

# 1946

*Mum turns twenty-four and tries to find her raison d'être in post-war Hong Kong. She knows she's leaving, but will it be America or England? Jack Kruse is long gone, but they continue to correspond. Early in February her sister Hazel and husband Eddie Gosano leave for the UK leaving Mum feeling even more at sea. Although no longer employed at DGS Mum continues to teach. This is the year Mum meets her future husband and moves to England. For 1946, especially the latter half, I had access to many letters to and from Jack, Dad, the Lang's and others - providing a valuable addition to Mum's diary entries.*

## 1946

JANUARY						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

FEBRUARY						
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MARCH						
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APRIL						
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29	30					

MAY						
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JUNE						
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JULY						
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29	30	31				

AUGUST						
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	


SEPTEMBER						
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30						

OCTOBER						
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

NOVEMBER						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

DECEMBER						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

 Mum's Diary Entries

 Letters

**Jan. 8**

First mention of Dad in letter to Mum from Cedric.

**Feb. 6**

Mum's sister Hazel sails for UK

**Feb. 22**

Mum and Dad meet

**March 28**

Dad writes his address in Mum's diary

**April 3**

Mum leaves HK on Strathmore

**May 1**

Mum arrives London

**May 24**

Dad arrives back in UK

19  46

Mum moves from the family home (King's Terrace) Jan. 6<sup>th</sup> 1946 and until her departure on the Strathmore for the UK on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, lives with Glenda Wong at 1<sup>st</sup> flr. 12 Dragon Terrace, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong. It sounds like Mum was able to relax for the first time in a while away from her monastic existence at DGS and the chaos of the war damaged family home in Kowloon.

*“it is a luxury to live in a furnished flat – piano, radio and all”*

January 13<sup>th</sup> letter

Teaching Glenda and a succession of private students occupies her time outside of her busy social life. 1946 marks a continued return to normality with Mum getting a perm, engaged in choir practice, still teaching, though finished with DGS, and still in contact with Jack, and making plans to move to the USA. A letter from Cedric, now back home in London, puts in a final plea for a photo, and my father's name first appears. I suspect Cedric never did get his photo. Clothes, movies, visits to the Artifex, university, church and Tamar dances, books, both academic and novels, fill Mum's time. Hazel leaves for London with Eddie, her new husband, who intends to study and take his medical exams.



Causeway Bay  
1940's; Dragon  
Terrace is located  
towards left corner,  
base of photo. Note  
Victoria Peak in the  
background.

## Emily Hahn

*“Madame tells me to ask you to contact Emily Hahn thro’ “The New Yorker” if you want any ok’s for me. Mme has written to her and she says for you to refer to me as her pupil, protégée or something.”*

January 13<sup>th</sup> letter



A widely traveled American feminist who wrote for the New Yorker 1929-96. She moved to Shanghai in 1935 and then after moving to Hong Kong, she began an affair with Charles Boxer, the local head of British Army Intelligence. According to a December 1944 *Time* article, Hahn *"decided that she needed the steadying influence of a baby, but doubted if she could have one. 'Nonsense!' said the unhappily-married Major Charles Boxer, 'I'll let you have one!' Carola Militia Boxer was born in Hong Kong on October 17, 1941".*

*“When the Japanese marched into Hong Kong a few weeks later Boxer was imprisoned in a POW camp, and Hahn was brought in for questioning. "Why?" screamed the Japanese Chief of Gendarmes, "why ... you have baby with Major Boxer?" "Because I'm a bad girl," she quipped. Fortunately for her, the Japanese respected Boxer's record of wily diplomacy.”*

As Hahn recounted in her book *China to Me* (1944), she was forced to give Japanese officials English lessons in return for food, and once slapped the Japanese Chief of Intelligence in the face. He came back to see her the day before she was repatriated in 1943 and slapped her back.

By all accounts Emily was quite the character, accomplishments included driving across the USA in a model T Ford dressed as a man in the 1920's, living with a pygmy tribe for two years in the Belgian Congo and walking across Africa. While teaching English to the Chinese elite in Shanghai, Emily was in the habit of taking her pet gibbon Mr. Mills with her to dinner parties, dressed in a diaper and a minute dinner jacket. She also found time to write and publish 25 books.

Emily aided Selwyn-Clarke in his many relief activities and was an active agent in the BAAG.

## Ray Nash



Ray Nash, center



Mentioned in Cedric's letter to Mum, Ray Nash was an RAF boozing buddy of Dad's. As a boy, I often heard him talk of Ray and his exploits downing a total of 16 V1 flying bombs over the English countryside. The trick apparently was to dive in a fast fighter to gain sufficient speed, then get one wing under the Doodlebug to flip it – this screwed up the gyroscopic guidance system and the bomb would fly into the ground, before reaching London. On one occasion, as Ray was attempting this maneuver, a flying bomb exploded....

## Jack Kruse

On the 11<sup>th</sup> March Mum receives a letter from Jack informing her that he has secured a place for her at the University of Missouri, Columbia. She makes no mention of this in her diary; maybe as at this point she is dealing with Dad turning her life upside down. The letter finishes with the following:

I think I've said enough except to remind you to bend every effort toward obtaining those papers and having the photostatic copy sent to the Registrar, University of Missouri. Let me know of your results. Write to England if you have to. Turn the world upside down and shake it out but let's find them or let me know. I'll enquire about steamships in good time. Don't forget a copy of your birth certificate too. Keep it where you can find it. ~~Wait~~ We'll get you over here, so help me. And just between you and me, if anyone asks of our relationship (which you needn't broadcast) you are just a good friend of the family's and vice versa. Much love, *Jack*

Jack's letters continue as Mum sails for the UK, but sound increasingly paternalistic and condescending – in a letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> April 1946 he attempts to sum up Mum's attributes and shortcomings:

Your Flight Lieut. sounds like he swept you off your feet. And don't for the least underrate yourself or figure that because there has been a war going on that every fellow that proposes to you does so because he is a mental case or something like that. You have more charm and personality than 99% of all the women I have ever met and I dare say that I have met a pretty good cross-section of ~~the~~ class of people. You are NOT like most of the girls and that is what makes you so intriguing. You are honestly naive, you are particularly well-mannered and well-brought-up; you are accomplished in conversation and have a mind that is way above normal. You are ~~soooooo~~ Feminine and gracious and modest and talented but you have been restraining yourself so long that I think you have just a little of an inferiority complex, just a little understand.

The Kruse episode appears to end in July when Jack informs Mum of his engagement to a Miss Betty Cattou and signs off, however maybe it is just a switch to a purely platonic friendship (if it was ever anything more) as a correspondence continues after Mum's move to England.

*And thus we turn over another page in our respective lives — the remembrances of things past being both bitter and sweet but still just remembrances. The future blinds us with its light, the past is but a shadow.*

*Do write again Phyl — it isn't that I've disappeared from the face of the earth or that you have — we are just looking in other directions. Have fun. Give my best to Eddie and your sister.*

*As always,*

*Jack*

*“And thus we turn over another page in our respective lives — the remembrances of things past being both bitter and sweet but still just remembrances. The future blinds us with its light, the past is but a shadow.*

*Do write again Phyl — it isn't that I've disappeared from the face of the earth or that you have - we are just looking in other directions. Have fun. Give my best to Eddie and your sister.*

*As always,*

*Jack”*

## John Henry Rollins

During the time of ‘Mum’s Diary’ Dad served with 52 Transport Command 2/5/45 to 8/4/46 flying ‘over the hump’ 400-500 miles of mountains between India and China (over Japanese occupied Burma). He was the navigator in C47 Dakotas. The total ‘run’ was 2,000 miles from Dum Dum airport Calcutta to Kunming China. Cargo in included petrol, jeeps, guns, ammo, and out pow’s, wounded, civilians, missionaries and VIP’s. He was also involved in flying supplies to the Chindits (a British fighting group operating in the jungle behind the Japanese lines in Burma) – cargo included mules dropped by parachute (one panicked in flight and had to be shot – ‘blood everywhere’) and prefabricated runway sections. On one occasion Dad’s crew were asked to fly Louis Mountbatten (Earl), but they made it clear that they considered repatriating dying pow’s a more urgent task (Pc. Dad with me). My Dad always hated pompous ‘stuff shirts’ and Louis, Prince Phillip’s uncle, was the ultimate stuff shirt. This cost the crew their DFM’s.



Kunming Airfield



En route: Liu Chou (Chow) to Kunming, Dakotas in formation  
Henderson and Jimmy Greaves to Starboard

*F. Lt. John Rollins on scene. Phones back and forth. Ken involved. D.F. and Gloucester with him. Proposed to me seriously. Reminds me of Cedric.*

February 22<sup>nd</sup> Diary Entry

No ‘up to the stars’ accompanying this diary entry, both being from London and RAF it is hardly surprising he reminds Mum of Cedric – but was Cedric ever the love of Mum’s life? Was Dad a ‘rebound’ with Mum not over Jack yet? Was Ken involved being the eldest brother – and no

father being available to vet suitors? We know Grandma Susie did not approve of Dad, and sent him a letter to try and dissuade the match (pg. 420). We know Dad warned Mum that she would be marrying a 'Coulee' he being from a working class background and she, though brought down by the war, from the HK Eurasian elite. However marriage is two years in the future, and despite Mum's decision shortly to go to Britain rather than USA, she did not by any measure run into Dad's arms when he returned from service with RAF Transport Command.

Dad proposed on their first date, which seems to preclude him knowing Mum well enough to make any reasoned decision. Love at first sight, perhaps motivated by sympathy? "*pow little Darling Wizard evening*" - certainly motivated by physical attraction. Spring was definitely in the air. His diary entries indicate he viewed her more as an exotic souvenir to be brought home from his travels...but maybe that is unfair. His March 8<sup>th</sup> entry "*In love again!!*" does little to support any belief that this is a unique emotion for Dad. Knowing my father fairly well (compared with Mum he was an open book) I'm guessing he was having the time of his life flying all over the far east for the RAF, living up to the stereotypical, hard drinking, womanizing, death defying pilot hero. Plus, unlike in the European war that he was lucky to survive, no one was shooting at him anymore. Behind this exterior though he was probably fairly naïve by today's standards, especially when it came to selecting a future wife.



Dad's Crew: Bomber Command 11/43. Jack Forde Pilot, F/SG Billy Quirke mid-upper, Don Carruthers Wireless Operator, F/L Rollins 'the Long Sod', Navigator, Sgt. Doug Cole Flight Engineer, Sgt. Vic Roe Tail Gunner, Bert Warner Bomb Aimer.

Leconfield 466 Australian Sqdn. Halifax 2/3's.



Mum mentions both Don Carruthers and Jack Forde, especially when she has to take back seat to “The Skipper” when Dad abandons her to go to Blackpool (see 20<sup>th</sup> June diary entry).

## **Braude**

*Braude discovery “Boris” H.K.V.D.C.*

February 28<sup>th</sup> Diary Entry

Aurthur Nathaniel Braude (b. February 1, 1902 – d. June 16, 1969) hailed from Edinburgh. Braude came to HK no later than 1928 and was an engineer with HK Telephone Co., Ltd. Before long after arriving he joined the HKVDC. He became a Captain no later than 1941 and, during the Battle of HK was in command of HKVDC’s Signals Corps, comprised of 2 officers and 38 men. Upon the surrender of British forces he was imprisoned in Shamshuipo. Braude’s wife Irene was head of the VAD, commanding Nursing Detachment 1 – 3 officers and 126 nurses. Both Braude and his wife suffered from amoebic dysentery as a result of their internment. Mum would have known Braude through Cedric who served under him, and perhaps also through her nursing activities. There are many references to Mum teaching Captain Braude, presumably Cantonese, in her 1946 diary entries.



January 1946

Jan 1st.

Tidied quismals. Wrote  
 Fred for mum & to Jack.  
 lovely new yr. with  
 family. H.K. met m.  
 Dexter. read chat.  
 Home. Fins write to jck.  
 wed, Jan 2nd.

H.K. in A.M. with Mrs Wong  
 to see capt. Braube. Tea with  
 her. Chat Lara. See Mr. Louis.  
 Glenda's office. Decided to go  
 over ~~Sun~~. to hers on Mon.  
 Tiffin Dot's? office. Met Glen.  
 To Liang You's. Permanent  
 wave. K'loon. Bruce's tea. <sup>Penin</sup> Sula drink  
 to see "China". <sup>B4</sup> Cold me  
 not the same from mired.  
 Supper. met Major Hend,  
 Smithy.

January 1<sup>st</sup> 1946

Tidied quismals?. Wrote  
 Fred (*Shanks?*) for mum  
 and to Jack. Lovely new  
 year. Tiffin with family. H.K.  
 met Mr. Dexter. Tea and  
 chat. Home. Fins. write to  
 Jck.

Wednesday January 2<sup>nd</sup>

H.K. in A.M. with Mrs. Wong  
 (*Glenda Wong*) to see Capt.  
 Braude. Tea with her. Chat  
 Lara. See Mr. Louis.  
 Glenda's office. Decided to  
 go over ~~Sun~~ to hers on Mon.  
 Tiffin Dot's? office. Met Glen.  
 To Liang You's. Permanent  
 wave. K'loon. Bruce's tea.  
 Peninsula drink. To see  
 "China" (probably 1945  
 Hollywood's *China Sky*  
 starring Randolph Scott)  
 B4 told me not the same prom  
 mined (*the Prometheus did*  
*hit a mine, but no casualties.*  
*Coincidentally Jack typed a*  
*letter from the Prom. while*  
*at sea dated 2nd January*  
 1946) Supper. Met Major  
 Hend, Smithy?



On reverse of this page is the following list of hymns, the numbers indicating they are from *Songs of Praise* (Oxford University Press).

Come all ye faithful 78  
 Herald Angels 74  
 First Nowell 384  
 Unto us a child is born 385  
 Rocking 383

O & A & A & O  
 Cum Cantibus in choro  
 Let our merry organ go  
 Benedicamus Domino

The Beginning of the End  
 Let us sing in chorus  
 Let our  
 In praise of God

Come all ye faithful 78  
 Herald Angels 74  
 First Nowell 384  
 Unto us a child is born 385  
 Rocking 383

O & A & A & O  
 Cum Cantibus in choro  
 (unto us is born a son)  
 Let our merry organ go  
 Benedicamus Domino

The Beginning of the End  
 Let us sing in chorus  
 Let our.....  
 In praise of God

Although Mum and Dad had not met yet I have included photos of Dad's dated for this time.

19  46



H.M.S. Duke of York, Victoria Harbour (Hong Kong) Photo. by Dad dated 2/46

Dad (right) and two unknown at Star Ferry Kowloon Terminal, undated

Breakf Mrs Wong to Home  
Home bath pack Cooper  
Choir practice  
With Mrs Wong to Cooper  
Dropped in Amer. Cons.  
Chat Mrs. Bennett, Tea  
Aunt Eve, Fred, Met Gord.  
6. Dinner aboard, laughed  
Laughed. Stayed. Mission  
Choir practice

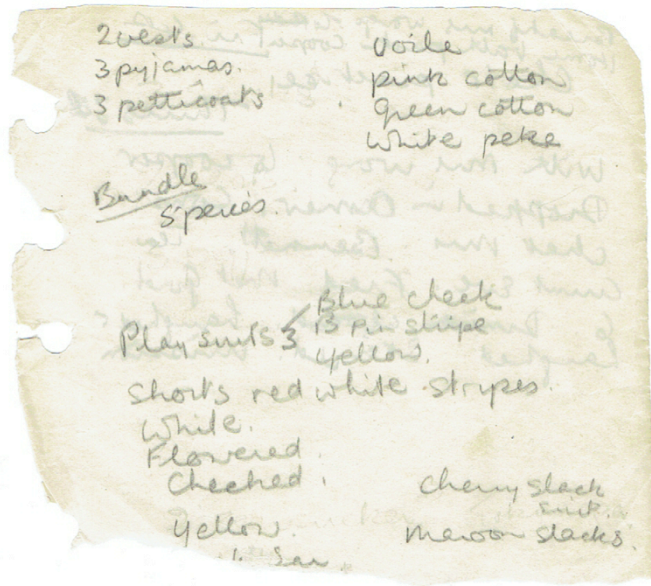
Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup>

With Mrs. Wong to Cooper. Dropped in Amer. Cons. (consulate) Chat Mrs. Bennett. Tea Aunt Eve. Fred met Gord. 6 dinner aboard. Laughed and laughed. Stayed Mission. (Could be Maryknoll Mission)

Friday 4<sup>th</sup>

Breakfast Mrs. Wongs. To Home bath pack Cooper. Choir practice.

On the back of the torn diary page containing the previous two entries is a clothing list:



2 vests                      voile  
 3 pyjamas                 pink cotton  
 3 petticoats              green cotton  
    white peke

Bundle  
 5 pieces

Play suits 3 – Blue check  
                                  B pin stripe  
                                  Yellow  
 Shorts red white stripes  
 White  
 Flowered  
 Checked  
 Cherry slack suit        Maroon slacks



Play Suit from 1945

Letter from Mum to Jack dated Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> January

*Jack Dear,*

*How lovely it must be for you to be home again. I am so glad. It is jolly good fun to think of you in "civvy street" – coloured tie, brekker in bed, fried eggs a la Kruse, friends and the glory of it all – Do write and tell – my imagination doesn't satisfy, tell me everything – sort of man to man confessionals – impressions you know.*

*To date I have your first two letters of the 12<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Dec. Thanks ever so much for them if you could know what your letters mean to me you would only stop writing to eat and sleep. (How's that for persuasion?) Seriously tho' – I can see that I shall be ever falling back on them for moral support – dependent, as you would have me.*

*I have now been at Glenda Wong's a week not actually settled, as a boarder here will move tomorrow to give me the room. I have been really fortunate as it is effortless acquiring ?? ate pupils – I find that I cannot accept anymore if I am to reserve time for study. Then, it is a luxury to live in a furnished flat – piano, radio and all. School quarters were alright – though (think I'll adopt the American 'tho') tho' I'm not sure if I stayed in there often enough to know. But while I was at home I hated the ram shackle appearance of everything (as it is with most homes) tho I should have been grateful for it to be still standing even I have an ignored guilt at the back of my mind that I have run away from things by living over here but I don't think so (by writing to you I find myself facing facts) if it were really my house it would give me intense satisfaction to patch it up in defiance of the marks of war – but its mums? and sad to say, she hasn't the energy nor the s?? – anyway my job is here.*

*J. dear do please oblige by letting me know what I can interest you in. I find it so difficult to write (there is another page but too hard to decipher, continuing Friday 14th)*

Letter from Mum to Jack dated Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> January

*Dear Jack,*

*Have just returned from an evening with Mary, father and Tubby who's leaving for Sydney tomorrow – I like him, he's simple. Genuine and inexorably cheerful. We saw a film called "Step Lively". Its one of those fast talking American musicals with at least three people talking at the same time, most of the time – most of it went over my head but it held my attention in so far as it is something of the last 4 years.*

*This Frank Sinatra has had absurd propoganda hasn't he? Tell me, can it be true that women swoon over his voice – Hollywood doesn't seem to acknowledge any limit to the credulity of*

*cinema fiends – but then I believe that women have been heard to scream over his singing – I rather like his looks tho’ – his countenance not expression.*

*Excuse this sudden resort to pencil Jack – I’ve had to return the borrowed pen and Robin snaffled mine when I was last home. This is rude but O.K. between you and I, I presume. I can’t stop writing anyway.*

*Madame tells me to ask you to contact Emily Hahn thro’ “The New Yorker” if you want any OK’s for me. Mme has written to her and she says for you to refer to me as her pupil, protégée or something.*

*You know, Jck, I’ve been in a surprisingly sunny disposition since you left. Do you remember the smile you left in my pocket? I mean I put it in my pocket because I just didn’t think I’d use it – its one that you gave me anyway. Well it dawned on me t’other day that I’ve been shining steadily. I’ve been gaining a much steadier footing too – living here for instance – I have my own way now as compared to how I was during the occupation. On top of it all I’ve put on 10 lbs.*

*I do so want to talk to you about the Fountainhead. I can’t write it – it would be one-sided – I want so much to talk about it and there’s no one I can talk to – it makes me feel rather pent up – I noted in a magazine today that Ayn Rand (come to think of it I think they’ve spelt her name wrongly its Raynd isn’t it?) is doing the screen play for a film called “love letters” am anticipating this surprised that she can be connected with the movie tho!*

*Incidentally, if there’s any sort of written sermon? Of mind and mat. of the past 4 yrs. for ex prisoners of war – I would be obliged if you could let me know.*

*How is your work Jack? I trust you’ll let me know what’s cooking. What about that night I helped you draw. Seriously I’m interested tho’. I realize I’m being inquisitive. Prior to the ? I used to think that I was very ignorant about architecture as I dislike most construction. I never used to mention it to anyone because I thought that was what was accepted to such a degree and so commonly could not be wrong. It is rather satisfying to find out that I was right after all.*

*Architecture I dare say is one of the most abused professions.*

*Goodnight my dearest Phyl.*

*On top of it all I’ve put on 10 lbs*

Mum quickly recovered lost weight after the occupation, however she did lose many of her teeth, a common problem due to vitamin deficiency.

19  46

Sat. 20 1946 Jan.  
Taught Glen. Town. Letter  
to US consulate. Bakery ar-  
ranged lesson for tomorrow  
instead. To buy paper. Up  
chat with Lara. Met Ron, to  
Uncle Bill Way's. To H.K. hotel.  
Mrs. Sey. passed & said letter  
for me. Lunch D.F. with Dot.  
Ron. Poor D had mood & me  
a Blithe spirit. Rushed up  
hill to reach to find postponed.  
Over to K'loon fetch my letter  
from school. Home. Letter  
from Cedric. H.K. tea with  
Paula. Date with Drew.  
Deanna Durbin. Bad mood.

Sun. 20<sup>th</sup> Jan.  
Church. Grand mood but Rotten  
day. Lunch Eva's. Show. May.  
Dot. Given chocolate. Tea.  
Up. peak. Evensong. Dot in  
heck mood. Causeway Bay.  
Dinner alone. Wrote Jck.  
Bed at 10.

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> January 1946

Taught Glen. Town. Letter to  
US consulate. Bakery arranged  
lesson for tomorrow instead.  
To buy paper. Up chat with  
Lara. Met Ron, to Uncle Bill  
Way's. To H.K. Hotel. Mrs. Sey  
passed and said letter for me.  
Lunch D.F. with Dot. Ron. Poor  
D. bad mood and me a Blithe  
spirit (*Noel Coward's play  
came out in 1941 and was  
made into a film in 1945 starring  
Rex Harrison - I wonder if  
Mum saw it?*) Rushed up hill  
to teach to find postponed. Over  
to K'loon fetch my letter from  
school. Home. Letter from  
Cedric. H.K. tea with Paula.  
Date with Drew. Deanna  
Durbin (*could be they saw  
Lady on a Train 1945*) Bad  
Mood.

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> January

Church. Grand mood but  
Rotten day. Lunch Eva's. Show,  
May, Dot. Given chocolate.  
Tea. Up peak. Evensong. Dot  
in heck? mood. Causeway Bay.  
Dinner alone. Wrote Jck. Bed  
at LO (*late hour*)

*"Have you met John Rollins who was my best pal  
in England? He was out in HK and I gave him  
your address"*





Airmail Letter card Letter from Cedric to Mum c/o DGS

3 date stamps – main one on front 28.12.45 from London

Other 2 date stamps on back HK 1pm 8.1.46 and Kowloon 3pm 8.1.46 HK

65 Sellincourt Rd

London SW17

27.12.45

Dear Phyllis,

I was so glad to hear from you again and that you are going to the States – Ohio? If it is I may be able to help you (can't read next word, but looks like fail) again -remember? You will be pleased to know that I met an old school pal of mine, a real lady killer, Sq Leader Ray Nash D.F.C. Top score for flying bombs; and did we have a good time at the local?

