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Xways Ludham Norfolk  
Nov 1. 44

Dear Billee

I was sorry not to have stayed until the train went from Wroxham but I had a pair of boots on which I did not feel too sure about and wanted to get out of the puddles. I felt perished with the cold and did not want to catch one as it would only have been a minute. I'm sure that you will let me off this time. Joyce had a passenger on the way home and the glass was steaming on the inside so you can tell that it was warm inside the car. She stopped at the gate and get the parcel of Aubrietia and also the wool for Mrs Medlieot whom she was going to meet on Tuesday.

It rained best part of the afternoon and all I did was to mend the chain; a link had been forced open at a joint – not a good way of making a chain. Phyllis promptly broke it again at the next link. The evening was uneventful, we had supper early. P no 3 went to bed about 9 and we were not much after ten.

Today (Wednesday) has been decidedly chilly and I was occupied all the morning and beyond bringing in some pots of Chrysanthemums. Did nothing in the garden but found a warmer job in the "wood" cutting up some more logs from the tree trunk. I cut 3 and if I can cut another 2 the remainder will do for a rose pole. I was very much surprised to find that it was worm eaten as it has only been down for a twelve month. Some of the worms objected to my sawing operations and came to the surface. They are about this size ----- and have been quite busy by the number of holes showing on the surface. One of the logs went on the fire at a quarter to 5 and now 8 o'clock there is still a good chunk not burned. P1 and P3 are both busy writing letters. Well I haven't much more to say so

Cheerio and best love from Pa

P.S. Can you guess who P2 is?

Crossways Ludham Norfolk  
Thurs 9. 11. 44

Dear Billee

There's very little to tell of today. It has been another day without progress outdoors but managed to get some dry kindling from the wood and cut it. It's surprising how soon a stock of kindling goes.

'M' spent the afternoon at Vera's sorting out the W.I. accounts, got in just about 6 as Phyllis and I were starting tea. P3 is all excitement in anticipation of her weekend at home. Had a bath and went to bed early.

Fri 10. 11. 44

Another day of leaden clouds and bits of blue sky and heavy showers but we managed to clear up 3 long baskets full of straw from the drive although that was a mucky job interrupted by rain.

P3 finished up quite early this morning and was already to go an hour and a half to spare and in the end left here with my bike with my haversack over her shoulder with grub for the journey and luggage. This travelling light with a vengeance took no liquid and depended on Peterborough for a drink. Se must have had any amount of time to spend at Wroxham, a pretty draughty place to wait about at.

Sat 11. 11. 44

Our dining room flue wanted sweeping badly. "M" made up a good fire and went up to the village and left the blower on – result chimney on fire. She said it was like a fog right up to Hall's and

vicarage. Luckily it did not last long and beyond a liberal fall of soot o the hearth nothing happened except that I found the blower when I took it down. We had a few more falls of burning soot during the day but nothing to trouble about. Whilst M had her usual Saturday amusement, I had a clear out from the frame of things that would suffer from frost .and got in big pots of Chrysanthus which find a shelter in the garage at night. You see I cannot bung up your room with plants now that P3 is using the room. Trotting to and fro to the frame took up all the available daylight and left over a few pots to stow away on Sunday. We miss P3 in the evenings after tea, with her “cow” chatter, not to be wondered at after 3 months.

Your letter came this morning, quite good time too seeing that the post mark was Nov. 10. at 11 am. Glad to hear that the tulips arrived safely and the reminder was approved. There’s not much in your letter for one to comment on. It’s mainly ‘M’s dept.

It’s good to know that Roosevelt is back again. I don’t like Swopping Horses in the Middle of the Stream and feel much more satisfied about the next 4 years. As you say Churchill did not seem is usual self, but lately he seems to have put on a more halting manner as though he were very careful what words he used. M is going to use the space overleaf so I’ll finish up

Cheerio and best love

Pa

Dear Babs.

