

IMay 1943

Xways Ludham Norfolk

Tues 4.5.43

Dear Billee

I seemed to have a good deal of time to fill in after leaving you at Wroxham.

We had a struggle with the side lawn which was a little bit damp and growth very thick. I got 5 of the medium baskets full so you can guess what the job was like. Later on in the evening I went up to the nursery to bespeak some tomato plants, everyone of those I got before have succumbed.

Wed 5.5.43

Very early this morning about 2.30 I was wakened and heard sounds which I was afterwards told were from Coltishall, Norwich and Yarmouth but being so distant I was quite content to go to sleep again in a few minutes.

Have been giving some attention to the margins and clipping the grass edges but had an interruption. Sally came over in trouble about her lawn mower which had got jammed with a small stone. She had altered the blade adjustment in consequence they were screwed hard down on the cutting plate and the wheels did not turn.

I shook the stone out and tried to run it but was sometime before I realized that it was screwed down too hard, but when I tumbled to that I soon got it going again.

This evening, I went up to the tomato plants and got a much better sample this time. I also indulged in half a dozen in pots and hope to get some earlier fruit than last year.

Thurs 6.5.43

I went up to the village this morning for the usual odds and sods and put in all my available time for the rest of the day gardening, principally seed sowing and 'M' disposed of sundry packets of annuals in the flower garden. Thanks to the rough weather the Wallflowers are finished about 3-4 weeks earlier than usual, but if this gives me a chance to clear them and replace before the hot dry weather sets in again it will not be altogether a disadvantage.

The hot dry weather seems to be a good way off, just now we are having a share of rain and terrific winds.

Fri 7.5.43

Another day mainly in the kitchen garden sowing and planting and thinning and weeding and have just finished hoeing all that part and filled in the time on the margins etc. near front door.

You have heard from 'M' about various things including the return of the Swallows and all about the Tweed that didn't match, what a tiresome business. It's a pity it could not have been ordered all at once.

Sat 8.4.43

Nothing very starkling today except the weather has changed for the worse, high winds and showers, the poor will be about finished off this time and they should have lasted out for another fortnight yet. Have been doing a bit in the garden but have been glad to pack up and come in for tea as soon as 'M' came in from war savings.

Sun 9.5.43

Got up first this morning and took 'M' her beloved cup of tea in bed – teapot and all so as not to be told off for not filling up the cup. I didn't feel very energetic but though I should be better if I got up but I developed a bilious turn and didn't go to church although 'M' went in the evening.

I went up to the post in the afternoon and came back via Lovers Lane. The weather by this time had improved somewhat but it was very chilly later although I do not see signs that there as been a frost to touch the blossom.

Quite a lot of incipient pears decorate the soil under the pear trees and apples likewise but to a lesser degree. I can't assess the probable crop yet but don't hope for anything very great.

Mon 10.5.43

Another wild and stormy day and I did not turn out till about quarter to 12. The usual bilious affair couldn't look at a pipe so am saving money at the expense of the revenue.

I went up to the post this afternoon and saw the result of the wind on the vicarage trees. Just to the right of the curved entrance fence there is a tall tree which branches to two stems a short way up the tree. This has fallen over in direction of arrow and carried some smaller wood with it. A good bit of amusement in cutting this up and clearing it away. It's a big tree and very shallow rooted. It should yield about a couple of tons of logs.

The rain is somewhat intermittent and the wind is still blustering round the chimneys but I cannot hear any tiles rattling.

Tues 11.4.43

Just a brief reply to your letter which came this morning. Have not seen any KSLI casualties yet. What a lot of red tape to being tied around the Wings Week but to become a selling centre is an advantage.

It was sometime before we heard about C&G but when we did it was quite reassuring about Gertie for she seemed quite chirpy.

I think the Mattocks have definitely made up their mind to go North. Its their sole topic of conversation just now. Little Mary takes a back seat.

