

P O Box 691
Cape Town
January 7th, 1934

My Dear All,

We were singing in our little meeting this morning with the boys "Another year is dawning" and no doubt we are all wondering what it has in store for us. Let us be patient and be prepared for any eventuality that may come along. May we all realise that a wise and kind Father knows what is best for his children.

The week has been a very busy one with so many engagements. The first two days of the year were holidays. Monday we took Cousin Harry and Mary Collett for a spin. He was able to come out of the nursing home and I took him to Three Anchor Bay where they have been staying next door to Xarrowdore. We stayed to lunch with them and later in the afternoon took a man and his wife who have recently come from England for a ride. He wrote to me from overseas to try and find accommodation for them and this was in return for attention shown to them. We stayed and had dinner with them. They are not Friends but know several in Gloucester. He is a YMCA man.

On Tuesday we arranged to go to Fish Hoek. We took Aunt Emmie and Mrs Gush and a little girl, who broke her arm some time ago, with us. Mr Gush and his two other children went by train. We camped out on the beach and having the car tent with us, fixed up a very comfortable awning against the fence where we were quite comfortable. Of course we took plenty of provisions with us and fared quite well. Some of the party, including myself, were in the water three times. It was a perfect day, without excessive wind or heat. The water was warm and everyone in good spirits. We got home after seven having had a perfect day. Of course I have suffered a little (only a little) inconvenience from sunburn but that has passed over by now. Gladys and Tom and the children joined us but would not share in our "eats". Fish Hoek is a very uncomfortable place when the south-easter is blowing at all strongly. We saw the Florences whilst there. I have had the snaps of Una's wedding printed and am sending one set to Joe and Blodwen (he took the snaps) and am enclosing another set for Grace to pass round. One set and the negatives have gone to the Florences.

On Thursday we all went up to Mr & Mrs West's for Monthly meeting. Mr & Mrs Lidbetter are staying there for the holidays. We had not been to their new home which is the last house towards the mountain. A very fine view of the bay is obtained from the stoep. It is a climb to get there. Recently they were terrified by a mountain fire which raged on three sides of them. Fortunately no damage was done to their property.

On Thursday morning, I met Arthur Collen (Douglas' foreman) at 6.30 and brought him out here. He has since seen the specialist about his damaged knee and I have taken him to a boarding house near the hospital as he has to have the knee massaged twice daily for a week. We shall of course see him again before he returns to Vryburg.

Yesterday Cousin Harry and Mary came over to lunch and we motored them to Claremont Gardens and a few other places of interest and took them back to Three Anchor Bay and stayed to dinner with them. Whilst at dinner, Aunt Emmie phoned to enquire if we were there as she had been to Botha House and found us out. We went along to see her on our way back. There was nothing wrong. Of course she feels very lonely, especially now that Gladys and the children are away at Fish Hoek. She could not find the keys of her room when she came home the evening before. She always hides them in a plant near her room but this time they had fallen and caught fast in a bush. It was late and not having any matches, was quite concerned what to do. She asked one of the gentlemen lodgers in an adjoining room to assist in looking for the keys and it was after eleven o'clock before she found them. Of course she could not sleep for some time after that.

Mom and I went to meeting this morning. There was not such a large attendance as last week. The meeting house is being repainted but it will always be a noisy place for a meeting for worship, I have always thought that it was a pity it was ever bought.

Cousin Harry and Mary are returning to their home near Middelburg next Friday afternoon. They will come and spend Thursday evening with us and sleep here and we shall see them off on Friday. He has made a wonderful recovery and I hope it will be lasting.

We have received letters from most of the family during the week. Nothing has come from Joe or Blodwen since their return. There have been very heavy storms in the Free State and we hope they have not been washed away.

We are very sorry to hear that dear little Jean met with such an accident at Kroonstad. I guess Grace and Ted will see that the reservoir is securely protected so that the children cannot fall in again. It might have been very much more serious.

The children's letters from Vryburg all speak of having had a good time at Xmas. Arthur Collen was able to tell us about the New Year doings. What a wonderful change has come over the country since the rains have fallen. Many parts of the country have had too much rain. It is a country of extremes – a feast or a famine.

We have not heard when Reg's people are returning. I hope they are in better health. Perhaps when Collen gets back, Douglas and family may be able to come down. We shall not be satisfied until we have had all the family with us.

We hope Ruth is enjoying her new occupation and will not find the hours too great a tax on her.

I have had a very strenuous week at the office owing to the issuing of hundreds of circular letters regarding the formation of the Company. My typist is due back next Monday (15th). The Governor General has accepted my invitation to open the Long Street premises and I expect this will take place about the 25th but am not sure. We are not ready for him yet. Mom has helped in folding the circulars etc. I hope the response will be satisfactory.

We have received a very large number of greeting cards this season, more than ever before. Thanks to all of you for your kindly wishes for the New Year. I hope it will be much peace and contentment to all concerned.

I must close now with very much love to all as though named.

Yours affectionately

Dad

P.O. Box 691
Cape Town
January 14th, 1934

My Dear All,

It is difficult to write this evening as we have Harry Collett and his daughter with us. But I must do the best I can and finish off in the morning. It has been a strenuous week, as all have been for some time past.

Let me thank all of you for your very kind messages of love and good wishes for my seventieth anniversary. I think I had letters from all my children and many of the grandchildren, besides letters from Aunt Eliza, Uncle Joe and many personal congratulations. Some members of my Board telephoned their good wishes. No one seemed to think that I am more than 60 instead of seventy. I am very thankful for the health and strength which I enjoy. I had for some time looked forward to having some of our friends in for the evening but as Mom did not feel equal to anything of the sort, we did nothing in the way of entertaining. We did not have a special cake of seventy candles but just a quiet evening alone. Aunt Emmie phoned her good wishes and as the day was the first anniversary of Uncle Bert's death, she and Gladys and Joyce went to the cemetery and placed flowers on his grave.

Monday 6th am. I notice that in most of your letters, reference is made to the desire on your part that I should undertake less work in the future. I do not see how this is to be done. The indications and the desire on my own and the Board's part is to do more. The opportunity is greater than ever and the need is pressing. I am very thankful that I have the desire to work and so long as I have physical powers sufficient to carry on, I hope to be of service to mankind. I like the new office very much. It is large and well ventilated. I do not get much direct sunshine and consequently is cool. In the winter it may be rather cold but we shall see. I hope the official opening will take place by the Governor General before the end of this month. There is still a good deal of detail to be done before that. I am glad to say that my typist is due back this morning so shall be able to get a move on better than has been possible during the three weeks of her absence. I have not been out of the building from nine to six during her absence.

On Saturday I brought Harry Collett and his daughter to stay with us until their return to Middelburg this afternoon. We took them for a run round Belville and Durbanville in the afternoon which they enjoyed in spite of a gale blowing all the way. Harry has made a wonderful recovery so far and is looking forward with much joy to getting back to his farm tomorrow evening. He attended our service in the house yesterday morning whilst Mom and Mary went to the Methodist Church here both morning and evening. I went to meeting, picking up Aunt Emmie and Mrs Garnett and a Miss Wilmott who has been staying with them from England. We had about twenty at meeting. In the afternoon we called on the Ross Roberts who are old friends of Ted's. Their youngest daughter was at school with Mary. We also called on Miss Cook, a cousin of Harry and also saw Rev and Mrs Hepburn at the same place. The Hepburns are also old friends of the family, having been stationed at Colesberg and many other circuits. Mom knew Mr Hepburn in her young days – before I came on the scene. I took the service in the evening at the Congregational church here so Mom, Harry and Mary went to the Methodist. It has been very nice having them here as we have been able to talk over old times. I see I have got to the end of the paper so must stop.

Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
Saturday evening, 20th January 1934

My Dear All,

As I shall be at Malmsbury tomorrow evening and do not expect to be back before 11 pm, I must try to write this evening instead. It has been a very strenuous week but I am glad to say that things are working towards a satisfactory official opening on Wednesday. We are posting 300 invitations on Monday and there is a good deal to arrange yet. However, I hope the function will go off to everyone's satisfaction. I shall be very glad when it is over and we can settle down to solid work. My typist returned on Monday morning. She says that out of the three weeks holiday, rain fell each day except two. She says she has put on about twelve pounds in weight.

Mr Harry Collett and his daughter left us on Monday afternoon but we have not heard of their arrival yet. This afternoon we have taken Mr Mennell and Arthur Collen to Fish Hoek. Mennell and I had a swim. The south-easter was rather disagreeable but the water was warm. We saw Gladys and family but did not call at the Florences. We have not heard from the latter since the wedding. I sent them all the negatives Joe took.

Arthur Collen says he is getting on slowly. He can bend his knee a little but it seems very slow work. Mom and I went up to see him one evening. He is very bright. I expect he will be coming to stay here again in a few days.

We are surprised to hear that Douglas and Evelyn are contemplating sending Arthur, Lynne and Rex to boarding school at Kimberley after Easter. How they will be missed and how they will miss the freedom of the farm. I wish they could come here so that we could see them at weekends and holidays.

Douglas reports that he has come through the drought better than most farmers. His health also seems better. He has much to be thankful for.

Miss Chalker called to see me. She tells of Ruth's labours in keeping the home fires burning. Ruth reports gladness and happiness in her new duties and hopes that she will be able to resume her writing stories again.

Grace will have both the boys going to school from this quarter. They will be company for each other. They seem to be having too much rain at Kroonstad. Grass in seed and standing three feet high must be an agreeable change to the past few months. It will be nice if Ted's parents can get to them for a visit.

Joe and Blodwen have been looking at one of the municipal houses. It would be nice for them to have their own home but the rent seems higher than they think they can afford.

Dot and Reg appear to be settled on the farm for the time being at any rate. We have not heard if his parents are back yet. We hope they are in better health.

I suppose you have noticed how the days are drawing in. I still rise about six and seldom retire before 10.30 or later. The office is two or three times as far from the station as the Strand Street office was so it makes it more difficult to catch trains, etc. I very seldom take the car to town for business. I did use it a few times when we were moving office and had our rug stolen from the car and the lock of one door forced open by someone unknown. Joe managed to repair the lock for me.

Monday morning. Reached home safely about eleven. Had a very nice run and all well, Mom stayed with Aunt Emmie. We brought back a man who had met with a motorcycle accident and wanted a lift.

Thanks for all letter received during the week. Hope for good news from you all,

Love from Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
January 28th, 1934

My Dear All,

The past week has been one of issuing invitations, interviewing people, ordering one thing and another in connection with the official reopening of our Long Street premises. It has been a great rush, which it should not have been had those responsible left things more to me to arrange for them. I must not complain, however, as Mr Starck, a member of our Board, has been the moving spirit throughout and had it not been for his generosity, the Association would not be where it is today. He told us at a Board Meeting last week that all the alterations and improvements which had been effected were not going to cost the Association anything. That means that he is paying for them. The new shop fronts alone have cost over eleven hundred pounds. He does not want any fuss made about it, which is very nice of him. Needless to say it has entailed an enormous amount of extra work and worry but so far I have not suffered in consequence. My only concern is to see that everything passes off smoothly. I had a meeting with the wives of the Board members on Monday morning and they all seemed keen on arranging the place nicely. They will all be there tomorrow morning. I must try to send each of you a copy of the invitation and programme which you may like to keep as a souvenir of the occasion. The building is not really finished, all the outside walls are to be painted but it is quite nice inside. I wish that all, or some of you could be with us on this historic occasion. On Wednesday and Saturday evening this week we are having social gatherings as well so by the end of the week, we ought to be fairly on the way to being fed up.

We were working at the office yesterday afternoon till about five so had no time to go to Fish Hoek as we intended for a swim. So after taking Aunt Emmie to see Mr Garnett, we went to the Woodstock baths for the first dip. Mom did not indulge. I found the water colder than I expected but the bath is quite nice. I much prefer the sea at Fish Hoek.

The Hallidays have let their house and will be going to England in March. We shall miss them a great deal. We are going over to have tea with them this afternoon at Aunt Emmie's. The school question has cropped up again and she is very anxious that we should discuss the matter before Thursday when we are having monthly meeting.

We are very thankful to have received letters from most, if not all, of you during the week. Some time when the rush is over, I hope to be able to reply to correspondence better than I have done for some time past.

I wonder if we shall see anything of the Prince next week. If we were still in Strand Street, we should have a nice view as he is to pass that way.

Arthur Collen is still having treatment for his knee. He will be coming to stay with us when he has fewer visits to pay to the specialist.

Next Sunday will be Mom's birthday. It was Jean's this past week. Uncle John would have been 83 on 26th had he been alive still.

Fancy one month of the year almost gone. It is terrible how quickly the time is flying.

I see Mom is writing so I need not add more, besides there are other things that I still have to do before retiring. So good night to you all and hoping you are all keeping well and happy, with lots of love

Yours affectionately
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
Sunday evening, February 4th, 1934
Mom's 72nd birthday

My Dear All,

Well the week is over and I am glad to say that everything has passed off satisfactorily. Monday's official opening by the Governor General was not so well attended as I had expected. Being an afternoon affair, there were many who would have liked to have been present. The Governor was very friendly and chatted with anyone. He gave a very interesting address, which unfortunately was not at all adequately reported in either of the local papers. Several snaps were taken, one appeared in the Argus of the Governor delivering his address. Someone whom you know figures in it. I must get a few copies to send round. Wednesday evening's function was also interesting. Mr Haddow in the course of his remarks, referred to my age and the need of getting a younger man some time. Some of the members of the board and others not on the board thought it very out of place of him but I am not worrying about it. Aunt Emmie was present at both functions. Mom came in on both occasions and helped with the refreshments which were ample and excellent. Everyone was pleased with all the arrangements and I am glad that they are satisfactorily over. Last night was the boys' evening. Hon J H Hofmeyr, Minister of Interior and Education, gave a very excellent address. Arthur Collen came with us and enjoyed it all. I hope we shall now be able to settle down to regular work. All my correspondence has got into arrear and my desk at home and at office is far from what it should be. We are very satisfied with the caretaker and his wife and hope they will continue as they have begun. Mr Muter is Mrs Dodd's brother.

Yesterday afternoon we took Arthur Collen to Fish Hoek but he is not allowed to bathe. I enjoyed a swim but it came on to rain so of course I got out so as to avoid getting wet, I don't think. We called on the Florences and Gladys. They are all well. Una is travelling about the country with her husband at present.

This afternoon we had the Hallidays, Gushes and Aunt Emmie over for afternoon tea as it was Mom's birthday. I got her a nice cake yesterday and she has had letters from all the family I think. We are to have an enlargement of Douglas' children but it is not ready yet. I hear that there are some parcels in the post but these will not be obtainable before tomorrow.

I am sorry that Prince George is not passing along Long Street tomorrow when he arrives from England. We have a lovely balcony there and could have had a splendid view of the procession. Mom and Aunt Emmie and the Hallidays have arranged to see him as he passes along the De Waal Drive at the Observatory war memorial. I shall try to see him in town.

Monday morning. The weather does not look too promising but there will be crowds in town for the Prince's arrival. Arthur Collen will see the procession as his train leaves about eleven.

I wonder how the mosquitoes have been up country this year. Here they are very vicious. We are constantly attacked.

I am glad to say that we are both well and looking forward to our next anniversaries. It is eight years ago today (Monday) that we left Vryburg for Cape Town. What a lot has happened since then.

I must stop now and get breakfast and off to town as soon as I can as there will be sure to be a great rush. I hope there will not be any serious accidents to mar the festivities.

Love from
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
February 10th, 1934

My Dear All,

I am commencing my letter this Saturday evening as I may be busy tomorrow, having to go over to Camps Bay as a stop gap for someone else. By the way, I have asked to be relieved of service appointments for this quarter, except as a stop gap, as I anticipate that my duties may be increased at Long Street on Sundays.

We have had a pretty busy week one way and another. Monday the Prince arrived and the whole city was given over to festivities. I saw him on the parade as he passed. Mom, Aunt Emmie and the Hallidays went up to the De Waal Drive and stood at the war memorial and had a good view of him. The city was very nicely decorated and the streets packed. The weather was very fine, not too hot and no south-easter. Stores and offices closed for the occasion, not the whole day but for some hours. In the evening, I took mom in to see the illuminations. We called at the YMCA and offered to take the caretaker and his wife round in the car but they did not want to go so I took their married daughter and her husband and two children. I have not been in such a crush in the car before. You can picture eight lines of cars in the Dock Road all waiting to get into Adderley Street so it was quite impossible for all to get through. After waiting about twenty minutes, we managed to turn into St Georges Street and from there into Adderley Street but was soon turned out into a side street by traffic police. We then got into the stream again by going up another street and again got into Adderley Street from Whale Street and a good way down Adderley Street again. Eventually we got to the bottom of Adderley Street thinking we would get home by way of the pier and Woodstock. This we found quite impossible owing to the stream of cars still waiting to get into Adderley Street from the Dock Road. So we again turned up St Georges Street and were directed up Waterkant Street. I should have said that when we got to the bottom of Adderley Street, we were held up by a car having stalled just at the tram stop. The driver was fossicking about trying to find out what was the matter, measured his petrol tank and generally held up that side of the street. There was no room for us to pass between his car and the tram which was waiting for us to get out of the way. Eventually the tram driver got off his car and pushed the car to the side of the road and we were able to make a little more progress. Everyone was very jolly about it and there were no accidents. But to continue ... We went up the length of Long Street and saw the wonderful illuminated car of electric lights. As we had got so far, we decided to carry on and get home via the De Waal Drive. There were hundreds of cars along the road and we had a good view of the city from there. We reached Observatory about eleven quite safe and sound. The traffic control was quite hopeless this night but righted matters the following nights. It was certainly a good test for drivers. You can imagine how close it was with all the thousands of cars with their engines running and no wind. We frequently opened the doors of the car to let in some fresh air. The illuminations were very fine and did great credit to the city. We had a somewhat similar experience on Thursday evening when we went along the High Level road to see the fireworks from the Green Point cycle track. The congestion of traffic was as bad as on Monday. We got through all right and came home without seeing much of the display. I think I have said enough about the Royal visit so stop.

The week has been otherwise uneventful. We are daily getting more settled down at the office. There is still plenty to do and it is interesting to hear the comments of old members how glad they are to see that we are back again in the old premises. Mr Starch, one of our Board members, told us at a meeting recently that all the cost of putting in new shop fronts and doing up the premises is not to cost the association anything. That is he is paying for it himself. The shop front alone cost over £1100 (eleven hundred pounds). It is very good of him and he resents any words of thanks or publicity for what he has done. Had it not been for him, we should not have got the place. He and his wife are going on a trip round the world this month. We are going to give him a social before he leaves.

This afternoon we went to Fish Hoek again. This time we took Joyce Townshend with us. Dudley was going down to fetch her after his game of golf. Mrs Gush has been spending a week with Gladys there and returned with us. The bathing was delightful. The water was warm and we all enjoyed ourselves. We took fruit with us. Mom does not bathe, I am sorry to say. There was a very large veldt fire over the Muizenburg mountain as we returned.
Monday morning, 6.30, 12th February 1934.

I suppose you have all noticed the difference in the time the sun rises now. Winter conditions are approaching but the south-easter continue so suppose you folk up country are still getting rains. Gardens here are in need of some showers. We have had a nice show of sunflowers and dahlias. The creeper which Uncle Bert gave Mom has made a fine show over the old palm stump at our back stoep.

We did not go anywhere yesterday afternoon but I took Mom over to Aunt Emmie's to stay with her whilst I went to Camps Bay for service. Aunt Emmie is looking through a lot of old correspondence that has accumulated at the Friends meeting house during the past thirty years and is destroying what is of no value. Any that are of interest, she is collecting for a history of Friends in South Africa. She looks to write it up when she goes to Maritzburg for the winter. Wallace's farther was married again on Saturday last and will be passing here some time this week on his way to England for his honeymoon.

We are very interested in all your letters. We hope to hear that Arthur Collen has arrived safely and has benefitted by his visit to Cape Town. Whatever Douglas and Evelyn will do when three of the children go to boarding school at Kimberley, I don't know.

I am sending to Joe to be passed round, a snap taken on Mom's 72nd birthday. Miss Gush took it in our garden and it has come out quite well. I am also enclosing one taken at Fish Hoek. I will get some more if you would like one each.

We hear that Joe has bought a piano for Blodwen. Both are very fond of music and I am sure it will be a welcome addition to their home but where they can find room for it to stand is another matter. We also understand that they are thinking of motoring over to Vryburg for Easter. Hope they have a safe journey. We shall have to be thinking about holidays again. Mom, I suppose, will be going away for the winter but I do not feel like going away myself this year. If I do, I should like a motor trip to Natal along the garden route. However, we will see all in good time.

I must stop now and get to breakfast. Have just 'done' reading the Cape Times.

Lots of love to you all,

Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
February 18th, 1934

My Dear All,

I think last week I inflicted two sheets of a letter on you. I hope you were not bored stiff as so many young people say these days. For one thing, I have not been up to concert pitch for some days. Mom thinks I may have been doing too much or that it is the reaction after the work in connection with the reopening ceremonies. I have not slept at all well all the week, which is quite unusual for me. Then the heat has been most trying. One day it was over 102 in the shade. The nights have also been very close and the mosquitoes have been very hungry. I think I shall have to give up coming home for lunch. The office is at least two or three times as far from the station as the Strand Street place and it makes too much of a rush to get out and back within an hour or hour and quarter. One is too hot and too tired to enjoy anything. I sometimes just lay down and rest for a few minutes.

I am glad to say that today I am much better. Yesterday (Saturday) I took Mom, Mrs Halliday and Aunt Emmie to Fish Hoek. None of them would bathe except myself. It seemed to have done me good. I do so enjoy a dip and Fish Hoek is better than Muizenberg I always think. Of course we saw Tom and Gladys and the boys. They are enjoying the stay there but will be leaving at the end of March. They have been offered the free use of Mr and Mrs Duns house at Plumstead for three months whilst they are away. Gladys used to be in Mr Dun's office (Reuters) before she was married. It is very nice of them to have offered it to them.

We are so sorry to hear that Douglas' Arthur has had a nasty accident during the week. It appears that he and Rex were riding on horseback from a neighbouring farm when Arthur's horse dragged him under a tree and he fell off and hurt himself rather seriously. We have not heard further so hope he is alright. Douglas said they might have to take him to town. I hope we shall hear good news in the morning.

Joe and Blodwen have sent us a very nice snap of baby Roy. The Prices have one enlarged and coloured of him sitting in his pram. It is very good. Evelyn has asked me to do some shopping for her. How they will miss the three eldest children, all going at the same time to boarding school, I don't know. It will be a great experience for them as well as their parents. I am always pleased to do any shopping for any of you if you will let me know your requirements.

This morning we, Mom and Aunt Emmie, went down to the docks to meet Mr and Mrs Wells on their way to England on their honeymoon. We brought them up to meeting and then on to see some friends at Sea Point. It must have been a strange experience for Wallis to have to act as marriage officer at his own father's wedding. He was married at Friends meeting held at the bride's house at Hillery. Auntie stayed and had dinner with us.

Yesterday was Pam's birthday. Hope she had a happy day. Aunt Emmie has a birthday this week. We have invited her to spend it with us but I think she will be going to Fish Hoek for a few days. I hope she will consult a heart specialist this week regarding her condition. She is looking to go to Natal in the course of a month or so but she ought not to travel alone.

I must stop now with the usual wish that we may be favoured with continued good news from you all during the week.

Much love from Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
February 25th, 1934

My Dear All,

The week has been one of almost continuous south-easter winds but today it has been perfectly calm and consequently excessively hot and oppressive. I have just returned from service in Observatory and am glad I went in a light suit. All the doors and windows were open and there was a large congregation. The service was a harvest thanksgiving one and was well attended.

Truly we all have much to be thankful for. I specially feel this as I am realising that my service for the YMCA may be rapidly drawing to a close. The Board of management met on Monday last and amongst other matters, discussed the future policy and work in connection with the Association. At the opening social, Mr Haddow had referred to the need of a younger man than I to take charge. He was very appreciative of what had been done whilst I had been here. Some of the members thought that I was too old but were very nice about it. The meeting adjourned to Thursday afternoon, in the meantime I had spoken to some of the members and told them that I did not wish to stand in the way. Mr Starck, who has done so much for the Association, left for a trip round the world on Wednesday and in saying goodbye to him on board, I said that probably there would be changes before he returned. He said he hoped I would not do anything before he returned. However on Thursday afternoon it was suggested that a young man should be engaged to work under me and that my salary should be reduced so as to make up for the new man. Others thought that I should not give up for another year at least. Doctor Dommissie said he thought my health would not stand it and that I might have a break down at any time (not very comforting, was it). The meeting was again adjourned until tomorrow evening. In the meantime we have talked matters over and taking all things into consideration, I have decided to put in my resignation, leaving it to them to say when it shall take effect. They have no one in prospect at present and it would not be fair to leave them in the lurch at a month's notice. I quite expect it will take three months or more before they get anyone. Mr Haddow hinted that they might have to send overseas. This I think would be a mistake and not necessary. I am sure it would be a mistake to put a young man into the position. It needs someone with experience. If they want a middle aged man with experience, they are not in a position to offer a salary that would attract a man who looked to a future. However that does not concern me very much. I have had two reductions of salary during the past three years and have suffered by same to the extent of over £800. I am drawing £84 per annum less than what I am entitled to. I told the Board that it was the work – not the worker – that need to be considered. I told them that it was a bitter disappointment to me after having looked forward for years to developing the work in the old premises but if it is to be so I must submit. I do not feel that my work is done and so long as God gives me strength to work for him, I am sure he will find something for me to do.