Have you met John Rollins who was my best pal in England? He was out in HK and I gave him your address. He is a Fl.Lt. and also has the D.F.C. Some people say he is more crazy than me. I do hope you have met him.

Was surprised that old (Hertzgog?) had still got his eye on you, I didn't think he was so faithful.

No mention of the photograph, aren't you going to send one?

I saw (Suiter, Pinter, Linter?) at Yokahama and he looked just the same but was moaning about the hard work and bombs so you see he hasn't changed a bit. I was due to leave Sydney on the Aquatania but heard (Sut, Lut?) was on board so changed to the Stirling Castle.

Will close now hoping to hear from you soon.

Sincerely Cedric



Letter to Jack as mentioned January 20th

*Jack dear I'm afraid this is going to be rather a strange letter. You see I have a headache and am feeling rather washed out with this beastly cold and everything. I wish I don't feel like writing to you, then I could settle down with a book but I do so I have to.*

*By the time you read this you must be quite rehabilitated. I am looking forward to your letters from home - I can't get over how grand your homecoming must have been after all these years. I feel rather bad about the fact that our letters (all letters) are so untimely. What is uppermost in my mind now is your letter of yesterday and I want to write about it but by the time you receive this your topical interests won't be Weiningen, Pearl Harbour or Leaves of Grass [poetry of Walt Whitman] anymore. In the same way your probably now reading my Christmas letter. You know what I mean don't you? "What ever's cookin" should be hot. But then, here's the ingratitude of human nature – I remember the days when 3 lines smuggled ~~out from~~ into camp was considered a most marvelous bit of luck...*

*"But then, here's the ingratitude of human nature – I remember the days when 3 lines smuggled into camp was considered a most marvelous bit of luck..."*

19  46

Mon. 21st Jan.  
Grand mood. Taught Glen. Studied  
Haystackin floods. Dict. prononida.  
R.L.S. Taught. Ho. Lunch.  
Mistake up too early to teach  
Cliff. Read. Brit Emp. Cronin  
started career. Amer. are nice.  
Malaria Paul de Krief. Town  
wandered into bk store.  
Back tea at Tai Wo. Taught.  
Back Glens. Dinner alone.  
Loafed. Wrote jk. Hair massage.

Tues. 22nd Jan.  
Hair wash. Taught. Post letter  
to jk. K'loon with dot. Laughed  
over Chi. Office incident.  
Ordered new shoes Home.  
Tea. Dinner. Back to Causeway.  
Read Fount H. till 1.

Wed. 23rd Jan.  
J. Choa stayed here overnight  
Taught. Braude. Tailors.  
~~Buy~~ Bought paper for this book.

Monday 21st January  
1946

Grand mood. Taught  
Glen. Studied  
Haystackin (type of  
Karst) floods. Dict.  
prononida? R.L.S.  
(Robert Louis  
Stevenson?) Taught Ho.  
Lunch. Mistake up too  
early to teach Cliff. Read.  
Brit. Emp. Cronin started  
career (could be  
referring to A. J. Cronin  
Scottish author)  
Americans are nice.  
Malaria Paul de Krief  
(American author of  
Microbe Hunters - a  
book on the discovery of  
the transmission of  
Malaria) Town  
wandered into bk store.  
Back tea at Tai Wo.  
Taught. Back Glens.  
Dinner alone. Loafed.  
Wrote Jack. Hair  
massage.

Tues. 22nd January

Hair wash. Taught. Post  
letter to Jack. K'loon  
with Dot. Laughed over  
Chi. Office incident.  
Ordered new shoes.  
Home. Tea. Dinner.  
Back to Causeway.  
Read Fount H. till 1.

Wed. 23rd January

J. Choa stayed here overnight. (a Leo Choa is mentioned in Mum's 1954 diary and A Dr. G. Choa is mentioned in *Dispersal and Renewal* pg.172) Taught Braude. Tailors. Bought paper for this book. Lunch at Dots. Taught. Cliff. Home read.

Lunch at Dots. Taught. Cliff.  
Home read.

Thurs. 24<sup>th</sup>.  
Read "Education for Freedom".  
St. John's dance v. enjoyable.  
Mike called before told me  
all about his pop.

Fri. 25<sup>th</sup>.  
Fins. "Ed. for Free". Choir.  
Artifex cocktail. Gloucester  
Aberdeen.

Sat. 26<sup>th</sup>.  
Awful weather. Out of sorts.  
Slacks to Ah Lau for altera-  
tion. Lunch Dot. Taught 2-4.  
Home Mike here. Univ.  
dance.

Sun. 27<sup>th</sup>.  
Missed church. Late.  
Read "Green Mansions".  
Underground H.K.  
Pain's farewell party more  
enjoyable. Gloucester. Dinner  
Café de Chine. Home bed  
early.

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> January 1946

Read "Education for Freedom"  
(1943 book by American  
Robert Maynard Hutchins). St.  
John's dance (cathedral) very  
enjoyable. Mike called before,  
told me all about his pop.

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> January

Finished "Education For Free."  
Choir. Artifex cocktail.  
Gloucester, Aberdeen (a town  
in the south of HK island)

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> January

Awful weather. Out of sorts.  
Slacks to Ah Lau for alteration.  
Lunch Dot. Taught 2-4. Home  
Mike here. Univ. dance.

Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> January

Missed church. Late. Read  
"Green Mansions" (1904 exotic  
romance by William Henry)  
"Underground H.K" (this was  
probably Underground from  
Hong Kong by Benjamin  
A. Proulx Canadian 1943 about  
escape from Stanley)  
Pain's farewell party more  
enjoyable. Gloucester. Dinner  
Café de Chine. Home bed  
early.

19  46



UHK 1945



Great Hall UHK 1945

Mon. 28 Jan.  
 Taught. Cliff. Peroxide  
 from Ivy. Met. Scetch.  
 Kalantan. Drinks glouces.  
 Dinner & Cinema on K.  
 G. show. Sylv. Syd countryman  
 Blood in sun.  
 Tues 29<sup>th</sup>  
 Read. man. unknown.  
 To Ah Lau's for slacks.  
 Took coat. Tiff. Babes.  
 expt. in August. Saw  
 mags. Ripped yellow woolly.  
 Ill Kwook. Vuyella shirt  
 Causeway Bay. ↑  
 Wed 30<sup>th</sup>  
 Feel out of sorts. Theodore  
 Harold called. Mike came.  
 Thurs 31<sup>st</sup>  
 Fixed Glenda about callers  
 Still out of sorts.  
 Church dance.

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> January 1946

Taught. Cliff. Peroxide from Ivy. Met Scetch Kalantan. Drinks glouces. Dinner and cinema on K. (King's) good show Sylv. Syd. Countryman Blood in Sun. (This must be the 1945 film Blood on the Sun starring James Cagney and Sylvia Sydney about the Tanaka plan, a fictional plan for Japan to take over the world)



Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> January

Read man unknown (1938 by Alexis Carrel controversial for endorsing euthanasia to remove 'defectives') To Ah Lau's for slacks. Took coat. Tiff. Babes. expt. in August. Saw Mags. Ripped yellow woolly. Ill Kwook's (Mum's clothing store). Vuyella (blend of wool and cotton) shirt.

Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> January

Wrote Jack. Causeway Bay. Feel out of sorts. Theodore Harold called. Mike came.

Theodore Harold White was an American political journalist known for his wartime reporting from China, and later he received a Pulitzer prize for non-fiction writing 'The Making of a President' 1960. Died 1986.

Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> January

Fixed Glenda about callers. Still out of sorts. Church dance.

February 1946

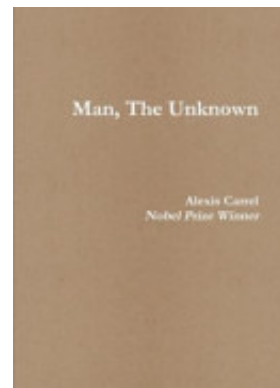
February. Fri. 1st.  
 Still O.O.S. "Man the Unknown" still going.  
 Books came for me.  
 Don came in p.m. Fooled around made them laugh.  
 Close New Year dinner with Glenda. K'loon met. Scietch Owls. Ensa Show. Peninsula hop. Calling yankee accents around. To fetch new shoes. wouldn't give. Wrote bit to Jack (see below).  
 Sat. 2nd.  
 Chinese New yr. Day. Chat with Ken. Watched bit o' softball. Marg & Bill there. Ron walked me to Dr. Ribs. Lunch there. Bea. Derek. H.K. met. Glen. Bai Leen. no. make Mrs. Fung's. Back. dressed. Gloucester new yr. party. Owl. Raymond liked. Enjoyed. Saw

Friday 1st February 1946

Still O.O.S. "Man the Unknown" still going. Books came for me. Dots? came in p.m. Fooled around made them laugh. Close New Year dinner with Glenda. K'loon met Scietch Owls. Ensa Show. Peninsula hop. Calling yankee accents around. To fetch new shoes. Wouldn't give. Wrote bit to Jack (see below).

Saturday 2nd February

Chinese New Year's Day. Chat with Ken. Watched bit o' softball. Marg and Bill there. Ron walked me to Dr. Ribs. Lunch there. Bea, Derek. H.K. met Glen. Bai Leen, Mrs. Mak's, Mrs. Fung's. Back. Dressed. Gloucester New Year Party. Owl. Raymond Lu. Enjoyed. Saw Fireworks.



The following are extracts from letters to Jack

*...per usual, my partiality for America which he thinks is a ripping joke as according to him I'm typically, characteristically (what a word!) British. Phooey to him – and I do mean Phooey (until I learn the latest word – kindly oblige). But he's quite pleased as he figured (another Americanism I presume) that Uncle Sam will look after me well. He kept resorting to the most ghastly attempt at an American accent."*

*"How I do ramble on – but what I must tell you is that his father has returned from a year in New York. I have just finished his book "Underground from Hong Kong" [pub. 1943 Benjamin A. Proulx]. I understand it was very popular in the States and they gave him the "works" for it – if you know what I mean. As a matter of fact, his escape from camp here was quite remarkable. But this is the best part of it all – Mr. Proulx is French Canadian which is after all extremely North American. But 23 yrs. in H.K. had bullied him into being very "pukka". Well since he went home in 42 he had been naturalized and now he's returned – accent, coloured ties and all to the bewildered despair of the Proulx. And, come to think of it, I should have ridden him first. Instead, now, he comes over to me to avenge his displeasure over his father by poking at my American inclinations. Jack, I wish you were here, the repartee that goes on until we double up with laughter. Similar to when I got even with Doc – remember incidentally, Mrs. Proulx will be making an air trip to Frisco shortly – some buying and selling business – he'll probably be gone a month. You might be able to say hello! [Mike Proulx is mentioned in a list of those Mum sent Christmas cards to in 1950]"*

*"Am reading Alex Carrel's "Man the Unknown" [A.C. was a Nobel Prize Winning French Vascular Surgeon] Pretty corny title I think. Titles are important, aren't they? I think they must either have a "sock" or remain a statement of the facts included. The above is rather like "Chandu the Magician" [1932 movie with Bela Lugosi] or something. It is a book that really needs to be read by us the deplorable Homo Sapiens. Wonder if you have read it. The author takes on the seemingly impossible task of an entire analysis and examination of man which must needs involve phsyology [sic], physiology [sic], metaphysics, anatomy etc. Preface says "before beginning this work the author realized its difficulty. He undertook it merely because somebody had to undertake it." So he must be a man after Robert Maynard Hutchin's [American educational philosopher] own heart. It is really intensely interesting tho' pretty stiff going – I'm acquiring quite a vocabulary owing to the constant necessity of referring to the dictionary. For light relief and during the considerable time I have spent on trams everyday, I'm reading "Cobbers" Thomas Wood on Australia [pub. 1934] – supposed to be the best book on Aussie – Xmas present from Mike. To return to M.T.U. [Man the Unknown] I came across statements that are very questionable..."*

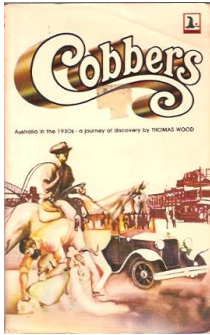
From another letter

*"tho' my opinion is hardly worth the ink. I'm just not in the mood to go on in this tone 'cause its Chi. New. Yr's Eve (It's Feb 1<sup>st</sup>. now I'll have to confess) and people are gay in this household) I went out to help them or watch them Chin Chin Joss (pidgin good luck). They burn a lot of paper*

stuff – burnt offerings of a kind. I somehow let it out to Michael about and I got what I deserved for it. 'Tis rather silly isn't it. Sorry.

'Bye Honey,

Phyl.



“Hazel sailed for U.K.”

Fireworks Sun. 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 Church. Worry Gerald.  
 Met Joyce, Marjorie, Mrs. A.  
 New yr. Lunch at Glens.  
 Town. Peak side. Bill and M.  
 Tea at theirs. Dinner Doris!  
Mon. 4<sup>th</sup>  
 Loafed around all day.  
 Date with Bruce. Incident.  
 Stayed at home.  
Tues. 5<sup>th</sup>  
 Back H.K. Slept A.M. Glen's tea party.  
 Slept 10.  
Wed. 6<sup>th</sup>  
 Hazel sailed for U.K.  
 Tiffin with Marg. A. D.F.  
 talked. Causeway. B. up  
 hills with Mike.  
Thurs. 7<sup>th</sup>  
 Ah Lau, Post letter to Jack.  
 Started Shand. Tea Marjorie St.  
 St. John's Dance.

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1946

Church. Worry Gerald. Met Joyce, Marjorie, Mrs. A. New yr. Lunch at Glens. Town. Peak side. Bill and M. Tea at theirs. Dinner Doris!

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> February

Loafed around all Day. Date with Bruce. Incident. Stayed at home.

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> February

Back H.K. Slept A.M. Glen's tea party. Slept 10.

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February

Hazel sailed for U.K. Tiffin with Marg, at D.F. Talked. Causeway. B. Up hills with Mike.

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> February

Ah Lau, Post letter to Jack. Started S'hand (*shorthand*) Tea Marjorie St. John's Dance (*St. John's Cathedral*).



Fri. 8<sup>th</sup>.

Practised. Choir.

Sat. 9<sup>th</sup>.

Lunch Dots office. Taught  
Sun. A.M. Pay day. Met  
Marj. Tea T.F. Saw Steve.  
To H.K. Hotel. Holaseos.  
Back. Bed early.

Sun. 10<sup>th</sup>.

Church Tea Dot. Home tiff.  
Mike came. no hike. Ride  
jeep. Roy. Sheko. Back  
tea. Mr. Madar. Peninsula  
Lara & her office chaps.  
Major Richards. Capt. Dunkley

Mon. 11<sup>th</sup>.

Tea marj. at her unc's.  
Borrowed notes.  
Bard's farewell dinner  
Café de Chine.  
Gloucester.

Tues. 12<sup>th</sup>.

Trouble with ahma.  
Stuff from Red +  
taught. Cliff. Tamar Dance.

*“Tamar Dance”*

HMS Tamar was a 3,650 ton British troopship launched in 1863. She first visited Hong Kong in 1878 with reliefs crews, returned once in 1886. She finally arrived in Victoria City on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1897. She was stationed permanently in the harbor from 1897 to 1941, when she was scuttled during the Battle of Hong during World War II, to avoid being used by the invading Japanese Imperial forces. HMS Tamar was now a land base

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February 1946  
*should be the 9<sup>th</sup>*

Practiced choir.

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> February  
*should be the 10<sup>th</sup>*

Lunch Dots office. Taught  
Suni (Robin) A.M. Pay  
Day. Met Marg tea T.F.  
Saw Steve. To H.K. Hotel  
Holaseo's? Back. Bed  
early.

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> February  
*should be the 11<sup>th</sup>*

Church Tea Dot. Home tiff.  
Mike came. No hike? Ride  
Jeep. Roy. Sheko? Back  
tea. Mr. Madar? Peninsula.  
Lara and her office chaps.  
Major Richards Capt.  
Dunkley.

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> February  
*should be the 12<sup>th</sup>*

Tea Marj, at her unc's  
Borrowed notes.  
Bard's farewell dinner  
Café de Chine (*popular  
pre-war HKU student  
hang out*)  
Gloucester

Tues. 12<sup>th</sup> February  
*should be the 13<sup>th</sup>*

Trouble with ahma.  
Stuff from Red +  
Taught. Cliff. Tamar  
Dance



HMS Tamar



Land base Tamar

Wed. 13<sup>th</sup>  
 Incident over ahma. Nervous at rain. Marg says disregard it. Gordon Typing stuff for me. Archi gave me jeep lift home. Dinner party next door. Lobo came over.

Thurs 14<sup>th</sup>  
 Drink D.F. with Marg. Goodbye. To teach. St. John's. Ride with Roland.

Fri. 16<sup>th</sup>  
 1st lesson. Mis Chan. Taught. Ho. Mike came. Gloucester with Sciech. Steve. Canton.

Sat. 17<sup>th</sup>  
 Glen. Tantrum. Mum rang. To Kloon. After reach. Mrs. Chan. pay. Home gave mum stuff & money. School. letter from Maith. Zeffors. false alarm. Bath. H.K. tea. Robin. Gordon. Cinema. Gloucester.

Wednesday 13 February 1946  
 should be the 14<sup>th</sup>

Incident over ahma. Nervous at rain. Marg says disregard it. Gordon typing stuff for me. Archi (brother) gave me a jeep lift home. Dinner party next door. Lobo came over.

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February

Drink D.F. with Marg. Goodbye. To teach. St. John's. Ride with Roland.

Friday 16 February

1<sup>st</sup> lesson. Mis Chan. Taught. Ho Mike came. Gloucester with Sciech. Steve. Canton.

Sat 17<sup>th</sup> February

Glen. Tantrum. Mum rang. To Kloon (Kowloon). After teach Mrs. Chan. Pay. Home gave mum stuff and money. School. Letter from Maith, Zeffors false alarm. Bath. H.K. tea. Robin (brother). Gordon. Cinema. (Could be Zorro Rides Again, 1937 given the Z with a line through it drawn before the word Cinema?) Gloucester.

*“Dinner party next door. Lobo came over”*

19  46

Sun. 18th.  
Church. Optician. Ah  
Lau. Middys didn't  
show up. Cricket & tea.  
Span & Stather. Wrote  
Jek. Bed Early.  
Mon. 19th.  
Taught G. Mrs. Chan.  
Steve rang. 3 chapters of  
Shand. Tidied desk.  
Mike came. Went  
felt spring fever.  
Tues. 20th.  
Shand. Taught Mrs. C. Tiffin  
Collected goggles & frame broke.  
Red cross. another bra. shirt.  
Post letter to Jek.  
Teach. Aunt Eve's Birthday.  
Bath dinner at hers.  
Break of specs marked rise  
in things.  
Wed. 21st.  
Taught Glen. Mrs. Chan.  
Tiffin with her. Back. Read  
Cobbers on tram. Lunch.  
Lara rang. Yankee date.

Sunday 18th February  
1946 (should be 17th)

Church. Optician. Ah Lau.  
Middys didn't show up.  
Cricket and tea. Stan  
Stather. Wrote Jack. Bed  
Early.

Monday 19th February  
(should be 18th)

Taught G. Mrs. Chan.  
Steve rang. 3 chapters of  
shorthand. Tidied desk.  
Mike came. Went felt  
spring fever.

Tuesday 20th February  
(should be 19th)

Shand (short hand).  
Taught Miss C. Tiffin with  
her. Collected goggles  
and frame broke. Red  
Cross. Another bra. Shirt.  
Post letter to Jack. Teach.  
Aunt Eve's (Mum's Aunt  
Eva) birthday. Bath,  
dinner at hers. Break of  
specs marked rise (cost)  
of things.

Wed. 21st February (should be 20th)

Taught Glen. Mrs. Chan. Tiffin with her. Back. Read Cobbers on tram. Lunch. Lara rang. Yankee date. Rang Ger. Cinema. S'hand. Saw "Bathe beaut" alone (*Bathing Beauty* 1944 musical with Red Skelton, Basil Rathbone and Esther Williams). Up Glouc. to fix. Down and saw Steve. Met Lara. Hotel. West Point (was a point of land in HK off the Pokfulam Road and Queen's Road West). Met Bob Hulat



Ramp. Gen. Cinema. Shand.  
 Saw "Baths Beans" alone.  
 Up glom. to fix. Down  
 Saw Steve. Met Lara  
 hotel. West Point. Met  
 Bob Huhst. Feb 24/6

Thurs 22nd.  
 Teach. Chan's business  
 dinner. Shand.

Fri. 23rd.  
 Fl. Lt. John Rollins on  
 scene. Phones back & forth.  
 Ken involved. D.F. &  
 Gloucester with him.  
 Proposed to me seriously.  
 Reminds me of Cedric.  
 Didn't go to Dexter's fare  
 well. Sat. 24th.

To Tai Wo. Bath Hair Wash,  
 Peninsula. Lara & Americans.  
Sun. 25th.  
 Steered landing craft.  
 Castle Peak. Steve's people.  
 Dinner. Stan & Stather.

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February  
 1946 (should be 21<sup>st</sup>)

Teach. Chan's business  
 dinner. Shand.

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February  
 (should be 22<sup>nd</sup>)

Fl. Lt. John Rollins on  
 scene. Phones back and  
 forth. Ken involved (*Uncle*  
*Ken, Mums brother*) D.F.  
 and Gloucester with him.  
 Proposed to me seriously.  
 Reminds me of Cedric.  
 Didn't go Dexter's farewell.

Saturday 24 February  
 (should be 23<sup>rd</sup>)

To Tai Wo. (*New Terr.*)  
 Bath Hair Wash Peninsula.  
 Lara and Americans.

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> February  
 (should be 24<sup>th</sup>)

Steered landing craft.  
 Castle Peak (583m peak in  
 W. New Territories) Steve  
 and people. Dinner. Stan  
 Stather?

*"Fl. Lt. John Rollins on scene.  
 Proposed to me seriously."*

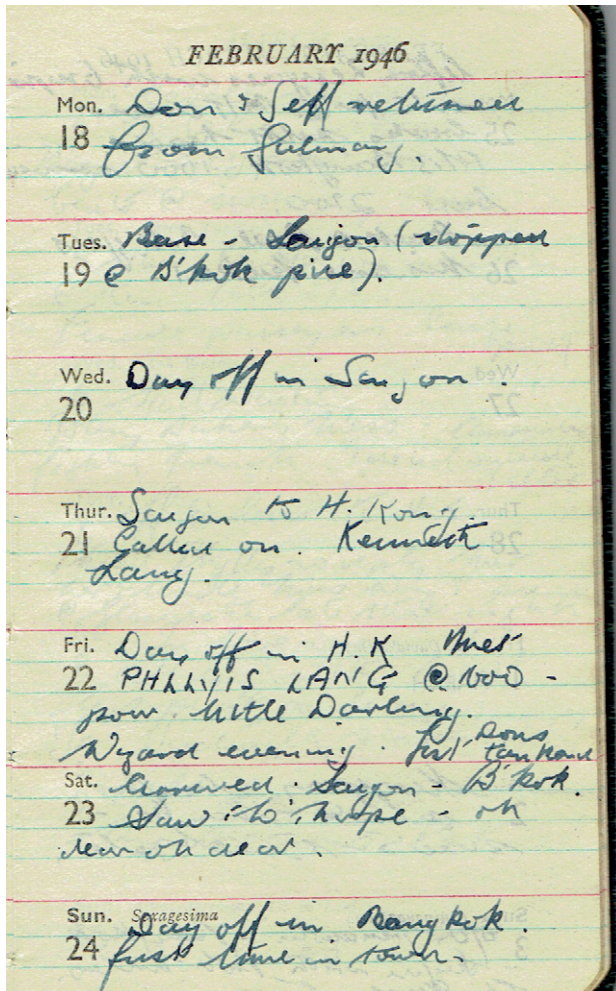
Dad's diary entry for 21<sup>st</sup> February 1946 reads:

*"Saigon to H. Kong. Called on Kenneth Lang"*

Why? Apparently Dad went to call on Mum at King's Terrace – we know Cedric had given him Mum's address and encouraged him to call – when he did Mum was out and Kenneth answered the door. Mum and Dad told Antonia and I that they first met at the Star Ferry. If they did it must have been shortly after this event. Perhaps Dad went down to the Hong Kong Star Ferry Terminal to meet Mum (see postcard over).

