Writing to JPW

Letters from MLW in UK to Delhi
June – December 1968

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Introduction

Provenance

These letters were written by Margaret Lee ('Lee' normally) to her husband John Percival Waterfield (JPW) between July and December 1968. The file of typewritten originals were amongst JPW's effects when he died at Somerton, Somerset, in 2002. They were brought to Oxford when 5 North Street was eventually sold. This transcription was carried out by their youngest son in May - June 2014 using Microsoft Word 2010 and stored as letters to delhi.docm[1], with final output to pdf; proof-read March 2018.

Originals

The original texts are typed on pale greyish-blue letter-writing paper, mainly 18 x 23 cm but some on smaller 13.5 x 18 cm., about 100gsm[2]. They have been punched through the top left corners and fixed in a buff file ('Supplied for the Public Service') with a treasury tag. They have been retained for future cross-reference at Warnborough Road, Oxford, for the moment at least.

Editorial

As far as possible the letters have been transcribed as they are. There are a number of overtyped corrections which show up boldly in the originals, but have not been replicated (hard to simulate over-strike on a modern word-processor), but the impression of the originals has been presented by:

- using a similar fixed-space font
- using a 'script' font for manuscript additions
- retaining word spacing, line length and lines-per-page
- representing significant over-struck corrections
- reproducing x-ed out letters and words
- preserving spelling and punctuation
- preserving marginilia

Some typos have been preserved where these are subtle or contribute to the impression, but (perhaps rather inconsistently) others have been corrected. These tend to be where the flow or actual sense has been corrupted in the originals; the original text is put in a footnote.

Sadly some new typos will have been introduced on transcription, but hopefully not many. Where text runs vertically, the differences between font-and line-spacing between the transcript and the originals becomes apparent; similarly, manuscript entries are poorly represented in terms of space on the page, and the short lines sometimes apparent (eg letter of July 15) in fact extend across the page even though the writing itself is not particularly large.

Preservation of the line length and lines-per-page has a slightly odd effect on the larger A4 canvas, but getting the word-processed document to cope with different page-sizes is more trouble than merited, especially should it ever come to printing.

The letters were filed chronologically for the most part, and two that are out of order near the end have been restored accordingly; but the first, in rather mock-Homeric fashion, starts *in media res* and the effect has been preserved.

Sit-rep

In 1968 Lee is 45; JPW, two years older, has progressed steadily in his career at the Foreign Office and is 'number 2' in India. Their children are John, 17, Polly, 15 and James ('Bunny'), 8. They have been married for 18 years and address each other by the private pet-name 'Pie'. The letters cover a period while the writer was in England, while the recipient was in India. It is unclear why this situation had arisen, especially as it would seem from the descriptions of effects left in India - apparently abandoned as if as abruptly overcome as Pompeii - that they both expected to return when they came on leave. Perhaps, considering the need to get their youngest child off to boarding school for the first time, and a decision to move to London from Sunningdale, it had made sense for the writer to remain in the UK to dealt with the admin arising from this apparently sensible plan.[3]

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[1] macros used to help with insertion of special text effects

[2] this made for excellent paper airplanes (see 'July 23')

[3] 2026: I now realise MLW had been in the States in the early part of 1968, dealing with her father's death. It probably seemed pointless extra travel (and cost) to return to India for a few months.

Without apparent anticipation of the work that might be involved, Lee was left facing six months of trying to sell one house, buy and repair another, cope with three variously demanding children at three separate boarding schools, while running a household about to be split across two properties but with many domestic effects still in the sub-continent, managing an overdraft near its limit, and all with about a week's delay in any support she might ask for - though as it turns out, this rarely came anyway. Maybe not the stuff of real crisis, but matter enough.

Parents
One's filial duty might seem to be to suppress these private letters. They do not particularly present either the writer or the correspondent (even without his replies being available) in a favourable light - indeed, given the content of some of them, it seems incredible they were preserved by the recipient at all! And according to the manners of the time, for a third party to read them at all, let alone to facilitate this for others, is poor taste, even if nowadays we are used to all electronic text - which means everything - being read by the government agencies, the press, and anyone in between (however mock-shocked we may claim to be at 'revelations' of such activity).

Value
The letters, with their detailed, day-by-day descriptions, obviously have immediate family interest. I believe they have additional value, in their detailed preservation of a slice of social history; and, even, in the fact that they are likely to be amongst the last (chronologically) archives of written letters in English, as this art has been overtaken by copious use of more ephemeral correspondence such as texting and email. The relative ease and cheapness of telephone use has similarly eroded such records.

It has to be admitted that the text does not have a great deal of literary merit, however. They are once-off, immediate thoughts-to-paper typescript (which represents a rigidity of composition incredible to anyone familiar only with the fluidity of word-processing), largely unedited. As such they do offer a certain vividness and authenticity, even if lacking in style: the repeated points, even the repeated words, grate.

On the other hand the narrative presented does has a certain novelistic structure, with the battle to buy and fix up the house at Kelso Place in time providing the final triumph to which the sale of the house St.Albans provides a counterfoil, and the difficulties with children, mother-in-law and other relations a rolling bundle of sub-plots.

Personally I also value the two primary impressions one gets from the letters: first, that life has changed almost unimaginably since the 1960s, when material culture was tight and a potato peeler worth digging out to bring back from India; when telephoning abroad was prohibitively expensive if not downright impossible; car batteries had to be regularly topped up; and the possibility that one might get *three* channels on a television was something worthy of comment. Secondly, and contrasting with this primarily technical and financial change, one feels that there is an enormous continuity of life, that day-to-day personal problems, anxieties and uncertainties are essentially unchanged.

Commentary
These are perhaps more in the nature of personal observations than useful insights into the text, but the following seemed notable.

a) style: formal diplomatic wife versus the stream of consciousness
Can writing style be inherited? I don't think my mother had much hand in teaching me to write, and certainly not much to do with the more grown up task of filling the page with words; and yet, transcribing her letters, they are curiously easy to follow (whereas, transcribing another's writing - Alan Clark's, as in his *Indian Outings July and August 1968*, for example - I find I frequently 'reach for the wrong word', being surprised by the sentence structure and word choice). Perhaps it is a more fundamental linguistic structure - for certainly she taught me to speak - though if so it is surprising to me that it survives to the written word, even to the use of subclauses, parenthesis, and punctuation.

The letters are a curious mixture of the immediate and the formal. The former produces observations and comments that tumble out as fast as she can type (with frequent exclamations about how irritating that she can't write as fast as she can think); a journal of everyday events. These convey the nature of daily life vividly - or, at least as vividly as such hum-drum business permits. In this respect they also present the uncertainties and doubts

of someone thinking through big problems, as she was. In this respect the letters convey the repetitious, circular arguments that are typical of spoken discussion - they are very much a substitute and representation of married discourse. The unrevisable line of type - so unfamiliar to modern use - contributes to this, and only once does she refer to something that she has written but not sent, and in only one other place is more than a word or two at a time 'x'-ed out.

The formal is evident from the very first address, punctiliously punctuated (as always) "St. Albans" with a full stop after the "St", and the sheer literary pride in the accuracy of the presentation in general. This no doubt was the product of her education; but it is overlaid with occasional chunks of diplomatic protocol, floating strangely amongst the stream of consciousness, and reflects perhaps her willingness to adopt the rôle of diplomatic wife as her part in the marriage, which seems to include not only social but secretarial duties. In this she is apparently encouraged by JPW, who is reported complaining that she hasn't acknowledged points in his letters, even if no action is required! But 'points of business' are a considerable element of the correspondence. The surprisingly formal 'Memo on Xmas Cards' (17 October) is another example of a style of document that might be more typical in an office than at home.

b) the 'value of money'

At various points the writer laments that J.W. has no idea of the value of money. The modern reader will be immediately struck by the effects of inflation on prices - a house in London for £10,000 sounds good, and worrying about plus or minus £50-£100 pounds on a house sale strange - followed swiftly by a sense of uneasiness as he tries to make sense of the different relative prices. Inflation is not a simple matter, everything being stretched out equally as on a rubber sheet, but introduces strange relativistic distortions: the Kelso Place house (c£10k) sold for c£2M in 2010, but day-to-day prices have not increased proportionately.

Interesting too that some things are still priced in guineas - usually when one is trying to pretend they are not as expensive as they really are, such as music lessons (Orrea Pernel is Gns.5) and dresses ("cheap" at Gns.8).

The numeric puzzles provide considerable interest; and there are a lot, with the buying, selling and mortgaging of houses under discussion, not to mention managing the overdraft, and, apparently, the uncertainties of devaluation, with the pound threatened again, and the franc tumbling.

However, the contemporary reader will also be struck by the material deprivation of life in the 60s (not so long ago) - at least, that is, compared to the current wasteful approach to Things, even if consciously overlaid by eco-cycling. This, even, in the context of someone who complains frequently about having too much 'gear' (the country cottage will be especially useful to house this excess). Thus there is much concern over what nowadays would be considered utter trivia - the lack of a useful clipboard is deplored (we would just buy one, if we remembered when next passing a stationers or weren't using our iPhone to dictate a note), or the kitchen utensils left in Delhi:

`We did however have a good bread knife there, which you could bring, as well as small saw-toothed knife. Prestige egg-beater- was that packed?  And my kitchen scissors, which I miss very much - I can't think why I took them to Delhi anyway, and I'm too economical to buy more.`

Elsewhere she is not sure she wants a book for Christmas - "why can't I read it out of the library", she complains.

This sense of economy was not just a matter of not buying things, but leads to endless practical matters, recovering furniture (`"I now see how easy it is to re-upholster"`), stripping, wood-worming and repainting furniture; and even to the planned redecoration of the new house. How she had time or energy for it, with all the other admin (not to mention writing 118,000 words) is a puzzle. In a way this is the behaviour of a much younger wife, trying to create a home for her husband's approval (the drive to get the new house ready for JPW's return is explicit), but is also, I feel, symptomatic of a careful material culture that has quite blown away in a generation or two.

c) contemporary culture

Surprising might be the number of references to contemporary culture which correspond to received history (Updike, Iris Murdoch, Hair, Beatles, Elizabeth Taylor) - rather than to forgotten dead-ends. Perhaps this is a function of the digital age, which is much more catholic about period, sampling and enjoying items without a sense of history.

More surprising are the references to censorship "lifted last month" - a sort of state control (on the theatres) one associates more with the first Elizabeth's reign - and its apparent results:
"you'd be amazed at the very sexy looking books on sale everywhere, such as even in the book machines at Waterloo".
Also of interest are the allusions to contemporary politics: the angst about the American election, and the trouble caused by the Vietnam riots (wherein a policeman's eye is put out). These provide a foil to the claim of importance for the political 'now': the U.S. survived Nixon, and Hubert Humphrey is a puzzling subject of a Tom Lehrer song. On the other hand, the engagement in such matters also seems strange to our detached, disenfranchised times.

d) sex
This seems to come up surprisingly often. Perhaps it is simply that for a child it is odd (in English culture, anyway) to think about one's parents in such context; but it seems unexpected that JPW's letters were "full of sex", and have to be concealed from "the children". Evidently he was disappointed about the lack of response in kind, though one can see that she is doing her best with the frequent complaint about not liking to go to bed alone.

Almost equally striking is the opposite - the writer's coyness in some areas, with curious periphrases involving "dame", eg "she is burgeoning and begins to look quite dame-y", or "severe infection of the dames' parts". However, this tension between her "natural reserve", the increasingly explicit discussion of sex in public and private life seems to be very much a part of the period, and indeed provides the psychological crux to the narrative (shortly after the one letter that was destroyed)... It provides an insight, anyway, into "the hardest game of all", which is how JPW's mother memorably summed up married life.

e) children: such a bore
Perhaps again this is from a child's perspective, but the casual brutal dismissal of the children's problems as a bore and a nuisance, despite the ostensible focus as a mother on family life, is striking. Especially for 'poor old J.W.' -
as I said before, I think J.W.'s problems a bore, and wish we could be without the responsibility.
Still, I suppose that is the problem with honesty, and
you really ought to look out what you say, not that it isn't their own fault if they read what's not addressed to them.

f) American
The writer's original American is almost wholly subsumed by standard British English; thus 'colour', consistently, and 'cheque' normally; but there are vestigial traces, so 'check' and 'checking account' appear surprisingly (but appropriately, in the context of her American money), the occasional elision of 'to' ('come visit', 'come see', etc), and there are instances where we might expect a double consonant but find a single. Some Americanisms may not even be noticeable, eg 'airplane' for 'aeroplane', as adopted since by British English.

Volume
As with most full collections of letters, the jaded reader will swiftly become bored and wish for the edited highlights, if not simply discard the whole abruptly. The production of such an edited version, while convenient for the casual reader, is not the purpose of this archive; moreover, so to do would in fact lose the impasto effect of repeated application of similar if not identical points. You might not like the depth of paint, but there it is, painted an inch thick.

JTW - 2014 - 2018

St. Albans,
Monday, July 17th[4].

Dear Pie,

This is going to be a very quick one, to catch the post before I go to fetch Bun from school: to say first that your telegram came this morning with the post, and I was so glad to get it, though I hadn't really expected one and had[5] assumed you got there all right! I've just written to J.W. and Polly and told them you've arrived all right.

Next, their concert was absolutely super – I do wish you had stayed to hear it. I was as nervous as anything, and so were they, but it all went off very well, though they could have done with a bit more audience. I suppose there were between 30 and 40 people there: I couldn't do a count, as we were sitting at the front so as to operate J.W.'s tape recorder, on which it is all on record. They both played well, and Polly especially so: in fact I have never heard her play better, and find it very interesting that she is apparently stimulated by an audience to perform better than she does in practicing. Perhaps she is a performer after all! Though I must say that the acoustics of the new music hall are very good, and probably make anyone sound better. I shook hands with Mr. Borgnis, a very slick number whom I'd never met (who had said a few words at the beginning about being pleased to welcome Miss Waterfield, and about how high the musical reputation of Downe House was), so I introduced M.E. to him and let them talk music. M.E. wriggled; I think she is in general one of those people who think Eton should be abolished (newspaper hoardings in Eton yesterday said "Tariq Ali says no to Eton"!), and though she was being polite, being a guest, I could feel her thinking she disapproved of it all on principle. After the concert J.W. and Polly had to go off to sort out their music etc. so Mr. Bayston, who is very sweet, took ME and Kate and me off to see the chapel (which they had never seen before) and gave us a very instructive talk about it. He made Kate's day by asking her if she was an instructor at Downe! Then we all repaired to

If I could find a way to send you the taped concert, wd you ever listen to it? – also return it? The children wd like you to hear it.

4 the first letter in the file is not the first chronologically
5 orig 'has'

the Cockpit and had a super tea ("Old English Cream teas" plus poached eggs and mushrooms on toast for those who wanted), and we were lucky to have got a private room (I've been there for tea with the Turners - were you there too, I can't remember?), so all went well.

Kate is a super girl, and I think very good for Polly. She talks of inviting Polly in the summer for a music festival in Wales, which would be a very good idea if the dates work out. M.E. is in her usual indecision; her proposed flat in her friend's house has fallen through because he couldn't get a mortgage, and she doesn't know what she is doing. She was full of nothing but solidarity for the students' revolt, which I found rather juvenile. She is very like the students: full of a passionate intensity for something or other, but she doesn't know what. I think this rather tiresome, but no doubt she thinks me fuddyduddy.

We discovered what "Instant Insanity" is, all through Bun looking in a toyshop window in Eton: its a puzzle game of coloured cubes, cost of 4/11. J.W., after slight prodding from me, made the proper gesture and bought one for the girls to occupy themselves with on the way back to Downe. Kate solved it nearly straightaway, but Polly and Bun didn't. It passed the time well, anyway. I got them back exactly at 8:30, after taking a very quick five in the woods picnic spot near Downe. We saw the aftermath of a horrid smash on the M4 just as we got on it at Slough (in fact we were the first car allowed on, and they were still sweeping away the debris and broken glass, luckily having removed the bodies) so I drove even more slowly and carefully than usual. The result was that Bun and I arrived back only at 10 p.m. (Bun having read the map for me on the way back) and then had quick supper and both went to bed more or less simultaneously.

Bunny is trying hard to be grown up (like map-reading). He decided, on his own hook, to make place cards for lunch yesterday (I didn't bring J.W. for lunch after all, as it would have meant less than an hour for him here, so I talked him out of it): so Bun consulted me on placement and wrote out all the names. I was amused to see that though he had written Polly, Kate Bunny and M.E., he had written me out very formally as Mrs. Waterfield!

No time for more now, as I want to catch the post so you'll get the quickest news poss. I'm full of questions about Delhi, but I expect you'll tell me all about those without my asking.

Lots of love from Pie

[June 20 cont...[6]]
the beans and lettuces and eating the radishes, and incidentally discovering that about seven parsley seedlings escaped your depredations with the hoe, so I'm slightly less livid on that score. In between times I saw, on the TV from Ascot, Joe Mercer winning a race - though apparently not the big one that the commentator thought he wanted to win. I shall be glad when we get rid of the Ascot traffic; I could hardly get out the gate this afternoon.

The car goes in for service tomorrow: it developed a most peculiar squeak or rattle, as of metal grating on metal, which Bun pointed out to me yesterday afternoon. I took him to school this morning in some trepidation, squeaking and creaking all the way, but by the time I'd got back down the town, I'd decided it must be to do with the brakes rather than the engine, as it didn't make a noise when the brakes were being applied. Mr. Barnes, whom I consulted, said that it very likely is the brakes (and often happens to disc brakes) and no danger and they will see to it tomorrow. It makes a horrid noise - and no doubt will be extra bill to pay. I've just had a bill from Halfpenny's for over £12 for 24,000 mile check-up, which I will pay.

No other news, but then I did write only yesterday. I wish there was some constructive house news though. But please send me all Delhi news, and what you are doing - now that you are back I'd like to hear all about what goes on in Delhi. What news of the Clarks' return? - Love to them and all others to whom I owe it. I hope tomorrow's post may bring a letter from you, though you may have been too busy to write; but it seems a long time since you left, and I miss you. I keep thinking of funny things and there's no one to say them to! No letters from the children to forward: a p.c. only from J.W., and a short letter from Poll, who said don't forward it as she had written the same at more length to you (about the concert weekend). Did they write well to you about the concert? - I hope that they thought that it went all right. M.E. had two complaints, first that Poll inexcusably didn't point her F string down the length of the hall, though she should have known to (did I write this before? Actually the acoustics of that hall were so good that she could have literally turned her back on the audience and the sound would still have come

[6] the first page of this letter follows later in the file - p.7

through the same) and, second, that Poll did not run a comb through her mane of hair before performing. ("Platform impressions count," she said, though admitting that Polly at 15 would be the last one to think so.).

I think that's all for now. I still cannot solve Instant Insanity - and I read on the women's page of today's Times that "An American psychological study reveals that women are extremely prone to nervous breakdowns when furnishing a house." Yipes! Did you see that Andrew Cohen has died? I see nothing about a new master for Delhi - could I have missed it, or is the announcement delayed?

Longing to hear from you.
Lots of love
from Pie.

And please do send the food order lists soonest - the only excuse for this letter after all! I'll be livid if I have to postpone advising Mary Hennings till after the hols are beginning.

St. Albans,
Wednesday, June 19

Dear Pie,

Here's the latest installment of "What's On" in St. Albans. Everything very busy and getting on well, though no more firm news about houses.

I'm longing to get your first letter and hear what Delhi is like and what all the news and gossip is. But I won't take time now to start asking questions about it, as this is just a quick one to send on the enclosed correspondence. I wonder if you've adjusted your time schedule yet?

On Monday I started tidying up after the weekend and got things a bit in order, and spoke to Philip S. about Rattenbury. Took Bunny in the afternoon to Windsor (he had seen some fascinating toy shops in Eton on Sunday and made me promise to take him some time, as he wanted to spend the Ellingworth's ten shilling present), where Bun bought a sailing boat which goes well in the stream, and I bought a bathroom scale, which I have now cleverly covered on the top with a spare bit of pink-flowered Vymura left over from the bathroom walls. We coincided in Windsor with the Garter procession in which Prince Charles was installed--swarms of people everywhere; I couldn't have picked a worse day, but it didn't matter.

After we got back, Fred Sturt came by (a little belatedly!) and I showed him the list of repairs. He is not equipped himself, but says he has a builder friend hereabouts who might be interested in a London job - he will ask him and let me know. He says to get a small builder, as the jobs all look pretty straight-forward and anyone could do them. (Re enclosure from your bank, do you want me to ask Fred to write out a detailed invoice? - Please send letter back if so. Fred <u>may</u> be reluctant as I think he's doing a bit of fiddling with the Revenue himself, but I will ask him if you think it's worthwhile.)

Yesterday Jill and Harry came in the morning to change for Ascot. They were in very good form, and

No time for more now. Traffic is roaring by for Ascot. Weather has broken and is damp—[?]cold]ish – Bun and I both have sniffles at a result. Your telegram was addressed "St. Albany" which made me laugh. Lots of love from Pie

came back in the evening for quiche and salad supper with me. On hearing that I wasn't going away for a holiday, they offered me to take the children to Woodbridge for a week or so (in their absence, as all wouldn't fit at the same time). I find this quite a good idea - they have a rowing boat on the river, and are only a few miles from beaches and good country for explores, and I think we'd all enjoy the change. But if J.W. gets a job for the time before they go to Dartington, that may rule it out. I might still go with Bun while the others are in Dartington - though I would prefer to go and stay with the Clarks if poss for some of that time.

The gardener came yesterday evening, surprising me a bit as you had told me Thursday; however, he mowed and clipped all the edges extremely beautifully - even Bun commented on how tidy it was!

This morning Mr. Hibbs has come about the move. He says we have a lot of gear! He says two van loads, and two days' work - one day to pack up here, and next day to deliver all to London (and rest in Kent, or hold for later delivery there). He will send a written estimate - I bet it will be high. He says that there is no way around packing all china, glass, books, etc. as for a normal move, even though it is such a short move. I'm bound to say I can't think of any way around it myself - though it's tempting to think that one could just pile the breakables in the car oneself, but there are too many. Soft things can stay in drawers at least.

I went to Mr. Lemasney this morning and got my teeth finished off. Asked if he'd do us when we are in London. Alas he says he is almost certainly leaving the end of the summer, to do a postgraduate course in Scotland, though it is still a secret and he hasn't told anyone else. So we will have to look for a London dentist - he hasn't got any friends there to recommend.

Enclosed are letters from Lady Kelly and R. Hutton, on which I have acted as annotated. I made point to Lady K. that you are leaving India in December - she sounds just vague enough to try to go to stay with you in Jan or Feb otherwise!

Have you measured Bun's bicycle tyres yet? Please do and tell me.

St. Albans
Sunningdale.
Thursday, June 20

Dear Pie,

Well, I wasn't really going to write again today, having done so only yesterday; but I've got one urgent (though boring) request. To get it over with first of all: Joanna Hennings has just rung up to ask further advice on orders (she apologized for never having thanked me for lunch - I very nearly told her she had better learn to write thank-you letters before going to Delhi), and asked if she could come to see me and go through her proposed order, on July 2. I said sure, and didn't really offer to meet her in London, because it's too much rush with Bun and besides a waste of my time and money! Goodness, she does have an oicky accent down the phone, but I guess she's all right. Anyway you may remember that I mentioned to you when they were here that you could send me my food import orders; but I don't suppose you will have remembered to do it. But without those lists I don't think I will be very much help to her, because of having a memory like a sieve. So will you please, by return of bag, send me the lists of orders that we had (I think there was the original Saccone one and then a Justeen one - I keep feeling there was a second Saccone one, but that may have been Bamako). I am sorry, because this will be a bore for you to do, but I really do need them: if you can send them by return I should get them all right before July 2: otherwise she will put off consulting me, and she would rather get her order over, and I would rather finish advising her on it, before all the summer holidays start. I think you may have copies of those orders in your files, but you may not. I certainly have, in the files that came out of my desk. (They were in a file in the bottom drawer of the chest of drawers in the double spare bedroom, which had all my desk things - if you have had them removed from there, no doubt you know where they are. They are in a file labelled "Import Orders" or "Food Orders" or "Food Import Orders" - something like that.) Please do do it straightaway - I know it's a bore, but you needn't write any note with them, and as I doubt if this will get to you till next Wednesday, there will only just be time if you catch the Weds. afternoon bag with them.

Next, an astonishing thing; I just opened the boiler cupboard, for the first time in weeks, and discovered in there a pair of golf shoes: brown leather, worn and lighter over the toes, with studs. In short, yours I think? Having concluded that, I went on to conclude that the shoes you so hastily sent back to the Turners must have been J.W.'s new and very extravagant sports shoes from Mewes. What a nonsense! Anyway I rang the Turners at once, and spoke to Richard, who answered and of course knew the history, but he didn't know the fate of the shoes we had sent to them. He said he'd enquire and let me know, and if they hadn't been sent to Swinley he'd[7] have them sent here. If they have gone to Swinley, it will be a slight nuisance because I can't identify them and will have to have J.W. to do it. I think this must be the answer to the whole muddle, don't you? - if so, it ought to teach you not to confuse your son's shoes with yours!

Here is a photo of Bunny for you; they had them taken at school. I didn't know anything about it, did you? - Bun says he can't remember if he told you or not. It's obviously a commercial swiz - everyone was taken, and sent two large and four small prints, with "no obligation to buy" - but Bun was so proud of them, and of having produced a surprise, that I thought I'd better pay 12'6 for them - and will put one in the book, and send smaller ones to J.W. and Poll and Claire (who has just sent him a birthday present). I wonder when they were taken - they have that look in his eyes as if he were coming down with a fever, but apart from that, and the self-conscious grin, are not at all bad.

It's been a nice day today, when it hasn't been raining which has been about half the time; and the garden is looking super. Philadelphus and weigela full out in the front, and Q. Eliz. roses and campanulas; the back is mostly still various shades of green. But the large shrub which we got from Paddock that you said was a deutzia has turned out to be a philadelphus, of a most superior sort: double and very sweet-scented. So I have attempted to strike cuttings from it for future reference. Thank goodness, the deutzia it was that died! Our other deutzia is not quite in bloom yet. THAT JAPONICA is still flowering, and I am trying cuttings from it, because I've never seen such a good one. In between the rainstorms I've been sorting out the veges, thinning[8]

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7 orig "he's"

8 this continues on p.3

St. Albans,
Tuesday evening,
June 25.

Dear Pie,

No sooner did I get the last lot of letters off to you (in three envelopes: one my letter, one the children's letters, and one my financial papers) than your letters of last Friday arrived this morning. I wouldn't have thought to have an answer to my first letter so quickly!

I didn't answer all the points in your previous letters anyway, so I'll continue now. But first, I have only just remembered that in the midst of all the "instructions" I gave you to take back, I forgot all about the Punjabi dress for Polly, which she would be very keen to have. It would make a good Christmas present for her, if you brought it back with you by air (it's light as a feather anyway). I enclose on a separate sheet an "instruction" about it - you will have to use your loaf on colour, and you would know better than anyone else what would suit Poll. Only not too pastel-y, because the darned things have to be cleaned, and a very light one would show all the dirt. Also too much embroidery or decoration would be overpowering on Poll. Perhaps you could take a dame to help you? - I thought maybe Lois or Philippa before they leave, but they may be too busy with getting away. They'd know what would suit, though. But otherwise you can probably find some other female adviser. No hurry as you can see, but they don't always have much variety in stock, so it might (Horrors, you'll say) take several trips and attempts in order to find the right thing. Use only Cottage Industries, because we know their size 10 will be about right for Poll.

I've no other horrible things to suggest now! You asked about those green ashtrays - have they turned up? They might have been some of the six left out for the Slatchers, as per this carboned list (I don't know why I didn't give you this list for checking when you went, except that the original was

left there for the Slatchers, so presumably you found it when you got there.)

I'm glad that the Slatchers have taken Prem and like him. That's good. Horrid that you report we have so much gear there - too much, I bet. Is there any hope of getting rid of any substantial lot of it? We've got too much here, too, but I'm going through and putting things in order. No estimate yet from Hibbs - he is slack. I keep seeing Ford Zephyrs about here and thinking of ours; it's funny you find it huge and difficult to manoeuver, but I think we are now spoiled by being Triumph owners.

I take note of Valentine's prescription for my rash, but it is in fact gradually getting better, and I'll only use that cortisone as a last resort! Walter Valentine sounds in a pretty good mess to me, if he doesn't even know where Joan is. Very odd.

Going back to question of gear - there are no doubt far too many of Bun's toys, and he doesn't talk of missing any of them except the bike. (Have you measured the wheels yet? And please will you tell me the answer - if they are over 18" that bike will be no good for London anyway, and I could consider getting Bun a small-wheeled grown-up bike which he would very much enjoy having here now.) If you look at Bun's toys I think that you will find most of them can be given away - give them generously for servants' children, and also the toy stall of Chrysanthemum show. (Mrs. Slatcher I think is in charge of that.) If in doubt write and ask before getting rid of Bun's gear. There is, for example, I remember, an enormous box of games and puzzles: there is no point at all in them. And there are a lot of games which aren't worth keeping, such as "Uncle Wiggily", "Buccaneer", and bad games of that ilk. Worth keeping: Scrabble, Monopoly, Risk, Cluedo, and any other standard games. Of Bun's toys, the only one that comes to mind as being really worth keeping is that wooden ball-in-cup, which is fascinating for all ages. And the big brick box, of course. Small cars if in good repair, but I think most are broken. Gosh, I really ought to come and sort all that gear out, oughtn't I? But I think you'll find it's mostly junk. All children's books to be kept though - I've already disposed of the junk books.

I can smell and feel Delhi when I read your letters! I rather agree with L. Coton that the colour photos were printed too dark - I hope you told him it was his man that did it?

I don't think there were any other points I meant to answer. I won't post this until tomorrow in case there is any news of any sort to add.

A bill has come from Blackwells, of over £12, for J.W.'s Italian books - I've written to ask him hopefully if he has paid for them, but I expect the answer is no. Did we agree to pay for his Italian books? - I suppose they are a part of Perugia but I'm living so nicely economically I don't like to write a cheque for £12!

Carol Herschel has just rung, of all things, to ask us, including you to dinner on the 18th of July, as she is going to have Hilda Vellacott staying. She was most disappointed to hear you are in India, so she asked me and John William to come, and I couldn't think of a good excuse so said yes. So you had better remind me who Hilda Vellacott is - I remember that she gave us a wedding present, but can't remember anything apart from that! I suppose we will have to look at Carol's pictures of her trip.

Did you see that Tony Hancock is dead? They put on one of his old comedy shows on the TV tonight as a tribute, and I must say it was very funny. Weather remains cold and raining - Bun says that you took the summer back to Delhi with you. Good Wimbledon tennis on the TV, though conditions obviously very wet and slippy. Can't think of any other news, so I'm off for bath and bed. Wish you were here - I don't like going to bed alone, though I must admit I sleep better when uninterrupted by your snoring! It's funny, but I've been waking up every morning at about 7 o'clock before the alarm goes off; I suppose it's my automatic mental alarm as I know I've got to get Bun to school.

lots of love
from Pie

(over)

Weds. lunch time = Nothing new today
(so I'll post this) except this
enclosed bill from Andrews for the
mower - I thought you said they
hadn't done it? - Do you want
to query it, or do you think
they did that? It's not as big as
their usual bill, anyway. Will
you pay, or return to me for
paying?

I am sending off for car license.

Poor Bun is having his
teeth pulled tomorrow.

Lots of love from

Pie.

St. Albans,
Monday evening, June 24

Dear Pie,

Thank you so much for your two good letters which came together on Saturday, just as I was beginning to wonder if I'd ever hear from you! (I had forgotten of course that the airline go-slow would affect the bags. Now I suspect that the rail go-slow may affect the mail from here to the bags, so I wonder when this will get to you, and wish I had written it sooner, but I wanted to have something to answer before writing again.)

First of all, nothing new on anything vital - i.e. house. No Rattenbury surveyors yet, which is discouraging. I'd like to go and measure more at Kelso anyway, but with no train services it's nearly impossible . Patience!

Bun is in very good form, and sends his love. I suggested that he might write to you, but he said, no, why should he, you hadn't written to him (even though I gave him your messages). So I think you might write a short letter just for him, to train him to answer. I've been very impressed, in going through old papers to sort them out, at the style and quality of J.W.'s early letters from Dragons, and if Bun is to be able to communicate at all when he goes away to school, he had better start learning. So if you'll write him a quick one, I'll see that he answers it. Bun is a real balls game player: I find it hard to cope and seem to have been playing endless French cricket, which I am rapidly getting better at. It has been an incredibly wet weekend, no chance at all of going onto the heath between rainstorms, and the best we could do was brief spells of ball games between the heavy showers, and sometimes in them. At school on Friday Bun was thrilled with Rounders, because he was the only one on his team to make a rounder, which won for his team, and he also caught out the best player on the opposite team. He came home full of himself, and complaining because it was the weekend, because he liked school so much. Today (Monday morning) it was of course a different matter, and he didn't want to go to school! But no serious pode.

It seems as if you've been gone a very long time, and I start to pode about it, even though there is a lot

to do here; but I agree that 18 years makes too many habits to be broken, and I haven't got time to write all the things I keep meaning to say, and I keep wishing that I were in Delhi, even though I know it's finishing for us, because you are there. So I want to hear all about it. I think it's a super idea that Alan should come and share with you (and expenses too!) - are you sure it won't cramp his style? I'm all for saving money and am being very economical. I'm glad to hear that Lois will come - haven't heard from her yet.

On what else has been happening here: the car was serviced on Friday (satis, I think). The thing making the horrid noise was a pebble lodged in the brake mechanism. The seat belts are applied - I feel as if I'm in an airplane if I put it on, but I make Bun do it before we go out on the main. The traffic has been hell, no sooner has Ascot finished than the rail strike has started, and cars are chock-a-block. The car protection thing is also with me - it doesn't have to be fitted, but is carried in the car: it consists of an expanding double-ended hook which is applied to the clutch pedal and the steering column and then locked into place, and is released with a key. It makes me wonder slightly if any car thiefs won't be provided also with the proper keys to fit it. It also comes with a small sticker which can be affixed to the windscreen warning that it has been fitted, but I wonder if that warning wouldn't also warn a prospective thief which lot of keys to look out? (It goes by the cozy name of "Krook Lok".) But anyway the hook fitting over the steering wheel is bright red and ought to warn anyone off who peers through the window.

Good letters from J.W. and Polly today - I will send them at the same time under separate cover, as I'm frightened of making one letter so heavy that the stupid mail room might send it by sea bag. J.W. didn't say to forward his letter, so he may have written separately, but he did say to send the crit of their concert - please keep it, will you, or send it back to me to keep. He doesn't say if he has sent another copy to Poll, but I assume he has. He has also sent his "maximum opus" on Mind, Matter, and Meaning, which I have only got to page 4 of - I had hoped to send it on with this, but clearly I'll take some time even to skim through it (16 single-spaced typed pages!). Would you like it, or has he sent you another copy?

At the weekend I had a sudden inspiration about the stair carpet, which you may remember had a horrid worn patch on one of the rising bits; and I thought the Rattenburys might come at any moment to see it they wanted to buy any carpets. I can't think why we didn't do it eight years ago, but I realized that it would be possible to cut out that worn bit and relay the top part (as there was a good deal of overlap under the top hall carpet). So I did, though it took a great deal of time, even with Bun's help , but it looks so much better as a result I'm very pleased. (Sorry, had trouble with the typewriter ribbon, which I couldn't get to reverse, but all well now.) But I wish that I had thought of that before, because it's the sort of job that would be much easier with four hands, and besides I found it very hard to get out all the tacks. I made only one small chip on the paint, which I repaired. The filth underneath was incredible; it made me feel I really ought to pull out the bottom half of the stair carpet too, but I ignored it in a cowardly fashion and will only face it if the Rattenburys won't take it on in situ. Flushed with enthusiasm I also bought carpet shampoo to clean all the other carpets, but haven't had a chance to do it yet, owing to having Bun in the house on the wet weekend. I have however washed and ironed the breakfast room coppery curtains (which you may remember Heals' said couldn't be either washed or cleaned), and I think they have come out not too badly - they didn't lose their colour, though they were incredibly difficult to iron (like rope, which I suppose they are, being a kind of hessian).

Tufnells sent some people at the weekend (Sat. evening) to see the house, which made me scurry round cleaning and tidying - but in the end only the man came, his wife not having a baby-sitter and according to him probably objecting to the main. And he hasn't brought her back, so they are probably non-starters, but as a matter of interest came from Chancellors, not Tufnells!

On my finances: first came a letter from Miss Linsley of Fiduciary answering the points, as far as I can see correctly. I answered fairly briefly, and then by next post arrived a letter from Harry, which I haven't answered, as I had already just answered the business part from J. Linsley. I enclose all, or rather

Please send all back for my file.

probably in a separate envelope to avoid sea-baggery. Will you answer Harry chattily, or would you like me to? And at what point do you think we should go into further with him any warnings about my needing my income here while we are back in England, rather than its being ploughed back into principal? It seems a little premature to me as yet, and uncertain owing to uncertainties of house-purchase, which may affect the whole picture: but that may work out all right if Rattenbury comes through. If not, it becomes a question-mark, if I need to bring a good share of my capital here, whether the remainder is worth Fiduciary's handling (and in view of their high charges). But we haven't quite got to that yet. These papers, incidentally, which J. Linsley[9] has sent may not make too much sense to you without the previous statement - but I can't very well send the whole file. But please tell me if you are going to write to Harry, on gossip and forewarning, or if I should - I would rather see him in July and talk, but he makes no mention about coming again.

What with all these papers and letters to send, I'm slightly annoyed that Dick Turpin hasn't rung up, which you said he might, because I thought I might bother him to take some of them with him by hand, and would have posted them to him if I knew his address. Perhaps he still may ring, though I doubt it, so I am apt to conclude with James L. that he is dreary and dull, because he might at least ring so that I could convey any urgent messages to you. Not that there are any, except that I miss you.

James' mother, Mrs. Lunt, has rung up and asked me to drinks next Saturday evening, when Muriel will be there. She is full of chat, and reports all about the latest rainstorm in Delhi causing power cuts, which Muriel has told her having it from James; so I countered with saying you'd had James to dinner and were going to dine with him. And she seemed very excited of hearing other second or third hand news of James! But I must lay on Miss Dean to mind Bun on Sat. if poss, otherwise Mrs. Lunt says I could bring him to go in the TV room (and, as I added, read his books), so all will work out.. I like Mrs. Lunt, because she is always full of beans - also I like James for approving of the photos which I'm glad to hear you have stuck up! - but please tell me as a matter of gossip when you say that Muriel is much older than James how much older do you mean? She doesn't really look any older than him to me, though she is more set in her

9 'Linsdley' in original; earlier spelled as shown.

ways (a hideous expression!). But I suppose when you say James is "worried" about her, you mean about her memory which he was worrying about before. It puts me off giving her anything to take back to Delhi for you, as I gather she'll be going next week sometime.

I have an idea that it was supposed to be tonight that was the H.C. party to say goodbye to the Freemans, and I have been thinking about it as I write. Amusing, Mrs. F.'s letter that you sent. If she does make any overture, I think Bun would not be averse to seeing Matt, and I would make an effort for it and would think it amusing, though I don't find her easy. Funny, she is rather like Lady Kelly in my reactions to her, though in a very different style. But if this gets to you before they leave, do say that of course I'd like to see them, or if they were coming this way at any time, etc. This business of personas on TV is most strange - the other night I let Bun watch a programme on BBC which I thought might be quite good, and which he was longing to see, about the progress of Alec Rose on his yacht around the world: but I thought it was rather cheap-skate, as it kept emphasizing that he was out of touch with civilization by saying things like "He didn't know that Elizabeth Taylor was ....., and he didn't know that the Beatles were...., and then in the middle of it, "He didn't know that John Freeman was going to Washington." Bunny and I both jumped - but perhaps it shows what the personality cult can do. Vide Ché Guevara - did you see the reviews in the latest Sunday papers of his book? I hadn't realized that the Giffords were so nearly in the forefront of his personality cult.

No more for now, as it's past bedtime, and I want to get this off. I miss you all the time, eventhough there is lots to do.

Lots of love from
Pie.

Copy of a letter from Lord Gifford (original on file)

30 Kelso Place London W8
June 26, 1968

J.P. Waterfield Esq.,
St. Albans,
Sunningdale, Berks.

Dear Mr. Waterfield,

I have now been able to consider the survey made by Mr. Norris. I think you will agree that it is generally very satisfactory, and I comment only on the remarks about dampness.

1. As to the entrance corridor, Mr. Norris appears to accept the explanation given by Peter Cox that the trouble is merely contamination of the plaster and all that is needed is to apply their special coating. I think that this was explained to you when you visited the house.

2. As to the opposite party wall, which was not treated by Peter Cox, I have carefully looked at it myself and the signs of discoloration are scarcely visible. The walls which we did treat were visibly falling apart, but since dampness in the opposite wall was not noticed by our surveyor, or it seems by the insurance company surveyor, I cannot think that it requires urgent treatment. Incidentally for inserting a damp course in the other 3 walls of the house Peter Cox charged only £91.

3. I agree that the rear wall does appear damp. We did not treat the plaster here

after Peter Cox had worked on it, and no doubt this small job will be necessary. The hessian has not in fact come away from the wall – it was never stuck down as we intended to treat the plaster.

