

Ocean Island.

5. 1. 39.

Dear Sir Walter,

I expect you heard, or saw, of Harry's m.s.e. before the arrival of my letter in which I said he was being recommended for it. I should think he will soon be coming back from the Phoenix Islands but they tell me he is still wandering round there. I expect he is making sure that his various ^{parties} are well settled in before he leaves them for 2 months. He sent me a Christmas message but that is all I have heard from him direct. The office people let me know where he is from time to time.

Before he left I'm sure he meant to order the parts of his uniform that are missing, did he say anything to you in his letter? If he didn't would you please order for him a c.e.s. sword & knot with the shoulder strap affair that it hangs in & also a helmet, size $6\frac{7}{8}$. He got his other things from Hobsons but I understand that Austin Reeds will provide them, Hobsons I think is in the Haymarket but I expect you know. We had better have an extra set of buttons too please. I suppose it wouldn't be possible to send

these things by air mail?

I enclose a snap of Alacie which Teira had taken by a policeman friend, she looks awful but the babe is quite good. He is progressing well, sitting up quite well but not actually getting to that position by himself & is beginning to show that he has a will of his own. I don't quite know what is going to happen to us in the near future, we thought of going to the Phoenix in April but I don't want to do anything that will upset him, also I don't know yet whether Mother is coming up here.

I have a nice garden here, zinnias & balsams flowering well so that I always have bowls of flowers in the house & the tomatoes are just forming - Cress, Lettuces, parsley & mint I have in boxes & I have a green salad every day for lunch so I think I should be able to manage Spmach etc for Alacie when he is weaned.

We enjoyed your description of the crisis very much but I wonder how long Hitler will be satisfied with what he got.

With much love from

Honor.

Ent. D. 3/2/39

Accepted 7/2/29.

Buttons ordered 10/2/39

Dispatched by A. N. 20/2/39

Ocean Island.

Central Pacific.

8 FEB 1939

15. 1. 39.

Dearest Lady Maude,

I am hoping to get letters from you to-day or tomorrow when the Medical Dept's ship, "Kiakia" gets in from Tarawa. The Macdonalds went across in her & Mac promised to have our mail extracted from the Bevu bags: I had a radio from him yesterday saying that my mail was on board. I added a p.s. to my last letter to you asking you to send all letters to Ocean Island. Now there are 2 ships going to & fro & in any case the bulk of the mail comes through here, our Private Bag is sheer waste of money so far, so I think it's much better to have our mail in bags which will be opened here & then sent on to wherever we are.

16th I didn't get very far with this & now a lovely mail has arrived - the parcels are still in the Post office but sound most exciting. I've had a hectic day - "it never rains but it pours" & now that I've begun to prepare for our next move Harry has begun to alter his programme. I thought it was about time I tried to settle what I was going to do so I asked Mr Garvey to let me know definitely whether I could keep this house till March or not & was told yesterday that it is wanted for unexpected

people so that knocks Mother's visit on the head. So I've wired her that I shall be sailing for the Gilberts soon unless she particularly wants me to join her. I feel that after the tragedy she may want to see me but on the other hand I hear that Auntie leaves for England in March so Mother may go with her. I dread the journey alone with Alaric, I have been with Harry for only 2 months of the past year & it is hardly fair to leave him again & all being well we hope to take Alaric Home before very long - it is all very difficult, especially having no one to discuss things with, I'm torn between my desire to stay with Harry & a desire to see Mother & to have Alaric somewhere safe. However if I start to fuss about him now I might as well pack up & go home as I shall have to get used to seeing my precious babe chucked from pillar to post. He is so gorgeous, everyone loves him, (or so they say!) & he is simply bristling with teeth - 5 before he is 7 months old, two top & three bottom, huge ones at the top, & he looks so sweet when he smiles. I got such a lovely surprise to-day, a letter from Harry, written at Beem on Dec. 14th just before leaving for the Phoenix. I sent him a wire to-day saying I expected to return with him & asking for approximate date. This evening Mr Garvey has received a wire from him saying that he is sailing at once for Tarawa as he must discuss things with Mr Garvey before he (Mr Garvey) goes to Fanning.