'M' is going up the village and will take this. Cheerio and best love Pa

P.S. Do you remember posting the letter with cheque enclosed for the war damage about 2 weeks ago. I have had no acknowledgement yet.

Have put pins in the probables

Crossways  
Ludham

My Dear Babs

9.5.43

My thanks for parcel which we got on Friday morning but I am sorry to say the stuff was the same as that I sent back so I am as far off as ever over the costume. We got the pattern yesterday (Sat) but no word about the returned length. I am sending you the pattern tomorrow but they sent 2 Boxes. I shall pick out and send those that I think you are most likely to be able to choose from. If single width is 27ins you had better have 4 $\frac{1}{2}$  yds. That will allow for a bit more ( $\frac{1}{2}$  yd) that you have in the grey but if you want the coat much longer have 5. If double width  $\frac{1}{2}$  that length will do. I have turned out and shortened the coat of that light tweed that I made some years ago. It looks quite well. I have made the back fitting. It was just straight you will remember and now it will make me a good knock about.

You remember when you were knitting your blue woollen costume that you had the leaflet? Can you find it and let me have it for the brown that I am re-knitting as I cannot do the shoulders and collar, revers etc without the instructions.

Have not seen anything of Rene or her better half since you left but shall no doubt later today. It's a retched wet and cold day but we shall go to church this evening. I shall have to ask someone about- 'Victory Week' tomorrow for so far, I have heard nothing of what is being done and there are no posters about yet. Miss England called in last evening and brought me a nice doll, about 10ins long that she had made and dressed in knitting to represent a W.A.A.F. A very good attempt I thought it was very nice of her. She left it to me to do what I thought best with it. I was very surprised to learn that she is not at potter Heigham but at North Walsham and has been there for 16 years. The girls school numbers about 400 and as N. Wal is aiming at £40,000, the school is having a very busy time. An exhibition of Country Dancing on the afternoon of the 15<sup>th</sup> outdoors and a Fun Fair in the evening also an exhibition of Posters produced by the children. I must say she is a Ludhamite who improves on acquaintance.

Now the birds, a nice tale for your little boy. On the morning of the 7<sup>th</sup> the day they were due to arrive, I went for the milk just before eleven. When I returned the porch was strewn with dried up Sparrow's dirt. I'm quite certain it was not there when I went out (they came about 11o/c last year). Well I watched out during the day and early in the evening they settled in for the night. So they

evidently came and cleaned up the house in the morning. Aren't they marvellous. I think its wonderful that this should turn up on the same day apart from the cleaning operations. Hope you got the cello case safely. I sent the small packets of soap powder as they packed better. I have not been round to Mrs Brown yet with the gloves but will let her have them one day next week, probably Monday.

We have heard from Gertie on Sat morning and she says she is getting on very well, has been doing some spring cleaning. So that sounds good so long as she doesn't do too much. We expected some visitors on Wednesday night but they had not time to get to Ludham only called at Norwich, Coltishall and Yarmouth. The war news is good, I wonder what the next move will be. I am writing this and cooking so will finish off now.

Much love and a kiss  
Mama

Have had a card for B. Transfusion on the 15<sup>th</sup> for myself and you, but am writing to them today.

Crossways Ludham Norfolk  
Wed 12.5.43

Dear Billee

Its been one of the dull samples of weather today plenty of cloud but warm and still a bit of sting in the wind.

Ted has been getting busy with the over thrown trees near his entrance and called in to say that he had cut up a 'cartful' if I liked to come and get it and return the cart afterwards.

I has so many times disregarded his offers in this line that I feel bound to do something about it this time.

I don't think I have ever realized what an incline it is from the vicarage to xways but I found it out this time. Heavier going than with the lawn mower and I was glad enough to go back home. Anyway, the wood, when sawn up will save a bit of coal but add to the effort in sawing and loading and more getting it done to say nothing of sawing it up and the result should be a valuable collection of logs.

Thurs 13.5.43

Real summer weather today, and my job today sorting out and propagating dahlias, was quite suited to the day – not too strenuous.

