

Cape Town
February 5th, 1933

7 years ago today we left Vryburg

My Dear All,

My first words must be a note of thankfulness that Mom's leg is much better and she is now able to walk without much inconvenience. The scalding was very painful and the healing process has been somewhat slow. However it is much better and I hope it will be a lesson to all to be very careful of hot water. As a matter of fact only this morning at a meeting Mr Darling, a Friend, told me that his little girl upset a pot of tea over her arm and scalded herself down to her wrist. She is such a sweet little darling in name and character.

My next note must be one of considerable anxiety on behalf of those in the family who are concerned in farming. The approaching spread of the dreaded foot and mouth disease is alarming. I sincerely hope that the precautions taken by the Government will have the desired effect of stopping its southward advance. Its proximity to Vryburg is very alarming.

Yesterday was another red letter day. Mother celebrated her seventy-first anniversary. We did not make any fuss about it, but of course got a suitable cake for the occasion (without 71 candles) and she has received the congratulations of those of our friends who knew of the event. In the afternoon we motored Mrs Webb and Mr and Mrs Price to Fish Hoek. We called upon a Mr Alexander, a Friend, whom I visited in hospital for some time, and who is running a small tea room near Tokai. Poor man he is suffering from heart trouble, like Uncle Bert was, and appears to be getting weaker. I do not think he and his wife can be making much out of the venture. He has a hobby for collecting parakeets and has some hundreds, I should think, of birds in various shades of colour. Some colours I had never seen before. I presume he sells them. He also goes in for poultry, rabbits etc. His wife is very bright and does the best she can. Mr Price stood us all tea, which was served in pyrex cups and saucers. I must try to see him again. We bought some fruit along the road and wish you could all share it with us. At Fish Hoek we outspanned on the sands for a short time and walked about to see if we could see anyone we knew. We soon found the Florences as they emerged from their bathe. Jim was there too. He looks to get married at Easter. I expect we shall attend the ceremony. We met quite a number of others who we knew. Coming back we came long the high level road over Muizenberg. It is a steep climb but we managed it easily. Mrs Webb is staying at Muizenberg but preferred to come back to town with us for the sake of the drive so she stayed to supper and returned by train. They all enjoyed the outing. The heat during the first part of the afternoon was excessive. In fact the past week has been most tiring. In the city is has registered over 100 but that is not in the true shade.

The past week has been a quiet one so far as any excitement is concerned. Uncle Joe and Aunt Emmie are still in Graaff Reinet, or at least we think so as we have not heard from them since they arrived there last Tuesday. As soon as I hear about General meeting I think Mom must go to Grace and Joe before I go to Vryburg. I hope to hear something definite this week. I wish you could get some good rains in Vryburg before we go.

This afternoon I have been over to Valkenburg to see Rev Wookey and one of our former residents. How thankful we should all be for the possession of our reason. Tonight I am taking service in Sydney Street.

Later, I got the post when I went into town and received one from Uncle Joe but no date is mentioned for his going over to Cradock. Probably it will be early this week. Mother thinks that my weekly letters may be of interest in years to come and wants any of you who may have old ones to return them. I never find time to re-read what I have written, but if you are interested I am glad.

Much love from Dad

P.O. Box 691
Cape Town
February 12th, 1933

My dear All

How are you all? I am thankful to say that Mother's leg is quite well again but the scar will remain for some considerable time to come I expect. We seem to have very little news from any of you during the past week. Grace had to be satisfied by sending us only a postcard. We are very sorry to hear that the drought is still so trying up country but hope you may have good rains before the winter sets in. A letter from Douglas this morning speaks of the cattle still being in good condition which is something to be thankful for. Joe and Blodwen seem to be pleased with their move. I wonder when we shall see them in their new home. I am glad Joe will be able to sleep out. We do not know if he has seen the doctor again. It is nice to know that work is improving on the Railway and that he has been working five days instead of four in the week. We have only had two postcards from Uncle Joe but expect he is in Cradock today. Our holiday arrangements are still uncertain. The Committee will meet next Sunday and decide if a General Meeting is to be held but if one is not coming off at Easter, Uncle thinks he will get back to England for Easter, leaving here on March 31st. In any case I am arranging that he shall go to Vryburg, most probably from Cradock. This will save his going over the same ground unnecessarily. The Y.M. annual meeting will probably be held on March 14 after which I shall be able to get away. Sometimes I feel like not going anywhere this year but we shall have to wait and see. In any case Mom will go up. Uncle has not seen half the beauty spots that I hope to show him.

Yesterday afternoon we went over to see the aeroplane arrive from England. We had a good view. It looked so small that most people thought it was one of the local machines which we had seen go up. It was very quiet and made a perfect easy landing. It is stated that there were 15 000 present. There were hundreds if not thousands of cars. We took Mrs Halliday and Gladys and her two boys.

Uncle Joe has kindly given me a reading glass as I find it necessary to have one in addition to my specs. I find difficulty in reading the newspapers even without extra power. I have had a nice one on approval for a day or two which seems to answer the purpose. It will be awkward having to carry it about with me for services etc but there seems to be no alternative. Two specialists say they cannot fix up anything else.

We hear that Joyce Collett, who was with us recently, is coming back to the Cape Town to find a job as her young man has been transferred to the bank here.

I do hope that foot and mouth disease will not spread into Vryburg district. It will mean ruination to the farmers there if it does. So far its progress seems to have been checked.

I am glad to hear that Douglas' children are getting interested in bees. I hope they will not get badly stung, but they must expect to get a few in buying their experience.

We have had some very trying weather lately but have managed to survive.

Have had four new boys arriving at Botha House this month so that things are looking up again. We come out on the right side for the past year I am glad to say.

I do not think there is anything more to add this week except to say that we hope that we shall hear good news of you all.

Yours affectionately,
Charles

Written notation: Willie said he had sent a four page dear all. It hasn't come this way yet.

P.O. Box 691
Cape Town
April 23rd, 1933

My dear All,

I fear I have a very difficult task to perform in trying to convey to you what has happened since I last wrote my weekly epistle. It is over five weeks since I last wrote and being on holiday, I did not do more than necessary in the writing line. In fact I only sent postcards now and then to keep you informed of our movements. Another difficulty I am faced with is the fact that I am considerably out of practice with the machine so you must please make allowances for errors. Not only so but time is few as a Tiger Kloof boy once said. I cannot expect to record the various happenings in correct date order so will first give an outline of when and where we went.

Mom left on February 28th with Mrs Webb for Bloemfontein and after spending ten days or so with Joe and Blodwen, went on to Kroonstad and stayed there until the arrival of Uncle Joe and I on March 21st.

I left Cape Town on Saturday evening March 19th (Uncle Joe being in Cradock at the time). I arrived at Dwaal on Sunday evening and spent the night with the Maskells, leaving again on Monday morning and meeting Uncle Joe, Aunt Emmie and Joyce Fear at Naauwpoort about noon. At Dwaal we discussed the Collett family tree. They are desirous that the other branches of the original founders of the family should be recorded. I may perhaps tackle it later on. In that connection it may interest you to know that I have now got all the details of Mom's parents' descendants and am sending same over to Uncle Willie for him to prepare a chart similar to what he had done of the Butler family. Uncle Joe will take the records with him.

We had a nice time travelling from Naauwpoort to Bloemfontein, the four of us getting together into one compartment. Uncle Joe being rather deaf could not hear all that transpired owing to the noise of the train but it was nice being altogether. Aunt Emmie had provided some ginger beer in her compartment and one of these bottles burst. We were not in the compartment at the time but one lady got more than she required, I understand.

At Bloemfontein we separated, Aunt Emmie and Joyce going on to Maritzburg to be with Muriel, who I am sorry to say has been very ill, and still is under medical treatment. She is ordered not to do any work for some time and has to keep to her bed. Fortunately Joyce is able to nurse her for the present. She was sufficiently well to allow Aunt Emmie to attend the General meeting at Johannesburg and I hope will continue to make good progress. I hope she will get away from Maritzburg for good if opportunity offers. Perhaps Wallis could get transferred to the Cape.

We of course knew that Joe had been temporarily transferred to Kroonstad but we did not know if Blodwen had gone as well, especially as he stated in his wire that accommodation had been secured for us. Mr Keppie, Joe's friend, was at the station to meet us so we decided to spend the night in Bloemfontein instead of going on to Kroonstad and arriving there in the early hours of the morning. We phoned through to Grace from the station and told them of our plans. We slept at the Koppies that night but I took the opportunity of going along in the evening to have a look at Joe's abode as it was possible we should not return through Bloemfontein. As a matter of fact I did come back through Bloemfontein. I also took the opportunity of seeing Nurse Edith Collett for a few minutes. She has given up nursing and is trying to run a boarding house. I fear it is not a very profitable venture at present. I am very sorry for her and wish some of her relations could make it easier for her.

Uncle and I arrived in Kroonstad about noon on Tuesday 21st. Ted and Grace made arrangements for us to sleep at Miss Hick's from their house. We were comfortable there but as the house is constructed of wood and iron and our room faced the afternoon sun, it was hotter than otherwise would have been. However, as we only occupied it during the nights, it did not affect us very much. We did not do anything special at Kroonstad. Joe and Ted met us at the station with the car which I had sent on from town. It was a great convenience in going backwards to town etc as Joe and Blodwen were staying at a boarding house near to Joe's work.

Of course we spent as much time as possible together. One evening some of Grace's friends, neighbours, came in to see us. Amongst them were Mr and Mrs Pierce whose father was a teacher at my old school – Croydon. Uncle had a long talk with him as I think he was at school with Mr Pierce. We enjoyed sitting out in front of the house and watching the twinkling lights of the town; Tynwold, as you know, being up on the hill overlooking the town. Motoring the first time from the station to Grace's house, I failed at first to recognise the house, the trees seeming to me to have been more plentiful on my last visit. It was very nice seeing the children and for Uncle to see more of Joe and Blodwen as on his former visit he only saw them from 10 pm at night to 7.15 the next morning and of course most of that time everybody was asleep. Grace had a few lessons in driving my car so as to be able to relieve me if necessary on the journey across to Vryburg. She took to it quite easily and later drove quite a good deal.

Joe and Blodwen had just three weeks in Kroonstad and liked the place so much that they are hoping they may be permanently transferred there. That this is possible as the Foreman was very pleased with his work and practically suggested that something of the sort might happen. We shall wait and see. It was arranged that as Joe and Blodwen were in Kroonstad that they should come and stay at Grace's whilst she was away at Vryburg with us. According to plan we left Kroonstad about six am on Friday 24th. The party consisted of Mom, Uncle Joe, Grace and baby and myself, four suitcases, bundle of rugs and food stuff for the days journey. We found that we had left behind our attaché case with the thermos, milk and a supply of tinned fruit salad but for all that we managed quite nicely. A friend of Ted's in the post office at Bothaville kindly gave us a supply of milk. It would take too long and you would not be particularly interested in having a description of the road between these two points. Suffice it to say that in some places it was atrociously bad whilst in others it was from fair to good and middling. We decided, however, not to take the same route on the return trip. We had early coffee before starting and stopped along the road – in the veldt – for breakfast and lunch. The weather was very hot and the engine boiled occasionally on going through heavy sand. As we got nearer to Vryburg we phoned to Reg telling him of our progress and also phoned to Ted. We rested for an hour or so at Schweizer Reneke as Mom was feeling tired and rather upset. From this point to Vryburg – 45 miles – the road is a disgrace to the councils concerned. Nevertheless we pressed on, stopping now and then for Mom's convenience. Just at the railway crossing at Vryburg, I switched on the lights and right in front of us was Reg and Dot in their car waiting to receive and welcome us to town. Mom went straight to bed and was quite alright by morning. The distance covered in the 18½ hours was just 808 miles (including stops). We took the following route: Kroonstad, Bothaville, Commando Drift Bridge, Maquassie, Wolmaransstad, Schweizer-Reneke, Vryburg. Perhaps some of you may like to follow it on a map. Dot had arranged for us to sleep at a house near by as home, which goes by the name of the dolls house, could not possibly contain us all. Rest was the order of the day for Saturday, although I visited quite a number of old friends. It was embarrassing at times to be told how young I was looking and how I retained my youthful appearance.

It was arranged that Uncle Joe, Grace and baby and I should go out to Douglas on Sunday morning, leaving Mom to stay with Dot and rest for a few days. We left after breakfast. Travelling through the heavy sand again caused the radiator water to boil so I loosened the cap for it to cool off before putting in more water. Unfortunately I loosened it too far and the cap blew off and boiling water scalded my left hand and arm pretty considerably. I had only my shirt (open neck) and trousers on so caught the full force of it. It took some time before we got on again. Grace bandaging my arm as best she could with a pocket handkerchief. When we got to Scholtzfontein Evelyn applied castor oil (externally) and bandaged it up with cotton wool. In a week or so it was alright again. It certainly might have been much more serious. Douglas had a somewhat similar experience, only not so serious, when he took us over to Wayong later. We were made very welcome although we were not expected for a day or two. School holidays being on at the time, I thought it best to go as soon after our arrival as the teacher's bedroom would be available and the children would be free. Maude and Mike Meyers came over during

the same afternoon and other visitors as well. Douglas has improved the stoep since we were there two years ago. It has been widened and paved and a new vine trellis erected. Another trellis has been put up by the back stoep and just one year's growth of vines has covered it. The five children have grown tremendously since I last saw them. Lynne especially has developed and is almost as tall as her mother. She is a great help and has a very sweet way of working with the younger ones. Cecily, the baby, is very good whilst the boys, Arthur and Rex, are most interested in farm work. Kingsley was not too well at the time but is very affectionate. He plays quite nicely by himself. Uncle was very interested in all that was going on the farm. The milking and rationing with bone meal of about 300 cows per day is some task.

During the week we visited the Hudsons, Col Rodgers, Leesfontein, and Mayong. The last was a somewhat trying journey. Douglas took his car and I took mine. The road in some places defies description. The outcrop of rocks and profusion of stones is very trying on my car. However, we got through and back with only one of my wheels punctured but having two spare wheels with me, did not take many minutes to rectify. We enjoyed the picnic and wonder if Joe and Blodwen will eventually settle down there. There is a good water supply and grazing but a very large over abundance of rock around the fountain (where of course the homestead must be). However we must wait and see. Talking of roads, the one to Dry Harts would take some beating. It looked like climbing up stone steps in some places. Of course these are not main roads and get practically no attention.

I am afraid I must break off at this point. I have been very busy since my return on Wednesday afternoon. This has been hurriedly typed on Sunday afternoon between going to see Mr Wookey at Valkenberg, taking Mrs Price and family to see Mr Price at New Somerset hospital, going to service in town etc. I have also done some typing since six this Monday morning.

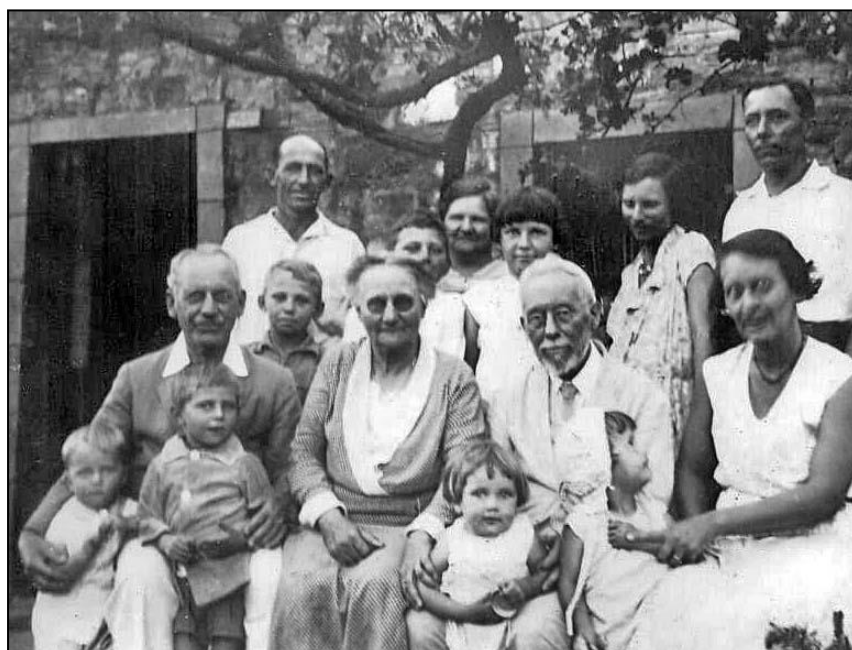
Uncle Joe is due here tomorrow, Tuesday afternoon and sails on Friday. He has been spending the time since General meeting at Cradock.

I will try to complete this narrative during the week and so get up to date. Meanwhile let me say how much I have enjoyed the holiday and the pleasure of seeing practically all the family circle.

Yours very lovingly, Dad



Joseph Butler Snr celebrating his 80th birthday in South Africa



Back: Douglas, Arthur, Evelyn, Lynne Butler, Dot & Reg Hudson
Middle: Charles, Rex, Emma, Joseph Snr Butler, Grace Irons
Front: Children: Norman Hudson, Kingsley, Cicely Butler, Jean Irons



Aunt Eliza, seated, with her older brother,
Joseph Butler, visiting from England



Standing: Ted Irons, Joseph Butler Snr, & Charles Butler
Seated: Emma Butler Grace Irons with Jean Irons, Blodwen Butler
Front: Children: Pam, David & Harold Irons

April 24th, 1933. Continued from yesterday.