I suppose he should be here in about 10 days. I gather that drought conditions in the Phoenix are bad. Harry thinks settlers should not be taken there as they would have to be rationed, not a promising outlook for a new colony. I think Mr. Garvey thinks that the S. of S. will insist on the settlement scheme going through - I imagine that Harry is pretty bothered about things because he wired some days ago advising against more settlers being taken. He said all along we should wait for rain but was over-ruled so the onus is on Fiji but it must be very worrying.

I hadn't heard anything about that earthquake you mention & we didn't feel it here, however I hope there aren't any tidal waves wandering around. None of Sir Walter's letters have come, so there is nothing between Nov: 14th & Dec: 12th, the period of your illness I expect. I was very sorry to hear you had been laid up & wonder if it was that old fever but you say probably 'flu. People here are having gastro-enteritis, probably from flies & there isn't any bread because they've got "rope" (?) in the bakehouse, it doesn't affect me as we always make our own bread.

Thank you for the newspapers, I don't know which is worse, reading about it or imagining

what happened - I do hope the crash or the explosion killed them quickly, it is still hard to believe that it has really happened, even when I see it in print. I haven't heard a word from any of my own family, except Mother, I expect they found it too hard to write but I hope Sybil will write soon.

The European news is sad reading too & really mail day is not now as joyful an occasion as it might be. The B.K.H. news letter is slightly cheering as it seems that the German public are becoming alarmed at this terrible persecution but what can they do? Those letters were very popular in Z'bar & also here, they are one of the best things you have ever sent us, & we have introduced a number of people to them. I suppose Hitler really believes that the German people are the only people who count at all otherwise how can he expect the rest of the world to listen to his talk of persecuted Germans in other countries. It really is appalling when one stops to think of all the terrible misery & hardship there is in the world to-day.

I was very surprised to hear that Joan was to be married, or rather, is married I suppose, I can't send her a cheque till Harry comes back but I am glad she is married

• hope she will be very, very happy.

About our things that Gerald was keeping, I think I'd better ask Mother to enquire when she gets home - oh dear, it's so awful to think of those two in that frightful crash. I did hope I would get a last letter from Ruby but now that the mail has come from Tarawa I'm afraid there is no hope.

How do you like our new stamps? We have a whole pictorial issue up to 5/- - the 1/- is one of the nicest.

Did I tell you that Alaic had masses of Christmas presents from people on Ocean? Animals of all descriptions, rattles, dolls & a musical box & a lovely little wooden cart shaped like Mother Goose which says "quack" as it is pulled along & the head goes up & down & the beak opens as it "quacks"! Alaic loves it now & Teira carries him up & down the verandah whilst he holds the string & pulls it along.

With much love to you all from

Your loving

Honor.

11 APR. 1939

Tarawa.

9. 3. 39.

Dearest Lady Maude,
I haven't a moment to write but this is just to tell you we are on our way to Beem & I am more seasick than ever! We've had a couple of days here to recover somewhat but have to be on board at 8 a.m. to-day. Marie was very good but got hopelessly constipated so we've been having a grand time! Harry I hardly see but at least he can keep an eye on the babe on board when I give out.

The enclosed snap was taken by Sergeant Mann - it's rather good.

Harry needs his uniform things for when H.C. comes in time so we're hoping they arrive in time.

Keep much love from us both
Yours
Honora.

P.S. Harry's ring
which he lost at
Agorae 9 years
ago has been
found, in the
sea, returned!