Needless to say we are not worrying as to the future. We are not penniless nor are we incapable of looking after ourselves nor do we wish to be in any way a burden to our children. I have some capital on which we can live some time if needs be. So I hope none of you will worry about us. There are so many things that I should like to do. For instance, I should like to take a motor trip extending over some months, visiting scattered Friends and relations and perhaps a way would open for doing some Christian service as one went about. There is plenty of voluntary work to be done here or elsewhere if one has the inclination to do it. Grace suggested some time ago that we might migrate to Cradock and they get transferred there as well. Of course it would be a great pleasure to be near to our children to be of service to them. I should like a cottage somewhere near here where we could have a place for all of you to come to from time to time. Please do not think that we are past work.

Monday morning. If we should stay in the Cape peninsula, I suppose we shall find a flat somewhere where we could get meals conveniently as I do not think Mom will want to take on

housekeeping again. It might so be that the Board will like us to stay on at Botha House as a new man may not be inclined to take on as much as I have done. Everything is of course in the air at present. I thought that you should know as soon as possible the position. I shall not be surprised if the Board does not accept the resignation at once but asks for time to consider the position.

We have talked the matter over with Aunt Emmie who quite thinks it is the best thing to do to give up all the work. Mom has never been very happy at Botha House, not having her own home. We are looking for guidance and no doubt it will come as needed.

I am afraid this has been a very selfish letter so far. I have not but there has not been much happening of general interest. We have been over to see Aunt Emmie as much as possible. On her 68th birthday, she went with Gladys and Joyce to consult a heart specialist. His report is much more favourable than expected. He says she is a fairly healthy woman and with care should last quite a long time. She must be careful and not get excited or worried. Her heart is certainly enlarged and is pressing on another organ which will always give her a certain amount of pain and discomfort. No operation is necessary. She can go to Maritzburg with safety but must not hurry. She had quite a number of letters and presents on her birthday. We took her to Fish Hoek on Saturday afternoon. I bathed again.

Arnold Richardson has returned from his sister's wedding. Everything went off very nicely he says. We are sorry that he is leaving us at the end of this month.

I went to see Bevan Wookey yesterday afternoon and also took Aunt Emmie to Uncle Bert's grave.

I must really stop now and get ready for another strenuous day. Hoping that you are all well and flourishing. I have to stay in town for lunch today and another meeting at five this afternoon and Board meeting this evening.

Lots of love to all
Yours lovingly,
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
Sunday evening, March 4th, 1934

My very Dear All

We have not gone to service this evening as I want to spend the evening writing to you. There seems a good deal to write about and it is difficult to concentrate or to get what I want to say in anything like chronological order so you must excuse me if I am somewhat disjointed.

First let me say how deeply I am moved by the very sympathetic letters I have received from those who have had time to write in response to my last week's circle letter. I do very much appreciate the sentiments of affection and loving devotion you have given expression to. I am deeply conscious of how unworthy I am to receive all the kind things you have said. I have only done my best which was my pleasure and my duty to do. I have tried to be faithful in the little entrusted to me. More cannot be expected and less would be a neglect of trust and confidence placed in one.

The Board met at 5.30 on Monday afternoon last and continued with only half an hour's break for refreshment until past ten. There was much to discuss and the appointment of various committees to carry out sundry duties. The item in which you are most interested came on at the end of the meeting - the General Secretaryship. I was asked to withdraw and for over half an hour they discussed the position. I had previously handed the chairman my resignation. This consisted only of a few words tendering my resignation without stating any reasons or going into any details. On being invited into the room, I was received with applause and told that the Board was not desirous that I should resign but that they felt that I should have some assistance so as to get someone in training who could relieve me of many of my duties. They spoke in appreciative terms of services rendered etc. Dr Dommissie said if I had resigned on account of health reasons, nothing could be said, but if I had tendered my resignation for the benefit of the association, he would not continue to sit on the board but would also resign. They were kind enough to say that they could not do without me and it was largely owing to my faith and optimism that they had secured the premises again. Mr Haddow was very concerned as he felt that his remarks at the social meeting - when he referred to my increasing age and the need that would be placed upon them to secure a younger man to carry on the work - was responsible for me sending in my resignation. He had no intention of causing me any pain or unsettling me nor had he anyone in view for filling my place. He admitted that he might have been hasty at times but he had a very trying position to fill as manager of the bank etc. The chairman said they all hoped I would withdraw the resignation. I cannot remember all that was said or all that I said in reply. My heart was too full and I felt very keenly all the nice things that had been said about me and the work I had tried to achieve during the past years. I remember saying that I had no desire to stand in the way. It was the work that mattered, not the worker. It was God's work and he would provide a worker. I said I realised that I was getting on in years but was still young in spirit. I also said that I felt tired at times and last year had been a warning that my health was not as good as it used to be. I felt that if any change was to be made, now would be a convenient time as he could start off on his own lines. I also felt that if things did not develop as the Board might expect them, they might have the feeling that had they had a younger man at the head, things would have been different. I might also have similar feelings. I told the Board that I would carry on until they had found someone to take over the duties. I warned them against having too young a man but one who had his heart in the work. I said I did not know what was before me. I had no plans for the future. I had thought that perhaps I might take a motor tour through the country visiting scattered friends and relatives. And so the matter was left. I do not know if they will advertise the position or just wait for someone to turn up. I have already interviewed one young man, about thirty five and shall see him again. Dr Dommissie, who motored me home after the meeting with one of the other members of the Board, said his idea was that my salary should be reduced so as to provide funds to pay a younger man, and that I should be a sort of figurehead to advise and assist as and where I could. If I did not feel able to go to the office or

wanted to take a holiday at any time, I was to be quite free to do so. I understand since the meeting that it is the Board's wish that we stay here at Botha House, although nothing was said about that in the meeting.

On Friday afternoon, I consulted Dr Dommissie as to the state of my health. He very carefully examined my heart and lungs and other organs. He is satisfied but the muscles round the heart are sluggish which accounts for me feeling tired and exhausted at times. He advises me to take a holiday as soon as I can but that is out of the question until I have someone to leave in charge. He gave me a prescription which he says will buck me up again. I mentioned a long standing desire I had had to take a sea voyage and he thought that would be good for me. He said I also had a slight rupture. This was possibly caused by my assisting to push the grand piano across the stage one day. It does not cause me any discomfort, or not much, and he thinks it will soon pass away. He wants me to rest as much as possible and not take more service than necessary. (I only have one this quarter.) I am to do as little as possible. This does not appeal to me as I realise that we are only on this journey once and so it is my wish to do as much as I can whilst I can.

Yesterday afternoon, Mom and I went to the Home of Rest at Durbanville to see if we can get accommodation there over the weekend at Easter. They think they can put us up for the three or four days. This will be a change for Mom and I. Aunt Emmie thinks of going to Maritzburg some time this month. She has given notice to give up her rooms.

Mr and Mrs Halliday have decided to leave for England on 20th and will be away for several months. She would be quite willing to take a motor journey with us to Natal if we decide to go. I would not mind taking a three month trip round the country if way opens in that direction.

This afternoon we have laid to rest Miss Thornton, who nursed Grace when she had measles at West's boarding house at Sea Point a good many years ago.

Each afternoon this week, except Friday, I have committees to attend at 5 pm so it does not look as though the work was easing off just at present.

I should have mentioned that at the meeting when I was called in, a wireless message was read from Mr Starck advising the board to go slowly and wants me to be retained as secretary. I had told him when seeing him off at the boat that there would probably be changes before he returned. He begged me to stay until his return.

Monday morning. In a recent letter, Dot suggests the possibility of Douglas and Evelyn coming down and talking matters over. They will be very welcome if they can see their way to do so. All the family will then have been with us comparatively recently. We hope Ruth and Denis may come later when her holiday is due. I am glad to say we are both keeping fit so far as general health is concerned and we are quite prepared to wait developments as they come along.

Again I say very many thanks for the very loving messages which have reached me in connection with my resignation. I appreciate them all but feel that I do not deserve all the nice things that have been said. I hope there will be more letters this morning when I get to town.

Yours as ever,
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
March 11th, 1934

My Dear All,

My last few letters have, I fear, been very selfish ones. They seem to have been all about myself. I am deeply grateful to all who have written about my resignation. Some think I should not give up whilst others think I should. This afternoon, Mom and I called to wish Rev Hornabrook best wishes on attaining his 85th birthday. We referred to the same matter and he thinks I should keep on. There is nothing special to report in the situation this week except to say that Reg has written expressing the hope that a way may open for him to step into the work. Perhaps it will. There is to be another Board meeting tomorrow afternoon when I expect the matter will be referred to.

I am glad to say that I am feeling better the last few days as the weather has been much cooler and I think the doctor's medicine may be having some good effect. We had rain one night and morning. It was much needed and I expect we shall have plenty from now onwards. I am glad to hear that the veldt is looking so nice up country. It was about this time last year that we started on our holiday and picked up Uncle Joe and Aunt Emmie on our way to Bloemfontein and Kroonstad etc. I do not know when we shall go for this year's holiday. This day in three weeks we look to be at the Home of Rest at Durbanville for Easter weekend and shall see what that does for us.

Yesterday afternoon we took Mr and Mrs Goodchild for a spin. Also Milly. She has grown so tall and thin. She is teaching at Sea Point school at present. They are living at Mowbray – quite close to us. Mr G is not at all well. They were interested in hearing of you all. David, their son, is still unmarried and helps to support them very considerably. We went along the new Muizenberg road and turned off after passing Princess Vlei up to Zeekoevlei, then on to Belville. Some of the roads were very bad and we shall not go that way again in a hurry. Our boys were playing a tennis match at Belville so we watched them for a while. We called on Ted's relatives, the Moirs, but they were out. Our boys won the match by a good margin.

Every afternoon during the past week I have had committee meetings to attend except on Friday. They all take a lot of time and what with minutes to be written up afterwards, a lot of time is occupied.

We have seen a good deal of Aunt Emmie. She is still looking to go to Maritzburg and is looking for someone to travel with her, either by boat or rail.

We are glad to hear today that Joe and Blodwen are moving into larger quarters. It is in the same house but more room. He still talks of going to Vryburg for Easter by motor lorry. I certainly think the best route will be via Kimberley and follow the main road that Dr Compton takes when he goes to Douglas'. The road from Dr Hart's to Scholtzfontein is as bad as can be. Joe has travelled over that part before so knows what to expect. They could go right on to Vryburg and then out by the main road.

At Mr Hornabrook's this afternoon we met two ladies and their husbands who are on their way to England from Cradock. Mr and Mrs Long and the other I cannot think of their names. They know Aunt Eliza and Mary very well. They were teachers at Heald Town in Mr Hornabrook's time. It was very interesting to hear first hand news.

I do not think I can write any more tonight.

Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
March 18th, 1934

My Dear All,

We have come to a standstill so far as our future plans are concerned. The Board has not discussed the matter further and seems in no hurry to make any change. I spoke to Mr Haddow on Friday afternoon as to what steps were to be taken advertising or otherwise – and he did not know so I am not troubling further in the matter at present. I can see that there will not be any chance of my annual holiday until after April at least.

I am glad to say that we are both keeping fairly fit and are looking forward to a few – four – quiet days at Easter at Durbanville. We shall of course take the car and as they have a croquet court there, may take our mallets as well.

We do very much appreciate all your kind offers to us to come and stay with you as long as we like. We will bear it in mind and shall hope to take advantage of the offers some day. We must be content to live a day at a time and not make plans too far ahead.

We hear that Len Ambler and family are in town. The children were not well so the doctor advised them having a change. They are staying at Sea Point. We are inviting them over here for Wednesday evening. We have asked Mr and Mrs Dodd as well.

Jamie Butler turned up on Monday or Tuesday, after I had kept a letter for him for some days and sent same back to Louisvale. We have been expecting him all this afternoon but he has not turned up. He arranged to go to meeting with us this morning but did not arrive. Asked Aunt Emmie to dinner so as to meet him but as he did not come, I took Auntie home about five this afternoon. She hopes to see him before he returns to Louisvale on Wednesday by car.

Yesterday afternoon we took Mrs Hope and her husband to Kommetjie. She is one of Uncle Dan Trollip's daughters. I have not seen her for many – perhaps thirty years when we were in Cradock. One of her brothers is farming near Oliphantshoek, in the Kuruman district. We called on Gladys and Tom on the way back. I did not bathe this time as it was rather on the cold side. They are having the free use of Mr and Mrs Dun's house at Plumstead for a few months whilst they go to England.

Aunt Emmie was crippled with rheumatism in her knee today and could hardly walk. We took her by car.

Ruth writes that her parents are leaving in April for Iris' home and will stay there for some time. Ruth says she will have to move into a boarding house. She has been working too hard and had to lay up for a few days. I do wish she could have an easier time. It will be Denis 13th birthday in a few days time. David and Cecily have also anniversaries in the near future. Many happy returns to them all.

It is nice to know that Joe and Blodwen are moving into larger quarters in the same house. They will enjoy the greater space and freedom. Their letters are always bright and cheerful. I wonder if they will really go to Vryburg by car at Easter. I should think that a trip to Kroonstad at present would be far enough.

We are thinking of how Douglas and Evelyn will feel when the three big children go off to Kimberley to school. It does not look as though they will be coming to see us yet a while. I am sorry for this.

Grace suggests that Mom should go to them for a time but we do not see how this can be done at present. We only had a postcard from Dot this week. I find I have filled the sheet so must stop with love to all.

Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
March 25th, 1934

My Dear All,

I expect next week's letter will arrive a day or too late as if our plans are carried out as arranged, we shall have to post from Durbanville and being holiday time, it is doubtful if letters will be collected. It may be quicker for me to post from town when I get back.

The chief news to report this week is that Aunt Emmie has seen her specialist again after a month's lapse and he says that the condition of her heart is worse than when he examined it before. He says she must not think of going to Cradock – owing to the high altitude – and does not approve of her going to Maritzburg. She had been looking forward to spending the winter there with Muriel. He says Durban would be alright but there is no one she is interested in except her old servant that she brought out with her when she came from England first. Consequently, all her plans are upset. She has given up her rooms and is storing her furniture for the present. I offered to take her to Durbanville with us as our guest but she has decided to stay with Gladys for a few days. We must wait and see what developments the future has in store.

The past week has been much the same as former ones lately, meetings almost every afternoon. The work is increasing and the Board has not taken any steps to provide a successor or an assistant. However, perhaps something may transpire at tomorrow's meeting.

The weather appears to be changing. Today has been quite overcast and a little rain has commenced to fall. We have had a good spell of fine days and I hope it will remain fine over Easter. We are thinking of taking a run to see the Halses whilst at Durbanville. We have not seen anything of them for a long time. We are also taking our croquet mallets as they have a court there. I shall take my typewriter in case it is wet and I shall be able to do some writing.

I am lending the car this afternoon to the Gushes to take a local preacher for the service at Malmsbury. I was not planned to go but the preacher's car had broken down so I helped with mine. I hope they get on alright. We only stayed in car for a few minutes. The water was too cold to enjoy.

I am glad to hear that Joe and Blodwen are likely to go to Grace and Ted for Easter. I was afraid of the long journey to Vryburg for such a short holiday. It is nice to know that Joe and Bronwen are going to have larger and more comfortable quarters in the same house.

Jamie was here for a few days but took ill and was not able to get about very much. He had lunch with Mom one day but did not see Aunt Emmie. He motored back to Louisvale in a new Ford V8 car. He speaks very highly of this make. I am going to have a good look round at the forthcoming motor show next month. Perhaps I will trade in my Morris for a new one. This one has done over 30 000 miles.

After service. It is raining slightly. I hope Mr and Mrs Gush will manage the car alright to Malmsbury and back. He is an old hand at motoring so should be used to the job.

Monday morning. No time for more now. The Gushes brought back the car this morning and say they had a comfortable journey and no mishaps.

Lots of love to you all
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
April 1st, 1934

My Dear All,

First of all let me say how grieved we were early in the week to hear that Harold Brown, Nessie Dodd's husband, had died suddenly at Jeffreys Bay. It appears that some of the farmers from the Tarka area had motored down for a holiday, arriving there on last Saturday afternoon. On Monday whilst bathing, Harold either had a heart attack, or something of the sort, and died. Mr and Mrs Dodd spent the evening with us a few days previously. I expect they will hasten to be with Nessie.

The past week has been as busy as the previous ones. Meetings galore, the business of writing them up takes a great deal of time. Thursday I did not get out for lunch until about three and we got away here as soon as we could, arriving about five. I was glad of a sleep before supper at 6.30. We found quite a few people here whom we know. We have a room facing east with a tennis court just outside our stoep and a fowl run close at hand. There are nice big trees and consequently plenty of shade. The car stands under the trees as there is not garage accommodation for more than one. Our room is No. 1. It is not at all elaborately furnished, in fact it is rather the opposite. The meals are plain and plenty to eat. I do not like the bread or the butter but that is a small matter. There are between twenty and 23 staying here. Mr and Mrs MacDowell, Friends, and a Miss Warren, daughter of a Friend who stays at Mowbray, are here. Neither of these people attend meetings but are interested in the Society. The MacDowells sent their boys to Sidcot School in England. There are also a number of people I know in connection with YMCA work. The place is run by a committee of the Dutch Reformed Church. There are two of their ministers in residence at present. One is a missionary from central Africa. He conducts family worship every evening before leaving the supper table (6.30). He knows quite a number of Friends. They have the wireless on in the evenings. Quite a good set. The reception is better than what we got in town. On Good Friday we did nothing but rest. It was strictly observed as a Sunday. Rev Vlok, who is Uncle of the Vlok's who lived next door to us in Vryburg, gave us a very nice address. Most of us sat and listened to the Crucifixion over the wireless and all went to bed early. Saturday morning we went over to Stellenbosch as we had written to the Halses asking if we could call on them. They had phoned Mom asking us to come to morning tea so we went. We took three of the young folk from here with us and left them in the town whilst we called on the Halses. I had also written to a Friend whom I had never met, who lives on a farm not far from the Halses so Mrs H joined us in the car whilst we went to call on them. They had previously tried to get them on the phone but the line was engaged each time. When we got there, we found only the servant in charge so of course turned back. They live right on top of a hill and it was some climb to get there, being only a farm road. As we got back to the Halses, who should we pass but these very people just on their way home. We should not have known them except for the fact that they spotted Mrs H in the car and she spotted them. So we had a standing chat in the road for a few minutes. It appears that Mr Barnett's brother went to Sidcot School and knows Mary and Ernest. Of course, living so far from Cape Town, he cannot attend meetings. His wife is a Catholic and was daughter of a Mr Angove of Port Elizabeth. She gives music lessons and has been in Cradock. We had arranged to pick up the members of our party at the post office by 12.30 and we were back here for dinner before two o'clock. The Halses are pleased that they have at last sold all their Vryburg property. The Government has bought it for native reserves. They are trying to sell the farm they are on.

The weather has been so delightfully fine that it has not been desirable to stay in to write letters. We shall be off back to town in a few minutes so must hurry up and get another sheet filled if possible before we leave. It has been a very nice change and for the most part has been very enjoyable. I think I have already stated that Good Friday was spent quite quietly. Saturday we went to Stellenbosch and in the afternoon we played a game of croquet but the court is very

small and in bad order. I also had a few rounds at tennis but did not finish a set. I do not think it did me any harm but do not think that I shall try again. It did not do any harm. In the evening we listened into the wireless and retired early.

Yesterday, Sunday. We did not go off the premises. Capt. Dobbie of the Cape Town Bible Institute conducted a Bible reading in the morning and in the evening I was asked to give a short address. It was of short duration as we wanted to listen in to Rev Titcomb on the wireless. It was greatly enjoyed. I should have said that whilst we were at the library on Saturday evening, a lady asked us as we left if we were Mr and Mrs B from Vryburg. This was Mrs Chennowith who used to work at the Vryburg dairy. She asked us to come and see her on Sunday afternoon, which we did. They were so pleased to talk over old times. Mr C is town clerk here and has a very nice home. He gave me an introduction the manager of the wireless station at Klip Huivel. This afternoon we took a party from here over the station. It is beyond my powers to describe all, or even a small portion, of what we saw. It all seems too wonderful. The wireless masts are over 800 feet high and have never been used as after they were erected, the short wave system came into operation. They state that it would cost too much to take them down so there they are.

Mom has had some games at croquet, which I am glad of and hope now that she has broken the ice, as it were, she will continue to play when we get back.

The weather has been perfect the whole time and we have all had a very enjoyable outing. Neither of us have cared too much for the food. The bread is far too close and the butter is not first grade. Our room has been rather noisy as it is at the end of the stoep and the early morning milk carts etc. as well as the fowls disturbed us. But we did not get up so early as in town so it did not matter very much. Everyone seems sorry that we are going and it has been a pleasure to give pleasure to some of them who do not often get the opportunity of a motor spin.

Monday evening. Here we are back again at LBH. We arrived about eight having first gone into town to see what post there was. We see in the Midland News an account of Harold Brown's death and funeral. Will cut it out and send it round.

Hope all of you have happy holidays. Ruth writes that she is moving to Dorset House, Somerset Street, Grahamstown. Denis writes he came in fifth out of 150 in a cross country race.

I do not think I must add more, you will be tired of reading what I have written. I expect there are numerous mistakes. I have not been able to see what I write as I have been sitting in front of a window and could not see the letters on the machine. Good night, much love,

Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
April 8th, 1934

My Dear All,

Another week has flown and we are still alive to tell our weekly tale of happenings. It has been a very busy week and the one we are entering upon is likely to be more so. However sufficient unto the day will be the strength I hope. Dr Mott is due tomorrow morning and I have to be at the docks by one to go on board with others to meet him. He has a very busy week in front of him. The Mayor is giving him an official lunch in the banqueting hall on Monday (costing the city 10/6 per head). In the evening he addresses the University students and others in the Hiddingh Hall. Tuesday the ministers and laymen are giving him a welcome in the YMCA Oak Hall at 10.30. The university lunch club give him lunch that day and in the afternoon we hope to have him at the YM again. The evening he is addressing a public meeting in the city hall when Minister Hofmeyr is presiding. The whole of the week is similarly occupied and I am supposed to attend all these functions. I have had to arrange for them all. There will be collections to count and bank etc.

I hope the meetings will be well attended and much good accomplished. Dr Mott will be visiting Vryburg on his way to the Congo. Mr Bull, who was secretary to the YMCA when the present premises were sold in QOWP is going to accompany Dr Mott all round his tour.

Yesterday we took Joe's friends, Dorothy Webb and her friend, Miss Dersley (daughter of the Mayor of Bloemfontein) for a run to Steenbrass river and back through Stellenbosch. They seemed to enjoy the outing. As we returned, we stopped where two cars had collided. Fortunately no one was hurt but both cars were damaged. One car contained a doctor and his wife. She was greatly upset and staggered and fainted but I was able to hold her and sat her on the running board. It delayed us a while and I hope they got on alright afterwards. A breakdown lorry had to go to their assistance.

This afternoon, Len and Gwen Amber came to afternoon tea. They are returning home on Wednesday evening. Both seem very well. They are hoping to get a change to the coast some time next year.

There is nothing fresh to report re the position at YMCA. The Board is hoping to interview Dr Mott on the matter this week.

We have not seen Aunt Emmie this week. She is staying at the YW at Muizenberg at present. We have spoken over the phone a few times. Joyce was at meeting this morning.

Received a letter from Joe this morning. They enjoyed their trip to Kroonstad but had a miserable journey back by car owing to the rain and the car skidding. We wonder how Reg got on at Pietersburg. Suppose we shall hear this week. No letters from Douglas or Evelyn for some time but know they have been very busy getting the three children off to school. We have not yet heard if Evelyn is going to stay in Kimberley with them. Nor do we know when they actually start for school but suppose it will be pretty soon as other schools are reopening this week. It is nice to know that rain has fallen up country. Here we have been having wonderful weather. Fine for weeks but we must expect rain any day now.

I must not write more but get to bed early so as to be up and to the docks in good time.

Much love to all,

Dad

Excuse mistakes.

P O Box 691
Cape Town
April 15th, 1934

My Dear All,

The past week has been one of great rush. We have survived it without breakdown. It has been very interesting hearing Dr Mott address so many gatherings with wonderful power but it has been a great strain. There has been three official lunches which I have attended. One with the Mayor and 150 guests in the banqueting hall, another with the University lunch club and the third with the Prime Minister at the House of Assembly. No speeches were made at the latter. I had the honour of chatting to General Hertzog and also General Smuts. I was early on board on Monday morning to meet him. He has delivered at least ten or more addresses, all filled with power and much wisdom and guidance. I cannot attempt to report them here, my job has mostly been to arrange for them and to see that details were not forgotten. Each evening since Sunday last has been occupied except Wednesday. That evening Mom and I went to the Motor Show and had a good look at the various makes of cars. It is possible we may trade in our Morris for a more recent and powerful car. More about this anon.

Friday afternoon we had a letter from Douglas saying that he and Evelyn were at last making a start to come and see us. I hurriedly read the letter and thought it was this week that they are starting and sent off my car tent and route book by passenger train to Rooispruit, as requested, so as to catch them there. On second reading, I find that they are not starting until next week. I would have sent by goods train which would have been much cheaper. It will be some weeks before they reach here as they go via Kimberley, Cradock, Queenstown, Grahamstown and the garden route. It is a trip I hope to take some day. He has bought a new Chevrolet car and I hope they will have a comfortable and pleasant journey. Of course they will only have the two young children with them.