4. The kitchen was treated by Peter Cox and appears to be satisfactory. The "some evidence" of damp is minimal, and if 100% perfection were required the same coating operation could be carried out.

5. I have confirmed with Peter Cox that they will arrange for the transfer of the guarantee to you.

Really the only defects requiring cure are in the corridor (which you knew about) and the rear wall; and accordingly I do not think that the survey gives ground for a reduction in the agreed price. However to show good faith I am prepared to go down £100, provided that we can exchange contracts and have a deposit paid within the next two weeks. I do not want to hurry things unduly, but we are anxious to start negotiating for a new house for ourselves; and no doubt you know from experience that one is always anxious to have things finalised. I hope you find this reasonable, and look forward to hearing from you.

As to completion, could it be early in September, as I am planning to take time off for the move during the Law vacation?

Yours sincerely,

(signed) Anthony Gifford

St. Albans,
Friday, after lunch,
June 28

Dear Pie,

Thank you so much for your two letters, of 23rd and 24th, which both came this morning. I thought one might be the food lists I asked you for, but no doubt they will come soon. (More doubtful though if Mrs. Hennings will manage to get here next week, unless the rail strike is settled.)

I'm just waiting for P. Sheppard to ring me, so will fill in on other news and points first.

First, Bun had his two teeth out yesterday, and was a very good boy. He felt a bit groggy afterwards, and was indeed a little low for the rest of the day, and complaining of his mouth hurting, but bounced up this morning and seems all right. We tried to watch the Wimbledon tennis, which amuses him, yesterday p.m., but it's all practically washed out. I've never seen such rain, and more forecast – the stream is up to the bridge, which I've never seen in June before; and the gardener couldn't get on much of Wednesday because it was pouring, and too waterlogged to sow anywhere. He did some of the side hedge (it is all growing like a cool green jungle), and will come back when the weather permits to do the mowing. It hasn't been poss to sow Berks. since you left, and indeed it is more waterlogged now that it was in March, but at least the veges are growing.

Second, apart from the rain, the rail strike is a great bore. Many phone calls between ME and me and Poll: Orea Pernel offers to see Poll in London on Sunday at 3 p.m., only possible time. No trains running at all on Sunday owing to strike. So I'm back to one of those driving weekends again. Bun and I will go to pick up Poll tomorrow at picnic-lunch-time, and bring her home for the weekend (possibly going by Paddock on the way back to say goodbye to Bow, who leaves Mon., but if weather is awful we may not). Then on Sun. I will have to drive Poll to London (but luckily only Addison Ave. in Holland Park, so not too bad) and then back to Downe by evening. Apparently the car jams into London have been very bad this week owing to no trains,

but they shouldn't be too bad on Sunday going in that direction.

My letter about disposing of some of the gear has crossed yours exactly, and must have been written on the same day! Re Bun's toys, I have already commented – but do not know what you mean at all by

Coloured (paper
(cardboard strips.

What on earth? My mind's a blank at that description. Bun's roller skates: Yes, they <u>are</u> good, and should definitely be kept. Somewhere there is a key for them (which turns the nut which controls length) – I am afraid I can't remember where it is, but you should keep your eyes open for it. It should be with the skates, but Bun at one point took it away under his control and put it with his things. But I suppose a plier would do the same if the key is mislaid.

My files – I agree, throw away any pp on bills accounts etc. applying to Delhi which you don't need to keep. But anything applying in general to amounts of food and drink provided for cocktails wd be useful to me to keep. Also keep any DSWA papers (though not the old DSWA mags)

Box of wooden construction toys etc – yes, I think throw. I suppose you <u>don't</u> mean by that the big brick box, which keep.

Maps – the roll was in the very <u>top</u> cupboard of J.W. and Poll's room, along with driftwood and other items. You have probably found them by now. I'd like the driftwood please, at least the more solid pieces of it.

Glass jugs – yes, keep.

Batteries from Bun's toys – are probably mostly useless now. You cd give to Imtiaz or Gusain, as if any are still good they might like them.

Modess – I answered on my previous instruction about food and goods, which you took with you. You can't have looked it up! The answer is sell to T. Leslie for shop or otherwise dispose of – If you can't dispose of them, bring them back.

Old bathroom scales – yes, sell them, as I said on previous instruction. New ones here cost only 42 shillings, cheaper than when I bought those previous ones.

Hurrah for Dec. 7th! It seems a long time off, though.

Funny about J. Parkinson – who'da tho't it?

Flo Smedley rang up to say their new post is Paris – they are pleased. Typically, John was asked if he could be there by 12 July (just over 2 weeks notice!), but said he couldn't.

Saw Iris Malcolm in the town, who says their John, having taken the scholarship exam at Eton, has come 21st on the roll. They are pleased, but think he won't get into College from that position.

I am living economically, but have paid cheques for:

1) £25 car license

2) £12-3-6 for J.W.'s Italian books from Blackwell's. He said you had said you wd pay, but he was a little shocked at how much they were.

3) £33-18-7 for mortgage interest due 30 June. (It occurs to me that if this is bill for next quarter we may be due a small amount back if we finish here by 25 Sept. Or is it paid in arrears?-It didn't say on the form.) Anyway the amount of difference will be very little, and I thought better to pay it in good time during the 14 day reduction period.

Later, after fetching Bun from school: And having finally got on to Philip Sheppard, who has been frantically busy all day till now, but who has given wise advice.

A letter came from Gifford this morning, of which I enclose a copy, and I shall try to get him on the phone this evening to discuss.

Gulp! moment of big decision! I've been wishing all day that you were here, as nothing from Rattenbury or his men yet (but Philip is now going to chivvy again).

About Peter Cox and the damp, you can see that it's not much clearer than before, and Philip, who is a great pessimist, thinks the Cox guarantee not worth much; at the same time his advice is to go ahead on the house, if we are ever going to and accept the £100 reduction and not argue further. I agree with this, and think it's at least a gesture from Gifford. So, as we agreed before you left that we'd go ahead in any case, we're putting everything in motion. Philip is now mailing you the contract for you to sign – you should get it at the same time as this letter. And I've also just rung up the bank, on Philip's advice, to confirm that they will cover the 10% deposit cheque. Mr. Bayzand is on holiday,but the acting manager, Mr.

Bowra (Bowrer?) assured me that they would cover that cheque whenever I need to write it, to be repaid on completion of the sale of St. Albans. So that's all right, but of course I won't write the cheque till you've signed the contract, which I expect you will send back forthwith to Philip. (He is actually more resolute than me – I quiver! – and says that if the contract should get delayed or lost in the mail from you, no doubt either he or I could sign this part of the contract!) Still, there's no reason for me to quiver, as we'd made up our minds before you left, and we may as well get on with it. I hope you won't feel that the £100 reduction is too little – I think it's just about marginal, but Philip is strongly in favour of not arguing further, which I think is probably right, and he obviously thinks we have kept the Giffords on a string embarrassingly long already! So let's get on with it – I will speak to Gifford about it all, and will find out what he means by early in September; Philip says the exact date can be settled after you've signed the contract. He also says that there is almost certain to be a very brief period when one needs a bridging loan, ~~xxxxx~~ if Rattenbury comes through, and he sees no reason why the bank won't give a short bridging loan as long ~~xxxx~~ as the contract is signed for St. Albans, because he says Rattenbury won't complete payment till he gets possession; and he urges fixing the date for Kelso anyway, with bridging loan for a few weeks, and using that time for getting builders on with it there. We'll face that when we get a little nearer it – but as soon as it appears that Rattenbury is coming through, you may wish to write to the bank to ask about a very short-term bridging loan. I will also speak to Rupert Button to say further that if Rattenbury doesn't come through, I will need money by about the beginning of September.

That's all I have time for, if this is to catch the evening post. I'll write another installment soon. Wish you were here, sorry for scrappy letter.

Lots of love from

Pie

St. Albans.
Saturday evening,
June 29

Dear Pie,

This is just a very quick one, to catch you up with news – I will post it in London tomorrow.

First of all, I got Gifford on the phone this morning, and told him that we were going ahead and that you were going to sign the contract, less the £100 reduction, which I thanked him for. In fact, he has got a paper from Peter Cox, which in fact as he quotes it, doesn't sound as if it will be too bad to fix. He says he will let us have ~~xxx~~ the paper. We have agreed that we will agree on exact completion date a little nearer the time. He seemed genuinely very relieved that we are going ahead with the purchase, as they haven't been able to start negotiating seriously on a house for themselves (which I can understand only too well!). (By the way, this is in sequence to my last letter, which I suppose you will have already got, or will at least get at the same time as this, otherwise this will all be gibberish to you.)

Next, Bun and I drove over to get Poll at 12.45, and we had a picnic lunch in a field lane near Yattendon, because we had said we would call in at Paddock afterwards to see Bow before he leaves. So we arrived at Paddock about 2.30, and found there as well Aunt Edith and Roger B.-J., and stayed there for about an hour. Bun and Tim really get on very well, and everyone was in good form. But we didn't stay too long, as Poll was anxious to get home fairly early, and also I wanted not to be too late because I'd promised to go for drinks to the Lunts.

So – to drinks with the Lunts: they had a bang-up party, about 40 people, in their nice little garden (mercifully the rain had finally stopped and the sun come out, otherwise I can't think what they would have done), and it was very pleasant. Don't quote me to James, but it was all full of General This (retired usually) and Lady That (grey-haired), with a small mixture of the young, being the Lunt grandchildren. It was nice to see Muriel, who seems in perfectly good form, and says she is going back to Delhi on the 17th. She was full of gossip about their Delhi landlady, which I didn't much listen to, though I gather James has been involved; and full of oohs and aahs over the Parkinson scandal, though James hadn't apparently told her that June was disputing

twins' paternity. I like James' parents very much, also his sister, who was there with all her brood, including the pretty Penelope, who as you may remember lives in Kynance Mews, just around the corner from Kelso Place. She had taken 3 hours trying to get down from London, which just shows you the bad state of trains.

Not much more to add tonight. Oh, Dick Turpin did ring up yesterday evening, as you will have heard, and I gave him various minor messages, though the automatic pip kind of things seemed to be going every few seconds so that I could hardly hear.

After all your trouble with doing the car license form and enquiring, they have sent the whole lot back with this extra form to be filled up! I've filled it all in, with advice from Wells the gardener who has come (Sun. morning) to mow the lawn – but have decided I can't forge your signature at all satisfactorily! Please will you sign and return by return at once to me, so that I can get all papers back by the 14th.

No more to add now.

Lots of love from us all,

Pie

St. Albans,
Monday, July 1

Dear Pie,

Thank you for your letter and bamako lists – I can't think why you can't find the Delhi ones, as I'm sure they are there somewhere. They are not here, though I suppose it's possible that I put them in a separate file intending to bring them. No more of a muddle than you and your files coming on leave, though! Anyway, no matter, because Joanna Hennings is coming to see me tomorrow and I'll advise her out of my head and get rid of it.

This is just a quick one, as I'm busy putting everything back in order after the weekend, to report on Poll. (No more house news this morning, and the only other news I forgot to tell you is that Bow is trying to book himself through Delhi next Sunday, and if he does will have a couple of hour stopover as he did last year. Shirley and children are coming to stay with me on Sunday next, and if the timing works out right, I may go to paddock for lunch, and bring them here, taking Bow to airport on the way. So you may see him with very up-to-date news of us, or again you may not.)

Now for yesterday: hottest day of the year, and a horrible time to go into London (though today is hotter). Anyway Poll and Bun and I set off at about 1.40, after early lunch, having coordinated to meet ME at Orrea Pernel's (or rather her friend's) house at 3. We went well, and in fact arrived in very good time, only taking an hour to get to Addison Avenue (a charming little street just north of Holland Park Road, but surrounded by the most squalid slums). Met ME, and met Orrea Pernel (in her fifties, round and plain, but very sweet and gentle); and then Bun and I went off to the park to play while they got on with lesson. (I had meant to take him to see Kensington Gardens, but the traffic was awfully jammed on all the mains, and O. Pernel said we cd see peacocks in Holland Park in easy walking distance, so Bun wanted to go there.) And indeed Holland Park was very pleasant – I've never been there before – but there wasn't much time, as by the time we'd thrown the ball about a few times and then stood in a queue to buy ice-creams, it was time to go back

to fetch Poll.

Upshot of the lesson: Orrea Pernel approved of Poll's playing, said she had good tone and played musically, and she would like her as a pupil. She insisted we should talk it over and think about it before deciding. She will give Poll lessons at Dartington in August anyway. We had long talk with ME afterwards to consider; and ME says that this is what she was hoping for, that Orrea Pernel would take Poll on, and Poll is very keen and finds her extremely nice. But O. Pernel's position is this: she has been at Bennington, Vt. teaching, but has now come back to Europe; but she is not going to live in England, because of income tax problems, though she will be here off and on to give concerts and teach a bit (She is a consultant teacher at the Royal College of Music, where she gives occasional Master classes – and she is also giving master classes at Dartington, as well as performing – so it's lucky that she'll have Poll for lessons then.) She does not recommend any of the teachers at the Royal Schools, and says that the only one would be good for Polly has now gone to Bennington, Vt. to take over her previous job there. ~~¥~~ She *(O.P.)* is living in Switzerland (Locarno), where she takes a few pupils at a time, who live in her house (or said if she should get more, several could share a flat nearby) – and in fact she said that Poll cd come to her at any time. But the awkward time is the next year, while Poll is still in school. During this time, she cd give Poll the occasional lesson while she is in England, and Poll could perhaps go to her in Switzerland during holiday/holidays, depending how the timing works out. After Poll is out of Downe she could go for longer periods, perhaps 3 months at a time, depending upon when O.Pernel is going to be there between her commitments. M.E. makes two other points: one, that Poll is really at a stage now when she doesn't need so many constant lessons, and should try to stand on her own feet for longer intervals, as long as she has a guideline to go on (and O.P. has given her plenty to get on with until Dartington), so the occasional~~s~~ lessons shouldn't handicap Poll (and in fact I think may be quite a good idea, to see if Poll really can get on without so much supporting attention). Two, that going to Switzerland and living in O.P.'s house would give Poll a social ambiance, or meeting other young musicians and also O.P.'s friends, which she wouldn't get if she was just going to a music school

in London. (And I would add to that, that it would seem to be a very good way of giving Poll a period in Europe, and much easier on the parental mind to send her to O.P.'s house when she is so young, than it would be to[10] fix her up at some European music school.)

From the musical point of view, which I am not really up to understanding, I think that we have to take M.E.'s advice; but I think I see the difference between this and B. Hancock's view, which I suspect is that this isn't breeding Poll to be a top virtuoso performer only but is developing her to an expert degree musically in an atmosphere that will suit her (and what, if anything, she makes of it later will depend on how she goes and what her interests are – already she is saying "Miss P. says Logarno is in the Italian part of Switzerland, do you think I'll be able to learn Italian while I'm there?"She does have so many other things that interest her, that I wouldn't like her to be stuck with someone who would only teach her virtuoso performing, which I think would discourage her as well as bore her.) Poll had a very nice letter from "Fizzie", which she showed me, commenting on the wonderful grace and serenity with which O.Pernel plays Bach, and saying that she did hope Poll could have her for a teacher – "So much better than one of those short-armed Central Europeans!" From Polly's point of view, I think that I agree. Anyway, O.P. is by what I hear a very good teacher as well as performer – technically, which is beyond me, she apparently gave Polly many useful hints to follow. And (the part I can understand a bit) what she has given Poll to do seems eminently sensible: Poll is to start learning Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto (which is enchanting and which Poll loves) and then instead of doing endless "studies" she is to get hold of the Beethoven quartets and the late Haydn quartets and use the first violin part of these as exercises. I find this very worthwhile, as it means that, even if Poll should later decide that she is not going to go on seriously with music, she has meanwhile become acquainted with a great deal of very good music, instead of wasting endless time on playing bad music as exercises.

?avoiding B.Hancock's tragic life?!

I wish that we could talk this all over together, as I can't type as quickly as I think. Other things come to my mind all the time. One is that I think that this will answer as a sort of "finishing" period for Poll after school, and another is that, depending how all the timings work out, it looks as if she would be

[10] orig 'a', ie 'would be a fix her up...'

going, after leaving Downe next year, for various shorter or longer periods to Logarno, in the intervals of which (and thank goodness from that point of view that we will be in London) she would come home – and I would think could pursue something else. I have in mind partly (though I haven't got to this with Poll yet) that she might do a secretarial course in London when she is at home, so that if she wants to be an impecunious musician she will have something she could fall back on; or alternatively she could go on with language studies. She might also later decide that she wanted to do university entrance. But is really so young that I feel she can do a year after Downe quite happily by studying with Pernel, and she will still be in good time to decide what she wants to do with herself, and won't have wasted any time meanwhile. She herself is very keen on this plan, as progressing her on music and therefore not frustrating her, and I think it offers all possible options and so should be gone on with. Also I think that it is a great compliment to Poll that Orrea Pernel will take her on – and,who knows, Poll may in the end develop the same sort of career and play and teach, as she has a certain aptitude for teaching, I think. This will get her in musical circles, too, because I feel that she also has a considerable aptitude on the piano for accompanying, and especially for modern music; and the more that she can be around musical people in general the more likely she is to find her particular niche.

Next, as to the expense (oh, dear!), I think this probably wouldn't work out too badly, though I haven't got down to specifics yet. On the lessons, ME says that O.P.'s lessons are 5 gns., which she slightly apologizes for, but that her lessons go on for as long as she thinks useful, and are therefore better than an inferior (though good) teacher who might charge four guineas but limit the time to 60 minutes. It's plain to me anyway that O.P. does it for the love of the music – I haven't got so far as asking about costs if Poll goes to stay with her, but I am sure that they would be reasonable, as it is quite clear that she is not doing it "to make a buck", and if this is what Poll wants to do, I reckon it should be counted as her "coming out" or "finishing." But my dollars may come in handy – and, oh dear, if we don't sell St. Albans, they may really get depleted!

Thank goodness anyway for a child who really knows what she wants to do! I don't think that I can usefully go on further at this point, and I hope that you will not be in violent disagreement with anything that I have said, because I am about to write to Orrea Pernel to thank her and to say that Poll would like to be her pupil (with slight reservation that Poll must see how she gets on without regular lessons before D~~x~~artington, which ME suggested wd be a good test for Poll). Polly herself wd of could gladly walk out of Downe House tomorrow to pursue music, but I think that it is right (which I insisted on to her, and which indeed she recognised that we would want) that she should finish her A-levels at Downe next year. I'm sure that this is best, as she has still a lot of growing-up time anyway, but I wish that I had more confidence in Mrs. Wilson and Co.! But Poll could still, like J.W., be around her more-or-less contemporaries for longer, and with luck absorb more social attitudes. (I saw Kate on Sat. when I went to pick up Poll, and she greeted us so nicely and grown-uply. I do wish that Poll wd absorb more of her good sociableness!)

I hope that this has all made sense: it is a very hot and muggy day (98° on our thermometer outside the kitchen door, which I admit has just got into the sun - but still very hot for England, and I'm regretting that I didn't bring more sun dresses back from Delhi - not to go in the sun with, but just to keep~~x~~ cool in.) Still it's nowhere near as hot as you are, and I marvel that you can write such good letters in that heat, which would absolutely ruin me. I hope that the monsoon has broken by now - I see a very short para in the Sunday Telegraph saying that J. Freeman has returned to London. Is Sir M.J. ever going to be announced? I am getting bored with looking for it.

In nature of a p.s. - I think that I have never driven in London before yesterday. I told Poll this when we succeeded in arriving at Addison Ave. and her comment (a real Waterfield one) was, "Well, you should be grate~~x~~ful that I gave you a chance to get the experience." Actually she read the map very well, and I think I do know more about driving into London now, and even though we didn't ~~xxxxxxx~~ohave time to get to Kelso Pl. yesterday I think I know how to do it now. So she is right in fact -

and I think that if it does work out that we get possession there a bit before leaving here I shall do very well at going back and forth for any number of trips, which I should like so much to do, because there are so many cuttings from the garden which I'd like to have time to put in peacefully there. My cuttings of philadelphus and fuchsia, and the ones you put in pots of the hypericum, all seem to be growing; and I think that I may have to hand some of them over to Paddock to keep against our getting a country cottage, or else give them to Mary. There are two very good yellow roses in bloom in the front bed – are they the Francesca roses that you moved from where the fuchsia now is? I can't remember. All roses anyway are coming out well now, but not much colour otherwise in the garden. Gardener came yesterday – he mowed, but says the blades are not much good; he will come on Wednesday and try to adjust them and file them. (So perhaps the Andrews bill is right, and they only did chains and didn't get as far as blades?)

Did I say, please thank Lois for her letter, and we are expecting them all for Sat 20th – I will write to her. Her letter doesn't sound as if she got my last one – I can't make out whether that's only Delhi heat aff_ecting the way she writes, or whether my letter really went wrong. I'll write to her anyway, but now must get back to tidying house.

Lots of love
from Pie

p.s. Enclosed letter from your bank.

p.p.s.- Did you get the ~~driving~~ car license form? Please send it back quickly!

St. Albans,
Tuesday, July 2

Dear Pie,

Thank you so much for your letter and the lists, which you found at precisely the right moment, as they arrived about an hour before Joanna Hennings: she came at 10:30 a.m. and stayed till 6.30, asking questions all the time! Meanwhile I had given her elevenses, a good lunch (incl a glass of beer), and tea, fetching Bunny meanwhile, and still answering questions. I am now quite sick of thinking about Delhi at all!. But never let it be said that dip wives don't give good service, though I must say I think I never got any such extensive briefing for any post. Still, she means well (though plain as a pike) and I think will do her job conscientiously, besides knowing Sir M.J. and his peculiarities, which ought to help. They are meeting Stuart and Eve Bell next week, and will no doubt get more (?wacky) advice from that quarter.

One point came up in our talk, when she asked about tools and equipment for the garden. I think that we bought a fork, and possibly a spade, also we took out that revolving sprinkler which cost a couple of quid. She said that they would gladly take off us any gardening equipment – I said they wouldn't need to take anything from here except secateurs (as I expect we will want to keep ours, right?) So you might look around at what else we have provided Mathur with, and tot up a fair and reasonable acct. for Hennings.

Bun was finally persuaded to take his swim suit to school today, urged on by the hot weather, and came back absolutely thrilled with his swim, and said that he had finally learned the crawl ("Mr. Morris gave me a few tidbits.") He was cock-a-hoop about his progress, and is now determined to swim every time he can. The weather has turned cooler, thank goodness, as it was still 80° very late last night when I went to bed: too hot for England. Neither Bun nor I got much sleep, as we had to have windows open and the traffic is still unduly heavy. I discovered it's not only your snoring

which wakes me up, but the traffic as well: roaring cycles at 1, 4, and 5.30 am. all woke me up. Stupid!

As I wrote before, Muriel L. isn't going back till about 17th – she did not offer to take anything for me, not even messages, and taking it all in all I think she is very preoccupied with her family situation. So I think it wd be much easier if you ordered Taj's watch from Hongkong, if you can. If really not poss, I cd ~~xxxx~~ buy (? from Sunninghill) and post to M. to take to you. But she seems choppy and changy over plans – obviously if anything happens further to her mother she may not go back yet.

I do like hearing what you are doing in Delhi, though I agree it sounds dreary! I thought the article on Porto Brooke fascinating, though it made it sound much more frightful and spoiled than it seemed.

Re your gear questions, I think I've answered all of them before. Do get rid of all you can! I too have thought about flying out to Delhi in November, which wd be great fun if it weren't so far, on excuse to sort out gear. But all depends on how house deal works out, whether D.S.A.C. wd pay, and when Bun's half term is, etc. We'll have to see.

Now I'm going for early bed, as I can hardly keep my eyes open. Will go on tomorrow.

No – Contd. Thurs. morning, as I was holding this up hoping to get some more news of any kind about house. But none – I spoke to Philip this morning, and he adv~~x~~ises waiting till early next week, by when if no satisfactory answer from Rattenbury or his solicitors, I might start chivvying agents again. (Poss. legal problem if another agent produces someone with an offer and Rattenbury still comes through – we would then have to pay two agents' commission.) I have got into a fit of depression and begin to think that Rattenbury is either a~~x~~ figment of the imagination or else a henchman of Chambers, put up to delay all our action, so that when he finally backs down we would be psychologically ready to take a low offer from Chambers! This is pure fantasy, and there is no sign of Chambers, whose garden looks disgusting. Rail strike goes on, slows up mail, may slow up Rattenbury's purchasers, I don't know.

Anyway I will finish this and get it off. The bags

may be starting to get more regular now, so you might get this by Sunday.

The monthly bank statement has come (here, I note, and not to you as you asked, and no separate copy for me). I am sending it on in its original envelope. I note that it is about as you thought - £127 overdrawn at end of month. I live economically, but find money flowing anyway – partly because I am gradually building up Bun's Dragons clothes by cheap cash purchase (Bon Marche etc.) and should have little left that has to be bought from Harrods. The list doesn't appear too bad, and a lot of things left from J.W. do – i.e. the same old grey woolly dressing gown will be going back to Dragons again!

Alas here is another bill from Andrews – it looks to me like a duplicate of the one I sent you? – though I can't remember the exact amount of the one I sent on to you. Please deal and/or tell me.

Hibbs has sent an estimate of £147-10-0 which I think very high, but has opted for one whole day for packing here, second day for loading, third day for delivery. I don't like that, and will speak to him – I can't believe we have so much gear here that it takes a whole separate day to pack it, and another to load it. I will meanwhile get other estimates to compare. But we're rather in the melting pot: if I transfer capital and we still have St. Albans, it means only half the job to do at once; also if we have any slight overlap period before I move from here, I could easily cart some things from here by car while going to supervise builders etc. I will keep his letter as I need it here, but quote his close:

"So far as your move from Delhi is concerned, I shall be very pleased to arrange Dock clearance and delivery and look forward to receiving the necessary shipping documents in due course and in this connection would ask you kindly to remind Mr. Waterfield to have the case(s) consigned to our order."

I enclose his card with address.

I've had the June fruit bill from C.R. White – strawberries for 4th of June cost £4-18-0!

About Orrea Pernel – Have an idea she lives in Lugano, not Locarno, but am not sure. I thought they

were both the same until Mummy told me they were two different places. But basically I think it doesn't make much difference.

Going back to banking – have you written to Barclays about my income and income tax? Because you promised you would when you got back to Delhi.

Not much else – I am involved in orgy of tidying and sorting now, and find that there is all too little time. Shirley and co. come this weekend, and then the beginning of the holidays is upon us. The garden_er came last night – he brought his tools and sharpened up and adjusted the mower, which he said wasn't cutting very well. So that's a good thing.

Sorry for rather scrappy letter,
but I'd better get it off. Bun
is in excellent form, and looking
forward to Timmy coming.

Lots of love from
Pie.

P.S. – Doorbell has just rung, producing
florist with large bunch of
flowers from Joanna Hennings,
thanking me for my help. V. dippy!

Monday July 8 –

Dear Pie –

This is just to forward
Poll's letter – poor dear,
she sounds a little tired.

No time to write generally–
Philip and I have both got
your letter and contract,
and all is progressing – Just
in process of trying to set
up completion date before
sending contract off – Roberts
has just weighed in with
Rattenbury, has spoken to
Mrs. R. and will speak to
R. this evening – She is
expecting to move, and says

they have sold their house
so it all sounds hopeful.

Shirley + children here –
Bow was here last night,
and has now gone to
Tehran – not going to
Delhi as you'll have gathered
by now – We fetched J.W.
for Sunday supper last
night and all had cozy
time. Shirley leaves
Weds, and J.W. starts
hols Weds.

No time for more if this
is to catch post, and I
must fetch Bun, who is
thrilled to have Tim and
Mandy here.

Lots of love,
Pie

St. Albans,
Wed. July 10

Dear Pie,

Sorry I didn't have a chance to write on Monday when I sent on Poll's letter – life has been really frantic with Shirley and children here, and at the same time I've been trying to get the house business sorted out (shutting myself with the phone in the bedroom!).

I think I told you that Bow came for Sunday night, and flew off on Monday. Shirley and Tim and Mandy left this morning at 10 a.m. for the Odgers, and the rest of the day I've tidied up and made ready for J.W., whom Bun and I fetched this afternoon at 5 p.m. in the pouring rain. He seems in good form, though rather quiet – tired, I think, as he was up nearly all last night saying goodbyes. Now I'm trying to get him off to bed early but he seems to have revived! He came for supper on Sunday to see Bow, and then on Monday Shirley and I went to a Music circle concert at Eton (Miss Dean baby-sitting the three children), featuring Mr. Bayston playing a Mozart piano concerto – J.W. on clarinet in the orchestra.

Now, on house: I've spent most of the past week making phone calls in all directions and sorting things out as far as possible, and the present position is this:

The contract for Kelso has also been received by Philip, with the copy of your letter to him received by me; but so far no other letter from you. They seem to be taking a long time to come!

As we had agreed, I have now written

the deposit cheque for Kelso and sent it to Philip, who will dispatch it with contract tomorrow. I agreed with Gifford for a completion date in September 25 – he wanted early in September, but gave way. (I felt a little beastly about it, because I played the helpless female and said I couldn't start thinking about moving till then!)

Philip and I took your point about an ultimatum to Rattenbury, but as Philip pointed out, does one really want a definite ultimatum when one doesn't have any alternative in mind? Because even if one started chivvying for lots of people to come view again, one wd probably be in the same position of finding someone who wd have to sell his house, and Rattenbury is further on than that. In fact I think that today's news of Rattenbury is definitely good, though I have to keep supporting my spirits against Philip's gloomy pessimism. He really does see every possible difficulty and points it out most gloomily!

Roberts has stepped in most helpfully and has spoken to Rattenbury, and his position is that they are expecting to get the house, and are expecting to complete and move in September when I move. They have sold their house, and their buyer has sold his house, and that buyer has sold his house: but mercifully the chain stops there, because that buyer works for Prudential who will put up the money for that purchase. So, though it is rather more removes than one would like, at least the chain reaction has reached a stopping point, and once the contracts are signed up the line, all should be well; and Rattenbury (who naturally can't sign until his house is signed for) expects to be able to sign the contract with us by early August. I do not see how we can do better at the moment, though we are waiting to hear the precise information when Philip hears from Rattenbury's solicitors. (There is said to be a letter on the way.)

I have also spoken with Mr. Bayzand of the bank, who was most sweet and helpful on the phone, and said to come in and discuss any problems any time with him: I rang to tell him I was going to sign the deposit cheque, which was O.K. with him, and asked him about the position on completion, in case the dates don't work out to jibe completely. (But if Rattenbury does come through, I think it will come out just about exactly right.) Anyway the position is that once a contract has been signed for this house, the bank is prepared to make a bridging loan to cover any discrepancy in dates. I think that naturally one doesn't want to do this, as we'd have to pay interest on it; and decided, before I got Gifford to agree to the latest date I could, that it wouldn't be worth trying for an overlap in order to get the builders' work done at Kelso – better for me to endure it after I'm in that have to pay any unnecessary interest. But it does mean that if Rattenbury has signed the contract (even by early Sept., which God forbid) and couldn't reach completion by Sept. 25, the bank would bridge a gap in time, which, though we don't want that, would save transferring dollars. (Incidentally, the Giffords have found a house they want, which they can get by the beginning of Sept if it works out – so we are in fact condemning them to pay for a bridging loan from their bank, as they want to move in early September.)

Now to continue with the more gloomy possibilities: in case Rattenbury fails and we don't find another buyer who will sign on the line by early September, I have today spoken again to Rupert Hutton to confirm that if need be at that point I can transfer the

dollars. He says all right, as he said in his letter, but warned that the problem was that one couldn't transfer them back again to dollars. I said that we realized this. He also tells me that Harry is coming to England and Europe next week for about ten days, and I've got his hotel address and will hope to see him while he is here.

Bow, to whom I had only a brief chance to talk owing to children and all, was full of ideas (gloomy again!) about dollars and sterling: but his basic point was that if I did transfer the dollars here, for God's sake leave them in real estate: he says that securities and such are at a crazily high price here now, which no one can understand, that international opinion is still of great distrust that Britain can turn the corner, and that there is a lot of betting that there will be a further financial crisis this winter, with another devaluation and probably a fall of the government. Not the time to transfer dollars obviously, so I hope it won't come to that! But if it should, I begin to wonder seriously if we shouldn't think at that point of withdrawing St. Albans from the market and hanging onto it for a bit? You will say that I am crazy and I probably am, because it would stretch us too far and probably mean using still a bit more of my capital to keep it going: but on the other hand there is no doubt that property values show every sign of appreciating more than almost anything else, and that rates wd not be high to keep up (I'm not sure how much insurance we have to pay though?). We have in any case almost enough furniture and fittings, bar a very few items, to equip both houses. We could perhaps do short lets (office people?) of St. Albans to help cover expense, and have it still for spring or summer holidays. So there would be a lot of bonuses in that plan, and it might not prove a bad investment in the long run. I only put this problematically to ask how you

would feel about it. (I see now incidentally that when the house is nearly empty it is not nearly so difficult to keep clean and tidy, and I don't think we'd be intolerably pressed from that point of view in keeping both houses going, only from the financial point of view). Tell me what you think, as a first opinion - all the children wd of course shout hurrah - but I think in all probability Rattenbury is coming through so it won't arise.

This is my last sheet of writing paper[11], and I haven't even started to answer your letters! I hope that tomorrow's mail will bring more recent news anyway. First, how flattering if the Freemans express desire to get us to Washington - it's ironical, because I certainly wd have liked to go there a couple of years ago, but now am not specially keen. I know you'd like to work with him, though, and I expect it wd be great fun if it worked out, though no one can tell how anything will turn out! Did you see the article in the Times of Monday about him - I was so pleased to see it start off with his tribute to the Dip. Service: jolly good, it was about time someone said that. I've heard nothing from her, by the way. I note all your other points (Margot Holgate, for instance, whom of course I wd like to see), but mostly they seem too old to answer in detail now, as it is beyond bedtime. Car part: I have had no chance, with Shirley and children here, but will go tomorrow to Bracknell to see about it. Have written a note to Muriel (not knowing her phone number, and fearing to disturb sick household anyway) asking if she cd take it when she goes. If not, there is today a change of address card from the Roses on which Clive has penned a

[11] this particular paper is smaller and more lightweight than usual, and includes a royal coat of arms crest

line offering to take anything to you – would that be too late, or can you think of someone else sooner if Muriel fails?

You ask about Bun's old gun there – I am not sure which[12] one you mean, but suspect large black machine gun – he does like it, but if it is really bust, throw it. I thought however it was only the very tip that was bust, which didn't affect the action. You had better try it out!

Your letters seem very old and out of date, and I haven't yet even had an answer from you about Poll and Orrea Pernel, or even that car licensing form which we sent before that. So I hope for a lot of mail tomorrow, and wish that communication weren't over such a long gap. Incidentally I've just had a very good p.c. from Poll, who had a good day going to Oxford with a group of girls to hear a cello master class given by Rosto-povich - she was thrilled, and they all went to lunch with the Warnocks (whose daughter is the ex-Dragon who is at Downe House) - J.W. says "an old Dragon family" - Do you know them, or why is the name so familiar? Poll sounded in bouncing form, and has found out that Orrea Pernel is being soloist in a prom concert at the Albert Hall in August, for which I will now try to get tickets.

*Am sending under separate cover a letter from Sun Alliance_*

Thurs. a.m. - Good letters of last weekend from you today - and 2nd letter for Bun - I will get him to answer_ Am just off to get car part so no time to write more, but will write later. This seems a gloomy letter - sorry.

Lots of love from
Pie

[12] orig 'when'

St. Albans,
Saturday, July 13

Dear Pie,

J.W. has just posted to you a very long letter which he wrote last night - I am sorry that my last to you was probably again a bit scrappy and gloomy, and I was just about to sit down and write you a nice cheerful one today with all the good news, when yours of 10 July arrived, well calculated to put anyone off! Please to remember that youare well out of date with the news, and there is bound to be a gap, and stop nagging on about things that have crossed in the post. I don't do so, and I object violently to your saying "I do hope you will try to be more methodical and active," when I am getting on with things as fast as I can, and not complaining about all the muddles you make[13], such as golf shoes ! And also Bun's premium bonds - you worried me very much writing to Bun asking if I had received his postal savings book and bonds, and I have had to go back all through your correspondence to find the reference to it. The post office savings book I did receive, but about the bonds you wrote: "I have found and propose to send the bonds (3) to the bank for retention and the book to you." You did not send me the bonds, so I suppose you either sent them to the bank as you said, or else you still have them: so it is no good sending me instructions about sending them to the bank. Do try to be more methodical!

Now for news: I think it is all good, but in view of your continually harping about ultimatum to Rattenbury, I suppose you won't think so. You'll have had Philip's letter of the 11th on the position; but you perhaps don't fully appreciate that Rattenbury's solicitors according to Philip certainly wouldn't advise him to sign until his house is signed for: unlike us, he has no reserve of capital (as far as we know), so couldn't sign until all is arranged for his house. But I agree that it is worrying his not having signed. If one could pick out of the blue a purchaser able to sign at once, naturally it would be better; but Philip keeps advising me against starting all over again yet, and Roberts says Rattenbury is coming on all right. And the new news: Rattenbury rang up last night, and said that all is going well at his end, as far as he can see there are no snags, everything is

[13] orig "makes"

coming through, and his mortgage surveyor will be coming to see the house soon. And he and his wife want to come and discuss purchases: they cannot come immediately because their son is going into hospital for an operation; but we have fixed for them to come on August 1st. I must work out prices on anything that I want to get rid of and have all that put into the contract. So I think this sounds very encouraging, don't you? I will of course press them to sign the contract if it isn't done by then - I am quite sure he is genuine and is doing his best to come through, and it looks o.k. Can do no more now.

Yesterday I went to London to get the tickets for Orrea Pernel's concert in August, and also went to Kelso Place to continue measuring. My God what squalor they live in! - you wouldn't believe the mess and chaos everywhere, and it is lucky that you won't see it. I'm longing for them to get moved out, so that one can see properly where one is. However, after measuring, I found last night the furniture plans all slipping into place nicely, and I think that we will fit well by getting rid of as much surplus as possible to store, and I am much reassured and longing to get the house. It was so quiet after St. Albans, and I found that the distant rumble of the undergrounds wasn't a nuisance. Also I checked again the bicycle allowances in Kensington Gardens - it is 20" wheels including tyres. Can you measure Bun's again with tyres and see if they come within this? I expect they are just about 20". I'd be grateful also if you'd measure length of his bike so that I can see if it will fit into the shed at Kelso - I expect it will. Please let me know.

Mary has found a piano stool for us, second-hand in the depository in Rochester Row, for £8. I checked with Harrods, and the new ones similar were 20 to 30 guineas. It is the kind the children want, so that is good. I was planning to drive up to Maunsel St. with J.W. and Bun tomorrow, have lunch and collect it - but poor old Bun is in bed with sore throat and slight temp. today, so I will have to postpone trip. What a nuisance his throats are - he is not feeling too bad, but is sorry for himself and demanding - though at the moment he is settled in bed watching Saturday sports on the TV.

Harry Norris rang last night - Jill and Mummy in Switzerland. I asked his advice on builders for Kelso, and whether one shops around and takes estimates from

builders as one does from movers. He advised not on the whole, and said it was better to get a reliable man and then trust him. He offers to get the Wimpy man who is a building expert to meet me at Kelso and go through the mortgage repair requirements, and see if he can produce a suitable builder, on whom he might then be able to keep an eye and supervise. I think this is a very kind offer of Harry, and I must say I think it wd be very reassuring to have his chap keeping a supervisory eye; so I shall proceed with this unless you see grave objection.

I see the James, Greenhill etc. announcement in the Times - not very prominent! and not very much to say about Sir M.J. either.

On Thursday I got the Ford spare part from ~~xxx~~ Stevensons. I was floored because they swore there wasn't any such thing as a Zephyr V-8 as you wrote, and that I must mean a V-6; and I swore I remembered that it said V-8 on the back, and they said that wasn't possible. Are we thoroughly confused? Bun's view was that it is a V-6! In any case, I see no reason why the little switch should be any different for a V-6 or a mythical V-8: so I got it and hope it is right. Muriel rang and said she will take it on Wednesday, so I have posted it to her. J.W. and I decided at the same time that it wd be nice to send you a tape of selections from the Eton concert - so he retaped the J.W.-Polly items with a commentary which he thought wd amuse you (some of it very pompous, I thought!). It is coming with Muriel too - please keep it after listening. I expect Alan still has their machine, if not Dick T. or practically anyone else in the H.C. has a taperecorder that wd play it. So do please hear it - it wd please the children. (N.B. - Please note that it is tape speed 3¾,~~¥~~ mono.)

Joanna Hennings rang again asking more questions about the house. She is very exercised about the size of the dining table (to get damask cloths), and has asked the Min. of Works here and they have no record of the size! I described it but couldn't estimate length - if you wanted to be very kind you might send me measure of length (both ordinary and after Gusain put› in extensions) - or quickly ask M. Bianco to look out the measurements there. But if it's not easy don't bother.

Here is a letter for you from Bun - he wrote it all himself, so please do not write and correct all his

Sorry - missed
out the back!

spelling to him, as that puts him off writing. Much better to communicate even if incorrectly!

