

Crossways Ludham Norfolk
Mon 11. 9. 44

Dear Billee

This morning seemed an extra long morning and we quite ready for 12.30 dinner. I went up to the village soon after 9 and after that had lots of time to do things in the garden including the harvesting of my onions. You are not I know much interested in these but they turned out to be the finest crop of onions that I have grown and constantly reminded me of our trip down the western Coast of Ayrshire with Ailsa Craig out to sea – Ailsa Craig being the name of the variety.

We both had a substantial rest after dinner and I for one felt better after that and I carried on out doors till 8 pm when a cold wind made things rather uncomfortable and I was glad to come in. I was rather afraid of a frost during the night seeing how the temperature dropped but luckily we were spared such cold as that.

You will remember that early this morning I said it was down to 39, well I found out afterward that it had dropped down 3 deg lower than that, justifying the old saying that the coldest time of the day is just before dawn.

Tues 12. 9. 44

Generally a fine day but not too warm and I did quite a bit out doors trimming back climbing roses and seeing to the poles. These are getting pretty rotten nowadays but I think I have made them pretty secure from the rough winds.

Both Smedley and Mrs Fakes have written and as soon as I can find my notes I will square up with you, both communications were very welcome.

Wed 13. 9.,44

I saved 'M' a trip to the village this morning and all my available time has been given to the thorny problem of climbing roses and I have managed to do the tennis lawn after getting the mushrooms. I don't suppose we shall be getting many more, only a few buttons are showing up but Phyllis brings a contribution and flavoured some soup. M was a bit tired this evening but I waited for the European news before following. I made a note of the medium wavelengths – they are 373, 307 and 267 metres. You may be able to get one of these although there may be a certain amount of German interference. C can get it on the medium wave but here it is too much jammed. We are closer to Germany but you, being farther than us may be able to get results.

Thur 14. 9. 44

One way and another this morning - my pen wants washing out - soon went and I seemed to have done nothing. The 12.30 dinner today just suited us for we caught the 2 o'clock Bus to Ormsby and walked over to Hemsby. Plenty of room on the bus and quite comfortable. The weather was fine, in fact a bit warm for us and when we got inside the bungalow it was almost like a hot blast. Everything was O.K. and although they gave not more than an hours notice the place was reasonably clean and a lot of clearance had been made to the garden.

The lifting of the rainwater tank is a very temporary job and the wood weed not good enough to last long so it will have to be seen to properly. We left there at 4.30 and caught the Bus (a Relieve) at 5.30 at the Royal Oak. Plenty of room but had to change to the service bus at Rollesby and I had to stand from there although 'M' had a seat given up to her by an American soldier. We did not go as far as the First and Last but got off at Ormsby and found the footpath past Scratby Hall, a nearer and much more pleasant way than along the main roads – I made the walking distance just over 2 1/2

miles but as we took nearly an hour it was not too bad but I should have appreciated a seat on the bus instead of standing part of the way. We had both had enough by the time we got back. Phyllis had got the tea which was very nice. She had expected us soon after six and had just made the tea when we got in. M had gone to bed and I was waiting for the 10.45 news and said I would go as soon as it had ended

Nothing very startling in the news just at present but the storm is gathering all round Germany and no doubt that shortly we shall hear about things and I notice that the 10.45 news is only on medium wave 373 and not 307 or 267 which are used at 10 am or as it will be next week 9 am. Well it was not long before I went to sleep thanks to our outing in the afternoon but I roused up about 12.30 and heard a couple of distant reports which rattled the front door.

Fri 15. 9. 44

No juice today. We had notice that it would be cut off from 9 am to 6 pm so did not lie in bed after 7.30 so as to get breakfast in good time.

I do not feel any effect of yesterday's walk and "M" can only feel it slightly. She is going to post this if possible to catch the morning post.

It looks very unsettled this morning, a thundery appearance but quite mild again after the cold spell.

So far we have heard nothing from you. but will wait as long as possible before closing this up in case we get one.

9.30 and M is waiting to go

Cheerio and best love

Pa.