I think I had to stop at our journey as far as Dry Harts where we visited Col and Mrs Rodgers. Douglas had a windmill to erect at the station (on the Colonel's property of course) and it was some job too. Uncle and I were very interested in watching how it was done. It would not be of general interest to describe the process – supposing that I could do that correctly – so I had better refrain. However it was successfully accomplished. We enjoyed lunch and returned to Scholtzfontein as the sun was setting. Uncle Joe has been greatly impressed by the great expanse of country he has passed through. For miles on end one seems to be travelling in a huge basin with the horizon all round on one even level. At Dry Harts this changes as one descends towards the river, in which there is seldom any water.

One day I motored Grace and some of the children over to The Hudson's farms and enjoyed renewing the friendships of former days. A good deal of interest centred in the newest arrival in Leslie's home. The road between these farms prevents that frequent interchange of visits which would be more frequent if transport difficulties were not so great.

One afternoon Douglas took us all to see the wildebeest in one of the camps but the game were not obliging enough to show themselves. We also visited Leesfontein, the spot of many very happy picnics at Xmas and New Year time in years gone by. Mom, Reg and Dot came out for the day on Sunday April 2nd and we all returned in the two cars to spend the rest of the time with Dot and Reg. Quite a number of old friends came to see us. The Magistrate and his wife asked us all down to afternoon tea on Sunday. They were both old Cradock friends and it was nice to renew their acquaintance. Rev and Mrs Legg also entertained us to evening tea and invited Rev and Mrs Jennings to meet us. During the evening much interest was displayed in discussing some ethical subjects and the native question. Mr Jennings is considered one of the best experts on native languages and their customs. We gained much information on all sorts of questions. This was continued the following evening at the Jennings residence. One of the most interesting visits that we paid was to the Native Institution at Tiger Kloof, about eight miles from town. Rev Mr Haile kindly devoting the afternoon to showing us the most interesting portions of the work carried on there. Uncle was greatly interested in all that he saw. We made a few purchases, including an order for a pair of boots for myself made from legavan skin. They have since arrived and are very comfortable. We also watched the native girls weaving mats. Mr Papp, who attended the Friends general meeting in Cape Town is in charge of this department. Mrs Papp, who we know very well, was too ill to see anyone. Before we left Vryburg (1926) we attended the foundation stone laying of a new church they were building at Tiger Kloof. The work is now nearing completion. Of course the work has only been done at odd times but it is going to be a splendid piece of work when completed. All the work is done entirely by natives,

under European supervision. A London Missionary Society official is coming out from home this year especially to open the Church. Another afternoon we went to see the dry land station and also Swartfontein, both of which, and many other projects I had a good deal to do with in my day. The trees on the dry lands have grown tremendously but are very much neglected. Zwartfontein has been abandoned as a water supply for the town, except as a reserve. A good deal of the machinery used in my day is lying about the site. Another interesting visit was to the Dairy which has grown to large dimensions and is now one of the largest producers of butter in the Union. Churns capable of turning out butter by the tons are employed. Uncle was particularly interested inasmuch as two of Tangye engines are in use here. Gwelem Jones, one of my Sunday school boys, is in charge and I am sure he learned a good deal from Uncle. Reg has been appointed Chairman of the Works Committee of the Town Council and was very glad of Uncle's experience in matters of pumps etc.

One evening I went with Reg to the new Plaza, more to see the building than the picture "Hells Angels". We were very disappointed in the picture, which had been widely advertised. It was far too sloppy for my liking. The loudspeaker was also far too loud and grated on our ears. The building, which has been erected since we left Vryburg is very good, well planned and I should think is considerably in advance of the times. But such is progress. I was glad to see that considerable advance has also been made in the style and number of new houses erected during the past few years. The whole town is improving, the streets, side walks, furrows etc all show progress. We were greatly struck with the new park which is growing on the old market square immediately in front of our old home Cradock House. The new trees have grown well and when the flower gardens are completed, Vryburg will have a very nice beauty spot. We were shown over Cradock House and of course recognised many of the pieces of furniture etc which were purchased when we left. The new owner, Mr Fincham, has developed the garden considerably. He, being a retired man, has the necessary time for such work.

I do not think I have referred to Reg and Dot's nice little home. It is frequently called the Dolls House. It is certainly small but very comfortable and convenient for them. Two or three additional rooms would of course be an advantage and they may come in time. The breakfast room where we had all our meals was just big enough for the six of us to sit round. Reg has greatly improved it since he bought the property some years ago. He has a nice little grass patch in front which forms a convenient playground for dear little Norman. Here the two children, Norman and Jean, had great fun. Both were always ready for a spin in grandpa's car and often went down town with me. The children got on well together for the most part. We hope that our visit was not too much tax upon Dot's strength at this present time and hope to hear good news from that quarter in the near future. On the last evening of our visit we attended the Congregational Church where we had worshiped for eighteen years. The congregation numbered less than 30 and Mr and Mrs Legg must find it difficult to minister under such conditions. The acetylene gas which I helped to erect about 25 years ago needs replacing and no doubt will be supplanted by electric light when the town installation is an accomplished fact, which I understand is likely to be in the near future. Mr Legg still has about 15 preaching places in the country which he regularly visits and a good work is thus being maintained. I can remember the time when it was difficult to find seating accommodation in the church on a Sunday evening. The population has changed considerably since those days. We also visited the new public school garden which is a credit to the staff and scholars. In a pool they have two baby crocodiles. I wonder what they will do with them when they grow up.

We took the opportunity on Sunday afternoon of having a little talk on Friends ideals and Quaker worship which I hope was profitable to all. We also met a Miss Lewis, a friend of Mary's, who applied for membership with Friends and was admitted. She is at present a school teacher but is looking to get married to a policeman in the district.

Our visit to Vryburg completed, the circle of Uncle's introduction to all his relations in South Africa. He has met all Uncle James' children and grandchildren, Aunt Emmie's and now

mine and I am sure all have been very pleased to have met him. What the future has in store for us all no one knows. We must be content to wait and see.

From Vryburg we began to retrace our steps towards home. It was agreed that Mom should stay in Vryburg for some time to be with Dot and at the farm as well. So on Monday morning April 10th we, that is, Uncle Joe, Grace and Jean and myself with a load of three suitcases and various packages of luggage for the Journey started, just as the full moon was setting and before the sun had risen, for Kroonstad. We had early coffee before leaving and planned to camp out for breakfast near Schweizer-Reneke. We had no alternative as to the road to take as that is the only way out into the Transvaal from this point. We had to have headlights on for half an hour or so before it was sufficiently light to travel without. Grace helped with the driving part of the way over. When we stopped for breakfast, I found a nasty piece of wire had embedded itself in one of the front tyres. I quite expected a serious puncture would have revealed itself. Fortunately this did not happen, although the wire was over an inch deep into the cover. I have kept the piece as a memento. I also found that one of the breaks had got over heated but as we were close to town, I got this adjusted in a few minutes. From this point to Klerksdorp we had good roads and took full advantage of same.

We decided to return to Kroonstad by another route so as to get better roads. Our Matron's brother-in-law is manager of Barclays bank in Klerksdorp so we hurried on in order to get there before they closed at one o'clock for the dinner hour. We did it with ten minutes to spare. His wife, who was a teacher in the Vryburg school in our day, was too ill to see us but Mr Helm gave us advice regarding roads etc. He also came to see us as we were having our lunch under the trees in the public park by the river. We were off again about two and struck more bad roads until we joined the road between Kroonstad and Bothaville. I had suggested to Uncle Joe that if the car travelling was too tiring for him, that he could join the train at Klerksdorp and go straight to Johannesburg, but he elected to stay with us in the car. We were able to phone Ted from a station along the route that we expected to make Kroonstad by six pm. We also wired to Vryburg reporting safe progress up to a point where we could expect the telegram to get delivered before closing time (5 pm). We did reach Kroonstad just at six. The moon which we had seen set just as we started in the morning, rose just as we arrived at our destination. The distance covered in the 12 hours was just 217 miles, not a bad record.

We rested at Kroonstad on Tuesday as much as we could and on Wednesday morning we picnicked at the river for a short time before proceeding to Johannesburg by train at noon. Meanwhile I was busy trucking my car back to Cape Town as it was thought I had better not take it to Johannesburg as parking and other difficulties might be awkward. All the family came to see us off except little David who was suffering from face ache.

Joe and Blodwen had returned to Bloemfontein on Saturday night, having had three weeks in Kroonstad. Whilst Grace was away, they had stayed with Ted. David spent the time with The Pierces and came home shortly after we arrived. It was a great pleasure to see Ted and Grace and the four children and for Uncle to be able to enter into their home life and surroundings. The children are full of life and their parents need never have a dull moment. David goes to school on his bike every day and is getting on nicely. They are an affectionate family, as they should be of course. Personally I should be glad to hear that Ted was transferred to Vryburg as it will be necessary in a few years time to make some change when the other children have to go to school. They keep a couple of cows on the plot and some pigs and poultry.

I had phoned to the Amblers at Vereeniging that we should be passing through that afternoon so they came to the station and a few minutes talk. They were all looking very well and enquired after all of the family circle.

The journey to Johannesburg was uneventful. We noticed numerous plantations along the way and wished that there were more of them. As we got nearer to the golden city, mine dumps disfigured the landscape.

We were each met by our respective hosts. Dr Fox met Uncle Joe and Mr and Mrs Haarhoff met me and we were soon at their comfortable home in Parkview, about four miles out of town. They were very kind and attentive to me and made me very welcome. They have only one son about eleven years old. Early tea was brought in by a servant every morning on a tray, with teapot, milk jug and sugar basin complete, hot and cold water laid on in a built in washstand, two electric lights etc. etc. Mr Haarhoff is a professor at the ~Transvaal University. He is brother to Mrs GW Wilson of Cradock whilst Mrs Haarhoff is a Friend born in England. She is rather delicate but very enthusiastic. They motored me in and out of town daily and could not have done more for me if I had been one of their own relatives. Mrs H remarked on saying goodbye that it was like one of their Uncles leaving.

I cannot go into much detail about the General Meeting. The school council met on Thursday afternoon and meetings were held all day Good Friday, Saturday and on to Sunday afternoon about 6 o'clock. Aunt Emmie was there and Mary also. I am glad to say that whilst there was considerable feeling of disappointment that the school had been closed there was no suggestion of votes of no confidence or censure on those who had been responsible for its closing. Friends don't do such things in the conduct of their business meetings. We accepted the position as it was. The school is closed for the time being and a committee is appointed to see if any way can be found for developing the work. I do not think any school will be restarted at Inchanga, perhaps something might develop here in Cape Town later on. Uncle Joe was warmly welcomed by all and everyone marvelled at his vitality and interest in the proceedings. The attendance was good, representatives from Durban, Port Elizabeth, Cradock, Pretoria, Cape Town and of course Johannesburg being present.

I was able to leave on Sunday evening for Bloemfontein as no meetings were being held on Monday. There was no opportunity of seeing anything of the city. I simply went from the YMCA for my post each day and then to the YWCA where the meetings were held. We had fine weather but it was very tiring as we kept very close to work. I noticed that my heart seemed to be thumping more than usual but I do not know if it was on account of the altitude or what. I was glad to be able to get away and have bank holiday with Joe and Blodwen in Bloemfontein. Joe met me about nine and after breakfast we all went in Mr Keppie's car to Marzelspoort for the day. Nurse Edith Collett was also with us and we had a very jolly time. The water supply for Bloemfontein is obtained from the river here and the council has gone to considerable expense in laying out the grounds as a pleasure resort. We all went for a motor launch spin up the river. There were sports etc going on all the time. We did not stay for the evening entertainments and fireworks as we were all pretty well tired out. Joe and Blodwen are both well and comfortable in their flat. It is nicely situated some distance from the roadway and so they avoid a good deal of dust. I had to leave again by 7.15 Tuesday morning for work and arrived in Cape Town on Wednesday afternoon at 3.30. I have enjoyed seeing practically all the family – Ruth and Denis being the only exceptions. It is nice to find you all in such good health and I trust that you will prize your blessings and be thankful for what you have. Uncle Joe returned to Cradock from Johannesburg on Tuesday with Mary. Thus end my story of my month's holiday. Let me thank you all for all your kindness and attention and help. I am so glad that Uncle has been able to meet you all.

Much love to you all
Dad

P.O. Box 691
Cape Town
May 14th, 1933

My dear all,

I am trying a thinner paper this week so as to see if my typing will be better than last week. I think I had too many sheets in for the thickness of the paper I was using. By the way, I asked some time ago for the return of copies of my weekly letters. Mom has returned some and Uncle Willie sent two back from England.

We have had a variety of weather during the week. Some days we have not seen the sun all day, others have been nice and warm. I have not had a fire yet in the evening but if it gets as cold as it was on Friday evening I think I shall have one. It was wet on Friday but it cleared up nicely yesterday so the University Rag had a fine day for a change. It was very well organised. I should have liked the children to have seen the big elephant that was made out of canvas and drawn through the streets on a lorry. I hope they raised a lot of money for the hospital. The town was crowded with visitors.

Aunt Emmie and Joyce arrived on Wednesday afternoon. Muriel was so far better that it was considered safe to leave her in the hands of a white girl who has been engaged to help. Muriel has still to take great care of herself and not do any work for some time. Aunt Emmie expects to go back to Maritzburg soon after the wedding of Joyce. Aunt Emmie has been to see her doctor two or three times and has been overhauled again by specialists and has still to see them next week. So far as I can gather the latest discovery is a clot of blood which has probably been the cause of her trouble for years. It was thought that gall stones were the cause or even cancer of the stomach. This the specialist assures her is not the case. She is instructed not to run or hurry for trains, trams etc (which she has always done) nor to lift anything on to hat racks etc. She should go to bed for some months, but of course won't.

Joyce's banns were called today for the first time and the wedding will probably be on June 3rd or 10th. I suppose invitations will be out in the course of this or next week. I had supper at Gladys last evening after my weekly game of croquet and heard this news. None of them were at the meeting this morning, Tom Webster will not be going to England until after stocktaking in July. I also heard that two of Alice's children at Graaff Reinet are ill. Alice has an abscess near the ear. I wonder if it will hasten Alice and Allan's return.

I travelled in the train the other day with Mr and Mrs Ross Roberts. They want me to go and spend an evening with them. I don't know when.

Sunday evening, 9.45, I have just returned from taking service at Camps Bay and had a good time. I took Mr Price junior with me as far as New Somerset Hospital to see his Father. It appears that he had another injection on Thursday and the result was not as satisfactory as former ones. When Mrs Price and the others of the family were there this afternoon, he did not appear so well but I saw him before going on to service and he seemed to me to be about as when I saw him a fortnight ago. I have left word with the Sister to phone to me if there should be any occasion but she does not think it will be necessary.

This afternoon I visited the Old Ladies home and they seemed pleased to see me. I have promised to go again. Rev and Mrs Lewis were there as well. Rev Lewis is ex Mayor of Cape Town and has promised to come and speak at morning service here some Sunday when he is free.

After that I went on and saw Aunt Emmie and the rest of the family at Gladys. It seems most likely that the wedding will be at the Sea Point Methodist Church and the reception at Carrowdore. Aunt and I would have preferred it at Mr Titcomb's where they have attended in the evenings for some years but Joyce thinks that the church is so big and the guests so few in comparison that they will all look as though they are lost. However, it is their concern. I have offered the use of my motor for the occasion but I think they want a "proper" wedding motor. The date is provisionally booked for June 3rd, so that's that.

I also visited a sick man that I went to see a few days ago. His rheumatism is not any better. I can sympathise with him, not that I am suffering from the complaint, I am thankful to say. I also called at the Prices and seem very anxious about Mr P. As I say, I saw him on my way to service and do not see any serious change. Naturally he would like to come home but that would not be wise until they have finished with the injections. It is possible that he may have to have another series of these.

Matron will be going on her holiday about the 13th June and will be away for about a month. She did not have her holiday last year. The same temporary Matron that we had before will, most likely be able to come again. The weather, which was threatening first thing this morning cleared off and after meeting and it has been as near perfect as one could wish.

Mr Hussey, formerly of Cradock Boys school, was at service this evening and spoke to me afterwards. His son plays the organ at the church.

We have invited the YWCA residents to join us at Princess Vlei on 31st as they did so enjoy it last year. I hope it will be a fine day.

I am thinking of taking four of the residents for the two days 24th and 25th for a camping picnic to Saldana Bay. I have not yet chosen the four.

It is late but I may add in the morning.

Monday early. I expect Uncle Joe is landing on English soil now. We may perhaps hear from him today or at any rate next mail from Maderia. It will be nice to know how he has fared.