I think if you make the sleeves 18” good that should do. Pa did not add that Phyllis went off hatless and without stockings. I wish she were staying away a bit longer as I have had a wretched day today. Did not get up till 11 am and the weather has been enough to make one ill. Have finished off the W.I. sheet this evening but have told Vera I can’t deal with it next year. They must either find another treas: or someone else to deal with the knitting.

Crossways  
Ludham  
Gt. Yarmouth  
8. 11. 44

My dear Babs

I hope by now Miss S has got the parcel. It was a fine lot of tulips and should give you a nice bit of bloom when they are about 6d each. Thank you for the hairnets which are very acceptable and if you had only experienced the wind we had here in the early part of the week, you would have known how much I appreciate them. Our garden is strewn from end to end with straw, worse than it has ever been and the plants on the division borders between the 2 lawns are absolutely hidden. We have got a good lot of Chrysanthus indoors, for I have picked them as soon as they break. We have had some more frost, but Pa thinks tonight will be very cold.

What a nuisance about your train last week and what an expense for you. I’m afraid it made your week end pretty heavy. I have told them over the way, they have been over this afternoon for tea and bridge. Its much better than having them in the evening, all things considered. Madge says she thinks they will make up their minds to stay for the winter. I have thrashed out the W.I. affairs but I don’t intend to sign them as Treas: on principle. Vera won’t like it but I can’t help that, also I do not want to be elected Treas: for next year. I have asked M. and S. not to vote for me and I shall ask a few more, for after all I have 3 pretty big jobs 2 knitting and W. S. and someone might be found who is doing nothing. The person who Vera wants for Sec: is Mrs Killick, Cyril Thrower’s sister and she would be quite good, has been a School Teacher.

I heard today that Nell is going as daily companion to Mrs Adcock. That won't last long for it's a year or two ago that Mrs A. told me that she could not stand her at any price and Kate also told me when she once came here to ask me to deal with the knitting party as Mrs A. was going out, that the only other person that they could have asked was Nell and she, Kate, did not want her about the house.

Mrs, G's collection amounted to £10.10.0 which is being oostea to her. She has a school in a village, 9 miles from where her brother is working, a place called Bacton, Norfolk and I hear there are about 30 pupils so she should be able to manage that. Lucky to get it I think. Phyllis is off on Friday, I let her read what you said about trains in your last letter. Her bike will be finished tomorrow. We shall have a lazy weekend to ourselves, at least I shall, not too much cooking for a change. The boy came here yesterday about 4 o/c, had a good practice. His mother had sent him some new music and I asked him to have some tea. He did not want to but anyway he did and then practiced a bit longer and came back into the dining room and browsed thro' some of the travel books. He simply gazed at them most of the time he was having his tea, so I asked him if he would like to look at some of them. He goes on leave next Tuesday and hopes to stretch it to 14 days. He is hoping, if he is lucky to be here for 18 months.

The people over the way are off in a day or two and M. V. S. are very sorry. They would have liked them to stay now they are used to them, but don't want anybody fresh they say.

I have not had a reply from Rene, have you heard from her. I expect she is dashing about and hasn't a moment for anything. The yellow knitting is doing very well, people seem to like them for a change and the next lot of wool is to be for jerseys and the colour Rose and Crimson. One girl has enough wool to make 4 pilches .(?) I have not heard again from Dick or Annie so conclude that Arthur is about the same.

I don't think there is much more to tell now. Wore my brown rig-out to Church on Sunday afternoon and fond it very warm.

Much love and a kiss.  
Mama

Crossways Ludham Norfolk  
Sun 12. 11. 44

Dear Billee

We did not turn out this morning till about 11 o'clock. 'M' was not feeling at all up to the mark and I just slept on as I generally should do if 'M' does not wake me. We did not have dinner till 1.30 it was a good chance to laze with P3 out of the way and we did it properly and did not stir out all day, so can't spin a yarn round that.