Crossways
Ludham
Gt Yarmouth
12. 9. 44

My dear Babs.

Sent your parcel off this morning and the Bemas. (4/6 ...) came yesterday morning together with the enclosures. Pa also had a letter from Smedley with cheque to date, and this morning we had one from Mrs Fakes with the 4 weeks rent of bungalow less deductions 5/6. It appears the people left on Friday last so now we must try and go over there one day this week and see how things are. One would have thought they would have let us have a line but I suppose its too much to expect from present day people. We had a letter from Charlie again this morning but nothing from Gertie so I have just written to her asking if there is anything wrong that she does not write herself. We are not going to Vera's tonight as she had word that her brother and his wife were coming today for a few days. The weather is grand. (It would be) but very cold night and morning. I think this is all now. Hope to hear that you had a good journey. Pa will write before the week is over

Much love and a kiss
Mama

Xways Ludham Gt Yarmouth Norfolk
16. 9. 44 Saturday

Dear Billee

Not a bad day and warm with a fair amount of sunshine. As there was nothing definite about the black out, I went up and interviewed Robert and found that the relaxation did not apply and in fact all round the coastline from Kings Lynn to Yarmouth and for some miles in, the black out still

continues, and I think it wise. If any mistake has been made, I think it is that the relaxation has been made so since spring. Especially for London and the definition of the kind of curtain allowed is too vague and in fact not a definition at all. After going to the village I had a good day in the garden and had a spell after tea as this is about the last chance this year for evening work outdoors. Had a good burn up as I had a large amount collected outside the garage

Phyllis is making herself at home with the piano and the cello – seems very fond of music.

Sun 17. 9. 44

Officially double summertime has ended but we are trying to have a time of our own and getting up at 7. This enables us to get breakfast over before Phyllis comes in to breakfast although she is getting in earlier which suits us a great deal better. We made no attempt at going to Church this morning and it was surprising what a difference the extra hour made and how much more time it gave us. Today has been fine and fairly warm with mainly a cloudless sky. 'M' has had an outing up the lane in the afternoon and gathered a fine lot of blackberries. There are plenty in the garden on the Lovers Lane bank but they are rather inaccessible and the strong new runners somewhat militant.

We both went to Church this evening and they had full lights on but the service was cut down to about 50 minutes so lights were switched off sometime before blackout. Madge and Sally were there and we walked home with them.

Mon 18. 9. 44

Not much to say as today slightly warmer than yesterday but less sun but very pleasant withall M went to the village herself and I followed my usual occupation. I don't quite know what I should do without the garden to occupy my mind, with the clock alteration I only got about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour. after tea.

Tues 19. 9. 44

Your letter came this morning. Glad to hear you had a weekend with the Marshalls but it appears to have been a busy one. The news certainly is good but there is bound to be an interval of decreased progress whilst the air borne troops are getting into their stride. I had no idea that we had such a number of men and transport machines. I can visualise 20 – 30 thousand and they should soon make themselves felt. The Rhine could be easily crossed with a repeat hop. The flying bombs may still make themselves a bit of a nuisance but I don't think that they are going to be anything like the trouble they were before we occupied the Pas de Calais Coast.

We went over to Mattocks in the evening – result 950 up at the end.

Wed 20. 9. 44

'M' is writing to you this evening so you will have her impression of Lady Ironside no doubt. Its been a very quiet, calm day but not a glimmer of sun and some drizzle just after breakfast. The 7 a.m. stunt (we are still keeping it up) is proving a success and gives me a better chance in the morning and compensates to a certain amount for the hour cut out in the evening. Have been digging and tidying up today and got through quite a good bit.