I'm sure J.W. told you all about his job at Valley End Farm, which he will start Monday. I hope he will give satisfaction - we've never seen much evidence that he knows much about gardening, have we? This morning he has also taken another job, doing an early morning newspaper round for Smith's - 45 minutes per morning, £1 per week. He reckons that if the two together are too much, he'll see if Poll will do the newspaper one! Both are good physical jobs anyway, which I think a healthy thing. He has asked Fred Campbell to stay, which is a good thing and also good for Polly.

How rich [are] all these people who buy and sell houses that you mention, like Maynards and Simmons and Hicks. However, I'm not surprised that the Hicks can spend so much on furniture - if we had only one child, we too might have saved up £2000! But surely it is much better to have three good lively children, even if broke, so we should be thankful for them.

I don't think I've missed any vital points - in any case I must take this off to catch the post now.

Lots of love
from Pie.

Monday, July 15

Dear Pie -

Only a quick note to
get these posted - one
from Polly just arrived,
and Bun's letter for Gusain.
Bun is better, and his
throat turning into a
cold, but he's not quite
right so I've kept him
home: very tying down.
Esp: as TV went bust
on Saturday, and Pack's
hasn't yet come to fix
it. Also washing machine
bust this morning - so

this seems to be day of
domestic crisis!
J.W. has started his
jobs this morning.
I fetch Poll on Wednesday.
No time for more –
promised to play chess
with Bun, who usually
alas beats me now!
Lots of love from
Pie

St. Albans,
Tuesday, July 16

Dear Pie,

A lovely fat envelope from you this morning, but it only turned out to be the D.S. Monthly Bulletin! But there was also your short note of the 12th - I trust I will get a longer letter soon, but am disappointed that you didn't sent one (or even a message) with Lois, who rang up this afternoon. I at least have sent you messages via Muriel, who flies tomorrow!

I think that I have now answered most of your points, and that you are still poading because of the lag in communication. (J.W. by the way says that he is cross not to have had a letter from you, but that he knows when he does get one that he will be crosser still, because you won't have had time to answer any of his points!) But to answer the questions you repeat: a) I've already said that I didn't receive Bun's bonds, which you wrote that you were sending to the Bank; but I did receive Savings Book. b) We have literally not had time to go to Swinley, where Peggy says J.W.'s shoes are, to ask for them, but will go as soon as poss, probably tomorrow. There has really not been a chance, largely because of having Bun at home in bed with his sore throat. However, he is now recovered and will be back to school tomorrow, just in time for me to go on and fetch Polly. It is pouring with rain tonight, more or less as usual. You'll have read about the floods in the west country: we had also the most flooded stream I remember, certainly for this time of year: Berkshire was deep in water as far back as the vegetable patch, and this side of the stream was covered above the flagstone terrace. It has subsided now, but left tremendous sludge and mess behind: I am thankful there will be time to get it cleared up before the Rattenburys come! But it was a splendid sight to see the astilbes sticking their plumes up above the fast-rushing flood water.

We have the new piano stool that Mary found - J.W. went up by train on Sunday and fetched it. Mary said it wasn't very heavy, but J.W. thought it was by the time he had got it to Waterloo! However, it is just the job,

and I have re-upholstered its top in gold brocade and begin to think it's not too difficult to be a do-it-yourself upholsterer.

Did you get the Sun Alliance letter for action that I sent on to you Saturday? Perhaps you'll say I should have decided, but we had never considered this point.

Other points of business: I suppose that you didn't order a new Barclays cheque-book? I ordered one, and one has arrived here, but addressed to you. I presume it is to be mine, so will keep it: if you've ordered one, you had better re-order. Also have you yet written to the bank about my income? (There's a repeat question from me.)

I think that's all the business for now, and I I hope that I have answered all points! Poll sounds much more relaxed now, and I hope to find her in good form tomorrow. J.W. is fine, and is getting nicely tired from his outdoor jobs: he eats tremendously as a result! Bun, as I said, is all right now, and has been up today though indoors mostly - he has been rather a nuisance from not feeling well, and I haven't been able to get on with things as much as I'd like. But everything is in train - the TV has gone to be mended, the washing machine repairman comes on Thursday, Sirl of Ascot come next week to estimate for a move, and tomorrow, now that Bun is in school, I will have a chance to locate the Bagshot-Camberley area moving firm. Haven't yet had a chance to read the Sunday papers, but that is a usual complaint.

Muriel sounded in good form, and promised to deliver the car part and tape that I sent her. Lois sounded also in good form; they all come on Saturday. I go up in the direction of bed now, early because I've got to get over to Downe early tomorrow. J.W. is alas working, so Poll and I will have to manage to load up her bicycle! J.W. has had more driving lessons, and says he is getting on well - he is longing to drive me all about the place, which I tend to resist, but will let him drive to Swinley, except on the main.

Lots of love from Pie.

Tut, this reads like another scrappy letter., largely because not much to report - only endless games of chess and Pelmanism with Bun.

St. Albans,
Thursday, July 18

Dear Pie,

Thank you so much for your two letters of last Sunday, which arrived this morning. (Also one for J.W. but not for Poll - you probably idiotically sent it to school, and she says they don't forward letters but keep them till the beginning of next term - also she says that she is in a rage with you from not hearing from you, and won't write to you again until she gets a letter!~~=~~ She hasn't even had any congratulations from you on Orrea Pernel.)

I agree with you about time lag being very tiresome. Also I agree with your letter to Rattenbury - at least it can't do any harm, and I will send it on with a "helpless little woman" note. But you really don't seem to hoist, though I've said it over and over, that R. certainly isn't going to sign till his house sale is set: we could not possibly have done so if it weren't for my dollars. But it doesn't hurt to chivvy him.

Bun went back to school yesterday, all sore throat gone, and I drove on to fetch Poll. No problem, and she is in very good form, though a little tired from the end of term activities. We got back in good time for lunch, and indeed before J.W. got back from his gardening job. (Today the people at Valley End Farm have given him a complete set of Scott's Waverley novels, which they were turning out and going to throw away: he came back laden, and very pleased; but slight groans from me at still more books to go on our shelves!

Last night I took J.W. and Poll for a beginning of holiday treat to the Theatre Royal in Windsor, Miss Dean coming to baby-sit. It was a play that J.W. had heard a lot of his friends commend, and Poll too said that the Downe Seniors (incl Kate) had gone to it and enjoyed it tremendously; and you'll never guess what it was: The Beaux' Strategem! It was very well done, and we thought it very good - not played so bawdily as I thought it might be, which was just as well. They cut a lot of it, and strangely not the same cuts as the Delhi production: you can tell Alan that they cut his whole part out!

J.W.'s bicycle has got a puncture and is in for repair today, so he has walked to jobs. Poll goes tomorrow to Smiths to be instructed on a newspaper route. She is uncertain whether to look for any other job, as she needs so much time for practicing: and I think myself that she needs a good rest too.

The Hotpoint man came this morning to look at the washing machine: luckily I had discovered in the papers that the tenants had paid last year the yearly coverage of 5 guineas which came off the rent - I suppose we told them to do it, but couldn't remember~~me~~. I say luckily because the entire spin drier has gone and has to be replaced, which will cost only £1 under the guarantee; if not, it wd have cost £23! He says he doesn't think we will get more than £20 for the machine, unless we were trading it in for a new model, when we would get maximum for the trade-in, probably between 30 and 40. I wonder if we should perhaps keep it for country later (along with ceiling airer?) - what do you think? Because £20 is very little (and minus what it wd cost to advertise it) compared to what it wd cost to get another one ever.

Tonight J.W. and I go to Carol Herschel's to see Hilda Vellacott, so I won't have a chance to write tonight and will finish this and get it posted this afternoon.

Poor you, having to deal with Bun's toys - I am sorry. I knew they were in a terrible muddle, but most I think are for junking or giving away (But as I said before, not to Autumn Fair (except worst ones) but for the toy stall of the chrysanthemum show.) I will consult Bun gently when I go to get him from school, and ask him what he wants back, and will add to this later.

Yesterday afternoon we went to Swinley (J.W. driving, which terrified me as he is not used to this car, which goes much more powerfully than the driving instructor's car), and got his golf shoes back, thank goodness, in the original box as returned there by Mark. So that's all right, except that you have an extra pair. (Maybe one of your golf cronies wants them?)

I have received and noted your letters to Bank, to Leslie, and to Fahey (which has crossed his letter that I sent on to you on Sat, so will no doubt write again to him.)

- 3 -

Continued 4 p.m. after getting Bun from school - he is in very good form, and waiting for an answer from you to his letter!

I have questioned him on toys, by the devious expedient of asking what toys he remembers there that he wants. The things that he says he wants are

bicycle
books
roller skates
machine gun (but not wooden rifle)
Secret Sam gun (in black case)
Giraffe (the big stuffed one that used to belong to Polly. He doesn't remember any other stuffed toys there, though I know there were some. I think others can be disposed of, except possibly that white sleeping pussy cat which he was very fond of. And if you see any other sentimental ones, you might ask me abou t them.)
Plastic submarine (this was slightly broken, and you may feel it not worthwhile, though he says he wd like it if it still floats. It had little pellets to go with it, but the plug to hold the pellets in is what broke. If it doesn't float without that plug, junk it and he'll forgive you.)
Train sets: Not the small heavy metal one in the round tin, which he says he doesn't want. But he thinks he does want the wooden train set, which is in a wooden box, with a little wooden train (I think in the same box). There is another small wooden train in four pieces (natural wood but water-colour-painted by Bun) which also fits on that track - if it's not too broken bring it too.

(Brick box - keep of course as we agreed previously)

Other things:
Cowboys and Indians - definitely not wanted.
Cars: Bun says he wants any small cars that aren't broken (my impression is that at least half are too broken to be worth keeping), and especially he wants the James Bond car which he thinks is there, if you can identify it (It's a small Dinky or Corgi with an ejector seat and a pop-up roof (Ithink, but I think the roof was broken off. He'd like that one, broken

[the reverse is blank]

roof or no.)

Ball-in-cup, which I mentioned to you before: Bun tells me that it was broken (I had forgotten), and unworkable. But he agrees with me that it was the best toy he had there, and he would love to have one: so if you saw one in Cottage~~s~~ Industries (about Rs.2 worth), it wd make a very good Xmas present for him. You didn't ack my comment on it before, do you know what I mean? Wooden ball on ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ string attached to wooden cup on handle. It really is a most excellent toy, and besides would be perfect for confined space of Kelso Place (in garden!), so do look out for one.

Bun can't remember any other toys there, nor can I. I think you'll find that most of the rest is junk. The cowboy hat and Davy Crockett hat he has no attachment to at all - they were J.W.'s anyway, and it is high time they were junked. I agree about keeping brass animals and Agra things. If any other queries please ask. I am sorry about all the toy mess, I do agree it's awful to sort out: but just get rid of them according to this list.

Now I must stop if I am to get this to post, as I'll now drive J.W. around to Mr. Propert to collect his bike. We are due at C. Herschel's at 6.30, which seems an ungodly hour!

Lots of love from
Pie.

I don't think you'll find that Bun's toys remaining amount to much - apart from books -- once you've got them cleared through - but wd be interested to hear about how much space they take up.

St. Albans,
Friday,July 19

Dear Pie,

Thank you so much for your letters of 16th and of Weds. afternoon, which came this morning, as well as Polly's letter (which had been sent on from school after all). I like to get nice talk-y letters like your latest, and am just sorry that by the time I get down to writing letters there are usually so many points of business that there isn't time just to talk on. You keep asking how I am ("in myself" I suppose you mean!) - I should have thought that you could tell from my letters that I am all right, though I do not at all like being alone, esp. for going to bed. But Poll says that you wrote to her that you think I am "overstrained and distraught" - that does make me cross , as I don't think I am, and J.W. and Poll say (at least to me) that they don't think so either.

However, this isn't destined to be a talk-y letter, I'm afraid, owing to our events of last evening, which J.W. has just written to you about. In case you are reading this first, the sad fact is that he banged our car into a stationary car in South Ascot, last evening as we were on our way to Carol Herschel's. He had been driving me about perfectly well, and it wasn't a crowded time of day, being nearly 7 at night, and he was driving all right - I really cannot think how it happened. He was in fact going quite slowly and about to overtake the stationary car, but completely misjudged length of our bonnet and width of our car (which are of much greater dimension than the instructor's car), and without any excuse at all (I was saying "Brake!", and he was, but thought he had more space to spare), he biffed the right hand tail light and bumper of a parked mini, and biffed correspondingly our left hand front bumper and lights, which bashed in amazingly easily. Anyway, he then pulled up beyond out of the way, and we found the owner, a gentle maiden lady (or woman I suppose I should say) who had in fact been approaching her car on foot at the time. She was remarkably calm about it, so thank goodness we didn't have any dreadful scenes of recrimi-nations. It was plainly and solely our fault, which I of course said, and apologized; and neither she nor I had much idea about procedure. But a local chap came

up and said quite rightly that what we should do was exchange names, addresses, license numbers etc. and our insurance company names. Which we did, and of course I rang Mr. Clarke first thing this morning and asked if that was right and how did we proceed. So he is sending me a claims form to fill out, which he says I can sign on your behalf, as he'll vouch that you are in Delhi, and that I must get an estimate from the garage to forward to him. So I rang Mr. Barnes and took the car down to him - alas, it looks like being a bigger job that I had hoped, as there is a very considerable dint in the front left above and around the light; and in short he said it is more than they can do and he took it along to the garage in Camberley that they deal with for big repairs and is getting an estimate from them, which he promises to let me have tomorrow. Oh, dear, and he also thinks it will be at least a week's work.

I do blame myself, dreadfully, because I feel I shouldn't have let J.W. drive at all: but his instructor has been telling him he should get more practice by driving our car; and he did seem to be doing all right, and getting practice and confidence, and feeling much more grown up as a result. He was of course absolutely shattered and shaking like a leaf afterwards, and talking about giving up learning to drive, which would be a very bad thing: so I let him drive part way back from C. Herschel's, but only on the country lane bit, and was O.K. But I've now told him he is to have more lessons with his man, and stick to that car (anyway it has dual controls, which was the maddening thing last night because I couldn't seize control when it was needed). Anyway I guess it has been a very useful lesson to him, because if anything he was beginning to feel that it was perfectly easy to drive. But the only danger I think is that he doesn't feel psychologically so much loss of confidence that he gives up trying to learn. (Another nice man came up to him last night and said, "Dont worry so about it, it's all experience isn't it, and it happens to most people." A dreadful thought - L-drivers are certainly a menace on the roads, but I cannot think how they can ever learn otherwise.) So I think that it would be as well if you wrote to him more in sorrow than in anger, as he is feeling quite worried and upset about it as it is.

But alas it is going to prove expensive, I am afraid: not only will we lose our no-claims bonus, but Mr. Clarke says almost certainly the insurance will not pay the first £25 of damage, as that is usual when a provisional-license or young driver is driving. (Mr. Barnes makes a first very rough estimate of about £60, which seems astronomical for a few dints, but these things are terribly expensive.) I will know more about it in a day or so - and needless to say I shan't let J.W. drive again for a good long time, though I don't tell him this bluntly. The whole thing is maddening, not least the loss of use of the car for a week while it is being repaired. Luckily that will be after Bun is on holiday, and luckily it could have been so much worse. But it's still bad enough. J.W. has offered to forego his pocket money for the summer hols in part reparation (they had talked me into pocket money, even though they are earning, on the grounds that the pocket money is for being helpful, which indeed they are, as they have offered to do the cooking, and are generally being very helpful, as is Bun in his small way). I think you had better give a view on this: I think myself that, esp. as J.W. is earning quite a bit of money, he should make some contribution to the expenses which will ensue, and contributing his pocket money wd be a decent gesture. Do you agree?

Now, as I think that is somewhat exhausted, on to other news: we went on to C. Herschel's, which we discovered was drinks (a washy wine cup) not dinner - I somehow suspected it from the early hour, but could swear she said to me dinner when first inviting us! There we met Hilda Vellacott who was a ratherformidable dame of over 80: she had just been staying at Heathfield, where her niece is headmistress. Otherwise there were there the usual lot you would expect: the Shorlands, and those two girl nieces, Sarah and Charlotte, and a rather frightful dried-up ex-military couple. I was put up to talk to the hard-faced wife about Africa, as she had just been visiting her off-spring in Zambia. I asked her what it was like in Zambia now - "Dreadful, absolutely dreadful," she shuddered. I asked why. "Oh, just dreadful, for one thing I couldn't bear to be ruled by the blacks. Well, no one could bear to be ruled by the blacks, could they?" After which I didn't really feel I had anything else to say to her - but I kept

being taken over to her, by Mrs. Toogood for example, to talk to her on the grounds that I had once been in Malawi. It was that kind of evening.

This morning Mr. Rattenbury rang up, having had your letter, with my note in which I said I'd heard nothing from his mortgage surveyors. He said he had chased them up again this morning, and their head office said they had passed on the papers to their *r*egional office covering this area and were surprised that the man hadn't yet been, and that he should be here any day. They do seem extraordinarily vague, but I hope that they will turn up soon.

Today was Bun's school sports - he ran (with a little girl as partner) in the 3-legged race (badly) and in an obstacle race (quite well), and seemed to quite enjoy it. I went to watch, though it involved working out a complicated program with Mr. Barnes, who had to take our car to Camberley: but as they were fetching another car from Camberley, it all worked out rather neatly, with the Halfpenny's men dropping me in our car at the school, taking our car on, and then leaving it for me afterwards at school, coming back here in the car they were picking up, and picking up their original car which they'd left in our drive the while. Very cox and box!

Thank goodness for peace and quiet tonight! Tomorrow Lois and P. ~~and~~ and P. come. J.W. and Polly have been busy this evening making cakes and mayonnaises! And we are now going to see the first prom concert of the year on the TV, which is at last operating again. (I heard a lady in the electricians in Sunninghill this afternoon telling them that she could hire from Bracknell a 23-inch TV getting all three channels for 8/11 a week, so I note that we are not getting a good bargain from Pack's - however at this point it doesn't seem worthwhile to change.)

I have been going through things trying to work out approximate prices of items the Rattenburys might be wanting to buy. I had thought to find a St. Albans file of expenditures and receipts which might include, for example, the bill for the fitted carpet in the downstairs hall. To my surprise I think there is a file missing: there is a "St. Albans - Vol. I - Dec. 1960 to April 1962 - Miscellaneous admin, current maintenance, etc." but there is no Vol. 2. Surely there should be? (There are buying and selling, and letting, files, but

no general admin after 62.) It didn't by any chance go to Delhi? I can't think why, except that Vol. 2 might be up to the present. The St. Albans file you brought back from Delhi was the special one on letting. If by any chance it is in Delhi, it might be a help if you glanced through and let me have anything of purchases (like that carpet-laying, which was a Stollery bill) which may be salable. Not to worry if you haven't got, or if it's difficult. But surely we must have that file somewhere?

This afternoon, after Bun's sports, I took J.W. and Bun up to Sunninghill to have their hair cut, which worked out rather well, as J.W. took Bun to the barber while I went about looking at prices of things like gas fires and electric heaters, etc. And they both look much better with haircuts.

Now I must stop and go to attack Cash's name[14] tapes for Bun's Dragon clothes while watching the T.V. I've let it slip while TV has been out of action, as I only like to sew while being otherwise amused. So I'll stop now to get this posted at the same time as J.W.'s, and will report in my next on the Clarks' visit.

Oh - Harry Norris has reported on his man, who wants to meet me at Kelso Pl. to go over the things, possibly with a builder at the same time. I am trying to arrange a time for next week. Jill and Mummy are just back from Switzerland, where they had a good time, and the Ellingworths are just about to move to Kent.

Lots of love from
Pie

I can just hear your teeth
gnashing as you read this
about the car!

[14] orig. "names"; and "attack" might perhaps have meant to be "attach".

St. Albans,
Sunningdale, Berks.

Tuesday, July 23

Dear Pie,

This is ridiculous little paper[15], but the children seem to have finished my big pad!

Thank you very much for your letter of 18 July (midnight) and of 19 July (office)- what peculiar times you do take to write! I thought I did always, or usually anyway, acknowledge your letters.

You'll have heard from both J.W. and Polly by now about the Clarks' visit, which was excellent but too short. We had great fun, and we certainly enjoyed it.

I wish that I had a black bag and a clipboard like you - the absence of both makes my sorting things out all that much more difficult. I keep writing my memos on bits of scratch paper, only to find often that Bun has pinched them to make paper darts with!

Very busy at the moment, and there is ever so much to do. Yesterday(Monday) after sloshing through the week's wash, incl all Poll's dirty clothes from Downe, without benefit of the spin drier which hasn't been repaired yet, I had the Sirl man in the afternoon to make an estimate

[15] super-extra small - 13.7 x 17.8cm (5 3/8 x 7 in)

for the move. Haven't yet received estimate, but no doubt will in a day or so.

Today I kept Bun out of school (did I tell you I was going to?)) to go to Harrods and get the remaining bits of his Dragon uniform, and to meet Molli Cloake and small John for lunch at Harrods. We had a nice,though quick,lunch, and the boys mostly stared at each other! J.Cloake, who is a very self-possessed and quiet boy, says they will both probably be in Keppler together next term, and he seems to be looking forward to being Bun's Pater. Bun was rather in the mood of not wanting to hear anything about Dragons till he gets there - I think he's being an ostrich.

After lunch we went to Kelso Place, where I'd arranged to meet Harry's Wimpy man, who is a very high-class type. He was most helpful, though he expressed great puzzlement over the damp in the hall, and said he doubted if he'd agree with Peter Cox. I haven't all the correspondence from Cox yet, but spoke again tonight to Gifford about it, who swears he believes Cox that it's just a question of replastering or repainting the bits that they didn't do - he says definitely the damp is only on the parts their man didn't replaster. When I get all the papers I will consult Northcott, the Wimpy man, further. I'm fairly philosophical about it - that is, I think it is a long-term problem which probably won't be solved overnight. Northcott will also consult builders for estimates - we went through the things that need doing,

all really the basic essentials as required for mortgage, plus such essentials as caulking all window sashes, lowering fore-court in front as Wimpey surveyor recommended (to bring it lower like neighbouring houses, and avoid strong possibility of damp entering drawing room floor), and raising slightly a bit of the back flagstoning in the passageway area outside, where water is collecting - it wants lifting slightly and tilting towards drain so that it will all drain away. (Perhaps you'd rather do this, but it looks like a heavy builders' job, and it's appalling how the water collects there. What do you think?) Anyway, for the essential repairs, not counting any decorating, he thought it might approach £1500. Golly! But I must say he was hesitant to give any guess at all, and may have guessed generously, and said he'd have to see how much less any builder would estimate. I reckon we have got to go ahead and get these real essentials done properly, though - but it doesn't look as if it will leave us any over for frills, does it?

Rattenbury's mortgage surveyor comes at last tomorrow morning - I pray he won't find anything ghastly wrong here!

Also Vicky comes tomorrow morning to stay till Friday, and Fred Campbell on Friday for the weekend. This is Bun's last week of school!

Barbadee Meyer rang today when I

was in London, and spoke to Poll, asking us all over for tea on Aug. 15th, when she has got all the Elliots coming. Coincidence! - We have accepted.

What a fascinating tale about D. Turpin - doesn't it sound like a provocation? Has any more come of it? - Of course I wouldn't dream of repeating. If not provocation, Scott!

How maddening of Bracknell to produce the wrong car part, and after all the looking up and checking they did. But there's not much point in my wasting time giving them hell, unless you can send me the part so that I can go in and make them give me the 12/6 back. I can scarcely credit it's the wrong piece, they looked it up so carefully and swore it was right, and I made them double-check; but of course they are only untutored louts.

Bun was very pleased to hear that Gusain has got his letter. Re Poll, Kate doesn't know if she is coming back next term or not - if she does well enough on her A's she'll come back to do university entrance. But how scandalous that Mrs. W. admits to the Elliots that Downe House can't prepare Vicky properly in history, and she their scholarship pupil too.

You'll have got J.W.'s good report by now - Poll's hasn't come yet. Joanna Hennings has been again on telephone to me with endless queries about clothes! Hennings has gone on an office trip to

West Africa (Commonwealth parts) for a fortnight, I don't quite know why.

John Cloake came rushing into Harrods while we were having lunch today, sweating slightly and dashing, to give Molli a list of Harrods things that haven't arrived with their Alltransport packers. They are in throes of getting away; he asked how you were. They go across France to Genoa, and then by boat to Beirut - lucky!

Now must stop,as I'm slightly exhausted after London all day (pouring with rain too!), and want to go and sit quietly by TV for a bit.

Contd. Weds morning - With a great blow: just as I was expecting Rattenbury's surveyor to arrive, he rang up and said that he had been instructed not to proceed, as Mr. Rattenbury was not going ahead with the purchase! I was staggered, as you may well imagine, and in interval of going to fetch Vicky from the station, have rung up Philip, who has as yet heard nothing about this, and also Frost - Roberts is on holiday until next Monday, as I knew before, but I spoke to his colleague, who said he could scarcely believe it, but would get onto Rattenbury and speak to him as they had heard nothing, and should have heard first, and I am now waiting for him to let me know what he finds out. I suppose it is theoretically possible that Rattenbury may be changing his mortgage company and is proceeding under different auspices,

so it's just as well to get some explanation of this. But I'm afraid it's likely that Rattenbury has folded for one reason or another, and as soon as I hear from Frost (or before if he fails to get onto Rattenbury quickly), I will ring all the agents again and tell them to sell the house. Quickest! Philip typically already says that there now isn't time to get anyone else to sign a contract in time.

So now I need your advice on the points I asked you before as speculation! But first, if we should find a quick purchaser who would make a n offer, how low would we be prepared to go if it would mean not transferring the dollars? Please tell me your views definitely on this. I wd not be surprised to hear again from Chambers with a ridiculously low offer - he has been in residence this past weekend, though I've not seen him to speak to. If we don't find a quick purchaser, or the offer is lower than you think we should accept, and I've got to go ahead and transfer the dollars, shall we go on continuing to try to sell, or shall we withdraw temporarily? We have, as I said before, just about enough furniture to do two houses, and we could count this as country and holidays, and indeed might find when we go abroad again that we would rather keep this as a base and sell Kelso. But I've gone through these points in a letter before, and you refused to answer them. So please do now.

Seeming slightly more academic now, Sirl's estimate has come this morning: it is exactly half of Hibbs' estimate!, being £53 for the removal to London, and £21 for the things to go to Farningham. That seems much more sensible, but as we are in the melting pot again I shan't conclude anything yet. If we haven't sold St. Albans, I think I shan't remove the furniture from here to Kelso until the builders are finished - doesn't that seem sensible? And if we have overlap, I can move a good lot when I drive up back and forth. But this is all talking off my head hastily.

Have had Mr. Simmonds this morning - I had noted that after heavy rains recently that the drain pipe by kitchen door, hidden behind privet hedge, seemed to be leaking or blocked up - it was indeed more than leaking, it proved to be utterly corroded away at the back, so that the rain water has been pouring down the side of the house instead of going down the drain. He has had to replace a piece with a section of plastic pipe, and says that all is well now, and no harm has been done, though it will take a week or so for the bricks to dry out. Perhaps as well that the surveyor didn't come and report that the wall was soaked with damp. The only nuisance is that Simmonds had to dig up a good piece of the bed under the privet (quite rightly) to be sure that the soakaway pipes were all right and not blocked, so it[16] looks a little messy but will soon grow again.

[16] orig "it's looks"

Later, 4 p.m. after fetching Bun: Philip Sheppard has just rung to say that he has been on to Rattenbury's solicitors to enquire, and has discovered that they have written to him (which he will get tomorrow) to say that R's purchaser has failed to sell his house so R looks forward to an indefinite delay and sees no prospect of signing a contract with us in anything like the next three weeks that you had written to him about, so he thought it was fairer to withdraw now. Perhaps it is, but perhaps your letter has had a bad effect! But I expect it is better to know now, in fact, and I will get agents cracking again to find another purchaser, but Philip will write in answer, after getting the other solicitors' letter tomorrow, in a conciliatory vein inviting R. to come back at us if he succeeds in selling his house. We can't do more.

Coincidentally (almost too pat) Chambers next door has just rung up to ask us over for a drink tonight - I've said I'll take J.W. (to support me!). I do wonder if he is going to make some proposition, or if he is just being sociable. We will see - I would like to encourage him to make a reasonable offer for the house! Will let you know later, but I'll get this into the post to catch today's last post.

What a letter!

Lots of love from

Pie

St. Albans,
Thursday, July 25

Dear Pie,

Thank you so much for your good letter of last Sunday, which came this morning - I am just reading it over again to cheer myself up, as I feel very gloomy and alone and do not like it. And I've been sending you such disastrous letters that it's nice to get a good cheerful one from you. But I wish that you were here, and I couldn't sleep last night (?gog and worrying) and I wished so much that you were here, both to be in bed with and also to talk over all problems with.

But before I get onto problems (business!) I'd rather comment on your letter, otherwise I will run out of time and space. Bun has just tucked up (I hope) -it's his last day of school tomorrow, and J.W. and Poll and Vicki have taken a cook-out onto the heath. Vicki is a sweet child and they all seem to get on well. They have now started to make a plan to walk the Ridge all together, after the Meyers' party and before children go to Darting~~~~ton. So all is very well with all the children, which I must say is a great blessing.

Except that Poll is annoyed with you because she didn't get a letter for her - we had to censor the pages about Punjabi dress (why couldn't you have put it in a p.s. on separate sheet?), so she is in a rage. But I'd like that to be a surprise, and I do know just the colour you mean, because I tried that colour on myself, and as far as I remember it is very suitable and probably the best that you could have chosen. Well done! She should be pleased. Thank you no, I don't think that I need another; I wore it when the Clarks were here, and it was amazingly comfortable and fun, but I don't foresee a great many occasions where one can suitably wear it.

I am sorry my letters aren't so loving - it is only because there is so little time to get everything down on paper, and so much business to get through always, which is a great nuisance, and there's[17] lots of other things I should be doing now instead of writing! Poll had no letter from you about Orrea Pernel - it was me you wrote to, and you surely didn't expect me to send that one on to her, as it was as usual full of sex! Of course I passed on your messages, but that is not the

[17] orig "there's is lots"

same!

J.W. conveyed the piano stool to Waterloo by foot - by holding it by the scorpion hooked around it, which I had sensibly provided him to carry it with. It was still pretty heavy though!

The Valley End Farm people are called Styles - J.W. says he told you that. He thought the name rang a bell, but it doesn't with me? He says they are not gents, but he seems to be getting on well with them, and is weeding vegetable patches and shrubberies and being told he is doing a good job (unlike "that idiot boy" that they had before!) He seems to enjoy it, and it is healthy and earning money - I only wish that he had more time to do the same for our garden (for free!). The 10/ man does well, but I've put him altogether on hedges now, as they take a long time and need cutting well back at this season, esp. as it has been so wet, and that is very heavy work for the children. Poll has mowed the lawn (I pay her 5/ an hour for gardening work, as she hasn't got any job but the newspaper), and she is worth it, as otherwise I'd be wasting the 10/ man's time. But I've pretty well cleared stream myself - Berks. is still soaked and far too wet to mow - it is just like April. But beans and lettuces flourish, and beans are just appearing.

So sorry you found wrong type of tape recorder for children's concert - I hope you'll soon find right two-track kind, which must be fairly common.

Now about toys, again, to clear that deck:

Bicycle: I don't know what Imtiaz wd be willing to pay you. Rs. 400 I work out as more than we paid for it new, which was around 16 pounds. I looked, with Bun, in Harrods the other day at the Junior small-wheeled models, which seemed to fit Bun and he was very keen. The dame said they usually last till about 12 years old - so that would really be better for Bun to be going on with, but they cost £18-10-0. What do you think? If you can get a reasonable price from Imtiaz (?say equivalent of £10 or more), I think it wd be worth getting Bun a small-wheeled model, which will last him further on, as his old one really did only just fit him. On the other hand, once he's off to school, he won't have so much opportunity - but as status symbol he is very keen to have one. Please do as you think best, but let me know soon so that I can regularize the position.

Books - Best bring the lot on the basis you described.

I had already weeded a lot of ephemera, and Bun wants the annuals and Ruperts, etc. - they are good swapping matter for school.

Machine gun - sorry it's wrecked, I thought[18] not, but if so reject it. Secret Sam - I am sure is there unless it has been pinched - Bun put it away carefully himself. It might be in a carton of some sort? It lives in a black plastic briefcase, and you shd find it.
Stuffed toys - I agree keep good good ones. Also plastic submarine. Wooden train set - are you sure the little wooden engine and cars aren't in the box with the track? Never mind if not and lost. I agree chuck all cars if they are broken, and buy ball in cup.

Games - We are all up in arms that you have chucked Cluedo - you must find it and retrieve it, I specifically told you before to keep it (it just shows you don't read my letters). So please retrieve it out of junk, it is inexcusable to throw it just because you don't like it. Besides it will cost me about £2 to replace! Bull board - for goodness sake keep, I cannot think why you want to throw it, as it is one of the basics. The circles must be somewh~~e~~ere. Re oddments and rocks ; Bun has remembered his geode rock (the semi-circle with crystals on the inside, and is very keen to have it. I expect that comes in the category you say you have automatically kept. Wooden snakes - good for you to keep - he had forgotten about them, so will be pleasantly surprised when they turn up.

(Pause - Margo Holgate just rang up, she is better but obviously still feeling not at all well, and is hoping that she'll soon be allowed to go home and rest up there. I asked her to come down and see us, and she said she'd like to when she is more up to it, and will ring again. She's just had a card from you all (and me, she said!) in Delhi, and was very pleased.)

Re Chilean?Jap hats - you are a dope, they are our precious Mali hats. There are two with red leather trimming - one is Bun's and one is Poll's - and one natural coloured one with black trim, which is mine. And we definitely want them all. I agree they are awkward to pack, but exactly the kind of thing the Chinese packers can do well - if Hibbs can pack them, so can they. And they are not heavy.

No word from Kays - it wd be nice to see them, esp. those sweet girls. Letter from Lois today from Montacute,

[18] orig: "though"

all well and not flooded. We will go and stay, which will be fun.

Further Bun question: The pin board - on the whole I think it's worth keeping and bringing - and certainly those red lady-bird tin tacks which should be stuck in it. It's no problem to bring it back, and it may well be useful. Bunloves it for sticking things on.

I enclose Polly's school bill with this letter - the report I have sent under separate cover, in case they don't put it in air bag! It is all very satis, though they never say anything very much, as you know. I've kept the notices about next term dates etc. Well done to pay Pugsleys and say more fruit.

Now, after supper, back to house business: J.W. will have told you that we went over to the Chambers for a drink last night, and I must say that, contrary to my peculiar suspicions, he showed no interest in our house at all, and I think was asking us as social Sunningdale friends to impress old Capt. Needham (who lives at Sunningdale hotel) who is putting Chambers up for golf club. Chambers talks of nothing but how rich he is, and that he can't afford to live in England and must go to Malta. Old Needham was a rather awful old stick, I thought, chairman of the local Conservation Assn. (no relation of Peter). He talked of Antony Meyer and how the locals hope he'll get Chertsey, and he knew Michael Waterfield's restaurant in Kent. Chambers cross-examined us on house position (and I said it looked as if our purchaser was in difficulties and we were looking for another but were meanwhile going ahead with Kelso Place) but didn't seem much interested. His children are quite sweet and I daresay find him trying. He pours a very strong whiskey (me unaccustomed!), and after an hour I got up dip-smartly and made adieus on grounds of having to get back to Bunny. Noticed later that Old Needham stayed till 10:30, having no doubt got supper out of them!

I really cannot understand Rattenbury, but think he struck a genuine snag. Philip has had letter from his solicitors and is replying in conciliatory vein, but saying we are offering house again. Acc to Frost man substituting for Roberts, Rattenbury said he didn't like being pressured by your letter and in any case couldn't sign contract soon because of his purchasers' snag. But he has rung me up since I sent letter on and discussed when the surveyor would come, and didn't complain of your

letter, and it must have been after that that he discovered he hadn't after all sold his house. He seems to me have collapsed very suddenly and feebly, either because of snag or because perhaps of second thoughts on buying this house - cancelling the surveyor at the last moment certainly indicates loss of heart in some way. Perhaps I shouldn't have sent your letter on - though I wrote civilly with it and we talked civilly on the phone together after that - but in any case if he were going to continue dragging his feet and signing nothing it is probably just as well to know about it. I have spoken to agents and will continue chivvying them, but time is getting short and I would like specific reactions to all this, and what we had best plan apart from the pious hope that we will find a buyer ~~xx~~ in time.

In this connection, as well as in general, I got on to Harry Fowler this morning: I had written briefly to his hotel about the time he was due to arrive and had rather expected to hear from him, but time has been going so quickly that I only no~~w~~w realized his time must be nearly up, so I seized phone and got through to him. He allowed to having been very busy, and is leaving tomorrow, and no time to come down here to see us, and vaguely asked if I was going to be in London today or tomorrow, but without inviting me specifically to anything and saying he was pretty booked up with appointments all the time. And as it really wd have been difficult for me to go up at the mo~~men~~t (Vicky here and Freddy coming tomorrow, and Bun still to be fetched and carried from school), we just had a chat on the phone (re your comment on sex, he's not my type anyway, as I thought you knew!). He reports Grace and family all well, and about to go off to the Bahamas, and he may be over (probably with Grace) in the winter, and he sent you many warm messages and asked how you were. So we had a gossip, and he asked how our house position was, so I told him, and said that we might need some of my dollars if we don't sell. His advice, for what it is worth, was as follows: try not to use the capital. He says English banks <u>are</u> lending money all the time against dollar securities, and that he thinks I should talk to our bank, because that might be preferable to transferring the dollars, even with the interest payments on the loan. (This is obviously to cover the possibility of a further £ devaluation - in which

case I should imagine the money saved by holding dollars wd more than pay the interest. But he went on to say that sterling looks pretty good at the moment.) I know we don't want to be involved in heavy payments of interest all over the place (though you are always the one to say borrow money and keep your investments), but I think anyway it won't do any harm if I go up at the beginning of the week and discuss all the possibilities with Mr. Bayzand, who was very nice to me down the phone before and offered to advise me at any time. In any case, he will have to be brought into the picture of what we are doing, and I might as well get his advice. He will probably tell me that Harry is talking nonsense! But I do put it to you as a first thought that we should probably transfer as few dollars as possible, and that it might be better to sell some of our sterling investments for the benefit of hoarding more dollars. One doesn't like to think gloomily of more £ devaluation, but if it did happen we'd lose on the sterling and gain on the dollars.

Anyway, please give me your first reactions to this. I shan't write any more now, because it is getting late and I am too tired to make much sense. But I don't like going up to bed alone and wish you were here. Even with the typewriter, it is too slow writing letters and I cannot get it all down

All much love from Pie

St. Albans,
Sunday, July 28

Dear Pie,

It's after lunch on Sunday and I'm feeling soporific, as it is at last a warm and sunny day, and everyone is beavering about their affairs: Polly mowing the lawn in Berkshire (at last dry enough), Bun playing with his superball, and J.W. and Fred Campbell playing a card game on the terrace.

Everyone and everything in short is flourishing and perfectly all right - except the house, and I'm not going to worry about that just for the moment.

It is such a joy to be here and see the children growing up and being so sweet and helpful, I wouldn't miss it for anything. We had a very good time with Vicki here - she was a sweet guest, and got on very well with all of us. After the 3 older ones had their cook-out the other night, they slept the night on the heath! I didn't tell you before, because in fact I thought they'd give up the idea and come creeping back! But they had a glorious sleep out under the stars, as it was a warm enough and dry night, and came back feeling like the raggle-taggle-gypsies-o (and looking rather like that too). Fred Campbell arrived on Friday evening, Vicki meanwhile having got permission to stay a day longer - so they all rushed up on the golf course Fri. evening, the boys playing and the girls trailing and making like agge-wallahs. Then back for bridge, Fred and Vicki keen but not expert, so I acted as adviser while sewing Bun's Cash's name tapes on. (An endless job.) Sat. morning all the Elliots came by for elevenses to pick up Vicki, on their way to Peters-field to visit cousins. It was very nice to see them - Anthony doesn't look any different at all, and is very nice (so is his wife, whose name I can never unfortunately remember). Their small Thomas, who got on very well with Bun, is probably going to be in Stradlings (they were very vague about which house, but said it was with the Hoskens). He is nearly nine, but Bun seemed to hold his own - they rushed off to play by the stream. Anthony says he hears of much upset in the office from amalgamation. They do not seem to be looking forward very keenly to W'ton - in fact I think she is wishing they cd be here. They said how nice our house was (so did Clarks) and

wouldn't we be sorry to sell it. Their three daughters will all be at Downe from September.

J.W. and Poll and Vicki have made another good plan - Vicki will come here for the night after we all go to the Meyers on the 15th, and on the 16th the three of them will take the train to Swindon and walk the ridgeway. They are all very keen, and it should be good for them - provided they have shoes that fit properly!

Fred Campbell, who leaves in about an hour to go back to Cambridge, is taller than J.W., and a bit shaggy but not too much. He left school end of last year, and has been in Paris studying Russian this Spring, and is now at a summer course in Cambridge, where he goes properly in Oct. to study Russian and French. He smokes a pipe and considers himself very grown up! He is very keen on golf, and he and J.W. have been playing a lot. It is great fun to be here, and J.W. and Poll able to have their friends, and they are so sweet and helpful and have been doing the meals that it really ~~xxxx~~ isn't much trouble,to me at least, for them to have guests. What a good thing to be here at this stage; and how well it is turning out to have J.W. 2 years older than Poll!