Mon 13. 11. 44

A miserable kind of a day, plenty of rain and dull overcast skies. I went to the village tis morning and tied to get No. 8 batteries for you but Thrower and Brooks were out of them. The van comes to Brooks every other Wednesday and I'll try again after next Wednesday. The afternoon was miserably dull and we had the light on in the dining room best part of the time. It was still raining in the latter part when 'M' discovered that she had no more cigarettes so I went up to the P.O. and got some for her. She had a nasty accident this afternoon and ran a crochet needle into the lower fleshy part of her finger and I had the job of getting it out – gave it a good sharp pull and got it out at once. Didn't want to prolong the agony. It went in about a quarter of an inch. A hook is a nasty thing to get into your flesh but so far the place is healing up although the finger is stiff and sore.

P3 came in about 7.20 minus hat or stockings, her head did look a tousled mop and for once in a way found something besides "cows" to talk about. Seemed surprised that she did not see you at the concert.

Tues 14. 11. 44

This morning built up false hopes and it was the old story of overcast and rainy but a brief glimpse of sun in the afternoon induced 'M' to put out some sheets to dry. The washing was done yesterday but its only half dry today. The sun did not last long and the sheets had to come in. 'M' took the W. I. a/c up to \Vera just before tea but was rechristened before getting home. I did nothing outdoors except gathering some kindling and place the little frame in position for a few lettuce plants. I still don't know what to say about cloches. It seems to me that they will be difficult to get and very expensive and troublesome for transit.

We had a wire today from the hospital to say Arthur passed away at 8.30 yesterday (Monday) evening and later on one from Dick with the same news and saying that he would let M have particulars as to the funeral.

C had a nasty shock whilst at work for a rocket came down in the river near him. His mate fainted and Gertie writes that when he came home he was like a jelly but perhaps G has written to you. I want to get this posted before 10 on Wednesday morning so you may not get any reply to anything we may get from you but I'll keep this open.

Nothing more now.

Wed morning  
Cheerio and best love.  
Pa

Crossways  
Ludham  
Gt Yarmouth  
15. 11. 44

My dear Babs

Pa has already told you that Arthur died on Monday evening and the only feeling about it is relief that he has come to the end of his suffering for he has had a bad time during the last few years. Dick has sent me by wire the time for the funeral which is next Monday at 2.30 from Messants in Thomas St. Woolwich. At first I thought of trying to go but have since written to Charlie and asked him to get leave and go in my place. I hope he will be able to do so. He and Gertie are having a dreadful time again and when you read the letter from Gertie that I am enclosing, you will realise a little what it must be up there. This letter came this morning and if I had not decided I should not have gone for it would be a harassing journey and Pa would not have had a moments peace while I was away.

It's terrible about Mrs Angel and Marie and I can't think what Leslie will be able to do will do without her. When we know more about it there may be others we know among the 32. It's so maddening to think that we can do nothing against. these rockets. Have had a letter from Annie this morning and she expects Charlie will be going and she thinks Herbert is in London. I have written to Dick and explained things and told him to expect to see Charlie. After all he is at W.Garden City living now. So he will know how things are for travelling to London. This is all now as Pa will post this before 4 o clock. So goodbye

Much love and a kiss  
Mama

P.S. We are lucky to be where we are these days, even if things are a bit wearisome at times.

Crossways Ludham  
Norfolk  
Tues 21. 11. 44

Dear Billee

We heard from C that both he and Gertie went to the funeral on Monday afternoon and the whole party afterwards (nine) adjourned to Emily Simmons for tea and to hear about the disposal of the two estates involved. AWB had about £80 and after paying funeral expenses of about £21 the residue was to be divided between C.W.F.G. and C

Wed 22. 11. 44

“M” was about early this morning and went to Church for early service. After another down pour the garden was almost impossible. I was only able to do a Simmons in the rates of 2/3 to former and 1/3 to the latter in accordance with a will made by AWB. There was a further sum of £188 remaining out of the estate of AMB – which had been used for AWB’s benefit – and this was to be divided between her children or if deceased amongst their children. Dick voluntarily gave up all claim so it remains for Amy, Jim, P1, and Gertie Gunton heir to F. E. Gunton but to make things all in order they are being asked to express agreement – by the way I had forgotten C. P. B. who must be included. In the meantime “M” is waiting to hear from Dick.