Thanks to all and sundry for letters received during the week. I am glad to know that Dot had such a happy birthday. I am anxiously waiting for news from that quarter. I left word at the post office if any wires came after office hours to put them into my box. Nothing was there yesterday. Hope Douglas will get his new battery in time to catch the news regarding the election results this week. I am pleased to hear that the sugar treatment on the tennis court has turned out so sweetly. I feared that it would be very sticky. Grace reports colder weather. It was cold enough here on Saturday afternoon to play croquet in my woollen gabardines. I hope Ruth and Denis have enjoyed their holiday. Ruth must be very tired after all the work of cooking for such a large wedding party. I do hope she will not over tax her strength.

I must still write to Mom so must close with very dear love to you all.

Dad

P.O. Box 691,
Cape Town,
Saturday May 20th 1933.

My Dear All,

The most important news this week is the safe arrival of a second son to Reg and Dot. The news came through by telegram on Friday at lunch time. I was resting at the time and Miss v. d. Valt phoned to say that a wire had just come so she read it to me. Hearty congratulations to all concerned. I trust that the little stranger will grow up as well as his senior brother has done up to now, I wonder what his name will be. I shall have to see to his name figuring on the Family Tree. I hope for good news during the week.

Another important happening this week has been the fixing of the date of Joyce's wedding. The pros and cons of place, marriage officer, etc have all claimed attention. The final decision has now been made and invitations have been issued. The date is Saturday morning 10.30 at the Methodist Church, Green Market Square. Rev Mr Titcomb is to officiate, assisted by Rev Beverley of the Church of England. I am to give Joyce away. Morning tea is to be served at Strand Street, near the Lutheran Church. I understand no toasts, except the Bride and Bridegroom are to be proposed. They are going on a motor tour along the coast. So that is that. I hope the weather will be fine for the occasion. We have had some cold days during the week and some rain. During the day it has been fine but changeable. We must expect rain from now onwards.

The election on Wednesday caused a good deal of excitement. There was not any contest in this particular ward but the results were very keenly watched. Of course we had the wireless on and I waited up till ten when the announcer stated he would come on the air again at half past if there were any more results out. So I had my bath in the meantime and got the latest before turning in. I see Mr du Plessis has beaten De Kock at Vryburg. It is to be hoped that the new Parliament will justify its existence and do some useful work.

The Winchester Castle arrived in England last Monday. Next week we may hear from Uncle Joe.

One evening I went to the Methodist church social. They want to enlarge the school room and require £2000 for the purpose. Many of the ladies wanted to know when Mom was returning.

You will be glad to know that Muriel is making progress towards recovery. She has gained a little weight during the past fortnight but the doctor says she must get away in July. Nothing is decided as to when Aunt Emmie will return to Maritzburg. Aunt Emmie is still in the hands of specialists here. They were afraid of gallstones and possibly something worse. However they think it is a clot of blood in the bowel which has caused all the trouble.

This afternoon it cleared up sufficiently for a game of croquet at Pinelands. I had an excellent partner and we won before the other side got to the fourth hoop.

I am writing this evening as I shall not have much time tomorrow as I go to Malmesbury about four and don't expect to be back before 10.30 or so. I have just got post (9.30 pm) and Mom replies to my letter posted last Monday morning. This is very quick work. Joe also wrote after receiving my last dear all. I am glad the thinner paper is satisfactory. I am now able to type seven copies so you need not trouble about sending any back.

Monday morning, seven o'clock. It is just as well that I did my writing on Saturday evening. May 22nd 1933. I had no time yesterday to do any. After service with the boys here I went to meeting, picking up Aunt Emmie and others on the way. Afterwards I called to see three sick members of our lodge and then home to dinner. Rested a while and after a cup of tea, was off to Malmesbury taking Capt Tonnessen and three of the lads from here. We left at four and had supper at Mr Jobs. It was misty going out as far as Milnerton but beautifully clear after that. We got back by 10.39 and had coffee at Tonnessen's and to bed by 11. There was some mist a few miles from town coming back.

I hope to hear good news from all the family this week. Thanks for letters received during the past week. I hope Joe and Blodwen will go to Kroonstad for the two days' holidays.

The mist is thicker than ever this morning. As I write I cannot see the trees on the tennis court. I expect it will clear off presently.

I have my monthly Board meeting this evening so shall be pretty busy. I do not know what the Association will do owing to the depression. Finances are getting worse every month.

I expect Mom has gone into town to see the new baby and in due course I shall hear who he looks like etc. I hope everything continues to go well with the mother and child.

Aunt Emmie thinks she must go back to Muriel soon after the wedding. Muriel expects to go for a change some time in July. Doctor seems to think it will take a very long time for her to regain strength. She has put on a little weight during the past fortnight, I understand.

I must stop now and have breakfast and also write to Mom so goodbye for the present. Hoping you are all keeping well and happy.

Yours affectionately,
Dad

P.O. Box 691
Cape Town
Sunday, May 28th 1933

My Dear All

I am off to service shortly and Aunt Emmie and Joyce have had supper with me here. I know I shall not be able to finish before starting but as they are both writing, I may as well do the same. It has been a most lovely day, so far as the weather is concerned but was very cold in the morning and will be cold just now.

Later. Let me go back a bit and tell of the happenings of the week. Our return from Malmesbury last Sunday evening was stated in the papers on Monday as having been the worst fog for several years. I am glad to say that we came through it without any trouble or mishap. Monday and Tuesday were wet days and I had very little inclination to fulfil my promise to the boys to take them to Saldana Bay on Wednesday. However as they were keen and I did not like to go back on my word, we started about quarter to nine with four of the young men – Weatherley, Barlow, Halliday and Bloemarus – and made the first stop at Mamre. It rained a little on the way and the car got somewhat dirty with the state of the road. We were sorry that the old mission church was locked up as we should have liked to have seen the inside. The boys took some photographs of the place, copies of which I will send round when printed. The road was rather bad from here to Darling, but we got through alright. Mom will remember we went this way with Rose and Willy Roberts some time ago. It was all new ground to me from here on to Hopefield and Saldana Bay. We did not stop anywhere until reaching our objective where we arrived about one. We had a good look round for a suitable place where we could outspan for the rest of the day and spend the night, as we had no intention of going to any hotel. We could not find what was wanted so after having a stand up meal in the veldt – it was bitterly cold – we decided to retrace our steps part of the way back to Langebaan. We were disappointed in Saldana village. It is a whaling station of some importance. A good many houses, a large number of small whaling and other fishing boats in the bay and a couple of small war ships. The Bay is very nice but the absence of trees or shelter did not appeal to us. By this time the weather had cleared up a good deal but it was still cold. As we approached Langebaan we passed a nice clompie of trees just outside the village and decided that if there was nothing better to be had at the beach we would return to the trees and make our camp there. We passed a mounted policeman as we neared the village and he said there would not be any objection to our using the place. The village is also a fishing place with a very nice sandy beach. There is a large lagoon here as well and also a whaling factory. The lagoon stretches for about fourteen miles. We found the camp to our liking and very suitable for our purpose. We soon got my lean-to tent fixed up and we settled down to make ourselves comfortable. Dinner was the first consideration. I had taken ample supplies, tongues, fish, jam, fruit salads in tins, etc etc etc. Bloemarus and Halliday undertook the duties of chef and assistant whilst the others did the necessary preparation for the night. The weather had cleared up nicely by this time and we felt confident that we were in for a good time. We all thoroughly enjoyed our meals. In fact we brought back some of the supplies for some future occasion. I took my camp stretcher, kaross and plenty of blankets and of course all the boys had their rugs, groundsheets etc. I turned in early. Weatherley shared the tent with me whilst Halliday had his own scout tent – just large enough for one – and the other two dug a trench in which to sleep. They collected grass and then with rugs, overcoat and two of the sweaters on made themselves very comfortable. They enjoyed sitting round the camp fire until about nine and then after reading and prayers, all went to sleep. The spot light on the car was very useful for arranging matters in the dark. About two in the morning we were surprised by a sharp shower of rain falling as when we turned in it was perfectly clear. The two unprotected ones came under the shelter of my tent. None had properly undressed – except taking off our boots. Sun did not rise until after half past seven I think but for all that, we had early coffee and rusks and then a late breakfast. Those of us not on duty in the cooking line went for a walk for a couple of miles before breakfast. Packing up followed.

The tent had dried a little but we could not wait for that, so packed it wet. No one had suffered from the rain and no one had caught cold. We enjoyed our breakfast of scrambled eggs and sausages besides other dainties. We went down to the beach again and spent some time there. We watched two small fishing boats come in and land their catch. This included a small man-eating shark which had been caught in their net. It was still alive and kicking. One man showed us its three rows of teeth and it tried to bite the intruder. We started on the return trip to town about noon and returned via Malmesbury. We stopped along the road about three for our last meal before reaching Cape Town, where we arrived about 5.30 having done just 250 miles. We thoroughly enjoyed the outing and should have been very sorry had we not gone. It was interesting listening to the roaring of the waves although we were at least two miles from the sea where we camped.

Monday morning, 6.30. Mr and Mrs Gush invited me to morning tea at Stuttafords for Saturday morning, which was very kind of them. They are attending meetings regularly. They have three children, the son is working at Garlicks, the eldest daughter (17) I don't think is in employment. Their baby is five years old, a very sweet little thing. In the afternoon I went for my usual game of croquet at Pinelands and lost my second game.

Yesterday I had no appointments except the morning service with the boys. Rev Stephenson gave the address and as he was taking the service at Metropolitan Church in the morning and Mrs S was preaching at Woodstock, I took them both in. I was disappointed in not getting any letters but suppose the two days holidays have upset things. However, a postcard by airmail came from Uncle Joe reporting his safe arrival in London. He had the cabin to himself all the way for sleeping as Rev Cook's son got ill and was sent to hospital. Mr Cooke only used the cabin for a dressing room.

In the afternoon Aunt Emmie wanted to go to the cemetery to put some fresh flowers on Uncle Bert's grave. They cannot put up a headstone for about a year as the ground has not settled yet. Joyce came with us. We returned via town as I thought there might be some post by the afternoon mail but there was not anything. Perhaps there will be something this morning. Auntie and Joyce stayed to supper with me and afterwards went to hear Rev Titcomb. I went to Observatory and listened with much profit to a very fine discourse by Rev McGahey. On Wednesday this week we all go for our annual picnic to Princess Vlei. I hope the weather will be fine.

I hope you are all keeping well this cold weather. I notice that you have had heavy frosts up country. Hope it will be fine for Joyce's wedding on Saturday morning.

Much love to you all
Dad

P.O. Box 691
Cape Town
June 3rd, 1933
Saturday evening.

My dear All,

Today is the day, and perhaps I had better commence my letter this evening whilst the happenings of the day are fresh in my memory. For several weeks arrangements have been in progress for Joyce's wedding. How, when and where it was to be have been discussed and re discussed until at last it was finally decided that it should be in the Methodist Church on Green Market Square at 10 am. A minister of the Church of England was to have assisted Rev Titcomb but at the last moment he dropped out owing to ill health and Mr Titcomb conducted the whole service. No hymn was sung.

I was at Gladys's a few minutes after nine with my car and a man to drive it. He took Aunt Emmie, Gladys and her children and maid into town and I followed later with Joyce in the most expensive car I am likely to travel in (£150 a touch). We were in plenty of time so the motor man drove slowly into town down Adderley Street, up Long Street and Whale Streets and down Burg Street to the Church. On arrival, a photographer asked us to stop on the step of the church whilst he took a snapshot of us. Joyce and I then walked up the aisle to the strains of the wedding march. A more beautiful bride it would be difficult to find. She looked very sweet. I will not attempt to describe what she wore. It was all very pretty. There was a good congregation and the service we impressively conducted. My share of the service was to say "I do" in reply to the minister's question "who giveth this woman to this man?"

The reception at Melke House, Strand Street was attended by about 100 guests. Everyone seemed very friendly and happy. There was an abundance of refreshments and the toast list was short. Rev Titcomb in his usual happy manner spoke very nicely of the bride's association with the Society of Friends, and they were all friends at the gathering. Mr S A Harvey, in speaking of the parent of the bride and bridegroom, said that he did not know the Bride's mother but the bridegroom's father had been a near neighbour of his – in fact within a stone's throw – but they had never thrown a stone at each other. The ceremony was over by about 11.30, everyone being very pleased with themselves and one another. I motored Aunt Emmie, Gladys and the boys home after. As we got near home we passed Dudley and Joyce in their car as they had been out to get their luggage etc. We stopped and exchanged farewells once more.

So much for that and I must leave the rest of my letter for tomorrow. I should have added to the above the Eric McAllister, who is staying at L B House, acted as guardian to the wedding presents at Gladys's whilst all were at the wedding. It may not be generally known that Eric's mother died in Cradock 21 years ago when he was a wee baby and Aunt Emmie nursed him for the first year of his life.

I should also mention the weather. The last few days were not bright and the morning broke not at all brightly. It was quite cold and overcoats were necessary. Joyce impressed upon me the night before to be sure to bring umbrellas, so I took two. However they were not necessary as the morning wore on the sun shone and the day was as perfect as one could have wished.

There was no exhibition of the presents as it was too inconvenient to cart them all into town and back again. The risk of breakage and loss did not seem to justify it. I understand that there will be a private view during the week for those who call at Rondebosch. There is a beautiful collection of things which will be very useful as well as ornamental.

June 4th, 1933. I think I have said enough about the wedding so will turn to other matters of more or less interest.

Wednesday, a Union Day holiday, was a problem to know what to do. All day Tuesday it was raining more or less and during the night it also rained. We had arranged for a dozen of the residents at the YWCA to join us as they so enjoyed the outing last year. Fortunately we had

arranged to leave about 9.30 and by that time it seemed safe to venture and after telephoning to ascertain if they were willing to risk it, we went. The day turned out very fine, but cold and threatening. Of course the ground was damp but as we all kept on the move with games of one sort and another no one was any the worse for the outing. I took my car and tent which was useful for sitting on at meal times. Of provisions there were ample. The girls brought fruit and sandwiches. One of the boys took his gramophone and records. We were back by 5.30. Miss v.d Walt and her sister who knew some of the YWs also were in the party. She unfortunately slipped on the grass and sprained an ankle and has been limping ever since.

Thursday evening I had supper at Ross Roberts at Kenilworth. I took them as far as Princess Vlei before supper to show them the new road that has been made from the end of Rosmead Avenue. I attended a mission service afterwards at Kenilworth where good results were evidenced. I brought Arthur Merrington and A S Wood home afterwards.

The news of the week is that Mom is looking to return on Thursday, arriving here about One on Friday. I am afraid that we are in for a wet spell. Today it has rained pretty heavily. I hope it will clear up before Mom arrives. I have had one fire this season but I expect we shall have plenty from now on. One thing, we are nearly at the shortest day of the year.

After the wedding yesterday and taking Emmie and Gladys home, I was still able to have my usual round of croquet at Pinelands. I was glad when bedtime came.

After our morning service here at which Mr Shearing Senior spoke, it was raining so took the car to the meeting, picking up the Darlings en route. Owing to the weather, very few were present. I took Mr Halliday home and we both called on the Gushes whilst it was raining. I have paid a number of calls this afternoon and took Emmie and Gladys over to the cemetery as they wanted to put the bouquets and flowers that were over from the wedding on Bert's grave.

Had letters from Joe and Blodwen this morning reporting all well in that quarter. I am glad to say that Mr Price is getting better and expects to be allowed to come home on Friday. I saw Bevan Wookey this afternoon. All the patients had to be indoors owing to the rain today.

Grace wrote during the week reporting very cold weather, which seems to have been very general all over the country. I guess Mom will want a fire when she gets back. I suppose Dot is home again and I hope will not overdo her strength. Mom will have lots of news to tell me about you all taking her about as you have been doing.

I am very sorry that most if not all my last week's letters missed the post on Monday. Will try to prevent a recurrence of the mishap. Next Sunday we may perhaps have supper at the Florences' as I am down for service at Kalk Bay in the evening.

Monday morning, June 5th. It rained heavily last night and the Girls' tennis court at the back of our house is a lake. Strange to say thunder and lightning accompanied the storm. It is very seldom that we get thunder and lightning at the Cape. I must not attempt another page as you will not have time to read it and I have not time to write it.

Love from Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
Sunday afternoon, June 11th 1933

My dear All

I had quite expected to be able to report Mother's safe return to town but Dot wrote at the beginning of the week saying that it was desired that she should stay over for the christening of baby Alan and also to be present at Douglas' children's school concert. It was also expected that Mom would have a Cape Town lady to travel with if she stayed until June 22nd so that's that. I am still a grass widower. I have been told during the week that married men make very bad bachelors. I can quite agree with that sentiment. However I am told by one and another that I must be patient. I always thought that I had a fair stock of that virtue. Of course I was disappointed but as we have been having such miserable weather for some time, I could not wish to hurry Mom back as she feels the cold and dampness more than I do. Fortunately she has not to go out in all sorts of weather as so many have to. I am glad to know that Mom has been free of rheumatic pains since she has been up country. That is much to be thankful for. I am frequently visiting a member of our Lodge who has been in bed for several weeks. I saw him this morning after the meeting and can very sincerely sympathise with him.

The week has seemed exceedingly long, I do not know why, I have had lots to occupy my mind and a fair number of letters have come from one and another. I always long for letters and I do not know what I should do if one could not communicate our thoughts to each other in this way.