I am sorry to have to record the sad loss by death of Mr Garnett. We heard that he was not well a week or so ago and early in the week, Aunt Emmie phoned that she heard he was dangerously ill. It apparently started with gastric flu and developed into enteric fever. He passed away early on Friday morning. He was buried at sea yesterday morning. It was a very calm day and quite a number of friends assembled at the docks at 9.30 where Rev Dr Wark (Presbyterian minister) conducted the first part of the burial service. Mrs Garnett and her daughter and son-in-law were present. The coffin was then conveyed onboard and taken outside the three mile radius where the concluding portion of the service was conducted. The body, which was bound in canvas, was removed from the coffin and committed to the deep. Over a dozen wreaths were also thrown into the sea and after the tug had slowly circled round the spot, returned to the docks. There was about thirty of us on board. Mom and Aunt Emmie did not go to sea but remained at the docks for our return. Mrs Garnett was perfectly calm and did not show any signs of breaking down. We are all very sorry for her and shall miss him very much. The sea was perfectly calm and the view of the mountain was grand. They have decided not to cable to the Hallidays – brother-in-law – who was due to reach England during the past week. The Society of Friends has lost by the removal of Mr Garnett, its most trusted and valued Friend.

Thanks for all letters received during the week from each family. We do feel so lonely if you do not write, even if it is only a little.

Yesterday afternoon we went to see Aunt Emmie and Gladys in their new quarters at Plumstead. It is a very nice place and they should be comfortable during the coming winter.

I must not attempt another sheet as there are other letters to write.

Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
April 22nd, 1934

My dear All,

I do not seem to know where to begin this week. We are glad to know that Douglas and Evelyn are starting on their long looked forward to holiday and in the course of a few weeks, we may expect them to arrive here in Cape Town. I expect they are on the road to Uncle Owen's as I write. After spending a few days there, they go to Fish River, Cradock and other places before touching at Grahamstown. I do not see how they can be here before about the middle or end of May. It is something to look forward to.

Then we hear that Reg has returned from a business trip to the northern Transvaal and has practically decided to go into partnership with an old friend who married one of Rev Legg's daughters in Vryburg. Potgietersrus, the place where they are likely to start, is about 150 miles north of Johannesburg on the main line to northern towns of the Transvaal and border of Rhodesia. The altitude is practically the same as that of Vryburg but the scenery is, so far as I can gather, very mountainous. Frost is seldom experienced there and I believe the country is very fertile. I understand the business is an auctioneering concern. We should have much liked to have Reg and Dot with us here in Cape Town but the way has not yet opened.

We are proud to hear that Denis is playing cricket for the school and is doing well for his side. I do not remember making a score of over 50 runs when I was a boy at school. Keep it up Denis.

Grace writes that they are expecting Pat Irons to visit them. They were anxious when she wrote about Harold having bronchitis. We hope the dear boy is better now. Yesterday we took Grace's friends, the Cloetes, out for a spin. We took them beyond Camps Bay and then through the docks and watched a steamer go out to sea. It was perfectly calm and quite a pretty sight. Just as we went to bed, we heard that a tramp steamer had gone ashore near Milnerton in a fog. We went along after meeting this morning to see what we could but found that during the night, two tugs had pulled the vessel out to sea.

Mrs Price brought us some snaps of Joe and Roy to see a few days ago. They are very good indeed and we have ordered some to keep. I don't know if I reported that Joe had been promoted to the position of acting foreman at work whilst the regular man was on holiday. This is a good lift up and I hope may be a sign that permanent advancement is not far distant. It is nice to know that they are more comfortable in their new quarters though still under the same roof.

We want the addresses of Douglas' children so that we can write to them as opportunity offers. We have not heard how Arthur Collen's knee is getting on. Hope he is able to use it more than when he was down here.

Tomorrow morning I am meeting Ernest's wife, Alison, on her way to England for a holiday. She will spend a day with Gladys and another with us. The vessel leaves on Friday next.

I do not think I have referred to the blessing of penny postage since it has been reintroduced. I hope it will have the effect of encouraging all of you to write more frequently. Sometimes more than a week goes by without hearing from some of the family. I don't scold you but even short letters are welcome if you cannot write long ones. We are always interested in even trivial happenings. It was interesting to hear of Willie Saunders in Dot's letter.

I have just returned with Mom from taking service at Marsh Memorial homes. The children were very attentive. I have only taken three services this year so far.

Lots of love to all,
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
May 2nd, 1934

My dear All,

The news of the week has been the visit of Douglas and Evelyn. The weather has for the most part been kind to them. One day it rained very heavily but having their closed motor, it did not inconvenience them very much. They have been about a good deal seeing their friends, Mr and Mrs Ambler, Aunt Emmie, Gladys and Joyce came in on Thursday evening. Douglas and Evelyn had two of Col Rodgers nieces, Misses Donnars, here one evening and they called to see the Goodchilds and Nelly and her family on the way back. It was Mr Goodchild's 70th birthday. They were all very pleased to see them. On Thursday we went round Chapmans Peak in Douglas's car. We were going to Cape Point but Mom did not feel well so we returned via Fish Hoek, Muizenberg, etc. The children were so pleased with playing in the sand. Each had a spade and bucket. Evelyn has taken a number of very nice snaps of their tour, and no doubt some of them will be passed round for inspection. I have offered to type seven copies if she will write an account of their holiday. It would make very interesting reading. I hope she will do it. It could be illustrated with photos as well.

They all left at 8 am Friday and hoped to sleep at Beaufort West – 304 miles – the same evening. As I write, I expect they are in Kimberley as they hoped to cover the remaining 315 miles today. They look to spend Sunday with the other children in Kimberley on Sunday and home on Monday.

Douglas thinks that we should retire and live somewhere up country, say Cradock and have my motor and drive about the country roads. I cannot say I look forward to such a prospect with much pleasure. I have often said, and say it again in all sincerity, that I do not mind living to be 150 on one condition, and that is that I am able to work. So as soon as I am unable to do work, I trust that I may go hence. To be placed in such a place as Cradock or other similar up country dorp with nothing to do, and all day to do it in, would finish me in no time. If it has to be, I cannot help it and I shall make the best of it, but at present it has no appeal to me. Of course it would be nice to be in the same town as Aunt Eliza and be able to visit our relatives from time to time in the district. We should also be a little though not much, nearer the rest of our family. Mom, I know does not like Cape Town and now that winter has set in, I have suggested that she goes as soon as possible, this week if convenient, as far as Bloemfontein and later to Kroonstad. Mom has had a nasty cold the last few days and is not feeling fit so I hope this will be possible to arrange pretty soon. We do not know what is before us here. Mrs Hurndall has resigned and I shall be having a committee meeting on the matter soon. When we leave here we shall have to keep house somewhere and no doubt a way will open for us. We must be content to live a day at a time.

Saturday afternoon we went to Pinelands. Mom did not feel equal to seeing anyone at croquet so she spent the afternoon with Mrs Hobkerk. I did not finish my game as it was getting late. We took Mrs Hobkerk to Aunt Emmie's as I had to get the typewriter for this letter. She seemed to enjoy the spin. I must tell you a joke that occurred last time we played. I was speaking to Mom and of course called her "Mom". An elderly lady who was helping with the tea afterwards asked Mom if I was her son!!!

We are glad to have had letters from most, if not all of you during the week. Dot will feel lonely after Reg has started for the north. I wonder when we shall see their new home. Perhaps we may take a trip through the game reserve some day. I see I have come to the end of the sheet so must stop.

Lots of love
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
May 6th, 1934

My dear All,

I hope no one forgot that it was Dot's birthday yesterday. Uncle Joe had not forgotten it as a letter came from him by last mail for me to send on. We have not yet had details of how his end came but we all think that he rose about six as usual and that he either fainted or collapsed as he was about his usual duties. Or, of course, he may have been found dead in bed. In any case a post-mortem was held and the verdict was natural causes, syncope-heart failure. We are surprised that it was necessary to have a post-mortem at all. The week after next we shall hear full particulars. It seems so strange receiving letters from him knowing that he is no longer alive. I am glad to say that both Aunt Eliza and Aunt Emmie have taken the loss very calmly. I think Douglas was at Aunt Eliza's when the news arrived. We had a long letter from Aunt Eliza telling of some of the doings whilst Douglas and Evelyn were in Cradock. We do not know where they are now. I expect they are spending Sunday in Grahamstown but we have only had two postcards and one letter from them. We hear from Aunt Eliza that they can look to spend only ten days in Cape Town. We shall see about that.

Thanks to all of you for your kind sympathetic letters to hand during the week. It is quite clear from Uncle Willie's letters (written of course before Uncle's death) that he was looking to return with Alison.

My time for writing my circle letters is somewhat interfered with now owing to the Sunday afternoon straight talks at the YW which I have to arrange. These commence at 4.15 and are over by 5. This afternoon I went to the hospital to see our old office boy who after three months' absence from their care, had to return again. He is now on the danger list and I fear he cannot last very long. Dropsy has set in.

I forgot to mention last week that we took Mrs Hemming, wife of the late Station Master at Vryburg, for a spin. She was staying with a friend of hers, Mrs Cox at Green Point. She quite enjoyed the outing and has now returned to the Transvaal. A day or two after, Mr and Mrs Ambler called and it appears that the Mrs Cox is a great friend of hers.

I have not done anything yet about trading in my car but shall wait to see what Douglas thinks.

Ruth writes that she and Denis look to come to us at Xmas. This is something to look forward to. We shall be very pleased to have them.

The annual meeting went off alright on Monday evening. The attendance was not too good. The Board held a meeting the following afternoon to elect a new Chairman. Mr Haddon was chosen. They discussed other matters for over two hours before I got home. I have asked the Board to give me a statement in writing as to what duties they wish me to be responsible for under the new arrangements. They have not done so yet and are to hold another meeting in about a week's time to go into this. They should have done so before.

Yesterday afternoon, we both played croquet at Pinelands. Mom did very well. The game was a draw, both sides equal.

We are wondering when Reg and Dot start for their new home. We shall want to go and see them as soon as we can. I am still thinking of taking a round tour of the Union.

We have just returned from evening service and Mom says I must not start another sheet. I do not know that I have much to add except the usual consignment of love to you all. I trust you will all keep well through the winter. So far we have had very nice weather and hope it keeps fine whilst Douglas and Evelyn are here. Everyone who has written speak in highly of the children.



Aunt Eliza taken at Cradock
1st May 1934

Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
May 10th, 1934

My dear All,

It is a regular summers day to day. Almost too hot to be in the sun. No wind or clouds about. Everyone says it is unseasonable. Let me say that Mom's cold is much better. She has breakfast in bed daily and is alright again for which I am very glad. We have been thinking that it will be best for her to get away as soon as possible, first to Bloemfontein and then to Kroonstad. Grace is due to be with Blodwen about the 10th July so Mom can spend a week or so before then and afterwards go to Kroonstad and be with the children whilst Grace is away. We also hope that Dot will be able to be with Mom whilst at Grace's. We do not know when we shall be able to go to Potgietersrus to see her there so she had better see us in the Free State before she goes so far north. We had thought of Mom starting on Thursday next but today I find the excursion season starts on Saturday 16th so it may be as well to save a few pounds in fares and start a few days later. So that is what we shall look to unless unforeseen events make it necessary to alter. Excursions are issued up to July 7th so it might fit in with my plans if I can get away by that date and join Mom.

We had a Botha House committee on Thursday afternoon and my position was considered in view of Matron's resignation. I suggested that in the interests of economy and in view of my eventually leaving the YMCA, it would be advisable to get an efficient man and wife who could take the matron's and my place jointly and so save money. I had previously been approached by Mr Ralls of Kroonstad and from enquiries made, should consider him a most suitable man (and wife) for the position. I had communicated with him and recommended the appointment if he was available. The Committee thought it best to advertise the position at a joint salary of £100 per annum all found. Unfortunately I received a reply from him the day after the meeting saying his available. I am trying to arrange for the advertisement to be omitted and the appointment given to him.

Later. We had such a nice long letter from Blodwen and Joe, also Dot and Grace. Evelyn has sent postcards saying they arrived safely at Vryburg. They did what they set out to do in the time. I have offered to type some copies of their travels if she will supply the necessary copy.

Yesterday afternoon we had a Local Preachers conference at Durbanville. Mom went with me. There were about 30 present and we had a very nice time. We did not get back until about eight.

Aunt Emmie has been here this afternoon and has been doing some of her typing. She has just gone back by train.

You will be glad to know that further particulars have come to hand regarding Uncle Joe's will. It now appears that he has left the residue to be divided into six parts. One each for Aunts Eliza and Emmie, Uncle Willie and I. The remaining two sixths to be equally divided between Norman, West, Ernest, Florrie, Alice, Josie, Jamie and Kathleen. Of course we do not know what the estate will realise but whatever it is will be welcome. Miss Boone, and Uncle Willie have sent me Uncle Joe's watch which he was wearing. It arrived safely last mail and is a nice silver one. Aunt Emmie has received a Bible with his name printed on it. She is giving it to our Joe as he bears his name. Mom will take it up with her.

If our plans mature as they seem to be developing, I expect we shall try to find a suitable home in Pinelands where we can settle. We shall see how a way opens in due course.

I have other letters to write tonight so must close, with lots of love

Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
Evening, May 12th, 1934

My dear All,

I am commencing my circle letter this evening as my Sunday afternoons are now broken into by attending the series of Straight talks at the YMCA.

It has been a week of some anxiety regarding Douglas and Evelyn. We have been half expecting them to arrive any day since they left Cradock on May 3rd. We thought that perhaps they were looking to spring a surprise on us by not announcing the time of their expected arrival. However, as we did not hear anything about them, I wired to Ruth on Friday morning to see if they had arrived there. Ruth had not heard from them either. At lunch time I received a postcard from Douglas posted at Kimberley saying he was on the train on his way back to Vryburg as over thirty of his cattle had died from eating locust poison and about the same number were sick. He had left Evelyn and the children and the car at Seven Fountains and hopes to go back there next week. He says he does not know if they will be able to continue their tour here. We shall be very disappointed if they have to go straight back to Vryburg but of course can quite understand his anxiety in the matter. As we had not heard from them, we thought that perhaps they were going to surprise us on Thursday, a public holiday, so we went along the road to the foot of Sir Lowry Pass. I had suggested that as we might pass each other on the road, we should each tie a handkerchief over the right hand headlight. I never looked to see who is in the cars as we pass each other. We are glad to know that they are safe and sound.

Thursday was a lovely day. I went into town before nine to see if there was any letters or wire from Douglas and then left about ten, calling for the Gushes and took them all to Steenbrass River mouth where we camped on the beach for the rest of the day. The Council is getting on with a reinforced concrete bridge over the river. It will take them about six months to complete the job. Some of us climbed to the top of the hill on the other side of the river. The waves breaking over the rocks was very grand. Strange to say the Cape Times has photos of the scene this morning.

This afternoon we went to croquet again. We took Aunt Emmie with us. She did not play but perhaps will do so later if she stays in Cape Town. We took her back to Gladys' Plumstead where she is staying for the present.

Yesterday evening we received an airmail letter from my brother Willie who gave some particulars of Uncle Joe's funeral. There was a large attendance and after the service, Uncle's lawyer, a Friend, read Uncle's will. The following extract from a letter of the Lawyer is of interest. He says:

"by his will, the deceased appointed yourself (Uncle Willie) and his nephew, Henry West Butler, to be executors and trustees and after certain pecuniary legacies and one specific legacy, he gave all his estate in trust for various relatives in fractional portions. There were the usual substitutionary provisions in the case of beneficiaries dying before the testator and leaving children. One of the fractions and shares before referred to was left in trust for the testator's nephews and nieces, the children of testators deceased brothers John and James Butler and if any of such children are at present under age, then the trusts of the will would in this respect continue until such children attain majority. There was also a legacy bequeathed to D R Butler, the grandson of testator's brother Charles Butler, but if D R Butler is under age, his legacy could be invested and direction given to accumulate the dividends without occasioning any trouble to the deceased's trustees."

This is as far as we know anything at present. I am very glad that Uncle has specially remembered Denis. He often remarked to me that Harold was the only grandchild of our generation that had passed away. Perhaps later on Uncle Willie may send us a copy of the whole of the will. I have no idea as to what his estate will be worth. Next week's letters will no doubt contain full details regarding his death but it is nice to know that he was spared any length of suffering. He died early in the morning in a moment quietly engaged at his morning reading.

Sunday evening, 13th. Have just returned from evening service in Observatory. I have had a full programme today. Service with the boys at O.QT am, meeting in town at eleven, visited Rev Wookey at Valkenberg and our old YMCA native boy who is in hospital again at the New Somerset hospital. From there to the YM straight talk where I had to preside for Rev Granett. Back again to evening meal here at 5.30 and service at 7, home at 8.30 after calling to see how Mr Price is getting on. He has not been so well lately. He nearly fell whilst getting into his chair but his daughter and I caught him in time.

We have not heard from anyone except Grace this week. She writes that the water on the erf is giving in and Ted has had to take up the wind pumps. She is using rainwater at present. Mrs Price has shown us some excellent snaps of Joe and his baby. We are ordering some of each. Roy is only about nine months old and is walking. I don't know how many teeth he has.

Grace wants Mom to go to Kroonstad in July so that she can be free to go to Blodwen at that time. We shall try to arrange this but I cannot say when I shall be able to get my holiday. Young Mr Lewis turned up on Friday and said he does not want to begin his duties before July but is willing to commence in June if the Board wishes it. The committee is meeting tomorrow afternoon to discuss what duties they wish me to perform. I had a long chat with Dr Dommissie about it a few days ago. He says he does not think I am going backward in health but I should get away as soon as possible. I do not see how that can happen at any rate before the new man has a chance. He told me that in any case they want us to stay at Louis Botha House. When they have defined my duties, I shall then be in a position to say if I will accept them and the further reduction of eight pounds per month.

I have not decided anything about a new car. I have had a good look at a Morris six and Vauxall and Chevrolet. I am still going to look at the new Fords.

Aunt Emmie is still staying at Gladys and I hope will continue so to do. She is certainly much better than when she was staying alone and cooking for herself.

Monday morning. It seems that my letter will be like a serial, coming out in penny numbers. I do not know that I have much to add except to say that we do miss your letters very much if they do not come to hand regularly. As we are so far away, we feel very lonely and often wonder what and how you are getting on. Now that postage is reduced to a penny and postcards to half penny, we do hope we shall hear from you all frequently.

I am thankful to say we are both coping well and happy.

Must stop for breakfast and then to office. This week is a very full one with meetings of one sort and another to attend. I am to preside next Tuesday at the Sunday School anniversary here in Observatory.

Lots of love to all,
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
May 17th, 1934

My dear All,

Douglas and Evelyn have arrived. We had a wire from them from the Wilderness on Wednesday saying that they might arrive Thursday night or Friday morning. We did not make any plans for the Thursday holiday but went over to Gladys and had dinner there and afterwards took Gladys and her boys to Princess Vlei and a little further. Mom stayed with Aunt Emmie. It was a very fine day though the morning looked as though it would be wet. We got back about five and shortly afterwards, Douglas and Co arrived. They had travelled via Worcester, Wellington and Paarl, Belville. They missed the Pinelands road so came on to Salt River. They have had a very nice journey, the scenery is described as lovely. They have not had much rain until they got near to Cape Town and were advised not to come via Caledon.

Friday morning I had an appointment with my dentist as one of my back teeth has been giving me trouble. I saw the dentist last week and he filed down the offending tooth but it did not stop the trouble so he made further investigations and found a very bad hole which was poisoning my system. He wanted to come out here (½-£) and extract it but I got Douglas to come in with the car at six pm. He had to make three injections of some stuff and ordered me straight to bed after getting home. It rather upset me but I am alright again now I am glad to say.

Friday evening Aunt Emmie came over and Douglas and Evelyn motored her home, the children sleeping meanwhile in our bedroom. I did not stay in town on Saturday as I was feeling rather shaky. In the afternoon Douglas motored us all to Muizenburg where the children were delighted to play in the sand. We took tea with us and then went to Fish Hoek and dropped in on the Florences for a standing gossip. We came back along the drive over Muizenberg and called at Gladys's for my typewriter. Aunt Emmie is using it during the week for typing out a history of Friends in South Africa. It is a long job. We did not go out in the evening but Mr and Mrs Gush came over to see us and enquire how I was. Douglas and Evelyn took them home. Today, Sunday, has been much as usual. Douglas and Evelyn and the children went off about half past nine to spend the day with the Wilsons at Sea Point. We had our usual service at O.Q.T and had a much larger attendance than for months past. This is a direct result of a meeting I had with the boys on Wednesday evening when I had occasion to speak very plainly to them on various matters, financial and others. Mom and I went to meeting as usual.

This afternoon I left Mom in the botanical gardens whilst I went to the YMCA straight talk. Douglas and Evelyn are attending service at the Metropolitan so as to hear Rev Titcomb. Mom and I are staying in and incidentally listening to a service from the Presbyterian church. We are also finishing our letters so as to be free when they return. The children will, I expect, be very tired.

Thanks for letters received during the week. So Reg will be leaving in a few days time for his new home. Dot is staying at Douglas's for a while.

Mrs Hurndall has tendered her resignation at Matron as from June 30th but I have told her that I may be away on holiday for July so she is willing to stay longer if necessary. We are trying to sell the place but that is not an easy matter. However, we shall see what is going to happen. Douglas thinks we ought to retire to some quiet place and avoid the rush of traffic etc here. We have not made any definite plans for the future. A good deal will depend upon how the new man gets on.

Monday 7 am. No time for more.

Love from Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
May 19th, 1934

My dear All,

Winter has come at last. This week we have had a good deal of rain and of course it has been much colder. The season started with a sharp thunderstorm which incidentally upset the electric train service for a few hours.

We have at last heard from Douglas and find that he had to hurry back to Vryburg on account of heavy losses of stock through locust poisoning. He estimates the loss at about £300. I hope he will get some compensation but I fear it is very doubtful. Douglas wired from Grahamstown on Thursday saying we may expect them to arrive about next Thursday. We hope we shall hear by what route he is travelling as Thursday is a public holiday and we could meet them along the road and spend the day in the veldt somewhere. Hope we shall hear in time to make plans. We usually take the house for a picnic on Empire Day but may have to put it off until Union Day.

Grace writes that their well has given in. I should have thought that after all the rain that fell a few months ago, the fountains would have been strengthened. We are always glad to hear news of all the children. We are trying to plan for Mom to go to Kroonstad either in June or July so as to liberate Grace to go to Blodwen in July. It is perhaps possible to look forward to our taking our holiday some time in July. The Board has agreed to take on Mr Stakesby Lewis on six month's trial as Organising Secretary from June 1st. so I am thinking that perhaps after he has been a month with me, he can be left alone for a time whilst I get away. I am not certain that I will leave town but if I do, we might spend the month between Bloemfontein and Kroonstad. If I take the car, we might take short runs into Basutoland and Kimberley etc. Joe and Blodwen suggest that we could be accommodated in the rooms adjoining theirs. We shall see what happens.

Dot writes that she is not going to Potgietersrus at present as they have not a house to go to. We have not heard when Reg starts for his new venture. When I get long leave or retire, I hope to take a long tour through the country, including the Kruger National Park. In that case, we should go through the northern Transvaal.

We went to croquet this afternoon but Mom said it was too cold for her to play so we did not finish the game. Went to see Aunt Emmie and brought back this typewriter. She is typing a sort of history of Friends in South Africa. I am glad to say she is keeping much better than when she was living alone.

Sunday afternoon. We got a letter card from Douglas and Evelyn this morning when we went to meeting. They report that they may be expected some time this coming week. We had a wire to the same effect on Thursday. They may wire from Caledon or somewhere in that neighbourhood. I hope they will arrange to have the holiday (Thursday) with us. We may go to meet them if we know in time.

So Dot is not going via Bloemfontein and Kroonstad just at present. We shall want to see their new home later on. I called to see Mr Price on my way back from Our Straight Talk in town this afternoon. He is not quite so well and not able to walk as much as usual. No doubt the weather affects him.

Mr and Mrs Cloete came home with us from evening service and is having tea with us before going home. The anniversary service this evening was very good.

Much love to you all. Must not attempt another sheet this evening, so good night.

Much love to all,
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
Evening, June 16th, 1934

My dear All,

One does not know where to begin every week. So much to do and so little done. The work is not decreasing and I can see it is going to be impossible to get away early in July, if at all. We must wait and see. It was Mom's intention of starting for Bloemfontein on Monday next. I had almost booked her seat but she took ill and had to stay in bed for a while. Stomach was the cause of the trouble and we cannot tell what it was that upset her. However, I am glad to say that she is much better now (Saturday evening) and I hope will not have any recurrence. Mom says she does not want to travel alone and would rather wait until I can get away as well. So that is how matters stand at the moment. We hope that will not upset Joe and Blodwen's and Grace's plans.

Sunday evening, 17th. Mom is quite better today and has been to meeting and this afternoon I took her and Aunt Emmie to Sea Point whilst I was at the Straight Talk at Headquarters. I took Mr Haddow home after the service. Aunt Emmie had dinner with us today. She and Gladys came to meeting in the morning. I think this is the first time since they have been living at Plumstead.

About thirty applications have come in for the position here. Mr Ralls, who I thought would be glad of the position, has turned it down as he wants a salary of £20 per month in addition to all found. I expect the committee will make its selection this week. We shall know better then what is before us.

Yesterday afternoon we had a look at a few houses which we have seen advertised but have not decided upon anything yet.

Mr Price's health is causing anxiety to his family. We call there pretty frequently. One feels very helpless in such cases.