It has been a little less inclement today and I have been able to do a little outdoors but everywhere is soaking wet.

little by sticking to the paths, and not sticking in the mud.

M has made up another sackful for the Mercantile Marine and I took it up to the post and “M” had a W.I. meeting in the Council schoolroom this afternoon, after the children had gone.

I have finished ‘Cottage Loaf’ which you recommended – it was jolly good. P3 also read it in a couple of days. Another one I have just read is ‘A Little Place in the Country’ by Marjory Hesse Tillman also a welcome relief to ‘Crime, or Sex, or War’

Thur 23. 11. 44

Only a little rain last night and the ground is draining out a little which gave me limited opportunity today so gave up and found a job sawing up some Thorn that M and I annexed in the summertime. Some movement in that job and in consequence I came in much warmer than usual.

This evening we went over to Mattocks and had some Bridge, had persistent bad luck but my various partners helped me out to a quite respectable balance in the end.

Madge got very tired by eleven o clock and we left the third rubber unfinished.

Fri 24. 11. 44

A good amount of rain this time and after being indoors all the morning I went and posted books back to Smiths and picked up the first instalment of apples from Riches that M had bespoken and after coming home sawed up enough Thorn to last from 5o 11 o clock. We had the 10.45 news, it is all very satisfactory and the French have done very well indeed. Evidently all the fit men were not deported or half starved and it seems that France came off better than any other occupied country.

Sat 25. 11. 44

‘M’ was due to leave here at 1.30 pm for a meeting of War Savings in Norwich and so it meant a little earlier move out of bed. The car left here a little before time - it was Story’s but driven by a young Polish pilot, who M said was a very careful driver.

P3 had an afternoon at home, the first Saturday since she has been here and is to be followed by a whole day on Sunday.

Some rearrangements of Chrysanths in pots and wood sawing kept me amused during the afternoon, but its an early knock off in these days. My Chrysanths are a bit of trouble but they are coming out well now. I shift the pots into the garage every night and take them out in the morning. There was quite a respectable fall of snow in Norwich this afternoon but in Ludham it was only rain.

Sun 26. 11. 44

A slack day at Crossways. I did not get up until a quarter to four. P3 laid till 9.30 am but 'M' was a bit earlier. Dinner was a mess up, the juice went off just after 'M' had got the batter in the oven but luckily the meat was sufficiently done on the outside for some slices to be cut otherwise the boiling was easily overcome. It's been brighter today and with a drying wind and only 0.04 rain. Things have not been so damp and dismal.

We have been wondering about you all the week, perhaps we shall hear Monday morning, anyhow I'll leave this to finish off then.

Nothing from you so far but may come later. Am trying to get this into early collection.

Cheerio and best love

Pa

P.S Please send us some more labels, they are better than we can get here.

Crossways  
Ludham  
Gt. Yarmouth  
26. 11. 44

My dear Babs

I believe that Pa is writing to you at this moment, but I expect that you can do with another one from me. I have wondered about you several times today and how you were enjoying yourself at Harrogate. It was very nice of Leon's people to invite you. I suppose his leave ends on Monday and no doubt we shall see something of him during the coining week. He will find that a lot of the men that were here when he left, have gone. The party has gone from Braeside about 10 days ago and they have and they have another lot due to come there today. This last is a couple with a baby of 4 months. I wonder how they will like that and the washing every day, which I don't think they had thought of till I mentioned it. They are still undecided about going away for Xmas but they say if they go they think it will be alright to leave the lodgers there!

Phyllis will be here for Xmas, for one of the other girls wants to go home for then and P. has arranged to do her work and have her time off in the New Year. Have you heard from Charlie about his little surprise after the funeral last Monday. If not I am sending on his letter. I have not heard yet from Dick but I expect to any day. Of course I knew and I think I told you that Arthur intended to do something of the sort but I did not think much about it for I did not think there would be much left by the end of Arthur's life. I hope C. and G. will make good use of it. I was sorry not to be there myself, but with things so bad in London I think it was best to remain here. Have you got the watch, there was no charge, and if you have the address of the Electrical people for my blanket, will you will you please send it on.