*"You looked so very beautiful again, my heart always does a funny little flip when I sit and watch you – like the first time I saw you at the ferry. Only then it nearly turned a complete somersault. Funny come to think of it, watching your wife to be walk out of a motley crowd..."*

Extract from a 1948 letter from Dad to Mum. April 1946 entry shows another meeting arranged at the ferry.



19  46

On back of Dad's photo: N.S. 443 21/11/45 Me after winning war in Far East  
*PORTRAIT BY THE CAMERA EXCHANGE 17-2A, CHOWRINGHEE ROAD CALCUTTA.*



X marks the spot  
Where Mum and  
Dad first met  
22/2/46

Dad's diary entry for 22nd February 1946 reads

*"Day off in H.K. Met PHLLYIS LANG @ 1:00? – pow little Darling Wizard evening"*

And then the next day he was off to Saigon.



Caption reads Hotel Majestique, Saigon 2/46



Mum steers a landing craft across HK harbor

267 #88 Mon. 26<sup>th</sup> Feb.  
 Taught. D.F. tea Philip  
 return watch. Mrs. Chan.  
 Gloucester lunch Gerald.  
 Church guest house fix  
 school Julia's kids.  
 K'loon. School. Home.  
 H.K. mum. Mrs Guts.  
 Tea. Intro to pupil Mrs.  
 Lai. thru' Dr. Rammler.  
 Babe. Back to Causeway  
 Dead Beat. Spring in  
 air. couldn't sleep.  
 Wrote jk.  
 Tues. 27<sup>th</sup> Feb.  
 Tidied room. Amah's came.  
 Mrs. Chan. Causeway.  
 S'hand. To teach Cliff early.  
 Mrs. Nak's dinner with  
 Glen.  
 Wrote jk. Read mags.  
 Bed 11.

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February 1946  
(should be 25<sup>th</sup>)

Taught. D.F. tea Philip  
 return watch. Mrs. Chan.  
 Gloucester lunch Gerald.  
 Church guest house fix  
 school Julia's kids (*George  
 Kotwall's wife Julia,  
 children George, Barbara  
 and Hazel – see photos.  
 pgs. 28/30.*). K'loon.  
 School. Home. H.K. mum.  
 Mrs. Guts. Tea. Intro to  
 pupil Mrs. Lai. thru' Dr.  
 Rammler? Babe. Back to  
 Causeway Dead Beat.  
 Spring in air. Couldn't sleep.  
 Wrote Jack.

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February  
(should be 26<sup>th</sup>)

Tidied room. Amah's came.  
 Mrs. Chan. Causeway.  
 S'hand. To teach Cliff early.  
 Mrs. Nak's dinner with Glen.  
 Wrote Jack. Read mags.  
 Bed 11.

“Fix school Julia's kids”



Causeway Bay 1940's



Causeway Bay now

### 1941 HKVDC Corps Signals at Fanling



Captain Braude (glasses) Photo source Elizabeth Ride Collection. See editors notes 1946.

Diary entries indicate Mum gave Captain Braude lessons – Cantonese? Also in the photo is Cedric bottom right.



March 1946

Wed. 28<sup>th</sup> Feb.  
 Taught. Glen. Braude  
 discovery "Boris" H.K.V.D.C.  
 Mrs. Chan. gave me lipstick.  
 Back to tiffin. Shand.  
 Tea with Babe. here in  
 Babe. Tea "Parisian Grill".  
 Met. Bob. Huth. over to  
 Peninsula - S Winko!  
MARCH 1 Thurs. 29<sup>th</sup>.  
 All wobbly & empty. G got  
 sour over my change &  
 breaker order.  
 Taught her. Mrs. Chan.  
 Read after L. till tea.  
 Teach. Cliff.  
 Uncle Laurie to dinner.  
 Bath bed early. no work.  
March Fri. 30<sup>th</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup>.  
 Wet day. Braude paid 7 lessons.  
 Back to causeway. P.M. 2  
 chaps. Shand.

Wed. 28<sup>th</sup> February 1946  
 (should be 27<sup>th</sup>)

Taught. Glen. Braude  
 discovery "Boris" H.K.V.D.C.  
 (Hong Kong Volunteer  
 Defense Corps) Mrs. Chan  
 gave me lipstick. Back to  
 tiffin. S hand (short hand).  
 Tea with Babe. Late for  
 Babe. Tea "Parisian Grill"  
 Met Bob Huth over to  
 Peninsula - S Binko!?

Friday March 1<sup>st</sup> 1946

All wobbly and empty. G  
 (Glenda) got sour over my  
 changing breaker  
 (breakfast) order. Taught  
 her. Mrs. Chan. Read after  
 L (lunch) till tea. Teach Cliff.  
 Uncle Laurie to dinner.  
 Bath bed early. No work.

Saturday March 2<sup>nd</sup>

Wet day. Braude paid 7  
 lessons. Back to causeway  
 P.M. 2 chaps. S'hand.

Braude discovery "Boris" H.K.V.D.C.

This probably refers to Mum's discovery re: Boris Pasco's involvement with the HKVDC

Fri. 2nd March.  
 Climax with Glen. told her off.  
 Strained situation.  
 more strained when she  
 kissed me & took me to  
 tea & pictures. Said her  
 mind was off.  
 Hair wash.

Sat 3rd. March.  
 U. wet. Braude paid 2 less.  
 Pm. at causeway. Shand.  
 Wrote for Cedric.  
 Home for weekend.  
 Dinner. Chat down Mrs.  
 Guts told kids story.

Sun. 4<sup>th</sup>.  
 Family breakfast. Mum  
 cried. Walk with Ron.  
 Stewart. III Kwo. Peninsula  
 lunch Julia's. Robin Seedy.  
 Stayed in & looked over  
 bks. Threw away letters.  
 over after tea. Dinner  
 Gordon. Fixed for U.K.  
 met Godfrey Gittins. I was chirp.

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March (should be 1<sup>st</sup>?)

Climax with Glen. Told her off. Strained situation. More strained when she kissed me and took me to tea and pictures. Said her mind was off. Hair wash.

Sat. 3<sup>rd</sup> March (should be 2<sup>nd</sup>?)

V. wet. Braude paid 2 less. (paid for 2 lessons) Pm. At Causeway S'hand Wrote Joyce, Cedric. Home for weekend. Dinner. Chat down Mrs. Guts told kids story.

Sun. 4th March (should be 3<sup>rd</sup>?)

Family breakfast. Mum cried. Walk with Ron. (Mum's brother Ron would have been 11 yrs. old in 1940) Stewart. III Kwo. Peninsula lunch Julia's. Robin seedy. Stayed in and looked over books. Threw away letters. Over after tea. Dinner Gordon. Fixed for U.K. Met Godfrey Gittins (related to Jean Gittins?). I was chirpier.

March 4<sup>th</sup> And all the awkward trappings for imminent departure are contained in this diary entry including many visits over the next days to III Kwo – Mum's haute couture dress shop.

*"Family breakfast. Mum cried Threw away letters"  
 Fixed for U.K"*

Monday 4th March  
 up 1/4 to 8 late  
 Work. Lunch with Dot. Met Mum. Assessments. Death Certif. Relief - Mrs Baker? Fixed. 5. Show "Junior Miss" with Dot. Back, Shand.

Tues. 5<sup>th</sup> March  
 up. 7. Shand. Town. Specs. Watch. p.m. tried Alexis. couldn't concentrate. Read digest. Taught. Cliff. Eileen Crib with copied H.W. (home work) Home. Bath. Alexis Carrel. (French surgeon and Biologist, Nobel Prize Physiology 1912) Wrote Gibs. Bed early. Dream Jack Letters.

Wed. 6<sup>th</sup> March  
 Gordon Mike up for chat. Town with Gord. dinner. Walk.

Monday 4th March 1946

Up 1/4 to 8 late  
 Work. Lunch with Dot. Met Mum. Assessments. Death Certif. Relief - Mrs. Baker? Fixed. 5. Show "Junior Miss" (1945 Hollywood Movie) with Dot. Back, S'hand.

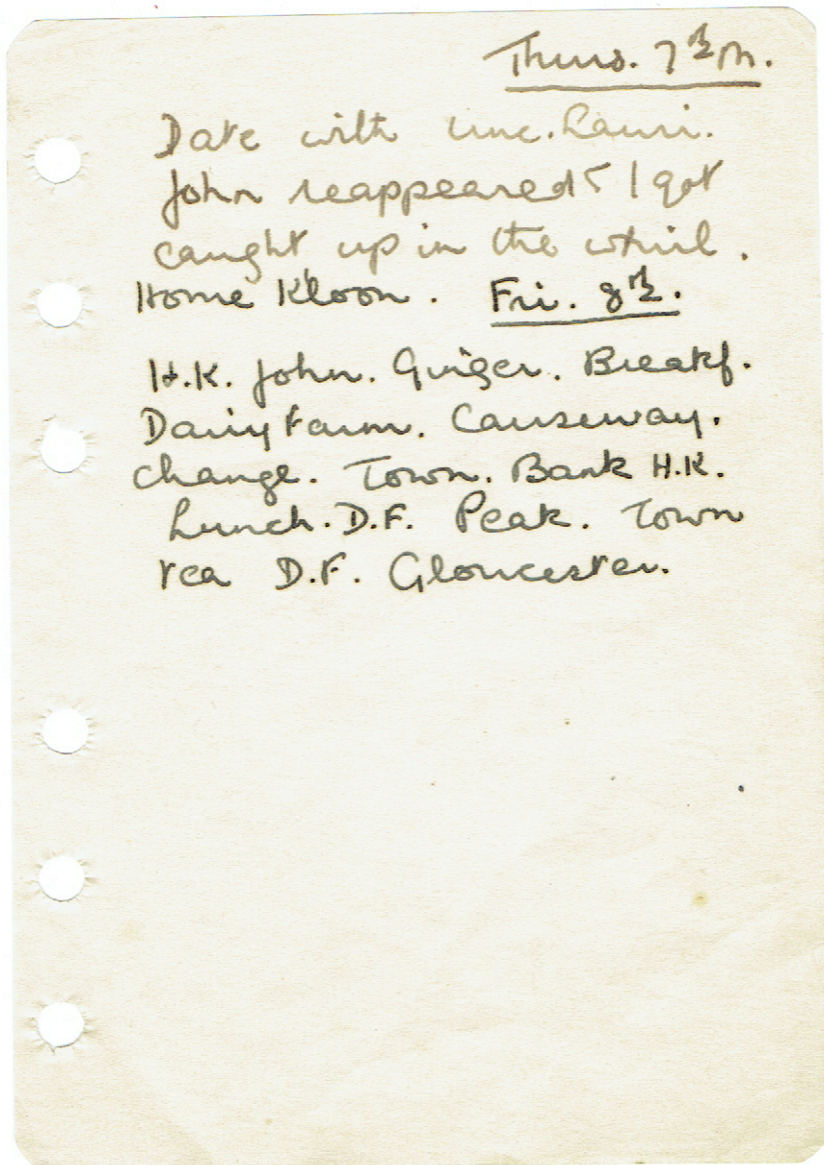
Tuesday 5th March

Up 7. Shand Town. Specs. Watch. p.m. Tried Alexis. Couldn't concentrate. Read digest. Taught. Cliff. Eileen Crib with copied H.W. (home work) Home. Bath. Alexis Carrel. (French surgeon and Biologist, Nobel Prize Physiology 1912) Wrote Gibs. Bed early. Dream Jack Letters.

Wednesday 6th March

Gordon and Mike up for Chat. Town with Gord. Dinner. Walk.





Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 1946

Date with Unc. Lauri.  
John reappeared (*second mention of Dad*) and I got caught up in the whirl. Home K'loon.

Fri. 8<sup>th</sup> March

H.K. John. Ginger. (*Dad had ginger mustache, from his dad's side*) Breakf. Dairy Farm. Causeway. Change. Town. Bank H.K. (*Mum hasn't done bank before, probably Dad*) Lunch D. F. Peak. Town tea D.F. Gloucester.

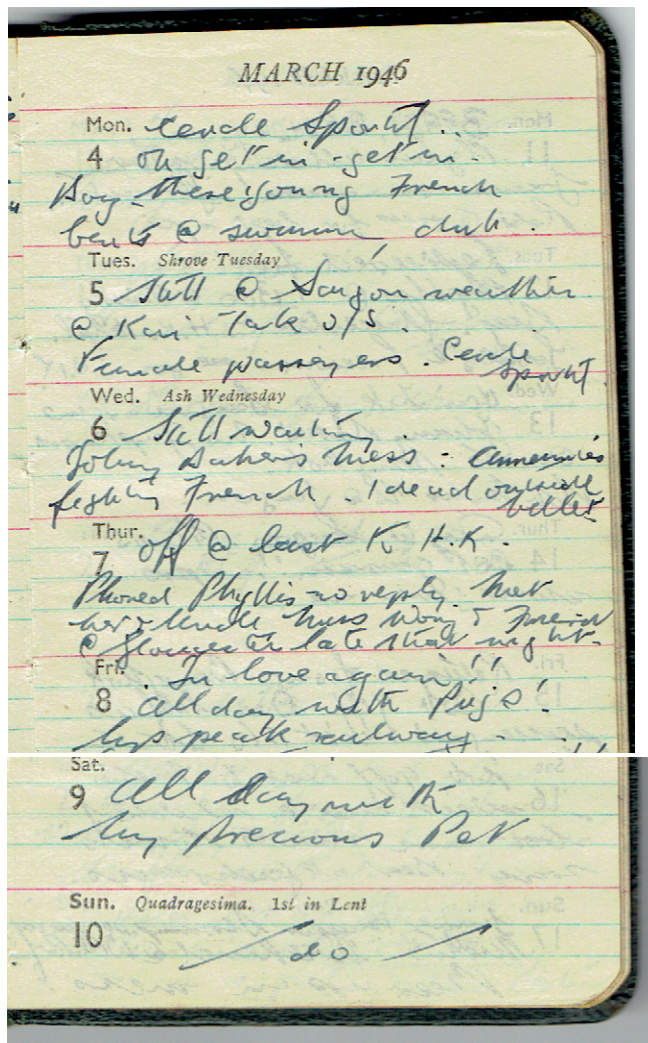
(see pg. 358)

Earl Richard Niron  
Route 5, Roue, New York  
USA  
Berui The Hull  
Rural Route #5  
Greensburg

The rest of this page and the reverse side is blank

indicating Mum stopped keeping her diary for a while, something different has happened?

The following entries Friday 15th to Thurs. 21st (Dates and month guessed at) are on a separate sheet of letterhead paper with the above address on one side:



*Dad's Diary*

7<sup>th</sup> March 1946

Off @ last to H.K.  
Phoned Phyllis no reply. Met her Uncle (Lauri?), Miss Wong (Glenda) and Friend @ Gloucester late that night."

8/9<sup>th</sup> March

"In love again!!  
All day with Puj!  
Up peak railway."  
All day with my precious Pet

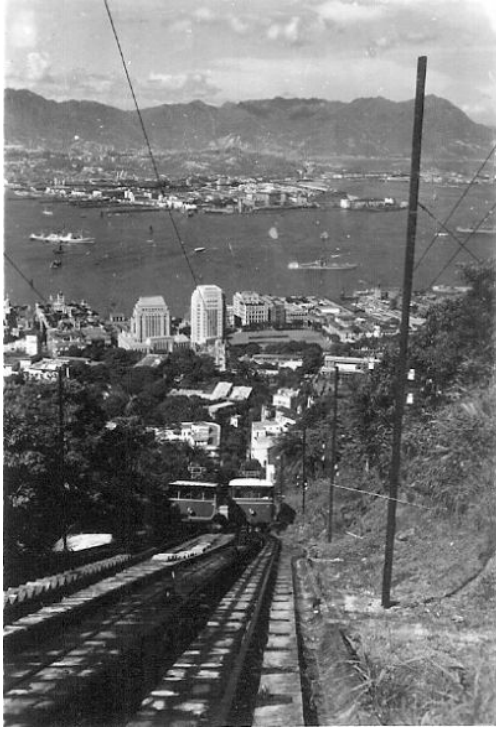
10<sup>th</sup> March

Ditto

"In love again!!  
"Up peak railway."  
"All day with my precious Pet"

Letter from Mum to Dad 1947.

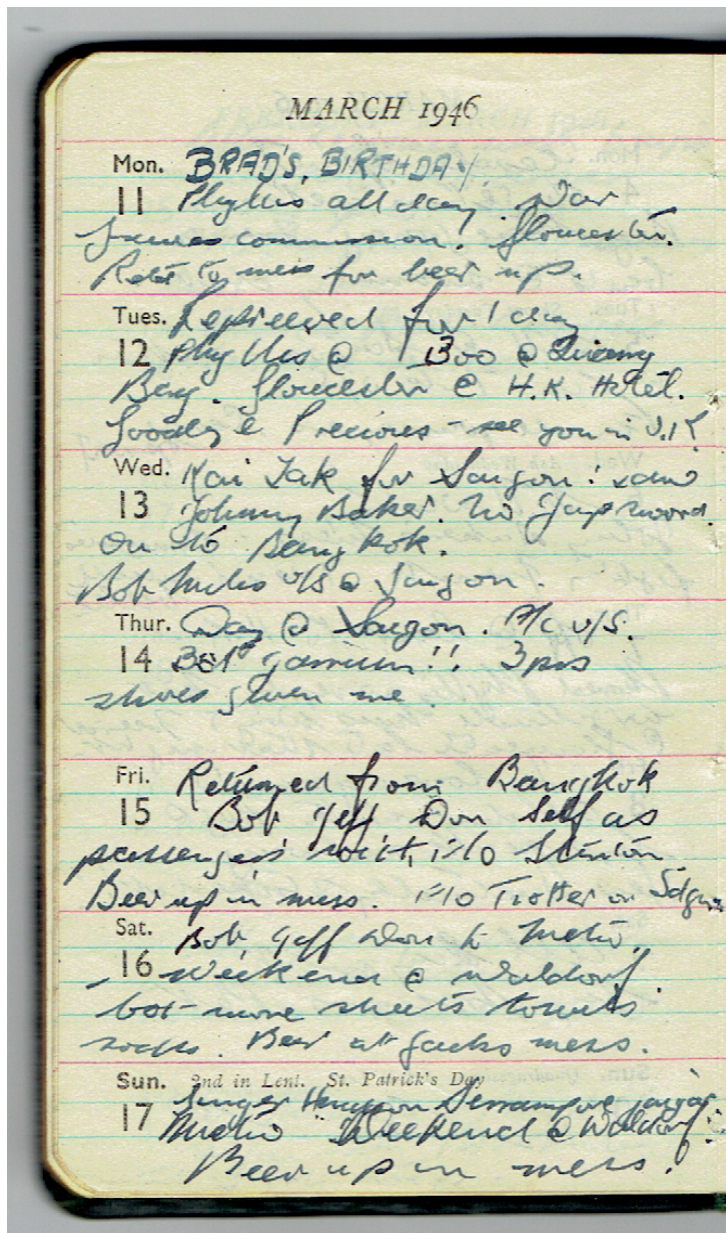
"This looks like squishy school-girl stuff when I look back – But I can't help it. At the moment I feel for you like any girl feels for first love. Perhaps our affair should be more matured by now – and sometimes I am quite surprised how deeply and seriously I feel about you – but other times – well its just like the Hong Kong Peak again."



Peak Tram 1940



Dad's photo and caption: View of water-front from top of the island  
Kowloon harbour and Kai Tak airport in background 1945



*Dad's Diary*

March 11<sup>th</sup> 1946

**BRAD'S BIRTHDAY**

Phyllis all day. War Graves Commission.  
Gloucester.  
Retd. To mess for beer up.

March 12<sup>th</sup>

Rerieved for 1 day  
Phyllis @ 1300 @ Quarry Bay.  
Gloucester @ H.K. Hotel  
Goodly and Precious? - see you in U.K.



*Mum's first letter to Dad?*

*12 Dragon Terrace (1<sup>st</sup> fl.)*

*Causeway Bay*

*H.K. March 13<sup>th</sup>*

*Dear, very dear John,*

*I am feeling very much alone and rather lost. I am glad you asked me to write what I felt – because its just feeling. I haven't the why's and wherefore's of it all at all. I told you last evening that it didn't seem as tho' I were in Hong Kong being with you. Well I'm not back in hong Kong yet. I'm captured in a castle and Glenda's a dragon (Glenda Wong). I'll have a good rest tonight and collect my wits tomorrow because it's a manhattan castle actually.*

*I was half awake in bed this morning listening to you – I think you left a little after 7, unless it was you noisily “who datting” \* with the plane at about nine. I said “aspirin please” to mum this morning instead of “good morning”. I was trying to work up a self-assertive spirit this A.M. so I asked Glenda if she knew a Bateman or Bateson. I think she smilingly affected vagueness so I set to and presude. She said she had met sooo many RAF's that she really couldn't say; so I told her what you said. Of course I left out objectionable remarks and I didn't say you had her typed; and to my chagrin she was cheerfully, smilingly mysterious – she said she thought you looked somewhat familiar! It was the first time I've seen her like this – you know your probably right. But as my letter from the U.S. this morning said “never give a sucker an even break” – so for this day and age maybe its “more power to her”. You know I do admire her in a way – can't understand why the heck I'm afraid of her.*

*I'm sorry 'bout the scrawl but my pen has just died after the first paragraph so I'm using her's.*

*It's suddenly occurred to me that you might be annoyed with me, having said all that to her – But you said I could – remember?*

*John dear, this should be a sort of thank you letter too shouldn't it. Please accept my “thank you” with the same good grace as you did my “no thank you”.*

*Enclosed my foot.*

*Miss you too much.*

*Love,*

*Phyl.*

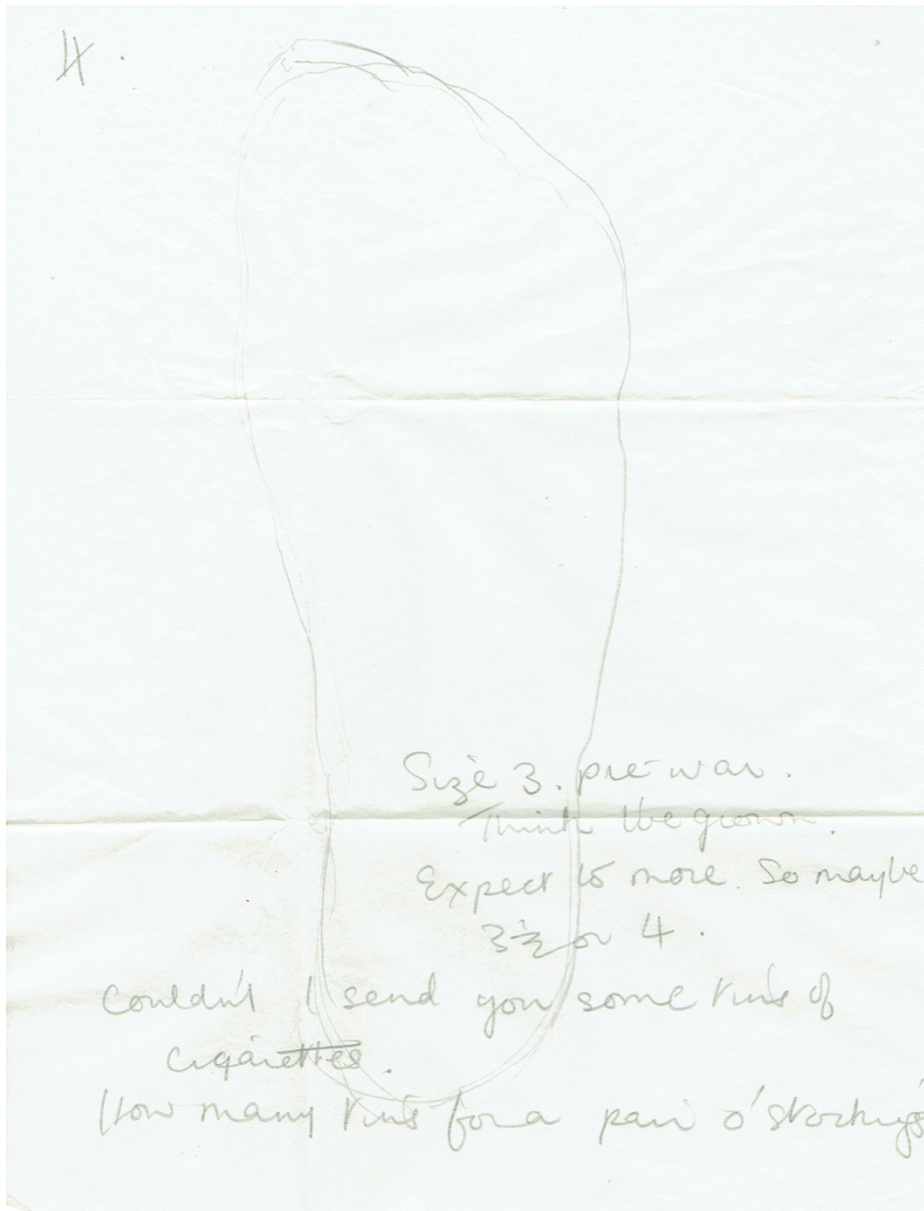
*I presume you've written to me.*

*Reply immediately. Please.*

*Thank you.*

*Don't forget my bracelet*





Mum had tiny feet, I used to tease her by asking her if she had them bound – which never went down well. JR

\*Back in WWII, US fighter squadron pilots would often fly under radio silence. But things get lonely up there in the cockpit, so after a while there'd be a crackle of static as someone keyed his mike. Then a disembodied voice would reply, "Who dat?" An answer would come, "Who dat say who dat?" And another, "Who dat say who dat when ah say who dat?" After a few rounds of this, the squadron commander would grab his microphone and yell, "Cut it out, you guys!" A few moments of silence. Then... "Who dat?"