You will be glad to know that Blodwen's father has been able to come out of hospital. I saw him on Friday evening and he was very thankful to be in his own home again. He has had a very sorry three months away but seems a little better than when he went in. I hope the improvement will continue. He will require constant waiting upon.

On Friday the Methodist local preachers convention met at the Observatory church. The meetings have been very helpful and encouraging. Last evening the new president was installed. The meeting was preceded by tea at which all the ministers of the circuit were present. The ladies of the congregation supplied a very nice tea. Many enquired for Mom as they miss her very much. I sat next to Rev Stanton who is returning to Kroonstad at the beginning of July. He recognises that he will have a difficult task to pull the work together again but is going to do his best. He enquired after Ted's people in Umfolozi. He gave a very nice address after tea. Almost all the Methodist pulpits in the Peninsula today are being occupied by laymen. I must go in a few minutes to fill my appointment at Kalk Bay. We are having a social at the Church Hall tomorrow evening. I had intended visiting a Friend Mr Alexander, who I have been to see several times before at Retreat on my way but this morning Mrs West phoned to say that he passed away yesterday. I am going all the same. He is to be buried tomorrow morning.

Later Sunday evening. Have just returned from Fish Hoek and Kalk Bay. Saw Mrs Alexander (took Mr Halliday with me) and arranged to attend funeral of Mr Alexander tomorrow. She is very grateful. Had supper with Mr and Mrs Florence who expressed pleasure at seeing me. Enquired after you all and Uncle Joe. Says Una looks to get married about the end of the year. She is coming home next week by the Garden Route. Had a nice service. Mr Halliday came back with me. He went to see some friends of theirs at Fish Hoek and did not come to service. It has been dull all day and rained a lot last night.

Aunt Emmie will be leaving for up country soon. I am not sure if she starts on Tuesday. Hope to see Joe and Bronwen and Grace and family in due course.

Love to all from Dad

P.O. Box 691
Cape Town
Sunday evening, June 18th 1933

My dear All

I shall have to give you short measure this week, partly because there is nothing special to record, except the weather, and also because time is few.

Matron left on a month's holiday on Tuesday and the same acting one who has been here before arrived a few minutes before Mr H left. Everything is going on satisfactorily so far as I can see.

I had news from Reg on Tuesday that he had decided to sell his business and I hope the arrangements he has made will be satisfactory to all concerned. I await details.

One evening recently – before matron left – I went over to Gladys soon after dinner and as my meal here had not been satisfactory, I was glad to enjoy a piece of venison which they had received from Eric. It is the first I have tasted for a long while. By the way, they all seem to be suffering from colds in that house. Aunt Emmie has a nasty attack. I called for her yesterday afternoon after my usual game of croquet and she stayed to supper with me. We sat and chatted after around the fire – the second I have had this winter. As I had not had any letters from up country for nearly a week, we went into town to see if anything had come by the afternoon train and was rewarded by getting letters from Evelyn, Arthur and Rex and also one from Joe and Blodwen which was refreshing, and for which much thanks. I hope to hear from Mom and Reg and Dot soon. There was not any post this morning. Grace wrote during the week reporting severe cold weather during the week but all were well. Douglas wrote giving particulars of an invention which he would like to patent. It is very simple but I have consulted a firm in connection with same and it is doubtful if it can be patented. The object is to use old motor shafts by means of adaptation of certain parts of a car for driving machinery. Douglas' name may yet become more famous still. Possibly he will have his own electric light driven by his own patent power.

I have been to see Mr Price a few times since he returned home. He was not so bright this afternoon when I called. He is able to walk round the table by holding on to the table.

This afternoon I took one of the invalids I have been visiting for some time past for a spin. He is suffering from dropsy. He enjoyed it but it was difficult getting in and out of the car. The weather yesterday and today has been splendid. I hope it is a definite change for the better. Most days it has been necessary to carry an umbrella and wear top boots and overcoats all the time.

This evening I have had service at the Baptist mission.

Joyce Townshend and Dudley are expected back from their honeymoon today or tomorrow. They only got as far as the Wilderness. Aunt Emmie is going to wait their return before deciding upon her plans. Muriel is so much better that it does not seem really necessary for her to go to her but feels that unless she does go soon, she will not be able to stand the heat of Maritzburg in the summer.

If any of you have not seen the photos of Ruth and Denis, please say so and I will send them for you to look at. They are very nice.

I have spent a good deal of time recently in destroying old letters and books, Income tax papers etc but there is still much to do.

I am hoping to hear definitely when Mom will be home. I suppose it will be Friday about noon. Am glad to say I am keeping as well as can be expected under the circumstances as the doctors are fond of saying.

Goodbye till next week
Dad

P.O. Box 691
Cape Town
Saturday evening 24th June 1933

My dear All

I have to report the safe arrival of Mom on Friday afternoon. The train was a few minutes before time. Mom had a comfortable journey down but it was very cold. We had had considerable rain during the night before. I am surprised that the mountains were not snow capped.

It has been a very dull and wet week and so we have not been out anywhere. So far did I get last evening and switched off to write some private letters.

Sunday evening. On Tuesday afternoon Mr and Mrs and Miss Farren came out to dinner on their way to England. I arranged for them to meet Aunt Emmie and the Hallidays at the latter's home. So after dinner we all met and had an interesting talk over General meeting and subsequent events. I took Aunt home after and also took the Farrens down to the Docks as their boat was leaving early in the morning. They look to see Uncle Joe in London. Aunt Emmie has had a nasty cough for some days and had to have a doctor. We saw her this afternoon and she was much better. She has decided not to go to Cradock or Maritzburg for the present as Muriel is much better. We also had a short visit from Mr Wells senior on his way back to Maritzburg from England. The vessel only had a few hours in Cape Town but he managed to see Aunt Emmie and the rest of the family. He has shaved off his moustache and I hardly recognised him. He has been away for about ten months. He took first prize on board for fancy dress – going as a lady.

Joyce and Dudley Townshend returned from their honeymoon on Tuesday having spent a very enjoyable time at the Wilderness. We have not yet been to see them in their home but must try to do so this week.

Gladys's husband is going to England for a short trip at the end of July partly on business and the other part on pleasure. Gladys has not decided what she is going to do during his absence.

All letters received during the week refer to the cold you have experienced lately. Here it has been continuously wet nearly all the week. It is unfortunate that Mom should come back just in the thick of it. However, she has been away for just on four months. The change has done her good. This afternoon we went to see how Mrs Alexander, who lost her husband recently, is getting on. She is very bravely facing the position and thinks she will be able to pull through. She has two daughters living with her. We also called at Mrs Price's this evening after service. Mr Price is getting on and is able to walk round the room without holding on to the table. His treatment at the hospital was not at all satisfactory so far as the nurses are concerned. He has not a good word for them.

Monday morning. Another dull day is before us. I have to attend a conference of European and Coloured people this week which has been arranged for delegates all over the Union. The City council is giving them an official welcome in the City Hall this evening. My typist still has trouble with her foot which she strained at the picnic. She comes to work most days.

I must stop now and get to breakfast and be in town a bit early.

Much love to all and thanks for all letters received and still asking for more.

Yours affectionately

Dad

Cape Town
P O Box 601
July 2nd, 1933

My dear All,

It seems too dreadful to realise that half of the year 1933 is behind us. Xmas will be here before we are aware of the fact. However, we must do as the Boy Scouts are constantly reminded, be prepared.

I am thankful to report that the weather has made a decided change for the better the last few days. Had it remained as it was when Mom returned last week, I was seriously thinking of packing her off again to Fish River to stay with Aunt Jessie for a while as she is still unable to get about except on crutches. It would also have provided company for Aunt Emmie who is leaving tomorrow for Cradock and will spend a little while with Aunt Eliza. Afterwards she will go to Eric and I hope will also call and spend a little while with Joe and Blodwen in Bloemfontein and also with Grace and Ted at Kroonstad on her way to Maritzburg. I have given her a timetable so that she can advise those concerned if it is possible to call. It has just struck me that perhaps it might work in so that Ted could travel by the same train if he goes to Zululand in August. In any case, she does not want to travel alone. Tom Webster is going to England (and of course Scotland) on July 28th and Gladys is trying to let her house so that she can also get away for a holiday. She will not go overseas.

We have not "called" on Joyce and Dudley yet but hope to do so some time this week. They have settled down quite comfortably in the old home of Mr Townshend in Tamboerskloof. Dudley is joining the SOE on Tuesday so perhaps Mom will stay with Joyce whilst the men folk are out.

Yesterday afternoon we took Rev and Mrs Stiles for a little spin as far as Camps Bay. They have both been on the sick list recently and as the day was so fine, they quite enjoyed it. We went over to croquet afterwards but it was too late to complete a proper game. However it was worthwhile. I am hoping that Mom will take up the game.

Uncle Joe writes that he has sold his house and now we shall await news as to what his plans are for the future. We were going to spend some time with Uncle Willie at Southport after that, we may hear what he intends doing. Both Aunt Eliza and Emmie want him to make his home with them but Aunt Eliza does not wish to leave Cradock.

We had a call from Una on Friday, she brought a cousin to dinner with her. She looks to get married at the end of this year. She is looking very well and was very interested in seeing the photographs of you all.

Later. We brought Aunt Emmie home from meeting this meeting and she stayed to dinner. We have since taken her to the cemetery where she placed some flowers on Uncle Bert's grave. We then took her to the Garnetts where she is staying to tea. We (Mom and I) then went to see Mrs Coldrey, an old Cradock lady over 80 who is very ill. We also called to see the Crerars but found they had returned to Scotland for good. We have just been to see the Prices on our way back. Mr P was sitting outside in the sun. The rest of the family are well.

Evening. Have just returned from a coloured service. The lights (paraffin) were so feeble that I had to have a candle stuck in a bottle on the reading desk in order to see to read.

Letters from you all have spoken of excessive cold weather. Snow fell in Bloemfontein. Joe wrote a long letter. We are hoping for good news from that quarter in due course.

We shall be interested in hearing who the new governess it to be at Scholtzfontein. I must not attempt another sheet so will close with very dear love to each and all.

Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
July 9th, 1933

My Dear All,

The past week has seen the departure of Aunt Emmie to Cradock on her way to Maritzburg. Her decision was arrived at somewhat hurriedly as she found a lady passenger who was going that way. We are glad to hear of her safe arrival and welcome and hope it will be possible for her to spend some time with Joe and Blodwen and Grace and Ted on her way to Natal. We understand she goes to Eric at Rooispruit on Tuesday of this week.

Letters this week from Uncle Joe speak of his seeking guidance as to where he can be of the most use – either in England or in South Africa. I think in any case he will come out again and I hope spend some of his time in paying longer visits amongst his relatives than he was able to do when here before. We must wait and see.

The past week has been of more than usual importance. Three important meetings have been held. On Monday evening the Cape Church Council elected me as Honorary Secretary and Treasurer. I have been treasurer for some years. One reason why I accepted the position is that if the YM should close down, I shall still have something to do. At present the duties are not very arduous and I think I can do all that is required as well as another. However we shall see.

Tuesday was SOE. We had a very interesting lecture, illustrated with photos of whaling in the south Atlantic.

Wednesday was Board meeting. They have decided to call a big meeting in the Cathedral Hall on 26th to discuss whether they should close down or what to do. I am not worrying or the least bit anxious about the future so far as I am concerned.

On Thursday evening Mr and Mrs Gush spent the evening with us. It is interesting to know that they are related to the Willmores. Mabel Willmore, who was librarian in Vryburg for some years, married Mr Gush's brother. I think they are some distant relation to Evelyn. Their son is named after Major Dennison. They are related to the Massons, formerly of Vryburg. We took them for a run to Milnerton yesterday afternoon as their daughter has been on the sick list during the holidays. This evening they also accompanied me to Parow for service. This afternoon I paid three calls on sick folk.

I see Mom has been busy writing today so has not left much for me to say.

It has been a very dull day but no rain has fallen.

Monday morning. We are of course interested in Grace and Ted's suggested holiday to Zululand. Naturally we should like them to come here. We have room and could make them comfortable.

We did not go to see the Wallabies football match on Saturday. The prices were beyond my limit. It is of interest to know that four members of the team are members of the Brisbane YMCA and our Chairman invited them to lunch at Carrowdore last week. I did not go.

One of the fellows residing here has gone overseas with the SA contingent of Boy Scouts to the Jamboree. I went to the docks to see them off and at the same time to try to see Aunt Eliza's friend, Chris Johnson, who was on the same boat going back to England. I found his cabin but never having met the young man or having any description of him, failed to get hold of him. I asked the stewards and dozens of people on board if they were Johnson without success. I found his cabin and saw his luggage and found a passenger who was sharing the same cabin. He promised to tell him I had been to see him. I left my card.

Letters from have been few and brief. We do look forward to all your letters.

Love from Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
July 15th, 1933

My Dear All,

I am sorry to say that today I have been in dry dock with a nasty cold which I contracted a few days ago. It has affected my throat and chest and I have felt difficulty in breathing with more or less frequent spasms of irritating coughing. I have had breakfast in bed for some mornings but today as it was such a blizzard in the morning, I did not go to the office at all, being Saturday – half holiday – I managed alright. Mom has of course doctored me up with lozenges, honey etc. We had very heavy rains all the morning which of course made croquet out of the question. It cleared off about three this afternoon so we motored over to Gladys to hear what news there was of Aunt Emmie. We find she is at Rooispruit and likely to go on to Muriel's shortly. She suggests that perhaps she may go by sea to Durban as she thinks that perhaps her heart will not stand the altitudes going over the mountains. We think that perhaps as she has not been having much exercise since she left Cape Town, that she is suffering from indigestion rather than heart trouble she had in Cradock. We do not know therefore if she will be meeting Joe and Blodwen and Grace and Ted.

So Grace and family have decided to go to Zululand for their holiday in August. We should have been so glad for them all to come here as at present we could accommodate them in the house. We hope they will have decent weather and have a good rest. Evidently they are not taking the car with them.

Dot wrote saying that Reg had a nasty cold and was also in dry dock for a time. Hope he is alright now. Wonder how things are working under the new management. Our interest in the paper and Vryburg generally will be lessened by the sale of the paper but I hope it will turn out for the best for all concerned.

Joe and Blodwen wrote during the week. We are sorry that Joe is so subject to colds. With his early work and excessive heat and cold, it must be trying. We are patiently waiting for news from that quarter. In fact we went to town specially this afternoon to see if there was not a telegram waiting for us. There was nothing. We then went as far as Carrowdore and Sea Point to see the waves as they broke over the sea wall. It was a grand sight but not so grand as it was this morning when the sea was much rougher.

We have not had a line from Douglas or Evelyn during the week. We hope they have got a governess to their liking and that everything is going well. I am curious to know how Douglas' machine for motive power has panned out. I hope it will be a financial success as well as a good invention.

Sunday afternoon 15th. I stayed in bed for breakfast and did not go to my usual service with the boys. The D R Church Minister gave the address. I went to meeting and visited some sick people afterwards. Called at the Prices and found Mr P sitting out in the sun. We are now listening in to Delville Wood memorial service which is being broadcast from the City Hall. I wonder if any of you are doing the same. It has been such a contrast today to yesterday. It is calm compared to yesterday's 70 mile gale.

Tomorrow it will be ten years since Uncle James passed over and next Saturday he would have been seventy nine.

We are sending out this week some hundreds of letters to old and new supporters of the YMCA inviting them to a meeting on 26th to discuss plans for the future. I signed 250 letters in 50 minutes. I hope it will be a success.

I hope to put in full time next week. My cold is much better this evening.

Much love from Dad

P.O. Box 691
Capet Town
July 23rd, 1933

My dear All,

Some of you have often made fun of me for commencing my letters in the days when I used to write under the gum trees in front of our house in Vryburg, but today is just one of those sort of days when it would be nice to sit out of doors and write. I hope the time will not soon come when I shall not have the inclination to write to you. It is one of my pleasures to have a chat with you all once a week. I fear my contributions are frequently dry and very disjointed but even so, if they keep us in touch with each other, they are serving some purpose.

I think the past week has been something of a record inasmuch as we have received letters from Ruth, Douglas and Evelyn and Arthur, Grace and Ted, Reg and Dot and Joe and Blodwen. For all of these much thanks. Here let me say that I wish those of you who have scruples about sending on each others letter would withdraw such objections. I always think that what is of interest to one is more or less interesting to other members of the same family. By that means, the whole family is kept the more in touch with one another. Of course there are time and items of news which are more or less intended for individuals but I am referring to the ordinary run of letters, not the extraordinary. That's that.

I am thankful to be able to report that my cold and cough are much better. It has been a very trying week, cold and wet and generally miserable. Today, however, is bright again. Yesterday afternoon was fair for a time but it came on to rain whilst I was playing croquet and had to stop play. It was very cold. Mom stayed with Gladys whilst I played.

Grace and Ted and family are looking to go to Zululand in August for their holiday. I have suggested that Ted takes an extra month, if he is entitled to it and come down here for a month as well as going to his people. It will be very nice if they can.

We must begin to discuss plans for Xmas so if any of you have any suggestions to make, let us hear of them as soon as you like.