There has been a good crop of rumours as to what occurred last night, mostly of the Mrs. Brown variety, but all I knew was a slight vibration of the delicately poised front door. No sound of gun fire or bombs just the gentle rattle and I went off to sleep again very soon. I think it must have been one of our own low flying night fighters, roaring just above the chimney pots. How easy for him to mistake his distance by a few feet in the dark.

Fri 14.5.43

Something must have dislocated things a bit as there were no papers when M went up to the village this morning but I got the Times just before tea.

M has been very restless at night lately and got up at half past five this morning and just before eight, when I arrived in the kitchen I was surprised to find scones, cheese cakes in small piles on the table.

Madge and Sally came over this evening to hear Churchill broadcast and to have some Bridge. Madge and I were partners and managed to finish up in front. They departed just before 11 in what was almost daylight and cloudless but BBC said 'nothing over this country last night'

Sat 15.5.43

Yesterdays maximum was 82 todays 59. What a difference although it was fairly sunny but a biting N W wind.

Wings for Victory takes pride of place here in Ludham today. M was out from 3 to 5.30 and then to the village hall for the opening public meeting.

A party of soldiers provided a band and a concert. Quite good efforts of the popular sort and aided by Sydney Grapes. Of course, the inevitable speeches and Auctions but I can't give you much first-hand information and 'M' is going to tell you all about it. I went along to the meeting at 7.30 but came away just before 9 when the Auctions had started and got home in time to hear Big Ben M followed me later just before ten.

Sun 16.5.43

A glorious sunny day but a decided nip in the N W wind and a slight ground frost but luckily not enough to affect my potatoes which are almost all well up.

We both went to church at 11am. The church was packed, mainly soldiers and some late arrivals from the Landing ground who were accommodated in the choir stalls.

All the backless forms at the back were full but I should think those seats were not too comfortable.

M has just had a representative from the camp (a ( ) piper) with regard to a dance they are having at the N.A.F.I. canteen on Wednesday. He's just gone and I haven't a lot of time to finish this off.

Your letter came Saturday morning We heard from the Evans that snow fell in Bradford so were not surprised to hear it from you.

The enclosed throws some light on Effie's relations with some of the other members of the family. You will see it is to C&G and Gertie has sent it on to us and asked for it to go to you and will you please send it back to Welling. Effie doesn't come very well out of it all.

Well I shall have to leave off now in order to catch the post so Cheerio

and best love Pa

£3690 total Sat night

Group £128 towards 3 bombs (£300)

Xways Ludham Norfolk

Wed 19.5.43

Dear Billee

There seems nothing to tell you except War Gossip and gardening, and 'M' will tell you about the former and as to the latter, lawns are claiming first attention and its not an interesting job, rather monotonous and tiring, but its well worth doing as far as appearances go and usually, I'm nothing lost to knock off in time for 9.0 news and supper, and dozed off whilst listening to Churchill.

Thurs 20.5.43

'M' went to the village this morning and improved the shining hour by scrounging from various tradesmen a couple of parcels to be raffled at the whist drive this evening. 18 hands were played without interval and that disposed of the doll was drawn for and curiously enough Mrs England won it and put it back to be auctioned. The two parcels were disposed of and a bottle of Scotch and a bottle of Gin were then put up for sale by auction. My score for the whist drive was a little above average but 'M' only got 99 for 18 hands. I did not stay to see the end of the auction sales but came home to Black out and get supper etc. 'M' of course had to stay on and got home later.

Fri 21.5.43

Today tied with yesterday with a max temp of 72 and scarcely a cloud on either day. Air very dry and my hands are as badly cracked as in the winter time its very much a nuisance at times.

Had tea on my own today as 'M' did not get home until 7.30pm. Have been waiting for rain to dress the garden with sulphate of ammonia but it seems as far off as ever so have made a start and hoed it in.