We rang Paddock for her birthday on Friday, but haven't had a chance to go over with presents because of having the two guests here. She sounded a little cheesed, and J.W. thought so too, and thinks that we are neglecting her~~x~~, and says she misses J.W. and Poll. But they have been so busy here, and Bun in school till now, that there really hasn't been a chance to get over since the beginning of the hols. Did I tell you that Poll has taken over a second newspaper route (an easy one down Charters and Devenish and ending up here at home), so she is now getting £2 a week. J.W. seems to have settled down well at his Valley End job, and is enjoying it. To tell the truth, I think it is so much healthier for J.W. and Poll to be here, and working, and having their friends, than it is for them to be at Paddock, that I feel guilty that maybe we have neglected Mummy - but after all it is less than 10 days since she got back from Switzerland, and before that she had Shirley and co. and wasn't keen to have us; so I shan't worry about it. We will go over as soon as we can, but Mummy says this week is no good, because she has Christine Murray-Allen

coming and then is going to Cambridge with her~~x~~ for the rest of the week.

Short interval for inspecting garden: Poll is just finishing Berkshire, which looks miles better for being trimmed. In fact the whole garden looks super now - what a difference the sun makes.

Your letters of the 23rd and 24th came yesterday, and Bun was very pleased to get his letter. Poll full of complaints because she hasn't had one.! How annoying, about the Ford switch part - I will get one in Bracknell, and complain. I can't find receipt though, I probably threw it away. I will see how big it is forsending. Good that you've found bullboard circles - keep it, as I already have said. I hope that you've rescued Cluedo too! All your news sounds fine, but I do not miss the climate or atmosphere in Delhi - I wish that you were here, though, because it would be much more fun, as well as easier to discuss all the business, which I suppose I am going to have to start writing about in a minute.

Our car is not yet in for repair, ~~x~~as it hasn't been vetted from the insurance yet. Mr. Barnes says they should do it soon; it is lucky that it is going meanwhile. I'm horrified that the next letters we get from you will be full of your reactions to gloomy car and Rattenbury news!

About the house: I note your comments that Fahey said the two mortgages cd run together for a few months, but I do not see any definite letter to this effect on the file, only a letter from Fahey said that it might be possible and that he would let you know in a week or so. Do you want me or Philip to check up on this? Unless we have some fairly definitely interested purchaser for house, we may not gain much if anything by carrying the two mortgages. I will go this week and talk to Bayzand about our monies - but I'm sure he'll probably say that Harry Fowler is talking impossibilities. I do not myself in any case mind transferring the dollars - in fact in a lot of ways I think it wd be a good idea. I went in to Giddys on Friday and talked to them, as they had produced the most prospective purchasers before: they say they'll do their best, but that houses on the main are going very slowly now. They haven't yet sold Brook House. Roberts of Frost will be back from holiday tomorrow, and I will speak to him too. I wonder if he

will attempt to get Rattenbury back on hook. I suspect Rattenbury of just welshing and not being interested any more - but I also have a nasty suspicious mind, and wonder if R. will come back at us later, if he does sell his house, and make us a lower offer if we haven't sold this. Then what? In any case, I hope you will have answered by now my question about how low an offer we would be prepared to accept, if we should get one. My feeling is that if we got a definite offer, with contract signed, before having to transfer the dollarss, we might accept a bit lower to have it done - what do you think? On the other hand, once we have transferred the dollars, I don't think we should lower price, and indeed I don't see how the value of this house can fail to go up (albeit gradually owing to road and semi-detached) just as all house prices go up - and I see now, after thinking about it since R's defection, all the advantages of sticking with this and calling it our country cottage for the next year or so anyway - a) it works and is in order, b) we have enough furniture and gear for it (barring a very few exceptions), c) it has ample space for all our gear, d) the children are very attached to golf and heath and from that point of view it is excellent outlet from London, e) with the amount of work to be done at Kelso we will not want to embark on a country ruin, requiring also a lot of work, for some time to come, f) of course the garden here, which is in good order and doesn't require too much maintenance work, and g) the possibility (I put it no higher) that we might in the end discover we would rather keep this as a base when we go abroad rather than keeping Kelso Pl. You can no doubt knock down all these arguments if you like, and add on to the other side the expense of keeping this as well as Kelso; but in fact we may have to call this country cottage, at least until we sell it. Poll and Bun are delighted at idea we might not give it up yet - J.W. slightly less so, because he visualises a West Country cottage; but'I've pointed out that that is an unlikely possibility at this stage, as too far for the nearly fortnightly takings-out from Dragons. This wd also serve for spring and summer school hols too, which a further cottage wouldn't, because you always could commute from here in the good weather, and I don't think I'd much like going to a country cottage for school hols if it meant separation - I guess we are having enough of that now, and I don't like it.

But to get back to basics, if I transfer the dollars, how much do you think I should transfer? Philip's letter of 19th July sets out the figures clearly, adding to 7,435. In addition to this we would need 1,565, presumably, to repay the bank loan of the deposit, which we must now be paying interest on. Added to this wd be the repairs of Kelso (I've not yet had estimates) and the necessaries for Kelso (viz, hall and stair carpeting, which the Giffords do not and never have had, so I can't buy it off them.) I would rather of course cash my £300 investment here, which you have just written to Leslie about, to save at least £300 worth of dollars. Are you prepared to use any of your investments to finance repairs and fittings of Kelso, or do you want me to transfer enough to do it all? (Yes, I know that I needn't transfer more than absolutely necessary as we go along, and should leave the maximum possible invested for as long as possible, so you needn't tell me that). But I'd like a general line of guidance from you at least.

Re Kelso, we will need hall and stair carpetings, kitchen fitments, and a certain amount of curtains (none here will fit there). Curtains cd be done gradually, except 2 ground floor windows. No furniture needed, of course - and we have ample of pictures, ornaments, etc. If we haven't sold St. Albans, and want to go on using it, or rent it, we'd need an extra cooker (?second-hand cheap), possibly a fridge, but not necessarily till next hot weather, and one double bed for us (master bedroom) - could do without that by using camp beds when children here, but for letting we need a bed in that room, and I think fairly cheap at second-hand or in auctions. Nothing else needed, so you see how well equipped we are for two houses! And I think that if I move into Kelso the furniture that is going there while St. Albans is still on the market, it will not look derelict or bare.

I must stop now if I am to catch the evening post. Have interrupted this in the middle to take Fred to bus. Children admit they are tired after week of guests, but say that it has been fun. We have Joan coming for the day tomorrow, which Bun is much looking forward to. I will consult Terry, who comes in the evening to fetch her, about carpets.

I enclose Bun's school report, which seems satis though it doesn't say much. If you think it wd be any use for Dragons, will you send it on to Inky? I think however he said he wd write to Mr. Morris for info, didn't he? This report anyway doesn't give any sort of guidance for placing Bun.

No time, I am about to miss the post. I wonder when this will get to you. I wish that you were here. Thanks for sending dining table measurements - I will tell J. Hennings - she has been on the phone to me three times since with other questions!

Lots of love
from Pie

St. Albans,
Monday, July29

Please return photos for book some time - no hurry.

Dear Pie,

Here is our latest lot of photos,which I have now got and send to you to cheer you up. Not that they are very good, but~~=~~ they are reminiscent. You'll see that I took 2 of Kelso Place - for future reminiscence, or possibly to guide you with a Christmas card, though I honestly don't find the facade very good for a card. You wondered if you wd do a card - I think definitely you should, as it will be indication to all of our change of address from Delhi - but if you could think of a good subject I think a last one on India would be a good idea. It's always hard to know what to do when just changing positions. I suppose Barambdeo or Boom wd be too out of date? Perhaps trite Taj or like as a final fling at India?

I'm very cross indeed with you, because of the snippy way you refused to answer my "speculative questions" which I put you some weeks ago about what we should do if Rattenbury fell through. For speculative read intuitive - and I wish that you had answered to give me a line, because I am now groping mentally in the dark and not sure of your feelings - except that you wrote to Philip before you left that if we didn't sell St.A. we wd keep it for weekends and holidays. I am now very pro this, and esp. if I transfer dollars I think we might as well make a virtue of necessity and actively keep this - in fact I wonder if it is fated that in the end we will retire here! Bun and Poll wd certainly be much relieved of mind if we didn't sell, and for Bun especially I think it wd be a marvelous outlet, or "lung" as you may like to call it. He and I are going to go into the stream tomorrow and clear it and verges and repair small rock damage by waterfall - I had to laugh at just getting your letter saying "R. can do that." The garden is really lovely now, and has so much of our history in it.

Have just seen Panorama on Pope's new doctrine re pill - Antonia Fraser horrified. And will watch the 24 hours which promises interviews with scientologists - have you caught that in the papers? - They sound most peculiar, and we've all been agog to know what it's all about. So this won't be a long letter, and I'm not going to go over all the points again and complain

that I haven't heard from you, because it wd only be too out of date by the time it gets to you.

This afternoon I took all the children over to have tea with Joan - we were supposed to be bringing her over here, but in the end she didn't want to come because she has some complication with a painful back - actually I don't think it's serious, but she always makes a great fuss whenever anything feels amiss with her. Anyway the children wanted to see her, and I wanted to use her sewing machine, which I have used to good purpose in sewing Bun's boot bags for Dragons, and shortening the sleeves of his (inherited) shirts. Thank goodness for all the kept Dragon clothes, and also the second-hand ones we got at Dragons, because the very few bits and pieces (6 small things only) that I had to get for him at Harrods came to over £12.

I trust that you are keeping and bringing my old sewing machine - I am lost without it.

Poll has just gone to wash her hair - she is beginning to respond to vanity now, and it only needs Bun or J.W. or me to say she has rat-tails for her to go off to hair-wash. J.W. is rather tired after so much visitors last week - he went off to newspaper route this morning and said he was quitting, but instead they offered him a shorter and later route so he agreed to try that. I think he is really enjoying his gardening job, and reports that they say he is quite professional!

I shan't write more now. I hope that you remember that I have got to write a cheque for Dartington for about £80 when the children go.

I miss you and wish that you were here -

Lots of love
from Pie.

P.S. Joanna Hennings rang - again - this evening to thank me for dining table measures which I had sent here - and specially asked me profusely to thank you for getting them. And asked me a lot more questions to boot!

St. Albans,
July 31, Weds.

Dear Pie,

Have just come back from London from talking to Mr. Bayzand, and want to get down on paper what we discussed while it's fresh.

But first, just to say everything(else) is o.k. here, and everyone is fine. We miss you - I wish you were here. J.W. and Poll coped very well with Bun while I was in London, and in fact they all went and played a few holes of golf, which they enjoyed.

Paddock rang up last night at 10 p.m., which is most unlike her, to talk to us before she went off to Cambridge today; and she seemed so keen to see us that I said we'd go over on Sun. afternoon next, when she is just back. (We can't go in following week, as car has now been vetted for repair by insurance representative, and will be in for repair next week. It will be a great bore being without it, but at least there wasn't much special planned for next week, and it will be a relief to get it done. Estimated cost: £54 plus cost of all the parts. We have got to pay the first £25, which is awful. I commented to insurance vetter that the front seemed to crumple with a mere touch, and he said yes, they seem to have made cars thinner and thinner, and they are now just about as thin as will hold together. It's a useful but expensive lesson - not that I have ever crunched into anything, nor do I intend to!) Anyway, we will have to got to Paddock on Sun, which is not the best time.

Back to Mr. Bayzand: he was very pleasant and affable, and I had a long talk with him and learned quite a lot, and had a cup of tea. But basically what it comes down to is that it is probably best to transfer the necessary dollars and be done with it. He is quite prepared to give us a bridging loan even if there is no contract signed for this house: but the bridging would have to be limited to 6 months, and the interest is at 9½% - i.e. about £80 a month on 10,000. ~~¥¥¥~~ Not anything to be embarked on lightly - but on the other hand if we really got hold of a buyer who couldn't complete for a month or two, it would probably be worth having a loan

rather than transferring the dollars. But for longer probably not - the only point wd be in guarding against devaluation (which now seems less likely, as the pound seems going well). But he points out, by lots of complicated figures, that even if there was a further devaluation, as long as the money I transferred was in real estate, the gradually increasing value of all property should just about offset what one wd lose in case of devaluation. So it looks to me as if there is not much point in embarking on a bridging loan unless we've got an active customer coming along for this house. In general and for what it's worth, Bayzand's view was that investment in property is at least as good as any other investment; the only snag is in having to pay capital gains tax on selling a house, if[19] one owns more than one house, whereas we wouldn't have to if we sold this house before buying Kelso, or within a reasonable time of so doing: it's a complicated lot of working out what the capital gains would amount to (probably about £500 on this house if we sold it after a year), but is apparently not so high a rate of tax as what one is paying on unearned income.

Re unearned income, do you know that the rate is now 8/3 in the pound[20]? And worse than that, your income and mine have to be aggregated together, and if we get in the surtax bracket the tax on investments is 10/ in the pound. It begins to seem hardly worth while having any income! Barclays income tax experts (whom Bayzand rang up for advice while I was there, because he got so fascinated with our problem and didn't know the answers) incidentally have a different view on my tax than Mr. Andrews of Dennis Berry. You may remember that Andrews said that, regardless of my being a foreigner, because I am married to you, I <u>always</u> have to pay English income tax because your residence is officially England. The Barclays man says on the contrary when we are <u>out</u> of England I escape paying tax in England, and only have to pay English tax when we are actually living in this country. (That is a slight argument in favour of keeping as much money in dollars as poss - but on the other hand by lowering my investment in dollars it will cut down the rate and amount of income tax I have to pay in the U.S.. It's very hard to even begin to work out how it will all work out!) Anyway I see no strong arguments against transferring the dollars, and think that that is going to be the cheapest and best thing to do - unless we should get a purchaser lined up very soon for this.

[19] orig "is"
[20] 41.25%

Contd. Thursday afternoon - and I'll write quickly now, to get this into the afternoon post. Busy this morning xx taking the children, where J.W. had dentist appointment, bought Bun wooly vests and pants at Marks and Sparks, Polly slippers and material to cover the grandfather study chair, which I expect she has written to you about. A good project of rehabilitation! Then J.W. and Poll rushed off and spent all the rest of my money buying record bargains! - but they will repay me.

Thank you so much for your letter of Sat. 27July to Monday 29 July - it was a <u>great</u> relief to me to get your reactions to Rattenbury's falling-out, and to see how exactly you agree with me. I agree with all you say, and I am indeed quite happy to transfer the dollars, and I think it will all work out O.K. (You haven't forgotten, have you, that acc. to Andrews' advice it wd be well to cover me by getting you to sign a thing saying that I have lent you X pounds interest-free - as I should hate to have to pay heavy inheritance tax on that money, which will be in your name in the houses, in case you died first. But if I die first no doubt you can contrive to mislay the document! I hope that you agree with this.) I think that your figure of £7500 that you think ~~xxx~~x I should transfer will probably not do, however: Philips basic figures required is 7,435, but that does <u>not</u> include the 1565deposit which is paid but is on loan from the bank and should be repaid to avoid interest. That makes total of £9000 exactly, and does not count solicitors fees and moving charges, or any repairs to Kelso. Are you reckoning to cover those, or shall I transfer 10,000 for a start? 9000 would start us, but not cover Kelso expenses, and it's no good your saying to get it in tip-top shape unless we have the money to do it! I will see the builder in London tomorrow, and should have an estimate from him soon thereafter. I <u>hope</u> that I then won't have to go to London again for a while, as it is too difficult to go back and forth and sort out all this business during the children's hols, esp. as I'd like Bun to have happy holidays before going off to Dragons.

If we haven't sold St. Albans, or even if we sell it for later completion date, I am now proposing not to move in until builders' work is finished - Mr. Northcott says it's a great help to them to work in an empty house, though of course I could go up and see that all is going as I like, and also take the chance to move

some of our smaller things up myself gradually, to avoid so much packers' charges. But if we haven't sold here we will want to leave as much here as poss to make it look decent, and I wouldn't propose to move any pictures, as we have so many coming from Delhi - nor all the books either.

A bit more on the house: you say definitely don't withdraw it, and I agree at this point, but I still question, once I have shifted the dollars, whether we shouldn't withdraw it, at least till next year. It would, I think, make a big difference psychologically to Bun, and I think he'd go off to school more happily if he didn't feel he had to say goodbye forever to St. Albans at the same time: still this isn't over-riding, and he will adapt to whatever comes. The chances of selling once the winter sets in will probably lessen, anyway - but again perhaps not. Another point is that I'm so sick of seeing those for sale signs up, and think it might be wiser not to have them up once I have got moved to London, as a dark house marked for sale would seem to offer itself to burglars. Perhaps the agents would remove the signs and still leave the house quietly on their books.

Second point: you speak of having taken out insurance on Kelso Place (I haven't time to turn up the reference now if I'm to catch the post), but a related point is what about insurance of St. Albans as well if we haven't sold it? Are you considering this, and are you going to take action, or am I meant to?

Haven't much more time before post, and I've promised to play a game of quoits with Bun after (we bought a quoit in Windsor, and it works fine over the clothesline outside kitchen!), so I won't comment now on all your dispositions of my clothes - well done in general, I will check carefully against my list when I have time. I'm glad Carol B. can use that black-and-white evening dress: I put it for disposal because a)it was getting a little tight, b) one doesn't have much use for cotton long dresses except in tropical heat, and c) it was quite similar to the black and white Mona Lisa kaptan that I had made, which I prefer. So it's lucky she likes it. Photos of Kelso Place already on their way to you - they don't look very inspiring for a card, but maybe done symmetrically on they'd be better. Can we see what you do to vet it?

Letter from Aunt Louise today, they are coming on Sept. 10 for one day here: not going to middle east after all, but doing a lecture swan around Europe for a month after.

I will try to deal with the beastly Ford part in Bracknell tomorrow - there was no time to go today after we had finished in Windsor. Time is short, and I must say is going very ~~xxxx~~ fast - the holidays seem to be flying by. Next week no car, which will be a nuisance, and then only a week till the children go to Dartington. I do hope they'll enjoy it; for Bun and me it will be a relief to be rid of two kinds of constant music in the house! The noise never stops! It doesn't usually bother me, but I have got the curse at the moment and do for once feel rather tired. Also I feel that I have not got time and energy to cope with more than essentials during the holidays - if a purchaser turns up to see the house, fine, but I really haven't got time to keep chivvying the agents the whole time and fussing and fretting about it; having decided to transfer the dollars if need be, I want to stop worrying about it all and try to enjoy the holidays. Have nearly finished Bun's Dragons clothes - all but the shoes, of which there will be a lot, since there are so many on the list and he has outgrown nearly everything. I'm leaving them as late as poss because his feet seem to grow visibly in the warm weather! Did J.W. not have a writing case when he went off to Dragons? I have an idea I should get one for Bun.

Please to answer my points about a) insuring both houses if need be, and b) how much capital you reckon I should transfer if need be. And now I must really run with this to post. J.W. and Poll have also written, and perhaps have covered points I haven't.

Lots of love
from Pie.

Sorry[21] *- have just discovered JW has run my Biro out of ink, and both my black office pens have dis-appeared. What it is to have children!*

[21] this is written in pencil

St. Albans,
Sunday , August 4

Dear Pie,

Thank you so much for your letter of Weds. 31 July. This is chiefly to send you Bun's letter, which he wrote on Friday when I was in London at Kelso. He is coming on in his letter-writing!

Haven't much time to write now, as it is nearly Sun lunch-time, after which we go over to Paddock with our belated birthday presents.

Meeting builder at Kelso was satis, but I'll save details till getting the estimate. Otherwise could spend all my time writing and getting nothing done. No further news on St. Al, and no prospective buyers yet.

Have you seen today's Sun Telegraph? - Beginning of a series of articles by Aziz! This one all usual old stuff of life of student in Soviet, but wait for it: next week is promised the story of his "break for freedom"!

Mary Ellingworth rang up last night and bored on interminably; she was absolutely thrilled at your warm letter and was obviously very touched and is so pleased to be coming through Delhi - but I'm sure you'll find her an awful bore! She offered to bring anything to you - I will send car part either through her or Clive. Haven't alas got it yet because when I went to Stevensons it was only to discover that their parts dept was closed tight while they are moving to new premises. But will do so in time.

Letter from Milo - you didn't tell me he was going out, but you obviously told him to write and invite me out, he did it rather grudgingly! I will answer, but am really so busy at moment with holidays etc. I'd just as soon not have to bother with him.

Emily Mills and I had got a plan which has fallen through - she rang and asked us all there (Giles has gone to Australia, but is not going via India), so I asked them all here for Monday, as we won't have car, and Hallam to play golf with J.W. But now she has rung and said that Carola has been taken to hospital in London with severe infection of the dames' parts - it was thought they might have to operate, but they've

got her on the mend with anti-biotics, and Emily has to fetch her home on Monday for a fortnight in bed. What bad luck, and poor Emily on her own with Giles away. Anyway, after Monday Hallam is away on a bicycle trip, so we've had to postpone plan, and will hope to see them after Dartington. Time is getting very short - we've asked the boring Shorlands over Friday evening for bridge, as we owe them. They say now that Claire may be here - it will be nice to see her anyway.

We have lots to do, so don't worry~~xx~~ that we are lonely - we do not want to see any lame ducks unless necessary! I'm sure other people have got in touch, but I can't remember now what I've told you. J.W. and Poll are going up to see Jeremy and Joanna on Wednesday.

Re your question on buying any more carpets there - can I think about that one for a while? In short, will you give me please plenty of notice before you plan to get the packers in, as there may be one or two things you cd profitably buy there. Till we're sure about sale or non-sale here it is hard to work out exact plans. I have an idea that one more low square stool like the one Polly gave you may be a good investment, but cannot be sure till I've finished working out space in Kelso. Equally another numdah rug may be a good idea - there are lots in the shops here, but they are not of very good quality, except at Harrods where they are v. expensive.

King,Wood have suddenly started sending us house ads again, including a lot of the same old ones, which must be dud houses. But I was very interested to get one of 23, Kelso Place! - one of the new houses down the terrace. It has garage, 2 baths, and four midget-sized bedrooms, and living and dining separated on different floors, which I don't like. They are asking £26,500 freehold, which is rather encouraging, don't you think? Of course it's new and with garage and extra bath, but even so....

No time for more now. Masses of end-of-month bills seem to have come - I spend a lot of time just managing household, and shall try not to complain again about the time you take over sorting out papers! Weather is still foul, and not like August at all.

Miss you - lots of love
from Pie.

St. Albans,
Tuesday, August 6

Dear Pie,

No letter from you today, which is gloomy! But then we are all feeling slightly gloomy now anyway - J.W. came down with some kind of bug on Saturday, a feverless Sunningdale tummy bug, of kind which I get occasionally (or perhaps it's a version of the flu which is wide-spread) - I thought he might be malingering or psycho-logical because of no temp, but indeed not so, because he is better now, but Poll and I got the same effect yesterday, and both just lay on our beds feeling achy and dragged out. We're all feeling better now, though washed out, and the weather doesn't help as it's grey and horrid. And we all have no appetites. Never mind, it will pass.

We went over to Paddock on Sunday anyway, and presented Mummy with presents - books from J.W., a dwarf azalea from Polly, and a big box of Harrods chocs from you and me (I couldn't think of anything else, because she doesn't want any more <u>things</u>). She seemed pleased with all, and pleased to see us, and was generally in good form.

Now I've looked over carefully your notes about my clothes you sorted out, and it all looks fine, though I honestly can't call to mind the extra dresses you say you disposed of: they must have been old, so good riddance, and well done. The only comment I have is about that black brocade evening skirt with net over-lay -I had forgotten about it, and on the whole don't want it, so if you have a chance of disposing of it at another thrift sale, please do. It only takes up a lot of storage room and doesn't fit me, and I never have liked the material (which Mary once sent me from Japan).

Clive Rose has just rung up and had a gossip, and offered to take car part, which I will get next week (when I have car back) and get to him. He says he has also been promised to be head of a dept. in the office, but doesn't know which one. He says he saw the chap he/you think you are replacing, who doesn't know, or isn't saying, anything about himself moving. He also says there is a big promotion board in Oct., after which presumably everything will be sorted out. No doubt he will be telling you this, and other gossip,

when he sees you. They have moved in to their house, but still have the builders with them.

Now, I hate to go back over again the same points about the house, but there may be a few new points that are new, as well as a lot you haven't yet answered. First of all, I am, as I said before, quite happy about transferring the dollars, and I have spoken to Rupert Hutton, who says that there is no difficulty, and no point in arranging it before necessary - so we really still have this month to see if any likely buyer looks like coming along. (In which case, you will have had letter from Fahey, of which they sent me copy, about carrying two mortgages: this doesn't to me look like being a very good deal unless we have in mind a buyer fairly soon - what do you think? If we do, and are going to cover by bridging loan, then it wd no doubt be worthwhile to carry the extra mortgage for a bit.) But if we have no likely buyer, and I transfer the dollars, I come back to the point that I feel it wd be better to withdraw St. Al. from the market, at least till next year, when houses may be more saleable; also if there shd be a devaluation meanwhile, property values will rise and securities won't. But I've gone through these points before, just haven't had your answer to them: and I wd like an answer. It is perhaps a rather academic point, because if we don't find a buyer the result will be the same; but psychologically I feel it would be better for us all to make a decision one way or another - and if we haven't sold this, I think we should decide to keep it for the moment. (As I said before, it is even possible that when we go abroad again we may prefer to keep this rather than Kelso , which will not keep all our gear.)

Or do you think if I transfer dollars we shd still carry St. A. mortgage? I think not.

Going back again to the exact amount of money I should transfer - you are wrong in saying Philip has subtracted the deposit; if you look at his letter carefully you will see the position. Also you will have seen on the monthly bank statement that owing to the deposit cheque we are grossly overdrawn. I've checked my cheques (the 900 series) which are all correct, but see that you have spent a lot of sterling - what on earth is the standing order for £60, also the ADV of 162? They make our balance v. bad, and I must admit it's tantalizing to me not to know what they are!

For the house, I work out the position as follows:

St. A. mortgage - 3,850
Kelso Place - ~~*~~5,150
(This includes the deposit of 1565, on which we are already overdrawn. It also includes the extra 500 of mortgage money, which will be produced after we have done all the reapirs.)

Total: £9000

This does not include solicitor's fees, stamp duty, moving expenses, or expenses of putting Kelso into order. It looks to me as if the minimum I can transfer will be £9,000 (approx $ 21,600), and that will leave us without a penny for repairs, carpets, kitchen etc. Or do you think our balance from salary will get better enough to pay for the moving and fixing up expenses, or some of them? I haven't yet got builder's estimate, but will let you know when I do - it will obviously be some where between 500 and 1500. It looks to me as if I ought to transfer £10,000 to enable us at all to get started off satisfactorily: please tell me what you think of this, as you usually complain that I want to realize too much money and should leave maximum invested. But it seems to me that the interest rate we are paying on being overdrawn is much~~*~~ higher than the income coming in from my dollars (which anyway is going to be heavily taxed on our aggregate), so if we are going to have the two houses, for a while at least, we are better to do it properly. (Incidentally I hope that you have answered my point about signing that I have made interest-free loan to you: that is the only thing that worries me, not that it will happen, of course: but it would be crazy to be in a position where I might lose a large hunk of my money on inheriting it from you, if I couldn't prove that it was mine.)

One other point that I've asked before, so you may have answered by now: what about insurances for both the houses? Another point connected with insurance: do you know if our world-wide insurance covers the expense of the move to London, or do I have to insure separately for the move? (Both Hibbs and Sirl estimates ask me to mark for insurance separately.) If you don't know the answer to this, shall I enquire of USOIB?

I think that is all the points for now - I hope

that you will answer properly, if you haven't already done so. It's no good my taking Philip's or Bayzand's advice really, except on legal or banking points, this is something you and I must work out by agreement - and I think we are agreed in principle. (Oh, I forgot to say again, I think I would be wise to use that £300 that Leslie has invested for me, and save that much of dollars anyway. That cuts the 10,000 by a bit anyway.) Philip is a driveler by nature! - Mummy said that she got a bill from him for £300 for advice over the Blount nonsense, and was now sorry that she had consulted him so fully and kept him in the picture, which she was sure had increased his charges. Anyway, he never advises anything useful, except on his fiddly legal points.

Interval for lunch - and just before lunch the doorbell rang, and to my surprise it was Chambers, ringing ostensibly to thank me for letting him have Simmonds' name and number (which I had sent him in a note). He admired our garden most fulsomely and said how enchanting our house was - he looks most covetous, but I think doesn't mean anything by it. He also said we must all come some fine Sunday for lunch with them all at Wentworth - the children say I must have ready-made excuses for all times in case he really asks us! I can't make out what he is up to, but I think nothing except trying to consolidate himself socially in this area, which his children don't like because their friends aren't here. Did I tell you that he said before he was going to Malta in September to see about buying a house there? If he should then decide to sell here, I wonder how that would react on us. Too many for sale boards down the road!

We had super French beans out of the garden for lunch - they are really coming on apace now, and doing well. It's funny that you, from being away in Delhi, have now apparently consolidated yourself psychologically about getting rid of St. Albans, whereas the rest of us, who are here at the best season of the year (even though it's a poor summer), have got more and more averse to seeing it go. Indeed, since I heard that Rattenbury had fallen through, I haven't once been bothered by the noise of traffic: which shows you how psychological it is! I would so much like to have the best of all worlds by having this house as well as Kelso - it would be such a wonderful weekend and summer outlet from London, even if we let it for periods. But no more for now - I must get this into the post. Maybe there will be a letter from you tomorrow.

Lots of love from Pie.

St. Albans,
Thursday afternoon,
August 8

Dear Pie,

What a good lot of letters from you this morning, of last Friday through Monday (plus the one for Poll), for which thank you very much. I can't think why they all come at once - it is very annoying, as it was nearly a week since I had heard from you, and I only just restrained myself from writing a very cross letter yesterday asking what had happened to you. And now there are so many letters at once that it's hard to take them all in!

It is very grey and raining today, after a wild and stormy night last night - the weather is really atrocious for August, and it is far too wet to mow. I hope it will improve before we go to Montacute! J.W. is playing the piano, Polly is playing the gramophone and typing a letter to you, and Bun is interrupting me while writing to Gusain - so we are full of usual noisy activity, and I don't know how much sense this will make.

I'll go through your points first, to see that I haven't missed anything. First of all, you are still complaining about my not getting your letters - and you ought to know now that it is only the time lag, which I admit is very annoying. But it can't be helped. (Re school fees which you mention, ~~xxxx~~ did you get Polly's Downe House bill which I sent to you - you do not acknowledge.) What a good idea for you and Alan to go to Kulu - what girls are you going to take with you? What a pity there is so much flu in Delhi - I hope that you (and Alan) escape. The weather doesn't sound very enticing, I must say. Bun is thrilled at the thought of getting a bike - I must say I do think he needs one to keep him happy and occupied. You must do as seems best with the one in Delhi (If you couldn't sell it at all, might it be marginally worth keeping for country? - on whole, I think probably better not, as extra complication - but if we are going to have two houses (i.e. country cottage after selling St. Albans) we will have endless arguments about where the bike is to be! Still if new one is small-wheeled, it can go easily in car~~x~~)

(2)

Good for rescuing Bull Board etc. Don't worry about the wooden train set -I daresay Bun will have forgotten it as well as outgrown it by the time it would come. About the games: please keep Monopoly and Star Reporter (you needn't bother to check contents, they should be more or less intact). Scrabble for Jrs. and others can go (though of course keeping proper Scrabble)

Tessa Baring rang up this morning and said she had my suitcase - she is about to go away, but I will collect it later sometime, as there is no hurry. Probably easier when I've got Kelso as a base. Maunsel St. no longer to be relied on, as Ellingworths have moved to Kent, and Dora has not yet moved to Maunsel and I daresay will only be there off and on anyway. Funny that W. Valentine is back without Joan - not that I am actually very interested, but I would not have guessed that she had an affair, with Anand or anyone else. But one never knows, the revelation on D. Scott was certainly surprising enough. Why on earth did you give my dresses to any D.S.W.A. sale? I can't think why they tried to run one, it seems a ridiculous idea, and I wanted my dresses to got to DCWA sale, which I hope they now will, as I got some Rs.300 for my last lot, so it is worthwhile as well as charitable contribution.

We have all recovered from our Sunningdale bugs, I think. Bun was a bit low yesterday but is bouncing today. But this weather is enough to lower anyone. I miss you very much and do not at all like to go to bed alone, as I start worrying when I'm in bed and can't go to sleep, and wonder if we are doing the right thing about houses.

Which brings us back ~~xxxxx~~ to that subject again! I think you have now answered most of my points, except the ones you hadn't yet received. Roberts of Frost has now rung up, back from his holiday, and says he is going to get hold of Rattenbury and find out what's happened, as he was very surprised he withdrew. I haven't heard from him yet, as presume he hasn't contacted R. yet, but I doubt if it will do much good. But just in case, or in case of another purchaser turning up, I won't take house off market or shift dollars until about the end of the month. But I see that you now introduce a new idea of having a bridging loan for a month or so in case of devaluation - I am totally unable to judge the likelihood of this. The bridging will cost about £80 per month, acc. to Bayzand, and you must give me your judgment on

whether we should embark on this. Bayzand doesn't seem to think devaluation is probable, and as I said advised us against taking a bridging loan from him. Please answer this again if you think I should go for bridging.

I note cheques, and also that the 162 was Plessey and the other 60 and 10 premiums on your life, so you've answered that question ~~xxxxxx~~ of mine. But what on earth is this receipt (enclosed) from Edinburgh bank? No doubt there is some simple explanation, but I can't think of any except that you~~r~~ are leading a double life, as it's the first I've heard of any banking dealings in Scotland!

Also, you sent me two carbons of your letter to Philip, with which I agree. I think one of them must be your file copy - at any rate I do not want two, so I am sending one back to you.

I note that you will deal with Clarke about insuring for both houses, and for contents. I expect you will soon answer my question about insurance during the move as well. Another question, re insurance for the car: I remember there is a letter from Clarke saying the premium will be higher when we move to London. If you agree, I do not propose to do anything about that, if we haven't sold St. Albans, on the grounds that the car will be basically here (I would propose to leave it mostly here, as safer, though I wd of course use it for carting things up to London and would have it there sometimes). But I believe that we can leave it registered and insured here if we still have St. A. Do you agree? You might ask Alan some time when you have a quiet moment about the ins and outs of having two residences, as he knows and being a mathematical type has probably got it all worked out. Apparently one has got to choose which is one's principal residence, and it all makes a difference on taxes and so on.

The car will be ready tomorrow or Sat., which will be a relief. I am tired of carting things from the shops on foot, and have just sent J.W. off on bicycle to get some basic supplies. He is in an uncharacteristic rage, and says he doesn't see why he should go to the shops - but I don't see why he shouldn't be helpful for once this week.

(4)

Re Kelso, I still haven't the builders' estimate, and will make better sense on expenses after getting it. But you say, "We cd decorate Kelso ourselves?" as if it were a query or new possibility - I had assumed all along that we would do the decorating ourselves, and have only asked for estimate on the essential builders' work. Perhaps you thought because Northcott's guess of 1500 seemed so high that it included decorating? - But it didn't at all. You also said in your previous letter that we should perhaps have all outside painted - I am not sure what you mean by that, as we must anyway, for mortgage £500, have all exterior metal and woodwork done - which is in effect all the outside (except for the concrete of the railings at front, which I've asked to be done too). The exterior itself is plain brick - surely you didn't mean have it painted, as all the others~~xxxx~~x in the row are unpainted?

The one question of mine which you haven't answered, typically, is if you will sign a paper that I have loaned you the £9000 or 10,000, whichever it turns out we will need. Please to assure me that you don't mind doing this: it is only a formality, but I can't like the thought that if anything happened to you, the internal revenue would take away 30% or so of the money that I've put up on the house(s). This just doesn't make sense, and it's better to have a document to cover it.

Going back to Kelso: Give me some minor advice, please. I'm trying to sort out furniture allotments if we still have here, and cannot make up my mind what I think about the ~~xxxxx~~ chair situation. We should take the dining table (now in breakfast room) for Kelso, and use for here instead Bun's play table, which I am now engaged in re-surfacing to make it match pine dresser, so that's all right. We have the 6 chairs now here in breakfast room (black backs with natural wood seats), and also the 6 delicate bedroom chairs with stuffed seats; obviously one lot should stay here and one lot go to Kelso. The wood ones are really kitchen chairs, though they look very nice, so I slightly favour leaving them for breakfast[22] room here and taking the bedroom chairs for Kelso dining-end of recep., as they match this table better and wd possibly be more respectable there. But do you have grave objections on the ground that they are too much bedroom chairs? I see a lot of fairly similar ones in London antique shops at tremendous

[22] orig. "breakast"

prices! You needn't consider, in your answer, the red striped upholstery, as I now see how easy it is to re-upholster. (Polly's grandfather chair has come out very well, and I am longing to re-do the red stripes (and see if Mr. Bowyer can fix or brace somehow the one whose back keeps breaking), but I don't know what colour to re-do them in till I decide where they are going to go. If that one breakable one can be fixed, do you think they'd be all right for Kelso recep? - They do make quite comfortable small extra chairs for sitting on, too, which is more than can be said for the wooden ones.

Did I say before that I think, subject to your agreement, that if we don't yet sell St. Albans, I will leave all the pictures here (and a lot of the books), so that it will allow enough room at Kelso for all our things which will be coming from Delhi. Does this seem a good idea? It will make more sense if all the Delhi things basically go to one place or another, and that place wd seem to be Kelso. Anyway, if I started moving pictures from here, the picture marks on the wall wd make it look a bit derelict.

How long do you think I should go on employing Wells the gardener (Mr. 10-shilling an hour man, as the children call him)? He is good and careful, but pretty slow (I suppose those two things go together), but will be finished with all the hedges in another few weeks, weather permitting: he says that hedges stop making new growth at the beginning of August, so when he has finished that should hold them for the winter. He can do mowing while children are at Dartington, and then again after they go back to school (until mowing stops -?Oct); but by then I think we should dispense with him, as there will be little other heavy work? Do you agree? Anyway once I move I couldn't employ him, as he needs to be supervised to be sure he works!

I've been reading the new installments of H. Nicholson's diary in Sunday Times - what a second-rate man, as I've always said, and am rather delighted to see it confirmed in his own writing! I do hope you won't waste money buying the book, but I suppose you will. Everyone says what a dreadful light he casts on himself.

Saw a bit of the Republican convention on TV - and the other night on Panorama I got a surprise: they were interviewing Iowa republican delegates, and suddenly

there was Ted Ellsworth ("insurance salesman from Dubuque") looking very natural, and strongly supportin g Rockefeller. But it didn't do any good, alas - I despair that Nixon might be president.

I think I've about come to an end now, and anyway I must hurry to get this in the post. Do tell me if you get it this Sunday - I am never sure about the letters I post on Thursday. Perhaps Weds. is a better posting day for the Sunday bag?

And don't go and get the flu like everyone else! I hope that you haven't - I was feeling very gloomy yesterday and was sure that I was telepathic and that there must be something wrong with you, but I expect it was probably just because I hadn't had any letters. Amusing about Joyce (King I suppose now?). We have Shorlands coming tomorrow. Next Tuesday to Orrea Pernel prom concert in London, Miss Dean is coming to babysit, having had her holiday. I asked Mummy if she might have Bun for a couple of days (it wd be good for him, and wd have been nice to leave him there during concert), but she muddled her dates and is going to Jill. It doesn't matter, but I think wd be good for Bun to go some time, though I can't quite make out if Mummy wd like it or not. She wd like J.W. and Poll to come stay, but they are too busy and don't want to.

We miss you lots, and wish you were here.
Lots of love from Pie.

Off to post - on re-reading, this seems a pretty glum letter, though it doesn't mean to be.

Enclosed is Bun's letter and picture for Gusain - I have today bought Bun a writing-case for Dragons, and he is very pleased with it_ He has written out in a little note-book all addresses so that he knows where to write letters, and generally seems grown-up and undisturbed at prospect.

St. Albans,
~~xxxxxxxx~~
Thursday evening, Aug. 8

Dear Pie,

Further to my letter of this afternoon, which you may have got before this, and should anyway read before this: Philip Sheppard rang up this evening (he must be working hard, as he rang at 7 p.m. when I was trying to play pelmanism with Bun, and I wasn't really on form to discuss business with him). Anyway he was ringing to discuss your letter of Aug. 5 which he had received today, and really wanting to know if we had decided whichway we were going to jump. He also typically asked me, anxiously and for about the sixth time, if I had found out whether I can transfer my dollars. He is really not a prop at all, but mostly a hindrance, and it takes him a very long time to understand anything! I wonder if he is mentally very dim, or if he is just so worried about looking for bogies and being afraid he may overlook one that he can't think.