The wireless is switched on for the concert this evening. Phyllis is apparently enjoying it but if there are lots of mistakes in this you must put it down to the wireless. Shan't spoil another sheet so
Cheerio and best love
Pa

Crossways
Ludham
Gt. Yarmouth
19. 9. 44

My dear Babs,

I expect we shall be having a letter from you tomorrow but Pa will be writing later. Very glad you had a nice weekend, in fact I was quite pleased when I saw the P.C. from Alys. What a rough journey you had back. I think I should have chanced being late for the meeting and got a cup of tea for after all no one can help trains these days. We have had some fine weather since you left although today has been dull and overcast. Last Sunday was a grand day and I had another B. B. expedition up the lane. I got 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. and they were very fine ones. I made them into jam with some apples and hope to make some more. P. has had a change this week and has been at the White House, that's down just past Wrights. She likes the equipment and general arrangements there, better than at the Abbey but Daphne is still away and there is only one girl and one man and she says she hopes he goes back to the Abbey when D comes back as there are more outdoors and she enjoys the fun althou' the men there are such duffers. She has been coming in to breakfast just after 9 all the week which suits me much better but evidently, she will get changes from time to time. She is quite at home here now and generally manages to get a little practice in every day, both instruments. She is very lucky in that respect and I hope she appreciates it.

The wool work is going apace today W.I. Meeting. I have now 9 coats in and the last wool they sent me was for shawls (7), they are all in hand and I could have given out more wool, but I shall wait till I get the other coats before sending for any more. We have not heard much from Welling. There has been more damage and At Wellhall Charlie wrote but since then I'm afraid there will have been more. It looks as tho'Duncan Sands made a fine mess of things when he told people that the Battle of London was over for naturally many people would think it was good enough to go back.

Pa has told you we went to Hemsby. It was a nice outing and the people had left everything in very good order. The place looked quite cosy and nice. If Phyllis had not been here I think we should have gone there for a bit, still she talks of having a weekend when people get settled down at Reading in early October and we think perhaps if the weather is good we may go over there then. We should not need to take much. Jehinudi Menuhiton (?) is playing his violin: you may be listening. What a name, but I liked listening to J. S. better

By the way, Lady Ironside told me this afternoon in the course of conversation that all the glass is out of the Albert Hall, but she did not think there was any structural damage. She turned up to the W.I. this afternoon and gave us a most interesting talk on Gibraltar. She was only there for a little over a year just before war was declared. She is very nice and homely, a much younger woman than I expected to find her. She came from Heigham to Norwich by car and bus to Ludham so Vera had her from 2 o/c and then back to their place for tea. She asked me to go back to tea which I did and had a most enjoyable time. L. Ironside caught the Bus. I left the tea ready for them here and Phyllis cleared it away and washed up.

We are going to Vera's next Monday evening for bridge, Last night we went over the way, their people come next Tuesday. I have not heard of any Ludham evacuees returning but all the Potter Heigham people have gone back with the exception of the party at Townsend's. Pa had the long-awaited increase for 6 months the other day and it worked out to about 5/- per week!

I have finished my skirt but have not so far done anything more to the coat. I'm sorry about your green coat but I quite forgot it, anyhow you will have it I hope before you get this letter. The pears want keeping for a while but you must watch them. I am sending the knitting book herewith. We are still getting a few odd mushrooms but as the weather is colder not nearly as many as we were getting when you were here. I hear they had a nice lot on the stall last week. That is closing at the end of the month and I think in a way it is a mistake. Vera tells me that Mrs Adcock is gradually getting worse and went as far as to say she does not think we shall see her again in Ludham. I hope you can write to Vera when you can find time for I'm sure she will appreciate a letter. She talks of going to London for Xmas and as things are going at present it looks as if as far as Germany is concerned the war will be over. The Blackout relaxation does not make any difference here, but after all now we are so used to it, what matters?

So far I have managed the flowers without any more, even from Braeside and shall have enough this week which is my last. The evening services are not altered and the Harvest Festival is fixed for Oct 2nd Sunday. I hear Miss Grimes is leaving Ludham. Her father is going to Horning to another sister and she is going out teaching. Roll's son is taking over the house. I wonder where another organist is coming from for Ludham. Well I think this is about all the news now and as it is 8.20, will see about supper. Phyllis goes off to bed soon after nine.

Much love and a kiss
Mama.