Sat 22.5.43

Another warm day but after tea the sky became cloudy and very black in the Norwich direction with a little murmuring of distant thunder. I hurried up with my sulp. Amm. and completed the dressing but did not have time to hoe it in round the potatoes. The rain was of the typical

thunderly type but not much of it about 0.07 all told. I amused myself in the garage during the rain but the roof is very bad in many places where the rain comes in.

'M' did not get in until about 8pm She went into the vicarage and had tea with Rene who had been helping her check up at the end.

Your letter came this morning. The camping business sounds good but the weather may not be very kind to you in October although September is usually pretty good and Ripon is quite an interesting neighbourhood. Don't let the cooking worry you too much, it's not the 'Ritz'

The thunder and rain soon passed over and by noon tomorrow we shall probably not see any trace of the storm although it was pretty severe some distance away.

Sun 23.5.43

Taking it out somewhat this morning, no more rain and very little evidence left of yesterdays.

Private E Hall Home Guard called in this morning said they hadn't got any flowers, could we spare Mrs Hall a few so 'M' gave him a good handful of Lupins and I then showed him the state of the garage and he said he would do something about it as he could get the wood. We shall see what happens.

Plenty of bloom in the garden but a rough wind is trying to bruise the flowers. The weather is very unsettled today and the wind is very brisk from the North. We seem to have a large share of boisterous weather just lately but escaped the snow such as you had recently. The Lakes and Scotland had it pretty bad according to the papers. Well 'M' will let you know about Wings Week so

Cheerio and best love

Pa

Crossways

Ludham

(May 20'43) Wed 9am

My Dear Babs

I've about as much time as you have for letters this week, but still must say I've managed pretty well so far. V W is going well. Yesterday's total was £4,600 and something so the £6000 should be assured by the weekend. The army people are having a week and coming to me with their proceeds on Friday and I understand the Air Force are getting them stuff locally.

My group has turned up trumps £325 so far, so we shall get 4 Bombs. I was afraid to say 4 but wish now I had I expect the doll will raise about £5 and I hope to get something else for another raffle for the Whist Drive to add to that for the RAF Fund so that's all that except roll on Sat night.

Now about the tweed, that poor yard has been through it this week, it's been Blue'd, tea'd coffee'd and laid in strong soda water and comes up smiling every time. I don't believe its even shrunk a ¼ of an inch, so it is much nearer costume so I shall finish it off and make the best of it.

Shall not close this up till the post comes this a.m. The weather is grand this week also the news. Oh I must not forget the titbit of course it concerns Ted. He did his own business 18/15/- on Sat, and Miss Broom tried hard to pump me for Rene's benefit as he would not tell her what he did. Well on Monday he came along with a tale. Riches had given him a cheque in C, on Sunday evening for 17.1.0 E offering and to save income tax on it. It was made out to P.M.G for W.S. He had lost it out of his pocket he thought when going home he pulled his Hkf out. I cheered him up by saying 'I expect it was in the garden and goat had eaten it' advised him to send to the bank and stop it. Pa and I laughed when we thought of the panic there must have been with R, anyway he came into me directly after 3, had found it in the garden and 'don't tell Rene' He hadn't said anything to her about losing it as 'she would have laughed her head off' My reply to that was 'yes and would have had yours off too' He laughed so that was that: what a joke, so it has gone to Rene's W Saving and I suppose she will make him return E off £10 on which poor parsons don't have to pay I. Tax. What a dodge he is.

What good news we are getting but isn't it dreadful to think there must be all this destruction and then people congratulate one another on it all. Apparently the k S L I have not been

in it yet suppose they are being saved up for the next move. Yarmouth now has a balloon Barrage, they have been complaining about lack of protection, and last week this station was cleared out and a fresh lot installed so Rene has lost her lodger. Haven't seen her all the week so I expect she has got some fresh people. M and S talk of going next Wednesday, leave Norwich at 7 mins past 6am poor Sally, Mrs Brown brought me a fine song written by a friend of hers but I only got it yesterday too late for anyone to do anything with it or I would have copied it and sent it to you. Now I will wait for the post 9.10 so probably an hour to wait.