He said that with respect he didn't think that he could agree with you that the St. Albans mortgage should be paid off. His grounds, I am bound to say, were that it would be less expensive to carry that extra mortgage than to carry more bridging loan. Not for the first time I explained to him that if I transferred the dollars it wouldn't be a question of extra mortgage v. bridging loan; either he is very slow to hoist this, or he is, like everyone else, being very protective of my dollars. The only reason I can see for being protective of them is the possibility of devaluation - so I am bound to say his conversation make me think of this point, which I didn't raise in my letter this afternoon. Which is, that as you mentioned the possibility of bridging rather than dollar transfer to hedge against devaluation, would it be a possibility to consider going on ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxx~~x carrying the St. Albans mortgage and transferring of dollars say only £5000-6000? This would provide a hedge of slightly less than half the dollars in question. I.E. considering the mortgage as roughly £4000, if I left that much in dollars and there was a devaluation this winter of say 20%, as I work it out

that would save £800 - and might be a useful hedge. (Of course, carrying the matter to its logical conclusion, one ought to then say do a bridging loan on the rest of the money required, something over 5000, of which the interest would be about 40 a month, again as a hedge.) But perhaps we ought to do one of these as a hedge? I have not of course seen the proposal form which the Sun Alliance have sent you, as I only got a carbon of the letter, so I do not know whether this would seem feasible to you or what "additional security" would be needed; and your mortgage company seems so muddled to me that I doubt if you can understand it either! Indeed Philip found it very difficult to explain to me what was meant in their letter by a "1-year term assurance", and I don't think he succeeded in explaining it in the end at all. He seemed to think that it meant the mortgage would only be granted for a year, and then again he seemed to think it might mean that only if you died within a year (Please forgive me for mentioning it, he said) would I benefit from the terms of the mortgage. You must decide what seems right on this, but I do wonder if you shouldn't go through with the proposal form (you may have done so already) on the grounds at least that if we have a possible purchaser for St. Albans and need to bridge over a time, it would probably be better to carry on this mortgage and have to pay interest on only a smaller bridging loan.

Will you let me know what you think about this? Of course I know that if you have any privy knowledge that there may be a devaluation you shouldn't let that enter your head in our private affairs - but I doubt if anyone would have any definite privy infm. this far ahead, and in fact I don't suppose anyone knows yet. Other possibility to carrying on this mortgage is the exact opposite: pay this mortgage off by transferring 3850 of dollars and have a bridging loan of the other 5150 necessary, as a hedge. But now I am beginning to talk around in circles, so I had better stop. Let me know.

Philip says no difficulty about doing a simple paper saying I've interest-free-loaned you however much I transfer, and says that can be done as soon as is decided how much I am transferring. Though he, as always, starts to complicate it by saying would I require any security for the loan. Really! he is very dim.

I will post this in the morning if there is no further letter from you to answer.

Lots of love from Pie.

St. Albans,
Saturday evening,
August 10

Dear Pie,

How lovely to get your letter this morning, even if it wasn't practical business (even better not!) and not suitable to show the children (though I must say I always suspect one or both of them, and even almost Bun, looks around hard and reads any letter they know has come from you, although I conceal the sexy ones like this one. So you really ought to look out what you say, not that it isn' t their own fault if they read what's not addressed to them.)

It's now Sat. eve - nothing worth watching on TV as usual, so the children are listening to Mahler on their gramophone. The weather has at last cleared and the sun came through this afternoon at last - a weak sun, and everything is drenched in moisture, so it's very sleepy-making but a great improvement on the weather in the past week or so. I'm hoping Poll may be able at last to mow the lawn tomorrow.

Letter also from Lois today, who seems well settled in country and is very warm. Also letter from Milo, who asks me for lunch 20th Sept. before he leaves - I shall go, and perhaps send you something, if anything has turned up like another car part you need!. I'm glad to hear you don't plan to pack up there till mid-November - that will give me better time to sort out my mind on what we may need from there that is economical, and obviously all depending on whether we have got two houses or one. I wonder how long it will take the things to get back though - you could perhaps have things sent back a little sooner if it seemed a good idea? I'm only thinking about walls of Kelso possibly being bare of pictures till the gear comes, and such as that. But basically we are all right whatever, and one gets so used to moving and being without things thzt it hardly matters.

We had the Shorlands last night, and I am so used to picnicing with paper napkins, no silver, etc, that I forget to apologize - anyway they know that. Claire

came as well, also Prudence, whom we hadn't seen for a long time. Claire is looking remarkably well, and dresses very well, and is very independent - she has driven down from Scotland towing her caravan, and has been staying in Suffolk, from where she had driven yesterday - I think she is of more value than Prudence, though her parents may think the opposite. We had a nice evening, and a super dinner cooked by J.W. and Polly, and then some bridge, and I learned quite a bit of gossip ~~about~~ second-hand and junk shops in the area - and managed to get rid of some of my jumble-junk onto Eileen S. for her charities:just the s~~*~~ort of thing I wanted to receive in Delhi, but since Bun's school fair have not known how to get rid of here! Eileen ~~*~~and Carol told me about useful Red Cross shop in Bracknell, where their niece Charlotte (from Hong Kong, who has left her husband as you may remember) bought a fridge for £2 and a suite of sofa and two arm chairs for £2-10-0 - this all being of interest in case we keep two houses, as I am now quite sure that by judicious second-hand buying one can make good any small deficiencies with very little expenditure.

Which reminds me that I think, owing to pressure of business writing, that I didn't tell you about what I bought at the same time that Poll bought her clock. I may have jumped the gun, but thought that we couldn't go wrong with it: I bought from Mr~~*~~. Bowyer in Sunninghill a second-hand double bed, with interior spring mattress in good condition, for £5! I hope you take this as earnest of good intention of how my mind is working! If we don't sell St. Albans, it will stay here for our bedroom, and if we do we will undoubtedly need it for country cottage. I can't say that the headboard is particularly attractive, but it is plain and inoffensive and though veneer is worn I have in mind possibly to paint it white. And the mattress seems in very good condition - Bowyer said he knew the people he got it from, who were a solid old couple who turned it in for two single beds as the man had back trouble. I will put the mattress out in the sun to air. It really looks very good, and is remarkably cheap, and I feel reassured to own now two double-beds.

Having insured myself thus, Eileen Shorland said last night that they know a couple who are looking for

a house to buy in October, who might like ours. I said by all means, but I doubt if they w~~e~~ill - he is a commander, and they are looking for somewhere within commuting reach of London, but also for retiring, so I suspect they won't want the main road . But she says she'd tell them about it. Also we've had other viewers for the house today - from Frosts (Roberts' side-kick rang up, so I didn't find out if they know anything about Rattenbury, but it shows they are active) - and it has nearly caused family crisis, because Bun and Polly both said strongly, don't let them come, make the house untidy so they won't want it, don't let's sell it! - so much so that I assigned J.W. and Poll to take Bun on the heath so~~e~~ that he wouldn't be here when they came. I think they are not serious buyers yet, but might well be: haven't looked at other houses yet, live in Wembley, three smallish children, cousins in Sunninghill, want to live somewhere in this area. Husband Jewish-looking, and central European name, seemed intelligent and probably doing well-ish in some sort of technological job, wife illiterate and like my worst DWS wives, but loved garden and has always wanted to have magnolia tree, but doesn't quite like main road - they retired to think about it, and said they'd be in touch. They may or may not be - but we are rather bouleversé, as we'd till now been without interest and would rather keep_ St. A. if poss.

This is a point on which I am not sure if you and I are agreeing - owing to lag of letters, I am never sure which letter of mine you are answering. You still say you think we are agreed on selling later (underlined) - I am not sure how much later you mean. My feeling, very strongly, is that if I transfer the dollars we should aim not to sell, at least until after next summer. I am reinforced in this by your saying the insurance of this is not very great: certainly the rates are not very high, and it would provide us with an easily accessible lung which does not need an awful lot of work on it (as any new cottage would) during the time that we have still got to work on Kelso - I don't know how you feel about this, but I feel that there is a lot to be done on Kelso, and until that is in order we won't want to embark on a new cottage which one will also want to start improving, what we need is an outlet from London for relaxing, which this would certainly be, without having to do a lot of work on it. And we could surely do short lets if we decide to, and keep if free~~e~~ for school holidays?

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I have said all this before, but am belabouring the point again intentionally. Because I now realize that if Frosts are going to be assiduous in sending people, sooner or later someone may want the house; this may be a good thing or not, but if it is on the market and Frosts finds someone who offers to buy (and their list price, you remember, is 10,250), then according to Philip, they may be legally entitled to claim commission from us as they have found a purchaser. So I think that when the moment comes that I transfer dollars, we have got to think very carefully whether we want to leave this on the market. And I suggest that we should definitely withdraw it, and then put it on the market later as and when suits us. (As a side issue from this, there might be a marginal advantage, if we withdrew until next year, in that we might possibly change our Sunningdale agent? I don't feel that Tufnells do us any good and are not interested (Dixon is not here and is always said to be in the London office, and I deal only with the secretary, who is probably more efficient anyway) - but if we withdrew for say a year, I suppose we might just manage to shift agents to perhaps Giddys, who wd probably do much better at selling it if they weren't on half-commission. But that's a side point.) My main point is that you've lost the feel of here - and I think in the long run you're right to say get rid of this - but we have all been so happy here in the summer that thought of a different country cottage is not very enticing - this would be a super holiday house, considering that as a family we are all used to the disadvantages and love the advantages, and has the extra advantage that it is also commutable, so that we could come for school holidays even though you were at the desk in London. And the children would love it for country - and you surely for golf and garden? - more than a strange country place at this point.

I've belaboured long enough - there is only one other point connected, which is that if I transfer the dollars my feeling is that they should definitely be in property ("real estate") at this point, because if there should be a slump or devaluation in the winter, property is the one thing that will hold its value (apart from antiques, anyway, which we don't own!). So I vote very strongly to take this off the market from the point at which I cover with the dollars, and then see how it works out. Do you agree - please answer! Marginal point - Mummy says, and I rather agree, that psychologically

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when houses are on the market for too long people tend to regard them as bad and unsellable - I must say that that is my reaction to getting from King Wood the same old house ads that we got four or five months ago - so if we have transferred the money to do both houses, I think we should stick with these two, for a while at least.

Enough of that. How super about Peter Wilkinson replacing Colin Crowe - I didn't see it in the paper, should I have? It sounds v.g. M. Hainworth is a bore, but I agree they may be kind sometime. You haven't said whether, after your first abortive attempt, you have ever managed to hear the children's tape of the Eton concert - I expect you are too busy, but they would be very pleased if you could hear it. Polly is coming on very well on the violin. I am in communication with Orrea Pernel, who takes all the points about Poll having to finish school and suggests that M.E. may be able to fill in on interim lessons; but M.E. is in Spain, having moved to a smart flat in Halkin St., so I haven't been able to get hold of her on this. But Poll is doing V. well indeed on the things that O.P. told her before, and has no complaints on lack of lessons, only that news-papers take up too much of her time!

Now I've got a confession to write! I have at last written to Fiduciary Trust (Miss Linsley), but only now, and I am v. sorry that I haven't acknowledged your questions before: basically all you seemed to be saying was that I should write more warmly to Miss Linsley (whether she be cute or plain) and also to tell her to put more of my checking account money into investment - but I was sure that that was all dealt with by the terms in which I wrote last year and said the maximum should be $500 in the checking account, and that she said that would be automatically done in July when it was revised. But I've just had the July statement, and it wasn't done, so I looked at her letter ~~xxxxxx~~e, and it only said the opposite, that they wd put money in if it went below 500, so I went right back in the correspondence and saw that I had definitely said 500 max in the checking but that Harry had answered saying he was leaving more for the moment as there wouldn't be any income for a while - that was a letter to Delhi a long time ago, and I should have corrected it then, but hadn't hoisted and thought my instruction about 500 max was understood. But not.

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As you no~~t~~ doubt know by now, I am rather an ostrich about money (having thought it was plainly laid down anyway),in much the same way as your mama, who I always think very redoutable, is about some other things (more later on this) - anyway what I have done now, which seems the sensible thing to do, is to ask Miss Linsley to have transferred to our account in London the surplus over $500 of the checking account, which will I suppose come out at something over £300 - it is a drop in the bucket as far as the house money goes, but there is no point as far as I can see in investing it now in N.Y., and it will serve to reduce our overdraft here for a bit at least straightaway (on which we are no doubt paying substantial interest), and if I want to buy an item or two of clothes (thank you very much, but I think as far as my travelers cheques are concerned, I am better advised to keep them, now that I have got them, for travel in Europe possibly - or in the end they may have to go on new kitchen or carpets for Kelso!). Anyway, having calculated it up, I see that it is only a very few dollars indeed that I have lost for not having the rest of the checking account invested- but all the same I admit that you were right and I should have done something about it before.

I also of course wrote to Miss Linsley on the general lines of our problems, esp. on the question of how long a notice it's advisable to give on transferring the dollars here. I expect I told you, I spoke again to R. Hutton on the phone last week, and he said that two weeks notice was sufficient, and don't do it before then, Myself, I would <u>like</u>, on the dollars, if we haven't got a really likely purchaser soon, to opt for organizing/transferring them <u>before</u> I go to Montacute to stay with the Clarks on about the 26th or 27th (also P. Sheppard goes on holiday shortly before that), as I feel that I'm going to get no holiday at all if I'm still fidgeting about transferring money and what is going to happen. So what I would <u>like</u> you to agree with me is that, if we haven't got so likely a purchaser that it seems most promising to bridge it all, that I should arrange to transfer either £9000, or £5150 (if you want to carry on the mortgage for here), and that you will sign that beastly paper saying that I have

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loaned it to you, and that we will then definitely withdraw St.A. from the market until further consideration. Then we would be all balanced and ready to go forward. But please tell me that you will sign that loan form - goodness knows I do not expect or want you do die, but neither do I want to run any outside chance of Mr. Wilson's government taking more of my money than they are going to anyway. Besides that if I put my capital into your name, you may abscond with a girl friend and I will have no redress, in spite of having two double beds and you saying you have no piece! So please answer this point, because you can see it is worrying me, in the same way I must admit that my not having written to Miss Linsley has been worrying you.

Going back to Paddock being an ostrich: I've always thought Mummy was very coping, but she does have problems, and I am no good at advising her on them. She is having trouble again with her floors, and she has already paid £64, which Dennis Berry apparently told her she could recover: but now they have told her the way to do it is to take proceedings, and that she will have to appear in court, and she says that she simply cannot appear in court (you remember that last year when she had that driving summons on the way to Devon, she wouldn't go to appear in court, and now her license is endorsed and she may not be able to get another). In short, she has got a thing about appearing in court, and I do not know how to advise her - I think she had better ask Harry's advice, as Wimpeys could surely come in somewhere behind her. But the real worry is not just the £64 but the fact that the floors are curling up again. But she is going to stay with Jill and Harry next week, and I hope will take good advice from Harry.

You asked about Joan before - I spoke to her on the phone today, and she is all right, but rather low because her second great-aunt has just died, and also her father has been laid off from his job because he has arthritis in his hands and feet, and is four years short of pensionable age, so he will have to form up before the disability board every week: it seems very bad luck, but Joan doesn't know quite what it means. (It reminds me, speaking of state support of everyone, that I must write in to see about getting our family allowances[23], having been back nearly six months.) But Joan says Terry will look at Polly's clock with interest, which wd be a Good Thing.

P. Hutton also, for your infm, said that if I'm resident here (which acc. to Andrews and Bayzand I am), then the strict regulations require me to hold all my dollar holdings in the name of the Bank of England. Hutton adds quicklv, "but I'm not advising you to do this, nnd it's a tremendous complication," So I won't till I have to.

[23] orig. "allownaces". There is a lot of corrective overtyping on this page, which is difficult to represent on a modern system but has been indicated where particularly strong, eg with "advice", twice, but this one was missed, as was "nnd" for "and" going up the side. See comments on next page.

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My typewriter is behaving very oddly indeed, and the ribbon isn't working properly - it doesn't change itself. I wonder if it is the fault of the office ribbon that E. Dobson gave me! It accounts anyway for part of the bad typing, though not all of it.

But it is now very late, and I should go to bed - but in spite of the two double beds, I am not keen to go up alone (the children having disappeared some time ago). I appreciate all your good habits now that you aren't here, and can't think why I complained at your habit of talking in the bedroom when I was trying to settle down. Now it is all too quiet!

The car is back, since yesterday afternoon, and looks just as good as new, and is going splendidly. It is really a super car, and goes v. well. Mummy said on the phone today that she had heard from you about J.W.'s bump - I told him it would come out eventually: he said not to tell Granny as she wd never let him drive her car again, so I said that he would have to tell her himself, which he didn't. But the funny thing was that she never even noticed it when we went over last week, which shows you what a very small bash it was. Having heard about it, she says she thinks J.W. is not a natural driver and she was frightened when he drove her car, and how terrified she was when Jill drove with her: but I really don't think J.W. can be compared to Jill who is scatty, and I'm sorry I didn't warn you not to tell Mummy at all, but I thought she wd be sure to hear about it sooner or later, from Mary or Jill, both of whom I'd told. xxxxxxxx Anyway J.W. is going on with his lessons quite happily, and says that he is driving around Chertsey v. well; he is due for his test in Sept - I do not think he can possibly pass it, but I guess it is good experience. Fred Campbell, who has just passed his test on the first try, says he knows a very good driving instructor in Oxford, who gets everyone by on the first go; so I've commended J.W. to take note, and ask his name and number later in case of necessity. I reckonJ.W. might well do a test in Oxford while he's at Dragons, if he ever has time, and get it done with. But I won't let him drive this car again, though I don't say so!

Sun afternoon - the good weather has held, which is a wonderful change, and we had lunch on the terrace _ Poll is now mowing the lawn, and Bun is in the stream, and I'm sitting on terrace about to read Sunday papers.

There's not much to add - and I am too lazy to bring typewriter out, so you won't be able to read this anyway! I'm been sanding off Bun's big play table this morning - it will look much improved by being natural wood. Lawn is already looking improved by mowing _ aught I to put some fertilizer - weedkiller on it sometime?

Will take this to post now _ Hope to get answer soon to all my points _ Lots of love _ we miss you _ from Pie.

St. Albans,
Tuesday, August 13

Dear Pie,

Thank you for your two letters this morning - even if one of them did turn out to be only the D.C.W.A. magazine. I feel very far away from that now - also our letters, as you comment, aren't jibing again. At least, you seem to be answering some very old points of mine, as well as some v. new ones, and I'm not sure how far up on my letters you are. But I see that you were answering my letter of August 6th, in which I specifically asked you various questions, which you have not answered. Will you please go back over my letters carefully and answer all points that you have not answered (I refer specifically to my letters of Aug. 9, 12th, and Aug. 6th - in the latter, which you had already received, you did not answer my points about withdrawing house from market (also covered in Aug. 11th letter), whether you are arranging[24] insurance for both the houses, and whether we are covered by our insurance for the move and if not whether you are arranging that.) So please do see that you answer my points - I am now having to keep notes of the[25] substance of my letters so that I know what you are supposed to be answering!

As far as the toys go, I certainly answered your points a long time ago in detail. Have you looked at my letters to see? The point you seem to be raising again is the toy soldiers - I am sure that I said plainly throw them - Bun concurs and does not want them. We want all good games, as I have answered fully before, and the Mali hats, which Bun, Poll and I all want desperately. If you have not had my answers to all this previously you must be missing a long and detailed letter of mine (though I did not keep note exactly when I wrote it - I should think at least two weeks ago.)

Yesterday we spent practically the whole day going to Camberley and to Bracknell - shopping takes a very long time. In the morning I took Bun and Poll to Camberley to buy school shoes - as well as all Bun's (some of which are still on order, and we'll have to go again to try them), we discovered that Poll needed two new pairs of outdoor shoes, as her feet have grown one size. Horrors! She wears nearly the same size as me now. Bun is very

[24] orig. "arringing"
[25] "of the": orig "the the"

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pleased with his Dragons shoes (ghastly black[26] lace-up shoes!), and when I was out in the afternoon, leaving him with Poll, he v~~x~~oluntarily put them on and was wearing them "to get used to them," as he said. He shows every sign of adjusting himself to Dragons.

After shoes, we went along to Holloway's cycle shop to see about Bun's bicycle (Propert in S'dale doesn't do small-wheeled ones). Holloway had one only - a red Raleigh junior small-wheeler, which was exactly what Bun wanted. I'm afraid it cost £19-19-6 - a pound or so more than the ones we had seen in Harrods, but had a smart plastic carrying basket attached and is so exactly what Bun wanted that I went ahead and got it, as he has been counting the hours all weekend till we cd go to get his bike. Raleigh is probably a better make than the Harrods ones, anyway, which were Triang. The Holl~~o~~way man was a bit dubious, and said Bun wd outgrow it in about two years, but when I explained about London parks, he said it was a good solution, and that it is a size that is called a "pavement cycle," as it is legal to ride it anywhere on the pavements. It fitted easily into the back of the car, which is a help too. Holloway insisted on putting the saddle and bars up for Bun, so that he had to stretch madly to reach - I am sure this is right theory (you remember[27] he did it for J.W. and Poll too), but were r~~e~~ally <u>too</u> stretched for Bun to feel at ease with. Bun is terribly thrilled with it, and is going to write to you about it - but he says he won't write until you have answered his letter. (Poll and Bun~~xxx~~ have now just left for the heath on their bicycles, J.W. is just going to his driving lesson.)

After that morning shopping yesterday, I went with J.W. (to help me with supermarket carrying) to Bracknell yesterday afternoon, and went first to Stevensons for the Ford part. It took <u>hours</u>, what with long queue and long discussion: the upshot is that I <u>think</u> I sent you the right part before, and that the fault is at your end. We went through it all very carefully, and though you said I had sent you before the part for the interior <u>roof</u> light, that is quite a different looking part and does not resemble what I sent. The lad who served me before said he remembered clearly that he gave me the right part before, and the one they produced this time certainly looked identical. It is part number 13740,

[26] orig "back"
[27] orig "rmember"

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and it is the switch that fits on the dashboard behind, controlling the lights and side lights and dashboard lights (it also has a share in controlling the interior roof light with its rheostatic control, which controls the brightness of the dashboard and roof light). There is no other switch that answers the description of what you want. But just in case the previous one was wrong (I unfortunately hadn't kept the receipt which wd have given the number), and as I had anyway got Clive Rose teed up to take it to you, I have got another one for you - this is absolutely the right one (and I will wager it is the identical one I sent before). If it is same, or if it isn't, send one back (?with poor Clive) and I will get refund for it - unless you find someone else who can use it there. It will come with Clive, anyway - and if I've gone to all this trouble for the same part twice over, I will be annoyed. Tell the mechanics to look in the owners' handbook - they say it is all laid out in that.

Before I forget, the children want to know if we are keeping the Nivico, as they say our kitchen radio here is no good for listening to music. I should think you are probably planning to keep it, are you? - don't forget that when I priced Zeniths at Harrods over two years ago they were over £100 for export. If the Nivico goes well, it is probably an investment worth keeping, though you may find you can get such a good price there that we cd buy a less expensive set here for the moment. Do as you think best, but let me know please (as if we have two houses we can do with two radios). Re bathroom scales, you may be better advised to keep and bring those there - also don't forget that those two plastic bath trays are ours, and also all wastepaper baskets in the house. Nuisance that the MPBW want to paint now - why on earth didn't they do it while the Slatchers were there?

Thanks for sending the Observer article on Dartington - we had heard about it from Joan, who said on the phone she was saving it for the children, but we haven't seen her since.

You'll have had Leslie Mackay's letter - I rang him up this morning, and discussed: said not to change the investment now as I would want to cash it. He advises waiting a few weeks or a month, as he thinks the bank rate will be lowered this week, and the value will improve, so he advises waiting as long as poss. I said probably before the end of Sept, and will let him know later exactly when I need it cashed. He says Eileen has written about us

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coming to see them - time is very short this hols, but I will see when I get her proposed dates (Leslie couldn't remember). I hope also to see Millses as you say, also I hope we can get to Farningham to see Ellingworth's house sometime.

You will also have had letter from Philip, of which I had copy this morning, about St.A. mortgage. It does not now look worthwhile to keep it on - much better to pay it off - only question was whether hedging again devaluation was worth while, but I think probably not. But you do not seem to hoist my point about leaving the money in St.A. until next year anyway - if there is a devaluation, prices of property will rise (Bayzand said rise in property value in fact ought to cover any loss frm devaluation if I had already transferred the dollars), and what you do not seem to see is that we do not want to be at a point of having sold this, and not having found a country cottage, during the next year: and I do not think we will have enough time to explore areas and find a new place while we are still hard at work on Kelso. But I have said this before. About your suggestion that I telephone Fahey, I was indeed about to do so, but I think that we should not now aim for continuing St. A. mortgage. How much do we get for a transfer grant? I have not yet got the builders' estimate for Kelso, but I now half think that with the £300 from my shares, and about £260 out of my Fiduciary checking account, I will not need to transfer quite as much as £10,000 - perhaps 9,000 for a start, unless the estimate of works is disastrously high. (And you do not answer point about whether you are willing to acknowledge this as a loan.)

Contd. Weds. lunchtime - no mail this morning - I will post this this afternoon, and expect it will reach you on Sunday. I still don't know if my Thursday postings are getting to you by Sunday, which seems the only day in which you may have time enough to answer properly!

We went last night to Orrea Pernel prom concert at the Albert Hall. I thought it enjoyable but not super. Such a pity that the Germans didn't drop a bomb on the Albert Hall in the war - the acoustics are absolutely dreadful, and the atmosphere appallingly Victorian and chocolate-brown . Orrea Pernel played the Bach violin concerto in E Major (which the children and I had heard

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at the Festival Hall with Yehudi Menuhin - I must say I much preferred Menuhin in it - children are busy playing their recordings of it, as they each have a different one, to see what is the best version.) Orrea Pernel not the best, except possibly on the slow movement - which doesn't mean she may not be an excellent teacher for Poll. We had driven the car to Osterley and taken tube for Albert Hall, as it seemed a waste to go to Waterloo~~o~~, and I doubted (probably correctly) whether we would have been able to park anywhere within reach of prom concert - everything was jammed. But tube went well, and more quickly that I remember before - though it did seem an awful bind coming all the way back, as we passed within hailing distance of Kelso on way to Gloucester Rd. tube station. It will be good for children's concerts when we are there - though they are rightly not much impressed by Albert Hall, and much prefer Festival Hall.

We're for tennis and swimming at the Meyers' tomorrow - weather today is no good augury, as it is dark grey and wet! Vicki will come for night tomorrow, and then they walk ridgeway on Friday, and J.W. and Poll off to Darlington on Sat.

No more for now - I'll get this to post. Please tell me if you get it Sunday, and please answer all accumulated points. Also please tell me when you are planning to go to Kulu, so I'll know when you're out of touch and when to expect a gap in letters. Poll and Bun both say they won't write till they've heard from you again, and J.W. means to write to you today or tomorrow. He is very busy with his driving lessons, as well as jobs - though both have as of today given up newspaper delivery.

Lots of love
from Pie

P.S. Am sending in sep. envelope letter from F. Smedley and funny letter from Turners.

St. Albans,
Saturday evening,
Aug. 17

Dear Pie,

Here it is Saturday evening, and Bun is settled in bed, J.W. and Poll I hope settled at Dartington - we saw them off on train to Reading at 12, with I hope all their bits and pieces. After Bun and I had had quick lunch, there was a sudden bit of sunshine, so we decided to go on the heath, Bun with his bike, which I hadn't seen him with on the heath before - it goes like lightning; but of course by the time we got to the farthest part of the valley the rain poured down, so we came back sheltering by easy stages but were soaked when we got home. Miserable weather as usual.

To go back a bit, we all went to the Meyers on Thursday - again a pouring with rain day alas - and all mucked in with all the Elliots. The children all had swimming, and a bit of rained-out tennis, and some ping pong - and the parents all sat and gossiped (Babbadee's mother was there, whom I hadn't met before). We had tea with five different varieties of home-made cakes! Anthony still doesn't know when they are going to decide the candidate for Chertsey, which he is jittering on. Antony Elliot says he hasn't met J.Freeman and doesn't expect to before he goes; he says he let it be known that he was here if J.Freeman wanted to see him, but no reaction and J.F. seems to have disappeared altogether from environs of the office. Bunny got on very well with Thomas Elliot and with Sally (the youngest) Meyer, and they all played happily together. I hope that Tom is going to be in Stradlings (the Elliots are very vague, and haven't checked, but have an idea that's where he's going to be!), because if he is, he will probably be in the same dorm with Bun, and also with J. Cloake, who says he is going to be one more term in the dorm for the new boys. So Bun is getting on well knowing a few Dragons.

After Meyers' tea, we all took our departure (after endless signing of the visitors' book by all including children - Bun wrote his name very tidily and properly), and we brought Vicky back here in preparation for their ridgeway walk next day. They had planned to have a cook-out on the heath, but owing to pouring rain gave it up, and had a cook-in in the kitchen instead. They were off

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afoot by the 7.30 train the next morning (yesterday), and started to walk from the vicinity of Swindon. The rain held off till early afternoon, but they were rained (and J.W. blistered) out by the time they got to Chilton about 4.30, and gave in and rang Granny (which I had warned her about, but which they swore they weren't going to do!) So she fetched them for some tea and dried them off, and saw them off on trains, Vicky back to Oxford and J.W. and Poll here. They were truly exhausted (healthily no doubt) by the time they got here at 8 p.m., and didn't concentrate much on Dartington preparations till this morning. At which late point Polly had admitted she needed some new trousers, so we rushed down to Sunningdale and got her some smart Terylene ones. (J.W. bought himself a week ago from Mewes, from whom I've not yet had the bill, some smarts Guards terylene slacks.) So they were off in a rush!

Yesterday the phone rang, and it was Enid Boon, saying they are living in Camberley at the moment and could I come for a drink this evening - like a dope, I used Bun as an excuse, so when she said but of course bring Bun, I couldn't see how to get out of it. So I took Bun along, after Dr. Who time - they are very warm, the Boons, but endlessly dreary. (They had heard, needless to say, from their Peter, that I was still here.) They have sold their cottage in Aston Tirrold, because George has been told he will be posted abroad about the end of the year, and they didn't want to let their house and thought it wd deteriorate otherwise. So they have bought a small new terrace house in Streatly (not yet quite finished) as a base, and are meanwhile in large borrowed house in Camberley. It is funny, it is right by the car park in Portesbery Road, where we always park, and I'd no idea there was a house there - an enormous one, hidden up a long drive, with a huge garden. They are jittering about where they will be posted (George says it's his last post before retirement) and are absolutely <u>longing</u> to go back to India or Pakistan. In fact they talked so much about it that I wondered if they'd be given any indication that they might, though they swore they hadn't an idea where they were going. George says the whole office is in chaos over the re-organization and that personnel dept. has ground to a standstill until after reorganization.

The house is very quiet with J.W. and Poll, I must say. But a number of commitments are arising for this week, just when I thought I'd have a quiet time! Mummy has been after me saying couldn't I take her to Farningham to see Mary's house: so we have fixed tentatively to go on Wednesday.

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Mummy says she'll drive over here Tuesday, and we can go to Saville gardens, which she wants to see, and then on Weds. I'll drive her to Farningham. Mary wants us to stay Weds. night, which I wd quite like, but am not sure if Mummy will agree. Anyway this may all fall through, because Mummy is again unwell with cistitis, and is being drugged with anti-biotics by Dr. Dickson. She says it's the same thing as last year, and that the~~se~~ drugs make her feel bad. But I have a feeling that she is pressing to go to Farningham because she is afraid that Dickson may forbid her moving about if she doesn't get better soon, and I'm not sure if she ought to go at all. But we will see how it plays. (I'm concerned again about ~~xxxx~~ our car too - the battery was absolutely dead on Thursday morning, and wouldn't start - Halfperry's came along for it right away, and re-charged it, and got it back to me in time for going to the Mey~~xx~~ers - but they unfortunately hadn't got a spare battery they could lend in order to check ours thoroughly, and they say that if it goes dead again with the next few days it will show that there is something wrong with it. Not a very reassuring thought, but so far it is going all right.) Anyway I could always drive Mummy's car to Farningham.

That is about all my social news. I spoke to Clive on the phone today, and he has received the car part, and is bringing it and golf balls, which he got, to you. Poor James to have a suspect ulcer - I can just imagine him cosseting himself, and ten to one it is just a false hare of Valentine's.

+ Weds.

Super letters from you, of last Sunday and Tuesday/- I do hope that you got off to Kulu and/or Simla all right, and that you are having a good trip[28] out of Delhi. Wonder if you are beating up the night life in Simla right now, but pretty off-season I guess! There are too many things to comment on in your letters, but basically anyway we are agreed, and <u>at last</u> just about all of my questions are answered!

I'm glad you like the idea of our new double bed - no of course I had <u>not</u> been drinking whisky, but I <u>had</u> had a glass of beer. Anyway, with the help of Poll I have now set up the new bed (in our bedroom, which ~~xxxx~~ was the only place with enough floor space) after some difficulty in order to try it out. Bun and I have in mind each to sleep a night in it this week to see how it feels. Poll jumps up and down on it and says it's too soft and saggy! and I must admit the ends look a bit wobbly, probably because I

[28] see Alan Clark's narrative in appendix 3

didn't succeed in screwing it all up tightly enough, but it looks safe enough and only wants a new finish. But I guess it may be a little soft for your taste, though probably right for mine. Bouncy anyway! I've just realized I won't be able to take it down again till I get the children's help, but no matter, there isn't any better place to put it anyway.

Best news in your letter is about drawing room curtains from Delhi - yes of course they would be super for Kelso Place, and are a great bargain at that price, so by all means contract to get them. The only condition is that you should check to see if they are at least 106" long - I feel sure they must be, because I think the ceiling height there must be about the same as Kelso. If they are less than 106", please let me know the length, for reconsideration. (You might also measure width for my information.) I think they will be splendid: as Alan says, they can always be dyed, but for the beginning they will do excellently as they are. Because I have really half-decided, and hope you agree, not to embark on changing the rosy-red wall covering yet. It will hold for the moment, and that wall doesn't really want to be touched till we have had a chance to explore with Pakistani neighbours whether they will cooperate in any de-damping scheme, and if they won't we'll have to explore the best way of protecting our side from damp and shoving it back to them! So I think it's better to leave the red paper pro tem, as once we strip it off, the wall will need re-surfacing, and there's no point embarking on that till the damp has been thoroughly considered. (You remember that is the one wall which wasn't touched by Peter Cox at all.) So the grey curtains will be fine to tone down the red effect, and I'm sure there will be enough of them to do the dining end window as well. I've dis+covered by measuring that our old Chile bookshelves will fit into the alcoves of drawing room, and rather than have any new shelves built in before the wall is dealt with, I propose to use them - they are not all that nice, but will serve the purpose quite adequately, esp. as we will not have to take all the books from here yet.

Contd. Sunday morning - When I got to the word "bookshelves" above, there was a ghastly crash noise which sounded just outside our house. Bun who wasn't quite asleep came running down in a panic. I thought it sounded like a car crashing at speed, but not into another car, rather into a hedge or wall; Bun thought it sounded like an enormous blow-out, and said it was followed by a motor going "put-put-put" away into the distance. I hadn't heard any put-puts, no doubt

because I was typing, but the crash noise was the loudest I've ever heard, enough to give me goose-flesh even above the typing. I fully expected to see bodies all over our ditch, but when Bun and I cautiously looked out, we could see nothing at all, and there wasn't even any slow-up of traffic up and down the road. I cannot think what it was, and can only think Bun was right in hearing the noise recede into the distance. But Bun was so upset by the noise that I let him go to sleep in my room, and went up myself to go to bed and keep him company - though the normal traffic noises continuing on the road did put me off so that I found it hard to sleep. Now am behind-hand with letters as a result.

Have checking Cecil W.'s address (they say 48 Beverley Road, so I hope that's right) and will send letter on. Funny about old May Wahihuddin.

To go back to curtains for a minute - if those curtains are going to be long enough for Kelso, it wd be good to have them as quickly as poss, as we will have to go without until getting them. Perhaps you cd bring them with you in air freight? I know they will be heavy, but essential to get them as soon as we can, or even only one of them, in order to curtain the street window. What do you think?

We are together now on all plans for houses, so I'll go ahead on lines agreed. But one point I still have not got clear, and you don't seem to answer. You say St. Albans fabric insurance is covered by "arrangements with the mortgagees", but what happens about that insurance when we pay off the mortgage? Is it quite separate from the mortgage, or what? I do not understand. Also here is a letter for you from Onyx (typically badly addressed to you here), asking for an annual premium - I think this must be for insurance of Kelso, but as there have been so many letters to you about various insurances etc. for Kelso, I think better to send it to you for action. Will you ask them to send policy here or to you? Anyway, will you act and take note?

There is also a letter from Mr. Clarke in answer to yours about insuring contents. It all looks pretty straightforward - but, as he says, we must split the total sum insured (£3000) between our two addresses. Have you any view on how to split? I should think more than half for Kelso, as most of what we have in valuable furnitures will go there. He also says it is best to insure for transit risks for furniture removal with the removers, who can do it cheaper, so I will have to think how much to insure the removal for. I will deal with Clarke, but wd

xx

be grateful for your views on split.

Have found both office pens, one down crack of easy chair, other under back seat of car - neither place was I responsible for!

About Bun's fish - he got a little worked up when he asked me if you could bring the fish back, and though he understood that wasn't poss, I hadn't the heart to tell him you'd already given them away. I'd let that ride for the moment - he knows they are now coming back here,so just let it all slip and don't say specifically they are already gone.

Good that you at last heard Eton concert. Recording was bad, because done on J.W.'s battery machine, and afterwards re-recorded - so you couldn't expect too much from sound. Please keep the tape - it is J.W.'s tape, but he doesn't need it back now, but wd like it in due course (i.e. in lift van).

Photos of Freemans' departure are very good - Mrs. F. very photogenic, though most people look soppy! Polly unfortunately spilt her coffee cup all over the photos, but they have dried out and are o.k.

Why do you say "in looking for a cook for Kashmir~~r~~"? Who wants a cook in Kashmir, or are you going up? You write very elliptical letters - you never even said that Alan had flu~~e~~, but then suddenly said he had recovered! Funny about the Feasts - they are a strange couple. Also funny about Bells - they have been slightly on my conscience as fairly close neighbours, but not so much that I'm inclined to do anything about it. Sir M.J. sounds awful; I do hope he is not going to muck up your departure. You ask again in general about toys, but surely I have by now answered all your queries? I will write to J. Hennings about turkey bill, and will let you know.

Sorry you got put off by my sending back extra copy of your letter to Philip, but you never told me you were sending two copies for me! Also sorry I didn't remember that that Scottish bank financed our central heating. Everyone says that "A Man for all Seasons" is super - J.W., which you have forgotten, saw it from Eton before the end of the half - or perhaps you didn't know. I'd like to see it, and Poll, but don't suppose Bun wd enjoy it.

Think I've covered all points for the moment, and I have all too much other correspondence to get on with. You are right, only about three months more, thank goodness!

Lots of love from Pie.

St. Albans,
Tuesday,Aug. 20

Dea r Pie,

No letters from you, which is natural owing to the Kulu gap, but is depressing all the same.

Bu t there are a fair number of things to report on. We are all fine, and here is a short letter just come from J.W., which I enclose. Also Polly's music exam result came this morning, with a note of congratulation from Mrs. Wilson. (Poll asked me to open it and use my discretion about sending it on to her, according to whether it was good or bad!) She got grade A (the top grade) on the A-level music exam, and grade 2 (Merit) on the S-level music paper - so I reckon that's very satis and have sent it on to her. Though I am not quite sure if she hoped for better on the S.-level: but her worry on that seemed to be whether she would pass it at all. Bun is in excellent form - Mr. Green is here at the moment, sweeping the drawing room chimney, and Bun is having great fun watching the brushes appear out of the top of the chimneys on the roof. The chimney was so dirty that I thought probably the tenants hadn't had it cleaned last year, but Mr. Green says they did, and that is only a combination of last winters' fires, since the cleaning, and the bad weather we have been having, that makes it so dirty. The rain has been loosening great hunks of soot down into the hearth, so it will be a relief to have it clean. I bet his price has gone up! Bill from Simmonds for new drain pipe has come: £4-18-6, which I think is very reasonable, considering that he put a whole new length of pipe and worked nearly all morning digging up the garden!

No, only 12/6 !

As I told you, Mummy has not been at all well, and when I rang her Sunday she said she was in bed with a high temp, and the doctor hadn't been, and would I tell Mary she couldn't got to Farningham. So I rang Mary, and we were a little worried about Mummy, and Mary said wouldn't I please ring Dr. Dickson. So I did - but never again, he was so rude. Of course Mummy hadn't told me that she had had Ann Cameron there all day, and that Ann Cameron had already rung up Dickson - so he had some reason to be annoyed at being disturbed twice over. But he <u>was</u> rude, and said that Mummy was upset because the children don't go to see her enough. And he

then told Mummy that her family only worried about her being ill because they had a guilty conscience and didn't go to see her enough. Although he seems to be about as bad as that previous doctor at spreading accusations about, and I shan't speak to him again, or at least hope there will be no need to. Anyway, Mummy is better - I've spoken to her this morning - except that she is fed up with Dickson; and Mary is going to see her today. In fact Mummy now thinks she may go back to Farningham with Mary. I am going down there tomorrow with Bun, anyway, and will stay tomorrow night, as I have to see Simmonds the builder at 30 Kelso Place on Thursday morning - so Bun and I will make the trip by train (quicker, and Bun likes it better), thus making it easy to stop in London on the way back. I think Mummy's troubles with Dickson are largely of her own making, anyway, as she always treats her doctor as a confidant and pours out complaints of her family - I shall try to have no part again.

Also in the post this morning was a cheque for £22 from Joanna Hennings - which I have sent to bank and written to her to acknowledge receipt. So will you please pay for their turkeys?