We have been favoured with interesting letters from most of the family during the week. Thanks to you all. Keep it up. We are glad that Douglas and Evelyn found everything in order when they got home. The three children from boarding school will be home this week. There will be great excitement no doubt. Arthur speaks of having a hunt. I do hope there will not be any gun accidents.

Grace writes that the children are fairly well. They have had frosts whilst we are having summer weather. It has been a most unusual winter so far. Next week we pass the shortest day and shall be looking forward to spring. Dot writes from Scholtzfontein very brightly. She is hoping Reg will soon be able to find a house for her. She wants us to go up to them as soon as possible. In fact all the family seem to want us all at once. I do not know what we shall do just at present about holidays but will let you know in good time.

My letter is very disjointed this week. There has been so many interruptions that it has been impossible to concentrate. I hope the coming week will not be as strenuous as last was. One day I had no less than five meetings to attend. Mom has written a number of letters today so I will not add more now. I hope you are all keeping well through the cold weather.

Much love to all,

Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
Sunday evening, June 24th, 1934

My dear All,

It is not often that I do not feel in the writing mood but I must admit that this evening I do not seem to want to write. Yet I should be sorry to miss a week. The fact is I am not feeling too grand and have lost my voice. I have not lost everything that I want to say but the inclination to set myself the task of saying it. I suppose I have caught a cold although I have no symptoms as such. I have had the same trouble before and it generally means that I am more or less run down. However I hope the voice will return by tomorrow as I have some important meetings to attend.

Thanks for all your letters to hand during the week. This (Sunday) morning we received letters from Grace and Dot and a note from Blodwen. We have been thinking and discussing holidays and our future for such a long time now that I fear you are all getting tired of plans. Mom is now herself again, having got over her upset. She does not like the idea of travelling alone and prefers to wait until I can get away. The Board had a long evening with one of the Head YMCA men from England who has been travelling all over the country with Dr JR Mott. He emphasised the need in South Africa for specially trained men for YMCA work. Men who had had gone through years of training for the work. The Board approved of the idea but has not yet decided to get such a man. First of all it will have to raise a guarantee list to meet such a man's salary, probably six hundred or more. Even if they were to start at once negotiation for such a Secretary, it would probably take several months before he could assume duties. Now that the Board has got Mr Lewis, I feel more at liberty to suggest leaving the Association altogether from, say, the end of July, taking July as my holiday. There are about 40 applications for a man and his wife to run LBH and it is possible that they might select one to take over practically at once. This would thus relieve us to get away about the first week in July. If this should materialise, we would then go to Bloemfontein and Kroonstad and probably return to Cape Town from there and settle up our affairs here. After a week or two on that job, I feel like embarking on my long looked forward to motor trip round the Union. Perhaps one of Aunt Agnes' daughters would like to accompany us. She would be company for Mom and be able to assist in driving if necessary. Dot is very anxious for us to come and see their new home. Reg has bought a house at Potgietersrus and she expects to be going there about the middle of July.

We have spent some time in looking through houses in Pinelands and elsewhere but have not decided upon anything yet. If we carried out the above plans, we should not look to settle down anywhere until about the end of the year which would give us sufficient time to decide where to settle.

Monday morning. I went to bed before nine last evening and am feeling better this morning. I shall not go to the office quite so early so as to get warm. My voice is better but my chest is rather sore so must be careful. I still have hundreds of debenture certificates to sign, each one is worth £10 and they have to be finished and stamped with a 6 penny stamp before Saturday.

Of course the holiday plans mentioned above are all subject to God's will in the matter and I hope they will work out to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Much love to all,
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
July 1st, 1934

My dear All,

This is probably the last letter I shall type to you from the Louis Botha House. According to present arrangements, we leave here next Saturday evening for Bloemfontein. We have resided here for just on eight years and the work has been strenuous at times. It never has been home but the work has been interesting. I must not go into reminiscences now, time will not permit as there are other things I want to say.

The Committee has made its choice of a successor for LBH, a Mr and Mrs Fox. They have recently come from East London. Methodists, local preacher and a very nice couple. They were able to assume duties at once and as a matter of fact are in residence now. They came this morning and Mrs Hurndall left this morning. We are staying here for this week and will leave on Saturday evening. We had a little presentation to Mrs Hurndall. The residents subscribed over £3 and Mrs Hurndall purchased an eiderdown and travelling trunk with the money. We hope that our successors will be very happy and comfortable. No plans have been made for headquarters except that we are to return in about a month's time. I do not think I shall stay very long at the office as it may be several months before they get a man from overseas to fill my place. We have decided not to take any house at present, at any rate not before we return from this trip. What the future has in store for us, we are prepared to wait and see.

It has been a case of uprooting trees, as it were, this week. I have given up the secretaryship of the Lay Preachers Federation and handed over the books to my successor. They have elected me as President designate for next year. I have been secretary for five years. Other secretaryships I am also giving up as way opens. It will be indeed strange not being responsible for so many things.

The work during the past week has been very strenuous in connection with the debentures for the Property company.

It has been so awkward having lost my voice all the week but today it is much better, in fact I have been able to speak almost naturally.

On Friday I wired to Reg offering to motor Dot from Bloemfontein or Kroonstad to Potgietersrus if it would be any convenience to him but he replied that arrangements had already been made and he would be in Vryburg on 7th. I have not definitely decided if I will rail the car to Bloemfontein or leave it behind.

Mr Price remains very ill and there is very little hope of recovery. His son and daughter who came from Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth are returning. This afternoon I went to see Bevan Wookey. He is feeling the cold – it has been bitterly cold today. I arranged for him to have an extra blanket on his bed.

Monday morning. Yesterday was the coldest day we have had this winter. It rained a good deal and was generally uncomfortable. Expect we shall find a great difference this day next week when we reach Bloemfontein. We shall have a lot to do in packing up and storing our belongings before we start.

Post from next week to: care of Joe, 21 Waverley Road, Bloemfontein.

Goodbye, lots of love to all,

Dad

On the Train
July 8th, 1934

My dear All,

Well here we are, on our way to Joe and Blodwen at Bloemfontein. We left Cape Town at quarter to nine last evening and are due at Bloemfontein at a quarter past seven in the morning. We have been very comfy in a coupe but it is very close with all our luggage in such close quarters. We have had the heater on almost all day. The sun is hot but the air is decidedly cold. We have seen snow on the tops of the hills in the distance. Aunt Emmie and Gladys came to Botha House in the afternoon as did also Mr and Mrs Gush, to say goodbye. Both very kindly brought us some provender for the road. It was very thoughtful of them.

Mr and Mrs Fox, our successors, came to Observatory station to see us off. They also provided for our creature comforts by adding to what we had purchased. So you can see we have not done badly in the eating line.

The past week has been one of the most strenuous I have had. It has been a case of uprooting oneself from the activities of the past eight years but I think they will do very nicely indeed for the residents. They are very thankful that they got the appointment. We have left all our belongings in the house, pictures on the walls etc as we do not know where we shall settle when we get back. We have accumulated a fair amount of furniture during the past years which may come in useful if we have to start a home of our own somewhere.

At the office, I have been very rushed, so many things to see to and hand over. Of course I am supposed to be going back to headquarters but for how long I do not know. Nothing has been decided about a successor and will not be until Mr Starck returns from his trip round the world about the end of this month.

I wired to Reg during the week suggesting that I might take Dot to Potgietersrus by car from either Bloemfontein or Kroonstad if it would be any assistance to them but he replied that he expected to be in Vryburg on 7th and all arrangements had been made. We received a wire from Joe yesterday dinnertime saying that our plans might have to be altered owing to Blodwen's event materialising sooner, apparently, than expected. We shall not know definitely until the morning when we arrive in Bloemfontein. We shall, if necessary, motor on to Kroonstad and look to spend a time with them on the return trip. I hope to be able to report good news in the morning. Will close for tonight as we are now nearing de Arr. We intend sleeping in our clothes tonight so as to avoid the cold first thing in the morning.

We only heard from Grace this week but perhaps there may be letters waiting for us at Joe's.

Mr Price still lingers on. I saw him a few minutes before we left. He understood me when I told him I was going to see Blodwen.

Monday morning, Bloemfontein. Joe met us at the station and informed us that baby arrived at 2.39 Saturday afternoon. Baby and Blodwen are splendid. Grace arrived on Saturday afternoon. We, Mom and I are leaving after lunch for Kroonstad. Have been to town and wired to Prices etc. Very cold and bright here. Heavy frost. Hope you are all well. Post to care of Mrs Irons, Kroonstad until further orders.

Love to all,
Dad

Baby's name is Merle Alice

Kroonstad
As from Box 691
Cape Town
July 12th, 1934

My dear All,

I do not know if I shall be able to do what I want to, but I think it will be as well if I write my dear all daily instead of waiting until the end of the week or beginning of the next week and then forgetting some items of news which may be of general interest. I have the time at present so will try and see if I can keep it up. Perhaps some of you will say it is silly of me to try to write when away on holiday but I feel that I ought to try to keep in touch with all of you as much as I can. I know how we have missed letters from you when you have been away so will try to make amends.

We left Cape Town, as you know, on Saturday afternoon, or rather evening. We “only” had a dozen articles of luggage and all of them in the compartment with our two selves. You can imagine there was not much room to spare. Fortunately the hot pipes were on or we should have suffered from the cold. The night was one of the coldest experienced this winter. We had plenty of provisions with us, Aunt Emmie and Gladys and the Gushes having kindly added to our supply. We did not have occasion to patronise the dining car at all, except for an occasional cup of tea. Mom occupied the top bunk one night and I the next. As the train arrives at Bloemfontein early in the morning, we thought it wisest to sleep in our clothes the last night. Joe was at the station to meet us with my car which had arrived on Saturday afternoon. The first question we asked was “which is it, a boy or a girl?” We were glad to hear that a daughter had safely arrived on Saturday afternoon and that Blodwen was first rate. We were soon at their home (21 Waverley Road) and offered our personal congratulations. Baby looked very comfortable and Blodwen was wonderfully well and bright. Grace and nurse were in charge, or rather nurse only came later on to wash baby, an operation which caused some amusement to the lady folk. We had a hurried breakfast and I was commissioned to go to town and wire the good news to Blodwen’s people and to post some cards which she had already written to various friends. I was also instructed to have the birth notice inserted in the local paper and duly register the arrival at the Births Registry. We had intended to spend about a week or more in Bloemfontein before coming on to Kroonstad but baby’s earlier arrival than was expected upset this plan so we soon agreed to proceed northwards so as to be sort of parents to Grace’s little tribe. The distance between the two towns is just 144 miles. This we did in five minutes under five hours, including a stop for tea at Winburg. The road from Bloemfontein to Brandfort was very corrugated but at a good speed one does not notice them very much. We should like to have called at the Government farm school at Glen but must try to do that on the return trip. From Brandfort to Winburg, the road was better. Winburg is the old home town of the Irons family. We stopped at the café which was old Mr Iron’s original shop. During the Boer War he had to leave owing to his being loyal to the British. The last lap of the journey was the worst so far as the road conditions were concerned. We struck some nasty patches of sand and I noticed that a new noise had developed. This I found afterwards was due to the exhaust pipe having become detached. I got this fixed up here. Ted and the four children were on the stoep waiting for our arrival. Sun was just setting and we were glad to have arrived whilst it was light.

We turned in very early as we were tired, having had two nights in the train.

Tuesday July 10th. We had breakfast in bed. I do not think either of us were conscious of any noise or disturbance during the night. We did not rise before nine so you will give us credit for doing what we have so often been advised to do, rest and rest. This we did all day. I should have said that on Monday evening Joe phoned from Bloemfontein to enquire if we had arrived safely and we were glad to know that Blodwen was making good progress.

Monday night was claimed to have been the coldest experienced in Kroonstad this winter, 18 degrees of frost were registered. Of course we have to let all the water out of the radiator in case of bursting the radiator. Ted has secured a garage on the next plot to this so it is

very convenient. In the afternoon, I walked to town with the two boys and came back with Ted in his car. Harold is having a new bike and of course is excited about it. All the children are as lively as can be. They are very happy and good.

Wednesday. The weather remaining fine (frost as usual), we decided to have a picnic lunch at the river. I took Mom and the children in by car and did a little shopping, leaving them at the river so long. Ted remarked last year that Kroonstad had the only river that he saw which had water in it and where there was boating. The council has made it a very attractive spot for visitors. There are swings, roundabouts, chutes etc etc all free of charge, a number of tennis courts, a small park with some buck, etc. We have not been out any evening yet, and don't expect to be as we are right out of town and of course the children cannot be left alone. Ted has a new house girl and a boy who looks after the cows, etc.

Thursday 12th. As Grace wrote for baby's cot to be sent to Blodwen, I took same in. Received letters from Aunt Eliza and Ruth. All very welcome. As a result of our discussions regarding our immediate movements, we thought it wise to consult a doctor as to the advisability of going further north. The change of air has certainly made me very drowsy and I thought perhaps the altitude was adversely affecting me. The doctor took my blood pressure and carefully sounded my heart. I told him that I had had rheumatic fever, pneumonia and pleurisy etc. He said I was wonderfully fit for my age and could not realise that I was over 70. He says that at the coast the strain on the muscles of the heart will be much less than up country. He also tested Mom's blood pressure which is a trifle below normal. He says she is in very good health. He admitted in reply to my question that Doctors had made far too much fuss regarding blood pressure than was at all justified. I am glad that we went to him. It was well worth the 7/6 he charged.

Friday 13th. I went to market in the morning and bought three large pumpkins for 1/6 and a bag of naatjies for the same price. Peas were 3d a lb. In the afternoon we took Miss Hicks and the children to see the works on the dam a few miles north of the town. The Council are erecting sluice gates in a dam in the river which was erected some years ago and the dam has filled up with silt. It is going to be an expensive job. Miss Hicks came over in the morning and helped with the cooking and stayed to dinner. She is very fond of the children and is a very nice neighbour to have. Uncle Joe and I occupied a room at her house last year.

Ted and Grace are contemplating enlarging the house by adding a couple of rooms at the side. I wonder if it would not be cheaper to add another storey as the foundations are strong enough and of course the same roof could be lifted.

Grace phoned this evening to enquire how everybody is getting on. She says Blodwen is very well but baby and Roy do not allow them to have much sleep at nights. Grace looks to return either Friday or Saturday next. I have written to Len Ambler to enquire if it will be convenient for him to show us round the garage on our way to Johannesburg one night and I want to see an eye specialist who has been highly recommended as being the best in SA. We then look to motor on to Potgietersrus and spend a few days with Reg and Dot. We shall return the same way and of course call here and have the last of our holiday with Joe and Blodwen. My holiday only commenced on 9th as I was working all day on the 7th in Cape Town and of course Sunday does not count. The Board told me that I was not to feel tied to only a month for my holiday. The first Monday in August is a public holiday so I shall try to work that in as well.

Saturday morning 14th. Mom developed a nasty cold in her head yesterday evening and is only now getting up (10.30). I hope it will not develop any further.

This afternoon we may perhaps call on Mrs Penny, mother of Mrs Smyter who used to live in Vryburg. The children are going to bioscope this afternoon. We are hoping to see Tor Venter who is about 30 miles from here. We shall ask him on the phone if he is at home.

The weather has been as perfect as one could wish all the time we have been here. I have to cover over the engine every night as it always freezes.

Later. Mom is better I am glad to say. She and the children are busy shelling peas.

I think I have given you enough for this week so will close, hoping that it will find you all well.

I expect Reg and Dot are speeding along today towards their new home. We hope to see them shortly.

Lots of love to all as though named.

Dad

Tynwold
Kroonstad
July 17th, 1934

My dear All,

If I remember correctly my last news ended with Saturday morning 14th. I am therefore somewhat behind if I want to keep up to date. Not that there is anything of great importance to record, as a matter of fact there is not. Saturday the children were promised a treat at the bioscope so I took them in, in plenty of time. Miss Hicks also wanted to go to town for shopping so I picked her up as well. Mom was not feeling too well, suffering from a cold and decided to stay at home. I took the opportunity of getting a decent shave whilst in town – I can't seem to manage that operation here – and also visited the public library. This latter is a fine building with plenty of papers and magazines. I hope to go there again. I should have said that before we started for town, we noticed a large grass fire raging on Mr Pierce's farm so I phoned to Mr Pierce, who is a friend of Ted's, and sent Ted's native boy to help extinguish it. Mr Pierce, by the way, is a son of the late Tom Pierce who was a teacher at Friends School. Croydon. Uncle Joe enjoyed a long talk with Mr Pierce last year when he came to see us here. We brought Ted home, tying his bike behind the car. The children, of course, were excited with the pictures. Each evening we have spent quietly at home. I have played several games of draughts with the children and they seem to enter into the game fairly well.

Sunday 15th. Ted took the children to Sunday School at 10 am. I walked to church, about three miles and motored back with the others. Mom did not go out all day owing to her cold being worse. Rev Stanton gave a very fine address but the congregation was very small. In the afternoon we went to town again to attend the Delville Wood Memorial Service in the Town Hall. This was well attended and again, Rev Stanton gave a very sympathetic address. The Salvation Army band played the usual music. I could not but help calling to mind the position of the Salvation Army sixty years ago, when such an event would have been unheard of. The Army in those days was just beginning its useful work and was despised by the general public. In those days nothing was bad enough to throw at them in the streets. In the evening, we had reading and hymns with the children. We also had some gramophone records. We recognised the old gramophone as being the one we had in Vryburg many years ago.

Monday, Mom and I went into town to call on Mrs Penny, mother of Mrs Smyter, formerly of Vryburg and now living at Camps Bay. Mr Fincham of Vryburg, who purchased my house there, is a nephew of Mrs Penny. We generally call for Ted about five and tie his bike on the back of the car and bring him home.

Tuesday the children were invited to birthday parties so we had a quiet day. In the evening I went to a Sons of England meeting, the first time any of us have been out after tea. Mr Pierce called for me and brought me back. It was quite a nice gathering but rather on the small side so far as numbers were concerned.

Wednesday 19th, we went to Edenville, about 35 miles from here, to see Mr and Mrs Tor Venter. Both were in Vryburg in our time. Tor was in the bank with Harold and used frequently to visit at Cradock House. He married a Miss Bell, who used to work in Ruth's shop and was a first class saleswoman. It was very interesting to recall many incidents of past history. He is now an accountant at this little dorp. He is living in a hired house of five or six rooms for which he only pays £4.10 per month. They are 30 miles from everywhere and of course have not electric light or other modern facilities. They seem quite happy there. They have one little girl.

Thursday 19th. This is the first cloudy day we have experienced since leaving Cape Town. We experienced a sharp thunder storm, accompanied with hail. Mom and I started to visit Miss Hicks, who lives on an adjoining plot and where Uncle Joe and I had a room for sleeping, but as it commenced to rain, we turned back. We had the two little girls with us. I found Jean was no light weight to carry.

Ted developed a nasty cold during the day and came home far from well. He went to bed early as he was rather feverish and did not get much sleep. We had rather a restless night also as

the dog, a great dane, kept up a pretty ceaseless barking. I went out as soon as it was sufficiently light to see what was the matter but could only presume that he was cold.

Friday 20th. Great excitement today. Grace returned by the early train, leaving Bloemfontein at 6.30. Joe saw her off. I took the two boys in to buy on the market and do some shopping. Ted arranged to meet the early train and to let me know by phone if Grace was there, then I would go back and bring her home. She did come so Mom and the two little girls came back with me and we were soon on the plot again. Miss Hicks was also here so there was great rejoicing. Grace reports Blodwen getting on nicely and having got a new domestic, we hope all will go well with her and the two children. Baby is sleeping better so we hope she will be able to manage. Grace had brought some children's records for the little ones. They are greatly pleased. We all went to meet Ted who I am glad to say has recovered from his cold.

In the evening we sat and talked of their proposed plans for altering or rather adding to the house. They certainly do need more room here. The proposed new rooms would make the house much more convenient. The difficulty in Ted's case is that he might get promoted or transferred in which case it might be difficult to realise the property. However, they will talk it over. Ted says the Office was circularised recently for a return of the married staff so it looks as though there might be some changes in the wind.

Saturday 21st. We have now spent two weeks of our holiday. We have nothing worth recording it seems. Dot has written to say that she will not be in her own home before the end of next week and wants us to wait here a while longer. It is now suggested that we go to Potgietersrus by next Saturday's day train so that we can see the country. Mom seems scared to take the motor journey I am sorry to say. Dot says the road journey is a very pretty one. We also want to see the Amblers and they have kindly invited us to spend a night with them. Our plans are therefore being altered and as far as I can see, we shall leave here by early train on Thursday morning for Vereeniging (arriving there about 7 am) and leaving again in the afternoon for Johannesburg so as to have Friday clear for seeing the eye specialist. I hear they have more experienced men there than in Cape Town. We may also have time to see the Farrens and Hendersons in Pretoria either on the way up or back. I would like to attend meeting there and also to see them on the Friends school later. We look to leave Potgietersrus on the following Saturday, calling here for our car and proceeding to Bloemfontein for the last stage of our visit. I have written to the Board asking for a definite statement as to my position in the future but do not expect to hear for another week or so.

Dot writes a very glowing account of her new home. The garden specially appeals to her. We are looking forward to seeing it soon.

The children start school again next Tuesday. Ted motors them in with him at eight in the morning and brings them back at lunch time. Harold is in Standard one and I am surprised how well he reads. He is doing quite well at school. Both the boys have their own bicycles now and the little girls have a small tricycle between them. They live very much out of doors. Ted has two cows in milk and is doing quite a business with poultry.

I may as well post this today when I go to town this afternoon.

Love from all to all,

Dad

Kroonstad
July 25th, 1934

My Dear All,

I have not written a line for this week's circle letter since last Saturday I think. Now we are getting ready for our next move as tomorrow at noon we start for Potgietersrus. I must try to catch up as shall not have much time when we once get on the move again.

On Saturday we experienced a very severe storm accompanied with hail, thunder and lightning. It was quite unseasonable and of course kept us in. Sunday, Ted took the children to early Sunday school as usual and I took Mom and Grace to morning service. The church was very poorly attended although they said it was quite a fair attendance. We enjoyed Rev Stanton's discourse. In the afternoon it cleared up nicely and we celebrated Ted's 42nd birthday. Tor Venter and his wife called in the afternoon and Mr Tom Pierce and children came over as well. The birthday cake was duly cut and enjoyed. More rain fell during the evening and night.

Monday 23rd. I had offered to take Mr and Mrs Stanton for a ride if he wanted to visit any of his flock so he suggested going to see one he had never visited before, a Mr and Mrs Ruben Penny who lived on a farm about 20 miles out. Mrs Penny, mother of the party, accompanied us as guide. The road was not too bad for the most part but as happened last year when we took Uncle Joe to Vryburg, as soon as you get off the main road, you find the 'going' is more difficult. However we managed without accident but the car got a good deal of mud from the condition of the road. It was very cold and although the car is a sedan, we were all glad of overcoats and gloves. The farm is the first I have visited in the Free State. It is about 600 acres in extent and is devoted mostly to mealie growing. He has a good crop but is not all reaped yet and the heavy rains of the past few days will cause delay, if not serious loss, as there is very little chance of the grain getting dry. Mr Penny is, I should think, a prosperous farmer. He has a good shed in which he can house 600 or more sheep in wet weather, several stacks of hay etc. We got back to town after having enjoyed a good lunch which included guinea fowl, about five pm.

Tuesday 24th. Ted had taken a week's holiday this week and intended to motor us to see the Amblers at Vereeniging. All arrangements had been made over the phone the day before but as so much rain had fallen again during the night, it was deemed unadvisable to attempt the 90 mile journey. The weather did clear up but it was too late to attempt to go as the roads had not had a chance to dry. We 'called' on three neighbours instead. The first was Mrs v d Walt who occupies a very nice house built by a retired (now deceased) gent who was a successful business man in the town here some years ago. The house is just opposite Ted's gate. It is a beautiful place and is occupied by a railway man and his wife. He has electric light laid on and only pays £6 per month. This includes all the furniture which is all very good. If it were available and if we should decide to leave Cape Town, it seems as though this might be a very suitable place for us to retire to. It would be an additional attraction if Joe could get a transfer here from Bloemfontein. We also called on the Pierces and Mrs Archibald, all very nice people and friends of Grace's. All have children about the same ages of some of Grace's.

Wednesday 25th. I took Ted to the dentists this morning when he had all his teeth out. Dr had some difficulty in getting him under the influence of gas and I had to leave him in the surgery for an hour or two whilst he rested from the effects. I took Grace with me to bring him home and he is now comfortably settled in bed. He hopes to be up and about tomorrow when we leave.

Joe has written suggesting coming up to Kroonstad to meet us and motor back to Bloemfontein on August bank holiday. Baby, we are glad to hear, is making good progress.

July 26th. I am writing this in the train on our way to Johannesburg and thence to Potgietersrus. It is Ted's 42nd birthday. He had breakfast in bed, having had a good night in spite of the fact that his mouth is still sore from the effect of the extractions yesterday. He is much better than I expected he would be. Talking of birthdays reminds me that had Uncle James been alive, he would have celebrated his 80th last Sunday. I wrote to Aunt Letty on this occasion, as I generally do. It is just over eleven years since he passed away.

I took our luggage into town in my car and got post from Blodwen who says they have their car under offer to someone in Bloemfontein who wants it so they do not see how they can arrange to meet us on bank holiday at Winburg on our return to Bloemfontein on bank holiday if we are back from Dot's by that time. However we shall see all in good time. (The train is swaying about a good deal which makes it awkward to type, so please excuse mistakes.)

The last time I travelled along here was when Uncle Joe was with me on our way to Johannesburg General meeting 1933.