I am glad that Aunt Emmie had a few hours with Joe and Blodwen in Bloemfontein on her way to Maritzburg last Monday evening. Gladys has had a letter reporting her safe arrival at Muriel's. We do not know how long she will stay in Natal. Tom Webster leaves for England or should I say Scotland, on Friday of this week. Gladys has not been able to let her house so I suppose she will bide by the stuff and get someone to come and stay with her.

This afternoon I have been to see Bevan Wookey at Valkenberg. He is just about the same. How thankful we all should be for the possession of our reason. Then Mom and I went to the old ladies home at Mowbray. Miss Thornton, a Friend, as always pleased to see us. She was sorry not to have seen Aunt Emmie before she left. I was asked to see some of the residents who were too infirm to be about. They have it very comfortable in their rooms, fires etc. They always seem pleased to see visitors.

I am glad to say that my cold is much better this week. I still have spasms of coughing but they are less frequent and not so severe. Most mornings I have had breakfast in bed but gone to office as usual.

I am hoping we shall have a large gathering at the YMCA special meeting on Wednesday evening to discuss the future of the Association.

Lots of love from Dad

P.O. Box 691
Cape Town
July 30th, 1933

My dear All,

Seven years ago on 31st, we came over here to take charge as a temporary appointment. The same has never been confirmed and so we are still here. How much longer the temporary appointment will hold good I do not know. We are content to let it remain as such as long as the Board likes.

I expect you will be anxious to know how the special meeting went off on Wednesday night. There was an attendance of between 40 and 50. Mr Haddow made a very good speech so did Major van Zyl, the President. The result was that those present unanimously voted that the Association should carry on. The subject of premises was of course discussed. Negotiations have been in progress for several months to get back the old place in Long Street which was built for the YMCA years ago. These negotiations have been resumed since Wednesday meeting with the result that a friend of the Association is forming a company to buy them and so in the course of a few months we shall, I hope, be back there. What effect it will have on my position I do not know but I have prayed ever since I came to Cape Town that that would open for us to get the old place. At one time when it was put up to auction, it seemed as though it was not to be, but the owners would not accept the offer then made. Naturally I shall be very disappointed if I am not allowed to work in the new premises. In any case I do not think it will mean any change of residence. So that's that. More particulars will naturally follow as plans materialise.

We have had some shocking weather again during the week and some very delightful days. Yesterday (Saturday) was wet so Mom and I went and paid a long promised visit to the Jones and was glad to hear first hand news of farming prospects in Vryburg district. Mr Jones thinks that the district is not so badly off as a good many. Gwillam and Edris were at home also Gladys, Bessie and her husband were dressing their shop window. Gwillam's wife is returning from Ireland sooner than originally intended.

Mr Gush has been to Grahamstown and returned on Friday. He reports having seen Ruth and Denis as well as Mr and Mrs Brown. He reports all fairly well. Mr Rix called on me on Saturday saying he had seen Ruth at the library as he was enquiring about Friends educational system. I was able to put him in the way of getting some information on the subject.

Grace writes making the suggestion that if and when we retire, we might settle in Cradock and possible Ted could get a transfer there so that if Uncle Joe should decide to come out again, it would be nice for us to be together there. The suggestion is worth considering but at present everything is in the air so to speak.

Ted sends us a postcard to say that he has applied for two months leave and is proposing to spend one month with his people in Zululand and one month with us. I ventured to make this suggestion last week and am glad they have fallen in with it. Now who will be the next to do the same. It cost you nothing whilst here.

I wonder if Aunt Emmie will take advantage of travelling back to Cape Town with Grace and Ted and family when they return.

Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
August 6th, 1933

My dear All

I should have started my letter in this fashion had not Joe forestalled me. In writing informing us of the safe arrival of the son and heir, he said that my letter would be on these lines "the news of the safe arrival of a son to Joe and Blodwen". We got the news on Monday through the Prices. It was just too late to include in my last week's letter. You have all heard of the event ere this and no doubt sent congratulatory messages. We have had one letter from Joe since and trust all will continue to go well with mother and child. We shall be interested to know what name the little one is to be called. I have already notified Uncle Willie in England of the arrival so that same can be included in the forthcoming edition of the family tree. Baby is a week old today and no doubt we shall be duly informed of his progress as to weight etc.

No great happenings are to be recorded this week except the arrival above referred to. Matters in connection with the YMCA are progressing and steps are being taken to have new shop fronts put into the ground floor so as to make them rent producing. A meeting is being held this week to consider the future policy etc so I may be in a position next week to give more details.

The weather on the whole has been better during the week. Yesterday and today have been perfect and we are hoping that tomorrow will also be fine as we are intending taking Gladys and children and Eric McAllister to Steenbrass river, beyond Gordons Bay. We have had to give up the idea of Franschoek pass as same is not yet open.

Today would have been Uncle Bert's birthday and also the anniversary of his wedding day. We are going to take Gladys over to the cemetery just now to place some flowers on his grave as Aunt Emmie wishes it.

We are glad to have received good news from those of you who have written during the week. This morning we got letters from Douglas and Lynne. We are picturing Grace and Ted and family at Umfolozi today and hope they have as fine a day as we have here. We are beginning to plan our sleeping arrangements for their arrival. Probably Grace and the girls will share Mom's room and Ted and I and the boys have the room Uncle Joe had. David will miss Carney as he has left but most of the other boys are still here. So Ted has sold his car. No doubt he will be able to pick up another in Durban or here very cheaply. The difficulty in that case will be the getting of it to Kroonstad.

Tomorrow being a holiday, we will post our letters tonight in town so as not to disappoint you in receiving them. I had a postcard from Uncle Joe by air mail this morning giving his new address which is 27 Beaufort Road, Kingston upon Thames. Please note for future reference.

Reg and Dot mention the possibility of coming to see us in the dim future. They cannot hold out any definite time but the prospect is nice to look forward to.

Douglas also mentioned that it was time they had a holiday. We think so too. I wonder if Joe and Blodwen will be able to come and show off the baby at Xmas time. We called at Mr Price's this afternoon and am pleased to say that he was much brighter and they all say he is getting very 'cheeky'. He has surprised his doctor.

I want to write to Douglas and Reg and Ted some time soon but have nothing definite to say until I know what the Board decides upon.

Much love to everyone,
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
August 13th, 1933

My dear All

I had to cut my last week's letter short owing to Monday being a public holiday. I finished and posted after service on Sunday evening making a special journey to town so that you should get it as usual on Tuesday afternoon. I am glad to hear from Dot that hers arrived as usual and I suppose the others got theirs on the usual day.

We had a very nice day on Monday, quite like summer. We left LBH about nine and called for Gladys and her children and Eric McAllister. We called first at the cemetery and reverently placed some flowers on Uncle Bert's grave, it being the anniversary of his birthday and also the anniversary of his wedding day. From there it was a nice run to Gordons Bay. We stopped on the way for morning tea, which we had taken with us. The new road from Gordons Bay is nice and wide and goes for about six miles or more on the coast line towards Steenbrass river where the overflow from the dam which supplies Cape Town with its main water supply is drawn. Monday was the first public holiday since the road has been thrown open. The papers say there were approximately a thousand cars there. There is plenty of room for camping but I fear that picnic parties will soon spoil the place. We stayed here for some hours, having dinner and afternoon tea in the veldt. Some of us also indulged in a short nap. It was beautifully warm. The children enjoyed climbing about the rocks. Dr Dommissie and his daughter and her child were there as well. Instead of coming straight back to town, we returned via Stellenbosch so as to avoid some of the crush of cars which we knew would be along the main road. As we had plenty of food over, we invited ourselves to Gladys where we stayed and had supper and then home.

On Wednesday we attended a meeting addressed by Rev Norwood of the City Temple, London, in the Methodist church. He gave a wonderful speech and the big church was practically filled. The collection was over £17. I saw him off to Johannesburg the following evening.

Yesterday afternoon we went over to Sea Point and called on the Amblers and Dodds. Mrs Ambler has a bad leg so could not accept our offer of a spin. Mr Ambler was resting so we did not see him. Of course there were enquiries all round for one and another. We understand that Len and Gwen will be glad to get away from Vereeniging as the place does not seem to agree with the health of any of them.

Mr and Mrs Dodd are still living in the same house on Beach Road and would be very glad to let the downstairs so that they could return to their daughter's farm near Cradock. I wonder if it would be any use to Aunt Emmie. We learned that Nessie has three children living and May has no family. Mr Dodd has been out of employment for about three years and finds it very hard doing nothing.

We also called to see how Mr Price is getting on and I am pleased to say that he has surprised the doctors. He hopes to be able to be up and about again shortly.

I think we shall have to take it in turns, one week croquet and one week motoring on Saturday afternoons.

Both of us have had nasty coughs all the week. Mine has been more like whooping cough or croup. It catches me so that I literally gasp for breath at times. It is much better today and hope it will not return. Mom's too, is getting better. We have quite a duet at times.

I intended to say that when we returned from Clifton yesterday, we came up past the Round House. This is the first time I have motored up this bit of road. It is very pretty but very steep. We did it quite comfortably.

This afternoon we called on Mr Halliday who has been laid up for a week with a bad cold and cough. He is getting better. Joyce, who is married, is taking a house in the Windover estate.

We had a letter from Ruth as we usually do on the anniversary of dear Harold's death (9th). Grace and Ted write that they will be here about the end of this month. We shall try to give them a good time. I hope the weather will be fine for them to get about a good deal.

We have not heard from Bloemfontein direct, but hear from side winds that Joe can nurse the baby alright. We expect to hear that Blodwen is home again and that baby (Roy Charles) is making good progress.

The YMCA board is meeting tomorrow. On Friday we put a boy on to start cleaning up the place and taking out the nails where floor-cloth has been fastened down. We shall have to arrange for a big reopening as soon as we can. It is a real joy to think that the work will be able to make a fresh start. I hope I shall be equal to the task.

Monday morning. The weather the last few days has been delightful but this morning it looks as though we are in for another spell of rain.

We did not have as many letters as usual last week, hope for more during the week we have entered upon.

Much love to all from
Dad

P.O. Box 691
Cape Town
August 20th, 1933

My dear All,

Letters received from Grace give us to understand that we may expect the family to arrive on Thursday afternoon, 31st. Aunt Emmie may perhaps travel with them but it seems a pity that she should return so soon as we understand she contemplated going away with Muriel to the coast for a time. However I suppose we shall hear more definite news in good time, I hope they will arrange to have morning coffee at Joe's on the way down as that will save Joe losing any time from work. They have a good time to wait at Bloemfontein, but it is early in the morning. It will be interesting to have the four children here. Grace and the girls will share Mom's room and Ted and I will have the boys in No. 13 room. I have asked for a list of places they wish to see whilst here. Fortunately petrol has come down in price. I paid 2/10 or 3/- when I was at Vryburg. The country is looking very nice as we have had such a lot of rain, too much for our liking. Saturday was wet all the afternoon and evening consequently we did not go out of the house.

Dot speaks of getting ready for the electric light being installed. Vryburg will not know itself. I wonder how it will compare in price with our charges. I notice that there is a Press Union meeting on in Cape Town next week. No word of Reg or Ernest coming down for 6th. It would have been nice had it been possible for Reg and Dot to have come. We must look forward to their coming later on. Douglas also talks of having a holiday some time. By the way, I do not think we have heard from the Ranch this week but Dot reported that the family was expected in for the Saturday tennis match and bioscope. I am curious to know how his motor car engine works on his pumping plant. Why not adapt it to an electric light installation.

I wonder if any of you saw in the Argus or Times of Wednesday and Thursday an account of Dr Leopold's address at the SOE lunch club on physical deficiency amongst children. According to his statements, practically all South African children are more or less defective. He strongly advises parents to have their children examined every year. He is giving another similar lecture at our next regular meeting. I wish I could remember more of these addresses.

Things are moving too slowly to my liking in connection with our going back to Long Street premises. There will be a lot to do before we can start moving. I have had a boy for a week getting out nails from the floor where matting or oilcloth has been tacked down. He has not finished one floor yet and there are three to do. Then there will be colour washing, new shop fronts to be erected to say nothing of the furnishings and moving etc but I am looking forward to it.

Monday morning. I was not able to finish yesterday. In the afternoon I went to the Salvation Army Jubilee and of course meeting as usual in the morning. Mr Gush came here and gave a very interesting address to the boys on geometrical lines. He pointed out the circle indicated selfishness, the straight line – the infinite. It was all very good. After evening service, Mom and I called on Rev Hornabrook as he had been down to see me during week and wanted to know particulars regarding the new development at Long Street. It resulted in his giving me a cheque towards the work. We were there a few evenings before but he was out. Nelly was interested in hearing of Joe's marriage and the birth of Roy. She says she has written congratulations. By the way, we have not heard from Bloemfontein for more than a week. Suppose they are too busy nursing baby. We are both getting better of our colds.

Much love to you all

Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
August 27th, 1933

My dear All,

I am trying to type this with the typewriter on my knee sitting beside Mom's bed. Mom has had a nasty cough for the best part of the week and as it does not seem to get better by ordinary treatment, she has stayed in bed today to see what that will do for her. It is certainly better so far. Naturally we want her to be better so as to be able to get about and enjoy Grace and Ted and the children's company when they arrive on Thursday. We have not had any intimation of any change in the plans, so shall expect them then. Aunt Emmie most likely will be arriving with them. I understand she will probably stay at the YWCA in town until she has made up her mind what she is going to do. Gladys has been on the sick list most of the week, ear trouble, stomach upset. Her children have not been well either. We have been over a couple of times. Gladys hopes to hear of Tom's safe arrival in England by tomorrow's mail. So far she has not heard from him. Uncle Joe has sent everybody postcards giving his new address and I hope any of you will write to him as you have opportunity. Douglas enclosed a letter for him this week about some engine gadget he has in view. Uncle Joe does not refer to any plans for coming out again. I hope if he does decide to come that he will do so as to avoid the English winter.

Thanks for all the letters received during the week. We have seen snaps of No. 13 grandchild and of course he is greatly admired. He seems to be making good progress which I hope will continue. Joe and Blodwen are looking forward to coming down here for Xmas. They suggest coming via Durban and boat to Port Elizabeth and the train – garden route – to Cape Town. Blodwen has a brother in Uitenhage and so would be able to visit him. We hope they will be able to carry out the scheme. Reg and Dot hint that they too are looking forward to coming 'sometime'. We also hope their plans may also mature. Douglas and Evelyn have for a long time schemed a motor tour through the eastern province. It is something to look forward to. The spring and autumn are the best times in the year, I think, for motor journeys. Just know the country in these parts is looking lovely. I am hoping to be able to take Grace and Co about a good deal during their visit. The weather is not at all settled yet. We have experienced summer and winter conditions during the past few days. Yesterday was again wet and prevented our going to croquet or anywhere. It is most disappointing having wet Saturdays as that is the only day I can really get out. The evenings are getting longer so perhaps we can do some trips after supper. Mom, however, does not like motoring in the evenings very much as the numerous lights dazzle her.

We had a short visit from Mrs and Connie Halse yesterday. Mrs stayed to lunch. They have just returned from a very interesting motor trip through the Kruger National Park, Basutoland, Barberton etc etc. Connie does all the driving. Just the two of them are staying on the farm. They wish they could sell the place. Connie recognised Uncle Joe's photo. She called on Uncle when she went overseas during the war period. We listened in during the afternoon to the Wallabies test match being played at Port Elizabeth.

This afternoon I have been to the hospital to see our native office boy who has had to go for treatment again. Last year he was in hospital for three months. Ernest was at meeting this morning. He had dinner with us on Friday evening. He returns to Cradock tomorrow.

As I have not any appointments this evening, I am staying in with Mom and so may break my usual practice of only sending one sheet.

There was a nasty landslide near Clifton Hotel last evening. I have not seen it.

Rev Hornabrook came to see me at office one morning. Did I tell you he gave me £5 towards the YMCA fund to get back to Long Street? Another friend of the Association has given £100 this week anonymously. We want more gifts like that. The painters in the building now and I hope we shall be able to start the new work there on Sunday October 1st.

The Gushes have taken the house Aunt Emmie had at Rondebosch. They moved in yesterday.

Dot speaks of the trees coming out into new leaf. All our oaks and fruit trees are bursting forth. The electric light in Vryburg will be a great boon. I notice the church, manse and Dot's house are being fitted.

We are planning to put Grace and the two girls in with Mom and Ted and the boys and I in the room near the hall (No. 13 room).

So Dot's baby has been vaccinated. Glad you like Mr Lanham. His brother here still looks after my car. We are now on the 26400 mark and still going strong.

I have ordered (and paid for) the Children's newspaper to be sent to Scholtzfontein for a year. It will be arriving in a few weeks time direct to you from London. Under the circumstances I shall be glad if you arrange for it to be sent on to Grace's children when read as it may as well serve both families. It will be found very interesting and instructive I hope.

We hope the travellers will be able to see Joe and Blodwen on the way down then we shall be able to hear how the child is getting on.

We are sorry to hear that Edith Collett has had to leave her quarters again. It must be hard for her. I am so glad Joe and Blodwen are doing what they can for her. I am afraid it is not possible to find a suitable situation for her in Cape Town.