E. D. Kotwall (see below) could be Edulgi Dorabji Kotwall, Mum's grandfather, he died in 1936.

19  46

E. D. KOTWALL & Co.  
EXCHANGE, COTTON, YARN  
FREIGHT, INSURANCE  
AND GENERAL BROKERS.

5, QUEEN'S ROAD CENTRAL

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS  
"LAWTOK"

HONG KONG, \_\_\_\_\_ 19

RADIO ADDRESS  
"KOTWAL"

TELEPHONE Nos. 20862

Earl Richard Nixon  
Route 5, Rome, New York  
U.S.A

Bernie Mc Hall  
Rural Route #5  
Greensburg  
Indiana

Letter to Hazelrigg. Suppose said  
well do all he can.  
Wanted 1 hr. for chat.  
Letter from and Mary. Mon  
Play Fire brigade.  
Dinner. Pemb Gill. met May.  
Best Summers shot Dot. Fire  
Brigade. Said go on Helen.  
Tea that son & Amer. friends.  
Lunch with Stan.  
Caught. Brande. Mrs. Chan.  
Sun  
Saw Bish. Bath.  
Hair wash. Bath.  
Swim. Repulse. Gordon's friends.  
Lunched at home.  
Communist Sewell Break.  
~~eat~~ Saw Bish in desperation.  
Fri



Friday March 1946 (could be 15th)  
*No diary entry*

Sunday (could be 17th)  
Saw Bish  
Hair wash Bath  
Swim Repulse (*Bay*). Gordon and friends  
Lunch at home  
Communion Service Break  
Saw Bish in desperation

Monday (could be 18th)

Play Fire Brigade (*card game*)  
Dinner Paris Grill. Met Maj. Basil? Summers chit Dot. Fire Brigade. Said go on Kalen (*Kelantan was RN ship*). Tea chat Ron and American friends.  
Lunch with Stan.  
Taught. Braude (*Capt. Arthur Braude H.V.D.C.*) Mrs. Chan

Tuesday (could be 19th)

Tea Wiseman's. Gave mum news of go.  
Took bull by horns charged in with letters to Hazlerigg (*Civil Affairs HK see letter of 20th March 1946*)  
Surprised said he'll do all he can.  
Waited 1 hr. for chit. (*chit was an expression commonly used by Mum and Dad for a note*)  
Letter from Aunt Mary.

### **Dr. Mustapha bin Osman**

Mum's Aunt Mary was her mother's sister who lived in Penang Malaysia. Mary's husband, Dr. Mustapha bin Osman was born in Kadah (northern part of the Malaysian Peninsula) in 1900. He started at the University of Hong Kong in 1917 – graduating seven years later in 1924. He worked as a house surgeon and physician in HK. He became a doctor (MD) studying pathology (1924/25) at medical school in Edinburgh University and Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore USA. He became Malay's first pathologist in 1925, returned to HK, and lectured in Pathology and Bacteriology at UHK 1925-30. It was probably during his time at HKU that he met and married Mary (also known as Meriam). He returned to Malaya in 1930, where during the occupation (1941-45) the Japanese military administration appointed him surgeon general, a post he continued to hold following British reoccupation in 1948. He was conferred the CBE on retirement in 1955. Dr. Mustapha and Meriam had a son Lorrain, and daughter Selma. He died aged 75 in 1975.

During their trip out to HK in 1963 Jonathan and Antonia Rollins got to visit, a journey Antonia got to repeat later with her husband Roger and son Benjamin Seldon.

Dinner. Thurs.  
 III Kwo. Sonny grumbling.  
 Mum brought stuff out.  
 Tea.  
 Looked over letters.  
 Milk with art.  
 Ran up to see Wright not in. after Free-  
 dlander.  
 Tea Mrs. Chan. told her quit.  
 Dunkley. passport.  
 Late to Gordon King.  
 Exite trunks to Canton.  
 Mah Jong. Bed early. Wed.  
 III K. came tried on red gown.  
 Gordon walk with beauty or all.  
 Tea at D.F. G. obj. to Kelantan.  
 Saw Hazelrigg. sign paper to go.  
 Told of Kelantan.  
 Lunch Paris grill. with insuff.  
 depress. bore. Rang Glen pack for me  
 Kalan. spoke to comman Herevill.  
 Harbour office over Kloon pick  
 up Basil & Drana.  
 Peninsula chit wasn't in.  
 Home bed early tried tries  
 Tea wise man gave mum news of go.  
 Took bull by horns charged in with

Wednesday March  
 20<sup>th</sup> 1946

Mah Jong. Bed early.  
 III K. came, tried on  
 red gown. Gordon  
 walk talk leaving et  
 all.  
 Tea at D.F. G. obj. to  
 Kelantan (he was  
 right - the tub was a  
 death trap). Saw  
 Hazelrigg sign paper  
 to go. Told of  
 Kalantan. Lunch  
 Paris Grill with  
 insufferable  
 depressing bore.  
 Rang Glen pack for  
 me Kalantan Spoke  
 to Comman Herevill?  
 Harbour office over  
 Kloon pick up Basil  
 and Drana.

Thursday (could be  
 21<sup>th</sup>)

Dinner  
 III Kwo. Sonny  
 grumbling (probably  
 didn't enjoy clothes  
 shopping!)  
 Mum brought stuff  
 out  
 Tea  
 Looked over letters  
 Milk with art?  
 Ran up to see Wright.  
 Not in. After  
 Freedlander.  
 Tea Mrs. Chan. Told  
 her quit.  
 Dunkley. Passport  
 Late to Gordon King  
 Exite trunks to  
 Canton.



Thurs 21st 1946 April March

Thurs.  
 D.F.  
 Gord Kg. late for letter  
 Capt Dunkley travel permit  
 over with Ron.  
Wed Excite rumbles canton.  
 Bed early. mah jong  
 v. tired. Sam Kwoo tried  
 house coat.  
 Dinner. Gord. walked  
 me home after walk talk  
 what is

---

m.

T

W

Thurs 28<sup>th</sup>  
 Lunch. Glen

Repeat of diary entries

Wednesday March 20<sup>th</sup> 1946

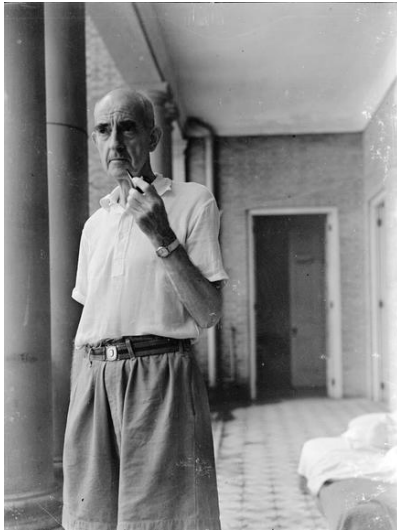
Bed early because mah jong  
 Very tired  
 S\*\*\* Kwo tried housecoat  
 Dinner Gordon walked me home  
 After walk, talk, what is.

Thursday March 21<sup>st</sup>

D.F.  
 Gord Kg. Late for letter  
 Capt. Dunkley Travel Permit  
 Over with Ron

19 46

Duncan Sloss, to whom Mum’s letter of recommendation from Gordon King was addressed, was vice-chancellor of UHK – spent the war in Stanley Camp and went to London in September 1945 to seek help in reestablishing the University.



Prof. Gordon King Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Hong Kong University. Escaping from Hong Kong, hiding in a sampan, Dr. King eventually reached the wartime capital of Chongqing (capital of free China) where with the support of the British Authorities and Chinese Government he set up medical facilities that would allow medical students who escaped from Hong Kong to continue their studies and qualify as Doctors. He was given the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the Royal Army Medical Corp. After the Japanese capitulation he returned to Hong Kong and helped re-establish medical services in the war torn colony.

Jean Gittins was a colleague of Gordon King

Mahjong tiles, Mum always avoided playing Mahjong, excusing herself with a headache. As a child visiting HK I can remember walking past rocking junks in Aberdeen Harbour where by the light of swinging pressure lamps, whole families noisily clacked mahjong tiles.



MARCH ? Mon. 25<sup>th</sup> April.  
 To. H.K. Hazelrigg. signed form  
 to repay repat.  
 McDonnell's. final arrangements.  
 Glen's office. Feel groggy. Home.  
 Lunch. Aunt J. gave me slippers.  
 Slept. Trunks back from Canton.  
 Sew amah came. started  
 pyjamas. Ron got pen for me  
 Chatted over his essay.  
 Felt ill. bed early.  
Tues. 26<sup>th</sup> April.  
 Salts. up late. Phones.  
 sorted out clothes. Shirts etc.  
 back from III. Bath. H.K.  
 Sprinkles. Bish. under-  
 stand Iris Prew. coming  
 D.G.S. matron. Con. nan.  
 having babies. Warned. I  
 shall not like Engd. Cold  
 & hard.  
Wed. 27<sup>th</sup>  
 Nan's. Lunch. Letter from  
 Con. wants to come home.  
 Everybody having babies.

Monday 25<sup>th</sup> April 1946 (Mon. 25<sup>th</sup> March)

To H.K. Hazelrigg (Civil Affairs Service HK see letter) Signed form to repay repat. (Mum had to agree to repay repatriation costs if requested – see letter) McDonnell's final arrangements. Glen's office. Feel groggy. Home. Lunch. Aunt J. gave me slippers. Slept. Trunks back from Canton (could be Mum sent trunks to Canton when she was planning to sail on Kelantan, and had to get them sent back for Strathmore.). Sewing amah came. Started pyjamas (Mum is going to need these when she gets to UK!). Ron got pen for me. Chatted over his essay. Felt ill. Bed early.

Tues. 26<sup>th</sup> April (Tues. 26<sup>th</sup> March)

Salts. Up late. Phones. Sorted out clothes Shirts? etc. back from III Kwoo. Bath H.K. Sprinkles. Bish understand Iris Prew. coming D.G.S. matron. Con (Connie) and Nan (Sai Ma?) having babies. Warned I shall not like England. Cold and hard.

Wed. 27<sup>th</sup> April (Wed. 27<sup>th</sup> March)

Nan's. Lunch. Letter from Con. Wants to come home. Everybody having babies.

*“Warned I shall not like England. Cold and hard.”*

*“Signed form to repay repat.”*

The British bureaucracy, parsimonious to the last, insisted that all repatriates sign a form agreeing to refund the fare, if requested.



19  46

(CAA 2)

CIVIL AFFAIRS HEADQUARTERS,  
LOWER ALBERT ROAD,  
HONG KONG.

No.

20th March, 1946.

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

At the time of the fall of Hong Kong Miss PHYLIS LANG, a British subject now aged 23 years, was a first year student in the Arts Faculty of the University of Hong Kong.

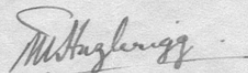
Her father, Mr. John Charles Lang, a member of the Senior Clerical and Accounting Staff of the Hong Kong Government, died in 1942, his death being accelerated by hardships during the Japanese occupation.

Her two uncles were executed by the Japanese for pro-British activities.

The University of Hong Kong having been destroyed by the Japanese it is impossible for Miss Lang to resume her studies in the Colony and she has expressed a wish to proceed to England for that purpose.

She is being provided with a passage to England on a repatriation ship on the understanding that she will refund the cost to Government if called upon to do so, but it is hoped that, as she has only very limited means, no call may be made on her.

It is hoped that any person or organization able to do so will assist Miss Lang in arranging for the resumption of her studies.



Civil Affairs Service.  
British Military Administration.  
HONG KONG.

19  46

Telephones:  
D.D.M.S. C.A. 39659  
A.D.M.S. C.A. 39660  
Secy. 39600  
General 39683

Ref. M.B. (C.A.) .....

**C.A.A. Medical Branch,**  
Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank Bldg.

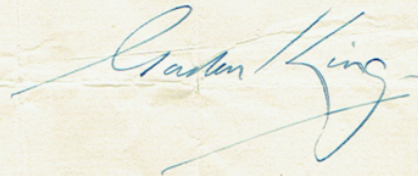
Hong Kong ... 22nd March, 1946.

Dear Mr. Sloss,

This is to introduce Miss Phyllis Lang, who was a 1st Year Student of the University in Arts. She suffered very considerably during the war, when she lost her father and two uncles. She is proceeding to England in the hope of continuing her studies, and would be a very worthy subject for some form of assistance.

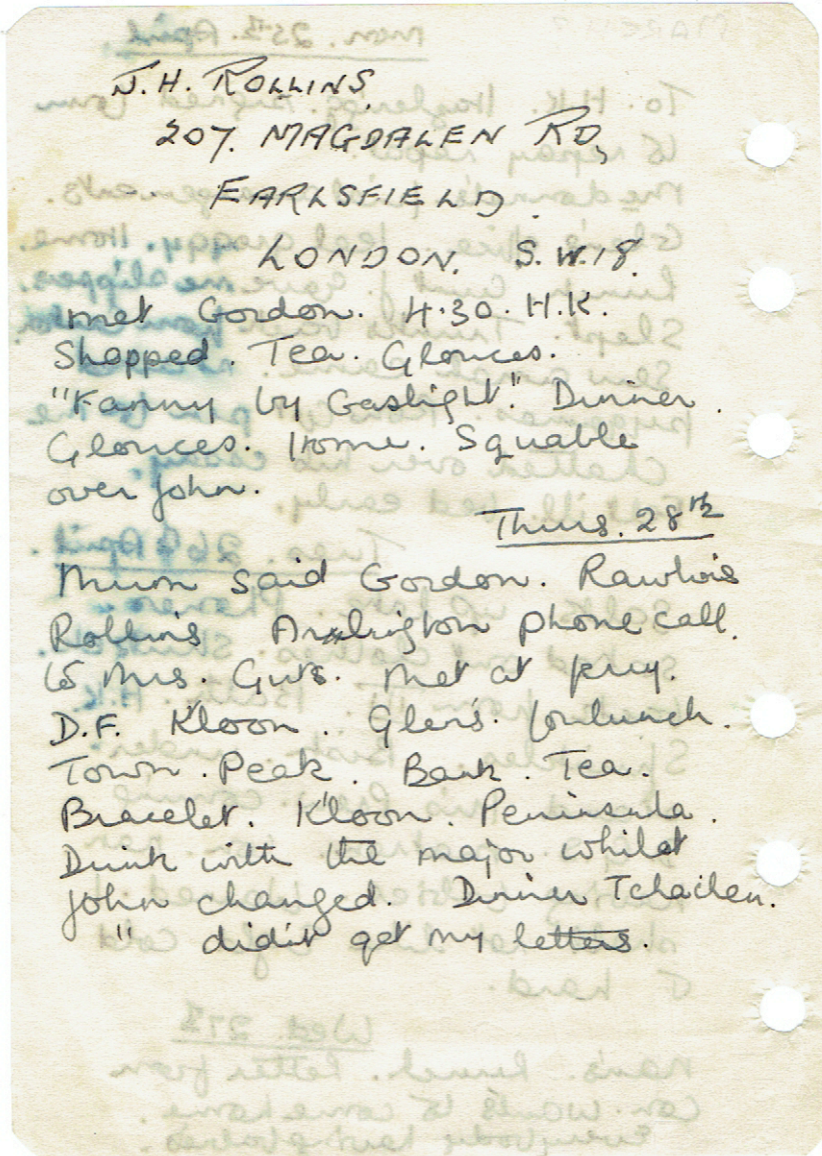
Her god-mother is Mrs. Stewart, the wife of a former vicar of St. Andrews, who is now living in New Barnet. Herklot knows Miss Lang well and strongly recommended that some assistance be given to her. I am giving her this letter to you in the hope that you may be able to give her some advice or help.

Yours sincerely,



D. J. Sloss, Esq., C.B.E.,  
178, Queen's Gate,  
LONDON, S.W.2.

The following is unmistakably in Dad's writing, his home address and that of his parents in London.



J.H. ROLLINS.  
207 MAGDALEN RD  
EARLSFIELD.  
LONDON. SW18

Met Gordon 4.30 H.K.  
Shopped Tea. Gloucester.  
"Fanny by Gaslight" (1944  
British drama film starring  
Stewart Granger and James  
Mason) Dinner Gloucester..  
Home. Squabble over John  
(apparently Grandma Suzie,  
Mum's Mum, was against the  
marriage and sent a letter to  
Dad to try and dissuade him)

Thurs. 28th March 1946

Mum said Gordon (was  
Gordon her Mum's choice for  
a husband? See photos  
below). Rawlins Rollins.  
Arlington (TX?) phone call to  
Mrs. Guts. Met at ferry (Dad  
I'm guessing) D.F. K'loon.  
Glen's for lunch. Town. Peak.  
Bank. Tea. Bracelet. K'loon.  
Peninsula. Drink with the  
major whilst John changed.  
Dinner Tchachen? John  
didn't get my letters.

It could be that Mum still viewed the US as her ultimate destination, a practice at writing Dad's surname is followed by her calling her American friend Mrs. Gutz (mentioned in Mum's diary throughout the war years) who had recently returned from HK to Arlington Texas.



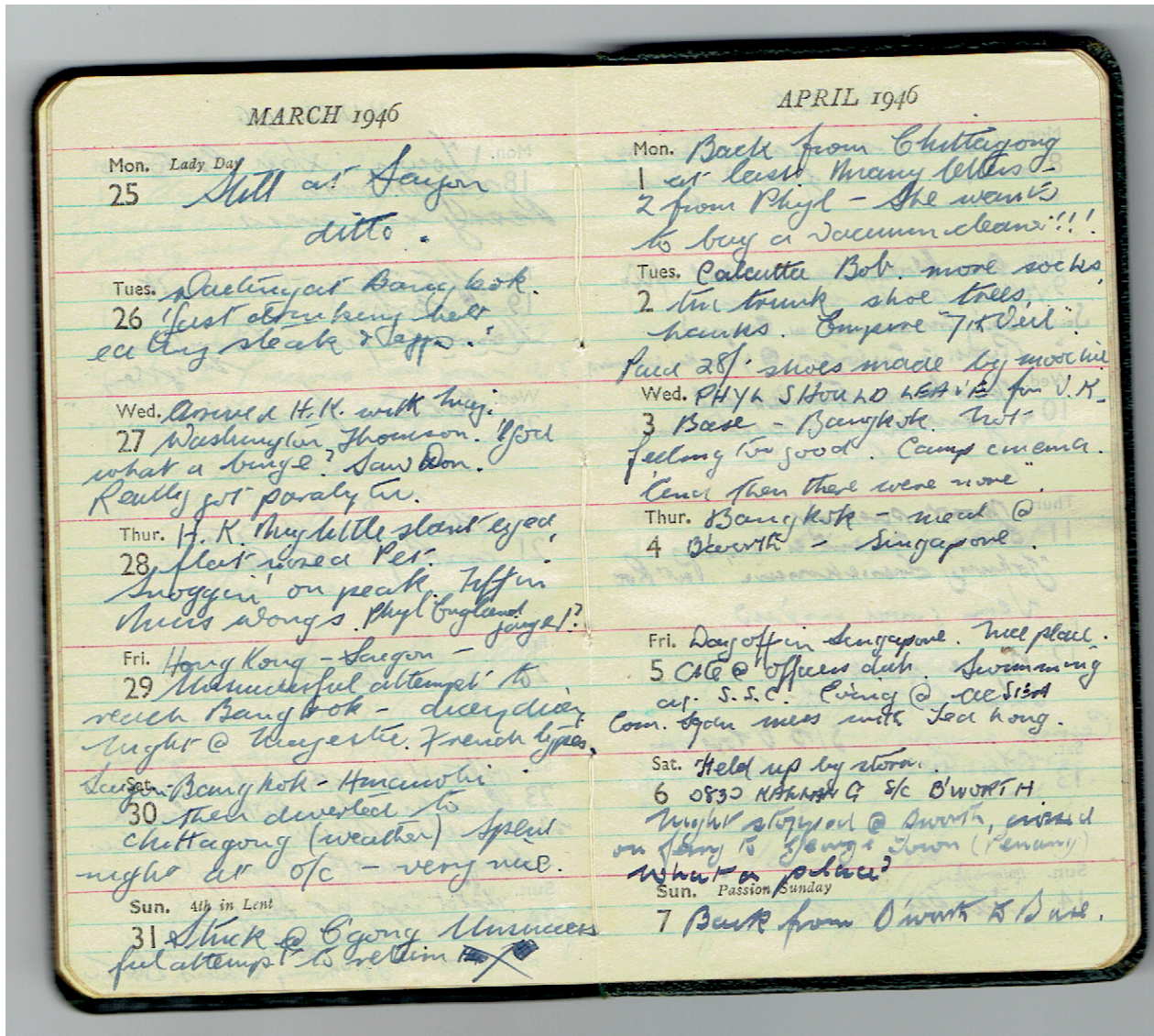
19  46



HKAAF Jan. 1 1953 Gordon Randall, Lelaine Mok,  
Tracy Brown, Archie Lang



HKAAF dinner dance Jan. 1 1953 Lelaine Mok, Gordon Randall, Tracy Brown, Archie Lang,  
Hazel and Dr. Eddie Gosano



Wednesday 27 March 1946

Dad's Diary

Arrived H.K. with Maj. Washington Thomson. God what a binge? Saw Don. (Don Carruthers) Really got paralytic.

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March

H.K. my little slant eyed flat nosed pet. Snoggin' on peak. Left in Mrs. Wongs (Glenda) Phyl England.