We have had a nice time with Grace and Ted. It has been quiet and uneventful but may result in some changes. Kroonstad is the second largest town in the Free State and is prettily situated on the banks of the river. Uncle Joe was charmed with the place and often remarked that it was the only town he had visited where there was a river with boating facilities. Whilst we have been here, the river has been 'down' which is most unusual for this time of the year. Of course everything has its winter appearance, grass quite white, trees bare and cold nights but fine days. The windy season is beginning but we have been used to these conditions in Cradock and Vryburg so that is nothing new to us. We cannot decide anything at this stage regarding our future until we know what the Board intends me to do. At the same time unless they are reasonable towards me, I shall not have many scruples in making my own decision. If we should decide to settle here, we should miss a great many things and comforts, to say nothing of our numerous friends in Cape Town. The children and grandchildren are a great draw and we should be very centrally situated. For instance, on Sunday last, Douglas and Evelyn and the two youngest children, as well as Mike and Maude Meyers, turned up quite unexpectedly at Bloemfontein as they were conveying poor old Col Rodger to the mental asylum there. We were disappointed that they did not come or return via Kroonstad but no doubt they were pressed for time. If we were resident here, we should be within 150 miles of Joe and Blodwen and 200 miles of Douglas and Co and 300 miles of Dot and Reg.

I am hoping to see Dr Fox (Friend) and others in Johannesburg tomorrow and also the Farrens and Alex Henderson in Pretoria, either on the forward journey to Dot's. I have asked a friend to make an appointment with the best eye specialist for me tomorrow morning.

I will post this from Johannesburg. Dot has written a glowing account of her new home and enclosed a sketch of the plan of the buildings and garden.

I shall have something to write about when I get there, as we hope to do on Saturday night.

Much love to all,
Dad

Potgietersrus,
Northern Transvaal
July 30th, 1934

My dear All,

Let me say many happy returns of the day to dear little Roy on this, the first anniversary of his birthday. May he long be spared to his parents and us all. Joe and Blodwen's two babies within a year constitute a record so far as our family is concerned.

Well a good deal has happened since I posted my last on Thursday, written in the train on our way to Johannesburg. I am writing this at 7.30 am in the front garden of the hotel where we are staying until Reg and Dot are able to move into their new home, which they hope to do during today. The sun is shining brightly and I am sitting in a thatched roofed open pagoda, cement floor under beautiful shady trees. Mom is not up yet and breakfast is being prepared. I have donned my white flannels and am enjoying the fresh air without hat. I mention these details because this is supposed to be winter weather. What summer weather will be like at this time of the morning I do not know. It is very delightful at present. I anticipate that it will be very windy before the day is out. That I can report on later.

8 am. Sorry to say that travelling has affected my typewriter in some way or other. I cannot get it to behave itself properly this morning, I hope it will improve.

The machine has not improved so I am using Reg's in the meantime.

Afternoon. We have been busy all the morning helping Reg and Dot unpack their goods and chattels in their new home. Most of their goods have travelled safely but some crockery has suffered. A later opportunity must be taken for describing their environment so will try to catch up with my narrative.

On our arrival at Johannesburg, we found letters from Alex Henderson inviting us to spend Friday evening with him in Pretoria. I phoned Dr Fox and found that he was away until Sunday so could not see him. We called at the YMCA and had a nice chat with Mr Briggs who is Secretary. He said that his Board had had a similar proposal made to them regarding the getting of a man out from Overseas to be their Secretary but they had turned it down as not being practicable. We retired early but could not sleep very well. The room we occupied was on the third floor and facing the street. The noise of the trams, motors, etc seemed to keep up all night. The street lights were also very brilliant so that we could not sleep. After breakfast, we went to see Friend Yuart Smith who travelled out with me many years ago. He is much concerned regarding the state of the Society of Friends in S. He very kindly motored us to the eye specialist at 10.30 and I had three hours in his consulting rooms. Part of the time my eyes were being dilated but for the most part, I was under very close electrical examination.

I need not attempt to describe the various tests to which I was subject to but suffice it to say that he pronounced both eyes affected by cataracts forming on them. He recommended that I should submit to having them removed at different times, say six months apart. The cost, he said, would be fifty guineas each plus three or four weeks' hospital fees, glasses etc. I anticipate the total cost would not be less than two hundred pounds. Needless to say I did not tell him to get on with the job. It will require a good deal of thinking about. He said I need not give up motoring so long as I could see traffic etc. This I can still do, I am thankful to say. I was quite tired when he had finished with me so we decided not to go anywhere except to the station and wait for the Pretoria train.

I had a talk over the phone with Miss Reynolds of Vryburg – and was surprised to learn that she was married. We also saw Gwillam and Edris Jones who were staying at the same hotel.

To be continued in my next,

Dad

P O Box 42
Potgietersrus
July 31st, 1934

My Dear All,

I did not get as far as I intended yesterday with my letter as we were busy helping Dot and Reg move into their new home.

We left Johannesburg by the 4.30 train for Pretoria and were met by a lady friend of Mr Henderson, a Miss Armstrong. Mr Henderson arrived before we left the station. Miss Armstrong drove us in her baby Austen to Mr Henderson's quarters where he is very comfortable. We all then went to dine at his boarding house, returning to his rooms directly afterwards. It appears that Miss Armstrong is an attender at the Friends meeting in Pretoria. We found much in common that interested us. For instance, Miss Armstrong is employed at the Government Laboratory at Onderstepoort, near Pretoria, and was working under Sir Arnold Theiler with whom I had so much to do in Vryburg days in connection with gal-lamziekte; I was interested in hearing that he was likely to visit South Africa again next year. I hope to see him again. Mr Henderson has a very nice collection of gramophone records and gave us a selection on the gramophone. He is thinking of taking his holiday very soon and hopes to see Aunt Eliza on his way through. It is seldom one comes across such a domesticated young man. He made the tea, cut cake, etc.

About ten pm Miss Armstrong motored us again to the station, our train leaving about ten pm. We slept more comfortably than we did on the journey from Cape Town as we had a compartment instead of a coupe to ourselves. We were awake by 4 am, the train arriving here at 5.30. Reg and Norman met us. I think it is the first time Norman had been up so early. We walked to Reg's partner's house (Mr Gilbert) where he and Dot have been staying until they can get into their own house. It was a very mild night but we were glad of early coffee served in their kitchen. Mrs Gilbert was Rev Legg's daughter of Vryburg. Of course there was not room enough for us, considering there were the two families living there, so we stayed at the Hotel until Monday evening.

Reg soon drove us round the town. It is a very straggly place with some very big stores of the usual up-country style. The town hall is isolated on a large erf apparently with the idea that sometime in the near or distant future, other buildings may grow up round it. There are an abundance of churches in the place but I do not know how they are attended. The Wesleyans have a fortnightly service conducted by a minister from Pietersburg. There are a few local preachers here and it is hoped that weekly services will be held.

The hotel we stayed at is run by a Jew. It is fairly comfortable. It is the first time I have ever found a long bath in the same bedroom. Several of the rooms are so fitted. They have hot and cold water laid on. There are a number of trees in front of the building, a long stoep, a tennis court in cement. The trees are lit up with electric light in the evening as well as the stoep and these are left burning all night as so many travellers and tourists turn up at all hours. This is a detriment if one wants to sleep.

Sunday 29th. Reg motored us to Pietersburg for service, a distance of about 40 miles. The main road is very good and we covered the distance in a little over an hour. The Methodists have a small church there and we were glad to meet some more old Vryburg friends. Miss Wookey, matron of the Kimberley hospital was visiting her sister, Mrs Organe, who is a teacher in the local school. He is at present on a visit to England. They invited us all to take pot luck with them for dinner. We were only six of us but we fared quite nicely. Needless to say we had many interests to talk over. Reg's sister was training for a nurse at Kimberley hospital some years ago. Miss Wookey strongly advises me to have the operations. She is retiring from her position in Kimberley. Mrs Organe used to be Sunday School teacher with me in Vryburg.

July 31st, 1934. We left Pietersburg about 2.30 and arrived back about 4.15. Reg drove both ways. Arrangements had been made to visit one of the numerous families of Amm's on our return. They reside about five miles from town. Mr Gordon Amm is the chief one here and has

a lovely home situated on the top of a rising ground from which a beautiful view of the valley is obtained. He has thousands of orange trees in full bearing. He is a staunch supporter of the Methodist Church here as well as being a local preacher. They have no family. We hope to see more of these people before we leave.

Monday saw usual busy helping Reg and Dot get straight with all their goods into their new home. Reg took the day off and by evening we were fairly straight, at least we were able to sleep under their roof. We finished the day by having Reg, Dot and Mr and Mrs Gilbert to dinner with us at the hotel. The house is peculiar in that it has a rondavel at each end of the front stoep, the doors opening onto the stoep itself. The dining room also opens on to the stoep. The



stoep is nice and wide and is enclosed with wire gauze and has a polished granolithic floor which is somewhat dangerous for the children slipping about. Window boxes with ferns etc are on the edge of the wall of the front stoep and gives the place a nice appearance. In one corner where the rondavel joins the stoep, is a fern stand. The rondavels are used as bedrooms. Close to one end of the stoep is another door opening into the bathroom which also has an outside door leading on to the side stoep. There is a nice bath and geyser and washstand built in. The dining room has three windows, one opening onto the front stoep and the others on to the side garden. A nice fireplace is in this room with brick mantelshelf. The kitchen opens from this with a pantry beyond. There is a good stove and sink with water laid on and a garage of ample dimensions and storeroom. The garden in front of the house is well stocked with roses, poinsettias, jacarandas etc. etc. The back garden is large and has quite a lot of things in it. We are fixed up in one of the rondavels. It has two windows and is very comfortable. From floor to the top of the thatch must be about 20 feet.

Tuesday, July 31st. Aunt Emmie wired to know when my operation is to take place. So far I have not definitely decided to have it done but in any case shall go back to Cape Town before doing anything in the way of making arrangements. If it has to be done at all, and everyone seems to think I should have it, I hope to be able to undergo it in Cape Town where perhaps it may be less expensive. I suppose at least six months would have to elapse before the second eye was operated on.

In the afternoon we did some necessary shopping and 'inspected' the Town Hall. That must be left for another occasion to be reported on.

Wednesday August 1st. Must post for English mail this afternoon. We are all asked out to the next door neighbours, a Mr and Mrs Watts. He has a chemist shop here. The neighbours seem nice and friendly and I hope Dot will soon make friends. Reg has gone to Naboomspruit, about 30 miles south to attend one of his firm's stock fair sales. Will be back this evening.

So far our plans remain the same, leave here on Saturday and reach Kroonstad on Sunday afternoon. I want Mom to stay longer here and come to Cape Town later on after I have made necessary arrangements for the future but she thinks she must stay by me. Joe and Blodwen are hoping to come up to Kroonstad on Saturday or Sunday and return with us to Bloemfontein with Grace and Ted going as far as Winburg.

I think this is all that I can write as it is about up to date so far as our happenings are concerned.

Much love to all, Dad

21 Waverley Road
Bloemfontein
Wednesday August 7th, 1934

My Dear All,

I have got back to my own typewriter again. I found that I had broken a part at Potgietersrus but have managed to get it repaired here at a cost of 5/6. I am thankful to Reg for the use of his which, from all accounts, appears to spell a great deal better than this one does at times.

I fear that I shall not be able to complete my record in correct date order as not having the typewriter, my letter has been neglected. However the dates do not matter very much.

I see by my last, I left off at Wednesday's doings. That is a week ago. One day Reg motored me out to see a farmer who was wanting to buy 100 sheep and his firm had found the seller. However, business did not result this trip but will probably do so later. He also saw another customer who is wanting a grinding mill for mealies. This was a more satisfactory interview. We saw the site of the famed Zaaiplaats tin mine but had not time to go over them. I understand that it is a profitable mine and the shares are standing high. My only experience of a tin mine was with Uncle Willie some fifty years or more ago when we went down a tin mine in Cornwall.

There are also platinum mines in the neighbourhood, but these are not working as platinum is practically no longer a commercial article. Canada, I think I was told, is able to produce all that is needed at a much lower price.

I called one morning on a Mr LS Meintjies who was farming in the Mafeking district years ago and whose farm I visited in connection with investigations into gal-lamziekte disease. Mr Meintjies claimed to have discovered a cure for the disease and manufactured his cure on the premises which I subsequently purchased for the Northern News in Vryburg. He was manager of the platinum mines. He has retired from business and has been mayor of the town and is still a town councillor. He has not a very high opinion of the bulk of the population. This is estimated by several people I asked as being about 500 Europeans and 1500 "poor whites". So many of the ratepayers were in arrear with their rates that the council made them turn out and mend the roads, so as to reduce their liability.

We spent a very pleasant evening at the Watts', Dot's next door neighbours. Dot left the maid and boy (Piet who they brought with them from Vryburg) in charge of the children. When we got back, both of the servants were trying to amuse Alan who was wide awake. No one has officially called on Dot yet but she will be sure to have a nice circle of friends. On Saturday afternoon, we motored to Mr Amm's for tennis. We were introduced to quite a number of folk there, all very nice. Mr Amm is a local preacher in the Methodist Church and all seem interested in the work. The Church of England allow them to use their church for the services which are held fortnightly. They are busy raising funds in order to build their own place of worship.

One lady we met knew about the Calpin's School at Uplands and described it as a Quaker school. I don't think Mr Calpin has ever called it such.

The Gilberts came along in the evening to say goodbye. They were going to the bio. This is the only form of entertainment the town has, and that is only once a week. We had booked our seats for the 11 pm train. Reg saw us off. Being holiday time, the train was full and we had been separated in two compartments with five others. This was too inconvenient for either of us so I transferred into a first class compartment but they could only give us a coupe. However, we managed to get some sleep. We arrived in Johannesburg about 8 am and had breakfast at the hotel. I took Mom to the YWCA whilst I went to the YM for their early morning service. There were only nine present whilst about 40 attended the YW. We met the Miss Davises at the YW. They were going to meeting that morning. I had phoned to Dr Fox early in the morning and he hoped to see me at the station before we left but Mrs Fox came, as did also the Davises. Mrs Fox informed us that she is going to England shortly for a year and Dr Fox will go over about May next. We arrived at Kroonstad about 4.30 pm. Ted, Grace and all the

children were there to meet us. Unfortunately Grace had left her bag containing her purse and savings bank book on the seat of their car whilst they waited on the platform. When they got home, they discovered that the bag had been stolen. Fortunately there was not much in either. We discovered as we went to get out the luggage from the van that Alex Henderson was on the same train all the way from Pretoria. He was proceeding to Cradock to spend part of his holiday at Aunt Eliza's. In the evening, Ted and I went into town for the evening service.

Monday saw us on the move again. Joe had offered to come up to Kroonstad to meet us and motor us back to Bloemfontein as Monday was a holiday. We did not think it necessary, it being not wise to risk travelling with two babies. Ted took his car with Mom and some of the children and I had Grace and the luggage and one of the boys in my car. We found the road bad in parts and good in others. We had no thrills or incidents along the road. We outspanned beyond Winburg, where Ted was born. We enjoyed a very nice lunch which Grace had brought with us. They came a little further with us then we parted, they going back and we continuing southwards. We wonder when we shall meet again. We travelled comfortably without incident until we got near to Bloemfontein. Mom remarked that perhaps Joe and Blodwen might meet us along the road. I did not think so as I knew he was working with his car, altering the van part into a dickey seat. Sure enough, when we got to Glen, about twelve miles out, there they were waiting in the road for us. Blodwen came into my car with Roy and we were soon home. We arrived at 4.30. I find that the petrol worked out at practically 30 miles to the gallon.

It has been quite cold since we arrived. So different to what it was in Potgietersrus. We have been out a good deal in the car taking the children and Blodwen and friends of theirs about. We called to see May Brown and Milner. The latter we have not seen though I have called at his office and house. We took May for a spin one morning round the Naval Hill. In fact we were there twice one day. We took Edith Collett out once and she came here to supper. She is nursing an old lady at the St Michaels Home.

Thursday evening I went to lodge.

Today, Friday, we are having a few friends in this evening. We hear from Grace that they had engine trouble on their way back but arrived safely. We leave here Tuesday evening. I go through to Cradock for a day and leave Mom at Fish River until I know what is going to happen to us at Cape Town. I have written again to Mr Haddow but do not expect anything will be settled before we get back. This uncertainty is unsatisfactory to all concerned. We have not heard from Douglas or Dot lately.

Much love to all,
Dad

Naauwport Junction
As from P O Box 691
Cape Town
August 14th, 1934

My dear All,

As I have three hours to wait here for the connecting train for Cape Town, I want to spend some time in writing up the doings of the past few days. Let me say here that I left Cradock at about seven this morning and had the pleasure of seeing Mom, Aunt Agnes and one of the girls at Fish River Station as I passed through. Of course there was only a few minutes to talk but all seemed well.

I think I posted last on Friday or Saturday. Fortunately Joe was not called upon to work any overtime all the week so we had him from about five each afternoon. He works very hard but seems quite fit so far as health goes. He is earning more money the last few months and is hopeful that things will continue to improve. He is talking of buying a house when Douglas sells some of his cattle. We shall all be pleased when he has a home of his own, the present place is far from what he desires. It is not at all convenient or suitable for them. There are four doors in front and only one at the back. No proper kitchen or fireplace or bathroom. We went over one that is offered for sale but the price seems high to me. It appears that all properties are dear in Bloemfontein. The situation is the redeeming feature. However we shall have to wait and see what happens.

One day I called upon Mr Bateman, the only Friend in the whole of the Free State. He is very interested in the Friends school. I left a quantity of Friends literature with him. On Saturday, the usual half holiday, we went for a spin to Marcellspoort, the only attraction near the town. We took a fresh route, via Glen but should advise anyone to keep to the main road in preference. It was a lovely afternoon and we all enjoyed the outing. I think I have previously described the place on a former visit so will not repeat except to say that Bloemfontein is dependent for its water supply from this spot. Joe and Blodwen went for a row on the river, taking Roy with them and leaving Baby in our hands. I hope the snaps they took will turn out well.

Cousin Edith Collett spent the part of one evening with us and stayed to supper. She has always been very interested in Joe and Blodwen and the children. She has a temporary appointment at the home where she was before. We also called on her on Sunday afternoon. The saddest call we made was to see Col Rodger at the mental hospital. Uncle Joe would have remembered him as we had a meal at his farm at Dry Harts when he was here. Poor old man has lost his memory. He seemed to know us for a time and his first question was had we seen his wife. She too has had a slight stroke and it is doubtful if they will ever be together again. Joe and I saw him alone the last time and he was full of leaving the place – which of course he will not be allowed to do. He is kept in bed as he is so inclined to wander and try to get away. How thankful we all should be that we have our reason. We took him some fruit.

On Sunday, Mom and I went to the Methodist Church and heard the Rev Mr Walls. He very kindly visited Joe when he was in hospital with pneumonia. It had been arranged to have baby christened at twelve, immediately after the service. As it happened, service was over about a quarter to 12 but Joe and Bronwen were early. A terrific thunderstorm broke over the church just before and we doubted if they would venture out. The service was short and baby behaved splendidly. We duly celebrated the occasion by having a special cake in the afternoon. In the evening, we all four left the servants in charge and went to the main church where the same minister conducted the service. The church is large but bitterly cold in spite of the fact the electric heaters are installed. We were glad to keep our overcoats and wraps on. The sermon was most appropriate to my case and the hymns 820 and 824 in the Wesleyan hymn book appealed to me greatly. Had I copy by me, I would quote same in full. After the service we were introduced to Mr and Mrs Dersley, parents of the young lady who we took out for a spin a

few months ago when in Cape Town with Miss Webb. Mrs Dersley, Eliza's friend in Cradock, is related to them.

Later, in the train leaving De Arr. After the service we did not have much time before catching our train so after cups of cocoa, we collected our luggage and Joe saw us off by the 9.45 pm for Cradock. Our plans had been altered so many times that we had become used to changes. Aunt Emmie wired that there was to be a social on Wednesday evening and as I had not seen anything of Mr Lloyd this trip, I felt that I must get back in order to meet him, especially as he is leaving for England on Friday. Aunt Eliza, on Saturday, wanted us to arrive in Cradock on Sunday morning so as to meet Mr Lloyd there on Sunday. As we had already made arrangements by wire for Uncle Jack to meet Mom at Fish River on Monday and Joe and Blodwen were desirous of having baby christened whilst we were with them on Sunday, we had to decline the invitation.

We were fortunate in finding that the coach we were to travel in was waiting at Bloemfontein Station so we were able to get in before the train arrived from Johannesburg. It was about 11 before we got settled in. Joe managed to get our hot water bottles filled from the engine as the night was very cold. Monday morning we were up by five, Mom having to get out at Fish River early. Uncle Jack was at the station to meet her and so we parted, I proceeding to Cradock. Mr Thomas kindly met me and I was soon at Aunt Eliza's for breakfast. Most of the morning was spent in seeing old friends. During the day I saw the following: Mr Metcalf, who strongly advised me to have the operation as he had done in England and can use one eye; Garlick, Moys, Phirson, Aunt Charlotte (Mrs Joseph) Byrns, Arthur Roberts, Lidbetters, Mrs Rose, Ernest, Aunt Letty, Cursoms, Sam Peterson, Willie Rayner, who was unwell, Mrs Brown (great friend of Aunt Eliza), Mrs Dersley and Mary. I also saw the Rev Barnes, the new Methodist minister who has taken Mr Evan's place. Mr Hughes, the Circuit steward was with him in the front garden and I had the opportunity of giving them some history respecting the church and parsonage. Had I more time, I would have liked to have seen more. I forgot to include Hy McLeod and Hyam in the list, and possibly there were others as well. No one said they were sorry to see me. The rock garden on the market square is very fine and well worth seeing. Fortunately my left foot, which has been giving me trouble lately, stood the strain of walking so much very well until the evening when I had intended to see Aunt Letty again but had to give it up at five. Aunt Eliza was before me. She gave me an excellent breakfast before starting for the station. Mr Thomas accompanied me in the taxi but Mary walked over. I do not know if I can find time before reaching Cape Town to give some of my thoughts on the journey but let me say how much I have appreciated the expressions of sympathy in the ordeal that I suppose I shall have to face. In this connection, I am enclosing copies of letters passed between the specialist and myself re the operation. Blodwen kindly typed these for me. I had hoped to see Eric or someone from Rooispruit at Rosmead but no one came. I understand the road is bad. I phoned to Aunt Rosa from there saying I would have a couple of hours to wait at Naauwpoort. When I got to Dwaal, she joined the train as far as Hanover Road. She had tried to get one of the sons to motor her to N'poort as her car was away at Kimberley, but her son could not be found. It was very sweet of her to come as far as she did. She hopes Mom will see them as she returns to Cape Town.

At Naauwpoort, I called to see Milton Wilmot, an old Sunday Schooler of my Cradock days who is always pleased to see me. I wrote most of these previous pages whilst waiting at the station there. I have had a coupe to myself since leaving N'poort so have had much quietness and time for reading and reflection. I have read with interest, and I hope profit, a book lent me by the Gushes entitled the Road Mender. It is the story of a man whose duty it was to break stones along the road in England and he soliloquises on the importance of the job and the various people he meets trudging along the roadway of life. He is an old man like me and as I have been visiting old friends and places where I spent many happy years, I too have been thinking backwards. Are the roads that I have travelled over any the better for the work I have put into them. The smoke which is emitted from the engine of the train in which I am travelling is soon

dispersed and forgotten. The spoors made in my various journeys too and from Grass Ridge and elsewhere have all been obliterated years ago but the memories of these trips are still fresh and green. I have traced the road Mom and I travelled by car to Middelburg, Naauwpoort etc. I saw the spot where I ran out of petrol as we mounted the hill outside of Naauwpoort. The road to Dwaal appeared to be in better order than when we were on it. De Aar brought back memories of my first acquaintance with the station in April 1887 when there was neither waiting room nor shelter from the cold. How I paced that platform for hours in the middle of the night till six am with a rug round me in an endeavour to keep warm. In those far off days there were no saloon cars as at present, only the old fashioned “dog box” of separate compartments.

How things have changed in 47 years. Who would have dreamed of being able to fly from Cape Town to Johannesburg – or Witwatersrand as it was called then. It took 48 hours from Cape Town to Cradock in those days. This train does it in 32 hours with much more comfort. It still could be covered in much less time if the long waits at various junctions were eliminated.

I am now within an hour or so of Cape Town so must close. Let me say how much I have appreciated all the care and comforts and pleasure of seeing the various homes visited during the past few weeks. You have all been exceedingly kind to us both. We do not know what is in store for us in the near future but we can as in the past, leave all that in the hands of our Father who knows what is best for us. If it should mean the uprooting of us and transplanting us elsewhere, we trust that we shall all have the necessary grace and guidance and strength for the change. I have seen for some years past that changes were sure to come and we must face them bravely. As the veldt here is different from that of the Free State or Transvaal or Vryburg, so we must be prepared for a different environment.

And so I close for the present, hoping to be able to resume my weekly epistles soon after returning to duty.

With very dear love and thanks to all,
As ever, your loving
Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
August 19th, 1934

My Dear All,

Here I am back again in Cape Town after five weeks absence. The place is just the same, no one has closed the door of the YMCA etc. Of course there are changes so far as we are concerned. I am without a home and Mom is not here and so far I do not know what our future is to be. Until that is more or less settled, it seems useless for Mom to return. If I am still to carry on as Secretary at the YM, then of course she will return and we will find a house or lodgings somewhere.