We have advanced one step towards getting the plants together for Alice, by making a list of what we can send, but the weather has been so bad that its impossible just at the moment. As soon as the ground dries up a bit we will deal with it.

Phyllis has been on the Land each morning this week and in the sheds in the afternoon so she gets Saturday aft. and all day Sunday free, for Land Army don't work on the land on Sunday. She has been lucky enough to have a lovely day today, very bright and clear and fairly cold, but plenty of sunshine, so she went for a ride this aft. got about 10 mls on the Yarmouth Rd and had a puncture, mended it and came back.

The W.I. meeting went off very well and the ballot business was very successful. Vera has got the same Sec. and Treasurer again as no other person was in the running. There were 3 nominees for Treasures but 2 withdrew and the 3<sup>rd</sup> could only agree. In the case of the Sec: there were 5 but the same thing happened. Still there is a magazine Sec. and a tea person and another to deal with the

Trading Stall each month so that the work is pieced out more. Vera told me the other day that when the Vicar starts his classes for confirmation she is going to join.

Mrs Swanston is expecting her son home from Italy now every day. She has not seen him for 3 years so you can imagine how much she is looking forward to it. Miss Hacon is nursing! Mrs Adcock, who seems to have to spend a good deal of her time in bed, Nell told me. "Of course I had to go, my dear. I had an excellent post in Ipswich and went to say goodbye but she wept so bitterly and asked me to go to her, that I had to write to Ipswich and decline!!!" I wonder, but there. I have already heard another version. Now I don't think there is anything more at present so goodbye

Much love and a kiss

Mama

Crossways Ludham Norfolk

28. 11. 44

Dear Billee

In my endeavour to get my last letter in the post in time for the morning collection it just missed yours which came this morning.

Most of the points you make have already been replied to in the letter which crossed yours.

I gather that your visit to Norwood Green was not all that it might have been. Nobody's fault but as Evans says "there you are. "Glad to hear that you can go to orchestra without getting too involved and glad that it did not mean giving it up altogether, as it is a little bit outside School.

As regards the weather in Devon I told him to expect about twice as much rain there as at Ludham – I'm not including this month of Ludham rain which has been during November about 3 times the average.

P3's half day on the land has so far been to pull Kale for cattle feed and she has come home soaked at times. It's handling the wet Kale that does it. This last two days she has been called back to the "Cows"

I had a real lazy day today and did not get up till 3.30 and missed breakfast and dinner, gave Little Mary a rest and didn't miss much. Rain 0"65

Wed 29. 11. 44

"M" has secured a supply of cooking and eating apples from Riches (Churchwarden) and I went and brought back an instalment this morning. It's been a fine day for a change, a cloudless sky except about sunset when clouds spread up from the S.W. Barometer ceased rising and a lurid orange glow in the West as the sun went down, very fine spectacle, but you can make your own forecast. Luckily "M" did quite a bit of washing and got it nearly all dry.

We both put in some time in the garden this afternoon but there's not a lot of time these days, and a good thing that sunset will not be much earlier this year. "M" collected a lot more straw but it was too wet to burn and I cleared away plants from the Lounge doors – to frame where they will get a lot more protection and finished out my available time by cutting up more kindling. This seems a "Staff" job in these days.

P3 did not sit down to tea till about 6.10 and left here shortly before seven to go to Stalham to a meeting. She was going to bike but found but found the cover defective and went to see if she could get a lift, and as she did not come back I conclude that she borrowed a bike or got someone to take her in a car.

M has had a letter from Dick, he does not mention the disposal of the two estates but deals with the merits of white stone chips for filling inside the kerb as against white stone dyed green and decides in favour of green, a great pity I think as they will look as though they were moss grown.

Well I can't think of any more now so

Cheerio and best love from Pa.

Crossways Ludham Norfolk  
Thur 30. 11. 44

Dear Billee

Today was really a day of odd jobs indoors, not fit to be in the garden so did a job that wanted doing. Sorted out letters, papers etc and made lists for the easier of finding things.

