

Xways Ludham Norfolk
Feb 6th 1945

Dear Billee

We have had a minor moving job and transferred the desk to the dining room in place of the Black three corner cupboard which in turn has been deposited in the Lounge. Consequent upon this I have, so also has "M" sorting out papers etc and came Across what I at first glance, was some nice sheets of writing paper, but it turned out to be some old sheets of yours with a map of North America in outline, some relic I think of Dartford. I will try a sheet and see how it goes.

Your letter came this morning together with one from Gertie. Chas had a few days off – not feeling well and Gertie complains that the German Missiles are getting on her nerves and also that Webb will be unable to repair their burst water pipes in less than a fortnight. They are having a benefit at 18, how thankful they will be when everything is right again.

Our fuel situation seems a little easier. Just now have had 4 cwt of coal as our February instalment and Thrower today said he would fill the drum and let us have it as soon as he gets is supply in. The coal man promised a further supply of coke so between the lot we should be able to keep warm but 4 cwt for a month or 1 cwt per week doesn't allow for big fires. Of course there is juice to fall back on but I don't want to punish this too much. I have just paid the biggest E. L. a/c since we have been at Ludham.

You shall see Arthur's letter but I want to answer it first and it's a big job to tackle and deal with.

So you had a busman's holiday at the weekend, but I daresay you had quite a bit of amusement at times.

We shall of course be looking forward to your half term holiday and hope you have a good journey. We somehow got the idea that it was a week earlier. Why I don't know. "M" was intending to write to you this evening but just at the present is mending my gardening gloves, you know how much she likes that job. I have been doing odd jobs in the garden and am glad of them. It's surprising though how soft I have become during the inactivity of the last month or so when I did nothing that required much exertion.

The moles have been having a good game on the lawns and I had to remove 5 barrow loads in order to level it down. Over the way as well, they've had a probably twice as much as I had to contend with. The ground is absolutely sodden, which made the heaps more difficult to deal with.

Today I have been collecting leaves and making up a heap for leaf mould besides which it makes the garden look a bit more tidy but I was soon forced to give it up owing to the rain.

I think this morning produced the highest number of planes that I have ever seen, literally hundreds, there seemed no end to them from 7.30 am onwards in a NNE direction and the 6 news told us that they had quite a number of targets. I wonder how much longer they will go on. It seems so foolish and such a waste of life when they can't win. It looks as though the western front will flare up any time now and the preparation should be about complete. Although I don't expect anything so spectacular as in France or lately in Poland.

I do think there will be no doubt when the allies make a start from the west.

I hear that St Catherine's temporary organist is trying to float a choral and orchestral society in Ludham and that the first rehearsal is to be on the 8th at the Council School. I don't know whether P3 will show up. She did one of her little grunts when 'M' told her about it, and does not appear to be very enthusiastic.

9 pm Tuesday

Have just heard on the news that the Russians have crossed the Oder on a wide front. Splendid news and opens the way to Berlin. If only the other front flares up, surely Hitler will not be able to hold up much longer.

Cheerio and best love
Pa

Crossways
Ludham
Gt Yarmouth
6. 2. 45

My dear Babs

The gloves are finished. Pa's I mean and by the way so are the Green Wool that P has made for me. Now about the Coral and Orchestral Society, on Sunday after Church Vera wanted to speak to me and she told me about it and wondered if P, W, would like to join. She said she knew P was a cellist and I said yes but she used your cello here and it would be a different matter to take it out of the house. More than that there was

no cover for it. I thought at first I would not mention the matter to P but on second thoughts did so, for she doesn't go out here at all and if she was interested she might as well be in at the beginning. I'm inclined to think she might go along on Thursday evening. She is having her ½ day then, and is going to Norwich to a concert at the Castle in the afternoon but I expect she will be back in time to go there at 8 pm. Anyhow if she does go and should say something about the cello after I shall suggest that she does something about getting her own down here, or with regard to yours, wait till you come home next week for it cannot be taken out without a case. The case will be a good excuse. I expect it will be a job to get her own here for someone would have to bring it and as far as I know she won't be going home again for a while.

The enclosed cutting speaks for itself. What do you think of it. I thought it looked a nice coat and the price is very reasonable. Goring's as you know is a good shop and it should be safe to order from them if you were that way inclined, or you could get a more detailed description probably. Pa did not tell you what Gertie wrote about poor Mrs Dennis's son, the scamp. You know their bungalow at Rose Acre was wrecked and he was in hospital, well it seems that while he was absent from his work his employers discovered that his accounts were £300 odd short. They prosecuted and he has got 3 months hard labour. I am so sorry for his mother and father. He has been a continual worry all the time S. has known them.