I arrived on Wednesday afternoon. Aunt Emmie and Mr Arnold Lloyd, Mr Rowland and Stakesby Lewis met me at the station. I came out to Rocroy, Bellevue Road, Sea Point, where Aunt Emmie has been staying for just over a month. After changing my clothes, I called for post at the YM and then went to attend the meeting to welcome Arnold Lloyd who has a concern re the reopening of the Friends School. It appears that Mr Calpin, who started his own school at Uplands after he had resigned from the Inchanga appointment, has decided to give up and return to England at the end of the year or early in January. This appears to some to afford the opportunity for the Society to take over his school. The matter was discussed at some length. Arnold Lloyd left on Friday on his return to England and Friends in various parts of the country are to discuss the matter further and let him know what decision they have come to.

I have been to the office each day since my return but have not taken over any duties. I have interviewed two of the principle members of the Board and I gather that it will be best for me to sever connection pretty soon. Financial difficulties are weighing heavily upon them so my retiring will ease the situation to a small extent, though not much, as they have so considerably reduced it recently. However we shall soon know I hope what is decided. Dr D thinks I should have the operation on one eye done as soon as possible. He says I am much better in health than when I went away and in consequence, could stand the op better than if I waited longer. Aunt Emmie went with me when I saw the oculist, Dr du Toit. It was exactly two years to the day since I consulted him last. I showed him the Johannesburg specialist's letter and he agreed that Cape Town doctors had not made a practice of performing the operation as a regular thing. They found that the ordinary method gave the best results. There had been quite a number of failures in the new method. He said I could still go on using the eye for some time if I wanted to. He suggested a few months more, say up to December. The actual operation would only last about twenty minutes, he said, but the new style as recommended by the Johannesburg man would take a couple of hours. It was also much more risky. I asked about the operation as to being blindfolded for some time and the hands being tied. He said patients are blindfolded for some days and their hands strapped to their legs so that they cannot touch the eye but they can move them to their mouth. As to the cost, he said the regular fee was fifty guineas but they did not always get it. One patient was so satisfied that he willingly gave a cheque for £250, another gave £100. I expect he would not charge me the full amount. In any case it appears that the operation is necessary and when over will be a great comfort to me. If it is done soon, I shall secure accommodation for Mom as near to the hospital or nursing home as possible. I think I have said enough on this head but I know you are all interested so I have given you as much information as possible.

I must not add more tonight as I have some other letters to write but will try to write again in the week if there is anything fresh to report.

Love from Dad

P O Box 691
Cape Town
August 20th, 1934

My Dear All,

I have promised one and another to let you know as soon as possible when any decision is arrived at by the Board of Management. A meeting was held this afternoon after five to discuss the matter of Carodore. This having been disposed of, the question of my position was discussed. It was pointed out that I had done good service for the Association in the past and that the reductions in my remuneration in the past was due to the extreme financial difficulties through which the Association had passed through. My work had been appreciated, I was told, but it was felt that younger man should take control etc etc etc. In reply I stated that when I was asked to accept a reduction in salary to £10 pm, I was then in residence at LBH and was getting board and residence free. Now that I had been relieved of that duty, was I expected to give the same service as before for £10 without board etc. They admitted that I was entitled to board and residence but they could not afford it. I said I did not wish to be a burden to the Association, it was the work which mattered, not the worker. I was quite willing to relinquish my duties if so desired at any time. Reference had been made to the state of my health and also my eyes. Dr Dommissie stated that it was essential that as my general health had so improved by my holiday, I should have the operation done as soon as possible. He also stated that it would be at least six months or a year after the operation that I would be fit to do the work I had been doing (this is not a cheerful outlook). They hoped that there would not be any ill feeling about the separation when it came about. After further discussion, it was suggested that I should retire at the end of September. I said I had not yet taken over my duties since my return and if they preferred so to do, I would retire forthwith. This seemed to meet their approval and they agreed that I should be paid up to September 30th. The net result is that from now I am a free man.

Tuesday morning 7 o'clock. The position now being clear, it remains to consider what is best for the immediate future. Several courses are open. Let me say here that yesterday I was strongly advised to consult a Mrs Quail who specialises in eye exercises. I did so during the afternoon and she thought her treatment may do some good. In any case, it cannot do any harm. I have arranged to go to her for three Wednesday afternoons for half an hour's treatment. Mom has always been keen on this method. This will take me up to September 5th. During this time, I think I should spend as much time as I can in sorting and destroying papers etc which I have no further use for. The question arises where would be the best place to do this. The room I have here at Sea Point is not too comfortable but is good enough for the present. I suppose it will cost me at least £7 per month here plus travelling etc. It would mean carting a good deal of stuff over from LBH but that I can do by car. What I really require would be a room where I can lay out things and sort out at leisure. Aunt Emmie has a room in this house but naturally wants to have her own furniture etc in a house of her own, or sufficiently large where someone could share with her. If we were likely to be permanently resident in Cape Town, this might be a possible arrangement. The locality of such a residence would present some difficulty as whilst Aunt Emmie prefers Sea Point, Mom would prefer the southern suburbs. Then again it has been the wish of all of our children, I think without exception, that we should look to live nearer to the centre of the family circle. There again, Kroonstad seems to present the most attractive opening. My own preference would be Pinelands but am willing to yield to the wishes of others in this as in other respects. If we knew that the house we are sweet on near to Grace and Ted was likely to be available, I should be inclined to seriously consider taking it. The snag in that respect would be the possibility of Ted being transferred at a month's notice to another post, when we would be left high and dry away from everywhere. Bloemfontein offers attractions by having Joe and Blodwen there, but rents are very high there. Joe might also be moved as the man I spoke to at Kroonstad intimated he might come back to Cape Town.

Then again there is the long cherished hope I have had of taking a tour round the country visiting Friends and relations and doing the Game Reserve and other places of interest en route. This might be considered too much of a strain but I should dearly love such a trip.

I have not taken any steps to have the operation performed so everything is quite open for discussion. When it is performed, I should naturally want mom to be as near to the hospital as possible but if we are to leave Cape Town, I do not see any great advantage in staying unduly long after it is over.

I think it would be wise, now that we know where we are, for Ted to make definite enquiries as to when the house would be available and at what figure, together with a rough plan of the house and what furniture would go with it. Aunt Emmie reckons it will cost us to live in town at least twenty five to thirty pounds per month. Personally I think it should not be as much as that up country.

I do not think there is anything more I need to add at this stage but I shall be glad to know your views on the matter. It certainly is a relief to know that a settlement has been arrived at. It is not the settlement that I have desired for myself, but have yielded to the wishes of others and am of course going to make the best of it.

In my last circle letter I referred to Mrs Hobkirk's accident. It appears that she was on her way to see her brother and felt queer just as she started from her home in Pinelands and decided to go back. She then collapsed in the road and a neighbouring servant saw her and got assistance and removed her home. She was then removed to the Rondebosch hospital where she still is. Her head is bruised but she is getting on nicely.

I shall go to town most days and call for post at the office but box 691 will still find me. If you like to post to "Rocroy", 2 Bellevue Road, Sea Point, I may get letters as quickly. I do not know the postal arrangements here (Sea Point) yet.

Much love to you all, and trusting that the right way will open for us.

Your loving

Dad

Handwritten:

Dear Mom

I am getting this off this Tuesday morning and hope you will approve. Let me know what you think as soon as possible. This place, Rocroy, is not too comfortable. The bathroom and lavatory is outside. Emmie and I have our meals in her bedroom.

Dad

Return this for my file copy.

Rocroy, W, Bellevue Road
Sea Point, Cape
August 26th, 1934

My Dear All,

Well, I am an unemployed man. The most of my time since I left the YMCA seems to have been occupied in writing letters to Mom and the wider circle included in that all embracing term of "Dear All". It is always a pleasure to write to you and let me thank all who have written during the week. There has not been sufficient time for comments to have reached me since I sent you the news on Tuesday that I was free from office work. No doubt I shall hear all in good time what you think. Time has not hung heavily on my hands and I do not intend to let it. I have not been to the office each day but I often find it necessary to go for one thing or another. For instance I have had to lay in a small stock of stationery for my private use. I have also had money matters to see to. Tomorrow there will be English mail to get and so it goes on. Aunt Emmie and I have been looking at seven properties which are to let in case Mom decides to stay in Cape Town for a while. The general opinion seems to be that I should not have any operation done for some time to come as the necessity is not now so pressing owing to not having regular office work to do. Some places we have looked at are quite impossible so far as we are concerned. One close to the Hallidays is very nice but I do not know if Mom would like it. Yesterday when I went to croquet at Pinelands, the house where Mr Egan lived (a man I frequently visited) was offered me furnished for £9 per month. However we shall see what is best to do when Mom returns. I called at Prices on my way back and was surprised to hear that Blodwen was arriving next Sunday afternoon with the two babies and nurse girl. Of course I shall meet them. Mr Price is wonderfully better. It is nothing short of a miracle that he has so far recovered. He does not get up but is able to laugh and take an interest in things in general. I have been to Botha House a couple of times but have not got our stuff away except one or two things which I need. So far I have not been able to think where I put the keys of things I left behind. They can't be far, I know.

I think I told you in my last that I would give some information regarding the eye exercises I have been advised to take. The lady, Mrs Quail, has been doing this sort of work for some years. Bessie Price went in for her treatment and has since been able to dispense with her glasses. One exercise is to remove the glasses and raise one finger to the point of your nose and then lower the finger slowly from you keeping both eyes focused on the point of the finger, and then raise the finger again to the point of your nose. This to be done without blinking, operation to take, say, five seconds, and repeated 25 times in succession. Another is to place both hands in front and to focus your eyes on the point of the thumb, then swing your arms clasped from right to left as far as you can swing them – something like a golf movement. This to be done prior to going to bed as it induces sleep. I am to do these and others as often as I can daily and go to her again next Wednesday. Aunt Emmie will go with me next time. She says she will be able to tell in three weeks if they are likely to be of any benefit to me. I hope they may. I shall let you know how I get on. She also advised my leaving off my glasses as much as possible.

You will be as glad, as I am to hear, that Joe and Blodwen have decided to move to another house nearer to his work and infinitely more convenient than their present one. I hope they will be able to economise in other directions so as to make up for the increased rent they will have to pay.

One evening last week we spent at the Robson's house on the upper high level road. My it was a climb. It would never suit either Mom or I.

Another evening was taken up with Monthly meeting and on Saturday, we went to the YM Social in the Oak Hall. It took the form of a school and all the guests were drafted into separate classes. It was great fun. Emmie and I enjoyed the evening..

Time is flying so I must close.

With love to all,
Dad

Handwritten:

Dear Mom

If you decide to come with Blodwen arriving
here Sunday. After you had better move to
Butler Care Manhood, Cape Town
The weather has been delightful.
Must hurry into town to post this before 9.
Ted's letter enclosed only print to hand.
Lots of love, Dad

Rocroy, Bellevue Road
Sea Point
September 2nd, 1934

My dear All,

I have just had dinner, all by my lonesome as Aunt Emmie is at Gladys' for the day. She went there after attending meeting and I came back here. Presently I must be off to the station to meet Blodwen and the two babies. I hope they have had a comfortable journey. Yesterday was quite a summer's day and today is beautifully fine.

Our plans are now moving a bit. I thought perhaps Mom would decide to return by the same train as Blodwen but she was afraid of being seasick etc and does not wish to come back here at all. The general opinion being that I should not have any operation for the present, there seems no advantage to be gained by my staying any longer here than is absolutely necessary. It is costing seven pounds per month for my board and lodging whilst we might as well be together again. It so happened that in a letter I had on Friday from Mr Ralls of Kroonstad, who has just been appointed secretary to the Maritzburg YMCA, asking if we were going to settle in Kroonstad, we would take over his property. I have asked him for particulars of rent etc but of course he wants to sell. However there may be something come of it. I have asked Grace and Ted to report on the property so in a few days we may know if there is anything doing. The house I really should like is not available at present and Ted says the party who is in it does not want to leave unless he is transferred. So we must wait and see.

Aunt Emmie is very disappointed that we are not going to share a house with her. We have seen a number of places lately but Mom wired that she does not want to share houses. I expect Aunt Emmie will find a flat to her liking and I hope to be able to help her settle in. She has been living in suitcases for about seven months and is tired of it. I hope we shall find a suitable place without much difficulty.

Last Sunday I was at Marsh Homes for service so had supper at the Gush's on their invitation. This afternoon I have promised to see the Cloete's after meeting Blodwen. I may also go and see Wookey at Valkenberg as I have not seen him since my return. In the evening I want to hear Rev Lionel Fletcher at the DR Church. He is holding services there each evening this next two weeks.

I did not go to croquet yesterday. Spent most of the time writing to Mom and others. The weather has been delightful during the past week. At Dot's I was glad to be about in shirt sleeves with as little underwear as possible on. Ever since I have been back here I have been wearing my cardigan as well as underwear. Today I have left off the cardigan.

One of my back teeth has been giving me trouble lately and I have had it X-rayed. The dentist will decide on Tuesday if he can save it or not. My cough is gradually getting better. It has been troublesome at times.

Ruth writes that she has not been well and has given up her writing for some time. Denis is away on holiday. He has come top of his class again.

Dot writes that they are having some very good times at Potgietersrus Sunday evening. I have just returned from meeting Blodwen and the two babies and her servant. They have had a comfortable journey, or as comfortable as can be expected with two wee children. Baby was a little upset owing to having no supply of fresh milk on the train. All are looking very well. Mr Price was looking nicely and is of course pleased to see Blodwen and she him. I had afternoon tea with them and then went to see Mr and Mrs Cloete. Mrs Cloete is not so well, has been to the doctor and wants to get back up country as soon as she can. One of her sons is to be married in December and they want the parents to come and live with them at Johannesburg. Mr Cloete wants to stay as he has work enough to last him some two or three years.

They spoke of the house belonging to the Ralls at Kroonstad and think it might be suitable. They are only getting three pounds a month for their own place. However I am sure a way will open, perhaps not in the direction we may think.

I have decided not to go out tonight so as to try to get rid of my cough. Aunt Emmie is going direct from Gladys' so will not be home before about ten, I expect. I shall have a quiet evening here. If Aunt Emmie gets a suitable place pretty soon, I shall move into her room. We are very comfortable here. The food is good and plentiful and it is very convenient for getting into town etc. I guess we shall find a great difference in our cost of living. For instance, my washing bill for a fortnight was over five shillings. I feel sure we shall be able to live more cheaply up country than here.

Let me say here and now that if we do get settled in Kroonstad, I shall expect all the family to accept our invitation to spend Xmas together. There are bungalows there, a nice river for boating etc, tennis courts and other attractions. No one can tell how many more Xmas we shall have and I have hoped for years that such a gathering might be possible. So please all of you children make your plans accordingly. You all have motors and Kroonstad will be as near the centre as we can get. I do not want any of you to be put to any other expense. Perhaps we may repeat the invitation if we are spared to see our golden wedding on October 14th 1941.

Monday morning. I was in bed when Aunt Emmie returned from service. I was able to look through a number of letters and papers but there is much more to be done still. I don't think I shall go to town this morning so Aunt Emmie will post this for me.

I hope to hear good news from you all

Yours with love

Dad

Rocroy
Bellevue Road
Sea Point
Saturday, September 8th, 1934

My Dear All,

I feel that I must send my letter a day earlier than usual as yesterday afternoon I took Blodwen and the children and the maid to the docks. The maid has never seen the sea or ships etc. It was cold there and after calling to see Aunt Emmie here (she was out), we went back to Observatory. Blodwen had by then received a letter from Joe saying he was on the sick list with cold etc. It was decided then and there that Blodwen should return by tonight's train to Bloemfontein in case Joe got worse. We have not forgotten his last illness. I have wired for the latest news of him and shall be able to add before posting this.

Then there is the matter of our future which is still very obscure. Ted and Grace write that it may be necessary for them to move back into town in view of the children catching cold so frequently in biking back and forwards to school and the added difficulty of Pam having to go to school next year. If that materialises, then there is no purpose in our trying to get a house near the plot. I have had a letter from Mr Ralls saying his place is well let and he does not wish to disturb the tenants but want to sell. His price is £1150 (eleven hundred and fifty pounds). There are two houses (under one roof). Ted has enquired the municipal valuation, it is £670. So it seems that there is no prospect of getting a place there. Grace and Ted suggest we go back and look round. That means more expense in travelling. Mom wants me to go to Fish River and visit about with her in the meantime. This would be very nice but I do not want to be a burden to anyone. It is quite clear that I must pack up all our things and store them at LBH. Not necessarily do them up in canvas, etc ready to send by rail, but to get them altogether and out of the way of people at LBH. This I am going to start on next week and wait developments as to where to send them or what to do with them. To send by rail may cost anything up to £50 or more. The same applies if we were to find a suitable place in Cradock. Way has not opened for us to move anywhere yet and until it does, it seems useless to try to want to come back to Cape Town. Max Sonnenberg said some years ago that he could find me a job but that may not hold good now. The policy I used to adopt in running the paper was "if in doubt, leave it out" and it seems that until a definite course of procedure shows itself, we had better stand still and the way will open in due course. In the meantime, I shall get things altogether at LBH ready.

Aunt Emmie is still here and has not got any place in view for her to settle in.

I am still hoping that plans may mature so as to carry out our Xmas scheme.

I have had a miserable cough for some time but think it is getting better by degrees. The weather has been perfect for some time now.

This is a very selfish letter but I know you are all interested in our welfare. So that's that.

Much love from

Dad

Handwritten:

Word received from Joe just after
10 o'clock. "Quite unnecessary Blodwen
returning. Up and about again, going
Kroonstad."

Rocroy
Bellevue Road
Sea Point

Saturday evening, September 15th, 1934

My Dear All,

I want to get as much done of my letter this evening as tomorrow I may not have much time for letter writing. First, I wonder if any of you will notice any difference in the typing this week as I have had the typewriter cleaned and overhauled generally, also a new ribbon put in. I hope also that now it has had this attention, it may be found that its spelling has also improved. We must wait and see. It certainly seems to be working easier. I do eight copies in one typing. If you have difficulty in reading any of them, I will change to a thinner paper. It may interest you to know that a copy goes each week to Mom (whilst she is away) one to Aunt Eliza and Aunt Emmie, Ruth, Douglas, Grace, Joe and Dot.

I am glad to be able to report that I am a good deal better than I was last week. Last Sunday I stayed in bed all day and it is only the last two mornings that I have got up to breakfast. My cough has been very troublesome and the cold in my head has made me deaf for the time being. I have had constant noises in my head. There has been no temperature, in fact it had been below normal all the time. The weather has not been too nice either but today has been lovely. I have had no energy for work and consequently I have not been able to get on with packing or anything else. However, I am feeling much better this evening so am hoping to make up for lost time by slogging in next week in real earnest. All the pictures have been taken down from our rooms at LBH. Most of our furniture has been removed into what was used as the games room, next to the big hall. When everything is got together, I intend packing and leaving things all ready to be forwarded to wherever I intend we may pitch our tent. In this connection nothing is settled. Matters have at least advanced a stage. A telegram came this morning from Ted as follows: "promoted first class, this may mean changes, hope you are better, cheer up, writing, love."

This may mean a good deal to all of us. It may perhaps involve a transfer for Ted to some small dorp and consequently upsetting all idea of our making Kroonstad our future home. We shall await the promised letter with interest. Aunt Eliza sent me an advert from Midlands News showing that the house occupied by Mr and Mrs Hughes is vacant. If Ted could be transferred to Cradock, that might make it desirable for us to go there. In any case we must still wait and see.

Blodwen is leaving for her sister's home in Port Elizabeth on Monday noon and leaves P.E. for Bloemfontein on Monday evening 24th and will be passing Cradock and Rosmead on Tuesday morning, reaching Bloemfontein the same evening. She is anxious about Joe as she has not heard from him for a few days. I have not either.

Mom has been at Rooispruit since Wednesday last and is looking to move on to Aunt Rosa on or about Wednesday 19th. If I am able to get my work of packing etc done about the end of the month, I may meet her there. I cannot say anything definite.

Aunt Emmie is hoping that Muriel and Wallace may come down for Xmas and so is not making any move until she knows what her plans are to be. Gladys is still in a boarding house at Rondebosch and does not intend starting housekeeping again until after Xmas. She says it is cheaper than having her own house. Eric and Freda, Mom says, are both down with the flu.

Dot writes about her water leaking experiences, Reg and her trying to cope with a young river in their garden in the night. This reminds me of some of the similar experiences at Vryburg with the marked differences that instead of a river to cope with, the stream was so small that it was difficult to get it to run at all.

During the week I took Blodwen and children along the beach to Milnerton as the maid was so anxious to get some sea water to take home to her mother in Bloemfontein. We also went down to the docks to see the Miss Davises returning to England. Blodwen's mother has been laid up for a few days in bed with flu. Mr Price is still about the same. It is a miracle that he is

still alive. It has been nice for Blodwen to see him again. She would like Joe to get transferred back to Cape Town so that she could be nearer to her own people.

Grace and Ted seem to feel that it might be necessary for them to move into town on account of Pam having to go to school next year. This was before the news came about his promotion. So what they will do now we do not know.

Joe has been very quiet since Blodwen has been down. We hope he is not ill. Blodwen looks to be back in Bloemfontein on Tuesday 25th. I suppose Joe will have moved into their new house by then. Their address will be 13 Beck Street, Bloemfontein. Please make a note of same for future reference.

Sunday afternoon, 16th. I have now been here in Cape Town for a calendar month and do not seem to have accomplished anything. I am going over to see Bevan Wookey and Blodwen and also Mrs Hobkirk, if she is still in hospital. I may stay and have supper at the Prices and also see the Cloete's. I have not been to any of Rev Lionel Fletcher's meetings this week and his mission ends in a day or so.

Yesterday afternoon, when at the Strand, we called on old Mrs Ayliff, friends of the Gushes. She is one of the old Grahamstown family that was so kind to Uncle James in his early days of sojourn in South Africa. She is well over seventy and retains all her faculties.

There were no letters this morning. We do not get the post so early as formerly when I had the box (691) as then I used to clear it in the afternoons after the mail trains arrive. Now they have to come out the following morning and are delivered at the house before eight. The same with posting, we have to post here before midnight in order to catch the outgoing mails leaving at 9 am.

I am very thankful Aunt Emmie has been here. It would have been terribly lonely otherwise. Mom's return ticket expires on October 6th but I hope to be with her early in the month unless our plans are again altered. I am thinking of applying for the position of Secretary to the Public Library here as a part time job. If I should get it and it is not worth anything, I need not accept it. They do not say what remuneration they are offering.

I guess you will all be tired of reading this so will close with dear love to each and all, and hoping that soon we shall see a way opening to getting settled somewhere.

Your loving
Charles

Only three weeks to Xmas.

Rocroy
Bellevue Road
Sea Point
September 23rd, 1934

My Dear All,

You see I am still here in Cape Town and so far as I can see, am likely to remain for another week or so before I can get away. Candidly I am sorry to leave at all but that cannot be helped. Certainly there is not a prettier place in the Union that I know of where to retire.

The prospect of Grace and Ted being shifted sooner or later from Kroonstad has made us give up the idea of settling there. Cradock seems to be the next best place as we shall be near to all the Fish River folk and of course there is the added attraction of having Aunt Eliza there and Aunt Letty and her family. I am in correspondence regarding a house or houses and have started packing. I have not been fit to tackle this before and find it not too easy even now. I am not attempting to sort out much of the accumulation of things as I shall have plenty of time to do that when we do get a settled home. Mom thinks that part of Aunt Letty's old house, which has been divided into two, might do for us. We shall hear in due course if it is available. It would be very nice if Ted and Grace were transferred there. Ted suggested the possibility some year or two back.

I have not yet given up the idea of Xmas gathering somewhere. I have heard from a second-hand source that Douglas and Co will not be able to come. If we are in Cradock, Ruth and Denis could come to us there. I hope to know more definitely in plenty of time.

Mom is enjoying her time at Dwaal with Aunt Rose. They are both going to Joan's wedding on October 1st. I am sorry I cannot be there. So far as I can see at present, I hope to get away not later than Friday October 5th arriving at Dwaal the following afternoon about 5 pm. Perhaps we might spend our 43rd wedding anniversary together. Talking of wedding days, I saw in the Midland News that Willie Rayner, who was my best man, has died in Cradock recently. I called at his office recently and found that he was then on the sick list.

We have not heard from Blodwen since she left last Monday for Port Elizabeth. I called at the Prices yesterday and they had heard from their son in Uitenhage that she had arrived safely. I hope she is home on Tuesday afternoon as arranged as Aunt Eliza intends seeing her at the station as she passes through.

Reg and Dot write that their new furniture has arrived and that they are settling down. The people seem very sociable and nice. We shall look forward to visiting them again some day.

Joe has been busy moving I expect whilst Blodwen was away. I want to see a plan of the new home and how the furniture fits in. I am glad to hear that his cold is better.

Aunt Emmie is in bed today with a cold and cough. I hope she has not taken mine. The weather the past few days has turned to wet. Last night it poured in torrents and the wind was very stormy. I was packing at LBH all the afternoon. In the evening, we both went to the YM social. It was very good. We left before it was over as I was feeling that I was taking cold.

The YM is giving a farewell social to me on Friday evening. I did not suggest it or expect it but could not very well refuse. Monday October 1st is a bank holiday and the Lay Preachers are wanting to hold their picnic at Durbanville then, if it can be arranged, before I go. Friends will be holding a special meeting on Wednesday 3rd instant and my lodge meets on Tuesday 2nd. So you see, my time is well booked up. I hope to leave on 5th October. After next week, you can address to me there (Dwaal, Rail) Cape. I will, of course, keep them advised at the YM where to address any letters which may come to hand. I also anticipate we shall be in Cradock about November 1st, all being well. We might visit the Biggs at Graaff Reinet on the way, also Harry Collett who was here last year for an operation. I have not any idea of going round saying goodbye to all our friends. That would have been a job for Mom to do. For one thing, I shall not have time and another, it is a lady's job.