Now, have spoken to Philip Sheppard this morning, as he is going on holiday on Thursday: he nearly had a fit when I said that you were going to Kashmir in September (not that you have told me yet that you are going, so I am still feeling annoyed about that), and Philip said we might as well give up trying to buy Kelso Place if you are not going to be there to sign the mortgage, which you have got to do. However, he rang up Fahey or someone, and ascertained from them that they can go ahead and prepare the mortgage, without waiting for your decision on which insurance policy you are taking out (but I expect we should have an answer on that soon, and please do get it settled); so they will prepare the mortgage and send it to Philip's office they say by the end of this week (Philip says that will probably mean next week), and Philip's secretary will then send it to you for signature. So that should be all right - but for god's sake don't go off to Kashmir without signing it! Also Philip is preparing to send to you that loan paper - I said to call it £9500 that I am lending you, in fact it will probably come out a little more with the electricity stock and dollars from my checking account.

Philip said should there be any interest, or any termination date! I said no to both. I told Philip we would be paying off St.A. mortgage - I am sure this is what we agree, and you said in your last letter you were writing to Fahey to that effect, but in fact I've had no copy of any letter that you've written to Fahey about that. Have you not written it yet?

The main gist anyway of my point at the moment is that you have got the mortgage paper, and the loan paper, to sign before you depart for any more wilds. I think we can assume as of now that I will transfer the dollars, but if a good purchaser should suddenly turn up we could of course destroy the loan paper.

Now have got to stop and take Poll's bike, which has tire trouble, to Properts, and do a few other errands. Then have promised to take Bun either on heath or golf course, but if we don't hurry it's very apt to start raining again.

Off to Farningham tomorrow, back on Thursday afternoon, by which time there may be letters from you. Will fill you in in next letter on conference with builder at Kelso - his total estimate is quite reasonable (839 pounds), but about 160 of that is for some bathroom re-organization which I think I probably won't have done; I will talk to him about possible alternatives.

Lots of love from
Pie.

p.s- Bun tried out the new double bed last night and thought it super - he slept about twice as long as usual. I shall try it tonight.

St. Albans,
Thursday afternoon,
August 22

Dear Pie,

Just back from Farningham and Kelso, and it's Thursday afternoon, and your letter of Monday waiting here - I must write a quick answer to catch today's post, as you say they do get to you by Sunday. Glad to get a rushed account of your Kulu trip, which sounds as if it was interesting. So sad to hear about Margot Holgate - I had just been wondering how she was and when she wd be coming to see us. How absolutely awful - as you say, it was the service that killed her. xxx

Now there's a lot to tell you, and I haven't much time - so I won't go over old business again. Bun and I went off to Farningham yesterday morning, arriving about 11.45, after simple train trip - the only nuisance being having to change at[29] Victoria. We had a splendid time there, as Bun adored playing with Henry, and they were off on their own all the time (Katherine and Marion were both away).

I have got very mixed feelings about Dick and Mary's house - but please don't tell them so! - if you write to anyone, say that I thought it was super. It is a lovely old house, though it has been badly added onto at various stages, and has obviously been in very bad state of repair, all of which they are rapidly having put right. They have masses of rooms, yet it is compact, and has a lovely Georgian front, and it will be a very comfortable and elegant house when they have finished with it. And no doubt their five acres will be worth a great deal of money one day. But the garden is very strange - long and narrow and completely over-looked by two new bungalows built on a chopped-off piece of their original garden - the garden as far as playing space for children goes is smaller than ours here, and less interesting. Most of their five acres are in two fields - one long and narrow at the back of their long and narrow garden, and the other to the left on a dog-leg behind the left-hand neighbour's house; neither are much use for running about in, or for making nice, though they are undoubtedly a good investment. And the living and dining of the house are both overlooked by the new bungalows, in the same way the garden is - so one feels constantly cribbed

[29] orig "to change to Victoria"

For your records, if you like, the Ellingworth's address is: The Mount, Sparepenny Lane, Farningham, Kent.

and cabinned - though there are lovely distant views of the hills and fields. It must have been a lovely house and setting once, as it is on top of a hill; but now seems terribly built over. They are enjoying making it nice though, which it will be, though there is a terrible lot to do, with muck and junk all over the old stable and shed areas, and tumbledown buildings and car wrecks all about! It was a lovely warm day yesterday, to see and explore everything, and we had a good dinner and gossip - Dick is in good form and enjoying working in the office. After dinner we listened to news, on Czech crisis - horrid.

This morning Bun and I came up on the train with Dick, quite simple, though I was interested to see that although they are closer to London than us it took from 8.15 leaving the house (1½ miles by car to Swanley station) to 9.15 arriving at Victoria.

Oh, before I forget - Dora had left with them a clock for us (which I didn't bring back as we were train-ing). It is a very sweet mantel clock -(small)- most attractive and will be very nice to have for London. A nice mahogony~~x~~-ish case, and a nice plain face - Polly will be envious! I will write to Dora and thank her, but so should you, as she would be pleased (address her at 20A Maunsel). Oh, and also, I discovered in Mary's cellar a small gas cooker which I asked Mary about - it is one that the previous owners left behind for Mary to use until hers arrived, and though old is acc. to Mary working perfectly well. Mary says we can have it - for St. Albans, where it will do perfectly well as a fill-in. So I am very pleased, as long as I can work out how to get it here. And as I reckon we don't need a fridge here, at least for the winter or unless we let, that leaves us fixed on the basics for both houses.

We went in London to see Simmons the builder about Kelso. He seems very nice, and I have agreed the work with him - which we think covers all the mortgage requirements and does all the basic structural repairs but none of the decorations. I left off changing the bathroom fixtures around, which wd be an improvement but cost an extra £150 and is not really necessary. He will let me have a revised estimate, but the total will be about £680, which is

not too bad. This includes stripping off the corridor walls and dealing with the damp patches and refinishing those walls - though exactly how we are going to do it depends, as he says, on what we find underneath the paper. And of course it includes all external painting. That will leave us with the inside to tart up, but I guess that will be a good winter task, and anyway it is so tiny compared with here, and some of the rooms already done, that I think it won't be too much. He says they can start very soon after Sept. 25, should finish all the interior work and roof by mid-October (there's a bathroom cupboard to be built around hot tank, and cupboard to finish in J.W.'s room, three fireplaces in bedrooms to be ripped out and blocked~~ed~~ up, as well as the corridor). So I will probably move~~d~~ round about mid-Oct. after they have finished that, and it will then take~~s~~ them about end~~ed~~ Oct. to finish the exterior painting. Simmonds, did I tell you, is the builder just at the back - they have a good yard and workshop, so are very much on the spot. He has discovered what it is wrong with the back garden of Kelso, which floods abominably when it rains, and can fix it by making one gulley at the edge and only re-setting one paving-stone. Good! The front courtyard we are going to have lowered 10 inches (it is above the drawing-room floor level, as you'll remember, which is bad for damp) - and I've told him to leave a bed in the front, which we can put some nice plants in, instead of having it all paved. Hope you agree - the houses all along have little beds in front, and it seems stupid to have tubs when one can use the ground for planting. But I'd like to put some things there which would look nice all year around - haven't decided what yet. Neighbours have roses, but that looks very gaunt and bare through winter. Perhaps one or two roses and a couple of small evergreen shrubs?

Now for Bunn's part of letter: He says that you haven't answered his letter with sums - have you got it? - and that he will write when you have answered it. He also wonders if it is raining now in Delhi - so could you please, if you can remember, tell him if it was raining at 9.30 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 22? Also he wants me to tell you that he now has a proper football and also a rugby football, and that he practices with his football boots on. And Tumble is all right.

Dick says a chap who works under him in Oil Dept. (Weaite -?spelling) is coming to chancery in Delhi, and that he is first-class and very nice. He has apparently corresponded with you. His wife hasn't been abroad before and is not sure she likes the foreign service! Dick asked if I would answer any questions for her, so I said I'd be glad to help in answering anything I could. They are apparently going to live out? - if I knew which house (assuming that it's one I know -?Kays?) I could probably tell her something about it.

Having quickly looked over your letter, I don't think there are any other urgent points for now: but you ask about garden. The beans are super - I have probably told you - and Bun and I are eating them at great rate. Clematis is a riot of bloom. Poll pruned the Albertine rose at side of house, as far up as she could get with tall ladder, only leaving a bit at the very top that she couldn't reach. Fuchsia nicely in bloom (though error as surrounded with montbretia in bloom which clash), and the two fuchsia cuttings I took seem to be growing in Berks. Also philadelphus cuttings doing well, and the hypericum cuttings that you put in pots. Things do grow here - we will have lots to move to Kelso.

Have just rung Mummy, who says that she is better and up, though Dickson has told her to take it easy. And Bun and I have arranged to go over to see her on Monday. I'll take this down to the corner post now - it is a boiling hot day (thermometer shows 90o), and was a pity to waste~~x~~ most of it in London and going on the train. Tonight I'll try out our new bed, which Bun has insisted on sleeping in till now, and see how it is. My bed at the Ellingworths (K's bed) was horribly hard with hair mattress, in spite of which I slept like a log - but the double bed here is a great waste just for me, and I wish you were here too. It was lovely to get back to this lovely cool house after going about London in the heat: though I must say Bun was thrilled with Kensington gardens - we went into just the corner on the way to the underground, as it was such a hot day I didn't want Bun to think London was all hot pavements; and he concluded he was going to like Kelso, with being so near the park and the museums.

Lots of love
from Pie.

St. Albans,
Saturday evening,
August 24

Dear Pie,

Sat. evening and no letter from you today, which I suppose means you didn't write by Wednesday's bag, and I find the weekends very gloomy without you here. However, a few points, either new or unanswered before.

First, I forgot to tell you that Bun and I played actually 10 holes of gold on ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ Tuesday afternoon, the day before we went to the Ellingworths. Very good exercise, though Bun beat me easily - I kept going astray in the heather, which is now all in bloom and which I find it impossible to get out of. Finally decided that the only thing to do was to blast it out onto the nearest bit of non-heather! When I wasn't in the heather I was hitting pretty well, and Bun was consistently pretty good, so we enjoyed it.

Yesterday I forwarded to you a letter from Poll, and also a letter from Bun, which he finally decided to write. I wonder if you will get them before this? I always have a feeling that letters posted on Friday, and those posted on Sat. or Sun. must all get to you at the same time, as surely they are all sorted together at D.S.A.O. on Monday - but I do wonder if there is any difference in when they get there? I'm getting specially concerned in case there are any late points that need your dealing with before you go to Kashmir~~x~~-you will please consider carefully Philip's letter to you of 21st August. I find all his legal letters so boring that I can hardly bear to read them - but I think it is absolutely essential that you are <u>sure</u> that you have signed every paper necessary before you go off to Kashmire~~x~~. Philip doesn't know, but I do, that once you get to Dandi-pura you are away from all ken, and if you haven't netted all necessary by then, we'll just give up Kelso. So I hope you are seeing that all is dealt with - Philip is now himself away until 10th Sept. - when he gets back I will check with him to see that all in in order, if not you mustn't <u>go</u> to Kashmir~~x~~! But I hope that you will have settled and signed everything by then.

Also I wonder if you have hoisted that we will all be at Montacute from next Thursday till mid-week the

following week? I'll have letters forwarded, and it is mostly Aug. bank holiday weekend anyway; so I'm not too sure it is worth you sending any letter directly there.

The Czech crisis is most extraordinary - there's no point writing about it as it changes every minute; but the strange thing about it, as seen on TV film here, is how the Czechs, in a not war-like way, seem to have clambered all over the Russian tanks and chalked swastikas on them, and generally accosted the tanks as if they weren't afraid of reprisals. How strange that Chou En-Lai, and Albania too, have come out strongly against the Russian invasion, and yet our beloved (I don't think) Indians abstained in Security Council. Typical. How loudly they would have screamed to the world if the Russians had set one foot on Indian territory!

A funny thing I meant to tell you about the Orrea Pernel prom concert we went to - about all prom concerts as far as I know: that is that "God Save the Queen" was played neither at the beginning nor the end of the program. I thought that all public performances either began or ended with the Queen - I wonder if the rule has been changed, or if they think it might provoke riots at the prom? They seemed a pretty unruly youthful group until the music began.

I note that you have given me a message for Milo - I don't see why you can't deal with him yourself!, esp. as I shan't be seeing him until Sept. 20th, and he tells me he is leaving evening of the 20th - whether he is intending to come straight to you I do not know, but I should have thought you (or ASC) could expect him morning of the 21st - but for god's sake please sort this out yourself, as I do not have time to be intermediary. He asks me to lunch on 20th at Boodles (underlined twice by him) - I hope that I can find it, I don't suppose for a moment that it is so indisecret as to have a name-plate on its door~~s~~, and I picture myself walking all along the club fronts inquiring of doormen~~s~~ which is Boodles! I haven't looked it up in phone book, but you might tell me if it is along the same row as Travellers - I'm not even sure if I could find that unassisted! Not good on clubland. Interesting to see Boodles, though.

(3)

Summer is at last really here, and it is still boiling hot,though the swing cherry tree is already showing autumnal tints and shedding its leaves. Wells the gardener failed this week, as he was moving house (it wd be the time when J.W. and Poll were away), so yesterday I mowed the lawn myself (except Berks. which is strangely still too wet). It was lucky that Bun was here, because although I managed to start the mower, I had no idea how to fit the grass box on, which he easily showed me. Anyway succeeded in mowing the lawn fairly quickly, and felt very pleased with myself - have never done it before. Am very stiff now - whether from mowing, or from golf the other day, or from getting curse as I have just done, I am not sure.

Have spoken to Roberts of Frosts on the phone - he has sent some more people to see house (of which more later if anything comes of it). He says in general house market is just beginning to move again, and things are getting a little easier. He advised that we should see what happens in next few weeks - he himself however said, without reference to our particular financial arrangements, that if we hadn't sold by end of September he would strongly advise us to withdraw the house from the market altogether for say four months and then put it out again with new particulars. (This agrees with my feeling before of not hanging on too long with a stale property on the market.) I will certainly do as he suggests, though I intend to withdraw it from the moment I transfer the dollars, as I think we are agreed. But I am hanging on for the present to see if any sudden purchaser offers. I told him that if and when we withdraw we will not put it to Tufnells again, but will put it with him when we decide to put it on market again. I do not like uncertainties, but do see that there may be some point in hanging on for a little longer. But would be really pushed if a sudden purchaser did come along, as it's quite plain that Mary and Dick do not really have room to store our gear adequately - roof leaking in stable, and cellar designated for children's play area, besides being full of damp! I suspect we are better selling this in slow time, and intending to buy country cottage at once on selling.

Bun has again occupied the new double bed, which he find heavenly - I thought it very good too, the one night I slept on it, but it may possibly go down in the middle

when we are both in it!

Do tell me while I remember to ask you - I do not know if Tufnells still have a key to St. Albans - can you please tell me? I have an idea that you may have got it back from Dixon at the time that you told him we had accepted Rattenbury's offer. Did you? I don't want to make a big fuss with them over asking for it back if they have already returned it, and there are so many spare keys in the drawer I have no way of checking. Please answer soonest, as I do not want to leave keys with them when I withdraw from market. Incidentally, Roberts said he spoke to Rattenbury and got no change out of him - he said R. huffed and puffed and blustered and said he wasn't used to being treated that way, and Roberts said that he knew you and was sure that you weren't uncivil; and in short Roberts agreed with our theory completely that we had smoked Rattenbury out and that he was using your letter as an excuse.

Re household equipment in Delhi, as I got ice out of the fridge on hot day today, it occurred to me to remind you that we have a number of ice trays in Delhi, some belonging to the fridge (or fridges) in Delhi, but also I think 3 or 4 spares which belong to us. All ours here seem to be collapsing, so please bring the ones we have there.

You seem to be getting better at Cottage Industries shopping, which prompts me to ask you to consider one point on furniture, even though I know you are bored thinking about furnishing Kelso. But the point is that when I think about it, which is often, I realize that we are sadly lacking in any sort of decent settee or sofa (i.e. anything that will seat more than one person at a time, and preferably one that will seat three). The Put-u-up is pretty far gone, after eighteen years of hard wear (though it is a useful object), and that pink chaise longue which you fixed the bottom of is A) showing signs of sagging again, and B) not really comfy for even two people to sit on. I remember with longing, though not with very much clarity, seeing settees in the Cottage industries which were based on the charpoi principle (i.e. webbed seating), but with back and arms in natural wood. As far as I remember they struck me as very cheap (I think

not more than a couple of hundred rupees), and I thought that you might have a look at them and see what you thought - I think the thing to do would be to buy a slab of foam rubber here and have it covered for a seat over the charpoi-ish webbing. Any sort of two or three seater settee here costs at least £50, which is a great deal. (Or as opposed to foam rubber: if you either could find, or order to have made reasonably at Cot. Ind., a settee (which measures 6 ft.4 inches by 28 inches) I could cover that mattress to go on it.) I hope that this isn't Greek to you, though I fear it may be - anyway if you can go near Cottage Industries do look at those lightweight sofas, settees or whatever they call them, as I think they were most reasonable and would be attractive in Kelso (natural wood finish, like your stool from Poll, better than painted or lacquered). But to go with western-type chairs, settee should be about 14-15 inches high for sitting on - less would be all right if one were going to put foam rubber cushioning or mattress on.

Must stop soon to see news of Tv - at moment nothing on but Sat. night thriller starring Barbara Stanwyck - you would like, but I don't! Lots of other letters, mostly business, which I should answer but don't feel like doing tonight. Bun and I went for good run on heath this afternoon (Bun on bike) and found that some blackberries are ripe, so we must go with bags or boxes to collect them soon - no one seems to have been at them yet.

Now - had only finished writing that when the phone rang - and I think that we have sold St. Albans, though Bun has been screaming "water rats" in my ear as I've been on the phone (meaning tell them the dis-advantages so that they won't buy), so that I could hardly think sense. So I will now go back to the beginning of today and tell you about our prospective purchasers, about whom Roberts rang me yesterday. They are ~~a~~ very nice couple, called Van der Aiken, with boys of 8 and 6, and expecting a new baby in about November. He is a teacher (don?) who is now at Brunell (?), which is apparently a new college at Uxbridge - don't know what he teaches. Very much new English, intelligent classless family - wife formerly a school teacher. I warmed to them, as they seemed exactly in same state of children ages as we were when we came here, and therfore

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the right people for the house. But having decided I didn't want to part with the house, I wasn't specially trying to sell it to them, and I half thought I'd put them off, and wasn't sure if I was wise or right to have played hard to get. Am still not sure, as I am in two minds. Anyway, he has just rung back this evening, which he said he was going to do, and said that they definitely want the house, and they do not quarrel with the set price of 10,250; but on the other hand they cannot move yet, as the wife is expecting a baby in November, and they have got to sell their house (a new Wates house in Dulwich, where he has been teaching - it sounds as if it should be easy to sell, as new and still under its first ten years' guarantee), so they would not want to complete till sometime in January at earliest, and would make it later if we wanted, but could not make it earlier owing to expected baby. I like them as people to be in this house, and think they are a good family to sell to - the timing could be better, I suppose, but unless we find an absolutely cash purchaser I do not think one can find anyone who can necessarily complete much sooner. In any case it does mean that we would still have the house in Christmas hols and can sort everytning out when you are back. I cannot unfortunately up the price above 10250 as that is what Frost has got it listed as, but I think that we would probably be foolish not to take their offer - and then if by any chance (like Rattenbury) they fell through we would be no worse off than before. He was full of keenness to net it up as far as possible, and wants to put a deposit down with Frost at once so that they can be assured of the house; and I rather backed and filled and said that I would have to consult you before saying definitely, but then I said that although I was reluctant to sell I thought it would be allright with you, and that, if we were doing it, the sooner after Christmas hols we did it the better.

Because it does occur to me that it may in that case, as there is only something like four months delay, be better to pay off mortgage here and possibly bridge on Kelso for four months? (At £5000 pounds bridging loan, about £40 per month, interest thus saving fair share of my dollar investments?) I am not sure about this, and must speak to Bayzand about it on Monday - but the thing is I am not sure how anyone works out for tax whether one has to pay capital gains tax on ~~xxxx~~ selling when one owns two houses. (Dick E. was reminding me firmly about this the other day.) Bayzand said "reasonable interval" allowed before one was liable to capital gains tax, so I suspect

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if we have accepted offer before completing for Kelso we can escape capital gains tax (probably some £500), but it may be that bridging loan for interval will be evidence that we zre not intending to have both at once - on other hand this may be nonsense and it may make no difference as far as tax position goes. But say four months of bridging, although steep, would amount to only about £160, and it may be worth this to save about £5000 of my dollar investments? I have not worked this out very clearly, as it is now late at night (and I've missed TV news), but will best consult Bayzand on tax position on Monday. But if I transferred enough to pay off St.A. mortgage and a bit extra to set in train the necessities for Kelso, that would surely give us a small amount in hand (3850 at least when sale comes through here) to consider country cottage with - or alternatively to use for very expensive living in U.K.! Am not at all sure what we want for country cottage anyway, or to what extent we want the liability for one at this point - on other hand I suspect we want some country base and will certainly need it for our extra furniture. But surely we don't want ~~unless necessary~~ a country cottage requiring £9000-10,000, and it would be better to go for something much cheaper for the moment, saving as much capital as possible, and using what little income comes in (after Wilson's taxes, and children's expenses) to gradually fix up somewhere else? Please tell me what you think about this soonest - I will meanwhile consult Bayzand, but my first reaction is in view of firm purchaser to bridge except for paying off St. A. mortgage, and therefore transferring only about £4000. I could always transfer more later if we wanted, and saving some of my investment ought to help with covering the bridging loan for a few months.

I will now have to start re-thinking all furniture etc. - though not too urgently if we keep St. A. till Jan. Extra double bed will be useful wherever though! Am not sure if this cancels out what I said above about Cottage Ind. settees - worth your having a recce anyway. Mary's house absolutely un- useful as any weekend/country base for our family - you would hate it. Possibly Jill's Woodbridge better - haven't seen it yet. Feel now in midst of hot summer that we will very much need some outlet from London, and think that we will have to do something about it before next summer. On the other

hand, perhaps over the short term it would be better not to have two places, and to have occasional holiday instead.

I have been feeling rather sad over this as I write, as you probably gather; but as I have taken in the gist of all your letters, you feel (and so do I really) that we must sell St.A. sooner or later - and in fact, though I am very attached to it I do find that the traffic is getting more trying all the time and in that way it will be a relief to be rid of it. I only hope that we may not regret in a year or two that we have no more base in Sunningdale! - It is not that I am attached to the people or society here, but I do like the heath and golf course, as do the children, and it will be sad to come and look at it again when we are not based here. Still, as I think we agreed before, we have had our time here, and it is time to move on. For myself, apart from the need to have more room to store gear, I would be content to have Kelso only - and maybe we will in the end find that it is better to junk our junky gear and have only Kelso. Anyway we will have time after you get back to discuss all this. Did I tell you that Sirl estimated about 28/ a week to store our un-Kelso gear, or in other words about equivalent to storing it for half a year for the same cost as transporting it to Farningham and away again?

The other thing which has been giving me slight nightmares from time to time is the uncertainties of the service - i.e. whether you might suddenly be told when you get back from Delhi that owing to the merger and the exigencies of the service we are required to go abroad again at once! Unlikely you will say, but nothing is ever certain in this light, and I feel we may be wise to settle for having only one English place till we're sure. Viz. Samples!

My other worry is whether you will feel that we could make more out of St. A. - you have written such varying figures from 9.850 to 10,000, to 10,500, but in fact with Frost listing it at 10,250 and them offering it I cannot ask for more. Though I was so shattered on the phone, as I thought that they'd be put off either by me or the road that they wouldn't want it, that I never thought about making any stipulation about buying carpets etc - do you think we might make any stipulation? I will talk to

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Frost on Monday - but in fact I reckon we are jolly lucky to suddenly get 10,250 and shouldn't crib~~~~. (Mrs. Jones the chemist keeps telling me of all the people who can't sell their houses~~ in S'dale, and Mrs. Turner,the same, and the Wigrams never succeeded in selling Oakdene which was on the market for years, and have decided to go on living in it, and Brook House has also not been sold but has been withdrawn from the market, and Mrs. Wigram tells me the Blacks only succeeded in selling Cradley by lowering the price drastically - so you see I am well up on all the gossip of main road selling which I haven't reported to you before as it was so gloomy - and we will be well out of it if Chambers suddenly decides to put his house on the market, which I suspect he will.) Anyway I like these Van Der Aikens, though I resist moving from here! So please again confirm to me soonest that you are agreeable to this whole thing (as I have told van der Aiken that I must really consult you to be sure) - and more especially from our point of view what your reactions are in this case to how much dollars I should transfer. I don't mind transferring the whole amount, but as I doubt if we will need that much for an exiguous country base it may be better to transfer least poss. (In which case the paper for loan that Philip sent you can easily be typed out by you to read ?3850 or whatever. It becomes slightly academical anyway if it is a fairly small amount!)

It is late now, and if I go on I will only repeat myself. I will speak to Bayzand (re tax position) and to Frost on Monday, and I will tell Frost that I will provisionally accept the vander Aiken's offer subject to your views - in fact unless I hear anything very adverse from Bayzand over capital gains tax owing to overlap I will definitely then tell the van der Aikens that we'll have them as purchasers. I like them(for the third time) and think they'd be happy family here, and my only reservation is Bun, who was somewhat distressed today about the whole thing, even though when we went to London the other day he thought it would be super to be so near the park and museums - so I think he will adjust, though he will miss garden and heath horribly and we must see what can be done about that. He incidentally got on very well with the small van der Aiken children.

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The only other point at the moment is the completion date to fix with the van der Aikens - I note that Bun goes back to Dragons on Jan. 14th, and cannot immediately find in the papers when Poll goes to Downe, presumably about the same time. J.W. I suppose will also depart with Bun for the Dragons term, or about that time. Van der Aikens are keen to fix a date to suit us as well as them - I should think any time after Jan.15th would be agreeable? - Would you perhaps think better to fix for the end of Jan. to give us time to sor t everything out and not worry about it during the hols? That might be better, but part may depend on when the gear from Delhi is due to arrive? I'm torn between thoughts of interest on bridging loan (if that seems best) and having time to sort out all gear,so would like your reactions on this. Equally I suppose purchaser wd ideally like to start boys in school as near beginning of term as possible - they send them to state school, and I told them how good Mr. Morris and Windlesham school are. They wd prefer to change Feb-March, they said originally, but I said if they wanted the house they had better get on with it, though I'm of two minds whether this is right from our point of view. But I think that once we have decided to sell, the sooner it is done the better, and no use prolonging this agony. But it does perhaps mean~~n~~ that you should ensure even more carefully that the gear from Delhi gets here in time to sort everything out before we may have to send the surplus off to store for a while.

Must go up to bed now - I am not sure where, as Bun is in the extra bed in our room. Probably in pink room, as it's so hot I'd like garden window open - how lucky we are to have so many beds and choices! But I wish you were here, as I always hate going up alone.

Contd. Sunday a.m. - No more to add usefully now - I am feeling more reconciled to selling now, and see a lot of advantages in not completing it till early next year _ Will deal with business matters tomorrow_ Wish you were here!

Lots of love

from Pie .

Monday morning,
Aug. 26

Dear Pie -

Just a quick line further to my yesterday's letter. Have just spoken to Roberts of Frost - van der Aiken hadn't yet got onto him, and I was rather glad to get in first. Roberts says they don't like such a long delay in proposed purchase when accepting an offer, and that he will talk carefully to van der Aiken and size him up and see how quickly he is prepared to move. On other hand he says in normal course of purchase, anyone buying now wouldn't complete for about 3 months, or i.e. end November. And he points out - rightly - that if we were thinking of withdrawing anyway we wouldn't lose much of anything if v.d.A. failed to come through in the end - though he agrees we should put some sort of time limit if accepting his offer. Cunning old cynic Roberts said I was quite right to stall and say I must get your agreement first - he says someone else may turn up in the next week or so who wd be firmer purchaser! Anyway I await your reactions.

I haven't been able to get on to Bayzand, as line is engaged, and we are committed to go to Paddock to cheer Mummy up. But Roberts said he was sure in fact that if we've taken offer for house and are obviously in process of selling St.A., capital gains tax won't apply to it. I still on reflection think that I like, though, if we accept van der Aiken or other offer, the possibility of transferring only half the dollars (i.e. £5000), which wd enable us to pay off mortgage here and get on with Kelso expenses, and carry another £5000 as bridging loan for 4-5 months. Both for saving capital and as hedge against devaluation. Await your reactions on this too - of course no question of bridging unless we have definite purchaser coming along.

Lots of love

from Pie.

St. Albans,
Tuesday, Aug.27[30]

Dear Pie,

Thank you so much for your good letters of Tuesday, 21st and Friday 23rd, even if they were written in a rush. I am sorry we seem to get un-aligned and at cross-purposes; it is only the stupid overlapping of the correspondence, and I know that you are busy, and too busy to advise me, but I do often like advice all the same just to feel that we are in touch! And when I write letters there is usually so much to say that I try to get through all the business and stuff, and don't have time to write about how much I miss you and all that. Anyway, it does really begin to seem not long until December!

I'm busy, and so is Bun, getting organized to go to the Clarks - we will be off on Thursday morning, as soon as the post has come. And I've decided not to have the mail forwarded , as there will be no peace if I do, with all the business mail that comes all the time - mostly there will be no mail anyway, as it is Aug. Bank holiday weekend, and we will be back Tues. or Weds. You will know where to find me anyway, in case of need, and apart from that I shall be incommunicado for a breather!

Here is a good letter from Poll - they seem to be enjoying themselves thoroughly, which is good.

[30] this letter filed *after* the one of Sept. 4 - indicative of order of receipt?

Yesterday Bun and I went over to Paddock to see Mummy. She seemed pretty nearly all right to me, and not shaky or grim-faced, though she said she wasn't feeling quite right, and is still awaiting the results of the lab tests. But obviously better than she was. She was full of philosophical discussion about how hard it is to be a widow - she says she doesn't adjust to it. She said could I understand that, didn't I find while you were in Delhi that I could see somewhat the problem, and that she hasn't got the person she is used to talking to, and gets frustrated from not having. I certainly can see that point, and can see that it is very difficult for her. She is very chary of moving away from Paddock, which she says gives her her last link with Daddy, even though people keep urging her to move to Oxford. She admits it is hard to be alone in the winter there, but thinks if she moved it wd only be a sort of trying to run away from being a widow, and that she would miss the garden terribly. She seemed to cheer up a lot when I said that if we sold St.A. we were going to look for a country cottage somewhere in the Oxford direction probably - it wd obviously make a great difference to her if we had a base somewhere in her direction. I told her to ask Basil Pollard to find us a cottage - she suspects however that he has been sacked from Buckell and Ballard - village gossip says so, though she has no direct evidence.

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We drove Mummy down to the lock at Little Wittenham at tea time, as she wanted to get out, and hadn't been out of her garden since being ill, and looked at the boats and children swimming (rather cold though). Then Bun and I came back slowly through the evening light - through the ford at Hurst, at Bun's request. The car is going perfectly all right, and no more battery trouble - I cannot think what it can have been. Halfpenny's said it couldn't have been that the battery went dry, and indeed I have been having it checked and topped up regularly - it does need it a lot. Perhaps it was an aftermath of not being used for a week while it was in for repair. Anyway so far so good.~~x~~ I've touched up a few spots of bad paint today, and we'll put on roof rack tomorrow, and be ready to go. Spoke to Lois on the phone last night, and she s~~x~~ounds in fine form. Bun and I both have colds and scratchy throats - it's a bug going round - but are otherwise fine.

Tell Alan I liked his account of Kulu, and am glad to see his sense of humour is surviving in spite of Delhi heat, or perhaps it was revived by the trip. Very good account[31].

It's all very well saying "get on with it" to me and Philip, but I hope to God that mortgage gets to you and you sign it before taking off for Kashmir! Of course I am all for you going, and it sounds a good plan - but you honestly hadn't said a word about it until in your letter to Cecil Waterfield!

[31] See appendix 3

It's funny that I wrote to you about the same time as you wrote to me about merger difficulties and what the next job might be. It'll be all right anyway, but makes me feel we should liquidate St.A. if possible to be all straight for any event.

I wasn't going to start on business again, but I see that I've got such a long list of things to get through tomorrow that I'd better fill you in on the developments to the moment, and only add as necessary quickly tomorrow.

First of all, Roberts reported this morning: he says that van der Aiken has made a definite offer of 10,000 for the house. I said in that case I had misunderstood v.d.A., who had said he agreed to the price, which I understood to be the list price of 10,250. Roberts counselled me to take his offer - he said that he didn't think the price would go up by next spring, indeed things will be just as difficult then, and that he has now some experience of houses in this road, and that they are difficult to get mortgages on. He says V.D.A. sounds in a pretty good position, that he says that he needs a mortgage of only 6000 (after selling his house, which should not be difficult, as it is new Wates house and easy for a purchaser to get a big mortgage[32] on.) V.D.A. has a mortgage with Norwich and foresees no difficulty vis-a-vis here; Roberts says he could help him arrange mortgage for here, but v.d.a. says he notes that gratefully but thinks that he can arrange the mortgage. Roberts

[32] orig 'morgage'

says that he sounds better than Rattenbury, who he thinks gets tied up with his building society who were making so many difficulties over a mortgage for this that Rattenbury shied off. But I reiterated to Roberts that I was not prepared to accept v.d.a's offer without hearing what you thought, as ~~xx~~ indeed I told v.d.a. on the phone, and Roberts agreed to go back to him to see if he would up it, or at least offer a higher price with fitted carpets and fires (which are of marginal use to us actually, esp. if we may have to store them for a time.) I got the feeling however that Roberts may have advised v.d.a. that 10,000 was a fair price for the house.

Well then I was just sorting out my business correspondence after lunch, and trying to get all in order before Clarks, when the doorbell rang. To my surprise it was a new Tufnell man (a bit slimy, called Muir-Goulding - he looks very much an Anglo-Indian but wouldn't admit it, though he said he knew India) - he described himself as Timothy Tufnell's personal assistant (!), now in the Sunningdale office, and he brought with him a house-hunter called Noble, whom he was ta~~x~~king around all the Tufnell houses, and said that it was giving him a good chance himself to see what they had on the books. So I showed them around, and the Tufnell man indeed expressed great keenness on how nice the house was (this may have been an act in front of client!). Before they left I chivvied them by saying that I had had an offer from a client of Frosts, but had said that I wouldn't accept it definitely till

I'd heard your views. Both got very keen, Tufnell man said he'd speak to me tomorrow "about this and other matters," I said I couldn't remember if he still had our keys as I was going away, and he is very keen to have them if he hasn't (which I suspect he still had) - and the Noble man said he wanted to bring his wife and could he ring me. So they departed, and when Bun was in the bath tonight doorbell rang again, and there was Noble with his wife and two girls (9 and 10), saying could I bear to let his wife see the house. So they did - he said he had seen dozens of houses all day today, and only two possibles, of which ours was one. They seemed very keen, and departed saying they would communicate with Tufnells tomorrow, and was I really sure that I hadn't accepted another offer yet. Needless to say I too will be communicating to Tufnells tomorrow, as I don't even know what possible price they have been quoting to this man: presumably it is still on their books at 10,750, but they must know that we had accepted 10,000 from R. Nor do I know how likely a purchaser Noble is - he says he is moving from Chislehurst as his firm has shifted him and says he must move, but Tufnells may, or should, know whether or not he has got to sell his house and how substantial he seems. Common types, but nice. I feel as if I'm in the midst of a slight auction, which may be useful, but I do not want to frighten both off by playing them off too much against the other. And I do not see how I can judge with any sureness which one is more likely to come through in the end! So I really would like your views. If Noble

should in the best case prove to have already sold his house and/or having his firm backing him in purchase, and he offers for this, then I suspect I should go for a sure thing. On other hand, Roberts says he will chivvy v.d.a. to get on with it, and thinks he should be able to sign contract by end Oct or Nov, regardless of whether we agree completion date for say end Jan. And I am I must admit tempted by v.d.a., as later completion date, owing to their baby, would enable us to sort out after you (and with luck Delhi gear) get back. I have firmly told both, and the agents, that I cannot accept any offer definitely till I have heard from you. This is slight stall, I must admit. But I do need your guidance as you have quoted a different price in every letter you have written! I think that we should accept 10,000 or over from whichever seems the best purchaser - I must admit to slight preference for late Jan or Feb completion date, though if the Tufnell client wanted it straightaway we could I suppose bridge the entire thing for a month or so and save all the dollar investments. For even Jan. completion I think it wd be better to bridge about half, as I said before, for hedging and saving the investment. But there would be certain temptation to take an offer for early completion, if such, and get on with it.

I will continue tomorrow, with fruits of all I find out. And I have a lot also

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to do tomorrow ~~xxxxxxxx~~, so I stop somewhat dismally to go up to bed alone, which I do not like doing.

Contd. Weds. evening - I might as well have left out the preceding page, as events have overtaken it! Your telegram arrived just after lunch today - how very quick, and how super of you to send it - and only a minute after that Roberts rang up to say that van der Aiken had accepted the price of 10,250 (not incl. fitments, which Roberts thinks they don't want - but I can see about that with them later) and was prepared to write a cheque for the deposit. I agreed, and we are all set.

Before that, this morning, I had spoken with oily Tufnell man, who assured me that Noble is a real client, who wants to move in a great hurry and is prepared to sign a contract straightaway. He said he was expecting to hear from Noble today, and would let me know - however he didn't let me know, and so I have gone ahead and settled with the van der Aikens. I hope this is not a mistake! - but I think it is all right, as they are putting down deposit straightaway; and also, as your tel said, the Jan. date for giving up here is best combina tion possible for us - though it may make me lazy about the move to know that you will be back before the final sorting out from here! A great psychological relief to Bun, though, to feel that he will be able to come back here after going off to Dragons - by

the end of the Christmas hols he will have got used to Kelso as home too, so it will be easier after that. I hope we are not missing a gold mine with Tufnell's client Noble, but in fact I am sure we are not, as Noble admitted that he had had the house ad from Frost as well, ~~s~~so he wd be aware we were offering at 10,250 and certainly wouldn't offer more - and would probably want possession, acc. to Tufnell, in about 6 weeks.

I note you say you "confidently" leave all arrangements to me! - However, I am going to Clarks tomorrow, and will deal with everything when I get back. I did however ring Bayzand this afternoon to discuss financing - he is rather petty, but o.k. He is not really prepared to underwrite everything, which I didn't expect him to be - and when I said I was prepared to transfer dollars to pay off the 3850 mortgage here, he said there would be no problem about the rest and that he could assure me the bank would lend us 6,000 bridging with no problem at all. He worked out interest roughly, and said that over four months is would work out at something under £200, but as one gets income tax relief on it it would on the contrary mean only something a little over £100. That does not sound too bad to me, and I am preparing to go ahead on those lines. Will work out exact figures

when I've got back from hol next week, but what you can do is have that paper from Philip re-typed to say that I am lending you £3850. It's probably hardly worth bothering about, but you might as well sign it.

Bayzand[33], who is a keen little beaver on small matters, said,when I told him our purchaser owns a Wates house on Dulwich college estate, that those houses are in tremendous demand and that they fetch he thinks at least 10,000. So it looks as if v.d.A. is substantial enough for our house. Roberts says he works at the Financial Times; as he told me he is at Uxbridge univ. (sorry that's not the name of it,which I've forgotten), he is perhaps an economist or some such?

Now I will write no more, as I must finish packing and leaving everything tidy here, so as to be off in good time tomorrow. Wish you were here, but it will be fun to see the Clarks.

Sorry this has turned into a business-ish sort of letter again - it didn't mean to when I started it!

Lots of love, and
miss you,
Pie.

[33] orig 'Bayznd'

21 The Borough
Montacute

Friday morning,
Aug. 30[34]

Dear Pie –

Sent you a p.c. yesterday on arrival – hope you've got it[35].

This is to send on JW's letter _ No time to write properly, as I'm just taking Penelope + Bun to the sea side, while Lois takes Philippa for her driving test.

Car is I think <u>fixed</u> _ The nice mechanic here in Montacute dealt with it yester day afternoon – found it <u>wasn't</u> dynamo as he thought, but central box (which apparently controls all electrics and which

[34] this too filed after 4 Sept letter
[35] not on file

the Yeovil Triumph people told
him often goes wrong on 2000's)
He has replaced it, and
battery is now charging again _
part of the point of sea side
trip today is to exercise car
so that battery will further
re-charge itself. Total cost
£3 - not too bad.
No time for more _
Lots of love
from Pie .

St. Albans,
Weds.evening,
Sept. 4

Dear Pie,

Here we are just back, and masses of lettersfrom you to answer - some waiting here (incl. from 24 August, which hadn't arrived before we left, and seems very old), and also two which came at Montacute. I probably won't be able to answer all points now, but am feeling guilty for having no time to write while with Clarks, so I want anyway to get this off quickly to bring you up to date and say that we are back, and everything all right. Masses of mail, incl a lot of bills, waiting when we got here.

It was the greatest fun at Montacute, and I think they were angels to put up with so many Waterfields! Their house is absolutely super, and we explored all the area: saw Camelot, and walked on Ham Hill, and played a few holes of golf at Yeovil ("a few" because we totalled seven, which is really too many to play, so we only succeeded in doing four holes - very up and down course, but nice and grassy.) And we explored antique shops, and Polly bought another clock (for £2), which is sweet though goodness knows if it will work.