Things are much as usual here, the weather is better, but everywhere is very damp and not much chance to tidy up outside. I'm glad to say I'm feeling alright again, but there is plenty to do one way and another and I get tired. Still, I suppose I must expect that. I have not heard anything more from Dick, in fact there is nothing much to hear now until he is ready to settle up I suppose.

About the red wool, if there is only a little to finish I thought it might wait till you come. I have 4 ready to send away and 6 being made, all red. I quite thought you would be home this weekend as you normally are here or leaving on Shrove Tuesday but I suppose it is something to do with the date that Easter falls on. Miss Brown has had a short note from Mr Evans and he tells her that he is coming to Lowestoft after Easter to to a function and intends to come to Ludham to look up some of his friends. I really owe them a letter, I must try and write but I have several outstanding letters to deal with. I have written to Miss Weekley and told her that I shall be giving up the W. Savings at the end of March. I wrote about 10 days ago but so far have heard nothing from her. She is continually worrying about new members and I am fed up, so are the collectors. I told them what I had done and they all talk about doing the same, but probably they may carry on when the time comes.

Well it's 10.15. and I have to deal with Phyllis's breakfast so will pack up and this can go with Pa's

Much love and a kiss
Mama

Crossways
Ludham
Gt Yarmouth
24. 2. 45

My dear Babs,

Just a short note. We have not heard from you or you from us since you left. I am wondering how your cold is. I have another beauty, but I hope it will not develop as the last did. M and S are home, they came on Wednesday. Both are very well and sorry they have not written to you. The dress is on its way Pa posted it yesterday. I thought it safest to register it, as it would be well worth pinching. It washed splendidly, I was very pleased with it. If you see any of the coarse material let me know as some would make me a nice dress for the summer. We had a surprise visit on Wednesday just after tea from Ivor Thomas. He was in Ludham and wrote to Mrs Kirk, she replied and asked him to call in on Miss G's parents and that he would find you and Phyllis W there. He was sorry to have missed you, He knows P's father. He did not stay very long as it was just before dinner, but I told him we should be very pleased to see him again any time he liked to come in. He said he was going to be expected in a day or two. He is a 1st Lieu in the "Norfolks". We thought him quite a nice individual.

Had a letter from Gertie this morning. Mrs Walter's Stanley died last Monday and his mother had a heart attack apparently from shock. This happened at Rodwell and they had her there all day and had to fetch a Dr. so as C could not change his cheque he put it in the P. O Savings Bank. Good. Well there is nothing more I know of at the moment. I am writing this at 10 am and you know what that means on Sat: morning

Much love and a kiss
Mama

P. S. I had this env. already stamped.

Crossways Ludham
Norfolk
Sun 25. 2. 45

Dear Billee

It was a chilly business waiting on Wroxham Station and it became colder still during the afternoon. I'm afraid the wait on the platform did your cold no good but I am however glad that you made the connection at Norwich.

Although on the cold side this afternoon it was dry and we had a bit of a clear up in the garden and got rid of a deal of rubbish including more straw.

There have been a few unusual noises which did not seem like rockets or flying bombs but a series almost blended into one like a short burst of thunder which they certainly were not. I expect they were a new edition of Jerry's secret weapons and we may get some information about them when the "Security Silence" is satisfied., generally they are after dark and some scarcely audible whilst others set up a good rattle in the bungalow – well that's enough of horrors

Although Wednesday was a fairly genial day, I did nothing outdoors, had a bath before dinner and shifted the wireless in the afternoon only to find it voiceless and it took me the best part of the afternoon to put matters right. The fault was in the power lead between the switch and the set and in the end I had to renew it best as I could with odd bits of flex. One thing I had the place to myself as "M" had gone out to the Women's Institute.

It's really time I made a start on my digging programme, so I had a look round to see where I could start first and made a start and I suppose having done that I suppose I shall carry on but it will not be a straightforward job

I went over to Mattocks to return their barrow just before their dinnertime and so ensured a quick getaway. but I might have stayed there for hours but for finding time but sad to relate the juice went off about 12 o'clock and we wondered if we should get any at all as it was the centre of a batter pudding which was still in the oven which was somewhat pasty in the middle. They brought some chives back from Workington and gave me some which I forthwith planted. It is quite a tasty thing from the onion tribe and useful when onions are used up so I am afraid mine will be shortly – what do you say, Hurrah?

Friday morning was fair but after going out there was no time for garden before dinner and in the afternoon, it rained so that was that and I found an odd job or two in the garage.

I have cleared all the coal out of the garage and coal fires have become precious, but have got a supply of coke and have been able to get quite a decent fire with this. It's small stuff as you know, and is better than large pieces to burn in the open grate, but by keeping the grate clear and getting a good draught I managed to make a fire to meet our needs and glad that the weather was milder of late.