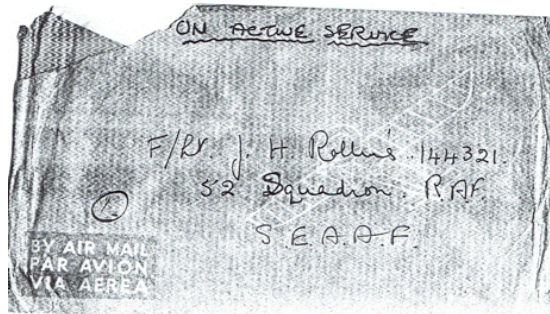
Monday April 1<sup>st</sup>

Back from Chittagong at last. Many letters – 2 from Phyl – she wants to buy a vacuum cleaner!!!

Wed 3<sup>rd</sup> April

PHYL SHOULD LEAVE for U.K.

19  46



Darling —  
I want to buy a  
vacuum cleaner.  
What shall I do?  
Phyl.

*Back from Chittagong at  
last. Many letters – 2 from  
Phyl – she wants to buy a  
vacuum cleaner!!!*

Mum trying to insert some domestic normalcy into a stormy, long distance, wartime courtship?  
Or maybe just trying to remind Dad of his future commitments as he wrestles his Dakota across  
'the hump'.

46  
Sun. 31st March.  
Church with Tom Gittins left  
early. Gerald's gave me gin  
for mme. Braude gave me  
lift to mme's. Talk. Cedric.  
Lunch. Repulse Bay. Gord.  
Tom. Dan. Tea. Back.  
"Strathmore" in. Home III Kwo  
Home. pack.  
1st April

Sunday 31st March 1946

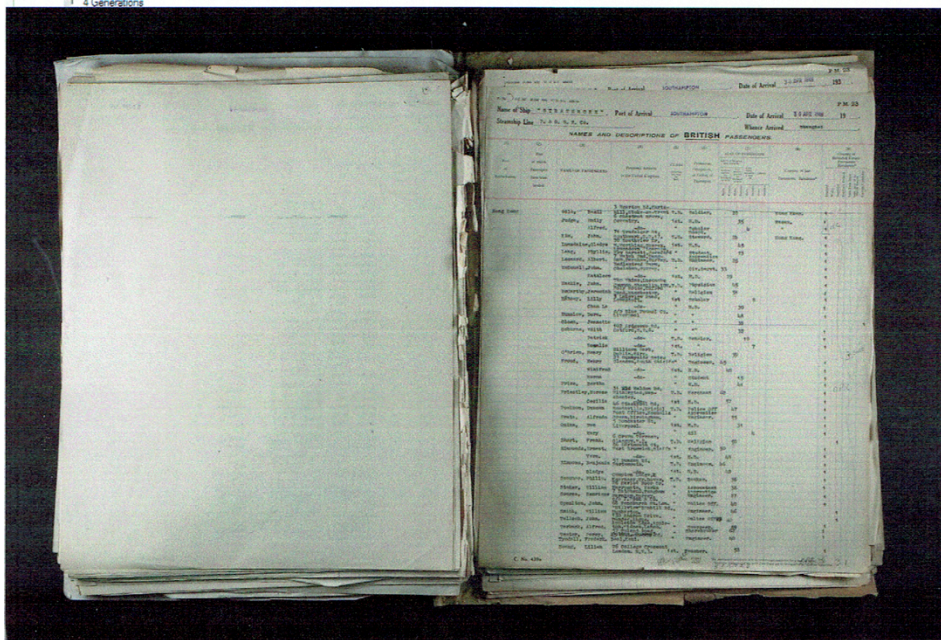
Church with Tom Gittins, left early Gerald's  
– gave me gin for mme. Braude gave me  
lift to mme's. Talk. Cedric. Lunch. Repulse  
Bay (*beautiful beach*). Gord. Tom, Dan.  
Tea. Back.

"Strathmore" in. (*Mum's ship to England*)  
Home III Kwo Home. Pack.

*"Strathmore" in  
"Church with Tom Gittins"*

Jean Gittins, daughter of Sir Robert Ho Tung, was in Stanley Camp, and author of *'the Women of Stanley'*. Was Godfrey or Tom Gittins related? See Eurasian.

19 46



Mum's name on Strathmore list of passengers, listed as Lang Phyllis, destination New Barnet, Student 23

Date of Arrival (UK) 30<sup>th</sup> April 1946

April 1946

46  
Sun. 31st. March.  
 Church with Tom Gitting. Left  
 early. Gerald's. gave me gin  
 for mme. Brande gave me  
 lift to mme's. talk. Cedric.  
 Lunch. Repulse Bay. Gord.  
 Tom. Dan. Tea. Back.  
 "Strathmore" in. Home ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~wood~~  
 Home. park.  
Mon. 1st. April.  
 Shopping etc.  
 Lunch Café. de Chine. Aunt  
 R. Mrs. Chan.  
 Up to W.K. club. Transport to  
 Aunt Eve's.  
 Town. photographs up peak  
 with Ron's friends.  
 Town dinner & night with.  
 B & U.  
Tues. 2nd April  
 Shop. lunch with Dot.  
 Home. Tea with Thelma.  
 Sales. gave me stockings.  
 Bed early.

Monday 1st April 1946

Shopping etc. Lunch Café  
 de Chine. Aunt R. Mrs.  
 Chan.  
 Up to H.K. Club. Transport  
 to Aunt Eve's.  
 Town. Photographs up Peak  
 with Ron and friends.  
 Town dinner and night with  
 B and U.

Tuesday 2nd April

Shop. Lunch with Dot. Home.  
 Tea with Thelma. Sales.  
 gave me stockings. Bed  
 early.





The following letter was mailed 1<sup>st</sup> April 1946 arriving in Kowloon April 9<sup>th</sup> (care of 9 King's Terrace). Given that Mum sailed on the 3rd – I wonder when it was forwarded to her?

*144321 F/LT. ROLLINS. J.H.*

*52. SQUADRON,*

*R.A.F. S.E.A.A.F. (SOUTH EAST ASIA AIR FORCE)*

*Monday 1/4/46*

*Phyl Darling,*

*We have only just this minute arrived back in Calcutta from Kai Tak, having been delayed throughout the trip by bad weather. 'Bad' is hardly expressive enough: its only by the grace of God we returned in one piece.*

*Strange to relate, your two letters were waiting for me here at the mess. Thanks so much Pet, they were both wonderful, even the two lined one! (vacuum cleaner letter?) Pity they didn't reach me before my last trip, still, that's life for you – prepare for a punch in the stomach, and you get a kick in the back.*

*Honestly Dear, its rather stupid addressing this letter to King's Terrace, but as you insisted (you wicked woman) I shall do so. You know what Pugs? I certainly have missed that little flat nose of yours: wish I could kiss it right now. Or even to hear your pathetic "no thank you", would be more than pleasant. No doubt I shall have to be patient, and maybe we can rub noses in a friendly manner in England – just good friends you know!*

*At present Darling, there appears to be a bottle neck in the repatriation scheme, and I may not be home for a week or two. Should you reach the "blessed plot" that "verdant isle", (or whatever it was) before me, please call in at my place and make yourself known – you'll be more than welcome. Father tells me Cedric is returning to H.K. at the end of April, so suppose I shall miss him – worse luck.*

*Write and let me know where you are Sweetheart. Fondest Love John*

*"We have only just this minute arrived back in Calcutta from Kai Tak, having been delayed throughout the trip by bad weather. 'Bad' is hardly expressive enough: its only by the grace of God we returned in one piece."*

Dad was preoccupied while dealing with Mum's request re. a vacuum cleaner.

19  46

Wed. 3rd April  
Pack. Left home 11.30.  
Mum ~~at~~ Thelma Ruby <sup>Mike</sup> saw  
me off. Pres. from Julia  
Sail. 3. Cabin with Joyce  
Symons. Sea sick. Bed  
Early.  
Thurs 4<sup>th</sup> April  
Up felt better. Walk on deck.  
Gordon. Breakfast. Table  
Mrs. Lunsdaine. deaf old  
woman. Missionary type.  
Lancashire type. Fire drill.  
~~Room~~ Upper deck. Chat  
Phyl. Colledge. Bill. Gladys  
Hutch. Deck tennis. Wash.  
Lunch. Seasick gone.  
Upper deck. Chat with  
chap.  
Cabin. tea. Shop. 2 packets  
powder 6 curlers. 3 wave  
pins. 2 bts. Vaseline Hair  
Tonic. Box soap.  
Deck diary. Dinner. Date Bill  
Smith. Walk talk.

Wednesday 3rd April 1946

(Mum leaves H. K. on  
Strathmore)

Pack. Left home 11.30.  
Mum, Thelma, Ruby (Mum's  
aunt, grandma's sister),  
Mike saw me off. Pres. from  
Julia (George Kotwall's  
widow). Sail. 3. Cabin with  
Joyce Symons. Sea sick.  
Bed early.

Thursday 4th April

Up felt better. Walk on deck.  
Gordon. Breakfast. Table  
Mrs. Lunsdain. Deaf old  
woman. Missionary type.  
Lancashire type. Fire drill.  
Upper deck. Chat. Phyl,  
Colledge, Bill, Gladys Hutch.  
Deck tennis. Wash. Lunch.  
Seasick gone. Upper deck.  
Chat with chap.

Cabin Tea Shop 2 packets  
powder, 6 curlers. 3 wave  
pins. 2 bts. Vaseline. Hair  
Tonic. Box soap. Deck diary.  
Dinner. Date Bill Smith.  
Walk talk.



Last of Hong Kong, caption by  
my Dad, photo. by my Mum.

Miss Lang leaves the land of  
Manāna 3/5/46.

*Mum leaves Hong Kong on the P & O Strathmore*

Initially Mum plans to sail on the RN ship Kelantan, and ships her trunks off to Canton, but fortunately, on the advice of a friend, changes to the P & O Strathmore (a habit that was to continue, with three more voyages UK - HK in the next 15 years on P & O vessels) and duly orders her trunks back to HK. Even the sewing amah is called into action – could be that Mum took the advice that she would find England ‘hard and cold’ to heart. I hope so.

The voyage from Hong Kong to the UK by scheduled P & O ships must rate as one of the great travel experiences of the pre-cruise world. Using the Malacca Straits and Suez Canal the trip took about a month, with stops at many of the great ports of the near and far east. During Mum’s voyage, trips ashore were few and discouraged, probably due to postwar turmoil. The trip must have provided a good opportunity, through mingling with English passengers, to prepare for the cold, grey, rationed world of post war London. Mum got into the spirit of things with deck games, singsongs and reading ‘*Pioneers Oh Pioneers*’, and managed to avoid most games of Bridge (likewise, in Hong Kong, she had an aversion to Mahjong). Mum obviously enjoyed herself; she even managed to get ‘dates’ with ‘chaps’ including Bill Smith and Tommy.

Riches indeed! Mum’s menu April 6

*P & O Menu*  
SATURDAY, APRIL 6th. 1946.

<p><b>BREAKFAST</b></p> <p>Stewed Figs Oatmeal Porridge All Bran Fillet of White Fish Lamb's Liver, Provençale Mashed Potatoes Milk Preserves Tea    Coffee</p>	<p><b>LUNCHEON</b></p> <p>Vegetable Soup Salisbury Steak, with Onions Lamb Curry Cold Meats Paysanne Potatoes Bread and Butter Cheese    Coffee</p>
<p><b>DINNER</b></p> <p>Cream Champenoise Nouilles with Tomatoes Roast Veal with Stuffing Cabbage Boiled Potatoes Plat of Peaches Coffee Oranges</p>	

*Beautiful night, up 'till  
12 with Tommy. In  
Bay of Bengal gave  
me his orange.*

*Most glorious days, I  
wasn't far wrong  
when I told Mike  
"cruise".*

Fri. 5<sup>th</sup> April.  
 Top deck 7.30. Time put back ½ hr.  
 Orange. Chat. 10. Boat drill.  
 Deck. shorthand. lunch.  
 Opened travelling trunk. Ironed  
 frock. Bath. Drinks. Dis.  
 Cabin. Cissy Symonds. Bath.  
 Dinner. Topside David talk 10.11.  
 Sing song. Drinks in lounge.  
 Sat. 6<sup>th</sup> April  
 Awake 5.30. Deck chat  
 Colledges Hutch Smithy Glads.  
 Gordon. Breakfast. Shand.  
 Boat drill. Letters. mum.  
 Jack. Buy Rinso, (Rin-  
 So White Rin so Bright  
 laundry detergent) Cologne.  
 Wash pygs. Lunch. Read.  
 Knit socks. Tea. Tidy  
 Cabin. tweeze. Bath.  
 Sun. 7<sup>th</sup> April  
 Woke to see land. Singapore  
 from a distance. Greeting  
 not able to land. Harbour  
 lights again in the evening.  
 Gordon went ashore. Told  
 Joyce in evening huffy with

Friday 5th April 1946

Top deck 7.30. Time put  
 back ½ hr. Orange. Chat. 10.  
 Boat drill.  
 Deck. Shorthand. Lunch.  
 Opened travelling trunk.  
 Ironed frock. Bath, drinks,  
 Dis. Cabin. Cissy Symonds  
 (Joyce's sister?) Bath  
 Dinner. Topside David talk to  
 11. Sing song. Drinks in  
 lounge.

Saturday 6th April

Awake 5.30. Deck chat.  
 Colledges Hutch Smithy  
 Glads. Gordon. Breakfast.  
 S'hand. Boat drill. Letters  
 mum. Jack. Buy Rinso, (Rin-  
 So White Rin so Bright  
 laundry detergent) Cologne.  
 Wash pygs. Lunch. Read.  
 Knit socks. Tea. Tidy cabin.  
 tweeze, Bath.

Sunday 7th April

Woke to see land. Singapore  
 from a distance. Greeting not  
 able to land. Harbour lights  
 again in the evening. Gordon  
 went ashore. Told Joyce in  
 evening huffy with me 'cos I  
 ignored him 2 days. Hanging  
 around Gladys H. Couldn't  
 care less. Most glorious days,  
 I wasn't far wrong when I  
 told Mike "cruise".

Joyce Symons in her memoir *Looking At The Stars* was Mum's cabin mate and remembers the voyage thus:

"Our repatriation ship was to carry British and French nationals from Shanghai and Hong Kong. The women occupied cabins whilst the men had to sleep in hammocks in dormitories. Fortunately my cabin mate was none other than Phyllis Lang, the Macau girl who helped me at school in the first term after the war. Phyllis kindly did her best to allow the newlyweds some privacy, so we managed to have a little of our 'honeymoon.'"

*Vengeance* "between Malaysia and Sumatra" ran into squall. Sing Song with men. "Daisy" Bed early. 1 week from H.K.

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April 1946

Came out of "Malacca Straits".  
 Ran into squall. Sing song with men.  
 "Daisy" Bed early.  
 (wk. from H.K.) Wed. 10<sup>th</sup> April  
 Decksideside Breakfast. Shand Mrs Lunsdaine.  
 Mrs. Kemp helped wind wool. Lunch.  
 Groggy with sleepiness rested - 4.  
 Read "Pioneers Oh Pioneers". Bath dress.  
 Dinner. After decksideside sunset.  
 Sing Song Shorty Bob Smith Tom. Drinks.  
 Beautiful night up till 12 with Tommy.  
 Gave me his orange. In Bay of Bengal.  
Thurs. 11<sup>th</sup> April  
 Glorious Day. Indian Ocean  
 Skies & Ocean a mystic Blue.  
 Decksideside Shorty Bob. Breakfast.  
 Chat. Gordon Joyce. Passed

Came out of "Malacca Straits"  
 (between Malaysia and  
 Sumatra) ran into squall.  
 Sing Song with men. "Daisy"  
 Bed early. 1 week from H.K.

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April 1946

Decksideside Breakfast. S'hand.  
 Mrs. Lunsdaine. Mrs. Kemp  
 helped wind wool. Lunch.  
 Groggy with sleepiness  
 rested - 4. Read "Pioneers  
 Oh Pioneers" (Poem by Walt  
 Whitman to celebrate move  
 west - did Mum feel an  
 affinity?) Bath, dress. Dinner.  
 After decksideside sunset. Sing  
 Song Shorty, Bob Smith,  
 Tom. Drinks. Beautiful night,  
 up 'till 12 with Tommy. In  
 Bay of Bengal gave me his  
 orange.

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> April

Glorious Day. Indian Ocean  
 and Skies and ocean of  
 mystic Blue  
 Decksideside Shorty, Bob.  
 Breakfast Chat. Gordon,  
 Joyce. Passed "Vengeance"  
 (aircraft carrier built during  
 the war HMS Vengeance R  
 71 was on her way to H.K.)  
 Diary Mrs. Lumsdaire.

Mystic Blue could be  
 from Heart Whispers by  
 Anna Wilson Simmons  
 1895 - from 'We Two'

And we shall meet again - we two,  
 Beyond the skies of mystic blue  
 Upon the far and better shore  
 With love as deep and strong  
 As yore,....



Mon.

7.30 10 runs round Bob.  
 Deck tennis Joyce Glads.  
 Slept read Deck Short & Preston.  
 Bath up early.  
 Chat Bob 'bout Drew.  
 Dr. Jimmy Richardson chat took  
 Tombola Joyce & Bob. <sup>my address.</sup> Grand budgeted.  
 Bed 10. Tired out, Slept deadily.

Tues

Up 7.15. Rushed dressed.  
 Wonderful sleep. Deck 7.30.  
 8 runs round. Depressed. ∴  
 Smith & Drew.  
 Breakf. Shand. Boat drill.  
 Going into Gulf of Aden. passed  
 Dim distant plateaus "The  
 Brothers." & Sorocco.  
 Knitted. Lunch. Topside Bob &  
 Short. Read "Pioneers".  
 Missed men's dance.  
 Deck Tennis with Trio. <sup>Stroll Mrs Lums</sup>  
 Evening dancing with Sandy.  
 New Moon.

Monday April 15<sup>th</sup> 1946

7.30 10 times round (deck).  
 Bob, Deck tennis, Joyce,  
 Glads. Slept. Read. Deck.  
 Shorty and Preston. Bath up  
 early. Chat Bob 'bout Drew.  
 Dr. Jimmy Richardson chat,  
 took my address. Tombola  
 Joyce and Bob. Grand  
 Bridged? Bed 10. Tired out.  
 Slept deadily.

Tuesday April 16<sup>th</sup>

Up 7.15. Rushed dressed.  
 Wonderful sleep. Deck 7.30.  
 8 times round. Depressed  
 (because) Smith and Drew.  
 Breakfast. S'hand. Boat drill.  
 Going into Gulf of Aden.  
 Passed Dim distant plateaus  
 "The Brothers" (6 volcanic  
 islands) and Sorocco (sic).  
 Knitted. Lunch. Topside Bob  
 and Short. Read "Pioneers"  
 Missed men's dance. Stroll  
 with Mrs. Lums. Deck tennis  
 with Trio. Evening dancing  
 with Sandy. New Moon

*"Passed Dim distant plateaus "The Brothers" and Sorocco"*

Mum established a routine when sailing P & O, which included walking round the deck a set number of times for exercise.

WED.

Wash clothes.  
 Walk. Breakfast. Shand,-----  
 Thru' Gulf of Aden into Red  
 Sea. Sat thro' bridge

**Mum arrives in the UK**

*Soon everyone was caught up in the excitement of reaching Southampton. As we drew alongside the pier a military band played Rule Britannia and tears poured down my face. The spring flowers and fresh green grass seemed idyllic to us, as did the neat houses and lovely big trees.*

*Joyce Symons*

Wednesday April 17<sup>th</sup>  
1946

Wash clothes. Walk.  
 Breakfast.  
 S'hand.....  
 Thru' Gulf of Aden into  
 Red Sea. Sat thro'  
 bridge.



Mum on the Strathmore

On arrival in London, as instructed, Mum heads for Dad's parents in Earlsfield to be greeted by Nancy on the doorstep "E're

*Frank, some Chink says she's 'ere for our John"* or words to that effect (Pc. Antonia from Mum). Dad was still on his way back from the Far East, so, in true Nanna and Poppa style, she is whisked down 'The Fog' (local pub) where Nancy was later (1952/3 and 57/8) to become Fog Fillies Champion at darts.





Nancy's darts trophies from 'The Fog' and Mum outside Dad's parents' home 207 Magdalen Rd. Earlsfield



Earlsfield Garret Lane and St. Andrews church

Cedric quickly arrives to rescue Mum and takes her to his Aunt Ethel's before she has to go to a hostel in Kidderminster for displaced people from the Far East. It is interesting to conjecture on what passed between Cedric and Mum during their first meeting since they were boyfriend and girlfriend in 1941. It must have been a poignant moment. Cedric had survived pow hell in Shamshuipo and forced labour in Japan. His letters to Mum and repeated requests for a photo indicates that, perhaps, his love for her was undiminished – although he realized that Mum had moved on, and John Henry was 'in the wings'. Not many more meetings are recorded between the two in Mum's Diary. Cedric, now demobbed from military service, along with his father, brother Michael and stepmother returned to HK in September 1946 on the MV Duntroon.

It seems his wartime experiences had not quashed Ced's lust for adventure. With his brother on board, he crashed a small plane into the sea off Hong Kong! (source email with Mike Salter 2018)

An interesting postscript to Mum and Cedric's relationship is that many years later Antonia Seldon (nee Rollins) – Mum's daughter, recalls a visit from Cedric when he was old and on the 'outskirts' of dementia, and he mistook Antonia for Mum. Could it be that Mum was forever captured in Cedric's mind as a young 19-year-old girl? For more on Cedric see Appendix D.

19  46

*“E’re Frank, some Chink says she’s ‘ere for our John”*



Dad’s parents Nan and  
Poppa.

Ann Nichols (Nancy)

Ernest Frank Rollins



Mum and  
Nancy at 207

Mum, Dad  
and Les  
Cohen at 207



**May 1946**

Entries for May 1<sup>st</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> are out of order. Could be that Mum filled them out later, entering the most recent events first.

Sat. 4<sup>th</sup> May  
 Supper.  
 Walk ½ hr & back to post  
 letter home. Tea. Wrote letter  
 home. lunch. Interviews.  
 local ministry of health.  
Fri. 3<sup>rd</sup> May  
 Hot bath bed.  
 Kidderminster. Blakeshall  
 Hostel. Rapuri camp.  
 4.45. Train from Paddington  
 just made it. Blow up from  
 official in charge.  
 1hr. Bus & back to Lee no  
 time to call Hazel.  
 Missed train.  
 Rush pack to Kidder.  
 Back to Clapham hostel.  
Thurs. 2<sup>nd</sup> May  
 Out pubbing. m. Mrs. Rollins.  
 Cedric. Stayed night at Hrb.  
 Tea. met his aunt Ethel.  
 Ced came while I packing.  
 Washed.  
 Garage & tubes. Walked with  
 Ced.  
 Dinner at C's. his grandmother  
 To Cedric's.

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May 1946

Knocked out bed 6. Train to  
 London. Waterloo. Marj, Eva  
 there. Disembarked (from  
 Strathmore). Saw Bob,  
 Shorty leave at 8. Interviews.  
 Goodbyes. Bob etc.

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May

Out pubbing Mr. Mrs. Rollins  
 (Mum meets Dad's parents).  
 Cedric. Stayed night at His.  
 Tea. Met his Aunt Ethel. Ced  
 came while I packing.  
 Washed. Garage and tubes  
 (Cedric still a keen auto  
 mechanic). Walked with Ced.  
 Dinner at C's his  
 grandmother To Cedric's

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May

Hot bath bed. Kidderminster  
 (SW of Birmingham)  
 Blakeshall Hostel (displaced  
 people from the Far East  
 were housed at Blakeshall  
 Hostel. Rapuri Camp see pg.  
 383). 4.45 train from  
 Paddington. Just made it.  
 Blow up from official in  
 charge. 1hr. Bus and back to  
 Lee, no time to call Hazel.  
 Missed train Rush pack for  
 Kidder. Back to Clapham  
 hostel.