Dearest Sir Walter,

Harry has just produced your letter
of Nov. 20th, it was overlooked when we first went through
our mail at Ocean Island as it was in a "Returned
letter" envelope; ~~and~~ it had been in the sea owing to an
accident to the Flying Boat - rather extraordinary that
the first damaged letter we have had should be the
one of sympathy for the death of Ruby & Gerald. Now
that I have recovered from the first shock of hearing
of that ghastly tragedy I find it quite impossible to
believe that I shall never hear from or see Ruby
again. Did I tell you before that that particular
make of machine has a very bad record in Australia
& I'm told that Australia will not use them now?
They apparently just crash out of the blue without
any reason that anyone can see, except I think in
one case where the tail or a wing fell off.

It is really lovely to be back on Beau
though it is terribly dry & my poor garden looks rather
desolate. I was agreeably surprised to find a few ^{flowers} ~~plants~~
& pot plants surviving & they are looking better already
as no rain water is thrown away, bath water etc. goes
on to the plants & they don't seem to mind the soap.
In the kitchen we use the brackish well water & we

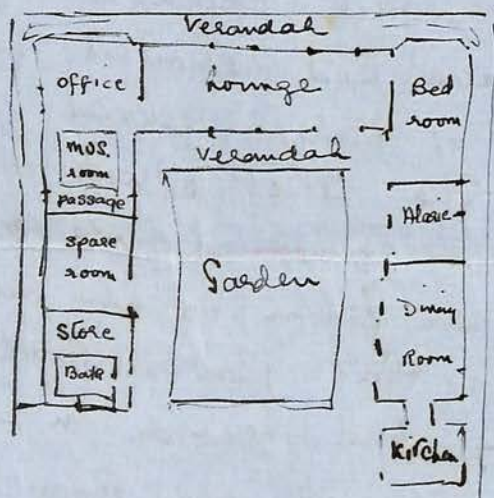
Beau.

G. + E. O.C.

28th March, 1939.

allow ourselves only one shower a day each, otherwise have to manage with a basin of water. Several flowering shrubs have survived + oleanders + a small sort of snapdragon which we call violeteen.

M^r Armstrong had all the main posts + the roof of our house renewed + made a wonderful job of it, it was just about falling down when we left, so I'm now having walls redone + having my usual fun putting walls in different places! I think it really is rather nice now, like this: —



The bathroom is a fibrolite room inside native walls + I have a lovely store room now - These used to be a wee one between kitchen + dining room + a nasty passage across there. Alice's room has two arches on the garden side + one arch on the other side so is very open + cool.

I've never seen quite such an awful muddle as there is in the house, or rather "was", as I've got it a little bit better but there were boxes everywhere + also natives working + as lots of stuff had been lying here for ages I don't know where anything is + quite a number of things are either lost or mislaid. My nice little portable oil stove which I hadn't even unpacked has been lost in transit somewhere. Harry says he never saw it after leaving Ocean. The stove in the kitchen is open at all the joints +

the oven shelf is rusted rotten. I'll ask for a new one but goodness knows when it will come as the A.O.'s stove was condemned in 1936 & the Beringtons are still waiting for a new one!

We were 2 weeks on the way here, we went first to Tarawa & had a calm trip but I was very, very sick, mostly I think because Harry made me get up. So we arrived in Tarawa with me feeling as weak as a kitten & Alarie, for some reason, terribly constipated. We stayed with the D^o & his wife for two days & quite recovered. Then we left for Nonouti but it was dreadfully rough & as we couldn't get there early enough to enter the lagoon the Captain put in at Kuria to give us a breather. We left Tarawa at 9 a.m. & I lay on deck till about 9 p.m. & to everyone's astonishment wasn't ill! But I can survive a lot if I can lie absolutely quiet & still. We anchored at Kuria at 3 a.m., went ashore next morning & sailed again at 4 p.m. However the current played the Captain false & next morning ^{we} were miles & miles away to the S.W. of Nonouti & it took all day to get back so we had to anchor outside the lagoon & couldn't start in till the sun was well up ^{next day} because of the shadow on the rocks. Even so the Capt. got a bit south of the passage & hit a rock straight off! I gather we merely scraped off some rusty metal, anyhow we carried on & eventually got ashore at 6.30 p.m. We had 4 days at Nonouti, a terribly dry island & the

old people in a state of semi-starvation as the youngsters & boys & girls get anything that is going. Harry bought masses of native made string but we couldn't take nearly all they wanted to sell & they were so hard up for tobacco that they came & begged just a smoke.