Crossways Ludham Norfolk

xxxx

Thur 21. 9. 44

Dear Billee

The weather seems to have settled down to a quiet space with mist and fog hanging about and an almost continuous dense cloud canopy and dew overnight which takes a long time to disperse and consequently I find a job, to amuse myself with, which does not bring me into close contact with the damp. It's usually about twelve before the day is aired. M and I made an effort to do a bit in the garden after tea, but it was very short lived and scarcely worth bothering about.

Fri 22. 9. 44

The 7 am effort is still being maintained but don't know about it when the dark mornings come along, another quiet still day but there is a little more air movement, the wind has backed to the S.E. and barometer fallen rather sharply so we may get a change in the weather.

My job today has been cleaning up the border South of the Tennis lawn. It has been planted three years and some of the things are much overgrown. We are still getting a few mushrooms, 'M' gathered some this evening, enough for breakfast in the morning; she had to collect them in the half dark as there is a wasps nest in the compost heap where the mushrooms are growing.

We had your letter this morning and some of it has been replied to in some which has crossed yours but the parcel you speak of did not come with it.

Glad to hear that Marshall's effort at lawn making is successful but hope that they will not allow the children to run about on it this year also not to cut it with a lawn mower till next spring, a scythe will do all that is required this year.

Your adopted prisoner of war must be a bit out of the ordinary judging by his request of Books. C and G also owe us a letter, we have not heard from them so a day or so.

Sat 23. 9. 44

I took another good big parcel to the post for the Merchant Navy and the coats and shawls are mounting up and will shortly make another good parcel.

I managed to get a cooking of runner beans for dinner today – the first and I'm afraid the only one thanks to the dry summer.

The parcel arrived O.K. this morning except for a little sugar that had leaked out, but nothing to speak of.

Have been doing the South border again today and the worst bit was around and under the Cherry and Barberry where the ground was riddled with Sorrel, bout the worst pest in the garden as the roots run about and branch everywhere, and every little bit left in grows again. I wonder if I shall ever get the better of it.

It's not been so warm today, the wind has been about N.W. and the atmosphere more brisk.

Sun 24. 9. 44

M roused up just before 7 intending to go to early service but on looking out saw great puddles on the drive and decided not to go. I had a lay in till about a quarter to 12

Phyllis says she heard the Acle alert at 4.30 am and heard the explosion shortly after – said it rattled windows and doors. One of the men on the farm said he heard two bumps in the distance.

It's a dull dreary day and rain at times and a lot of fire is quite acceptable. There is little more to add. I am enclosing a bit of the Mirror which C. sent on to us, you may be interested.

Cheerio and best love
Pa

Crossways, Ludham
Gt Yarmouth Norfolk
Mon 25. 9. 44

Dear Billee

There's not much to tell after the last budget from here. I rather fancy that some of the youngsters that Moore had got perched up on the tiles would be getting in one another's way. I didn't see any note of a foreman to see that the result was watertight.

After going up to the village I came and got on with my border and had a first class struggle with a broom bush which was overgrowing two fruit trees, not that they yielded much but with the broom out of the way they will have a better opportunity.

We went to Swanston's for bridge in the evening and in the beginning had some wonderful cards first hand 3 no trumps and finished off the rubber very quickly. My luck soon deserted me and I was on the losing side for both but managed to be just over a hundred up at the finish and got home just before 11 o'clock and the bit of fire Phyllis had kept in for us was very welcome.

Tues 26. 9. 44

Today was a little warmer than Monday and we only wanted a fire in the evening. As the weather was favourable I cut the side lawn this morning. The lawns look better now than any time during the summer and the grass is growing thickly but I don't suppose it will require much more attention this year. As lettuces are so much appreciated I pricked out another (and the last this year) box which should last well into next year. The daylight is rapidly shortening and there's no time for the garden after tea, in fact I have to start blackout soon after tea is finished.