Interview. going to Kidderminster  
 Hostel. Wandered round Clapham  
 Common. Wed. 3rd May  
 Rinsched out bed to.  
 Train to London. Waterloo.  
 Mary. Eva. there.  
 Disembarked. Saw Bob  
 Sherry leave at 8.  
 Interviews. Goodbyes. Bob. etc.  
Sun. 5th  
 Did room. Walk thro' country  
 George Fisher's  
 Hostel children to  
 Wolverly Parish Church.  
 Cold ruin. Back dinner.  
 Wrote Mrs. Salter. Tea.  
 To Kidder. Enquiries  
 Bus London. Loafed  
 round freezing. Missed  
 Bus back.  
 Dinner. Letters. Tony  
 Stamp. Read papers.

Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> May 1946

Supper. Walk ½ hr. and back to post  
 letter home. Tea. Wrote letter home.  
 Lunch. Interviews. Local ministry of health.

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May

Did room. Walk thro' country George  
 Fisher, Hostel children to Wolverly Parish  
 Church (2 miles from Kidder.). Cold ruin.  
 (There are medieval ruins in Wolverly).  
 Back dinner. Wrote Mrs. Salter. Tea. To  
 Kidder. Enquiries Bus London. Loafed  
 round freezing. Missed bus back.  
 Dinner Letters Tony. Stamp Read papers

*"4.45 train from Paddington. Just made it. Blow up from  
 official in charge."*

I remember as a child how Mum had problems meeting the demands of the clock, and was always on the verge of being late for something. This problem becomes obvious on her arrival in England where she is constantly missing trains and buses, and getting in trouble with 'the man in charge'.

19  46

Mon. 6<sup>th</sup> May  
Saw Miss Machulla about  
transfer to London Hostel.  
Matron about specs. Tea.  
Visited Irene Hicks.  
Clothes out from trunk.  
Dinner. Kidderminster  
met Betty Aslet. Town  
Hall food office received  
Identity card. Ration Bk.  
Coupons. Ordered. Lens for  
specs. Was informed contact  
lenses 30 guineas. Bought  
Kidder. cards. Stationary.  
Bus back. Tea. Took  
up hem ~~the~~ attaca coat in  
Block Com. Room. Chat  
Pop Pearlman. Cissy. Gave  
use woollies. Dinner.  
Cinema. Tea. Bed.

Sat. 11<sup>th</sup> May  
Chat Vi. After sup she cooked  
messed about kitchen talking  
to U. Tea. Met U. nothing

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May 1946

Saw Miss Machulla about  
transfer to London Hostel.  
Matron about specs. Tea.  
Visited Irene Hicks.  
Clothes out from trunk.  
Dinner. Kidderminster  
met Betty Aslet. Town  
Hall food office received  
identity card. Ration Bk.  
Coupons. Ordered lens  
for specs. Was informed  
contact lenses 50  
guineas (over £2,000 in  
2016). Bought Kidder.  
Cards, stationary. Bus  
back. Tea. Took up hem  
of Attaca coat in block  
Common Room. Chat  
Pop Pearlman. Cissy  
gave used woollies.  
Dinner. Cinema. Tea.  
Bed.

Mum goes through the transition from being an upper class Eurasian lady in HK surrounded by family, influential friends and Chinese servants, to a homeless refugee in grim, rationed, post war London. She quickly looks up expat family and friends, as the English bureaucracy grinds on. Her Mum sends her money; all she has to do is guard her purse from Dad's RAF crew sessions down the pub.

19  46

Wed 8<sup>th</sup> May  
With Cissy A  
Early into Kidder. Saw  
Opticians. Shopped. Gloves  
2prs stockings. Suspenders  
Lunch at Coop. 1.45  
Into London to Lee. Drop-  
ped in on Gosanos. Fred  
asked me to stay few days  
Tues 7<sup>th</sup>  
Saw Miss Machulla. No  
news of transfer for work.  
Decided to go to London.  
Evening in Kidder. Pub.  
lovely walk there.  
with Jim Kent. Aslett's  
hubby.

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May

Saw Miss Machulla. No news of transfer for work. Decided to go to London. Evening in Kidder. Pub. Lovely walk there with Jim Kent. Aslett's hubby.

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> May

With Cissy A. Early into Kidder. Saw opticians. Shopped. Gloves, 2 prs. stockings. Suspenders. Lunch at Coop. 1.45 into London to Lee (rooming house at 104 Burnt Ash road S.E.12). Dropped in on Gosanos. Fred asked me to stay few days.

(Freddie B. [Broadbridge?] is leaving on the 24<sup>th</sup> for Hong Kong - letter from Eddie Gosano to Mum 17/5/46)

Below letter sent to Blakeshall, Kidderminster

104 Burnt Ash Rd.  
Lee. London S.E. 12  
8/5/46

Dear Phyl,

We have been frantic trying to find out your whereabouts. Since I just rang up CO and they mentioned the address. I am not waiting to see Hazel but I am writing straight away. How's things - give us your address if you cannot come to our place or else write back to let us know where we can meet you in town. Best Wishes, Eddie

Hill Gate 2pm.  
 To Stewarts New Barnett  
 Dinner with them. Letters  
 there from Jack John, Marg,  
 Michael.  
Fri. 10<sup>th</sup> May.  
 Visit H.K. people at  
 Catford. Eva, Iris, etc.  
 Met Ed. Charing Cross.  
 Home dinner.  
 Cedric returned evening  
 tea. Drove me drinks  
 to Charing Cross. Farewell.  
 Walked all AM. with Thurs  
 Anne Ced's aunt at Sellin  
Sellin Court Rd. <sup>to Clapham</sup> <sup>Rest House</sup> <sup>collect</sup>  
 to Eaton for Ed. W.V.S. <sup>jewelry</sup>  
 clothes.  
 Dinner. Indian Restam.  
 Walked Strand. Malaya  
 House. Thurs 9<sup>th</sup>

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May 1946

To Clapham Rest House  
 collect jewelry? To Eaton  
 (Eaton Sq. Belgravia  
 London) Jo (Hazel) & Ed.  
 W.V.S. (Women's Royal  
 Voluntary Service) clothes.  
 Dinner Indian Restaurant.  
 Walked Strand. Malaya  
 House.

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May

Visit H.K. people at Catford.  
 Eva, Iris? etc. Met Ed.  
 Charing Cross. Home  
 dinner.  
 Cedric returned evening tea.  
 Drove me Ft. St. (Fleet  
 street) drinks and Charing  
 Cross. (station to get train  
 south to Wandsworth)  
 Farewell. Waited all AM with  
 Anne, Ced's aunt at Sellin  
 Court Rd. (Wandsworth  
 where Dad's parents lived)

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May

Chat Vi. After supper she  
 cooked. Messed about  
 kitchen talking to V. Tea.  
 Met V. Notting Hill Gate 2pm.  
 To Stewarts New Barnett.  
 Dinner with them. Letters  
 there from Jack, John, Marg,  
 Michael.

Sun. 12<sup>th</sup> May.  
 Kew Gardens. Jo Ed. Eva  
 Mike Prew. Stan Lee. Charlie.  
 Back to Lee. Tea. Radio  
 upstairs. Chow Fun.

Mon. 13<sup>th</sup> May.  
 Back to Kidder. Unpack &  
 tidy up. Trunks arrive. Saw  
 Col. Pearson about Trans. Trunks  
 were for.  
 Wash clothes - Iron. Wrote  
 Mum. Evening walk  
 to Cookley. Mrs Millar. Chips.  
 Pub.

Wed.  
 Weary with a cold. Knit  
 Socks. Letters. P.m. into  
 Kidde. Saw "Wonderman"  
 Mellor. Abe. Fish & Chips.

Thurs  
 Did Room. M.O.H. Remittance.  
 Into Kidde. Visit Pearlman.  
 Tea. Bought. Gloves. Purse  
 Washed white gloves. Saw film  
 Wrote Bob. Robbie Cham.

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May 1946

Kew Gardens. Jo (Hazel) Ed,  
 Eva Mike Prew. Stan Lee (*Lee  
 is Mum's address*) Charlie.  
 Back to Lee. Tea. Radio  
 upstairs. Chow Fun. (*Trad.  
 Cantonese stirfry*).

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May

Back to Kidder. Unpack and  
 tidy up. Trunks arrive. Saw Col.  
 Pearson about Trans. Wrote  
 Jack.

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May

Wash clothes. Iron. Wrote  
 mum. Evening walk to Cookley.  
 Mrs. Millar. Chips. Pub.

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May

Weary with a cold. Knit  
 socks. Letters. p.m. into  
 Kidde. Saw "Wonderman"  
 (*movie with  
 Danny Kaye and Virginia  
 Mayo*). Mellor Abe. Fish and  
 Chips.

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May

Did room. M.O.H. (*ministry of  
 health*) remittance. Into Kidde.  
 Visit Pearlman. Tea. Bought  
 Gloves, Purse. Washed white  
 gloves. Saw film. Wrote Bob.  
 Robbie Cham.





19  46

Letter dated 14-5-46 from 118, Redlands Road, Penarth, Glam.



*“I’d like to see my drunken little  
RAPWI”*

*My dear Phyllis,*

*So sorry this is a trifle over-due but I decided to wait for the films which didn’t come ‘till today. As you can see they were hardly worth waiting for. I’m enclosing the best but it must have been that !!! chinese film that ruined the others, they just refused point-blank to develop (sic).*

*Well, dear, how are you? Your letter conveyed very little. How do you like this country - this lovely England of ours – beautiful this time of year isn’t it, or maybe you haven’t had time to form an opinion? I often wonder just how you’re getting along, whether your marriage problems have sorted themselves out, whether you’ve decided your future or not, whether you’re still believing everything you hear! – hell of a lot I want to know isn’t there!*

*As for me, Phil, I’m just having a lazy time, I meet Tommy nearly every day and we go rowing, watching cricket, pictures etc., not forgetting the daily ‘noggins’ of course – couldn’t miss those could we! I don’t intend to start work until the end of June – even then it’ll kill me I’m sure. Very much afraid ‘I shan’t be around tomorrow’ – I mean, I shan’t be able to get to London, the accommodation in that fair city is absolutely nil so as much as I’d like to see my drunken little RAPWI (see below) it’ll have to be somewhere else – i.e. if your still single!*

*That’s about all I have time for now, my sweet, please write me a decent letter answering all the questions plus the one – do you still - ? Look after yourself, don’t do anything rash. Be good.*

*God bless,*

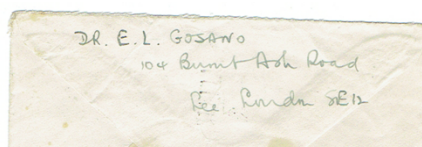
*Love,*

*Bob. xx*

*p.s. have you Joyce’s address!*

May 16 letter from Bob in Wales refers to Mum as a RAPWI girl. The Recovery of Allied Prisoners of War and Internees organization was established to repatriate pows from over 150 internment camps in the far east including HK. With the dropping of atomic bombs on Japan and the sudden ending of the war, RAPWI had to move into high gear. Once assured the cooperation of local Japanese Commanders, contact teams were parachuted in to ensure the safety of all internees prior to the Allied arrival and evacuation. Dad was part of the process flying out pows who were too severely malnourished or injured to await the later ship-borne evacuations. Some of these pows were too weak to survive the flight home – and many had severe injuries committed by the Japanese prior to abandoning the camps (Pc. between father and son).

Below letter indicates Eddie and Hazel were living at Burnt Ash Rd. and Mum still in Kidderminster 18<sup>th</sup> May. A letter sent by Mum's brother Ronnie 29<sup>th</sup> May is addressed to Mum c/o E.L. Gosano Burnt Ash Road.



104 Burnt Ash Rd  
Reigate Surrey  
17/5/46

Dear Phyllis,  
I do not think that Hornell can help as he has little to do with the H.K.U. and your best bet is Sloss - I am in no hurry re my specs. so take it back with you when you come over.  
We shall be obliged for some "detol" if obtainable.  
Freddie B. is leaving on the 24<sup>th</sup> for Hong Kong, so if you have any message or articles for HK, be sure to have it ready in time.  
Hazel sends her love  
Eddie

Dear Phyllis,

I do not think Hornell can help as he has little to do with the H.K.U. and your best bet is Sloss – I am in no hurry re my specs. So take it back with you when you come over.

We shall be obliged for some "detol" if obtainable.

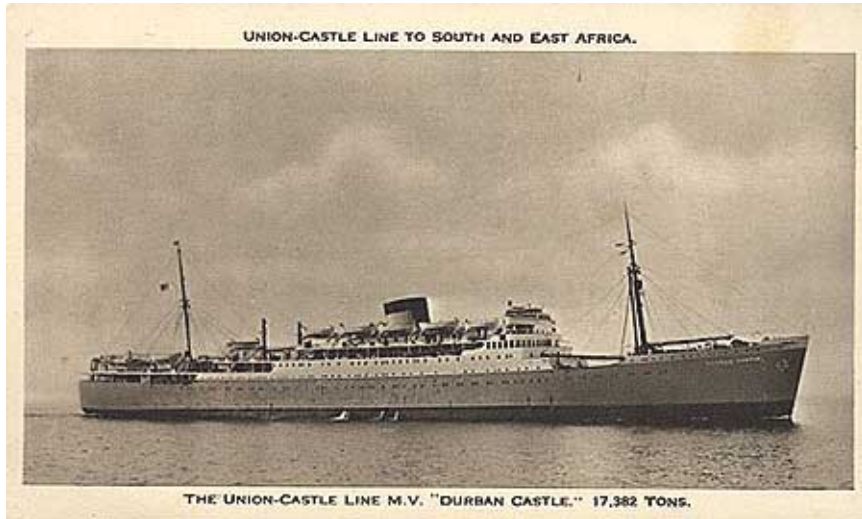
Freddie B. is leaving on the 24<sup>th</sup> for Hong Kong, so if you have any message or articles for HK, be sure to have it ready in time.

Hazel sends her love.

Eddie

### *Dad Arrives Back in England*

Following a final drinking session on the boat, Dad arrives in England May 23<sup>rd</sup> 1946 and is duly processed by 'Brown Jobs' (de-mobbed) and becomes a Civvy, and makes it home to Earlsfield and his parents for a celebration (with cake) on May 27<sup>th</sup>.

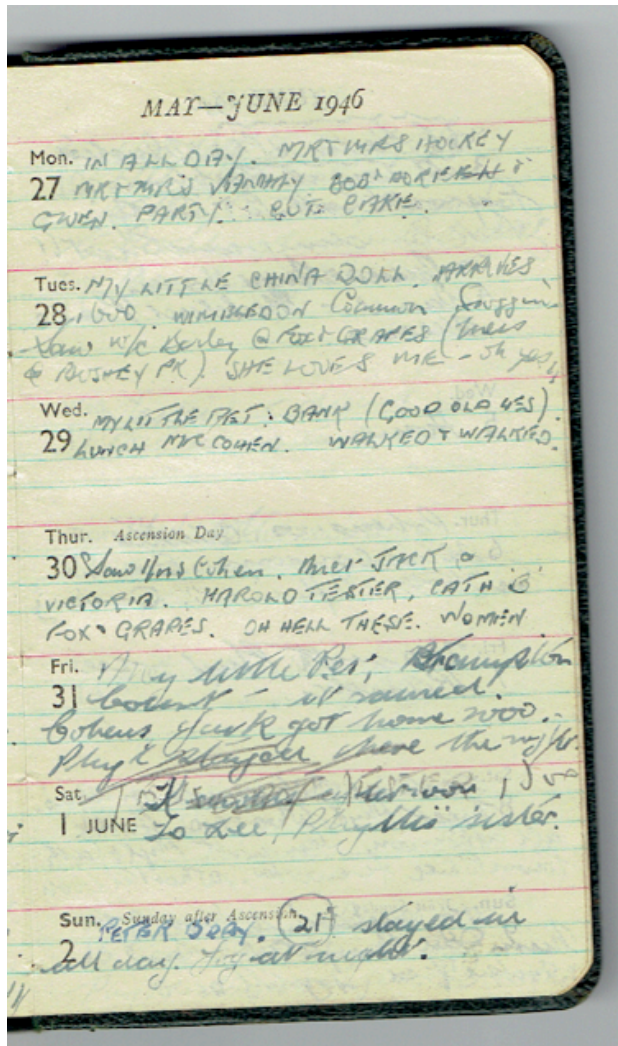


Ship Dad came back to UK on prior to being de-mobbed

The next day, the 28<sup>th</sup>, Mum shows up, and Dad whisks her off to Wimbledon Common for nefarious activities. Another Jack now appears regularly in both Mum and Dad's diaries – this being Jack Cohen, also RAF, and boyhood friend of Dad's.

The end of the war saw the end of British rule in many of its colonies, Britain essentially being broke, and heavily in debt to the USA. Dad told me a story of his arrival on the Durban Castle at Southampton Docks, where 'colonial types' men and women who had spent most of their lives in the far-east – waited in vain for servants to come and carry their baggage. Mum, similarly, had to learn to do her own washing, cleaning and cooking, without amahs to help. This and the damp cold English climate and austerity of post war Britain must have been a major shock. Inevitably she soon catches colds, together with suffering from hangovers from the constant pubbing, as she is subjected to the 'drinking culture' of Dad's family and friends. Mum was never able to tolerate much alcohol, and suffered frequently from migraines (traits as her son, I have inherited).

During his time in the RAF Dad, along with many others, acquired the habit of de-stressing by consuming large amounts of beer. This continued throughout his life, and was obviously a source of tension between Mum and Dad even before their marriage (see diary entries). Later in life he became what might be referred to as a 'functioning alcoholic', even though his doctor ordered him to stop making the 30 gallons of Elderflower wine he brewed and consumed each summer.



*Dad's Diary*

Tuesday May 28<sup>th</sup> 1946

MY LITTLE CHINA DOLL ARRIVES WIMBLEDON  
Common Snogging. Saw w/c (Wing Commander)  
Barley @ Fox and Grapes (mess @ Bushey Pk.)  
SHE LOVES ME - Oh Yes!!

Wednesday May 29<sup>th</sup>

MY LITTLE PET. Bank (Good old Les) Lunch Mr.  
Cohen (Jack). Walked and Walked.

Saturday June 1<sup>st</sup>

To see Phyllis' sister (Hazel)

19  46

## June 1946

The following letter was sent to Dad at Magdalen Rd. postmarked Lee 3<sup>rd</sup> June in an envelope with Canadian Red Cross Society in red top left corner.



*“If and when I marry  
you I shall love you  
with an all  
consuming passion”*

*104 Burnt Ash Road*

*Lee. L. S.E. 12.*

*Sunday. June 2*

*Hello my'ickle Pet – I'm sorry I was rude and unreasonable last night.*

*I went to see one of my very best friends this p.m. A “kindred spirit” of mine the Tony Pandy girl (coal town in the Rhonda Valley S. Wales) whose address I gave you – ‘member? I had been procrastinating about seeing her ‘cos she was expecting to hear from me from the States and I knew that I should have to explain my appearance. Marjorie is 25 and senior to me in school. She’s to be admired in every respect. She wanted to be an architect since she was eight. Anyway I was struggling with my account of my disturbing element when finally she told me mid laughter and tears that a R.A.F. she knew for a day and a half in Rangoon has shelved architecture for her! She was repatriated by air ‘bout three months ago from H.K. and they were held up for 3 days in R’goon. So we both sat speechless. Please write to me Blakeshall Hostel, Kidderminster. I’m going up on the 1:45 tomorrow.*

*If and when I marry you I shall love you with an all consuming passion and I’d love to sleep with you.*

*Goodnight darling,*

*Phyl*

*p.s. Marjorie’s given 70 coupons away.*



The following letter was sent to Dad at Magdalen Rd. postmarked Kidderminster 4<sup>th</sup> June in an envelope same as above.

*Blakeshall Hostel*

*Kidderminster*

*Mon. 3<sup>rd</sup> June*

*Mon Grand Amore –*

*I really should have been asleep hours ago but must say goodnight and tell you about an “Incidental” of mine today. Of course I missed the 1:45 and whilst awaiting the 4:45 I wandered from Paddington to a place called Whitely (Whiteley’s department store Bayswater) in quest of a vital desire – a pair of tweezers with scissor handles – you see darling If I don’t find some soon my eyebrows will go up and there doesn’t seem to be any in England. All this is beside the point but I’ll announce the “Incidental” when he enters. No – I’d better get to the point now ‘cos its very late. – I caught the 4:45 and arrived Kidde at 8:20 missing the last bus but one. I wasn’t going to wait for the last at 10 so decided to walk the 4 mls. to Blakeshall. After struggling ¼ ml. with my great suitcase I heard a car behind (Enter the “incidental”). I asked to be taken as far along his course as possible but he insisted on driving me all the way. I thought it really obliging of him and to my embarrassment I forgot the way on the way – we took several wrong turnings. Why I’m telling you all this is because the conversation was so funny. He is R.A.F. I told him you were too. I said you were Fl. Lt. He said he was Wing Commander. I said you were D.F.C. He said he was D.F.C. D.S.O. and manager of some steel concern. Name is Sherrif of Surrey Sqdn. – Do you know him? It struck me as funny ‘cos I was talking about you and he was telling about himself and our sentences being in that order – it sounded like a comparison. I’m returning to London on Wed. morning. Sorry this scrawl but writing in bed. Gosh! I’d better sleep.*

*Love Phyl.*

Around June 5/6 Mum finally moves from Blakeshall Hostel to London – to ‘Deepdale’ Burnt Ash Road, Lee – the rooming house where Eddie and Hazel are living. Despite the expense of accommodation and war torn state of London – it was where it was all happening – and of course Dad’s home.

*Dad's diary:*

Thursday 6th June 1946

Collected petrol coupons. Over to Lee (*Mum's guest house*) to see Phyl in car.

Friday 7th June

Zoo with Phyl to see Panda.

Saturday 8th June

Listened to Victory Parade on radio. Meet Phyl.  
Home all afternoon. Tea with Phyl and Cath.  
Town to see fireworks.

Monday 10th June

Up late. Over to Lee.  
All afternoon and evening with Phyl

*“Zoo with Phyl to see Panda.”*



Dad takes Mum to visit a Giant Panda at London Zoo. An interesting choice for a date – perhaps he thought the panda might make Mum feel at home.

The following letter would have been received by Mum about this date, organized by Jack Kruse, her admittance to U of M. Why Mum chose not to follow up on this opportunity was probably due to Jack's impending marriage – i.e. lack of romantic interest – and Mum's growing, if sometimes stormy relationship with Dad.

19  46

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI  
COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

June 6, 1946

Miss Phyllis Lang  
"Deepdale"  
104 Burnt Ash Road, Lee  
London, S. E. 12

*Sent Copy to Mrs. Krause*

Dear Miss Lang:

We are pleased to inform you that you may be admitted to the University of Missouri as a special student. We shall then arrange for you to take examinations to determine your admission as a regular student and your classification.

We are enclosing a registration blank which you should complete and return. Please indicate at the top of the blank the date which you plan to enter. For instance, 1946 fall semester.

Housing is extremely difficult here. It would therefore be wise for you to write Mrs. C. Green, Secretary to the Committee on Student Housing, 204 Read Hall, Columbia, Missouri, who will if possible assist you in obtaining living accommodations.

We are enclosing two copies of a statement of your acceptance which may be used in your Visa.

Very truly yours,



S. W. Canada  
Registrar

LV:hc  
Encls.