I have been very comfortable here in my one room. It is on the small size. There are two single beds in it, a washstand, chest of drawers, small wardrobe, an easy chair, which I have not

used, a bedroom chair and a writing desk I have purchased. So you can see there is not much room to move about. The windows open inwards, consequently the floor space is further restricted. There are outside shutters to the windows so I have plenty of ventilation. I get no sunshine in the room until about eight and in the afternoon. Our meals are well served on trays and we eat them in Aunt Emmie's room, which is larger and has a nice bay window, also a fireplace. When I first arrived, we had a fire most evenings.

We have not done much visiting. One evening we went to the Amblers as Mrs Ambler was sick. They came here one evening and we were out.

I have been wearing my cardigan most days and as I write, I have Ted's pullover on under my waistcoat. The weather on the whole has been good. The rain which has fallen was much needed by the farmers and gardeners.

I intend going to Observatory to service this evening as I have not been there for nearly three months, at any rate since we left on July seventh.

You must not forget that it will be Douglas and Grace's birthdays next week. Joe had his alone this year. Uncle Joe would have been 82 on October 15th.

Aunt Emmie generally reads the important items of news to me each evening. We do not get the Cape Times, only the Argus. I think I have only been on the sea front twice since I arrived here. I am quite looking forward to settling down somewhere as soon as possible. What the future has in store for us we do not know but whatever it is I hope there will be opportunities for service of some sort or another. It will seem strange living in Cradock after 27 years' absence.

I think I have written enough so will go to post and then to bed. I have written to Mom almost every day. Her letters come quicker now that she is nearer to a post office.

Hoping you are all well. I am reminded that I made a mistake last week in saying that it was only three weeks to Xmas. Of course, it is three months.

Lots of love to all,

Dad

Rocroy
Bellevue Road
Sea Point
September 30th, 1934

May Dear All,

This is probably the last dear all from this address. Today my official connection with the Cape Town YMCA ceases. I have been on leave since I returned from holiday on August 14th.

It has been an eventful week in many ways. Monday, the Local Preachers held their quarterly meeting when they wished me farewell in very kindly terms.

On Thursday evening, the social farewell was given in the Oak Hall. There was a very representative gathering present, including my old friend, Rev R F Hornabrook, who was the Wesleyan Minister in Cradock when I was so ill when Uncle Joe and Aunt Sophia were out here. The President, Major van Zyl, MP presided. I will enclose a copy of the programme for you to see.

There was a reporter there so I will not record the speeches. I could not if I wanted to as I took no notes. If I can get a copy of the reporter's notes, I may perhaps circulate them as a matter of history. The presentation took the form of cheques. One was for £50 from the Property Company for services rendered in connection with the secretarial work of the Company. The other cheque was for 30/- from a number of contributors. I did not expect anything at all except the £50 which I had had previous intimation of its coming. Everyone was very sorry that I was leaving etc.

By last mail, we received notification from Uncle Joe's solicitors that each of his brothers and sisters were to receive the handsome sum of £900 (nine hundred pounds) each from his estate. The money will not be here for some weeks yet but it is very nice to know that it is coming. The children of Uncle John and Uncle James are to have the amount that would have come to their father divided amongst them. This, together with the other assets, will ensure, I hope, sufficient to keep us free of financial anxiety for the rest of our days and will also enable us to live more comfortably than we had expected.

You will also be interested in knowing that way has opened for us to make our home in Cradock. When we found that there was a possibility of Grace and Ted being transferred now that he has been promoted to the first class in the Post Office, we made enquiries regarding Cradock. The result is that Uncle James' old home in Bree Street is available. The house has been divided into two. The smaller portion is called a flat and consists of three rooms, kitchen and bathroom. I do not know if any of the beautiful garden goes with the house, but I hope so. I have packed most of our goods and will truck the lot, as well as my car. I leave here on Friday, 3rd October and arrive at Dwaal on Saturday evening. I hope to stay there until Monday 15th, Uncle Joe's birthday had he been alive, and arrive in Cradock the same evening. We shall have to put up somewhere for a time until we can get straight.

You will be as sorry as we are to hear that Harold and David had a collision on their bicycles a few days ago with the result that Harold broke his thigh. He is in the Kroonstad hospital and I fear will be there for a considerable time. I do hope he will not be permanently lame. We shall be anxious to hear how he gets on.

Blodwen was not able to leave Port Elizabeth on the day she intended owing to Roy getting sick. Aunt Eliza went over to the station to see her pass on Tuesday morning and she was not there. I had supper at the Prices this evening and was glad to hear that she left P.E on Wednesday so would have arrived on Thursday. We shall be interested in hearing how they like their new home.

This afternoon I presided for the last time at the YM straight talk in the Oak Hall. Bishop Johnson gave a very inspiring address on Certainties. I could not but wish that some of our Quaker friends who seem to me to have such unorthodox views, could have heard him.

On Tuesday, I received a wire from Mary Collett, who was here last year with her father for his operation, saying she was arriving the next day with Ted Collett's wife. I of course met them and they are staying at the Rooms de Luxe. It appears that the trouble is in the throat and an operation is to be performed tomorrow. It is not considered serious. I have not been able to entertain anyone here as there is only the bedroom available.

Gladys and Tom Webster came over one evening but could not stay very late as it takes over an hour to get to Rondebosch by trams and buses.

Mrs Amble has also called as she is interested in getting fresh quarters and I think would like to share a house with Aunt Emmie.

Last evening we spent with the Robsons. There is a good deal to be discuss over Society matters which are not of general interest. It is nevertheless very disturbing.

I went to Observatory church this evening. I wonder if ever I shall go there again. Many members of the congregation spoke afterwards that they regretted our leaving them.

I hope our goods will travel safely. I anticipate there will be a truckload and they go at a special rate when the whole household furniture is consigned. Aunt Eliza says that there is a party living opposite to the house who may be glad to supply dinner daily as she did before to someone else there. It will seem very strange having a house to ourselves after all these years of living in a sort of community style. I am looking forward to the change. I am only afraid that the house may be too small as I need a room where I can work. However we will not get over the difficulties before we get to them.

I am thankful that my cold and cough are getting better. I still have spasms of coughing. The packing etc has not been easy and the uncertainty of things and frequent changes of programme has made it difficult.

Regarding letters and posting, I think you had all better post to us after say, the week ending October 13th to care of 29 Market Street, Cradock. Aunt Eliza will take care of them for us. Up to the 13th, please post to c/o J J Maskell, Dwaal, Rail.

I must not forget to remind you that it is Grace and Douglas' birthdays on 2nd and 4th respectively. I do very sincerely wish them both all the happiness and prosperity that is good for them.

Thanks for all letters received during the week and hoping for more in due course.

I am afraid that my letters of late have been very selfish and uninteresting. I do not know that I shall continue writing them after we get to Cradock as I do not anticipate that there will be much of general interest as most of you do not know the place or people. We must wait and see.

Much love to you all as though named.

Thus ends another chapter in our history. We have much to be thankful to God for all his mercies to us and we pray that his loving care and kindness may continue to be our portion.

Charles

Dwaal Rail
October 8th, 1934

My Dear All,

If ever I was in a difficulty as to where to begin my weekly epistle, it is now. So much has happened during the past week that it is almost impossible to record same in anything like proper order. As you see, I am here on my way to Cradock. I left Cape Town on Friday evening at seven and got here about six on Saturday evening. Mom was of course at the station and in a few minutes we were here. The house, as most of you know, is close to the siding. The train runs at the back of the house. I only had eleven articles of luggage in the compartment, including two boxes of fruit and vegetables for the family. One box contained the skeleton clock which had to be repaired a few days before I left as the main chain on the drum containing the spring had broken and damaged the works. It cost me £2 for repairs. I hope it has travelled safely. Mr Sam Hobson and Mr Russell were on the same train and it was nice having them to talk to. Mr Russell is teaching at Templeton School at Bedford for a few months and Sam Hobson was returning to Grahamstown. He spoke of Ruth's plucky work in keeping the home fires burning.

The earlier part of the week was occupied in packing up and getting a firm to do what was necessary in bailing the furniture etc. This cost £10, including the packing and trucking the whole consignment. I do not expect it will arrive before the end of this week. It will be some job unpacking and getting things straight. I do not know the plan of the part of Aunt Letty's house we are to occupy. So far as I understand, we have no front door but enter into what will be our sitting room. I will send a plan when we are settled. It does seem strange that we should be going back after 27 years of absence from Cradock to the very same house where I spent my time until I got married. We do not have much of the garden, only a bit of the yard. I was hoping to have a sort of study or work room to myself but as there are only three rooms, I do not see how this can be managed. We must wait and see.

Last Monday was a public holiday so I took Mary Collett and the Gushes to Muizenberg for a picnic. The weather was perfect. Mary's Aunt, Mrs Ted Collett, is in the nursing home at Warren Street. She has had an operation on her throat and is making satisfactory progress.

On Thursday evening the Lay Preachers Association gave a social and tea in the Oak Hall and presented me with a gold fountain pen. Just the thing I was wanting as the old one was giving trouble in the filling of same. I am going to send the old one to England to see if it cannot be altered so as to have one in reserve. About 40 were present at the social. Quite a few came to the station to see me off. The train was in two sections. I did not do any typing in the train, just rested as much as I could.

With regard to the future, I can say very little. One thing I do not know the number of our house in Bree Street so cannot give a definite address. This I will do next week. I have yet to study the postal system so as to get my post away on the most convenient days. It has always been nice in Cape Town being able to catch the fast mail trains on Monday mornings but here it will be very different.

I have been concerned at the news of so much sickness in the various homes. Some down with measles at Douglas' and Grace concerned over poor Harold's broken thigh. Dot, too, was anxious about her children. Blodwen was not able to leave Port Elizabeth as arranged and Joe not having been up to the mark. I hope for good news all round this week.

I will post this now in the hopes of it reaching you soon. I have lots of sorting to do here so will remain as ever,

Your loving
Dad

Please note New Address

53A Bree Street
Cradock
Cape Province
October 14th, 1934

My Dear All,

Well here we are back again in Cradock after an absence of practically twenty-seven years. We begin our new chapter on the forty-third anniversary of married life. My first note must be one of great thankfulness for all the mercies of the past. We have had many and varied experiences and can say we have been greatly blessed all along the journey. "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us" has been our experience.

We spent a few days at Dwaal very quietly together. As reported in my last, I arrived there on Saturday evening, 8th inst. We did not visit anyone nor did anyone come to see us. We were out for a quiet time and had it. One day it rained the whole day, 825 points being registered. I note that Grace reports nearly three inches falling at Kroonstad the same day.

Uncle Joe and Aunt Rosa lead a very quiet life. They do not visit much except to their own children who are living fairly near to them. Mr Maskell is always on the move, looking after things on the farm, which is a big one. The youngest son, Kenneth, is at home but does not enjoy very good health. He is under treatment for bladder trouble at present. He is very good at machinery and his brother, Vincent, is considered the best authority regarding motor repairs in the district.

I was pleased to see one of my old Cradock Sunday School boys, who is running the shop at the siding, much better in health and condition than when I last was at Dwaal. He had undergone an operation recently and has also knocked off the drink which was causing him to lose a great deal of business. His brother, Milton, who also has a business on a large scale at Naauwpoort, came up one day to see him. He also used to belong to the Sunday School in Cradock. His wife and family were with him. Our Harold and Douglas were at school with both the brothers, I think. There is a memorial tablet in the SS Hall here to the memory of their father who died here many years ago.

We left Dwaal on Thursday afternoon as I anticipated that our furniture, which was to leave Cape Town on Monday or Tuesday, would be likely to arrive on Thursday. We were pleased to hear on arrival at the station that it had been delivered that same afternoon. Aunt Eliza, Mary, and Mr Thomas met us at Cradock Station. Unfortunately Mom had one of her bad attacks of train sickness after we passed Fish River Station. We found that Harry Collett and his wife were on the same train, having joined at Collett siding. They came along to our compartment and chatted until reaching here. This did not improve Mom's condition. However, Mary took Mom to the waiting room whilst we loaded up the fourteen packages of luggage into a motor and we were soon at Mrs Jumbo Heathcot's where we had engaged a room until we are settled in. Aunt Eliza came in the car with us. Aunt Letty was not able to come as she has been ill in bed all the week with flu and is still in bed but is much better I am glad to say. Mrs Heathcot's house is just opposite us so it is very convenient for meals etc. So far we have been living there altogether as we are not ready here. It is so unfortunate that Mom has not been equal to take any part in unpacking etc but I secured a very intelligent boy who has helped very nicely for the two days, so much so that all the cases and packages are unpacked. The sorting out process is still to be done but we are sleeping here tonight for the first time. Ernest came back from Pretoria on Saturday night. He has been there for a week on business. He has not been along here yet but might come this evening. Mary has called in each day on her way to see her Mother. This afternoon she kindly sent along by Christine a beautiful bunch of roses from Ernest's garden and a poker, to be used as an instrument for keeping the home fires burning and not as an instrument of defence or attack. She also sent a steamer for cooking our vegetables. No one else has been to see us today. We have arranged to have our meals sent across to us from

tomorrow as Mom will be able to stay in bed if she wants to. She is taking some calomel tonight.

We have not been to service today as we do not want callers yet. There is much to be done before we are straight.

Our flat consists of three rooms. Those of you who remember the old house will be able to picture us. The end room furthest from the church is our lounge or living room or whatever you like to call it. It has double doors opening onto the front garden. There is a stone step over the furrow and short piece of wire fencing and no gate. I shall make a gate of some sort and paint the number of the house on same, to which can be affixed our name. This room is 18 feet long by 16 ft deep by 11 ft high. It has been freshly colour-washed, in fact the whole house has been done. There is a picture rail level with the top of the door and electric light in the centre. The floors of all the rooms need to be freshly stained and polished which we shall have done this week. There is no porch, the front doors open direct into the room, right in one corner. I have my writing table in the centre of the room. I have bought a cabinet and writing desk combined which Mom will use. The cabinet at present contains the remnant of our silverware which has been packed away ever since we left Vryburg. The salad bowl etc which Uncle James and Aunt Letty gave us for our wedding present is also housed in this cupboard. We have had these articles stowed away at Botha House all these years. Leaving this room, we enter the long passage which used to go from Uncle James study to the end of the house furthest from the church end. The end is partitioned off and forms the bathroom. Mary informs us that the long bath was Uncle John's and was probably the first long bath to be introduced into Cradock. It has been painted and looks quite nice. Of course the paint will soon wear off. We have brought our own geyser and hope to get it fixed up this week. The passage is four feet wide. At present there is no electric light either in the bathroom or passage but this is to be fixed up. Our bedroom door is nearly opposite the front room door. The room is about 13 feet square. There is one large window opening onto the back stoep.

I bought a new double bed and all spring mattress. This will provide a little extra comfort which we have often needed. There is not any picture rail in this room but will be. We shall have family photos hanging in due course. My gent's wardrobe fits in very nicely and at present we have nine suit and attaché cases which we have emptied. We hope to provide storage room for these at the other end of the passage where I shall fix up some sort of cupboard.

The dining room adjoins the bedroom at the further end of the passage. This is the room I had when I had the bicycle accident at the Plantation some years ago. It has a fire place in it and is approximately the same size as our bedroom. This room has double doors opening onto the back stoep. There is no window but it is quite light enough. I shall have to fix up bookshelves one side of the fireplace and a sort of cupboard on the other. Off the stoep, a new kitchen has been built. It is small but will do for us I suppose. There is a fireplace in it with a window pain built in so as to see the contents of the pots etc. There is no dresser or shelving. The only tap on the premises is in the bathroom. This is very unsatisfactory and will have to be altered. There is a nice rainwater tank which appears to be full. The back stoep will be very nice for sleeping out in the summer time. Uncle James and Aunt Letty used to sleep there.

The garden is quite big enough for our purposes. There are almond, fig, grapefruit and vine trees growing. There is a trellis part of the way and you may perhaps hear of me taking some interest in gardening if I do not find something else to occupy my time.

So far I have not found a garage for my car. I expect the car will arrive tomorrow. It was trucked from Cape Town on Thursday. Ernest says I can store it there in the meantime.

I think I have told you enough for the present about our surroundings. We have not done any visiting. I went up town once to do some shopping but will have to do a good deal more soon.

We have had letters from Ruth, who has not been at all well lately and has been on sick leave. Denis too was not too grand. He is promoted to long trousers now.

Douglas writes that the children are getting better. He is tremendously busy and is wondering what is going to happen in the future if the Ranch is sold.

Grace reports that Harold is making good progress but is still in hospital. She is game to carry out the Xmas programme if the rest of the family will fall in with the scheme. Will you all please express your wishes on the matter as time is getting on.

Blodwen writes that they are much more comfortable in their new home. Children are better etc.

Dot speaks of having done over WRP miles on October bank holiday. I want to see that part of the country they travelled over.

It is past nine and Mom has already gone to bed so I must finish off and go to post in the hopes of your getting this in reasonable time.

You might let me know when it does reach you so that I can ascertain which are the best days for posting.

Thanks to all of you for all kind thoughts and wishes for our future happiness. As Rev Legg once said "the first forty three years of married life are the most trying".

If you want to make us happy, write as often as you can.

Very much love to each and all as though names,

Your loving

Dad

53a Bree Street
Cradock
November 11th 1934

My Dear All,

Today is the anniversary of my dear Mother's birthday in 1823. Next Sunday, 18th will be the anniversary of my Father's and the 27th is the anniversary of Mom's Father's Grandpa Collett. Mary celebrates her fiftieth birthday tomorrow. She and Ernest and the four children in town came to afternoon tea this afternoon, after the Armistice Service in the Town Hall. It is now nine pm and I have just returned from evening service. Rev Mr Barnes has given a good address on "the Unknown". It was raining just at the end of service so as we had the car, have been taking a few friends home. These included Agnes Williams.

On Tuesday, we were shocked to hear that Aunt Letty's, or rather Ernest's and Alison's servant, who has been working for them for about eight years and was working as usual all the previous day, died about eleven on Monday night. It appears that she had taken a child who was at her home in the evening to its own home. It will be a sad loss to Alison who is due at Cape Town tomorrow morning. Mary, Ernest and some of the children attended the service at the Basuto church. The funeral passed our flat and was one of the largest ever held from the location. She was a very old and faithful servant.

On Saturday we had the pleasure of a visit from Uncle Herbert, Aunt Jessie and Enid to dinner. Later in the afternoon, Uncle Dudley and his wife came to see us. We had offered to take Katie to Grahamstown with us but she has declined. We are offering to take Uncle Norman's wife instead. Ruth wrote at the beginning of the week to say that the Prize distribution has been put off from the 20th to the 24th so we shall be looking to go down on 23rd. We do not know how long we shall stay but probably only over the weekend.

We have had some very hot days this week. Today it reached 100 in the shade on our back stoep. It is raining nicely as I am writing and we hope it will continue all night. I don't mind if I get wet in going to post even.

Yesterday the Wesleyan church held a sale of produce etc in the Town Hall. They raised about £25. I have been asked to say something at a social they are holding on Friday in connection with the photographs of all the former Ministers who have been resident in Cradock during the past 90 years or so. I started making the collection of these photos before I left Cradock.

It is just a calendar month since we arrived in Cradock and I must admit that I have not yet discovered why we are here. I do not seem to have been of any use to anyone yet. We are always busy but don't seem to get much done. However I hope a way will open. Next Sunday is Temperance Sunday and I have been asked to speak at the Baptist Sunday School. A deputation has also waited on me from the Toc H and invited me to attend their meeting on Tuesday. The local branch claims to have a larger proportion of members of both races than any other branch. So far as I can see, the organisation is run much on the same lines as the YMCA.

If any of you did not receive a copy of the plan of our flat last week, let me know. I did some but did not keep a note of those I sent to. I can do some more. As Mom has got a nasty pain in her shoulder, we are retiring early so will not attempt another sheet. I have written a number of scraps separately to one and another. I will not add more except to thank everyone for letters received and which I have answered separately.

Much love to all
Dad

53a Bree Street
Cradock
November 17th, 1934

My Dear All,

The past week has been notable for the fact that on Wednesday we received letters direct from Douglas, Grace, Jo, Blodwen and Dot, all by the same post. We also had our first letters direct from Uncle Willie to Cradock so Wednesday was truly a red letter day. We have also heard from Ruth twice so our luck, as they say, has been in. The week has also been different from others by the fact that on Thursday I had to call in a doctor to see what was the matter with Mom. She has been troubled with touches of rheumatism in her right shoulder for some time and it did not seem to yield to treatment. He examined her thoroughly and I am thankful to say that there is nothing seriously wrong. A bottle of medicine and some liniment will, I hope, do all that is necessary. It was my turn the next day to feel queer. After I got up to open the door to let the boy in, I came over sort of faint. Applications of cold towel on my head and hands and staying in bed till dinner time has about set me right again. Mary very kindly called each day and with her nursing experience was able to tell us what to do. I did not have the doctor and have kept quiet since. I had, however, promised to speak on Friday evening at the church parlour on the occasion of reopening of the room after the collection of photographs had been rearranged etc. I did not feel too grand but the task was not a very difficult one. I could not refrain from referring to the very happy meetings held in that room in years gone by when I had charge of the Young Men's meetings. It was also in that room that Uncle James passed away after he had given an address to the young men. It was a very wet night, consequently the attendance was small. They seemed interested in some of the past history. The collection of Minister's photographs is almost complete from the year 1842.

Sunday 18th. Then the week has also been noted for the fact that on Tuesday and Wednesday were Farmers' days and we saw quite a number of our relations on that occasion. On Tuesday, Uncle Gervase, Aunt Kate, Owen and Eric Fear turned up in the evening. Aunt Kate and Eric had been to Port Elizabeth for a few days and Eric had bought Uncle Gervase's car so they all returned by car. Aunt Kate slept here, using the folding double bed for the first time since our arrival. Uncle slept at Ernest's and Eric at Aunt Eliza's. They were off again after breakfast for Rooispruit. I took Aunt Kate round town before leaving as she had not seen Cradock for some years. We also called at the cemetery and saw Aunt Bremmie's, Uncle James' and other graves. Uncle Walter was in town but did not come to our flat. He is looking remarkably well but cannot walk very much as he is a martyr to rheumatism. Ernest left on Tuesday for Port Elizabeth to meet Alison who has returned from about eight month's holiday in England. They returned this Sunday afternoon by car, having called at Grahamstown to see Joan take part in some function in connection with the Training College before she leaves at the end of the year. They also went on to see Aunt Letty and some of the Graaff Reinnet family who are holiday making at the coast.

On Tuesday evening I went to a meeting of the Toc H organisation as a guest. I may join up with them as they seem to be out for service of one sort and another. On Wednesday afternoon, we called and took Mrs Williams and Agnes for a spin as far as Scanlen and Hales Owen. The weather was not very nice but they enjoyed the outing. We have had a good deal of rain during the week and our rainwater tank is running over.

We have also heard from Ruth this week and are glad to hear that Denis has again come out top of his class. She informs us that the prize giving has been postponed to Wednesday 28th, we shall still look to go to it. Aunt Jessie and Aunt Gladys will come with us. We shall try to see Trixie Hudson either going or returning. She is still at Alice.

Another event of the past week has been the receipt of Uncle Joe's legacy. We have not got our wireless set going yet. I have had the set, brought up from Cape Town, tested and it seems that it is not powerful enough for this distance so I have decided to send it back as a present to Louis Botha House. I shall get a set through Ernest if possible. I miss it very much,

especially as we seldom go out in the evenings. We have not been to either of the two bioscopes yet. The Grahamstown broadcasting station is to be opened this week and the reception should be good as it is so much nearer.

Today, being Temperance Sunday in all the churches, I was invited by the local WCTU to address the Baptist Sunday School this morning. There were only about thirty present but they seemed very attentive. We had Friends meeting at the Poplars this morning also. Ernest and Alison were not there as they only returned this afternoon. The next meeting is to be held at our flat, on December 2nd.

Grace writes that she had booked two rooms for us from December 23rd to January 3rd. I do not know if we shall stay so long as that but in any case, it is well that arrangements are so far fixed. We look to arrive at Kroonstad on December 23rd and Joe and Blodwen most likely will join the same train at Bloemfontein. They look to return on the Wednesday. Grace says Reg and Dot will most likely be arriving by car the same day. We are planning to break our journey at Bloemfontein on the return trip and spend New Year holiday with Joe and Blodwen.

Thanks for all the nice letters received during the week. We are very sorry that poor little Hal is not allowed to shed his splints yet. It must be very trying to have to lie so still for so many weeks. He will have to learn how to walk again when he does get up.

I don't think I told you that Uncle Herbert had a nasty experience a few weeks ago. He was superintending some ostriches being quilled and left the men working with them. After he had left the shed in which they were working, and before he had reached the kraal gate, the ostriches were let out and the birds rushed out. The front one knocked Uncle over and the others tramped over him. Fortunately he was not very seriously hurt but he cannot lift his arm to do his hair etc.

I must close now as we are just off to church and we do not want to be late to bed afterwards.

We hope you are all keeping well and trust we may be as fortunate this week as we were last in getting such a nice lot of letters from you.

I hope you will not be anxious about our health as no doubt we shall both be alright in a day or so.

