed to bring me a gallon and after the first few days of February I may or may not get the drum filled. The paraffin I want to keep the frost from the water pipes, using it in the Bathroom and Kitchen all night as well as a spot of cooking in an endeavour to keep down E.L consumption. It's all a game these days but so far we have had no interruption in the supply of juice but of course may suffer that way any time. What a good thing it is to have a little warmer weather except for the slush which I expect will go tonight, the wind is S with a fine drizzle and this evening its 40. The following are the temperatures which I recorded

	max	min
Sat 20 30	24	
Sun 21 31	22	
22 34	17	
23 36	15	

I should say that we have had about a foot of snow all told but I did not measure it each time.

	24	32	24
	25	30	17
	26	31	23
Sat	27	32	15
Sun	28	38	17
	29	32	27

On Monday the letter from my brother Arthur came. Such a budget and although I have read it through twice I haven't really digested it. He gave a long description of his business, house, garden etc including a sketch plan of the two latter. The house is of two floors, and in common with a famous architect, I don't remember who, he omitted the stairs. I'll pull his leg when I reply.

I must say that my two letters to Canada have produced splendid results and I think that Arthur is a bit Home Sick like Bert. At all events Arthur appeared delighted to hear from me. He says that he had often thought about writing to me but didn't quite know how to begin – perhaps a little in awe of his big brother.

Of course I have not been able to do anything in the garden lately but if this thaw continues I may be able to take up some more parsnips and leeks. Those that I took up recently have stood up in good stead lately whilst the ground has been frozen and covered in snow. There's a lot to be done in the way of clearing up to say nothing of digging in the compost heap.

I'll finish up now as I shall try to get this into the early collection.

Cheerio and best love

Pa

P.S. (in brief)

Your letter came Tues morning. Don't worry about clothing coupons, I shall not want them. Our colds are well away now. We have had a repeat of the marvellous rime – very pretty.

So far we have had no frozen water pipes (touch wood)

The electric clock is still grinding on. Cyclamen have quite recovered from the touch of frost.

To Berlin – the sooner the better.