JUNE 46  
Thurs. 13.  
 Late tidying. Ran to W'loo. Kingston Rowing. Pub. Gins. Lunch. Slept in park. Headache back Kingston p. sick. Walk. 2<sup>nd</sup> dinner.  
Fri. 14  
 Rip peaches & cream. Wireless. Walk Lee park. Rang marg. Wash. supper. Fixed room. all day.  
Sat. 15  
 Amer. exhibi. paint with Alec. Marjorie - lunch with Hooneys. loafed - Foyle's bought books. Yarn.  
Sun. 16  
 Church. P.m. meet John. 15 Kingston. Rowing. Slept in sun headache. Sick. NO. Home with J. Did garden. Brad's pub. stayed night at John's. Monte Carlo Ballet - Alec. at 7. Home in A.M.  
Tues 18 A.M. To colonial welfare. Letters from Mike. Jack.

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June 1946

Late tidying. Ran to W'loo. Kingston Rowing. Pub. Gins. Lunch. Slept in park. Headache back Kingston p. sick. Walk. 2<sup>nd</sup> dinner. W'loo. (Waterloo Station) 10.00

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> June

Ry's? (could Mum mean Fry's?) peaches and cream. Wireless. Walk Lee park. Rang Marg. Wash. Supper. Fixed room all day.

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> June

Amer. Exhibi. Paint with Alec, Marjorie (Tate Gallery). Lunch with Hooneys? Loafed - Foyle's bought books. Yarn.

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> June

Church. p.m. meet John to Kingston. Rowing. Slept in sun headache. Sick. NO. Home with J. did garden (Earlsfield) Brad's pub. Stayed night at John's.

Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June

Monte Carlo Ballet - Alec. (Ballet Russe) at 7. Home in A.M.

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June

A.M. to colonial welfare. Letters from Mike, Jack. Evening show with John. Jack Cohen. etc. pub Embankment.

19  46

207. Magdalen Rd.,  
London S.W. 18  
Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>. June 46.

*Hand delivered to*

*Miss. P.K. Lang*

*16 Park Ave.*

*N.W.2*

*Hello Beautiful,*

*Didn't sleep a wink last night, it's really too bad you know. Every time I close my eyes I see a cute little flat nose, two sad, but nevertheless wistfull eyes, and two rows of shining teeth. (The bottom row being crooked).*

*Well Darling, as you have, no doubt, gathered by this time, there is a reason for this effort. It is briefly this:- a letter arrived from the skipper (Jack Forde to you) (Jack Forde was the pilot on Dad's PFF crew) this morning, stating that he was unable to come down as arranged, but insisted that I went up to his place at Blackpool this weekend. He didn't give any reason for the visit, but it all sounded very urgent, so I replied immediately saying that I would go along on Friday.*

*By so doing of course, I have deliberately broken the previous arrangements with Jack (Cohen?). All very selfish of me I know Sweetheart, but the old crew always have come first, and always will. I can 'phone Jack easily enough, and explain to him, but of course I am very upset for your sake. The only hope I have is that you will forgive me for a very selfish act. However, I shall only be up there for a couple of days, and will contact you immediately on return. Somehow Pet I feel an awful heel about the whole business, maybe it's because I know you'll have your own interpretation for the whole affair! You lovely creature, you.*

*Darling, would it be asking too much for you to write me, saying that I'm forgiven, before I leave. If you would, I know I should go feeling a much happier individual.*

*I love you with all my heart, my little Pet,     John*

*I have just gone through the letter with a dictionary and haven't found too many mistakes.*



Jack Forde, Betty and Don Carruthers (wireless operator)

19  46

evening. Show with John.  
Jack Cohen. etc. Pub.  
Embankment.  
Wed 19 posted letters to  
Jack. Fixed drawers  
Evening park with Valerie.  
Thurs 20 letter from John.  
Cancel for Blackpool.  
replied. Shop for Shampoo  
Stamps. Perox. Rang Robbi.  
Washing failure. Coal  
Shoveling. Ironed. Cinema.  
Fri 21 tel. Robbi. Marg. Ro Cath.  
room. Washing <sup>Stocks</sup> Beth.  
Evening Aust House. Jack to Cath.  
~~Pm. Minist. Of Educa.~~  
HK Bank. Write Gran  
Mike. Stockings.  
Buy- Black polish. 2 Brushes  
dubbing. Lock for Trunk  
// to Eva's after supper.  
For Gibs address. Post  
letters.

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June 1946

Posted letters to Jack  
(Kruse). Fixed drawers.  
Evening, Park with Valerie.  
(Valerie lived at 16 Park Ave.  
N.W.2)

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June

Letter from John. Cancel for  
Blackpool. Replied. Shop for  
shampoo. Stamps. perox.  
Rang Robbi. Washing failure.  
Coal shoveling. Ironed.  
Cinema.

Fri 21<sup>st</sup> June

Tel. Robbi Marg. Do. Cath.  
Room, Washing stocks  
(stockings) Bath. Evening  
Aust. House (Australia  
House) frock to Cath.  
~~Pm. Minist. Of Educa- HK~~  
~~Bank-~~ Write Gran. Mike.  
Stockings.  
Buy- Black polish, 2 brushes,  
dubbing. (does Mum mean  
dubbin - used to waterproof  
leather). Lock for Trunk // to  
Eva's after supper. For  
(forward?) Gibs address.  
Post letters.

Dear John,

I'm furious now but I suppose it'll be too late to catch you by the time I cool down. Yes you may go with my blessings but I hope its "NO BEER" at Blackpool. I know why you love me and all that. Its only because I'm a half-pint and very bitter at the moment. Greetings to the bigger and better pints - Phyl.

As a final dig - you remember you promised to meet Marjorie on Saturday.

Sat. 22nd ~~Gran Joyce Mike.~~  
 Letters sewing. Ring Marg.  
 Shop shoe things.  
~~pm Nat. Art Gall. //~~  
 Finish up coral woolie assisted  
 by Mr. Garton.  
 In dinner. Read Pride P. Wore.  
 Travis. Marjorie's. Jaw eat. post.  
 lunch. to London Bridge. Gran.  
 H.K. Bank. collect. £500. up  
 late.  
 \* To Vict. St. for coupons. Inq. flat  
 for Marg. Write Sir. G. Cator.  
 Whitehall. Dental treat.  
 Sun. 23rd.  
 am Write Mike. Joyce. Rob.  
 Plan of clothes. p.m. Beige  
 cardigan. //  
 Bath. Church. Read "Pride &  
 P. Started blue sweater.  
 Listened into Rachmaninoff.  
 No. 2 concerto Piano & Orchestra  
 in C minor. Elgar's variations  
 upon an original theme.

Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> June  
 1946

Letters sewing Gran  
 Joyce Mike. Ring Marg.  
 Shop shoe things  
 Pm Nat. Art Gall.//  
 Finish up coral woolie  
 assisted by Mr. Garton  
 In dinner. Read Pride  
 and Prejudice  
 Travis? Marjorie's. Jaw  
 (gossip) eat. Gran wrote  
 and post.  
 Lunch to London Bridge.  
 H. K. Bank. Collect  
 £500. (£10,000 today)  
 Up late./  
 \*To Vict. St. (Victoria  
 Station) for coupons  
 Inq. flat for Marg. Write  
 Sir. G. Cator Whitehall.  
 Dental Treat.  
 (treatment?)

Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> June

A.M. Write Mike. Joyce  
 Rob. Plan? of clothes  
 p.m. Beige cardigan.//  
 Bath. Church. Read  
 "Pride and P. Started  
 blue sweater. Listened  
 into Rachmaninoff No. 2  
 concerto Piano and  
 Orchestra in C minor.  
 Elgar's variations upon  
 an original theme.

Clothing coupons – clothing was rationed 'till 1949 and was more severely rationed after the end of the war.

Mon 24<sup>th</sup> June.  
 Mrs. Duth. dishes. Breakf. Room.  
 Dress. Minist. of Edu. Victoria  
 St. pm. Shop.  
 Return. to minist of E.  
 Filled form. Board of Trade  
 for coupons. Did not wait  
 to queue. p.m. to Lewisham  
 bought each Sups. knit  
 needles. shoe things.  
 Back read P & P. Knit.  
 Listened in Toscanini.  
 Symph 1. in C. & Choral 9.  
Tues. 25<sup>th</sup> June.  
 Letters to Ron. Semmy. Rob.  
 p.m. swim with Monica.  
 Knit. Wash hair.  
Wed. 26<sup>th</sup>.  
 Swim before breaker.  
 To Catford. ast. Board.  
 shop. shoe stuff knit needles.  
 cleaned shoes.  
 To V.D.M.A. with him.  
 Saw Gibs. Went home.  
 Home. Chat with Mrs. Duth.

Monday 24th June 1946

Mrs. Duth (Mum's landlady at 'Deepdale'). dishes. Breakf. Room. Dress. Minist. of E. Victoria St. pm. shop. Room. To minist. of E. Filled form. Board of Trade for coupons. Did not wait to queue. p.m. to Lewisham. Bought \*uch Sups. Knit needles. Shoe things. Back read P and P (*Pride and Prejudice*) Knit. Listened in Toscanini Symph 1 in C and choral 9.

Tuesday 25th June

Letters to Ron, Semmy, Rob. p.m. swim with Monica. (*Jimmy's daughter?*) Knit. Wash hair.

Wednesday 26th June

Swim before breaker. To Catford. ast. Board. Shop. Shoe stuff knit needles. Cleaned shoes. To V.D.M.A. with him. Saw Gibs. Went home. Chat with Mrs. Duth (landlady)

Thurs 27<sup>th</sup>  
 Did Room, all shoes. Wash.  
 Iron. Finished Pride & Pred.  
 Put Val to bed. U. Catalogue  
 from Jack.

Fri 28<sup>th</sup>  
 False alarm letters. U. of Mis.  
 Ministry of Educa. Mended  
 bathing suits. Walk with  
 Alec.

Sat 29<sup>th</sup>  
 Letters Minist. of Educa.  
 Jimmy Richards other jobs.  
 Met Marge. Malaya house.  
 Rang Cohens. news John back.

\* Vict. St. Clothing coupons.  
 Lunch Selfridges serve y'self.  
 Back to Lee. Rang John.  
 Came with Jck at 4. Drove back  
 Earlsf. dropped Marge. John went  
 to J Bernards brought back to tea.  
 Pub. Jack met forer parents.  
 John tick me off. Bout letters  
 going back to his to stay in.

Thursday 27th June 1946

Did room. All shoes. Wash.  
 Iron. Finished Pride and  
 Pred. Put Val to bed.  
 University catalogue from  
 Jack. (Correspondence  
 from Jack - letter  
 dated/sent 12 June 1946,  
 indicates Mum was still  
 looking at attending  
 University in the States,  
 and Jack enquires  
 whether she was able to  
 arrange 'steamer tickets')

Friday 28th June

False alarm letters U. of  
 Mis. Ministry of Education  
 Mended bathing suits.  
 Walk with Alec.

Saturday 29th June

Letters Minist. Of Educa.  
 Jimmy Richards other jobs.  
 Met Marge. Malaya house  
 Rang Cohens. News John  
 back.  
 \*Vict. St. clothing coupons  
 Lunch Selfridges serve  
 y'self.  
 Back to Lee. Rang John.  
 Came with Jck at 4. Drove  
 back Earlsfield, dropped  
 Marge? John went to J  
 Bernards brought back to  
 tea. Pub. Jack met  
 parents John tick me off  
 bout letters going back to  
 his to staying in.

19  46



Malaya House Piccadilly London

Sunday 30th June 1946

Pubbing. Bernard pm. fight on floor. Tea. Walk. Back to Lee.

Write: Richardson

Gibs.

Ministry of Educa.

Go: Col. Office. North. Queensgate. Victoria St. Minist. of Educa.



Telegram sent to Mum from Uncle Osman (Aunt Mary's husband) 'ordering' her to go to America

July 1946

Sun. 30th.  
 pubbing. Bernard. pm. fight  
 on floor. Tee. Walk. Back  
 to Lee.  
 Write. Richardson.  
 Gibb.  
 Ministry of Educa.  
 Co. Col office. North. Queensgate  
 Victoria St. Ministry of Educa.  
Mon. 1st July.  
 Wrote letters. Forgot post  
 to Earlsf. V. hot. Jack came.  
 Speedway. Back to John's.  
 chat with parents.  
Tues 2nd.  
 Hid purse from J. Back to  
 Lee. lunch. Spring Post lets.  
 Fever in p.m. Cambridge  
 Theatre. Ballet. "Chota".  
 ulev. disappointing.  
 Still t. \*Jon.



Cambridge Theatre Seven Dials  
 London

Mon. 1<sup>st</sup> July 1946

Wrote letters. Forgot post. To  
 Earlsfield V. hot. Jack (Jack  
 Cohen? boyhood friend of  
 Dad's) came. Speedway  
 (motorcycle racing). Back to  
 John's. Chat him and parents.

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July

Hid purse from J. Back to Lee.  
 (Mum at this time was living  
 at 104 Burnt Ash Road, Lee,  
 London S.E.12) Lunch.  
 Spring Post lets (post letters).  
 Fever in p.m. Cambridge  
 theatre. Ballet chota-ulev  
 disappointing.  
 Still t. \*Jon. (ticked at John)



The next 2 pages, dates unknown but probably July 1946

Do room. wash knicks.  
 Asst. B.  
 Shop the present.  
 Ring Marge.  
 Fix bathing.

Sat.  
 Walk Liz Dais saw prefabs.  
 To mess. Listened Vic Oliver.  
 Tea. Jane Eyre Dais.  
 Over to Armitage. To Food  
 Office alone for Emergency.  
 Decided to stay week.  
 Town with Aunt Liz. Fri.  
 Wrote Gibs. Duthie. Bob.  
 John made box. p.m. To  
 visit Aunt Nellie. Unc.  
 Frank. Children. Willi  
 pianist.

Thurs.  
 Back. bath. Tea.  
 Slept train to Rugby. Bus  
 to Cov. Dash to catch train.  
 Beery farewell. AM. Bus  
 to place. Rain. To Jacks.

Wed.  
 Beery. Bath. Tired J. read  
 I slept. To J's for pm.

Do room. Wash knicks.  
 Asst. B.  
 Shop Jh's. present (*Dad's birthday  
 July 4th*)  
 Ring Marge  
 Fix bathing

Wednesday 3rd July 1946

Beery. Bath. Tired J. read I slept.  
 To J's for pm session. Saw  
 Caravan Jak John.

Thursday 4th July Dad's Birthday

Back. Bath. Tea. Slept train to  
 Rugby. Bus to Cov. (*Coventry*).  
 Beery farewell. AM. Bus to place.  
 Rain. To Jacks. (*Jack Forde?*)

Friday 5th July

Town with Aunt Liz (*The three  
 Aunts in Coventry [Liz, Mossie and  
 Daisy] – Dad spent a lot of time  
 with them growing up and would  
 have been eager for Mum to meet  
 them*) Wrote Gibs. Duthie. Bob.  
 John made box p.m. to visit Aunt  
 Nellie, Unc. Frank and children.  
 Willi pianist.



Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July

Walk Liz, Dais – saw prefabs (*a large part of Coventry was flattened during the war*). To Moss Listened  
 Vic Olivier (*British actor and radio comedian and the first ever castaway on Desert Island Discs in  
 1942*) Tea "Jane Eyre" Dais. Daisy (*this could have been the 1943 Hollywood movie with Orson Welles  
 and Joan Fontaine*) over to Armitage. To food office alone for Emergency (*presumably to get ration  
 coupons for her stay in Coventry*) Decided to stay week.

Aunt Mossie and her husband Jim Turton



Although Mum and Dad spent much time together in the following months, there were obviously falling outs, possibly related to money (*'we never had any money'* Pc. between me and Dad), and Dad's occasional binge drinking, with Mum taking second place to Dad's RAF mates. They made trips to Blackpool to see the sights and visit with Dad's old crew 'captain' pilot Jack Forde, and to stay in Coventry with Dad's three aunts; Liz, Mossy and Daisy.

When apart, the contrast in activities is pronounced. Mum was listening to Rachmaninoff (she took all the family classical records when she left HK) and reading *Pride and Prejudice*, then going to the pub with Dad and getting involved in fights (see June 29<sup>th</sup>). Whatever the difficulties, at some point Mum gave up the idea of continuing with university in the States and they were finally married August 1947. I don't know the truth of the story, but apparently there was no family at the wedding, just Mum's pupils. So she must have landed a teaching position!

*"Very curious how you can mate with someone quite alien and yet they become so very much a part of you"*

Written by Dad at the end of a letter to Mum April 1963

Throughout the summer of 1946 Mum receives numerous letters from her brother Kenneth wondering why she has chosen not to proceed to the USA to continue her education, even though, in large part due to the efforts of Jack Kruse, she has an assured place at University of Missouri. Her mother and grandmother also join in the remonstrations that she do something with her life, and when rumors reach the Lang family via Hazel that Mum intends to marry John Rollins – opposition is thinly veiled. In a letter dated 16th July 1946 brother Kenneth even plays the race card in his attempts to get Mum to continue to the States.

*"As you know very well even if Britishers do not question your claim to be British they are outwardly polite but they have an indelible impression that you are somehow essentially different, but if you are American origination is of no consequence, and you are left alone."*



Prefabs – Britain was very short of housing after the war, these 'prefabricated' houses were built of sheet asbestos and only supposed to last 30 years. When I was a student in London in 1978 I lived in a prefab with my Canadian fiancée.

The following is one of at least two letters Mum received about this time from K. Semmelmann (Sem) in Norway, who is referred to in her diaries, May 15 1942. He spent time at ‘the Mikado’s holiday resort at Sham Shui Po’ having been, and still being apparently, a member of the HKVDC. He had an unrequited love for Mum, she being with Cedric at the time, and he was probably a fellow student at HKU. His wonderful turn of phrase makes this a corker of a letter, and I couldn’t resist including it in its entirety. The other letter from him in Mum’s collection is similarly erudite and also displays elegant penmanship. Leirshund is a small village in Norway.

*Phyl, old gal!*

“Gunheim” Leirshund. 3/7/46

*You just mowed me down! Your letter, I mean. I was in Oslo today and when I got back home I found the usual pile of fan-mail awaiting me. Sprawling in a chair I lit a fag and idly shuffled the stack of letters, identifying the hand-writing of various maidens I have wronged since leaving H.K. And then – an unfamiliar scrawl – Canadian Red + envelope, English stamp, London post-mark – I turned it over – P.K. Lang – I damned near swallowed my fag! Thanks a lot, Phyl. I also have to thank you for a card you sent me when I was a guest at the Mikado’s holiday resort at Shum Shui Po. I’ve still got it.*

*I have made one or two feeble attempts to find out where you was. I wrote and asked Renate Gehring (who, with her sister, Susie, is also in England) but have had no reply yet. I met McKie, Broadbridge and Nick Jaffa in a bar in London and they said you were still in H.K. It’s astonishing the people one can meet in London. That squirt of a brother of mine, Pete, is there at the moment. I’ll give you his address at the end of this letter and if you have time you must contact him. As a matter of fact I had a feverishly urgent cable from him this morning asking me for the loan of fifty quid, the rat! So if you meet him make sure you cost him plenty because I’ll never get the fifty quid back anyway. I’ll give him your address.*

*How are you making out over there, kid – lonely? London is a pretty deadly place if your alone. Actually, I quite liked it, but then I only spent a couple of weeks there. It’s astonishing the way we’ve all been scattered – like fragments of an atomic bomb, what? I’ll certainly remember you to mutual friends but I can’t include Sut as I don’t know where he is. Last time I saw him was in Sydney, Australia, but he went to England after that and is probably back in H.K. by now. I also saw Bill Gegg “down under” and as far as I know he’s still there, I believe he intends to continue his studies at the varsity in Sydney – the reason for this vagueness is that his letters are just incoherent babblings of the beauty, the charm, intelligence and wit of an Australian girl with whom he is hopelessly, desperately in love. Actually she’s a very nice girl. Terry Lockhart was also there and is now a happily married man of three months standing; his wife is a H.K. girl named Peggy Lawson. Did you know Betty Longbottom? You may have done as she was a D.G.S. girl. She’s up in Lancashire, married and well on the way to proving that God is not the only creator of the human form (Betty’s name appears on the Stanley Camp roster).*

*As for Gigolo George (Paradiso) Davidson , he got away from Manila before the war and, after a spell at college in Frisco became (don't laugh now) a gob (slang for US navy personnel) in the U.S. Navy! His mother also reached the States safely but I don't know where they are now. I'll let you know if I contact him. Dear old George, he used to think the world of you – so did I, for that matter. You know, Phyl, once, when we were having dinner together at the Peninsula hotel you told me that when I wished, I could be “nauseatingly sweet”! Those words made a terrific impression on me and made me realize what an affected, dissipated, young waster I was. I think I've changed a bit since then. Contact with life in the raw has given me a clearer insight and a better sense of values and I'm sure you wouldn't find me “nauseatingly sweet” now. Of course, we're both five years older – don't you feel the sands of time trickling down on you? Soon we'll be covered with six feet of it – Oh morbid mind!*

*I'm tottering along O.K., leading a very quiet life in a silent world, buried in the wilds with the forest and the fields, the sun and the sky for companions. This is my own, my native land and, Phyl, it's beautiful! You have always felt, you say, that the Scandinavian countries are the most civilized. I have never yet met anyone who could give me a definition of the word “civilization” so I'm not quite sure what of you mean. To me (a cynical old stick-in-the-mud) civilization seems to be the scientific destruction of everything that is beautiful in this world, a denial of Nature. So of all “civilized” countries, I should say that this is the least civilized as here Nature is still the ruling force.*

*What's wrong with Robbie and where is he? I haven't heard from him since I was in Blighty. Incidentally, what do you think of England? A pretty miserable dump, eh? Down by St. Paul's you'll see the front of a once imposing building; above the entrance (which now leads on to a pile of rubble) it says “The Standard Life Assurance Co.” No doubt my sense of humour is a bit twisted – chronic as you would say at the H.K.U. – but it struck me as being funny. There should be a moral attached to it.*

*Are you bored by this long spiel of mine? Maybe I'd better pack up before I put you to sleep. Here's Pete's address – Lt. P. Semmelmann Norwegian Air Mission, 26 Belgrave Square. S.W.1*

*Did you know that he's a real, live air force officer? By the way, I'm still a real, live signalman in the H.K.V.D.C. and won't be demobbed till September. I'm only on “leave”. My mother is well and sends you her very best wishes – that's not a formality, she really does! Eh bien, I march!*

*Yours, Kaie I've gone native and dropped my English nom-de-plume. K*



Reverse reads Phyll's Norwegian boyfriend (probably Kaie)

session. Saw caravan Jack  
John.  
Blackpool. Red brick  
Grey skies wind sat on  
wall. Watched kids play.  
Tues.  
A.m. on Beach. To Jacks.  
p.m. Tony came Back to  
Jacks. pp in sessions.  
Mon. to Blackpool. Wandered.  
Dinner. To Jacks. Imperial.  
Sun. Church alone J met  
me. To Stratford on Avon.  
Fri. Painted walls. To  
Uncle Joe's. They engaged us.  
Thurs. To the fields. Swim  
at Kenilworth. Tea at War-  
wick. Mill Street etc.  
Tues. Wed. Swim at Kenpas  
to town etc.

Tuesday/Wednesday 9/10th July 1946

Swim at Kenpas (swimming pool in Styvechale, Coventry) to town etc.

Thursday 11th July

To the fields (Echo Fields). Swim at Kenilworth. Tea at Warwick. Mill Street (ultimate 'Tudor' street)

Friday 12th July

Painted walls. To Uncle Joe's They engaged us.

Sunday 14th July

Church alone. J met me. To Stratford on Avon.

Monday 15th July

To Blackpool. Wandered. Dinner. To Jacks (Jack Forde, Dad's crew captain lived in Blackpool) Imperial (The Imperial hotel, Blackpool)

Tuesday 16th July

am. on Beach. To Jacks. p.m. Tony came. Back to Jacks. pp m? sessions. Blackpool. Red brick grey skies wind sat on wall watched kids play.

19  46



Blackpool 1946, Dad took me when I was 11 on a father/son trip to see the Blackpool Illuminations.