Aunt Agnes writes that Enid (who has been helping Aunt Jessie for some years), has had a breakdown in health. Her brother has taken her and others for a motor trip along the coast. I do not know if they will come as far as here.

Am glad Vryburg had the opportunity of hearing Dr Norwood. I did not see anything about it in the paper. I wonder if he referred to the story of the picture "Had thou but known".

Some of you have referred to the new work of the YMCA. It has not yet been decided what is to be done with Carrowdore. If they could sell it, they would. They may let it perhaps. I do not think they will make any change in my position at present at any rate. Quite a number of people have been to look at the shops which are to let. I am looking forward with much interest to developing the work.

Monday morning. Mom has had a fairly good night and will spend today in bed. It is a dull morning and I expect we shall have rain again.

We are picturing Grace and company busy packing up and leaving Maritzburg tonight. I do hope they will have a comfortable journey down.

I have to stay in town for lunch today as the Board wants to allocate different rooms for our work at Long Street. It will be very nice when we are settled in.

Please excuse mistakes and bad typing as most of this week's letter has been done writing on my knees sitting alongside Mom's bed.

Much love to you all,
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
September 3rd, 1933

My dear All,

Well here we are with Grace, Ted and their four children with us safe and sound. They arrived on Thursday afternoon, the train being up to time. Blodwen and baby Roy and also Aunt Emmie were also on the same train – nine in all. They had a comfortable journey but it was very cold along the line. At Bloemfontein icicles were hanging from the carriages. The Hex River mountains were covered with snow and they report rain in many places along the line from De Aar. They experienced a nasty dust storm in Maritzburg the day they left. Mrs Price was at the station to meet Blodwen and Joyce took charge of Aunt Emmie. I was able to accommodate the rest and the luggage in the car and we were soon at Observatory. Mom was in front waiting for them. I had to hurry back to town as I had a committee meeting at five to attend. The same afternoon I was surprised and pleased to receive a wire from Reg saying “would like to leave here Tuesday or Thursday next, can you arrange accommodation?” I of course replied yes and on Saturday morning received a reply that the family was leaving on Thursday arriving on Friday afternoon. When they arrive, we shall have seven out of our thirteen grandchildren with us. Blodwen is staying with her parents. We have given Ted and Grace and children a room to themselves but I think Dot will share Mom’s room and Reg and I take one of the rooms upstairs. One thing we must arrange when they are altogether is to get a family group taken. Then I want to combine it with the one taken at Scholtzfontein and will also combine one of Ruth and Denis so as to have a complete family group. Perhaps Douglas and family might think of coming as well. It would be nice if we could all be together for once.



Back: Reg Hudson, Grace & Ted Irons, Charles Butler
Middle: Dot Hudson with Alan, Harold Irons, Emma Butler,
David Irons, Blodwen with Roy, Pamela Irons
Front: Jean Irons & Norman Hudson
September 1933

Yesterday afternoon we took all out to Belville to see Ted’s cousin. I left them there whilst I returned to Pinelands for a game of croquet. This is the first time for some weeks that I have been able to play owing to the rain. I did not finish the game as I went back to Belville to fetch the others. Friday evening we motored over to Sea Point so as to give Hal a little treat as it was his birthday. He also had a cake with six candles on it.

This morning after our morning service, we all went to town. Mom and Grace stayed in the Gardens with the children whilst Ted and I went to meeting. This afternoon Blodwen brought baby down for afternoon tea. I took her home and Mom and I went over to Rosebank to see the sick man I generally visit once a week. I also sent over to see Bevan Wookey at Valkenberg. He was in bed, having had a scrap with another patient and had come off the worse. Poor old man, I am very sorry for him. It would really be a mercy if he were taken. He has been there for over 25 years.

I am glad to say that our coughs are getting better. I hardly cough at all now and Mom’s is certainly easier. With warmer weather, I expect it will go altogether.

Mom, Ted and Grace are also writing and the two boys are interested in watching me trying to type. The children find plenty to interest them and they like running up and down the passages and stairs.

Ted, Grace and I went over to see Gladys last evening. She has not been at all well since Tom left for England. Her children have not been very grand either. Aunt Emmie has been in

this evening for a while and has gone back to town. She is staying at the YWCA for the present. She is advertising for rooms but has not had time for replies to come in yet.

Monday morning. Nothing fresh to report. It looks as though we are going to have a nice fine day and I expect everyone will be out somewhere.

Love to all
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
Sunday, September 10th 1933

My dear All,

The family is less scattered than usual and we are very pleased to have Grace, Ted, Dot and Reg with six of the grandchildren with us in the house. Then there is Blodwen and baby just round the corner with her parents. This is the first time in our experience that we have had so many of our children and grandchildren together. Needless to say they keep us lively and they all seem to be very happy together.

Reg and Dot's train was about an hour late on Friday but we met according to appointment. Ted and Grace happened to be in town at the time so they were also at the station and we all came out in my car. We had a late lunch and I had to hurry back to town to keep an appointment.

Ted has been looking at a number of second-hand cars during the week and has at last settled on an Erskine six cylinder sedan car like mine. He has purchased it and it is now standing in the yard with my tent over it. It is quite a nice car and has plenty of room for the family. We all went to Fish Hoek yesterday afternoon, Ted and family in his car and Reg and Dot and of course Mom in mine. Ted has to get used to the gears etc and they intend travelling back to Kroonstad by road. Of course they will take their time over the journey.

It is nice watching all the children playing together. We wish that it was possible for all the other members of the family to be with us, but that is out of the question at present.

We received a letter last evening from Douglas saying he would like to take a tour round via Cradock, Grahamstown, Knysna, and on to Cape Town. It is something to look forward to and we hope it may be soon.

Blodwen and baby came along yesterday and we had a group taken on the back stoep. I hope it turns out nicely. I want to have some more taken before Blodwen leaves on Thursday night. Mr Price is keeping a little better lately but gets despondent at times. I suppose it is to be expected.

As we came back from Fish Hoek, we called to see how the Alexanders are getting on as their mother is away in England. The children were thrilled with the little dogs and love birds which they breed there.

Ted came with me to Friends meeting this morning. Mrs Haarhof with whom I stayed in Johannesburg, was also at meeting.

It is difficult to write whilst all are talking but unless I do write before Monday morning.

This afternoon I went to see my native boy at the New Somerset Hospital. He has been there a month. Reg and Dot came with me. I called for Aunt Emmie on the way out and later took her and Grace and Dot over to see Gladys but she was out. Afterwards I called on a couple of sick people and to service with Grace and Ted. Reg has a nasty cold but otherwise all are well. We are arranging to have an evening when some of our old Vryburg friends can come along to see us all.

Monday morning. It will be Aunt Eliza's birthday on 18th and Joe's on 19th. I hope to write to both during the week. There is a lot of extra meetings in connection with the YMCA. I do not know when we shall move in.

Love from Dad

P.O. Box 691
Cape Town
Sunday evening, September 17th, 1933

My dear All,

Let my first words be many happy returns of the 16th to Aunt Eliza and of the 19th to Joe. I trust both may have happy days and many returns of the same. I am glad that Blodwen is home for the occasion.

Baby Roy has captivate all hearts here and I hope he will bring a full measure of joy into the home as I am sure he will.

Time is flying very rapidly and plans are being made for the return journeys of Grace and Ted and Reg and Dot. Ted has bought a second hand Erskine sedan six cylinder car for £60 and they are planning to go back by road leaving here next Monday 28th for the garden route. They are allowing a week or ten days for the journey, I hope all goes well.

Yesterday we all went in two cars to Paarl and Stellenbosch, calling for afternoon tea at Mrs Halse's. We took the same route as we did with Uncle Joe except that we did not have time to go over the mountain drive. The country is looking very beautiful, flowers in great profusion, the veldt as green as can be. We had lunch along the road before reaching Paarl and we all enjoyed the outing very much. Mrs Halse and Connie were pleased to see us. We had previously advised them that we were coming. We reached home just at six and had covered exactly 90 miles using three gallons of petrol.

We have also been to see Aunt Emmie's new home at Mowbray. She has two very nice rooms, one of which was built for a billiard room so you may imagine it is of spacious dimensions. She has a beautiful view of the mountain and will, I hope, be very comfortable. Gladys will be near also the Hallidays and ourselves. Ted is going over tomorrow to give a hand putting up curtains etc.

Ted and Reg went to meeting with me this morning. Mrs Haarhop with whom I stayed at General Meeting, was also there. There were very few present. Last week there were 20.

This afternoon Mr and Mrs Dekker and Mr and Mrs Ross Roberts came over to see us all. The Dekkers say they would not mind being back in Vryburg again.

The son of the Roberts who was involved in the motor accident some weeks ago has so far recovered that he has gone to the country for a change. They fear his face is permanently disfigured. They were interested in looking through some of the old photographs of Cradock.

Monday. Reg and Dot went to hear Rev Titcomb last evening and greatly enjoyed Ted and Grace stayed in to look after all the children whilst Mom and I went to our local Methodist service.

I am glad to say that Mom's cough is much better and she is able to get about as usual. Reg still has a nasty cough but otherwise we all seem well. The children play nicely together. They enjoy having their meals on the stoep.

We have had rain again during the night but on the whole the weather has been very nice. What we shall do next week when everybody leaves, I do not know. It will be terribly quiet but I suppose we shall get used to it.

I must stop now and get ready for breakfast. I have been up since six as I could not sleep.

We have had some snaps taken but they have not yet been developed. I hope they turn out a success.

Lots of love to all absent members of the family
From your affectionately
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
September 24th 1933

My dear All,

The last few weeks I have been able to save a few sheets of paper and stamps as it has not been necessary to post to all the family but from next week, I shall have to send to the full circle. Grace and Ted look to leave on Wednesday, or at least Ted hopes to start by car on Tuesday morning taking one of the boys with him, whilst Grace and the rest leave by train on Wednesday evening. The railway want £13 odd for carriage if the car goes by rail. I hope he gets through safely. He has had the car well overhauled since he bought it.

Reg and Dot look to leave on Monday morning October 2nd by the fast train and arrive in Vryburg the next afternoon about one. We shall miss them all very much but shall also look forward for a repetition on some future occasion. Perhaps now that we have had a joint visit from our two daughters, we may look forward to a joint visit from our two sons at Xmas.

It has been a great advantage having two cars here so that both families have been able to go about a good deal. Saturdays have been my only opportunity of joining them. We all went to Gordons Bay and Steenbrass river yesterday.

Monday morning. There was not any opportunity of writing much yesterday as Mamie Richardson, daughter of our former minister in Vryburg, came to see the girls and incidentally the children and of course us. Her brother is resident here. After service, Aunt Emmie, Mrs Halliday and Mr and Mrs Gush came in. Ted took them home in his car.

Reg has spent a good deal of time in interviewing business people but has not yet settled on anything definite for the future. Probably he will still settle down in Vryburg.

We have not heard from Joe and Blodwen since her return but Mrs Price tells us that they did arrive. We know that a young baby in the house makes a great difference so we quite excuse them. We also heard from Reg's home that Douglas and Evelyn had gone to Vereeniging by car. A business wire from Douglas reported their return to Vryburg.

During the week I lost my voice for some days. It is an old trouble with me but has not occurred for some years. I had no ordinary symptom of a cold but just simply could not articulate. I had to get a substitute to fulfil an appointment for last evening. The voice has now returned.

Ted advertised on Saturday for a companion passenger to accompany him to Kroonstad but no one has replied so far. I have suggested that as next Monday is a public holiday, we take Reg and Dot as far as Wolseley so that they can see the Bains Kloof. They would join their train there for home. We shall see later on.

I hear petrol is going to make a big jump in price this week. I want to lay in a supply if possible. An additional six pence a gallon is expected.

We are sorry to hear that Ruth has not been so well lately. Her father has been on a visit to Somerset East.

I must not start another sheet as time is few as the Native said.

Hoping you are all well and that we shall be favoured with good news from all the scattered members of the family,

Your affectionate
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
October 1st, 1933

My dear All,

Sunday evening again finds me beginning my epistle. I have just returned from taking a service at Parow Reg went with me for company. I have also called to see how Mr Price is getting on. Am glad to say he is much better. Is able to get up daily and gets about the house a little. He looks much brighter. He had just been listening in to Rev Titcombe's sermon.

On Tuesday morning Ted and David left at seven by car for Kroonstad and we were glad to get his telegram on Friday reporting his safe arrival at 9.30 that morning and having met Grace and the rest of the family at noon. I reckoned out his journey as having covered an average of about 260 miles for each of the three days and his petrol consumption at about 21 miles to the gallon. He took four cases of petrol with him and had about eight gallons in his tank. This was very good going. I guess he knows a great deal more about the car than when he started. We shall be very glad to hear details of the journey.

Reg and Dot have decided to stay another week longer as there may be some chance of his finding something suitable to do here. We hope it may be so. He has paid numerous calls on business people.

They have been about a good deal in the motor and I am glad to say the car has behaved itself well. Yesterday afternoon we went to Fish Hoek again and this time we saw Jim Florence and his bride. We all spent some time on the sands together. We took Mrs Hurndall with us as we thought she would appreciate it as she has had a good deal extra work to do during their visit. Tomorrow we hope to go to Mamre and Melkbosstrand. Reg's Uncle will join us.

Almost all the boys in the house are away for the weekend so everything is very quiet.

Tomorrow is Grace's birthday. I sent a hurried line to wish her many happy returns of the day. It would have been nice had she been able to spend it with us here but it seemed necessary to get back before the holiday on Monday as all the shops would be shut over the weekend.

Wednesday, Douglas will celebrate another birthday. We also wish him the best of all that is good for him. We shall look forward to the promised visit and hope it will materialise during the Xmas holidays.

Monday morning, 7 am. Up early so as to finish letters and take them into town so as to catch the fast mail. We are not starting before 10.30 so there will be time.

Uncle Joe has not made up his mind what to do about coming out again. I suppose he will stay in England.

This coming Saturday we are holding a lay preachers' conference at Durbanville so shall not be able to motor the family about that day but they have been invited to spend the afternoon at Hallidays. We have not had many friends in to meet them, it has not always been convenient. Aunt Emmie is not far from here and Reg and Ted have both been of some service in helping her straighten out her furniture.

Tom Webster started on his return home on Friday last. Gladys has not been at all well during his absence.

Have you made any plans for your holiday yet? We shall be able to accommodate you all as we have done the others, and on the same terms, free of charge. It will be a pleasure to do the same for you all.

Must stop now and get to breakfast and to town,

Lots of love as usual to all,

Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
October 8th, 1933

My dear All,

Let me say how glad we are to receive detailed news of the safe arrival of Grace and Ted at Kroonstad. Ted's letter giving details of his journey shows that he did not waste any time along the road. An average of 260 miles for three days is good going. I do not expect he will want to do it again at the same speed.

Reg and Dot are still with us. We all think that the opportunities of his finding some suitable employment is greater here than if he returns to Vryburg. So for the present they will stay with us. He has made many calls without anything suitable materialising. They have been about a good deal in the car and the weather has been very kind to them. We have had hardly any rain since they came down. Yesterday we were not able to go for a trip anywhere as I had arranged for the lay preachers to have a conference at Durbanville in the afternoon and had promised my car. We had a very profitable afternoon. In the evening I attended the farewell social to Rev Perry who is leaving for Durban this week. He and I have had a good deal in common and I am sure we shall miss him.

Monday morning. I was not able to write much last evening as after service, Reg's Uncle was here and Reg and Dot had gone into town to hear Rev Titcomb with Aunt Emmie. I took her home afterwards.

I have to go down to the docks early this morning to meet a young fellow from England named Braithwaite. I do not know if he is a Friend but the name is familiar. I shall soon see.

I am sorry to say that the Gush's little girl has broken her arm in playing. Both bones snapped and they have had to be reset three times. The last time, yesterday, the arm had to be cleaned so as to make sure of a correct setting.

We are having Aunt Emmie, Gladys and Joyce and Dudley out this evening. We have not had them all together before.

Norman and baby are getting on very nicely. They are both favourites with the boys though of course baby has not much to do with them.

We are not able to move into our new quarters for another two or three weeks as the place is not ready for us. It may be some time in November. I am still looking forward to the change.

I do not know if I mentioned last week that Mr Baker's mother died suddenly and was buried at Johannesburg on Friday. He is not back yet. I do not know if it will make any changes so far as the Boys' work is concerned.

I must not forget to mention that we had a very nice outing last Monday. We did 115 miles. We had morning tea at Melkbosstrand and lunch in the veldt along the road near Mamre. Unfortunately in our haste, we left an attaché case with our two thermos flasks, cups etc and a nice rug in the road as we loaded up. I have advertised for same but so far no word has come to hand. We spent an hour or so at Mamre, the missionary showing us over the place. We then went on along the Darling road and branched off to Malmesbury and so back to town. The flowers along the road were simply glorious. I am down for Malmesbury service next Sunday and Reg will go with me.

Must stop now and get breakfast and away to the docks. Thanks for all letters received. Hope you have had the much needed rains up country.