From Nonouti we went on to Tabiteuea, an overnight trip & we spent a couple of days there. Once again the enormous "bauea" (outside canoe) was taken out for us & we returned to the ship in it. This time however it had just been repaired & we had 3 sails & a jib. Harry took a number of snaps so I hope some will turn out. We had to go & see the Roman Catholic Bishop here which meant $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour's cycle ride on a very sandy & very bumpy road, our wrists hurt like anything by the time we arrived there. At Nonouti I went to see the Sisters twice but although it was a long ride the road was good as it was made originally with reef mud.

We had a very touching welcome here at Beu, just as we thought we had run the gauntlet of shaking hands they broke into song & sang a song of welcome to "M³ & M³⁸ Maude & their child Alaic". I was quite glad I had dark glasses on! Alaic had been sent ahead out of the sun but he showed his appreciation by jiggling up & down & shouting lustily. We became quite expert at taking him ashore plus all his necessary gear & thoroughly enjoyed visiting the different islands however on the ship it was anything but nice & so difficult to wash & to prepare his meals that I've decided not to take him to the Phoenix. Harry isn't keen on our accompanying him as he is much too busy to

be able to help & I think it only fusses him - we both think it would be better for Alacic not to go. For one thing he has to be held every waking hour because the movement of the ship makes him fall & bash himself. At present Harry is to & fro, collecting settlers, he goes away for 2 or 3 nights - then is at home for 1 or 2. This time he & Mr^s Bevington have gone to 3 islands & will be away 5 or 6 days so Mr^s Bevington (a recent bride) is staying with me. When they return Harry will be here for about 10 days before leaving for the Phoenix islands when he will be away a month or so. I'm supposed to be going to stay at the mission but I think this anthropologist from Auckland, Miss Rutherford, will be here & I can't very well leave her to fend for herself as I promised to look after her. She should have arrived some time ago but there have been numerous delays & she is now due here in 3 days time.

We have quite a crowd of settlers in the "maneha" close by, they seem to think I'm in charge & come to ask me about anything & everything! Their faith in me is really rather pathetic, I do hope everything will go well with them in their new homes, at any rate they couldn't be much worse off for they are all poor - one man has 10 children & he & his wife between them had only 25 coconut trees. So far we have had 2 births, one yesterday & one

6.

this morning, both girls; & sad to relate we have lost one year old baby but it was well when it left its home island. Some of the men are working in the house, re-doing the old walls, they are only too glad to get some work to do & understand, & a little money for tobacco or other trade goods is very welcome.

The European situation keeps us very much on tenter hooks, it is pretty certain the we would have the Japanese at least at Ocean Island in a very short time, we only beat them to Hawaii by a few hours in the last war. With our headquarters gone & shipping upset we would be somewhat uncomfortable to say the least of it & imagine they would come down through the islands sooner or later. I'm reading "Europe & the Czechs" which is very interesting but very sad reading now that Czechoslovakia has gone.

6th APR
The ship has come in a day early & expects to make a good mail connection so I'm sending this & will post again on the Mission ship at the end of the month. Harry returned yesterday with settlers, pigs, chickens & planks & I've been running round in circles!

Much love from us both,

Your loving

Honor.

28 JUNE 1939

Beau Island.

18th May, 1939.

Dearest Lady Maude,

The medical ship "Kiakia" is unexpectedly going across to Ocean Island so we get another mail away. I got my first radio from Harry this week, after 3 weeks absence, it was most cheerful, "plenty of rain, all well & everyone happy". Now we are in direct touch with him but it is too far for us to use the telephony apparatus which is a pity but I get quite a thrill when I hear them tapping away & then producing news of Harry. "Himanoa" hasn't gone across yet so I can't expect to have Harry back for another 2 weeks at least so, as usual, he is going to be longer than he anticipated.