Mum and Dad Stoneleigh, Coventry



The view of Kenilworth Castle from across what as children we called the 'Echo Fields' was one of Dad's favourite spots



19  46

Sun.  
Church. Met cousin David.  
To Stoney. Stuart Aunts &  
all. Walk back. John  
broke in.

—

Tues. 31st July.

Sad & weary from job  
hunting. Waited hr. for  
Sloss in vain & draught.  
Brown & Hollingworth -  
"We don't train designers  
heah."  
Am not worried tho'.

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> July 1946

Church. Met cousin David.  
To Stoney (*Stonleigh*)  
Stuart, Aunts and all. Walk  
back. John broke in.

Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> July  
(*should be Wed.*)

Sad and weary from job  
hunting. Waited hr. for Sloss  
in vain and draught. Brown  
and Hollingworth - "We  
don't train designers heah"  
Am not worried tho'

**August 1946**

*Wed. 5 August 1946 (should be 7<sup>th</sup>)*

*Dear me! I mean Dear John – I mean Dearest John – anyway – not having worked for 23 years 11 months and 6 days I worked for 8 hrs. solidly today and am now feeling stupidly exhausted so excuse if this is incomprehensible . I'm happy tho' I took on the babies business from 8 this morning till 5:15. There are 2 of us in charge of 'bout 20. We have five assistants but we fed them, bathed them and all. Most of them are bastards, abandoned. They're beautiful children. The hours are rather long. 3 shifts 8 am – 5. 1 – 9:15 pm then all night duty which is only 5 nights a week. I can have a day off every week and am trying to make it every Sun. So I may be able to knock off from an early shift 5 pm Sat. then go on a late shift from 1 pm Mon. and get a whole weekend off when I go on night duty. I don't know if they'd oblige but they do need nurses there so they may let me if I insist. My only fear is that I may not be able to see you often enough. If I can have it my way – I don't mind really working it all week. Otherwise – I'll chuck it.*

*Left off writing for supper and wash and am feeling more relaxed. It was such a blessing to see your letter when I came in this evening darling. – Thank you so much. I wish you could be here – even for an hour – it would make such a difference to the whole day – I want to tell you about the fat babies and the dopey red-head I lunched with and how strange it was to be called nurse Lang all day. Went to see the “old Man” of my Alma Mater yesterday (Sloss?) – he gave me such a very flattering credential – I must show it to you – you'll roar over it. One of the bastards (I love the sound of that word – it seems to kick “convention” in the pants) is called Elizabeth Caruthers – It made me smile – “Oh no! not her Don”. (Dad had an R.A.F. colleague named Don Carruthers). I had quite a “do” with Miss Caruthers. The fun of it is that you can do whatever you like to the babies – they scream themselves black in the face and no one interrupts you. Tell me all about apologies at Kingston. Funny part about it is that I remember twice telling Joyce earlier in the evening that I was apprehensive 'bout taking you dancing – that anything could happen!*

*Think its best if you wait for me at home on Sat and I'll appear when I can. If its too late I'll come Sun. morning. Be a good boy and write back Beloved. – Its so “face lifting” to hear from you . I miss you – ask Bing Crosby all about it – As never before my Love*

*Phyl*

*“not having worked for 23 years 11 months and 6 days I worked for 8 hrs. solidly today and am now feeling stupidly exhausted”*

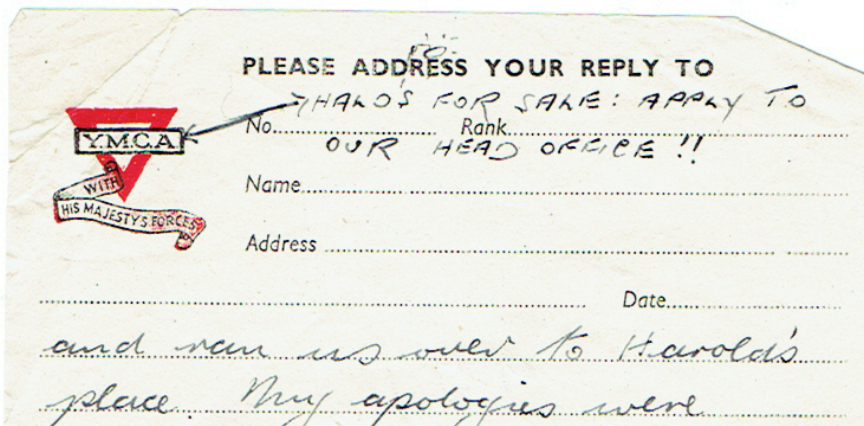


19  46



Don Carruthers, the radio operator on Dad's Bomber Command Crew Captioned Dum Dum (Calcutta) 10/45; so Don must have been with Dad in the Far East

Sent August 5<sup>th</sup> on YMCA/His Majesty's Forces note paper



*My Darling,*

*The strain of working for a living seemed somehow, less today. Can it be that I'm slipping back into the rut so easily? The superintendent had a long natter with me this morning, and all seems well between Messrs. Midland Bank Ltd., and J.H. Rollins Esq. If possible I shall remain under training for a month, as it will prove beneficial later (quite apart from the fact that the lazy existence appeals to me).*

*Jack Cohen turned up last night as arranged ('come on, come on, lets go home') and ran us over to Harold's place. My apologies were accepted, not without due demonstration; and the combs returned! "All the perfumes of Tel Aviv, will not sweeten this my little comb!" who said corny?*

*Miss you more than ever today. Sweetheart – only two more days then I can put my arms around you, bury my head and hide from the horrors of 'business London'. Almost forgot we can both bury our dreads – or can we? Bye My Darling Love John. 8/8/46*

*Hiyah Nurse,*

*Congratulations, Darling, upon joining the working classes – bloody awful, aint it? Try as I may, my minds eye refuses to conjure up pictures of you, surrounded by screaming, kicking hordes of illegitimate children. Not bastards, please sweetheart, it isn't nice! The hours seem quite fantastic to me – may be its because I only work (or make a pretense at it) for such a short while.*

*Really Phyl, us being parted for so long is pretty bloody grim. Still you know I'll be waiting for you on Saturday Darling: perhaps you can give me some idea of the time you're likely to arrive because dear Mama will be away, and Pop might want me to do some shopping or something for him.*

*Jack Forde came over last night, all binds and whines. No beer at Blackpool, and work seems to be getting him down. Today I had a very charming female (legs right up to her bottom) teaching me the intricacies of the new ledger keeping machines. Finally I got interested, but not in the machines – however she hadn't a nose like yours, so I wasn't impressed – much.*

*Jack Forde is coming over again tonight , so I guess we'll both get morbid and drink ourselves to death.*

*It just isn't fair – in fact its very wrong. That's civilization for you, work fourteen hours a day, and sleep the other ten.*

*So long for now Dearest and don't look so po-faced.*

*See you peachy*

*Fondest Love and Kisses*

*John*

*“Hiyah Nurse, Congratulations, Darling, upon joining the working classes – bloody awful, aint it?”*



Letter from Mum to Dad, dated 9<sup>th</sup> August 1946 postmarked Lee (Burnt Ash Road) addressed to J.H. Rollins Esq. 207 Magdelin Rd. Earlsfield, London S.W. 18. The envelope has Canadian Red Cross Society on it as does the writing paper.

*Dinner (lunch) hr. Thurs.*

*It was so thoughtful of you to write again. Coincidentally they came at a time when this and that and all – I received it at 7:30 just before I left. I am now replying from some eating place. I'm off at 5 on Sat. and will come over directly – I really like work mainly 'cos the kiddies have no one but ourselves. I'm very brownd off by the slackness of the whole place tho'. Everyone just mucks along – the organization is dreadful. The babies are attended to with the least possible effort and not cared for at all. Mrs. Duth (landlady at Mum's boarding house "Deepdale" at Lee) has three new boarders – bachelors. One seems a very decent sort, quiet but says something when he speaks. Other 2 are rather painfully selfconscious. They sat across from me at supper last night and being tired I was quite irritated by their awkwardness and effort at avoiding etc. etc. I do hope you're able to find sufficient interest in the training – is there much to read up on, memorize. Nothing like nice natters – superintentions with superintendants – keep it up honey-  
Must go back now - Gosh this lesson was a long time coming. But I enjoy the sight of myself.*

*All my love Darling*

*Phyl*

*"Gosh this lesson was a long time coming. But I enjoy the sight of myself."*

*"I am also fortunate to be a Eurasian. If they have their faults they are minor faults compared to those of an Englishmen a Chinese or any other pure breeds."*

See letter from Kenneth below

**September 1946**

9 Kings Terrace

Kowloon

H.K.

11<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1946

*My Dear Sister Phyllis*

*I cannot help but to feel deeply disappointed at the way you abandoned the U.S.A. trip. I always had good hopes that you may change your mind after reading my letters, which you failed to answer. Hazel broke the bad news to me. Please note that I am not blaming you as you may have good reasons, but I am complete in the dark because my letters are unanswered. Whatever the reasons may be it must be very important for you to reject a project that means so very much to you, your family and myself, especially. I am completely at a loss regarding your intentions, you say that you are taking a teaching course. Hazel says you will be married next fall, while others think you are just having a good time in the U.K. Whatever it is you cannot be doing the three things simultaneously, however none of these reasons seems appropriate enough for your not going to the U.S.*

*Here in H.K. we are carrying on fine. I do not intend to repeat the details I have furnished in my letters to Hazel. I am writing plainly and informally to you as I do not believe in being affected to my own sisters.*

*I am given to understand that you are frequently with John Rolland, I regret I did not try to know more of him in H.K. he has never written to me, consequently the family knows very little about him. I don't know why this should be.*

*For myself I am carrying on favourably planning my future which means hard work and experience. Regarding my character I have turned very grey and very much emotional, nothing effects either my temper or over enthusiasm. My plans necessitate my staying in the H.K. for ever, unless a pleasure or business trip inter \*\*\*. I belong here and am strongly con\*\*\*\* to make the best of it. I am also fortunate to be a Eurasian. If they have their faults they are minor faults compared to those of an Englishmen a Chinese or any other pure breeds. What I have said does not make sense in a few lines so forget it.*

*I am very sorry you did not leave classical records behind as we have excellent facilities for playing them, we have a lovely Murphy Radio at home and we have it on all the time. The younger ones all go for swing and boogey woogies.....letter continues for another page*

*Yours' forever*

*Kenny*

Kenneth would have been 21yrs in 1946.

19  46

The following letter is believed to be dated 26 September 1946 from Katherine Patterson Lang addressed to:

*Miss Phyllis K Lang  
17 Kidderpore Gardens  
Hampstead N.W.3  
London*

*My dear Phyllis,*

*So far I have only received one letter from you while I had about five from Hazel. In a way Hazel is more settled down than you are and so I am more anxious to get news from you. You know that I am very worried about you and letters from you is one of my joys.*

*I also hope you always remember the words I always tell you back at home and if you will do then I shall worry much less than I do now.*

*I heard that your going to be married soon Phyll, and you know that I cannot stop you and I'd only hope that you'd think it over clearly as your future life and happiness depends on it. I also want you to be sure that he will have a home in England to bring you back to.*

*Well, after you receive this I hope you'll write me often Phyll. I'm feeling well and therefore there's not much to tell you, but news from you means to me more than anything else.*

*With much love*

*Yours*

*Granny*

*P.S. please send my regards to all and my best love to Hazel and Eddie and thank them for their letters.*

Granny Patterson Lang would have been 72 in 1946

*“I heard that your going to be married soon Phyll, and you know that I cannot stop you and I'd only hope that you'd think it over clearly as your future life and happiness depends on it.”*

Sage advice from Mum's Grandmother

## October 1946

October 14<sup>th</sup> 1946:

Letter from Mum's brother Kenneth who is living at 9 King's Terrace, Kowloon with all the Lang boys and their mother Susie (Hazel is in Edinburgh/London with husband Eddie Gossano who is taking medical exams). Mum is living at 104 Burnt Ash Road, Lee SE 12 London.

*My dear Phillis,*

*.....I am most disillusioned at your decision regarding the U.S. trip as I have not received any appropriate explanation from you as yet.*

*.....The family I am happy to say is at the peak of its fine spirits. Every one is at last finding true happiness and comradeship. We are now an organization to be proud of and I will never swap our situation for any other in this world. It is indeed a pity that you are now away from us as I am sure you will be very happy with us. We miss one another constantly and ill feeling is simply non-existent. I very often take mother out to social and business functions and she is having the time of her life and at the same time being of great help to me....*

*I hope you can be of influence in giving Hazel's baby a name. You know we are all very happy it is a girl in this family of boys.....you must write and tell me immediately all about her as we may not get news from Hazel for quite some time to come. Granny is of course tickled pink as to be a great, great grand mother is very rare....*

*I think it is only fair that you should write us a letter to tell us about John even if you do not intend to marry him as we know very little about him. I want to know whether it is possible that the both of you may come down to Hong Kong even if the people here are a little warped.*

*Archie and Sunny (Robin) are still continuing at the D.B.S. and there is no immediate hurry to worry over them yet....Archie bought himself a new bicycle and is travelling to school on it everyday. He offered to take Sonny on the back but I definitely put my foot down as I so seldom do...*

*I have always wondered how you are fixed financially. As things are so stiffly rationed in the U.K. you must find it necessary to patronize the black market now and again. Do you go out very often if so where to. I doubt that there are places for general amusements in London other than art galleries, museums and a few picture palaces. Even if there are beaches the days are always too cold to swim (you betcha!)....*

KENNY

19  46

The same day, the following is a letter from Dad to Mum:

207 Magdalen Rd.

SW 18

Monday 14/10/46

*Phyl Darling,*

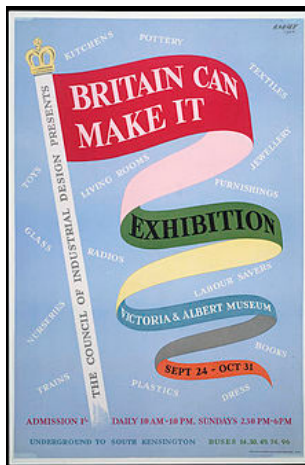
*Have only just left the Docs; who, after witnessing much chest tapping, deep breathing, eye crossing and urinating in small glass bottles, has pronounced me fit to fly as a civilian. Oh yai, oh yai! Which being translated into imperialistic, basic English means, hoo-bloody-ray.*

*I had intended this reach you early in the morning , or at least before you turned steps to Mecca, but as the Doc took so long to service me it will not reach you before evening time: si triste, si triste! ....*

*After spending my entire lunch hour in a queue (from the french queue, meaning tail) and a further fifty minutes this evening, I have, at great expense, obtained two seats for the "Ice Revue" at the \*\*\*, on Wednesday at 6:30pm. Suggest you call at Leicester Square for me, around 5 pm.*

*Fondest Love My Sweetheart*

*John*



Held at the V&A Sept. – Nov. 1946

*Sorry I didn't see you Darling. I came over because I just couldn't have another 24 hrs. without you. Suggest you call at the bank about 0145 pm tomorrow. Personally I'd like to have a look at the Britain can make it exhibition. Ring me about 9 in the morning anyway.*

*Fondest Love Sweetheart*

*John*

19  46

No. 9 King's Terrace,  
Tak Hing Street,  
Kowloon, 12th. Jan: 1947.

Dear John,

Thank you for your letter of the 23rd. Nov.: I must ask you to forgive me the long delay which has elapsed between receipt and answer; the reason of the delay is my having waited in vain for a letter from Phyllis herself explaining the situation, but as she has neglected to inform me of her intentions, naturally, I am not pleased at her behaviour, especially when contemplating taking the very serious step of getting married. The only intimation I have received on this all-important subject is from yourself and I thank you for the courtesy and respect shown to me by you at least.

You will appreciate the difficulty of a mother to give sound advice in respect of her daughter's future happiness from such a very great distance, especially when, as I have remarked above, that daughter has neglected to solicitate my consent, or even apprise me of her intentions and that, needless to say, this lack of consideration has wounded me very deeply. However, it is nevertheless my boundant duty to exert my utmost to safeguard my daughters future and in laying bare to you, what I consider, might perhaps be impediments to a continued and happy married life, after the first glamour has worn itself out. And for having given me this opportunity, I am indeed grateful to you for having taken the initiative and written to me on this matter.

You will have to bear in mind that Phyllis intends to make England her permanent home where living and climatic conditions are so vastly different from those she has been accustomed to hitherto; she has neither been trained or shown any inclination in any sort of housework; she has always had a servant to attend to her needs; her following is much more in the academic line and complete disregard for everything domestic. How will this situation, as outlined above, fit in for a housewife in England?. Will she ever be able to conform herself to the rigid life of England and it's climate?. These are facts that must be faced by both of you before taking the plunge.

From your letter, I gather that, theoretically, you seem to have all the essential requirements to make a happy and lasting marriage, and I would like you also to understand that, as far as you yourself are concerned, you are all that can be desired of a young man, and I have no objections to your marrying Phyllis, provided you do so with your eyes open and despite the situation, as regards Phyllis, I have outlined above and not reproach, in years to come, on these very shortcomings being pointed out to you to-day. Frankly, I do not think Phyllis will be able to adapt herself to the drudgery and hardwork required of a housewife in England.

I would suggest a wait of a year or two to make doubly sure that the tolerance which you have to-day for each other will endure and surmount all difficulties and not rush into a hasty marriage, you may both regret.

If after this period of waiting, and if you are both of the same mind as at present, then God bless you both and with my blessings wish you every happiness.

Yours very sincerely,

*Susan Louy*



**1946/47**

Above a final attempt by Grandma Susie to caution Dad, probably in response to a letter from him requesting permission to marry her daughter. Grandma must have received help in composing this, as it is in a much more 'legalese' style than her other letters.



Mum (right) in the Lake District April 1947 with Cambridge Congregational Society a few months before marrying Dad. Dad didn't go for two possible reasons – he was working at the bank and/or he was starting to suffer the effects of dysentery that were to plague him for the rest of his life. He was in the London Hospital For Tropical Diseases for several weeks both in 1947 and 1948. Two postcards sent to Dad at the time say the following:

*“Its just like this (postcard of Derwent Water) with sheets of rain all over. Exciting to be midst Mts. again. Wish you could see some of this. Drenching excursion to look at stone relics in a.m. Cinema p.m. Push to Gillerthwaite on morrow. Enjoying it. X Phyl. Regards and stuff to all and sundry.”*

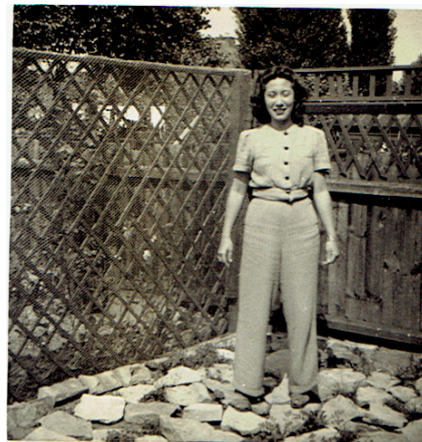
Then on the back of a picture of Gillerthwaite Farm YHA

*“I walk alone. Magnificent time.”*

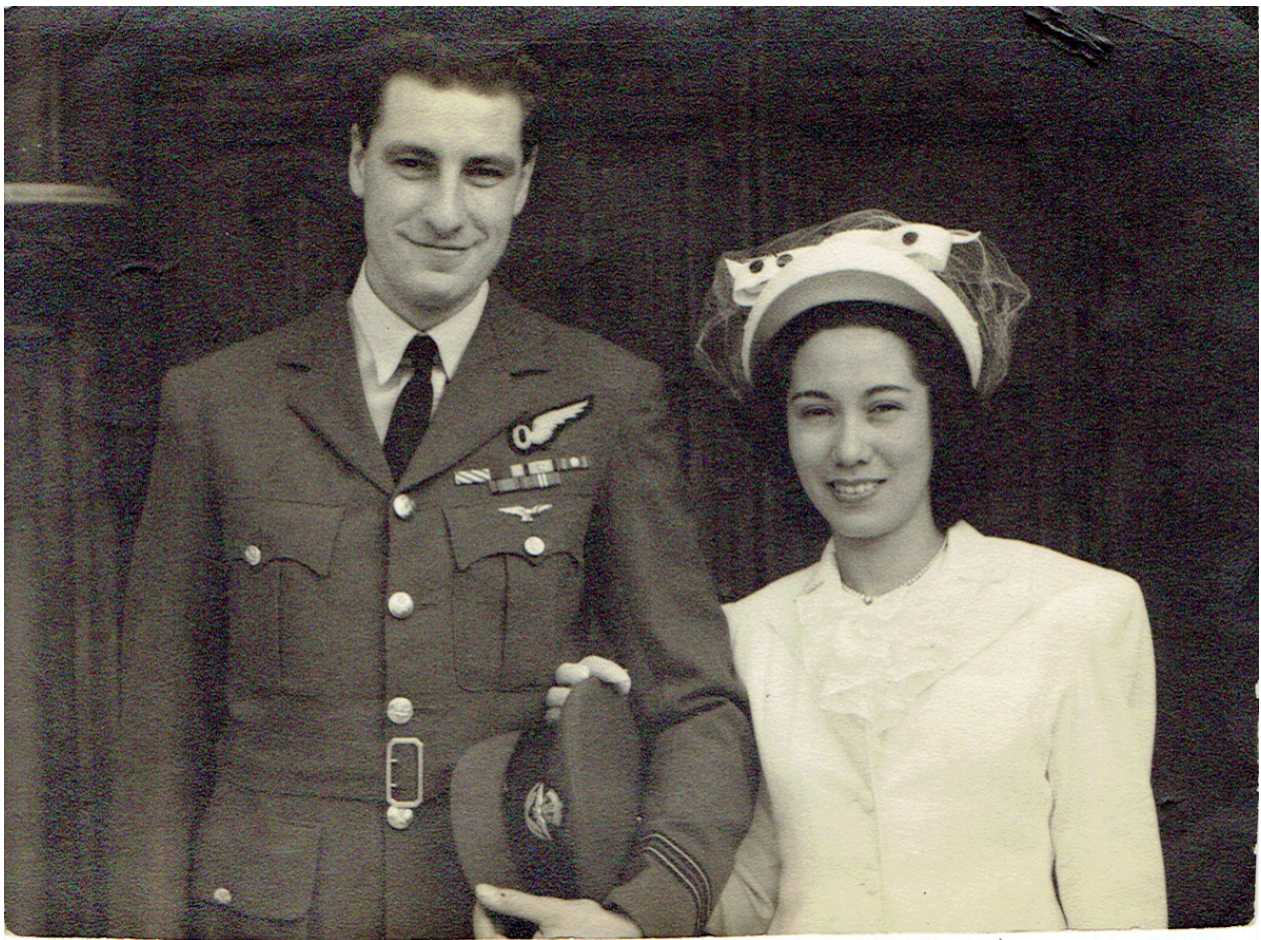
*“Arrive Euston. 5.5pm. Sat. X”*

*“Exciting to be midst Mts. again”*

Mum, Coventry, Daventry Road



19  46



Mum and Dad got married 4<sup>th</sup> August 1947 at St. Gabriels, Willesden Green, probably because Mum obtained a teaching position at St. Helen's School Willesden Green. No family were invited, those attending included children from Mum's class and those 'pulled off the street'



Witnesses – to the left of Dad Percy Ellis, to the right of Mum Dr. Mair Livingstone  
Mum was wearing a ‘Shark Skin’ suit – the current height of fashion!

19  46

St. Helen's School.  
13, Blenheim Pds.  
N.W.2.  
Aug. 28th

I agree to pay in £288 per annum.  
less Income Tax; & I will pay  
my Health Insurance &  
Unemployment.

A half-term's notice on  
either side, terminating at the  
end of a term to be given.

Phyllis P. Hutchinson

Mum lands a teaching  
position at St. Helen's  
School, Willesden  
Green.



Mum with her pupils at St.  
Helen's

19  46

19  46