Wed 27. 9. 44

Am trying to keep up the 7 a.m. business but was a little later this morning. The post didn't bring us much this morning beyond a further supply of pink wool and knitting needles. It was just a sight just one thickness of rubbishy brown paper and that three parts torn off with the needles just

stuck into the wool and in imminent danger of falling out – needless to say that the colour of the wool was not enhanced.

It's been quite cool today thanks to a biting west wind and have been glad of a fire all day. There was a nasty heavy shower just after dinner with some thunder. Phyllis had the full benefit of it when going back after dinner. I had partly cut the Tennis lawn in the morning and was afraid it would be too damp to finish it in the afternoon but the sun came out and with the brisk wind soon dried the grass and I was able to finish the job and start on the West border before tea. "M" mentioned to Sally that we were short of cooking apples and she promptly brought over a bowl full of mixed drops (mostly sound) and crab apples which make such nice jelly.

Madge and Sally are just beginning to find out what it means to have a vigorous child of 5 in the house. Sally says she is in and out, and up and down stairs and in their room all day and the mother doesn't do much to stop it. After all you might expect two elderly maiden ladies to be out of sympathy with children and get fidgety.

Crossways
Ludham
Gt Yarmouth
26. 9. 44

My dear Babs

Thanks very much for the p'cl which we got on Sat: morn. The fruit was very welcome as all I got this month was prunes and dates, it was a grand lot of sultanas you sent 2lb I suppose. And you know what the marg meant. I will write to Miss S and thank her for that and the tea. My skirt is finished except for the placket fastenings and its nice good of you to have got the wool for a cardigan. I was only thinking yesterday that I would try Throwers and see if I could get any. At present I am doing one of the W.I. shawls, a fairly long job but very easy knitting, 3p: 3purl. and a garter stitch border of 2 inches all round, they are to be 36 inches square. People are quite keen to do the work and so far it has not encroached on the M.N. work.

I had bad news about Arthur last week. Dick wrote that the hospital people had phoned him that Arthur was on the danger list. He went to see how things were and found him very low. The Dr said he might go at any time and probably in his sleep which would be a blessing. Dick is going again yesterday so I may hear again tomorrow from him. The hospital people sent me a form of admittance at any time but it is out of the question for me to go and moreover he would not know me. Charlie B has had a similar notice I hear from Annie and he thinks the same about going. Dick asked the hospital people to send the forms along to us both. I have written and told him I could not go up at present. I added to all that we are getting as odd flying bomb or two so I should not think of leaving Ludham.

We hear there was one at Hethersett early Monday morning. Phyllis heard the Acle siren and shortly after the bang. This was just before 5 a.m. I suppose they are aiming at Norwich but of course it is just a last despairing gasp. Charlie says there has been noting near them for some time now altho they get the London Alert.'

We went to Vera's last evening, had a nice evening and they are coming here on Tuesday next. Madge and Sally are expecting their navel people this evening sometime. Phyllis is getting on with her jumper and has just finished the collar. It looks very nice. She has not got her cheese ration yet as the latest nonsense from the F. Office was that they wanted her Birth Certificate and she had to send home for that. It came today so perhaps in about another week or two she may get it!! I told her what you said about calling to see her mother, and she says they are normally at home, they don't go out very much. She makes herself useful, she offered to do the ironing today and I let her, for it gave me a little time in the garden this afternoon. Its been a grand day but rather a cold wind. I think it would be a good thing if you can get someone to take over the orchestra and have a little more time to yourself this coming winter but I know how hard it is to get rid of a job.

There are very few mushrooms about now but if there is the least chance of sending you some I will do so. In about a week or 10 days we should have some nice lettuce to spare. I will send them also some onions for Miss S. We have a grand crop. The Market Stall is closing on Thursday till the Spring. I'm not sure about it being the best thing to do but the stall is hardly suitable for winter use.

My coat has not got any further yet. I don't get much spare time in the afternoon for needlework and I can't nicely do dark work in the evenings, Still there is plenty of time before I shall need it. As you have bought the wool let that be for my birthday and please don't get the dress material. I shall manage very well with the clothes I have got We don't seem to hear much from Gertie and I can't quite understand it. Charlie writes each week and I think we have only had about 3 letters from her since they left here 6 wks ago. She has had a bad cold C. says but is much better now.