Lots of love to you all,
Dad

Box 691
Cape Town
October 14th, 1933

My dear All,

I am starting my weekly on Saturday evening as Reg and I are going to Malmesbury tomorrow afternoon for service there. I hope it will be finer than it has been today. We have had showers on and off all day. This is very disappointing to those who look forward to the weekend holiday. How thankful we should be if we knew that all our friends up country were being similarly blessed. We hear that all parts of the Union have been experiencing very severe dust storms during the past few days. We hope that none of you have suffered serious loss. Some roofs we see have been blown off and other damage done. Grace reports that the Free State is in a terrible condition. No grass for stock etc.

Still we all have much to be thankful for and I hope you count your blessings, always remembering that there are very many who are much worse off than you.

Reg and Dot are still with us. It is difficult to find any opening for Reg. There are plenty of people who are willing to take his capital but they are mostly Jewish firms and one is naturally cautious in having any dealings with them. Reg is considering the ministry again but his age and the long course of training are difficulties which require serious consideration. However, I am hoping that a way will open as it has done for many others. It is nice having them with us and shall miss them very much when they leave. Baby is getting very interesting and takes notice of ever one. Norman is very sweet and is a general favourite with the chaps in the house. Dot has borrowed Mrs Merrifield's pram so it able to take baby out more. The car has been very useful in taking them about. On Friday we went down to the docks and saw Mr and Mrs Jennings and daughter off to England in connection with the case of the native chief who was suspended and since reinstated. I wonder if Uncle Joe will see them as he was so interested in the Jennings when in Vryburg.

Sunday afternoon. Dot took Mrs Hurndall to town last evening to some entertainment so all the rest of us stayed to look after the children. They (Dot and Mrs H) enjoyed themselves. In the afternoon we took them through Langa location and had a peep at the new Methodist Church. We did about 20 miles.

This morning Reg gave the address to the boys. Now I have had the pleasure of listening to both of my sons-in-law address them. I am glad they did so well and hope they will do so again.

Reg came with me to meeting this morning. It rained whilst there. I hope it will keep fine for this afternoon's journey.

We called at Prices on the way back from meeting and was pleased to see that Mr P is able to walk round the table without the aid of a stick. He is certainly better than he has been for some months. We were shown some snaps of Joe and Blodwen's baby. They are very good. Am ordering some.

Monday morning, 6 am. We safely returned last evening having covered 89 miles. We were interested in examining the Kliphuivel wireless masts which are over 800 feet high. We stopped there for about half an hour. This evening we are asking a few friends in to celebrate our 42nd wedding anniversary. Thanks for the congratulations which have already been received from members of the family. Truly we have much to be thankful for in all these past years. Reg was interested in meeting one of his old school fellows after service last evening – a Mr Martin who was in the same class with him at Oudtshoorn. They had not met for over 20 years. We are picking up Gladys first so must close with love to all and be off.

Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
October 22nd, 1933

My dear All,

I think I was guilty last week of making a silly blunder in the matter of the date of our 42nd anniversary I have often been confused as to the actual date of our wedding day. I know it was either a day after or the day before Uncle Joe's birthday. Dot reminded me that it was the day before. I wonder if I shall remember correctly next year if we are spared to see another anniversary. Well, we duly celebrated the event by having a small wedding cake – without candles – and had some friends in to join with us. Mr and Mrs Ross Roberts, Mr and Mrs Gush, Mr and Mrs Tonneson, Aunt Emmie and Reg's Uncle Reg. Mrs Tonneson sent a beautiful bunch of flowers from her garden. Reg and Dot sang and altogether we had a very nice time together. Thanks to all of you for your letters of congratulations.

I am sorry that I forgot to mention Ruth's and Kingsley's birthdays last week. October is a crowded month for anniversaries. Please excuse the omission. I have since tried to make good. Ruth writes that she is still keeping so busy cake making etc I am afraid she is doing far too much.

Letters from Vryburg and Kroonstad refer to the serious drought conditions prevailing. I hope that before long we shall hear the sound of abundance of rain. The newspapers recently had posters out "Drought broken in North" – it was nothing of the sort.

We met Tom Webster on Monday at the docks but I did not stop to see him land. Reg took the car and helped with the luggage. He is looking well after his trip.

We had a visit from a Mr and Mrs Wyatt, Friends who are on their way as missionaries to Pemba, an island off Zanzibar. We showed them some attention and Reg and Dot motored them around Chapmans Peak and then to their ship. They seemed very pleased and grateful for the outing.

We have spent a couple of evenings out, taking the children with us and letting them sleep in the car. One evening we spent thus at Aunt Emmie's and another at Gladys. The babies were quite good on both occasions.

Saturday afternoon we had a splendid run to Durbanville and then to Kliphuivel via the Vissershok Road and back to Durbanville by another route and back to town via Milnerton. In all about 80 miles. The country is looking very lovely, grain crops are well advanced and there is every indication of a good harvest.

Mom, Dot and Reg accompanied me to meeting this morning. There was not a very large attendance. Both Ted and Reg have expressed their pleasure and benefit from attending Friends meetings. Mrs Hurndall kindly undertook to look after the babies whilst their mother was away. Wilson from Sea Point came out this afternoon and took Mom, Reg and Dot and the children to Jones. I went to the hospital to see our native boy who has been ill there for some months. He is not really getting better. From there I went to a funeral of the wife of one of our SOE members. Reg's Uncle came to supper and stayed with Dot whilst Mom and Reg went to hear Rev Titcomb and afterwards brought Aunt Emmie home. I took the service in Rev Perry's church as they are without a minister at present.

Reg and Dot I expect will be returning to Vryburg about 30th. We shall miss them very much but shall look forward to having Douglas and Evelyn and family, also Joe and Blodwen about Xmas time. I see I have filled my sheet so must stop. Some of this has been written this (Monday) morning early. I have a Board meeting this evening and so we go on.

Hope you will all write as often as you can.

Lots of love

Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
October 29th, 1933

My dear All,

Before I forget it, let me say that Reg and Dot's address for the future, or until further notice, will be Frere Street, Vryburg, C.P. instead of Box 76.

Well we have come to the time for saying goodbye to Reg and Dot for the present at any rate. Reg has tried for all sorts of positions and investments but so far without anything to his liking materialising. It is possible that something may turn up in the future but we shall have to be patient and wait and see. I think they have enjoyed the few weeks spent here. We could wish that we could have made both Grace and Ted as well as Reg and Dot more comfortable but not being in our own home, it could not be helped. I think they have enjoyed it as far is possible. They left by the 11.40 train in the morning and are due at Vryburg at Dinner time on Tuesday. Quick travelling.

We shall now await news as to Douglas and family as to the possibility of their coming at Xmas time. We have not heard from Joe or Blodwen during the week but we understand they are coming. If Douglas comes by car, it will cost less than rail fares. We shall be as pleased to do for all of you as we have done for the others.

The week in front of us will be a pretty busy one as I have to take stock at Carrowdore prior to Mr Mallett, the manager, taking over the place on lease on his own account. This will involve making an inventory on 50 bedrooms besides all the household goods etc. At least a couple of days work. I shall go over there directly after seeing Reg and Dot off. We are gradually getting the new premises in order but the workmen are few and so many of the jobs being done are small but take a lot of time. However each day is getting us nearer to moving. My hopes of getting in by October are of course knocked on the head and it will not be before about the middle of later part of November before we shall be able to move. What the changes will be, I cannot at this stage say but I am expecting and even suggesting some. I see Mom has mentioned something of our suggested plans so I may as well briefly state what has transpired. I realise that it will be essential to have some responsible person at Long Street day and night. The secretary is the proper person for the position. There will be all sorts of meetings to organise and attend to. The secretary is the one to do it. It will be exceedingly awkward if I am at Observatory and have to be in town most evenings as well as day time. There are some very nice rooms at Long Street which we could occupy. A nice roof where we can have a garden etc. Perhaps Reg and Dot could take my place here (½.-.£.) and Reg act as assistant secretary part of his time in town. Mom would then be able to come and stay with Dot whenever she wanted to.

Monday morning. I see in the Cape Times this morning an advertisement for a Librarian for Grahamstown Library, salary £200, I hope Ruth will be able to get the position. No doubt there will be crowds of applications for it.

I suppose when Reg and Dot have gone, we shall get back to our regular habits. It has been very nice having them here for so long. It does not seem nearly two months. I hope the change will have done them good.

Much love to each and all,
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
November 5th, 1933

My dear All,

We are both alone today. On Monday we said goodbye to Reg and Dot at the station. We miss them both very much and also dear little Norman who was the life and soul of the place. He was always running along the passage and with his merry little laugh, kept everyone happy. All the residents were very fond of him. After he had finished his meal in the kitchen, he would come to the dining room door and call for his Mother and wait until he was told to come in. He was very friendly with everyone. Old John, the waiter, was good to him, often talks about him. In the evenings, they were put to bed in our room until Reg and Dot were ready to retire. Then baby was carried in his basket to the outside room and Norman wrapped in a rug and carried there as well. One of the boys in the room adjoining theirs has a gramophone and wireless set but the music did not seem to disturb the children or parents. We are glad to hear that they arrived safely and found all well. The only exception was that Reg's mother was in hospital for a time but we hope she will soon be alright again.

We have had a very nice two months with Grace, Ted and family as well as Reg and Dot and it has been nice to have been able to have them all in the same house with us. I do not know if ever we shall be able to repeat the event.

Douglas writes that he fears it will not be possible for them to come this Xmas. The drought is so severe and with extra work and responsibility owing to his foreman's accident to his leg, it may alter his plans. However we shall not give up hope of a way opening. We have not heard from Joe for some time but suppose he and Blodwen are still coming for Xmas.

We have been having very strong winds during the week and we hope to hear of showers of blessing having fallen up country. On Thursday we had some sharp showers. Rain I notice has fallen in Bloemfontein but the position is still serious elsewhere.

Mr and Mrs Dodd have left for Cradock district where they will stay with their daughter Nessie for some months. He called to say goodbye on Friday.

Yesterday (Saturday) we took Mr and Mrs Gush and Rev Stephenson to Kirstenbosch and Claremont park. They enjoyed it very much. The flowers are looking beautiful. The tobacco flowers I had never seen before.

This morning we went to meeting and took the Hallidays after. Called on Aunt Emmie as she was not at meeting. This afternoon we both went to see patients at the New Somerset Hospital. Our native boy is still a patient and the mother of one of the former residents is there also.

There are no developments in our plans at present except that it is pretty certain that one floor of the Long Street building will be devoted to the bedrooms. The electric lights are to be overhauled during this week so we are gradually getting nearer to moving in which I think will be towards the end of this month. My typist should have her holiday at the end of November but will probably put it off until the beginning of the year.

We are not getting at all good results from our wireless at present. I do not know what is the matter with it but it has been disappointing for some weeks. I must get it overhauled.

We called on the Prices this afternoon and was pleased to see that Mr P is still making progress and is able to walk about the room without the aid of his waling stick. They are looking forward to the return of their daughter, Mrs Merrifield. She went back with Blodwen.

No news from Uncle Joe as to his movements.

Much love to you all

Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
November 12th, 1933

My dear All,

Thanks for all letters received during the past week. Ruth writes that Miss Chalker has offered seats for her and Denis by motor early in January and asking if we can fix them up for some time. We shall be pleased to have them but at present we are not certain as to what plans may be made for us by then. Work of getting back to Long Street is progressing slowly but in any case, we shall fix up somehow. Of course it may so be that we are to stay here at Observatory. Joe and Blodwen are looking to arrive on December 17th and will stay for two weeks. I hope that they will be here whilst Ruth is with us. I am also hoping that Douglas and family will be able to come. Then we shall have had the pleasure of entertaining all the children and grandchildren during the year. It may be the last that we shall have under present conditions. I wonder if Douglas followed up the matter of the car which Ted wrote about when he was here. Twenty eight cars came by one train from up country last week belonging to visitors. Perhaps they could curtail the school session by a week and so come earlier and stay and be with Ruth as well. It will be so nice if you can all be together.

I hope none of you are over anxious regarding our position here in Cape Town. I do not think that we shall be retrenched when the YM goes back to its old quarters. I can still see visions of useful service and trust that health and strength may be given me to carry same into effect. I thank Ted for his very kind letter offering us a home if such be needed and I feel sure that everyone of the family would be willing to do the same if necessity arose. Naturally we shall want to retain our independence as long as possible and hope to be of some service to you all and the community for a long while yet. It would be disquieting if we felt that we were not welcome. We should not like to be a burden to anyone. So long as we can be a comfort and help to any, we shall be glad to. I am quite content to live a day at a time and leave the future in God's hands to do with and for us as he seems best.

I went to consult another oculist this week and he wanted to know my age. I told him to guess. He did: 55, he said and was surprised when I told him I was in my 70th year. After testing etc he confirmed the opinions expressed by two other opticians that it is a case of old age creeping on and that whilst an operation might be of assistance, it might not and I might be worse off than I am at present. It therefore seems that I must be content to make the best of what I have. I am very thankful that I can see as well as I do and with the aid of the reading glass Uncle Joe gave me, I can manage very well except for small print. It cost two guineas for this information.

Tom and Gladys have decided to take a furnished house at Fish Hoek for a few months from December 1st.

The lady Mom and I went to see at the hospital last Sunday died on Thursday. Her son used to stay here with us. We both went to the old ladies home this afternoon. Miss Thornton, who nursed Grace when she had measles, was sorry not to have seen her. Yesterday afternoon we took Rev and Mrs Ward for a spin. He enquired after Reg and what he had decided to do. I have given up croquet as Mom does not care to play so we take some of our friends out instead. Must stop and get to bed.

Love to all
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
November 19th, 1933

My dear All,

I do not feel in a writing mood at all today. Yet I must say that I am glad to hear that some rain has fallen at each of the homes you represent. I trust more will fall soon and so relieve the anxiety you must all be feeling. The dust storms described by Grace and Ted and Joe as well as Dot shows that the weather all over the country has been abnormal. I know by past experience what these dust storms are like and can sympathise with you all. An old native saying is to the effect that God sweeps the floor before laying down his new green carpet. May the green carpet soon appear.

This day four weeks, Joe and Blodwen will be with us, I hope. Ruth and Denis are due to arrive by car early in January so I hope they will plan to see each other here. Douglas was planning to visit Grahamstown – presumably to see Ruth and Denis – so I hope that it will be possible for them to meet here instead.

Our plans are all undecided at present. My Board meets tomorrow evening when I hope something definite will be agreed to. The position is made more difficult by the fact the Mom does not like the idea of residing in town. Personally I feel that it is my duty as Secretary to be where the most important part of the work will be, and that is at Headquarters. One result may be the sending in of my resignation. We must wait and see.

I do not think there has been much to record during the past week. We, Mom and I, went to the Princess Alice home of recovery yesterday afternoon and attended the fete. That did not interest me very much but seeing over the Institution was very interesting. All the little children seemed very happy. Most of them are TB cases. On our way back, we called to see how the Alexanders were getting on. We called there with Joe one day. Mrs A is still in England and is expected back on Xmas day. They still go in for breeding parakeets.

On Monday I met Mr and Mrs Farren at the docks and brought them up to town. We all met at Aunt Emmie's the same evening and had an interesting talk over Friends matters. They left on Wednesday afternoon for Pretoria.

The Hallidays are looking to go to England next March for a year or so. We shall miss them very much. Mrs H always enquires after all the family they have met.

Gladys and Tom Webster have settled to go to Fish Hoek from December 1st. If they like it, they may stay there for a year. It won't be very convenient for Tom in the winter mornings if he has to be at work very early.

Monday morning. Aunt Emmie came over just after we had supper last evening and went with us to the Wesleyan church here (Observatory). I took her home after. A Rhodesian minister took the service and gave a very helpful address.

Reg and Dot have gone to the farm for the present. Their address will be Private bag, Madrid, Vryburg. I hope they will like it.

I shall be busy with the usual posting of Xmas cards soon I suppose. Last year we sent out about 300. I hope none of you will think of sending Xmas presents this year. Times are such that you must save where you can. Of course the young children must be remembered but children of older growth can take the will for the deed.

We are always interested in all the details of your home life and hope you will always try to keep up the weekly home letter.

Much love to each and all,
Yours as ever
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
November 26th, 1933

My dear All,

In a few minutes I must be off to take a service in Mr Perry's church as they are still without a regular minister. I hope to go on again when I return.

The best news of the week has been that rain has fallen at Bloemfontein and Kroonstad and some, but not enough, at Vryburg. We hope that the persistent south-easter we have experienced for several days have brought more rain where needed. Last week I telegraphed to General Hertzog, as Prime Minister, asking him on behalf of the Church Council, to appoint a national day of thanksgiving for the rains which have so far fallen. I see that in Cradock such a service has already been held.

Letters have told of Reg and Dot moving out to the farm for the time being whilst Mr and Mrs Hudson, Trixie, and George are away at the coast. I hope the change will do them all good.

Yesterday afternoon we took Mrs Moir and four of her six children for a spin to the Strand. The weather was very blowy but we found a very nice sheltered spot in the park. We had never been in it before. There is plenty of shade amongst the big trees. They all seemed to enjoy the outing. Mr Moir has returned from his trip round the Union and has put on about twenty pounds in weight. As we passed through Belville, I called to see why our native boy's wife has not called the day before for her husband's money. He has been in hospital for the past four months. I found that she was taken ill the day before and removed to Rondebosch hospital for an operation. So after meeting this morning, I called at the hospital after taking Aunt Emmie home and was surprised to find that she had died after the operation from a rupture the day before. So this afternoon I have had the unpleasant duty of going to the New Somerset hospital and telling Jack the sad news. I am surprised that he has lasted as long as he had but expect this shock will hasten his end. He has worked for the YMCA for about eleven years.