Post just here 10am. Good news about missing parcel, no more now.

Much love and a kiss  
Mama

PS Hope you have passed your target by the time you get this.

Crossways  
Ludham  
(May 21 43) Thurs 12.30pm

My Dear Babs

Just to let you know we are doing. You are doing well. We listened to the first part of Joan's performance but could not hear it all.

Well, my group figure last night was £800 thanks to the N. Pub daughters and the Ludham target was 4,500 so we are doing well. I have been scrounging this morning at all the village shops for goods for raffles. The Doll has fetched £4.13.0 and I have been able to make up 2 p'cls for tonight one a toilet p'cl and one grocery I must have got about a £1 worth of goods so at 6 tickets I hope to reach £10 all told for the R.A.F.B.

Weather grand and all fine.

Much love and a kiss  
Mama

Crossways Ludham Norfolk  
Sun 23.5.43

Dear Billee

For the first time during a good long time neither of us went to church all day mainly on account of the reaction to the past week and there was a lot to be sorted out about it in order to get 'M's mind clear of it.

We had a couple of letters to post and after supper we both had a walk up to the post Office and enjoyed the beauty of even time and a lovely sunset.

Mon 24.5.43

M went off directly after breakfast to settle up one or two matters with Mrs. Thrower and to do a certain amount of shopping but was too soon for the paper and I went up later for it and to try and secure some ready mixed white distemper to use on frames but found it unprocurable and got some size and whitening to mix some up – a messy business. Thrower served me and conversation turned to paint and he said that when stocks were used up paint would not be procurable except on a government order so I searched a tin of white paint to add to my stock and have enough to last me a couple of years in the ordinary way.

It was a wet morning so nothing doing in the garden, not that I minded the rain in fact I was glad of it although there was only a quarter of an inch.

I went over our stock of potatoes which was growing out and I rubbed off all the shoots once again and sorted out the smallest which we shall not want and passed them onto Rene for the goat - 0 not a bad idea as we get some occasional drops of milk.

M went over the way for a final goodbye and I went over for a quarter of an hour in the evening.

Evans is full of his Church Council meeting and called in and went over it with 'M' it is fixed for Monday – the adjourned meeting I should say.

Tues 25.5.43

M had a jaunt up to Wrights this morning and had odds and sods to see to regarding the 'Week' and I went up to the village and somehow or other seemed to forget myself. Left the goods I had bought at Throwers and had to go back for them. Then did the same thing at the PO and did not discover it until I got home and had to go there again. Luckily in both cases I retrieved everything consequently there was very little time for gardening.

This afternoon the lawns were crying out and I did the side one and stated on the Tennis lawn and finished it after tea. The mower went fine and I found it a fairly easy job. I suppose I am getting more fit for the job. Just finished off the day. 'M' had another trip to Wrights

Plenty of machines coming back in the early morning almost a continuous drone.

Wed 26.5.43

I have had a reply from Gamages? To say that they will undertake the rewiring of the transformer providing that they can get the materials and it will take a fortnight-?- They want 20/- for the job so have sent to Charlie for him to send it on to them. It's a pity that I did not do this at first.

It's been a nice day and I've had a good day in the garden, but don't seem to reach a stage when I can say I am upsideways with it all.

Thur 27.5.43

It's been a queer sort of a day and temperature has fluctuated quite a lot. My job has been hoeing and weeding mainly among potatoes. These are well forward about the most forward I have ever had, hope we do not get a late frost.

We got your letter as usual on Tuesday morning. Most of it concerns 'M' and the week so will leave that to her.

You must be ever so pleased about your week it's a splendid result.

What do your pacifists say regarding Russia and the Comintern. It's a splendid gesture and should smooth away a lot especially with the U.S.A. I had thought of this and could not see how the existence of Comintern filled in with the state of affairs.