There are indications of this in the garden, things are beginning to make a start and the lawns are beginning to grow and the mower will soon be required. This means that all the straw will have to be gathered up first, a somewhat tedious job.

There was a lot of rime on the grass this Sat. morning after a period of brilliant clear moonlight but it soon clouded over with a cold wind developing but as I was digging it was warm enough for me – but my back is evidently suffering from "from winter greenness" which will (I hope) wear off as digging proceeds.

"M" developed an unusual soreness in the chest today and can only put it down to having swallowed too quickly a too large piece of apple in order to go to the door when Mrs Smallwood arrived, could not eat her supper and was troubled all night but today, Sunday, it appears to be easier and she has been able to get soft food down without undue pain. Her cough is still troublesome but it does not appear to affect the chest pain, which I think indicates that the pain has no connection with the cold, as I was afraid of at first. There's nothing much more to relate today, we have been at home all day today. Might have gone for a walk this afternoon but it was not too inviting with leaden skies and a chill wind.

And now I'll wait and see whether we hear from you on Monday morning.

Monday 10.15 am 26.2.45

Your letter has just arrived. What a pity that your train was not a bit later into Norwich on Tuesday. I had wondered why we did not get one from you sooner.

Miss E does not appreciate your departure apparently but it is foolish of her to show it so clearly and may alienate others on the staff which would make it rather difficult for her.

Glad to hear that you had confirmation from Thetford. It should all be plain sailing for you now.

Phyllis got her glasses O.K. and got home without incident.

"M" is washing and I am going up the village shortly to post this. It's not very cold but a nasty blustering westerly wind is blowing otherwise bright sunny intervals all set for Thetford.

Cheerio and best love

Pa

Crossways

Ludham

Gt. Yarmouth

25. 3. 45

My dear Babs

Just a short note, I hope you get it before you leave. I wonder if you have seen Phyllis, she is due back here tomorrow. Our weather has been very nice since she has left and if she has had as good, she is lucky for the time of year. I posted 6 oz of rust wool to you on Saturday morning after 10 am but you ought get that by Wednesday. Have you heard from Annie or anything from Welling. Hope they do go there for a day or two next weekend. We have a lovely lot of spring flowers and I'm going to chance sending Miss S. some tomorrow. Things are very quiet at the P O now that the camp is empty and I believe this is where parcels get held up. I thought of writing to her a little later on and inviting her to come here for a change in August but we must see how things go. I have at last written to Rene, a long rambling yarn as normal. I hope they appreciate all the Ludham items they get. You will probably gather whether they do while you are there. I do hope you have a good journey and fine weather. It should be lovely there this time of year. I shall think of you next Sunday morning although you will perhaps have to turn out for 7 am! Send us a line to let us know what kind of a journey you had. Well this is all now. I've had a good clean up in the bungalow while P. has been away and on Tuesday I start the cooking business again.

Much love and a kiss

Mama

Note: No date but found amongst 1945s.

Crossways,

Ludham

Gt. Yarmouth

\Mon even:

My dear Babs

The enclosed came from Welling this morning shortly after Pa got back from Potter, We need not have been concerned about them for it looked as if they had just not bothered to write. Still they are going on alright. I am also sending along your papers of instructions for the knitting and so far have not come across anything else. Will get the p'cl. off tomorrow. I hope you had a good journey back and that the train was on time, It is just 80/c so you should be comfortably settled by 23 and I expect Phyllis is holding forth on Cows' New Shed Abbey, that is if the family let her.

It has been a very cold day with some snow and sleet. Hope it will be better tomorrow. I saw Mrs Swanston this morning, she had been into the Church with Vera. Mrs Swanston asked her if she would clear away the evergreens on the and as Mrs S. said she could not get about in and out of the Church by herself, I think Mrs A ought to be ticked off for it's most unreasonable to ask Vera to do such jobs. They are coming here on Wednesday afternoon for a game of bridge. I expect Mrs S wanted to go there, but since we have been there twice since they came here, I arranged that they should come. I am very sorry but I have the feeling that you have not had as good a time at home as usual perhaps because I have had so much extra to do and have been glad of your help, for if you could have taken things more easily you would have gone back feeling more fit. If you don't feel a lot better soon, you will be very foolish if you don't try and get some further advice about the rash for if it is traceable to nerves that is the root of the trouble and the longer it goes on the worse you will

be . I have been reading about the Victoria Hospital in a paper Phyllis left about and I should think it fairly certain that they would have a skin specialist there. No one likes to give in I know but your health in the future is more important then the school.

Much love and a kiss
Mama