I wrote to some of you on Tuesday, after the Board meeting the previous evening, which by the way was not over till past eleven, saying that the Board does not expect us to reside at Long Street. They think that the stairs would be too much for us and of course they will eventually expect to have a younger man, unmarried, who would be expected to sleep on the premises. So that settles that point for us. It also settles that there will be plenty of room for Douglas and family if they see their way to come down for Xmas. We are still hoping that this may be possible but quite understand the position. That he needs a change no one doubts and I hope he will be able to take it. If he cannot do so, perhaps Arthur could come and be with Denis. However we shall hear all in good time. You are all welcome at any time.

On Tuesday morning, Mr Baker tendered his resignation as Boys' work Secretary, so there will be further changes there. My typist also wants her holiday at the end of December as she has been asked to be a bridesmaid. It looks as though we are going to have a pretty busy time when the actual moving takes place about the end of December. We won't get over the difficulties before we come to them.

I am glad to say we are both keeping well and are always on the look out for news from all of you,

Much love as usual from
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
December 3rd, 1933

My dear All,

I am late in beginning my epistle this week. Today has been very full as we had a telegram from Uncle Owen yesterday saying that one of Mom's cousins – Harry Collett – of Rietvlei was very ill and was coming to Cape Town, accompanied by his son and daughter, for whom accommodation was desired. Of course I met them and had arranged for the daughter to stay at the YWCA and the son nearby. I took them all up to the nursing home and then went out to see how Jack was getting on at the New Somerset hospital. He was better than last Sunday. I picked up the son and daughter on the way back and brought them out to supper here at Observatory. They went to service with Mom here whilst I went to Salt River for service there and picked them up afterwards and we all went into town to the nursing home to see how the patient was. Am glad to say he was comfortable and will be examined tomorrow. We have just returned 9.30.

I know you will all be very sorry to hear that Uncle Joe had a fainting experience a few weeks ago. Last mail brought news that he had attended a meeting in Kingston and was sitting in the front row so as to be able to hear well and he came over giddy. When he came to, he found himself laid out on a table in an adjoining room and attended by a doctor. They had loosened his collar etc and he was sent home in a motor. He has seen a doctor since who says there is no need for him to stay in bed or the house so we hope he is alright again. However I cabled on Monday to enquire and the next morning I received a reply that there had been no recurrence of the fainting. I suppose it is only natural to expect his system to show signs of increasing infirmity. He was 81 last October. I have suggested to Aunt Emmie that she should go over and bring him out here but I do not know what may happen.

I should also say that Uncle Joe acknowledged the receipt of several letters from many of the family. You must not expect him to write to all of you as he is a slow writer and has a very large circle of correspondents.

We have not heard if Ruth will allow Denis to come down by train with Mr Gush who is in Grahamstown at present. We are also hoping that Douglas will let Arthur come if they cannot all come this Xmas. Two weeks today we shall be meeting Joe and Blodwen.

With regard to the moving to Long Street, we expect to move from our present offices some time about the 16th. Mr Baker, who tendered his resignation as Boys work secretary, has withdrawn same. The workmen are getting on very slowly with the building.

Monday morning. We experienced a very hot day yesterday. The wind dropped but it has been howling again during the night. We are anxious to hear of good rains falling in the Vryburg area. Reg and Dot are acting as farmers at present on Mr Hudson's home. Both Mr and Mrs Hudson have gone to Port Alfred for a change.

On Saturday we went to Fish Hoek and took the Gushes with us. I had my first bathe and enjoyed it. We had tea with Gladys and Tom and brought Aunt Emmie back with us as she wanted to see the Argus model homes. We saw them on Friday. It was quite a good exhibition.

There were only seven at meeting yesterday morning but it was a nice gathering.

Three weeks today will be Xmas day. It does not seem like it at all. We have not done anything in the way of presents. I think the holidays to the Cape must suffice for this year except for the children.

On Saturday evening we went to the SOE Xmas social. We sat with Mr and Mrs Ambler. It was quite a nice affair.

No time for more now so will close with love to all

Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
Sunday, December 10th, 1933

My dear All,

You will be interested in hearing that Mom's cousin, Harry Collett, has had the operation that was necessary. It proved to be cancer and the doctors found there were two instead of one. The operation was performed yesterday morning. I was at the nursing home with his daughter for three hours waiting for the result. So far he is progressing satisfactorily, I hope this will continue. I hope to see him after service this evening.

You will also be interested in knowing that we have started moving to Long Street and hope to be settled in by the end of this week. The official opening will not be until some time in January. I have suggested the 11th as being a suitable day but do not know if same will materialise. We must wait and see. I think I told you last week that Mr Baker had withdrawn his resignation as Secretary to the Boys' department. My typist wants to have her holiday on December 23rd as she has been asked to be a bridesmaid for a friend of hers in the Free State. It will be very awkward but cannot be helped.

On Tuesday last, four years' ownership of the car was completed. I have covered 6373 miles in the year, an average of 531 per month. The total mileage is 28798. The following evening as I was coming home from town with Mom and some of the Gushes, the back axle broke as I was crossing into Adderley Street. I had to be towed home whilst the others went by train. There was not any accident.

On Friday afternoon, Mr Upton popped into the office. I was not surprised to see him although he had not advised me that he was coming. He has gone to Port Elizabeth and will come to see us on his way back in a few months time.

Aunt Emmie is with us this afternoon as she returned from Fish Hoek where she has been staying with Gladys during the week. They all seem to be having a nice time there.

Yesterday afternoon we went to a bazaar in aid of the local Wesleyan Sunday school. They raised about £100 by the effort.

By this time next week, we hope Joe and Blodwen will be with us. I hope they will stay longer than they at first suggested. We hear that Ruth may perhaps not be coming as she has applied for the position of Assistant Librarian at Grahamstown. If she is successful, she will have to make a start with her new job at once. She has often acted as assistant. We expect to hear in a few days time. We have not heard any news from Scholtzfontein as to their plans for the holidays.

I have been busy in the mornings lately addressing envelopes for my usual batch of Xmas cards. I like to remember my friends in this way as I cannot write to them frequently.

Monday 12th, 6am. Mom, Aunt Emmie and Cousin Harry's daughter Mary all went to the Metropolitan Church and I picked them up after my service at Kloof Street. I saw Harry Collett for a few minutes in the nursing home. He was looking very comfortable but was not feeling too nice as could only expected. I do not think he knows that two cancers have been removed. He is about two years younger than me.

One of the mothers of a lad who formerly resided here called when I got back and detained me for a long while going into his case. There is trouble in the home and I am trying to make peace between them.

Lots of love from
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
Sunday December 17th, 1933

My dear All,

I have just returned from the station having met Joe and Blodwen from Bloemfontein. They are up at Prices and no doubt will be down to see us before long. They have had a comfortable journey and baby is looking fat and well. No doubt there will be a good deal to talk about just now and as I have to go to Parow for service at seven, I had better get on whilst I can.

Two important pieces of news have to be recorded this week. The first is that Ruth has secured the appointment as assistant librarian at the Grahamstown public library at a salary of £120 per annum. I have wired to her suggesting that perhaps she can come here before she commences her new duties but have not had a reply at present. I am glad that it will not be necessary for her to continue her cake making business, which must have been very exacting. We all admire the splendid way in which Ruth has stuck to work in order to keep things going. She has indeed been a brave woman.

The other piece of news is that the YMCA has at last moved to its old "new" quarters in Long Street. Yesterday, being a public holiday, I took advantage of shifting over. It was some job but we did it, safe and all. Of course it will take some time before we are straight and get down to developing the work but the main thing is that we are there. It is unfortunate that my typist is going on holiday next Saturday and will be away for three weeks. She has worked hard and deserves a good change. Mr Baker will also be away for about three weeks as he is taking a party of boys by motor to Johannesburg, camping out along the road.

It was a very tiring day and I was very tired by the time I got home about seven. However, I had a good night and shall be equal I hope for a hard day tomorrow. I have to commence the day by going to meet the mail boat but shall not stop long as there is plenty to do to get the office straight. I signed about 250 letters of an appeal after I get home last evening. I will enclose one in each of your letters. Perhaps some of you may be inclined to make a contribution. I have to try to raise only £21 000 before the end of March. Some job in addition to all the other work but I hope to get through with it successfully.

Later, Mom and I met Joe and company and they have had a comfortable trip. Joe says he must return on New Years day as they are very busy at the works. He is working full time now including Saturdays. Both of them have colds. Roy has grown and weighs about 16 pounds. Joe is going down to the docks with me tomorrow early as I have to meet some people from England and will see the Italian submarines which have been here for a week or more.

Monday morning, 6am. The excessive wind which we have experienced during the past few weeks has dropped during the night. We may expect excessive heat to follow this. This day next week will be Xmas day. We have not made any definite plans for celebrating it but shall probably go to service in the morning and perhaps to Fish Hoek in the afternoon. Blodwen's brother arrived by motor on Saturday afternoon from Uitenhage so there will be two cars at the disposal of the two families.

Invitations to attend Una Florence's wedding on the 30th at Fish Hoek have been received. It is just about a year ago that Uncle Joe arrived back Cape Town from up country.

Lots of love from
Dad

P O box 691
Cape Town
Xmas Eve, December 24th, 1933

My dear All,

It is impossible to say how many more Christmas Eves we shall be permitted to see. Let us prize each as it comes with thankfulness, realising that it may be the last. By the time you receive this, Xmas day will be past. I hope you all will have had a happy day and that in due course we shall hear how you have each spent it. Before I came to South Africa, my dear Mother would always get all of us to write to Uncle James, who was out here some years before me. It has always been my hope to have all the family together on Christmas Day but now that each of you have homes of your own, it is almost impossible to arrange such a gathering. It is nice, however, having Joe and Blodwen with us, and baby Roy. We thought that perhaps Ruth and Denis might also come but she writes to say that they are spending a fortnight at the Kowie instead. Everyone is congratulating her on having secured the appointment of assistant librarian at Grahamstown. The salary is not quite as much as at first thought, but still sufficient for her to give up the cooking business she has been so successfully conducting for so long.

We are in for a quiet time so far as I can see. We shall probably go to service at ten here in Observatory and then into town to see Cousin Harry Collett who is getting on quite nicely at the nursing home. We shall bring his daughter out to spend the day with us and in the afternoon, if Xmas dinner is not too much for us, all go to Fish Hoek and have a swim and see Aunt Emmie, Gladys etc. Joe and Blodwen are coming to stay with us from tomorrow and will of course go with us. Aunt Emmie intends coming back with us from Fish Hoek. If the south easter continues as it has been blowing for the past week or so, I don't think we shall go there.

Yesterday afternoon, we took Joe, Blodwen and Jock Ross to Steenbras River. We called on Mrs Anderson of Vryburg who is staying at the Strand. It was too blowy and the time too short to bathe but we hope to be more fortunate tomorrow. Joe and Blodwen look to return on January 1st or 2nd. I wish they could stay longer. They have not seen nearly all the people that they want to see.

This afternoon we took Aunt Emmie to the cemetery to see the kerbing she has had placed round Uncle Bert's grave. It looks nice, we also called at Valenberg. I saw Mr Wookey as usual whilst Joe went in to see a young fellow who used to stay at LBH. Mr Wookey had been scrapping with another patient, a blind man, who had bit him on his right hand and the place would not heal.

I must not forget to tell you that Uncle Willie has sent me a copy of the family tree of the Collett family, or at least some parents and grandparents side of it. It is a work of art and very interesting. I must try to get a lot of orders for it.

We are settling down by degrees at the new premises in Long Street but it is very awkward just now as my typist left on three weeks holiday yesterday and Mr Baker of the boys department leaves tomorrow by motor to Johannesburg. He has left others to carry on his work. It is ten pm so I must stop and get to bed. Will post as usual in the morning but doubt if any of you will get the letters on Tuesday. I trust the new year will bring much happiness and blessing to you all,

Much love to you all from
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
Sunday, December 31st, 1933

My dear All,

I do not suppose I shall commence another letter this year as it is now past five o'clock and after supper. We are going into town to see Joe and Blodwen off to their home in Bloemfontein. The fortnight that they have been with us has passed all too quickly and we wonder when we shall see them again. They talk of letting their leave accumulate and taking a longer holiday the year after next and go somewhere else to see more of the country. It has been very nice having them here. They came to stay with us on Xmas Day and have occupied the outside room ever since. The two homes being so close together, they have been able to see a good deal of each. It is nice that Mr Price has been so much better of late that he has been able to enjoy their company. He is very fond of Roy who is getting more and more interesting every day. He is putting on weight and is a good advertisement for Nutrine.

I do not know if I can recall correctly our doings on Xmas Day. I went into town to post the circle letters early so that if possible, you might get them as usual on Tuesday afternoon, but I expect the postal system was not working in its usual groove. I shall do the same tomorrow. Mom and I went to service at ten at the Wesleyan church and afterwards went into town to see Harry Collett at the nursing home and to bring his daughter Mary out with us to spend the rest of the day. Mr Collett is making wonderful progress and probably will be able to leave the nursing home tomorrow. We shall know this evening if I am to fetch him and take him to Sea Point where he hopes to spend a week or two before returning to the farm.

We had a very nice Xmas dinner. Only eight residents were at home. Joe, Blodwen and Mary were with us. Last year Uncle Joe was with us. The dining room was suitably decorated and what with Xmas crackers, ginger beer, etc. etc. everyone had a good time.

In the afternoon we motored down to Fish Hoek to see Aunt Emmie and Gladys and Tom Webster. We enjoyed a swim in the sea and had afternoon tea with them. We called on the Florences and listened in to the King's speech to "my people everywhere". It came over wonderfully clearly, not the slightest sign of atmospheric. It was a wonderful event. We heard distinctly a man speaking from the bottom of a mine, a lighthouse keeper from somewhere, besides messages from Bermuda, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India and of course South Africa.

Mary Collett stayed the night with us and on Tuesday we went to the Zoo and Kirstenbosch, also motored up to Rhodes memorial and all around the University grounds and also through Groot Schuur grounds. Mary was very pleased with what she saw. Joe and Blodwen had not been to some of the places before either. Mary spent the second night here also. She has been helping me a little at the office as my typist is away. It has been a very busy week for me. Mr Baker was to have left early on Tuesday morning by car with ten of his boys for Johannesburg. I went in to see the start, but the lorry was not ready before nine. I did not stop longer and they did not actually get a move on until after eleven. Even then it was not satisfactory as something was wrong with the works and by the time they got as far as Belville, they were hung up again owing to a wire having fused. They expected to get to Johannesburg by Friday but I got a wire from them at Naauwpoort saying they had been delayed by rain but they were all happy. I wonder if they have arrived at Johannesburg yet.

Yesterday we all went to Una Florence's wedding. It was timed for 2.30 at Kalk Bay and I did not leave town until after one pm so it was a rush to get lunch and change. When we were half way there, I discovered that I had not brought a handkerchief with me so I called at Ross Robert's house and borrowed one from him. Joe drove the car and at well over the speed limit and we reached the church a few minutes before the bride arrived. Joe got a snap of her and Mr Florence as they entered the church and also some after the ceremony. I will send copies round to those interested. I suppose there was about thirty at the reception at their house. I had been asked to propose the health of the parents on the bride and bridegroom and took advantage of

referring to the friendship which had existed between the two families for so many years. The proceedings were somewhat lengthy but very sociable. We did not stay to see the departure of the happy couple – or at least Joe and I didn't – as we went for a bathe in the sea. Blodwen left baby with her people and found him quite alright on her return. I am sorry that Grace and Dot's telegrams of congratulations did not arrive in time to be read at the reception but they got them just as they were leaving by car for the Wilderness.

Uncle Willie has finished the family tree of the Collett family. It is a work of art and most beautifully done. As soon as I can get the time, I want to send a circular letter to the various families suggesting that they order copies at 10/- each.

Mom has contracted a stiff neck today. She thinks that she cricked it yesterday at the wedding so she did not go to meeting this morning. I went and as it was raining just before starting, I called for Aunt Emmie and took her along. We had a large gathering. Mr and Mrs Lidbetter were there. They are staying at the West's. Mr Bone and children were also present for the first time since Uncle Joe was here. We are all invited to the West's for Thursday evening when we shall hold monthly meeting.

We are planning to have a picnic on Tuesday at Sunny Cove – just beyond Fish Hoek. Aunt Emmie and the Gushes will join us and most likely Gladys and children.

It has been very nice to hear from you how you have spent Xmas and we shall think of you all tomorrow.

I must close now but before doing so, must wish you one and all every blessing in the New Year. No one can foretell what is before us in the New Year but come what may, it will be for our good. May we all be very thankful for all the mercies which have been given to us during the past year, which has probably been the most trying for many of us. Yet God has been very gracious to us all. For these and all mercies, let us be thankful.

Much love as always from your loving

Dad