Wilson and the pacifists what a huge joke serves them right.

Well its past eleven and 'M' has gone to bed so I'll finish off. Cheerio and best love from Pa  
PS the war commentary tonight was good. Did you hear it?

Crossways

Ludham

23.5.43

My Dear Babs

Delighted to be able to write 23<sup>rd</sup>. You seem to have done splendidly for like us I expect you have not got the final figure.

My Group total was £966! How's that and the main total was £6310. Now tell me how I stand with regard to the Group target for I remember you said the Keighley people did not want you to run a school target.

On Saturday at 12o/c the Ludham Indicator stood at £5800 and when I saw England he wanted to add my figure on but I objected and said I wanted it kept separate. His point was it was all Ludham money and should go into the main sum. I asked that the Group figure might be shewn alongside the £5800 but shewn as Group Target amount. Anyhow I heard from people coming into the office in the afternoon that the indicator showed it included. How do we stand now for our own Wings, it looks to me as if we are just swallowed up. I have written to Miss Weekley for her opinion.

I've argued with some of them but can't get any sense into them. I fancy some of the so-called committee have an idea I have bagged some for the Group which I shouldn't have done.

Church Council meeting tonight but it doesn't see me. I've had enough of some of the Ludhamites for this week. Miss Grieves wants a rise, Skillern wants a rise and Mrs S is giving up cleaning the church.

Much love and a kiss  
Mama

Crossways  
Ludham  
Norfolk  
Fri 28.5.43

Dear Billee

We've had a real summer like day again today and I've managed quite a lot in the garden. There is so much to do just now that it seems as though I shall never overtake it but I'm glad to say that the job of earthing up potatoes, which usually is so back breaking, proved less troublesome than for years. A sign I suppose that I am pretty fit, have been thinning carrots and also my fresh crop of onions. M has been doing quite a useful bit too and the side way to the kitchen looks park like, in fact Evans actually commented on it.

We had a walk after supper to the village to post and then on as far as farmer Riches to leave a church council meeting notice and back via Lovers Lane.

It was 10.15 when we got back and we dispensed with most of the black out and got to bed in good time.

Sat 29.5.43

Not quite such a nice day as yesterday as during the afternoon a cold NE wind set in and we had had enough of it and came in.

M had her usual Sat afternoon and took about £10 not so bad coming after the week.

During the afternoon I was in the garden and heard whistling in the Lane and presently a copy of Punch landed over the hedge near the seat. He was going to the Hall he told me.

Our experiment with the half black out was repeated this evening and it seems as though we shall be able to do this for about a couple of months which will bring us nearly round to the time when the additional hour is cut out.

Sun 30.5.43

At last there has been a little rain but only 0.15 and some distant thunder without any heavy thunder showers.

I forgot to wind up the clock last night and we both slept on until about 9.30 when M got up but I laid on for a bit until about a quarter past twelve so no church for either of us this morning.

'M' still seems to be tired after the week and had a good couple of hours in bed this afternoon. I was glad that she did as she looked very tired after dinner.

The weather cleared up by tea time and after the old old story at 6oclock I went to church but 'M' stayed at home.

I don't think I should have gone but it was the last Sunday in the month and there was communion after the evening service and I wanted to make one in succour agreement to Ted to keep on with it.

I think the result of the experiment justified it as there were 6 to the rail and one old lady in the body of the church who presumably was unable to go up to the table so this made 7 without the vicar and Skillern. I thought that perhaps it would not take much for him to decide that the evening celebration was unnecessary but under the circumstances he can hardly say that.

I must record a sad calamity. The alarm clock main spring has given out and I suppose its no good asking Cubit to repair it but anyhow I must see what can be done about it as I think we must have one.



Mon 31'5'43

Notwithstanding the clock being out of action 'M' woke up as usual and it was a grand morning.

Must take advantage of the rain and do some planting today for with the bright sun today it will soon dry up.

Will try and get this posted for this morning's collection. Cheerio much love

Pa