And J.W. and Poll and I went to take coffee on Monday with the Pilkingtons, who have a beautiful large house near Ilminster. It was nice to see them, and I warmed to

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them very much. And they took us to see a cottage which they said we'd like - and, goodness me, if it isn't absolutely our dream cottage/cum retiring house if we want to go to the West country. I now think perhaps we should, even though I find it a long drive and more suitable for long holidays rather than weekends. They didn't even know if it was for sale, but promised to ask their char, which they did, and rang us at Montacute not an hour later to say that the local rumour is that the cottage is going to be sold, as a new farmer has bought up the large farm, to which it belongs, and is going to sell off the cottages, which he doesn't need. I've got the agent's name, and will write with an enquiry tomorrow (Pilk says not to be too enthusiastic in an enquiry!) For details, which you'll be interested in: (but first, you know that I'm not really a country cottage enthusiast, and yet I felt that this was super - and I later dragged Lois to see it, and she thought the same): It is admittedly a long way from London, being nearly to Devon border; it is midway between Crewkerne and Chard, about a mile to the right of Windwhistle Hill (and golf course!), near the village of Cudworth (horrid name), in completely isolated country about half mile from village, and about 5-6 miles from Crewkerne. The setting is absolutely glorious - it is not overshadowed by Windwhistle, being itself on a lower hill (on a very narrow and deserted, though tarmaced, lane). The view from the garden at back is over sloping farmland and

panoramic right over Somerset (?Dorset) - am not quite sure of boundaries - but one of the most beautiful views I've ever seen (at present obscured by the outhouses, some at least of which would have to be removed to get full advantage of the view). View to side of house to panorama of Windwhistle Hill~~s~~, and in front,across lane,farm fields, and an orchard to other side. About an acre, or maybe a little less - just the right size, and all rough meadow grass (and nettles) at the moment. The cottage is sweet but absolutely falling down - at least half of it is, as it is really two cottages. The smaller end of it (which we couldn't get into) looks in fair repair, and has two rooms below and two above. It is all stone with thatched roof - at present divided down the front of garden by a stone wall, which makes it difficult to see the whole picture, but without wall the frontage would look very attractive (in fact dream cottage), and with house, garden, and views done up it would be anyone's dream. But larger end of cottage is totally derelict - in fact I should think it will fall down utterly in a year or so if something isn't done about it, and this may be a major snag. Its ceiling (i.e. floor of first floor) is sagging badly, and all beams would have to be re-done, and the wood is full of woodworm; one would have to take careful advice[36] as to whether it cd be made sound. If so, it would afford two very large,and one small, rooms on ground floor, and one large and one smaller room above. Of course no bathroom at all, and kitchen would have to be made out of one

[36] orig 'advise'

[this side blank]

room. I think it could be converted (if repairable), and by adding kitchen with bathroom over, one could probably work out four-bedroomed cottage with three receps. Mains water is at the end of the field, and electricity about 40 yards away - everything to be done, in fact, but appearing possible. Pilk thought that it might be possible to get it for between £1,000 to 2,000; Lois on contrary thought that any agent would realize possibilities and advise owners accordingly, and that they would ask 4,000 in spite of dereliction. I will write to agents and hope to find out! If it is going to be sold, and F.O. doesn't muck us up by sending us abroad again~~n~~, we all think we should buy it! (That is, or course, after we have got the contract safely done for St. Albans, and I just hope they don't sell the cottage before then.) If Pilk is anywhere near right on price, it is worth that for land with view alone, I wd have thought - and I really think Lois is probably nearer right. And I expect it would cost another 3,000 to 4,000 to put the structure right and install services - but one would then have a worthwhile property of value. Of course the great advantage of having the smaller end in reasonable condition is that we could use it for summer camping out in while getting the other end seen to - but I think the derelict end would have to be done fairly soon, before it gets worse. I am longing for you to see it, and hope that its timing of sale may match our wants. In fact I took two photos of it,

which I'll send you when developed - but they are not of the views, and I cannot tell you how good they are. The garden area would lend itself easily to converting to labour-save garden with lawns, trees and shrubs and views. Isolation might be a problem (I had just decided, before seeing it, that what we probably wanted was a village house like the Clarks, surrounded by neighbours) - cottage is on slope of hill above Cudworth village, which appears to be only a few houses, some quarter or half a mile below, and Cudworth church (very ancient, 12th century - tiny like Sotwell) about ¼ mile above. Totally isolated country, I wouldn't have believed it was there, so remote below Windwhistle. Lois had never been there before, nor I should think has anyone else, because there is no reason to go there. Pilk says he thinks that corner of Somerset is safe from development of any sort, because it is so near the county boundary (of Dorset and Devon) that the county won't be interested in developing anything there (same applies to their house, which is equally isolated and only a few miles away.) But of course it <u>is</u> farther from London than most Somerset or Dorset cottages; equally it has the possible advantage of being near to Devon so that one could pop down there easily. But no good for Oxford really. I only write at length because as you can see we all fell in love with it! Pilk says cottages in Oxfordshire or thereabouts are <u>much</u> more expensive than West country. He also says the Birleys are living in Somerton, which I didn't realize - it is

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where
/ Poll bought her clock today. I am quite good at knowing Somerset area now!

I haven't told you full account of stay at all - I fetched children from Phoebe's on Sat. afternoon, getting caught in terrible bank holiday traffic jams to do it - Phoebe had warned us, and she was right (apparently Taunton always jams up), but there wasn't any way to avoid it, and it just took a very long time indeed to make a very short journey. And as children had left their suitcases checked at station (because Phoebe declined to fetch them on bank holiday, and they made their way to her by bus), it took us ages to get to station to retrieve them. Lots of games with the Clarks, but no further composition of wodes (woads) - we thought we'd better wait for Alan's inspiration. Except that we all thought we should call our prospective cottage "Westward Woad"!

No more tonight - I will continue tomorrow, as I must go and unpack cases now; and there will be a lot of business to get down to again tomorrow, alas

Contd. Thurs. morning, just before lunch - no, just after as J.W. called lunch just as I sat down. No time to write much more, as I must get this off before we go blackberrying on the heath. Your letter of Sunday and Monday came this morning - too bad to didn't get bag at the weekend - and then I'm afraid when you did that it wd only have my p.c. from Montacute and note with J.W.'s letter. So I hope that this will get to you this weekend.

7

Shabash on ordering furniture - it all sounds super, and very economical. How nice to have a rocking chair! Is it cushioned, and is the easy chair cushioned, as well as the sofa? I will have to think about the cover for a little - sorry, but I think that none of the swatches you sent will do for cushion covers. They are mostly not the right material, either too light in weight or too bracadey. Mario (or furniture people) may have samples of other possible upholstery material? Should be heavier than those you sent for curtains. My only reservation is about ordering another coffee table - wouldn't one of our two Chinese tables have gone with the new furniture? We will have too many coffee tables. (Poll says they are always useful, which I expect is what you think!)

Shabash also about the curtains from drawing room - what a saga! Well done you. As for a dressing table, of course I have always wanted one, but I think that I must be content with the Collingwood dressing table, which is old family piece, and would be costly to store. It must be pretty valuable, and many people admire it - I do not like its claw feet and lack of drawer space, but never mind.

It looks as if all our business is going all right, though I have a lot of letters to write. My finances are in order, I am just always too busy to write you in full about them, but I am up to date and in communication.

8

I am pressed desperately by children to go blackberrying on heath, and must write first to Clarks, so I will post this and will continue letter this evening.

About super furniture you have ordered - could you possibly tell me exact measurements? This is very important, before I have furniture moved from here: we will obviously have to go half bare until India things arrive, but I must work out space and try to take enough from here to fill some space and provide sitting space till lift van arrives. Need measurements! Lois says gear from India takes at least 3 months - no sign of theirs yet. Do you think it is at all possible that you could send ours in time to get it for Christmas hols? I doubt it. For one thing, all our Christmas decs are in Delhi - but we can always do without. Furniture is more important!

Must stop and write to Lois with all our thank-yous. Will write more tonight.

Lots of love
from Pie

Sorry for frantically rushed letter - and haven't really started to answer yr points!

Good blackberrying this afternoon, and Poll has made masses of jam.

St. Albans,
Thursday evening,
Sept. 5

Enclosure from bank re tax on letting - I wish they cd keep our addresses straight!

Dear Pie,

Sorry I wrote a rather rushed and scrappy letter which I sent off to you this afternoon. But I wanted to get it off to be sure of bag for Sunday - I hope this may make it too, but it probably won't. It is very hard to find time for writing with the 3 children, and running the house.

I want to go through all your letters, which arrived totally higgledy-piggledy, and answer points. But first I had better comment on J.W. and his sudden apocalyptic vision of music: it is very trying, and I do not take him seriously, although I have to pretend to. I didn't realize properly when I forwarded his letter to you from Montacute, quite what he was up to in his mind - but it has become all too clear. At the present moment he says he wants to devote his life to music, and thinks I don't take him seriously enough when I just say that I have no objection to his having lessons with Joyce Rathbone, who if she can improve his piano playing will improve his satisfaction with it. I had one horrid moment at Montacute when I wondered if he was going to say he wanted to chuck up Oxford altogether, but thank goodness he hasn't gone that far; and I keep counselling him to play it slowly and see gradually what opportunities offer themselves, and wait till

he finishes university. I think that this will either prove to be a passing phase, or else that he will get discouraged by lack of opportunities in the musical field (he doesn't want to be a performer really), and that he will gradually turn to something else and enjoy his music properly as a sideline. But it is very hard to say that to him, as he sulks and says that I am being a wet blanket; so I say all right, go ahead pro tem. I think it would probably be very wrong to negate him utterly at this point, as he would only really properly rebel. But the nuisance is, as he no doubt has written to you, that he wants to give up Perugia in order to learn the piano "properly". I don't see what we can do about this, and think that we'll have to let him fill in his time before Oxford in doing his music, as he is so strongly determined to do so, and hope that he either works it out of his system, or makes enough progress to find eventually some sort of useful and satisfying niche in the musical world. Can you see any other solution? He is very tiresome about it, but perhaps it is less harmful than a lot of kinds of adolescent rebellion; and anyway I trust that it is a passing phase. Poor you, to have two such convincingly musical children! I can't think of any more to say about this at the moment, except that J.W. is anxiously awaitin[37] your answer to his letters - I do not see how he can imagine that you will be enthusiastic about his ideas, so he is bound to be depressed and in a sulk when he does hear from you.

after Dragons

How funny Ann Lendrum's gossip - she is actually quite shrewd, so I suspect is reporting

[37] run over edge of paper

faithfully what she heard, but I daresay you are right in thinking her informant was confused with Le Quesne. But, unlike you, I wouldn't be at all surprised if you got promoted, and it wd be typical F.O. to tie a stinking post to the promotion! However, I expect it is all false rumour, and I shan't pay any attention to it or worry about it. Too busy anyway with getting children ready for school and trying to sort out J.W.'s sulks!

Now I must look through your letters carefully to see what needs comment. First, thank you for sending Alan's Kulu and other photos - I will put them in the book. I had seen most of them at Montacute (Clarks' copies) and think they are very good.

I am sorry about car part - I think you did not at all describe it properly the first two times, as now that you draw the picture I can see what you mean. Do I take it that I am now to do nothing more about it?

About the curtain question: you are being very good to pursue this so carefully, and I am glad to have swatches, but I do not think at the moment at least that we want any further curtains from Delhi (apart from grey drawing room ones, which you have done shabash on). The thing is that the grey ones will do ground floor of Kelso, and we are buying the Giffords' master bedroom curtains, which you remember match the wallpaper. That leaves only the three children's bedrooms, which do not need much curtaining - I think if we move from here in Jan. we will have enough suitable from here

[a much discoloured bit of sellotape holding a fabric swatch 2x1 cm]
<- Dining room Drawing room ->
[right hand sellotape lost]

4

for those bedrooms, with possible exception of Bun's room - and as it has a brightly coloured flowered wallpaper, the curtains must be very plain and possibly white, or else an exact matching shade to one of the colours on the wall. In any case, I would rather have his curtains both washable and drip-dry - the synthetics are very good here, and such aren't available in India. Those bedrooms won't be big expenditure anyway, as the windows are not so big, and there is only one in each room. Subject to further consideration I don't want to order any from India. I note that you do not want the swatches back unless you ask.

About the upholstery for the shabash furniture, I don't think any of the swatches you sent would do - they are not upholstery material anyway. I find it very hard to think of colours for the covers when I haven't seen the furniture. Do I take it that the covering is included in the price you are paying? Considering the rosy red walls - sample attached of actual colour - and the grey Delhi curtains - I think something neutral would be best (?charcoal grey in nubbly texture, or beige-ish, or possibly a dull gold, if not greeny or mustardy). Dining room walls you remember are a peculiar shade of brown, which makes combining colours a nuisance. I think maybe a beige, not too light, might do, as long as it would go with the grey curtains. Can you send any more samples? I am sorry to be a nuisance, but when I asked you about a settee

I visualised doing covers here when I could see what was what, and I find it very hard doing it at long distance. Maybe these colours of walls which I have attached will help you in considering swatches. Anyway, do please send me the measurements of the furniture.

Re cine projectors: yes, we ought to have a double-type one. As it is, we cannot view any new films which we take. We can view old films on the old projector. Is there any market for that there (it is 110 volts and works off small transformer - but I want the small transformer, as it also works other equipment)? Other alternative wd be to keep old projector for old films and buy new one that wd take new films - if you can't sell the old projector, this may be more economical, though it is more of a nuisance to have two machines.

Don't worry about Dr. Dickson - I think it is better to forget about it. I did mention it to Mummy, who says he is sometimes rude and sometimes not. Mary saw him afterwards when she went to see Mummy and had to summon him, and said he was nice to her, though he had been rude on a previous occasion. I think not worth fussing about. Mummy reports, on phone tonight, that she is better but not quite well. She went to Farningham while we were at Montacute and had a good rest. I asked her to come see us, but she is busy, with Figgesses and others coming to see her

this weekend, and can't come. Louise and James arrive from U.S. on Tuesday morning, and J.W. goes back to Eton on Wednesday. Oh, before I forget,which I did before, to tell you: Mummy told me when I went over with Bun that Peter Waterfield had been sacked from his Cambridge school. He had been having rows with the trustees and trying to make what he thought were necessary changes, which trustees resisted, and in the end he offered to resign if they didn't approve of the changes he wanted. To his surprise they accepted his resignation at once, as from now; but are paying him a year's salary; and he hasn't yet decided what to do. Such is the story accord-ing to Mummy anyway, though she often gets things wrong or exaggerated. Anyway they are leaving the school.

Good for Alan to get ball/cup toy for Bun. I shouldn't think a reserve is necessary, but as they are so cheap it might be worthwhile if one came easily to hand.

Re toothpaste - there was of course a reserve of toothpaste in biscuit tin box/boxes in linen cupboard on stairs. All boxes are labelled for contents - except possibly the one~~s~~ of immediate reserve supplies for you, which certainly had some toothpaste in, though there was more in other boxes. A lot of Colgate left, for example, from era of Joan. I hope you have found it all by now!

Yes, Ellingworths are certainly sitting on a goal mine with their land, and they know

it - Dick is determined not to sell any of the land until the area is developed. It is sure to be eventually, I should think, as it's so near to London.

Poor pie, to be struggling to support the DSWA - I should think it's a lost cause, unless Joanna Hennings throws herself behind it, and anyway chances are that Sir M. James will have some idée fixe about it. But well done to get Anna Maynard involved.

It will be nice to see the Sheens if/when they come - I cannot remember when Farnborough show is, so don't have any idea when they will be coming. I like Rusty.

What a long saga about the grey curtains, including the white ants! It wd be nice to get them as soon as poss - do you think Sheens might possibly bring?

Fun to go to old Delhi and see curios and all, and get a brass elephant. Poll and I both turn our noses up at "brass chains for dames' waists", but that kind of thing might always come in handy for presents. And don't forget useful presents from Tibetan stalls.

About the furniture I've already commented at length - I do think it is a shabash buy, but I'm flummoxed on covering materials, though I hate to sound difficult about it, but I'm afraid you will have to get more samples. I prefer plain colours, or very muted patterns, but preferably with nubbly texture.

I will pay Harrods bill.

Tel number at Kelso is: 01 937 2826. (The 01 part is the prefix meaning London, as you know.) I now aim to move about mid-Oct. All three children have their half-terms on Nov. 1 to 4 - it is rather a bore having them all at one weekend, but maybe it will work out better that way.

What a bore the bank are, putting that £289 in deposit acct. when I meant it to go in current - I will write to Bayzand and sort it out. Yes, that was the balance over 500 dollars in my checking acct, and it should of course be in current to reduce our overdraft, on which we pay 9½ p.c. interest.

That new James Bond sounds funny - I must ask about it, but it may not be out in England yet, as books usually come out first in U.S.

Bun was very pleased to get his two letters, and will no doubt write to you soon. He wrote to Clarks today, so was exhausted with letter-writing, which however is beginning to come easier for him.

Polly is not a senior, and says it depends upon election. She was on list, but not elected. She is not everyone's cup of tea, nor tries to be!

Now I think I've answered all points to date, and find it is late, so will aim bathward and bedward, neither of which I like to do, as I hate going up alone, and I too have been feeling very sexy - only I've got too much business to do tomorrow, so I'm feeling put off already. J.W. and Poll are going to see Jeremy and Joanna tomorrow. *Lots of love from Pie.*

St. Albans,
Saturday morning, Sept. 7

Dear Pie,

Sat. morning after breakfast, and it is one of those misty sunny warm September days. Your letter of Tuesday-Wednesday came this morning - and I'm very distressed that you haven't been getting my letters. We are all out of touch again. I expect the Aug. Bank hol. caused the delay -i.e. mail slow in getting to the office and then not sorted out after it did get there. But I wrote to you just before going to Montacute (posted Thurs. morning as I left here, ages ago now) and I'm very surprised you didn't get that. I hope it has caught up with you by now - it had all latest house news, and thanks for your super telegram. Then on Thurs. p.m. I posted you a p.c. from Montacute announcing arrival, and on Friday a brief note sending on J.W.'s letter. After that I admit we were too busy at Montacute! But I've again written to you twice after arrival back here, so you ought by now to be well up to date.

There is not much new to add now - we are all well and busy. Joan and Terry are coming over tonight, as Joan wants to see Bun before he goes off to school. Poll wants to consult Terry on clocks, and I want to consult him on carpets. Joan's baby is due in a few weeks, and she is moaning about not feeling well. Louise and James arrive Tuesday at 7 a.m.!

I hope that this letter gets to you before you go to Kashmir, and that you have a super time. Will you be able to get any letters while you are there, or shall I just stop writing, I wonder? Hope that you will have told me.

Good for getting M. Binnington to bring curtains. Good for doing Xmas card, too - I wish I could see it, but I guess it's not essential. Children think they won't do cards this year - at least that is their first reaction. Xmas card postage will be 4d. this year! Good for ordering convertible cine projector - don't forget when you have got new one that you should get rid of old one, as I said in previous letter (but keep little transformer).

There is not much else to comment on in your letter. I have received Dragons bill addressed to you here. Owing to mail seeming so erratic, I will not send it to

Postage for 1st Class letters goes to 5d. on Sept. 10 - I will get and send you some 5d. stamps for you to put on letters to us!

you, as it might just miss you before you go to Kashmire. It is £174-5-0! which I will pay. They ask for it within a week of beginning of term (which is Sept. 18) - you might just tell me if you have time whether I take that literally or whether I can wait until Sept. salary has come in. We are going to be so grossly overdrawn this month anyway that I don't suppose it makes much difference, so I'll go ahead and pay it at about the beginning of term unless you advise differently. There was also a form for insurance of school fees in case of illness, with optional medical extra of B.UP.A. coverage of medical, hospital, specialist treatment for illness. Both together came to just over £3 a term, and they wanted an answer at Dragons right away; so I answered yes, and hope you agree. I remember we had Poll insured for the school fees and actually got some money back on occasion, and we can't tell how Bun's throat and tonsils will stand up to the Dragons climate till after he gets there. About school bills, I sent Poll's on to you, which I suppose you are paying; but I cannot remember ever having seen J.W.'s - it is not here, and I expect that you have it and are dealing with it?

Letter from Milo, who seems not to be staying with you, but I hope he is dealing with you direct. Also a letter from Barbara Davies, to whom I'd written my rough plans and dates: she says she is not at the moment coming to England as there is some move in the wind for them, and so she stays in Madrid until it is settled whether they are moving. She doesn't indicate where or when.

All else goes well, except that the remaining school clothes and shoes for Bun (on order from Harrods and Farmer of Camberley) haven't yet come, so I foresee last minute rush. They were all ordered months ago, too.

Here is a most peculiar letter from Bun being funny. I must hurry now to get this into Sat. noon post, so that it ought to get to you before you go to Kashmir. I hope that you have a lovely time, and catch lots of trout. Lois and I were much remembering at Montacute last year's Kash-mir, as it was just a year later. Did you hear that Philippa passed her driving test (first go, too), which is super. J.W. takes his on Sept. 13, but I do not honestly expect him to pass. Good experience, I guess.

Lots of love from us all, and
especially from me,
Pie.

St. Albans,
Tuesday morning, Sept.9

Dear Pie,

Thank you so much for your letter of Thursday and Friday, which came this morning - at least you have had some letters from us, though they were certainly delayed in arriving.

I've not got much new to report, but hope that if I post this today you may get it in the Friday bag before you leave for Kashmir. Have good fishing! I still don't know if there is any point in my writing to you while you're away.

Louise and James arrived this morning (7.05 at London airport!) - It hurt me to get up that early, but was a very nice morning when I did: sun glowing dimly through morning mist. L. and J. seem fine, though tired from trip - they are now having a rest until lunch time. I asked them to buy me some duty free whisky and cigarettes, so I am now well stocked up, at half price. The only nuisance is that they brought those American Benson and Hedges filters, which are so long I feel as if they're stretching right across the room. We may take L. and J. to Savile gardens or Virginia Water this afternoon - it is another lovely day.

I think everything is in hand on business, but really haven't had time to do much about it. Just waiting till children are off to school. Bun seems all right about going to Dragons, in fact very much all right. J.W. is chivvying me to move as he wants to lay the table, which I am typing at - so I don't think I will get much further with this!

I do hope that your beginning cold didn't turn into a cold, and that you are all right for Kashmir. Good for selling movie projector, though I should have thought it was worth more! I wonder if Cassen is coming with you to Kashmir after all.

J.W. is longing to hear your reactions about his musical determination - I imagine you must have got a slodge of letters at once. I think he is simmering down a bit, but I have been spending a lot of time discussing with him and persuading him not to do anything irretrievable at this point (He was talking of giving up Oxford, but has stopped that idea now), and to take all best advice from Pilk and his tutor etc. I think that I have persuaded him that his best course is to get the broadest background education possible at university (i.e. not a music degree), with a view to being fitted for any career he later decides to go in for. He does not want to do a classical degree, as he says he is sick of "classical jigsaw puzzles" - and indeed I do not see any special advantage in a degree in classics if he doesn't want to become a don of that variety. You may disagree? He is anyway going to take advice. I think that his interests are so general (apart from music, which I think should be a spare-time even if absorbing interest) that he could do P.P.E. (if I've got that right?) or languages, or anything except music, which would be so specialized that it wouldn't be likely to fit him for anything else. But I badly need your help and advice, as I am not at all good on English university education.

Now must run with this for post.

Lots of love
from Pie.

St.Albans,
Sunday afternoon, Sept. 15

Dear Pie,

It's a pouring-with-rain Sunday afternoon, and Bun is watching football on TV, Poll is listening to music (as unable to mow lawn today, which she was going to do), and I'm thinking of you being in Kashmir catching trout. There really doesn't seem much urgency about writing, as you won't be back for another week, but if I don't write things will backlog and I won't remember everything I meant to say.

J.W. went off to school all right, but we haven't heard from him since. The JLTs went off to their meeting in London all right - they will stop here for a night on their return to U.S. from Europe on Oct. 10. I'm sad to say that they seem much older (James esp.), which is natural~~x~~ but saddening - he is going very slow, and I got the feeling that this might be the last business trip to Europe that they do. So I am glad to have a chance to see them.

Polly goes to London tomorrow for a lesson with M.E., who has agreed to fill in on lessons for Poll in the gaps of Orrea Pernel (O.P.'s suggestion). I've just had a good letter from O.P. who said she was pleased with Poll's progress both before and at Dartington, and was looking forward to teaching her~~x~~. The plan at the moment is that O.P. may be coming to London in December, and she is certainly coming in the Spring, about at Easter time. She will teach Poll whenever she comes, but if she doesn't come in December, would like Poll to come to Lugano for a fortnight in the Christmas hols (after Christmas), to which I've said o.k. This would fill in the gaps till Poll leaves Downe next summer. I'm not sure about Poll getting there on her own, but I daresay she could manage. O.P. says there are three ways: plane to Zurich and 3 hour train, plane to Milan and 1½ hour train, or boat train from Victoria to Lugano direct, with only change on and off the boat. The latter seems simplest (also cheaper, acc. to O.P.) but involves overnight train. Do you think one sends one's daughter off alon~~x~~e safely on such a trip?! Maybe

O.P. will anyway come to London in Dec., so that this won't arise till next year. O.P. was explicit about her charges: £5-5-0 per lesson (which we knew already), 8 gns per week for room (central heating and h.c. water), and a "common purse" for food (she hasn't worked it out since 1965 when it was about 12/ per day, but thinks food has probably gone up a bit since then). O.P. does cooking, with her students helping. This all sounds nice and family-like and good for Poll, and the charges reasonable enough. I hope you agree?

Now I want to ask you about Cudworth cottage - though there are so many ifs and buts, and everything hanging in the balance at the moment. But I got a letter from the agents, of which I enclose copy, which I got very excited about (so did Lois, when she came by on Friday) - but the November timing is really a little too soon for us; on other hand the price they expect is reasonable. But the comment in your last letter was too cryptic for me - you wrote: "It won't do to retire possibly? But meanwhile." I cannot make out your sense, I am afraid. Do you mean that you don't like the idea of it for retirement, or are you questioning me about whether it is suitable for retirement? If the first, we should probably stop thinking about it altogether, as my whole point about it was that (if it can be repaired basically without too much expense at the moment, so that it won't physically fall down) it is the ideal cottage, with plenty of room, to work on improving gradually for a retiring house. So please enlarge to me on what you mean - perhaps it's the location you don't like for retirement? I thought I'd described the possibilities adequately otherwise. I do not think it would do as a "meanwhile" house, as it is too far out of the area for really useful weekends, and needs too much loving work put into it if one is only using it as a stop-gap. And in view of the November auction date, perhaps I should give up thinking about it? I would like though to go down and stay with Lois and Alan, and discuss it with a builder or surveyor - and also perhaps discuss with the agents: possibly the owner would accept an offer (if it was good enough) before the auction, for completion in Jan. after we have completed sale here - and it might then be worthwhile embarking on (assuming that St.A. contract is signed, and that we know by then

that we are not being posted abroad) - but it would mean sight unseen for you, which is horrid, even though all the rest of us think it is super. I enclose a sketch of cottages and land, which may possibly give you a better idea than my previous description - and I'll sent the photos as soon as they are ready. So please tell me at more length what your views are! Of course, it might always not sell at auction, and then we would have a chance at it possibly later; on the other hand, it might go even more cheaply than the agents expect at the auction. Lois, who looked at many cottages before they bought, was, as you report too, most enthusiastic, as were the Pilks - both confirming my feelings about it. But if you feel no good for retirement, then I think we shouldn't think about it.

The timing is certainly a little previous for us, as we shall be very pushed until St.A. sale is completed. Bayzand will only let us overdraw £6000, and I shall be hard-pressed. I have got all figures and will write them out for you properly when I have time to settle to it. Life is rather frantic at the moment, in last throes of getting Bun and Poll ready for school.

Yesterday Poll went up to London for her lesson with M.E., and found trains chaos owing to cancellations because of floods. Our garden was awash, which amused Bun. You'll have read about the floods - it must have been far worse in Kent and Essex, but certainly bad enough here.

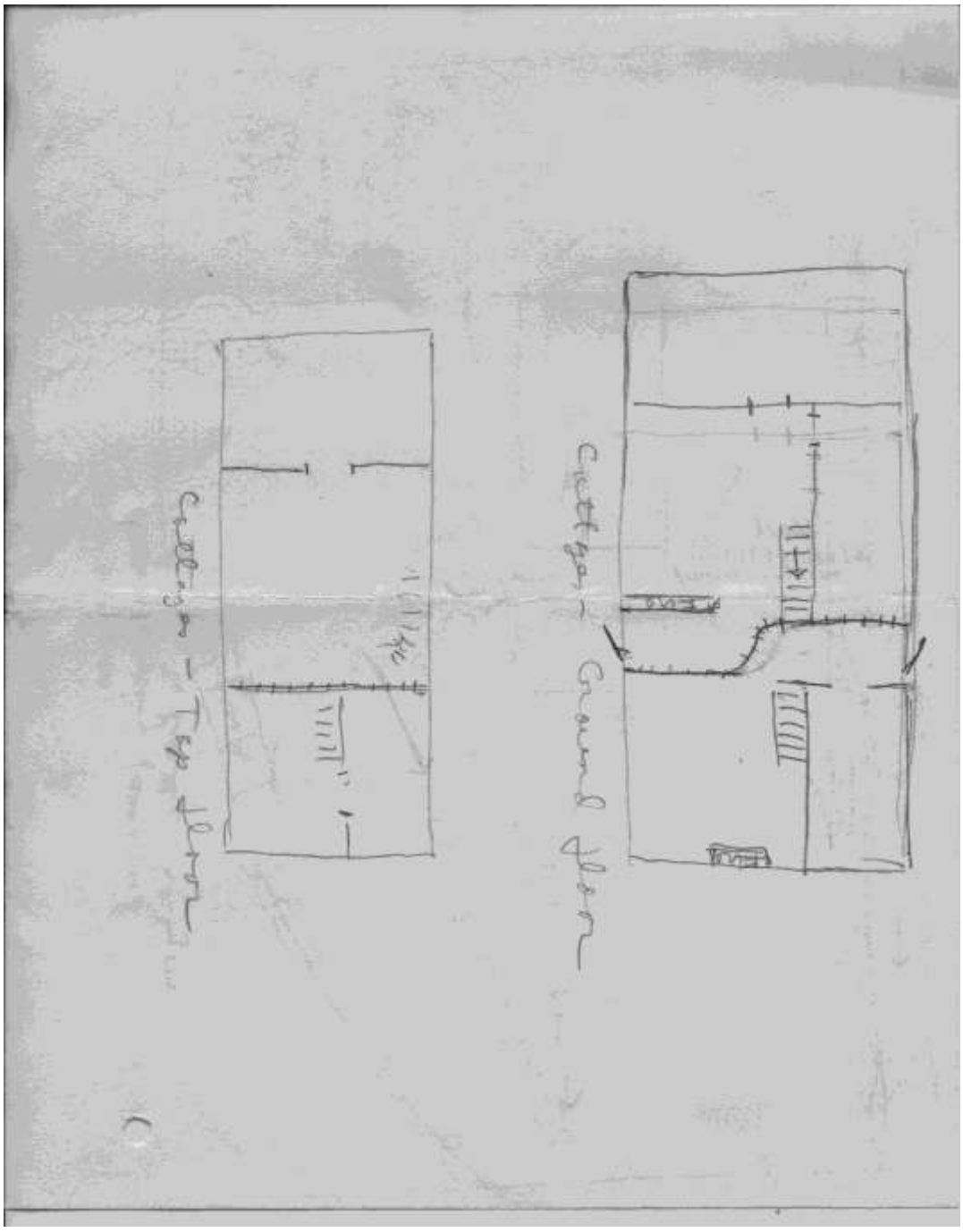
This morning we had to take a preliminary load of most of Poll's gear over to Downe, as she has got so much that we couldn't convey hers and Bun's all at once tomorrow. The plan was to take things to Downe and go on to Paddock for lunch - which in the end we accomplished, though we were very delayed. It turned out there were lots of floods in lower Berks. too, which hadn't got into the papers! First there was a bridge flooded at Wokingham, so that we had to take a long diversion round north, and then when we got to Earley, we found that the road to Reading was closed because of flooding! (I had decided to stick to the mains, as safer.) We were directed by a policeman to turn left to Swallowfield, and go up to Reading from there to get onto the Newbury road, which we proceeded to do. But before we got to Swallowfield (on the only

road open, as all the rest were barricaded and marked "flooded", we found that even the road to Swallowfield was under water - as far ahead as eye could see, and about up to the hubcaps. We found ourselves in a queue of cars, of whom more than half were prudently turning round and going back. Presently a nice man in a car came through from the other direction, so I leaned out and asked him if I'd have any trouble getting through He said it was all right, and perfectly firm underneath (though one couldn't see the road at all), so we took the plunge (as it was the only possible way of getting across to Cold Ash) and chugged through without mishap. That was the end of the adventure, as we found no more flooding the rest of the day - but it was a good thing we didn't have to come back the same way, as the road back from Pad (usual through Henley etc.) was perfectly clear... And I expect all should be clear by tomorrow, the rain seems to have pretty well stopped now, though it was raining all day. Mummy seemed in very good form on the whole, though she says she is not right.

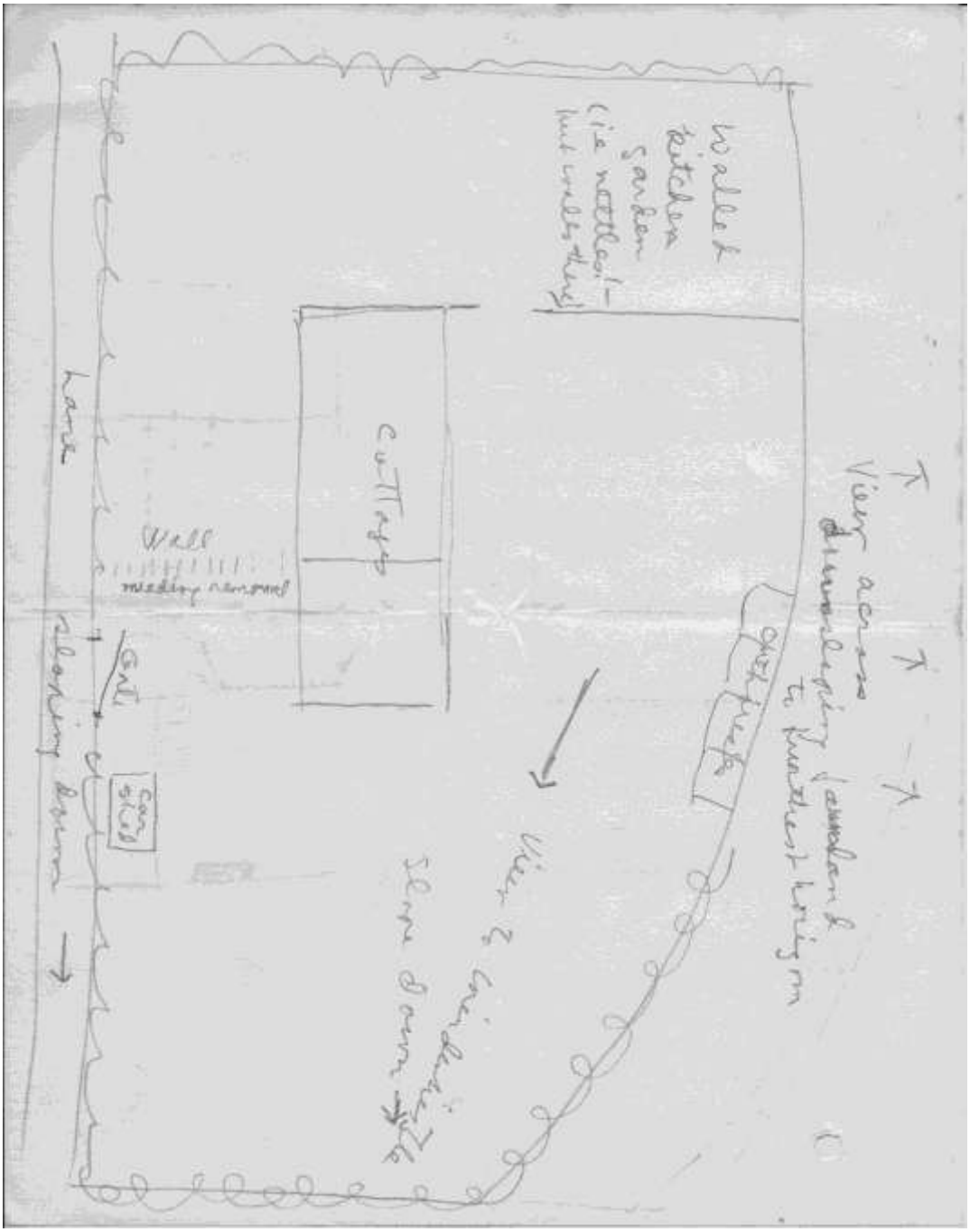
Now I must stop, as it is bedtime. I think I will get this off tomorrow as a first installment, though I won't have time to add much. We leave after lunch tomorrow, going to Dragons first and then to Downe House. (Vicki, with whom Poll is in telephonic communications about furnishing etc. their room) reports that her little brother Thomas <u>is</u> after all going to be in Stradlings, which Bun is pleased to hear.

Will buy and enclose in this tomorrow some 1d. stamps for you, to add to the 4d. ~~xxxx~~ ones that you have - please at least to me put 5d. on! The Farnborough air show seems pretty much rained out - no word from the Sheens. I have lots of questions of yours to answer, and some to ask - but will do that in my next, after getting children off. But one important point: Bun says will I please urgently ask you to <u>print</u> your letters to him for the moment, as he is not used to your writing (he does try, but usually gets stuck and has to ask me what some of the words are). So if you are writing to him at Dragons, which I expect you will do soon, please PRINT! (I am equally requested to type my letters!) Bun seems remarkably undisturbed about going off, though he is fidgeting at bedtime (since Sunday) and not being able to go to sleep for thinking and wondering what it is going to be like. He said yesterday that he thought after all he <u>wasn't</u> going to like Dragons; but we had a sensible conversation - I said that he knew that at any school there were some things one liked and other things that one didn't, and he agreed, and just said,

"Well, I only hope that there are more things at Dragons that I like than things that I don't like." He is very grown-up and sensible, mostly - andI think that I'll feel sending him off more than he will - wish you were here to help.



Plan of Poole Cottages, Cudworth - 'ground floor' and 'top floor'



Poole Cottages, Cudworth - plot showing 'walled ktchen garden (ie nettles - but walls there!)', 'view across downsloping farmland to furthest horizon', 'outhouses', 'view to Windwhistle', 'slope down', 'wall needing removal' 'gate', 'car shed' and 'lane sloping down'.

Copy of letter from:

Rawlence and Squarey,
Mansfield House,
Silver Street,
Taunton, Somerset

Our ref SAH/SB/T3514

11 September 1968

Mrs. J.P. Waterfield
St. Albans
Sunningdale
Berkshire

Dear Madam

Poole Cottages, Cudworth

Thank you for your letter dated 6 September 1968 in connection with the above pair of cottages. We hope to be taking Poole Cottages to auction on 14 November 1968 and have made a note to forward full auction particulars to you when prepared. It is not, of course, possible to say at this stage what the reserve price of the auction will be but we anticipate realizing a figure between £2,000 to £2,500.

Yours faithfully

(signed) Rawlence and Squarey

Contd. Wed.a.m.
Sept 18th

Dear Pie -

Just waiting for Bun to have his breakfast before we do last-minute (toothpaste etc.) trip to shops Your[38] letters of last Thur + Fri - come, but only today, owing to 4d. stamps. Normally they wd have come yesterday at latest. I enclose some 5d. stamps for you to get on with, so please use them for me anyway!

No time to answer your points now - except to say that I cannot understand why you write to Poll that Lois was more enthusiastic about Cudworth

[38] orig "yours"

than me – she must have been over-
ecstatic if so – You certainly seemed
to think when you got my first
letter that I was terribly enthusiastic,
which I was and am – in fact I
think we'd be missing something very
good if we don't pursue. That
is, if we have sold St.A. and
if we are going to be in U.K.
We are all indeed sold on it, +
JW + Poll seem to think the only
nuisance about possibly being
posted abroad is that we couldn't
then embark on Cudworth! Am
waiting for your views – and
hope that Kashmir has been good.

Lots of love from
Pie.

St. Albans,
Wednesday evening, Sept. 18

Dear Pie,

It's now 9.30, and I've just written my first-ever letter to Bunny at school, and I am really very tired and longing for early bed, but want at least to report on the events of the day, though I'm not sure how much more I'll get down on paper tonight.