Well now it is time to see about another meal, supper, so as I don't think there is anything more I specially wanted to say I will finish. Don't bother about the flying Bombs, We are not much concerned. We have told Phyllis that if she hears anything alarming in the night to scoot into our room and come into the shelter, she laughed! She is very happy with her work, nothing seems to trouble her much, not even a kick from a cow, for she has had a huge Black and Green patch on her leg where one kicked her a week ago and today has required another.

Much love and a kiss
Mama

Tues: No word from Dick today, so far, 9.30

Crossways Ludham
Gt Yarmouth Norfolk
Thur 28. 9. 44

Dear Billee

Things don't seem to be getting any happier in this direction for since Jerry eased up at the Pas de Calais area after it was captured, he has broken out in this direction. Its rather disturbing as we get no warning and hear nothing until we hear the explosion. During the last week visitors have rained from 0 to 4 per day, none of them less than about 5 miles away. "M" has decided that the best place to sleep is in the shelter. There's not a lot of room but its worth that to be able to get to sleep with a fair amount of safety. Phyllis doesn't seem at all disturbed about things. Says that she goes to sleep directly she goes to bed which is a good thing. The weather has been fine but not too warm and I have been clearing up on the West Border and "M" has been trimming up the bank. Churchill's speech was quite good but not startling. Besides the Home and the Forces programmes the BBC made much of it in the European news.

Fri 29. 9. 44

One incident in the morning and two in the afternoon and another at dusk when a flying bomb came over Ludham with a Spitfire on its tail. Mrs Gedge told 'M' that she saw the projectile leave the Spitfire and next heard the two explosions and reckoned that it came down near Coltishall, but its difficult to get exact information especially if it comes through two or three mouths. Here things make two reports and not as I always thought one.

Overcast all day but have been sticking to the west border and have come across that most troublesome thing in the garden – a patch of Sorrel whose threadlike roots penetrate freely and are difficult to get out of the soil, and every little bit left in, grows again. After tea there was light enough to pick the pears – not so many as last year but quite a nice lot, and they cant be stolen from the tree as last year.

Sat 30. 9. 44

Very little to tell today. I have nearly finished the front of the West Border. Was enlivened by a bang in the direction of Acle and saw the cloud of smoke floating away after but nothing further happened.

Sun 1.10. 44

We had made up our minds to go to Church at 8 am and awoke at 6 which of course was too early to turn out and it was nearly a quarter past seven when we finally turned out. This did not give me much time and it was a bit of a rush especially as the Church clock was fast, but we got there by BBC time and he had got well on with the service, and there were about half a dozen came in behind us and I should say just over 20 all told. Of course being Harvest festival the church was decorated in the usual manner but there appeared to be less apples and tomatoes as usual. We were home and nearly finished breakfast by the time for the 9 am news.

It's a nice clear fresh day with wind in N W so you may gather that it was not too warm and a bit of fire was very welcome this afternoon. This evening's service is at 6 o'clock, 'M' went but I stayed at home. 'M' had just left when there was a distant bump and this was the only report here. It was a very threatening evening and 'M' got a good drenching when coming home from Church.

Mon 2. 10. 44

It was a bright clear day after the night's rain, mainly N.W. showers. I was able to do a good bit of clearing up for the winter. This afternoon M and I had a good turn out of the shelter bed, the laths gave a sag in the middle which made it uncomfortable for two persons to sleep on it.

Your letter came this morning. Some of the questions you raised have already been answered. I shrink from the tone of your letter that it is better to give up some of your honorary work and give yourself more time to relax. You say "We are going to camp." Does this include yourself. I think that you would be quite wise not to go to London for the weekend under present conditions.

Arthur is apparently off the danger list now. I think I had better leave some of the other points in your letter for "M" to deal with. So far 7.15 pm, we have had no sounds to disturb us. I enclose a statement and cheque, thank you very much.

Cheerio and Best love

Pa