People in the village are evidently taking pity on Mrs Smallwood who has no garden. They have given her so many apples that she doesn't know what to do with them so brought some round for us, We can do with all the apples we can get.

Friday 1. 12. 44

The same old tale indoors – we have only had two days in November without rain. Have been sawing up logs for the fire and cutting up kindling.

Leon came about 6.30 this evening and stayed till about 8.15. He's a quiet sort of fish and its difficult to keep any sort of conversation going. One thing he's really proud of and that is his tobacco pipe, quite a new thing for him and of course all sorts of gadgets including lighter, some papers with which to make cartridges to fit the bowl and a companion to do various things to the tobacco in course of being smoked. I smiled and wondered whether he will think all these things necessary when he has been smoking as long as I have.

Sat 2. 12.,44

A little bit better underfoot after a day without rain (Friday), but not fit for much and all I did was to dig some leeks for dinner and take up a couple of Chrysanths and put in pots. We have had a lovely lot of blooms in the garden and should have liked to send you some, but a week knocking about in the Post would just about finish them before you got them.

I sawed up another lot of logs and was just clearing up when Thrower arrived with seven or eight wooden! boxes rarely seen nowadays.

Phyllis has had her half day off and went to Norwich ostensibly for shopping but all the shopping we saw was a new outer cover for her bike. We were hoping that she would not be back until 8 o'clock bus but tea was hanging about till 7 o'clock.

Your letter came on Friday, glad to hear that you had a pleasant weekend at Harrogate and found them nice people. In the course of conversation with Leon, I asked him how and why he picked on x rays. He said that it was the first place at which he made enquiries and that he had only seen x rays twice before and as you would expect he did not enlarge and I didn't want to appear too inquisitive. We left it at that and got no clear cut idea of his impressions. So Leon and his father went out shooting. You don't say what their bag was.

You look like having a full time job before Xmas – what with parties etc I expect that you will be quite glad to be at X ways after it all. We hear that Nell has left Adcocks after about a month and I'm not surprised that she did not last long. Mr A. I'm afraid will have a job to get a suitable successor.

Sun 3. 12. 44

Being Advent Sunday, we made an effort and went to 8 o'clock service but had to forego a shave which did not matter a great deal as the Church was only lighted in the chancel and we went into the first seat by the organ. Could not see a prayer book of course and heard very little of the service.

It's been a day of moods, bright clear intervals with heavy gusty showers from the west. "M" was going to Church at 4 but a heavy shower put paid to that. She went over to Mattocks before tea and learned the news that they had fixed up to go North on Thursday week. "M" says that Sally almost



cried about it. They are very foolish to go but the invitation is for 3 months if they like to stay as long. Of course they will leave their lodgers there and I hope everything goes O. K.

Shortly before our tea I took advantage of a bright interval to go up to ]Brooks and fix up with .... to go over to Hemsby and pick up a few things as we shall need some extra bed clothes. C.O.G. will have the double bed in the dining room and for the few days that they are here it will be a bit congested, but no more than when we had an Officer billeted here. I arranged that we should go to Hemsby on Tuesday afternoon and hope that it will be a better day than we have had lately.

Phyllis' part time on the land has come to an early end, but she may go back again before long. She talks of going to Reading next week end, going there on Saturday and coming back on Sunday the idea being to go to a concert on Saturday evening.

There must be something very seductive about the lounge this evening – I nearly went to sleep after tea and both P1 and P3 did have a short nap. The wind howls and beats against the windows and it sounds like winter but its not too cold and I don't think we shall have snow, hope not at any rate.

Apropos of your offer for Xmas of cloches I may add one or two things which would be acceptable, shirt (coupons would be provided), a chopper (now that I have something to chop) , and 6" flower pots and Whitakers Almanac, any of which could wait until you come home.

I forgot to tell you that Leon gave me a book nicely bound "The Research Magnificent" a novel by H.G.Wells, a queer yarn so far as I have got. "M" has got farther than I and says that its still queer.

Cheerio and best love

Pa