Baby & I are still at the mission station & M^{rs} Eastman won't hear of us going until the time of Harry's return is nearer. I am enjoying being here very much & find I can help a lot especially as M^{rs} Eastman is doing the work of 4 women! I have prepared all the needlework for 56 girls & help during needlework class. Tekukurui &

I do quite a lot of the cooking too as everyone else goes to school.

I'll see about having some things made for you, we've got rather nice round openwork baskets now so I could have them fitting into one another. I've just been having floor mats made for D^r Steenson & the women have done very well for once, they are apt to be very careless.

Alarie is forging ahead, puts on 3 or 4 ounces regularly each week & is now walking pushing his pram or when his hands are held but he won't stand alone. We think double teeth are on the way as we are having very restless nights though he doesn't cry - last night I only got 1/2 hrs sleep after 3 a.m. & then slept from 6 to 7 a.m. after handing him over to Teia. Baby just wriggled & wriggled & possibly dozed a bit. Usually he is awake between 3 & 4 a.m. & then sleeps till 5.30 or 6 a.m. He is very sweet, chatters away & if he sees anyone he wants just puts out one arm with the hand turned palm upwards! Yesterday we put him in his pen, in a little open house away from the main building, all alone, & he played away as good as gold. He has his first lot of prickly heat as a result

of some wet weather. We've had a nice lot of rain & it has made everything revive most marvellously & green grass has sprung up.

Please will you send Harry a ~~Mason Pearson hair brush~~ & I think one for Alarie too please, a wee one, his hair is so long & gets full of it, sand which sticks like glue. Also please a pair of ~~cutting out scissors~~, not too big, some ~~toiling elastic~~, ~~narrow tape~~, ~~round hat~~ ~~elastic~~ (for Alarie's crawlers, I'm told it doesn't cut their legs) & some ~~embroidery needles with long eyes~~.
 3
 4 yds
 Tera has been doing some fascinating & stitch on Alarie's aceter vests & they look sweet but I'm afraid he doesn't appreciate them yet!

I enclose snaps for Muriel, her letter has just come & I must have forgotten to enclose snaps in mine to her.

With much love from
 Honor.

[Missing p. 2]

17 JULY 1939

Beau Island,

Culbert Is.

10th June, 1939.

Dearest Lady Maude,

Alarie & I came back home last week but Harry shows no signs of returning to us, he has been away 7 weeks & he only expected to be away a month. We gather that "Nimauoa" has been busy plying between the various Phoenix Islands but I haven't had any news from Harry.

Thank you very much indeed for all the parcels that came this mail. Alarie still appreciates rattles, in fact I think he likes them more now that he understands cause & effect! The beads too he likes & the swing is just the right size for him. Please would you get ~~a good rag book~~ for me to give him ~~for Christmas~~ & some blocks? He has a small rag book which he loves, he was as quiet as a mouse the whole of lunch time looking at it. He is most amusing now the way he answers & tries to talk. And if anyone calls to anyone else he always joins in. Sometimes if we talk to him he gives a short answer but at other times gives quite a speech in

quite chilly nights which helped to clear it up but it has broken out in fresh places now.

Alaie loves to get on to the floor of his mosquito room, then he makes a bee-line for the flap & opens it with a lovely flourish, he learnt very quickly how to get out of that net!

I'll send you some baskets etc. as soon as they are ready. I've told the women to make them fit into one another & then they shouldn't get too fashed about. They are simply inundating me with things but so far I've had no difficulty in getting rid of them. However I've had to make it a rule that I only accept things on Friday mornings, because I had no place at all & it was such a waste of time having them come at all hours any day.

I will go through your letters again to see if there is anything to answer, I've got a frightful pile to answer. Frightful because I've let things get behindhand, I love getting letters of course. Please go on sending the religious books, Harry likes them & so do I.

With much love to you all from
Honor.