Much love to all as usual,
Dad

53a Bree Street
Cradock
November 25th, 1934

My Dear All,

It is Sunday afternoon and a heavy thunderstorm is raging, but very little rain is falling here. It is 3.30 and the electric light has been switched off all the afternoon for some repairs but has now come on again.

I am afraid my epistle this week cannot be a very bright one. Mom is in bed and has been upset for a few days with tummy trouble. Last week it was her shoulder that was causing trouble and on Monday or Tuesday, I got Dr Scholtz to make a thorough examination. He considered it muscular rheumatism and prescribed accordingly. We do not know if it is the change of water or climatic conditions but Mom has not been feeling right for some time. She has tried Glauber Salts etc etc. One night she came over shivering etc and had hot water bottle to her feet. I called in the Dr again but he had gone to Kimberley so I got the chemist to make up a mixture for her and that seems to have done the trick. Mary has been very good in calling in and helping with advice and attention. Mrs Barnes (Minister's wife) came along yesterday and helped her. Aunt Jessie and Enid were in as usual on Friday and stayed to dinner. Mom is much better this afternoon and has been able to retain her very light dinner which I prepared for her. As a matter of fact, it was prepared yesterday, cold chicken, fresh arrowroot, and jelly. To add to the general discomfort, our boy has not turned up today. He generally arrives on the scene at 6.30 week days and 7 on Sundays. So I have had to be jack of all work. It is fortunate that I was fairly well trained in my youth. Of course having the electric heater for any emergency is a great relief. The washing up part of the business is not always congenial. I find that it does not always pay to let this part of the work accumulate. We always let the boy off after dinner on Saturdays so there was an extra accumulation. To add to the trouble, I must needs have a fall in the kitchen yesterday afternoon. I had stood on the stool (the one we used in the bathroom at LB House).to put in the bulb in the electric light and lost my balance in getting off. My glasses did not break but the specs cut my nose and I got rather bruised on the knee etc. I thought I should have had a black eye this morning but it wasn't as bad as that. I hope the boy will turn up in the morning. Nurse Mary called during the morning and said she would try to find out where he lived as she went to her duties in the location. So we live in hopes. Of course, this means that our motor trip to Grahamstown on Tuesday will have to be off. Perhaps, if Mom is equal to it, we might go by train so as not to disappoint Ruth and Denis and ourselves. But that will depend as to Mom's condition tomorrow. She wants to get up now but I think it is safer for her to stay quiet where she is. So that's that. Later, Mom got up in the late afternoon.

Well, we have got our wireless set partly fixed up. Ernest is doing it. I bought a His Masters Voice all wave set through him and I think we shall get much pleasure from it. I have paid for it from the money the YMCA gave as a farewell gift and I think they will send a suitable inscription to attach to it. At least Mr Haddow said they would. We listened in to the official opening of the Grahamstown station on Wednesday evening. The aerial masts are made out of galvanised iron tubing and are 35 feet high. We get very good reception even without aerial, just a piece of wire laid on the picture rail in the lounge. For overseas purposes, an aerial is needed.

As the flies are so bad here, I am having the whole of the back stoep closed in with mosquito gauze. Nurse Mary says she cannot understand where the flies come from. There is no open rubbish or kraals near. I am eaten up by the bites of one thing and another. When the veranda is closed in, it will be nice addition to the house and will be almost equal to an additional room. We shall not be able to use it very much in the afternoons, except in the winter, as the afternoon sun blazes furiously on that side of the house. Right at the top of the stoep it is open to the air so we are arranging for Mom to have her pot plants there if it will not be too hot.

We have been favoured again this week with news from most of the family. Harold writes from Kroonstad in great glee that his leg is out of splints and he is able to sit on a chair. Grace writes that she does not think one leg will be longer than the other. I hope he will not

suffer any permanent disablement in consequence of his accident. He was eight weeks in bed. Grace has booked two rooms for us in Kroonstad from December 23rd, the day we look to arrive. Joe and Blodwen will probably join the same train at Bloemfontein. Reg and Dot may also arrive the same day. Just a month today to Xmas day. A lot may happen between this and then.

Douglas writes that Government has purchased Col Rogers' farm which will be a great relief to all concerned. They are looking forward to the boys coming home for the holidays very soon. We have suggested that Bynne should come and spend a little time with us before Xmas.

Joe and Blodwen would like to fall in with a suggestion I made for them to end down here for Dingaans Day holiday. They could do it so far as coming but the getting back is not so easy. Joe suggests that we motor them back as far as Naaupoort so that they can catch a train that will bring them home by 7 am on Tuesday. Mom does not feel equal to this at present so we must wait and see.

I don't think we have been out anywhere during the week except on Thursday when we went to the reading circle at Mary's. It was a very cold evening and Mom thinks that was perhaps the commencement, or last straw that upset her.

Very few people have troubled to call on us. Perhaps the weather is too trying.

Aunt Emmie writes that she hopes to see a good deal of Ruth and Denis at Gordons Bay. It is strange that we had planned for Ruth and Derek to come to us at Cape Town and now we are not there to entertain them. We are very sorry that they cannot join us at Kroonstad. It is a pity as the cousins do not seem to know each other.

Later. The storm has passed over and very little rain has fallen locally. I trust more has fallen in the district. Locusts are very much in evidence in the district. Have not seen any here yet. I don't suppose I shall go to service this evening. We will listen in to the wireless. I am sorry I cannot add a 1st word in the morning as I used to be able to do in Cape Town. The box is cleared here early to catch the seven am train.

Much love to you all as though named.

Yours affectionately

Dad

53a Bree Street
Cradock
December 2nd, 1934

My Dear All,

I am late in beginning my letter this week. There is not much to write about. We are both better. Mom had the doctor again as she did not seem to get right as quickly as we should have liked. He carefully examined her and said there was nothing organically wrong. There has been a good deal of gastro flu about and that seems to have been the trouble. She is not properly well yet. Of course we had to give up our idea of going to Grahamstown but are thinking of making another effort to go the coming weekend as Ruth will be leaving for Gordons Bay on 20th and we want to see her and Denis before they go. It will all depend on how Mom is by Friday. Aunt Jessie may perhaps go with us if we go by car. I am pleased to see by the paper Ruth sent us that Denis took a leading part in the concert and also came top in his form. I wonder how his cousins will fare in their examinations.

One evening, as Mom and I were walking in front of where Aunt Emmie used to live in this street, a lady who was leading a little girl, asked if I was Mr Butler. She said she used to stay at the YWCA and remembered my addressing their Sunday morning meetings at various times. She was a Miss Burger and is now married to a Mr Engelbrecht who has been transferred here. The world is very small. Yesterday a Mr and Mrs Edmonds called to see us. He was educated at a Friends school in England and met us at Meeting in Cape Town. They also spent an evening with us at LB House a couple of years ago. She is sister to the postmaster here. They are leaving for a few months business trip to England on Friday. Dorothy mentions the Farrens calling on her. They are Friends residing at Pretoria. He is an inspector of the Barclays bank and we met them in Vryburg. We had Meeting here for the first time in our flat this morning. There were ten of us. This afternoon I went with Mary to a Wayfarer and Pathfinders meeting in the location. It was quite interesting. One of the Toc H men is in charge of the work. On Friday evening we looked in at the Methodist Sunday School Xmas tree party for the children. What memories the hall recalled. I remember at one IOGT meeting, sixty persons were initiated at one meeting.

I am glad to say we have got possession of the garage belonging to this house. The rental is only 6/- a month. It will be much more convenient than having to go to the Poplars every time we want to use the car. I don't think we have done more than 150 miles by car since we arrived. Shall probably do more now. I find that I have to go very slowly up hills when I am walking. I do not notice it when motoring.

Grace writes that all arrangements are well in hand for Xmas. I hope nothing will upset the plans. We are so pleased that Harold has at last got his broken leg out of splints. By Xmas, I hope he will be able to run about. It has been an anxious time for Grace and Ted. Joe and Blodwen are still considering coming to us for the Dingaans Day weekend. It will be very nice if they can manage it. Three weeks today, we expect to be in Kroonstad. Reg and Dot look to arrive the same day. They are having some very nice trips in the country. The scenery appears to be very lovely. We have completed closing in the back stoep but have not yet beaten the flies. We listened in to the Royal Wedding on Thursday and heard the whole service much better than the people who were in Westminster Abbey I guess. It was very clear.

Last Sunday we did not go outside the door so tonight we are going to service as usual. I shall not attempt another sheet as by the time we are home, it will be too late to complete it. Thanks for all letters and good wishes received during the week. We are both much better. The scab on my nose has come off and Mom is taking food very much better than earlier in the week.

All your letters are very interesting to us and we do look forward to getting them.

Lots of love to all
Dad

53a Bree Street
Cradock
December 6th, 1934

My dear All,

Don't get a fright and think that I am out of my reckoning so far as dates are concerned. The fact is that I am thinking of changing my day for writing my weekly epistle. I have, as you know, generally posted when at Cape Town so as to catch the fast mail train which conveyed the English mail so that you got the letters as soon as possible. Now that we are at Cradock, the same does not apply. Writing on Sundays has often been very inconvenient, especially when I have had appointments to keep. The mail for England leaves here on Wednesday night (the box closes then) so I am thinking that it may be best if I change my day for posting to Wednesday. An added advantage is that generally we get our best post on Wednesday mornings so should be able to answer your letters sooner than at present. An added reason for changing this week is that Mom and I are hoping to leave early tomorrow morning for a weekend trip to Grahamstown to see Ruth and Denis before they go to Cape Town on 19th and I do not propose taking the typewriter with me on this trip. So here goes.

I had not room on my last letter to refer to a social gathering held at Aunt Eliza's the previous week. She had invited Mr Waterson and his mother and sister to see some of her treasures. Mr Waterson is a new arrival in Cradock and has taken over Mills Chemist shop. They are nice Irish folk, very homely and seemed to enjoy the occasion. Mr Thomas was also there and Mary came a little later. Mom and I were there in the afternoon so Mom stayed and had an evening meal with Aunt Eliza and I went up later. Aunt Eliza was in her element. Treasures new and old, no not new ones but old ones, were brought forth from unseen places and greatly admired. Pieces of needlework dating back to I don't know when were trotted out and the history concerning them told with great interest. Everything had its history but unfortunately it is only in Aunt's head. I think it should all be written, or typed, and attached to each article as no one else will ever know what sentimental value is attached to each article. Many of the things shown I remembered from my old home in London.

Grace reports that David has developed chickenpox. I hope this is not going to upset Xmas plans. We have not heard definitely if Joe and Blodwen are coming to us for Dingaans Day weekend but perhaps we shall hear before we leave in the morning.

I met Hilda Collett at Alison's a day or two ago. She, of course, was Hilda Brown and with us in our Vryburg days. We are hoping to see more of her when she comes to town again.

I had my second game of bowls yesterday afternoon. I have joined the club so shall hope to play pretty often. It is quite mild exercise and interesting.

I had a nice letter from Mr JSB Holden yesterday. He is glad we are back in Cradock.

Later. A letter from Blodwen just to hand says they will most likely be here on Saturday morning 11th. We shall be back by Wednesday at the latest.

Uncle Jack and Aunt Agnes have been to see us today. The latter had dinner with us. We are expecting Aunt Jessie in this afternoon and if she is agreeable, we may go as far as Bedford this evening and complete the journey in the morning.

Blodwen writes that dear little Merle had a nasty accident a day or two ago. Blodwen was making some custard and tripped over Roy with the hot custard in her hand. Some of it fell on Merle who was in her pram and scalded her legs. She yelled most frightfully, Blodwen says, but the servant applied olive oil and soothed the place.

For the last few mornings, since the back stoep was closed in with gauze, we have had breakfast outside.

Love from Dad

53a Bree Street
Cradock
December 14th, 1934

My Dear All,

I am sorry that I am late with my circle letter this week but you are the cause of same. Some of you have remarked upon the change of day for posting same and approve of the alteration as it will afford you the opportunity of getting our letters before you write yours – as some of you do – on Sundays and so this will bring us more up to date than before. I hope to continue the new arrangement regularly.

Well, we left about 6.30 on Friday morning for Grahamstown by car. Aunt Jessie came in by car the afternoon previously. We took provisions for the road and one suitcase between us two. The run to Bedford was uneventful. Road badly corrugated in some parts but on the whole, good. We did not make any calls on the way but went close to the Dodd's and Nessie's house. We stopped before reaching Bedford for breakfast or morning tea. We had had porridge etc before starting. It was a lovely morning for motoring, not too hot or cold. We reached Bedford about 9.30 (50 miles). Mom and Aunt Jessie used to pass Bedford on their way to school in Grahamstown. Aunt Jessie went to school in Bedford when she was about twelve and was interested in calling at the house, which she recognised, where she used to stay. The house had been altered but she and Mom made bold to enquire if it was the same place and the present occupiers very kindly showed them over the place which they are running as a boarding house. They knew the Mrs Gill who ran the school in bygone days. We wired to Ruth saying we were on the way and might be expected during the afternoon. It must be about forty years since I was last in Bedford. In those days I used to do a good deal of travelling for the Cradock business (Butler Brothers) by cart and horses. There was no railway to Bedford in those days. The town has not altered much. A few new houses but most of the business houses and names on the walls were the same as in my days. Of course, the old hands of firms had passed over. I called at the Barclays Bank as I thought Sydney Geard was stationed there. I had previously sent a postcard saying I might call. He married a Minister's daughter from there. I found, however, that he had never been stationed at Bedford and was residing at Ermelo in the Transvaal.

The road from here was quite new to me. All the times I have been to Grahamstown before has been by train. It was quite pretty in parts. In one place near Carlisle Bridge, we passed hundreds of aloes in full flower. The tall stems of the trees looking like telegraph poles. I have never seen such numbers in flower in any fence. We stopped for lunch in the veldt before reaching Carlisle Bridge. We always carry a tin of sheep's tongue for this purpose as we find it just about sufficient for our capacity on such occasions. This, together with fruit, tea etc made a pleasant break. The bridge is very interesting, having been washed away, I think, three times. I must get a copy of the tablet which is inserted on one of the buttresses on the bridge giving dates of various floods. Beyond the bridge, the road passes through Hellpoort, so named I am told on account of the excessive heat generally experienced in passing through the poort. The scenery is very grand and reminded me of Bains Kloof between Wellington and Worcester. The poort is about four miles long and winds in and out of the mountain. It is not so steep as Bains Kloof. The veldt changes considerably, some is grass, other bush whilst a good deal is so thick that it must be almost impossible to farm at all. There is plenty of prickly pear and I understand that Jointed Cactus is to be found in many places. I was reminded of the journey Rev Barnabus Shaw, the pioneer Wesleyan missionary in South Africa, which he records in his history of a journey from Cradock to Grahamstown by wagon (I presume) which took him eight days to accomplish. We did the 115 miles in eight hours, with far more comfort than he ever had. I was also reminded of the difficulties the early settlers must have had in farming in such a wild country as it must have been in those far off days. The bitter experiences of the kaffir wars, and fighting in such impenetrable bush as we passed through both on the outward and more especially on the homeward journey.

We arrived just at 2 pm and Ruth and Denis were on the look out for us. We were very comfortably settled in the same boarding house with them and can recommend anyone to go there if they are looking to visit Grahamstown at any time. We had a nice large room on the ground floor whilst Aunt Jessie had a room upstairs. Ruth and Denis are also on the first floor. Denis sleeps on the balcony. He was very interested in the crystal wireless he had just constructed at a total cost (exclusive of headphones) of 5/5. After a rest and a cup of tea, we took a run up to Stones Hill and regaled ourselves with strawberries and cream. A sister of Uncle Norman's wife runs the tea garden there and for sixpence each, we had a good fill. This place is very prettily situated on a hill overlooking part of the town and within easy distance. We saw the house which belonged to the Gushes. I cannot attempt to record our doings in correct order of events. We seemed to be constantly on the move and we were very interested in all we saw and the people we met. On Saturday, we all went up the mountain drive. We saw the spot where that terrible motor accident occurred recently when three school girls were killed and another injured. The driver must have been going at a terrible pace to have caused such an accident as the spot is not a very dangerous one. The view from the top is indeed very grand. For miles upon miles you view the surrounding hilly country. On a clear day, Ruth says, you can see the sea. I could not help thinking of the times Uncle James must have walked up the same road as he often mentioned in his journal going up Signal Hill, as it was then called. The new wireless station has been erected on the top and we were shown over it. In the visitors' book, we noticed that Alice Biggs had signed the day before and we were sorry to have missed seeing them. Old Mrs Biggs was with her.

We went through the botanical gardens which I had not seen since 1887 when I went to the Diamond Jubilee. It is a beautiful spot and is well kept.

We took Mrs Jack Brown for a spin to the conservation dam which supplies Grahamstown with its water. It is a fine sight but a miserable road to it. One afternoon I took Denis and Joan Butler (Ernest's daughter) and Barbara Collett (Uncle Gervase's daughter) to the bio to see Paddy, the next best thing. We were sitting far too near the screen to enjoy it properly. We made a large number of calls on various old friends. The Putteralls, who used to be in Vryburg, and many whose names I don't suppose any of you, except Ruth, know. We went to Commemoration church in the morning and the following day, a nice bunch of flowers was brought to the boarding house by Mrs Pinnock, Secretary to the Methodist Flower Mission with a printed card attached of Welcome and the text "I will keep thee in all places whither thou goest". We called and thanked her for the kind act. Of course, we went to see the Library where Ruth works. It is a very nice building and Ruth is very happy in her work.

The museum is also very interesting but we did not have time to stay very long. Uncle James spent three years in Grahamstown when he first came to South Africa in 1875. What a difference there is since those days. I notice a big change since I saw it in 1887. The streets are tarred and island gardens have been planted in the centre of the widest streets.

We started on our return trip on Tuesday morning. I should have said that Aunt Jessie developed a sore back on Sunday and was not able to go about everywhere with us. It got so bad that we were afraid that she would have to return by train but by the time we were ready to go, she felt that she could stand the journey. We came back via Alice so as to see Trixie Hudson. We phoned to her to enquire if it would be convenient and she kindly invited us to stay for lunch. We also phoned to Rev AJ Cook at Fort Hare and to Rev Wellington at the Methodist Teachers (Native) Training Institute at Healdtown and received cordial invitations to come. It was a very hot day, so different to what we had on Friday. The country was quite new to us all and very pretty in most parts. At Breakfast Vlei we met a railway lorry loaded with cheeses from a factory nearby. We arrived at Alice just about one and were heartily welcomed at the Nursing Home by Trixie and the staff. We enjoyed our lunch and a short rest. Trixie was allowed to accompany us to see Fort Hare. The matron was very kind and they all seemed very fond of her. Norma Watson, née Rickett, lives close by and we were pleased to see her and her two sweet little girls in her nice home. When I gave up the superintendence of the Vryburg Sunday School,

she was deputed to make a presentation of an entire dish to me. She was then about the smallest child in the school. She greeted us both with a kiss. The town of Alice has not grown appreciably since I was there many years ago. It is a quite little place and is in the line of old fortified stations of the early days.

Fort Hare has within the last few years sprung into existence as a University for the Natives. Of course all the buildings are new and up to date. None of the European Universities could be better equipped. Rev Mr Cook took us round the premises which cover a large extent of ground. Each of the different denominations have erected their own hostels but all have the same professors for instructors. The late Howard Pim (Friend) has left the whole of his library to the University.

After having afternoon tea, we took Trixie back and Mr Cook came in his cab to put us on the short cut to Healdtown. This saved us about 209 miles by going over the mountain but the road was steep and bad. We accomplished it quite safely but the heat was very trying to us and also to the engine. When we arrived, we were informed that one of the passengers in a car we had met going to Fort Hare was Sir A Pim, Howard Pim's brother, who is out here on some Government Commission in connection with Native education. I should have like to have met him. We were very thankful to accept an invitation to stay the night at Healdtown. We were tired and Aunt Jessie was feeling her back troublesome. The institution was breaking up for the summer holidays but I was shown over a good deal of the place. It is entirely used as a teachers' training school for natives. There are about seven hundred boys and four or five hundred girls in residence so you can imagine the amount of organisation that is involved. The boys' dining room is undergoing enlargement so as to seat 700 at a time. The running expenses are £100 per day and the natives pay for it. Government, however, pays the salaries of the teachers. The place is nicely furnished. Rev Wellington and his wife are kept very busy but they have a very competent staff. Uncle Dudley's wife's sister is Matron and Nurse there. Of course they have to do a lot of entertaining. We were given a most comfortable room and were thankful to have a nice sleep.

We left soon after six on Wednesday morning, calling for a few minutes conversation with Elsie Hornabrook's husband, Mr Dugmore, at Fort Beaufort. We had breakfast at Adelaide and reached home about one. We called at Dagga Boer where we had often stayed in Uncle John and Aunt Martha Trollip's days. Everyone was away at Bedford but we saw the new house which is very elaborate outside. There were 21 envelopes awaiting us on our return and we have been very busy since.

Much love to all,
Dad

53a Bree Street
Cradock
December 19th, 1934

My Dear All,

It is hardly worthwhile writing a circle letter this week as I have posted to you earlier in the week. But in order to keep up the continuity, I had better write a few lines.

Blodwen sent a postcard to say that they were looking to join the same train as we do on Sunday morning. We have not had any letters from Grace or Dot this week, the Public holiday on Monday has evidently upset postal arrangements. Perhaps we shall hear tomorrow. I feel like wiring to find out as it seems hardly worthwhile going if the others are not going to be there. We presume there has not been any fresh cases of chickenpox as Blodwen would not think of going with her two babies if there was any risk.

I went over to book our seats just before dinner time and was informed that the train was fully booked and we could not go before Sunday morning. The Station Master is from Observatory and of course I knew him. He will try to get us fixed up. If he cannot do so, we shall either travel by Sunday or Friday mornings train and get there in the middle of the night. I might even take the car instead of train. We will see later on.

Monday's holiday was spent at home. We did not do anything although there was plenty on. It was just a year ago that we moved from Strand Street into Long Street YMCA. What a lot has happened since then. Life was busy then, now it seems so objectless.

Ruth had a sad experience on Monday. Letter from her this morning gives particulars of what might have been a most serious accident. She was in a car (Miss Chalker's) and a young Minister was driving them back from Port Alfred when the car skidded and collided with a tree and overturned onto its hood. Fortunately no one was seriously hurt but the roof of the car was torn to ribbons. The glass did not break. It is a wonder that all the occupants were not killed or seriously hurt. I wired to her this morning. Denis was not in the car. They are leaving for Gordons Bay this evening. The accident happened on the same road that we were on, on the day we arrived. I noticed the road party was putting down fresh ground and I remarked that it was very clayey and I would not like to skid on that soil. It must have happened near where we had strawberries and cream.

Sunday was a busy day at the location here. The jubilee of the Native Church was celebrated. Rev Jacques came up specially from Grahamstown for the occasion. We went to the afternoon service. Aunt Jessie and Enid also came in and some ladies from Fish River. The Collection amounted to over £70.

Later. We have been to the station again and they have arranged for us to go by the Saturday night train but we have to travel first class as every seat is booked. Well goodbye till we meet again. I wish we were all going to be together but that is not possible this time.

Hoping everyone will enjoy themselves and not forget the significance of the day.

Much love to all, from your loving Dad

Ruth's address is:
c/o Marine Hotel
Gordons Bay
Cape Province.

53a Bree Street
Cradock
December 1934

My dear Children,

I have often said that if ever I had anything to leave behind me when I pass out of this world, I would much rather bestow whatever I might have whilst still alive and have the pleasure of giving pleasure and seeing those to whom I could give it, enjoy it. I never expected to have much to give but the way has opened and I think I can spare a little this Christmas time.

Of course none know what is before us. Both Mother and I have passed the allotted span of three score years and ten and we are pleased and thankful to be spared in a good measure of health and comfort.

As you know, I have no settled income or salary and am dependent upon what little revenue I received from my few investments, but I anticipate that if everything goes as I hope it will, we should have sufficient to keep us from being a burden on anyone for a few years by living on our capital. This I do not mind, I have it for that purpose. Should, however, it become exhausted before we are called hence, I know that we have the love and affection of you all that we shall not need to beg our bread.

It gives me great pleasure to enclose herewith a cheque for £10 and I am also enclosing in a separate envelope a Union Loan Certificate for eight pounds for each grandchild, which if allowed to mature will in time be worth £10 each.

I hope the gift will be accepted as a token of our continued love and affection for you and yours and provide some little extra comfort which may add to the pleasure of life.

With very best wishes for a happy Christmas and bright new year.

Your loving
Dad

At Kroonstad
Christmas 1934

Dear Ruth, Dennis, Douglas, Evelyn, Arthur, Lynne, Rex, Kingsley and Cicely,

We, the rest of the family, are here spending a very happy time together. The wish has often been expressed that you were here but we can quite understand that under the circumstances, this was not possible. However, we all send our heartiest greetings and no doubt we have been in your thoughts as much as you have been in ours.

We are devoutly thankful that the family circle still remains unbroken, especially after the terrible accident which Ruth experienced only a few days ago. One shudders to think what might have been but a merciful Providence has spared us all a terrible catastrophe. We have had a very happy time together and no doubt Dad will in due course record some of the happenings.

We hope the weather has been kind to you. It was not too hot on Xmas Day but today, Boxing Day, has been wet.

We are parting with Joe and Blod and the two babies this afternoon. We should like them to stay longer but Joe has to be at work on Thursday morning.

There have been eight adults and eight children, the majority of the family circle. Perhaps some other year, if we are all spared, we may be successful in getting all together for once.

With love to each of you,
Dad

M E Butler
G Irons
Grace
Joe, full of cake
Blod
Dot, full of fun
Reg