First of all, we had a busy morning with last-minute things, and Joan came over, bringing Bun a nice going-to-school present of a fountain pen and a bottle of Quink. He was very pleased - I hope to goodness he doesn't spill it all over everything! Last night Bun could hardly get to sleep at all, with fears and excitement, and finally came and asked if he could get into bed with me, sometime after midnight, so I let him. He was rather quiet today, and so was Poll, who always hates going back to school; and none of us felt like eating much lunch. So we set off soon after 2.30, and got to Oxford shortly after 4 with no trouble (except that that ring road is so badly signed that I made the same mistake we did before, and came in past Christchurch instead of down Longwall St. as I meant.) We found on arrival at 1 Charlbury that we were nearly the first to arrive (one little new boy only was there ahead of us), and the Hoskens came out and greeted us warmly, and we got Bun's gear in, and inspected his room (Keppler, where he is lucky to have a bed at the end, by the window, which pleased him very much), and stowed his toys in his locker, and went to the boys' dining room to have some tea. Then lots more parents and boys started arriving, and things began to get busy, and Polly was fidgeting to get on so she wouldn't be late, and Bun wanted us to go. I had with great forethought bought him the new Blue Peter annual, which I knew he was longing to have, and kept it as a surprise for him on arrival - and he was waiting desperately to read it, as Mrs. Hosken had gently made him put it into his locker until after tea; so he was longing to get rid of us, and waved us goodbye very cheerfully. Polly and I gaped at each other in amazement at how easy it was to say goodbye and leave him - largely the new book, I think, but also the atmosphere was very happy and I think he should settle down well. His matron is a <u>very</u> young and very pretty

girl called Jenny. We discovered that John Cloake is in the same dorm, about two beds away, and that Thomas Elliot is in another Stradlings dorm, but is going to be in the same form as Bun, as they are both starting in Lower 6. Mr. Hosken says they have a record this term in having 14 boys in Stradlings whose fathers were there before them!

No more floods, though lots of signs near Theale + Burghfield of where they had them yesterday.

After we left Dragons, we got rather muddled up, because of all the one-way traffic and bad signposting, and even though I knew which way I meant to go, we found ourselves going around in a circle - but finally got out of Oxford and on the road to Abingdon, and were to Downe House in an hour easily, and unloaded the rest of Poll's gear. Their room looked very nice, with the chair she took from here, and an old carpet (from top little room), and her brass-faced clock, and a variegated ivy in a pot which she bought this morning. But Poll hates being left much more than Bun did. Anyway I got back all right just before dark at about 7.15, and to tell the truth I find the house incredibly empty and feel that I am rattling around - also I am v. tired (just got the curse today, which I didn't expect, but I guess it's a little early from stress and strain), so I am wanting to go early to bed. I'm glad that I now have so much to get down to, as no doubt it won't give me time to feel the house so empty. It's certainly dirty enough anyway, after all the rush of preparations the last week or so, and the garden filthy after the floods; and I must get all in order quickly, as the van der Eykens are coming next Monday morning again - I asked them before to come whenever they liked, as they will want to measure for curtains, etc, and I can discuss what if anything they'd like to buy from us, and also how close they are getting to signing contracts, which have been sent by solicitors. But as the contract isn't signed yet, I want to have the house looking really nice and tidy.

But now I really can't write any more, as my head is drooping with tiredness - lack of sleep with Bun last night, and besides that all the driving yesterday and today - so I will send this off as an interim letter, and will answer all your points properly in my next, as if I start now I'll write poadily and tiredly. I wish you were here though, as I don't like to go up to bed alone and in an empty house.

Lots and lots of love

from Pie.

St. Albans,
Thurs., Sept. 19

Dear Pie,

My letter to you last night was very tired, I'm afraid, after a hard day; but I've bounced back today after a good night's sleep, and have been very busy starting to sort things out. All the end-of-holiday washing done, and dear little Bun's last toys put away tidily, and I'm beginning to get the house cleaned.

Tomorrow I have lunch with Milo - it's not at all clear to me if he is after all going to see you or not, as his last letter mentioned seeing you on the 21st, and I don't think you'll be back by then - but if he is either going to see you, or to come by the H.C. I'll give him this to take. Otherwise I'll have to post it.

It's 6 p.m. now, and feels very funny not having myself tied to the children's schedules! You will have had my letter saying how well and happily Bun went off to school - I do hope that he is settling down all right. It seems very odd without him.

Now to get back to your letters, and see what all the points are that I never had a chance to answer. First of all, about the plan to meet in Paris: of course I'm all <u>for</u> it in theory, but I really wonder if December in Paris would be anything like fun? I have the feeling it wd be better to save one's tripping to Europe until a better season of the year - and it isn't as if you wouldn't be able to get to London just about as quickly as to Paris. I reckon you're thinking partly of bridging the cultural shock of coming back to Europe suddenly - but I wd have thought we could be just as independent in London, without any children about - we cd even go out for a good many meals for less than it wd cost to go to Paris and back - and I don't think many people would try to "get at us" - people don't in London unless one makes the first move. You must tell me if you feel really strongly about it - it just rather seems a waste to me to go to Paris at the wrong time of year. Don't you want to get back and see Kelso Place? It should be nice and cosy by then.

Good for you to order the chair covers via Mario - and he's quite right to specify loose covers. Could you

please send me a pattern of the material that is finally decided? Thank you for sending the measurements of the furniture - the only thing is that they wrote out the measurements as for cushions - i.e. measurements from inside arms in every case. I can estimate by allowing a little for arms, but can you tell me roughly whether the arms are very broad and substantial, or if they are minimal?

About having the things there packed - you will be starting to think of this now, after getting back from Kashmir. Do you not think it wise to do it as early as poss? (And esp. if there is any risk of our being posted, it wd be as well if things were dispatched before we heard about it, as it wd be horrid if you were suddenly told we were going somewhere else and the lift van should be sent direct!) But I don't suppose in any case there is any hope of our getting the lift van by Christmas, or even by the end of the Xmas hols (the children are much fussing, because they say we must have the Christmas decorations or it won't be Christmas. I wonder if you will possibly have weight enough to bring them by air freight? - I think there are only a couple of boxes, and they are quite light - we won't otherwise be able to decorate a tree without considerable expenditure, and anyway they all say it must be our same old decorations, otherwise it wouldn't be right!) Apart from Xmas decs, there is not so much that is desperately urgent, except also the new furniture - but it would certainly be a great help if all the Delhi things arrived before we completed the St.A. sale, as we'd then have room still to sort out properly and decide what to store, etc. I'm a little worried about getting Kelso overcrowded and not having room for all the things from Delhi - I think the earlier you could despatch the better, as anyway you'll want it done before the awful man James arrives. Could you remind me please how many trunks are coming from Delhi? I think there are two very large ones there (I suppose the one you sent with Binnington is the smaller tin one?) It will be a problem knowing what to do with the large trunks - the sort of thing we might need to put into store, along with surplus St.A. things, until we get a country cottage.

Two other points on the gear there: could you please measure roughly the amount of books we have there? Just measure the inches of shelf space they take up. I'd like very much to know, so that I can work out space and leave room for them at Kelso. Also - a small point - when you

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come to the packing, don't forget we have a wall can-opener in the pantry (Gusain will know where it is), which should be unscrewed and brought unless it is bust, which it may well be.

I sent you some 1d. stamps yesterday - shall I send you some 5d. ones as well, or have you ordered from the bank? All the post seems to have gone wacky since the changeover, and all the shops complain no mail is coming through at all (hence no new lot of photos yet). Evidence so far is that the 4d. post is certainly a lot slower.

About the gear there, I asked you once before if you mean to bring the Nivico - and you've never answered. Well done to sell the china - that will relieve some storage problem, though I suppose we will eventually have to get a smaller set of tidy-everyday china. I'll wait and see how our bits and pieces add up.

I was amused by the letters of Mary and Daphne Hainworth. Daphne sounds nice. Poor Mary makes life very difficult for herself with all her complaints.

Tell Alan I liked his account of Meerut. I had a letter from Lois today - she has very kindly gone and reconnoitered Cudworth again, without my asking her to, as we thought we had quite missed the village before. Apparently there isn't any! She writes,"Finally found a place to park, and explored on foot. Apart from 2 post boxes, there seem to be no facilities - all the roads front on lovely farms, or vice versa, and there was a great grunting of pigs. A lovely wooly English sheepdog joined me for part of my walk, and later I saw him, from the garden of Westward Woad, rounding up the cows... I'm dying to know how much land goes with it - it might be quite a lot." Her description is vivid - <u>do</u> you think it is perhaps too isolated - though after all only about 5 or 6 miles from both Chard and Crewkerne.

With Sir M. James sounding so unpredictable, anything could happen, I guess, about your departure date. I <u>hope</u> he doesn't bugger everyone up, and I also hope that you'll get back in time for J.W.'s final departure from Eton (Dec. 11), and end of Bun's first Dragon's term (Dec. 13), and end of Poll's term (Dec. 18). Poll has so much gear at school (as has J.W.) that they will both have to be fetched by car. Anyway, there are the dates

for you. I go to take Bun out for the first time on Sunday, Oct. 6 (day after your birthday), and think I will have to base on Paddock as it's too far to come back here within the time. After that, all three children have their half-terms November 1 to 4.

Being a detective-book addict, of course I know those books of John Macdonald - I don't much like them, but they certainly evoke the Florida smells.

I agree all depends on van der Eykens signing contract - I certainly hope they will, and will discuss timing with them on Monday when they come. We are very pressed financially until it is done. In fact I don't think I should be thinking about Cudworth at all, which I admit I have been doing instead of concentrating on Kelso - because Cudworth seems so perfect it w~~x~~d be a great pity to miss it. But I await your obs, and really the timing is too soon.

I note Dottie Slater's letter, and will put down address.

I do hope that your Kashmir~~x~~ holiday turned out all right - it sounds a very mixed bag of people. I am looking forward to hearing.

About Bun's bike - I think he won't mind it's being sold or given away, as he is very content with the new one, and thinks the old one wd be too small for him by the time it gets back (Ithink it probably would be, too). So do as you think best with it.

Now I think I have covered all points that you ask about, and also that I want to know. So now I must come back to the dreary subject of finances, which I agree do not look very good. We are going to be hard pressed until we have completed sale of St.A., as Bayzand will not give us an overdraft of more than £6,000. You'll have had Philip's letter of 16th Sept. with figures - I will send him a cheque tomorrow. I had to ring Bayzand today as I'd had no notification about my £4000 transfer coming through - he says the mails are in a mess, and our account has been credited today (£4,007~~x~~ it works out at, to be exact). So for a day or two we are out of the red, but not for long. Bayzand says we are a total of £1285 overdrawn as of today. My dollar surplus from checking account has now gone into our current account

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(as it should have done from the first), which is £289-17-0. But I've had to write a good number of checks this month, mostly small but adding up to some £150, of which the largest were £25 for car repair and £30 for gas bill for quarter. Now that I've got children off, I can economize, but we are still badly placed. I asked Leslie to sell my electric stock, and won't pay Bun's school bill till that goes into account, which should be very shortly, as he has already sold. A useless investment, as I lost about £8 on them - but there is no point changing to another investment when we are so in the red. I take it that Bayzand's total of £1285 overdrawn does not include any school bills, which won't have cleared yet. I also note that you must pay rent tax of £197, and I guess a sterling cheque of about £30 for the movie projector? I think it would be wise if you warn me when you write any sizable sterling checks, as we are going to be sailing very close to the overdraft limit.

The position is roughly:

Credits:	Debits:
£4007	£1285 o.d.
296.4.5 (elec.stock)	£7812-17-5
4303.4.5	9097-17-5

that is, when I have written the cheque for houses, we will be 4794.13.0 overdrawn.

Add to this three school fees (I do not know how much J.W. and Poll's are, Bun's is £174) - say £600
and tax on renting St. Albans 197
and we are nearly 5,600 overdrawn.

Of course end-Sept. salary (? 600) will improve that, but in October I will have to pay the removal bill to Kelso, and possibly Simmonds the builder (about £680), but as he won't finish till end Oct. that may be a November bill. But I must also start ordering kitchen fitments for Kelso, and hall and stair carpeting. And the timber guarantee is going to be an additional expense, I do not know how much yet, as I have not yet had a chance to go into it and take estimates. But you see we are hard-pressed and I really would like infm from you on any sizable cheques you write. How does the picture look to you? We will be all right, of course, once St.A. is finished in January, and if we are too pushed we can of course do kitchen cupboarding and stair carpet in slow time - but if I can manage I do want to go ahead and get it all done, as far

as I can, before you get back. Anyway I shall live very economically now, and the children's expenses are all taken care of for this term. But I hope we can scrape through without transferring any more dollars, unless of course they are for Cudworth!

When do you think we might know what your next job is going to be? Do I gather that Tony Duff was actually in Delhi exchanging gossip with you, or was it by correspondence? Didn't Clive say that the promotions boards were coming up in October, which ought to settle everyone's jobs? Do you think Clive would give me the gossip later on, if I ask him, or will you hear? It makes some difference in trying to plan how much to move to Kelso - if we should be going abroad, which I hope is all false rumour, then we would obviously want to fit absolutely as much as possible into Kelso to avoid having to store more than absolutely necessary, as presumably we wouldn't consider country cottage unless we are going to be here But if I move too much to Kelso, and we then find later that we want to remove some to country cottage, that will mean~~=~~ another removal bill. In other words, if we were sure that we were going to try for country cottage, I would leave ample furnishings here for the moment, taking enough for Kelso without overcrowding it, and counting on removing the rest from here on completion to possible temporary storage and then country cottage. But any miscalculation I make may mean extra removing later, if the situation changes! I'm at sixes and sevens, as you can see - I think the best thing is to move the essential large stuff to Kelso, plus all small gear that I know we'll want there. But I must allow room for all the things from Delhi as well.

Now I must stop and attend to my supper, as I've just overboiled the soup while writing this havering nonsense. I do hope that Kashmir was good, and that it's not too depressing getting back to Delhi - and most of all I wish that you were here. Letters are a poor substitute, even though things seem to be going relatively smoothly (apart from finance!)

Lots and lots of love

from Pie.

St. Albans,
Sunningdale.
September 24, 1968

Dear Pie,

Here at last are the photos, long delayed in the printing, of our trip to Montacute. I'm sending them to you straightaway (and you can show them to Alan if he hasn't left yet) - but will you please send them back soon so that I can show the children and put them in the book?

I'm now getting used to being on my own (the first few days I kept catching myself wondering where Bun was), and find that I can get on with things very fast. Have got St.A. all tidy now - and we get possession of Kelso tomorrow. I'm longing to get started there. However, have just talked to Simmonds the builder about when they are starting work - typically, he has got a plasterer off sick and can't promise to start till Monday. I am v. glad that I'm not doing an instantaneous move, as I fore~~s~~see it will take some time getting things sorted out there. Actually I'm longing to get moved, but think there is no point in rushing it until things are basically in order.

The van der Eykens came again yesterday, to look again at house and decide what they'll put in which rooms. They are very keen, but haven't yet sold their house - still, that should be all right. He wants to send a surveyor on his behalf, as well as their mortgage surveyor, which is quite proper. I do hope that there is nothing falling down here! They will be interested in buying carpets and probably curtains, if I want to sell, when it comes to the point. I think probably best to sell all curtains we don't need, even at low price, because they never fit anywhere else and are just nuisance to keep. But I'll have a chance to see what if any will fit at Kelso.

I hope that you got back all right from Kashmir, and that the car also arrived back safely, and that you had a good holiday. I am still waiting to hear, as I haven't had a letter from you since pre-Kashmir. (This morning got a new Woad,"The End of the Woad," from

ASC - please thank him for it. It was nice to get a letter from Delhi, even in your absence. And say I look forward to seeing both Clarks soon - Lois writes to decline coming to stay here, on the grounds that I am busy engaged in moving, but I doubt if I will be moving by then, so hope they will change[39] their minds.)

Don't you think the Cudworth cottage looks sweet? It was hard to photograph because of the hedge dividing the front garden, which needs removing so that one can see the full sweep of the front. And I couldn't get a photo of the view as the light was wrong - you can just imagine that behind and to the left of the right-hand trees the ground slopes away with cross-country view. But I am getting pessimistic about it now anyway, as you don't seem to think it's good for retiring, and I think it needs too much work for other than that - anyway the timing is too soon, the v.d.E's are moving too slowly, and life in the service is too uncertain! But it is a darling.

I have been sorting out books to see which ones are going immediately to Kelso. I await your answer to how many books we have in Delhi - and also the other questions I asked in my last letter, all of which you may probably answered by now. Funny, when I was going through the books, I found a book of modern poetry (1920-1940) of yours, which, when I riffled through to see what poets were included, I discovered to have a poem by John Freeman. The same? - it could be. A bit heavy - solid, derivative, and sincere - no, not quite as bad as that sounds, but rather the sort of poem that J.W. might write. Amusing.

Clive Rose rang up last night, and reported back - said he had a good trip, and you looked after him well and seemed to have Delhi under control. He's got your car part and sent it, so you probably have it by now, at last. Hope it's the right one! Clive promised he'd let me know if or when he picks up any office gossip on jobs - he hadn't heard anything about anything yet. Also urged me to come see them when I come to London. It will be amusing to see their new house.

[39] orig 'changes'

Also Joanna Hennings has been on the phone a lot, asking advice about last-minute shopping. They've asked me to lunch with them in London on Friday, at a place called "Stone's Chop House." (?! Change from Boodles.)

I've just sent on to you a letter from Polly, which came today. She sounds all right. Not one single word from Bun yet - I suppose at least that may argue that ~~s~~he is well occupied, and is not sitting around moping and wanting to write home!

All evidence of stream flood is gone now, and the garden looks nice though autumnal. Roses still blooming merrily, and the michaelmas daisies are just out. French beans are finally finished. Weather turning distinctly chilly.

Philip reports that in the end the mortgagers don't require a timber guarantee for Kelso. No explanation. So Philip has scratched it out on that paper you signed. That's good, I think, but I will take the builder's advice on whether it is a good idea to have timbers checked by an expert anyway, just so we know - but Wimpey's survey thought it was o.k. as far as could be seen. Also Philip says that he thinks, but has not verified yet, that we will not have to pay rates at Kelso until we move in - that may be a slight argument in favour of later moving: Poll and Bun both want to be here at half term, and J.W. wants to be wherever the piano is. I'd rather be in Kelso, but not if builders are still in the house. Will see by next week how it goes.

Nothing more for now, as I must get on - there's no point in telling you all my step-by-step sortings and workings-out, but it's all going well. The only basic trouble is that we have too much gear - it will be good to see Kelso empty at last to get a better idea of how things will fit. Please don't fail to answer my questions about books, trunks, colour of new furniture covers, etc. - and remind me if there is anything specially large there that has to be fitted in to Kelso, apart from trunks, new furniture, books, coffee table, standard lamp and table lamp. Too much picnic gear and general oddments, I know - some will have to go into store until we get a cottage.

If you cast your eye about it may remind you of what we've got. Oh - the gramophone: I guess we had better keep it (the Clarks have an identical one at Montacute!), as the dealers in Delhi I talked to about it said we wouldn't get much for it. It certainly plays all right - I half wondered if we needed it, what with J.W.'s and Polly's, but when they are not here, I miss it; so I think it's worth keeping, unless you could get at least as much as £15 for it, which I doubt if you could.

Now will go to post, and then get back to work. Am longing to hear from you after long gap - wish you were here.

Lots and lots of
love from
Pie.

St. Albans,
Saturday,morning,
Sept. 21

Dear Pie

This is not going to be a letter, but is just to send on J.W.'s, which I enclose. I think he's coming on sensibly, don't you?

After all I discovered yesterday that Milo won't see you, and probably won't be near the H.C. (as he's staying at Oberoi) till after his trip to Kashmir - so I posted yesterday's letter in normal way. I had so hoped that he could easily take it, so you'd get it on return, but never mind.

I had a very good lunch with Milo at the Boodles ladies annex. It was nice of him to ask me (or should I say nice of you to make him ask me!) He has mellowed a lot, and we gossiped on. He had been the night before to hear J. Freeman speak on India at the Chatham dining club, where he took his godson Ralph Hancock. He says J.F. was very good indeed - no doubt he'll tell you all about it when you see him. Also says Pat and Beatrice have been in Israel on a holiday. Boodles (or at least ladies part, which is a quite separate new annex on back, entered by a completely separate back door!) gives a very good lunch, one of the best I remember having in England, all excellently cooked, and very good service. Much much better than the Travelers. I can't write to thank Milo at the moment, as he was off yesterday afternoon by air-plane: would you please tell him when you see him, specially from me, how much I enjoyed it and how nice it was of him to give me lunch? Don't forget - as I don't see much point in writing a thank-you to Malahide and won't catch him anywhere else.

I seized chance yesterday to look for a macintosh for me at Simpsons and other places in Piccadilly, but without finding what I want. I do need a number of items of English-type winter clothing (mine is all pre-Bamako, which takes one[40] back), but am trying to postpone doing anything about it on the offchance that the North Africa rumour has any truth in it! When do you suppose we will hear definitely about your job? If affects so many things, doesn't it? Another small one is that I daren't

[40] orig 'ones'

hire a TV set for Kelso until we are sure, as all the good and inexpensive hiring companies in London require one to hire for a year minimum. But I would like to get one before the children's half term (Nov. 1) for Bun's sake at least, and in case of bad weather. You will let me know, I'm sure, as soon as you hear anything.

Now must go to post this, and then see what I can do about tidying up debris in garden. It is bright and sunny, though windy, today, but the aftermath of the flooding has left everything very untidy looking.

Wish you were here, to help and also just to keep me company. It's so strange the house being empty - it feels like a family house that has been deserted, and I am sure that we are right to leave it now that the children have all gone off to school.

Lots and lots of
love from Pie.

Wednesday morning.

Dear Pie,

This is just to enclose Bun's first letter from school, just arrived though posted on Monday. You had better keep it for children's letter file. He sounds as if he is very o.k., doesn't he? But I wish he wd learn to spell better. Funny his winning marbles - J.W. predicted that he would.

Hope to hear from you soon - still nothing since Kashmir, and if you've put a 4d. stamp on I'll be lucky to get anything before the weekend! I suppose you did get back from Kashmir?

Lots of love from Pie

St. Albans,
Saturday, Sept. 28

Dear Pie,

Thank you so much for your letter sent Monday - of Kashmir and return - which came on Thursday. It took me so long to read it that I was an hour later than I meant to be in getting up to London for first owner's look at Kelso Place! I was glad to read all about Kashmir, and it made me very nostalgic - I do wish I could have gone too; but it will already seem a long time ago to you by the time you get this, I guess.

Now it's nearly your birthday - I have been thinking how nice it would be if I could get on a plane and fly out in time for it and give you a surprise. But I don't see I really can, as I've got to take little Bun out for the first time on Oct. 6 - and then with all 3 half term breaks up the time until it's nearly time for you to come back. Not to mention all the things that have to be done at Kelso - which is a shambles but will be all right in the end. But oh I really don't like being on my own - and I keep feeling it would be so much fun if you were here to share the beginning of Kelso (though I doubt if you would like that!), but doing it on my own is pretty dismal. Besides which, I feel split now having only me with two houses, and find it a great bore going back and forth: how you ever~~r~~ managed to commute for all those years I'll never know, as I already feel I'd rather be one place or the other.

Now about your birthday, which is what I started on: I deliberately haven't sent you anything, and declined Milo's offer to take something to you, on the grounds that it would only be something that you'd have to bring back again in a month or so. But I think now that this is pretty foul, and that I should have sent something to surprise you on the day, as late birthday-cum-Christmas presents won't be the same. But what I do what to give you for your birthday is something from India - would you like to choose something? - or get what I have in mind? - which is, a set of those coasters for glasses, in Kashmiri papier-mache, in preferably gold-y or alternatively silver-y colour. I think that you would like these, as souvenir of India/Kashmir, but I may only think so because I think

they would be so very useful - and you may not think that is fair. If you wd rather have ties or hankies instead, then you must say so, and you will get them for late birthday-on-return. But if so, you might arrange to get me the coasters as Christmas present! You may say, why didn't I say this before you went to Kashmir, but the reason is that I never saw any such coasters in Kashmir - they are all in Cottage Industries in Delhi, and perhaps you could send Carol to look and purchase say a dozen of them? (They are not cheap, about 4 rupees each, I think, but are decorative and we do not have sufficient coasters for household use.) I also realize I might have contrived something along these lines while Alan, infallible shopper, was still with you - but in fact with school-seeing-off, I let it slip too late. I think coasters are difficult usually to find in large numbers to match - perhaps assorted colours would do if the same size and shape. I must leave it with you - I would like to think you got coasters for your birthday, but if you'd rather give them to me, o.k.

I think that Alan must be just about to leave you, and I wonder what you are all doing just at his last night. And very curious the tale you told me about him and Carol, which I didn't comment on before, in case you left my letters lying about - which I hope you don't. When he has gone, you'll be very much on your own too - though not so much as me, as you have Gusain and all the rest!

Yesterday I had lunch with the Hennings - Stone's Chop House was very swish (theatre area, just off Hay-market) and gave a very good lunch, but masculine atmos-phere and crowded, such that one couldn't hear because of the hum of conversation - I don't much like noisy places like that, but we had a very good lunch, and talked about Delhi, which I hadn't thought about for a long time, and which they haven't really thought about yet (sensibly). I like John Hennings, who is quiet and anecdotal - he had strong views that wives shouldn't be overburdened with charities - to which I said good luck; but we agreed it depended on what James thinks. They have horror that James might say Hennings should fly and arrive earlier, owing to Sec. of State's visit - they wonder if they can cut off their phone to remain incommunicado until the get aboard ship on Nov. 7th! But surely James wouldn't be such an idiot as to start changing people's movements now.

Before and after lunch with the Hennings I was busy with trying to organize Kelso - it is going much slower that I thought. I am thankful indeed that I wasn't moving totally on Sept. 25, though I daresay in some ways that wd have been just as easy, as one wd have had to get things done. I was there most of the day, apart from commuting, on both Thursday and Friday - no sign of builders yet, which I knew before,but I haven't been able to get hold of Simmonds, who is always out, to confirm if they are starting on Monday or not. Knowing English builders, I suspect not. I had fixed with the Giffords that they would leave connected all services that they could - so electricity is on, though they had failed to do anything about the meter, so I've got the meter man coming on Tuesday, when I'll have to wait for him. Gas, the NTGB tells me,has been read and cut off, and they are sending me forms to fill up, as are L.E.B., and Telephone. But the real nuisance was that I found the water had been cut off - I finally got Kate Gifford on the phone, having tried for ages to get her husband at work or her at home, and she said that was a mistake, and they had asked their contractors not to cut it all off (they had to cut off kitchen water as they were removing sink with their fitted kitchen, as you'll remember), and she swore she'd get on to the chaps at once to come and turn the water on. It is surely only a question of turning the right main taps, but I don't know where they are, and nor did she, which seems strange to me. Anyway, after waiting some time, I got in touch with the local contractor chaps (plumbing, electrics etc.) myself, and she hadn't got in touch with them; so I established warm relations (they are around the corner and I think will be our local plumbing and electrical chaps) and left them a key, and they've promised to get their man around by Monday to get the water on. This is essential, as you may imagine, because of the dirt everywhere - I have been longing to start washing it all up, but on the other hand the builders will also make a mess, so it's not vital - also with no water for loos it's not much of a base for anything! But I do hate to see the remains of Gifford mess - biscuit crumbs on kitchen floor etc. - and not be able to start doing something about it. But all will sort out in the coming week -- I didn't really mean to start this long histoire , but there it is, it may explain why things seem to be going slowly.

It's really terribly exciting to know that we've got Kelso, and it will be fine in the end. I was very depressed when I went on Thursday, because it all looked so dirty and desolate - and small with no furniture in it, which is curious - so I spent a lot of time measuring, and checking that I was right on what would fit, and all will be well in the end, and I needn't bother you with details. But I do hope to get soon your answer to all the questions I've put - the only thing that does seriously worry me is space for trunks, and so you must tell me how many are coming from Delhi. Also about the new furniture - you say you checked with Mario, and he seems to have given eminently sensible instructions - but you don't say what colour the material is. Do please tell me soonest, as well as sending a swatch, which you may have already sent with Alan. But I want to know colour soonest. The red at Kelso looks not too bad, now that the photo of Che is down, but there are a lot of holes in the wall, from Rawlplugs, and dustiness where shelves and pictures were - until water is on and I can start to clean I'm not sure how badly marked it is. But I think with bookshelves and our things in, the red may be all right for a while - or I may just emulse over it. But there is one very bad corner in the dining room, where damp is coming through the browny wall-covering, which I must talk to Simmonds about - I did not want to remove that wall-covering yet, as I think it looks nice (Poll thinks it's hideous however, and keeps asking me to abolish it). It's really largely a question of how we go on finance - I haven't had your answer to my letter with what I thought was a fair reasoning on our position. I agree we should make Kelso good - but we are tight for the moment, until we are sure of the sale here - and there are many interpretations of good: one could spend a tremendous amount making everything the best possible, but at the same time you say gaily "Buy Cudworth" and I don't see how we can do all this at once, without going a bit slowly on one thing or another.

Basically what I think I feel is that, although I, and J.W. and Poll, would very much like to have Cudworth, it will probably involve pouring more and more money into it, even just to keep it standing: and unless we are by then assured by contract that we are selling St.A. to the van der Eykens, we shouldn't begin to try to cope with three houses at once. I think this would be folly,

not so much financially only, but from the human physical point of view of supervising builders, which I now see takes a tremendous amount of time and energy. And Cudworth is not easy for weekends, whatever you may say - it would be all right once organized, but in the interim a constant burden and strain. If we have got v.d.E's contract for here, then one thinks again, but even remote possibility of three is too much. I would also like very much to have only Kelso, and to have occasional holiday instead of maintaining another house: but that would involve getting rid of a fair amount of gear which might be difficult. I will anyway have all gear which I think most important moved to Kelso.

My mind jumps about; you comment that Poll writes very good letters, which she does : did you know that J.W. has a collection of letters of Rose Herschel's written from India when she was staying with her brother in Dehra Dun and Mussourie? J.W. very stupidly cannot remember where he got them - they are terribly interesting, and one warms to Rose straightaway. They are a most tremendous contrast to Louisa's letters (in the black box from Phoebe), which were really very dull - but Rose was a definite personality and her letters to her family are charming, and accompanied with a few sketches: one from Mussourie looking down the hill across the plain at Dehra Dun, almost exactly like the photos we took on that weekend, and looking exactly the same now as then (I think 1875). This was before she married William, and there's a sweet bit in one letter where she comments on meeting William (sorry, pause while I've been to look up the exact quotation - I~~x~~ cannot see the date on the letter, but it's on Rose's first arrival in Calcutta, and when, from later letters, it is apparent that Louisa is still alive): "An expedition to the Botanical Gardens at Garden-Reach which used to be the fashion~~x~~able riverside quarter of Calcutta, but which is now given up to the Officers of the P. and O. and the Shipping Agencies - Mr. Waterfield was the guiding star of the Party and made it so interesting. What a supereminent Botanist he is, and

yet he does not bore one in the least, but picks the very queerest and most astonishing things to show you with a twinkle of amusement at having posed you." Her first reference to William - and it's surrounded with descriptions of balls and festivities in Calcutta - you must read it all. This selection ends with her going back to England via Malaya and the far East - vividly described - and I'm longing to know how she finally got connected with William. His diary of the mutiny year I found fascinating too - despite leaden hand of Louisa c~~x~~opying it out. His handwriting was so much more interesting even if illegible! I cast a fly at Phoebe about wanting to read the rest - but she said we'd have to do it in the Indian Office library as she didn't trust the post. I'm sure there is lots of interesting material there. J.W. was wondering if there was stuff for a book, which I should think there is. Strangely enough Poll, on her way back to school (and Bun's way to Dragons) started reading to me,out of an anthology of some kind about music, a poem by I think Charles Lamb(but I wasn't paying much attention because of floods on the roads and Bun going off for the first time), anyway a poem denigrating music of his time, which suddenly referred to "modern Herschel" - I made Poll repeat what she had just read, and told her that was her Herschel ancestor, which she said she hadn't realized at all (he was all surrounded by Bachs and Blows). I had already commended to J.W. that he should look out the Herschel music, which Eileen Shorland, who is not at all musical, says is all in the museum at Greenwich - he was after all Master of the Queen's Music, or whatever it was called, and possibly an interesting subject for research.

Anyway, this brings me, via Rose Herschel, to J.W.'s latest letters, which I am sending on with this. I have slightly mixed feelings - I thought from his previous letter that he was reconciled to Greats after all, but it seems not so - I now await to hear the advice he gets from Joyce Rathbone. I don't really like at all this performing mani~~x~~a (pianists' hands et al) - but still better than drugs, as I said before[41], and I play it cool. But obviously a crisis comes, as any potential musician must devote constant attention to it at this time. Thank goodness you will be back by Christmas anyway to advise - though~~x~~ I must warn you that as you will have gathered J.W. is at the moment Dedicated. I had always slightly feared that he might want to go into the church, which would have horrified me, so perhapsI should be glad it's music instead.

[41] orig 'beforel'

(But you may note, and give me credit for, his comment that, although he's at the position of the letter he meant to write off to Christchurch before,he is glad that I talked him out of it, as it wd have been ill-advised - I thought it immature and told him not to send it without "taking advice", so any letter he may send later will at least be better-advised.)

Some comments from your letters: I note that you are dubious about when you may get away - by now you will know that I feel doubtful about a Paris adventure. I thought anyway that you would like to fetchJ.W. from Eton for the last time? If not, I can certainly physically do it. Bun however comes out on Friday 13th Dec. - and I rather thought you might like to fetch him at end of his first term? (Poll not till 18th, so a different question.) But you do make me laugh, trying to work out who J.W. could stay with - you always tell me I should let him grow up! He could perfectly well stay at Kelso on his own, certainly for a day or two - he would be willing to do it for any length of time, and I certainly wouldn't worry about leaving him - in fact he is really longing to have a chance to be on his own and be responsible, and it would be good for him, even though I think him rather casual about some household matters (but not as casual as the Giffords, for example). So if it should work out that way, we shouldn't I think worry about J.W, but the only problem is that timing between his exit and Bun's exit is not long - and anyway I am not sold on Paris in the winter - if I thought it would be meeting you any quicker I'd be all for it, but I can't really see it otherwise at that time of year. Besides I have an idea that my dollar travelers' cheques, which I still have, would either be better used in a good season of the year, or more likely spent to carpet the hall and stairs of Kelso - because I'm still worried about our expenses there.

I wish that I had a tape recorder to send letters on, because I think quicker than I can type! About Xmas cards, yes I have a copy of all the list (typed list in toto, of which you also have a copy). So you can certainly send me enough for the American lot, or any others - but please specify by pages of that typed list which I made. I note by Times today that Rex Benson has died, also that Plessy alas seems to be doing badly.

I may have more to add tomorrw, but now I am going up to bed. I wish you were here - I have just painted head and foot of the second double bed, so we are well equipped, as I said before. Tumble is biting at her cage, as I keep her in the breakfast room (where I am typing), so that she has company. I have finally got over having curse, which depressed me, and I think I had as well a psychological about Bun going off to school, especially as you aren't here, so I have really now lost all the family together, which seems very odd. Poll, who is very aware, commented what a change it would be for me, and Joan, to whom I spoke today, said the same. (she is still waiting for baby, but is feeling much better now than she was a few weeks ago.) Anyway I have been feeling quite bereft - at least I have had Kelso to worry about, which has helped .

Sunday morning: I doubt if you realize how autumn has come to England - it is really hot water bottle and bedtime brew weather. I had to buy a hot bottle the other day, as I was waking up cold in the nights. Horrid! I need you to cuddle up with. So last night, when I was just getting on well with this letter, I started getting too cold to go~~n~~ on and finish it! Now it's Sunday morning, after elevenses - I was just relaxing over Sunday papers and coffee when your telegram came, and I was very glad to get it. Poor pie, to be under pressure - I thought you probably were when I didn't get a letter from Wednesday's bag. And now I know not to expect one before Thursday, so at least I'll be able to get on with things without hanging about for the postman, who seems to come later and later (and at Kelso the mail isn't delivered till noon). I wonder when you sent the telegram - it <u>looks</u> as if it's dated the 27th at 7.30 p.m., but if so I can't see why it didn't come till today (brought by GPO man on motorcycle!)

I'm enclosing a voting form for 30 Kelso for you, in case you think you can fill it up, for voting next year, on grounds that you'll be back soon. It doesn't apply to me, of course. On Friday I bought the two local Kensington papers, to familiarize myself, as they say, with the area, and am having fun reading them. They are mostly drugs and thievery! but have an atmosphere rather like that Greenwich village newspaper that we used to get. London is very with it - Kensington market - both the things and the people - have to be seen to be believed. Many of the youth look just like the hippies who used to turn up in Delhi. It'll be fun living in London.

About M. Binnington and the curtains - I suppose you didn't think to give her the address and phone number here, in case I haven't got moved properly by the time she arrives? Could you send me her London address so that I could get in touch with her if need be? - Someone must have the address.

I am not at all sure that I like the idea of you with sideburns at all! - though I admit they are all the fashion. Have you still got them? Now I'm looking through your letter to see what else needs comment - though I shan't comment on all the Kashmir stuff, which seems old now. Funny to see Ghulam, and Nur Mohammed and old Wangnoo again, and good that you saw old Mrs. Waterfield. You mention the Nivico, but never have answered my question about whether you intend to bring it back to England. How very odd that you met Milo on Srinagar airport - you must have been surprised. A pity I didn't after all send a letter with him!

Very good the letter from P. Wilkinson - I'm glad that North Africa business was all a confusion. I wonder when you'll hear what the job is. Any confirmation on your departure date yet? - John Hennings hadn't yet seen James, when I lunched with them on Friday, and was waiting to be sure that his arrival plans were confirmed by James. The Hennings are now planning to take the train up from Bombay (but delaying so as to avoid Sec. of State), largely because, owing to car workers' strike, they have not yet got their car and therefore will have no chance to run it in before it is shipped; they are naturally chary of its maiden run being Bombay-Delhi.

Now I must go and see about my lunch - I am concocting a chicken and onion curry, which no doubt you would hate! - but it's good in the cold weather. It's very funny cooking just for me, but I eat well on the whole. Also v. econom-ically!

Lots and lots of love
from Pie.

It's pouring with rain as usual- but
I'll take letters to post before lunch.

St. Albans,
Monday, Sept. 30

Dear Pie,

This is just a quick line to ask you a few more questions - supplementary to the ones that I hope you have by now answered!

All goes well, though an awful lot to do. Have finally confirmed that the builders are going to get started on Wednesday at Kelso (only a week late, so something to be thankful for, I guess), and I'm meeting Simmonds there to discuss the few other problems that have become apparent.

Jill Lloyd rang up last night, very warm, and sent you their love. Dick said he hadn't had an answer to ~~xxxxx~~ his letter to you yet, so he assumed you were busy. Jill started to tell me all over again too about their boat, so it isn't only Dick that's absent minded! But they are very warm, and offer me a bed at any time during the moving process, which I think I'll be very grateful for.

I should get a good idea by Weds. of about how long the builders will be, and be able to decide when to move. You may think I am dragging my feet, but I am in fact longing to get moved: but the thing is that the children don't want to have half-term in chaos and surrounded by

builders. And the main nuisance is that once I have the move done, we will be very pushed to have enough things for both houses - we won't in fact have enough sheets, blankets, crockery and glass to do both, because the larger share of all these are with you in Delhi. So when we move, we're really moved, and it will be hard to shunt back and forth without carrying lots of household gear back and forth each time.

About the glasses - we are in very short supply here, as you know, and you may well wish to take this into account in keeping all we are likely to need, rather than selling all. I have looked into prices, which are more than I had thought: the water goblets will cost at least 6/6 each to replace, and the general purpose wine glasses 6/3 each. Cheap tumblers are at least 2/ each, and pretty nasty at that. So best keep a goodly supply for us, unless you can sell at really good price: we can always find some place to put them away.

Glad to hear that you got another numdah rug. Please (though it's a bore) could you tell me, fairly straightaway, the number and size and basic colours of all our numbdah rugs there (incl the little pinky bathroom one). I cannot remember sizes, and only vaguely the colours, and must know in order to sort out dispositions. I thought we could probably use one in

bathroom at Kelso - as you know, I'm going to decorate bathroom, so colour as well as sizes of the rugs is most important. Sorry to be a nuisance, and mid-week when you are busy too!

I've discovered that the yellow bookcase in the alcove of our bedroom is absolutely riddled with fresh woodworm - luckily it seems to be altogether on the piece of wood at the back. So I have ripped off the back altogether and discarded it (I never really see the point of having backs on bookcases anyway, so it's not much loss), and I'm repainting the shelves white, probably to go in our bedroom at Kelso. Also have found new woodworm in my oak bedroom chest of drawers - funny how it has appeared, do you think it can lie dormant for years and then pop out? Anyway I've rentokilled it thoroughly and hope for the best. But have also discovered that the little sectional bookcase in Poll's room has fresh woodworm all over - surely you rentokilled it this Spring, didn't you? But it's definitely fresh worm holes. I have again thoroughly rentokilled it, but it is now so riddled with holes that I really wonder if we wouldn't do better to get rid of it? I'm a little afraid of taking possible worm into Kelso. Have found nothing else here that is affected.

No more questions for now, and I must run to catch the post. Hope you are less busy by now. Wish you were here - I do not like being on my own.

Lots of love
from Pie.

St. Albans,
Sunningdale.
Wednesday, Oct. 2

Dear Pie,

Thank you so much for your letter via ASC, which arrived with Italian stamp today, and was waiting when I got back from London at 5. Also swatch and photos which came yesterday.

Now there are lots of things I should be doing, but I'll stop and write first. Here is Bun's second letter, which doesn't communicate much except marbles! Also letter from Mrs. (?) Hosken - I can't read the signature to know if it's Mr. or Mrs. Anyway, I will take Bun out on Sunday, and go to Paddock, where the Ellingworths and Henry will be too.

I feel suddenly very gog, which is a nuisance! I've had a Sunningdale tum for some days, which made me feel low, but now I feel all right again. I hope that your back is o.k. - poor you. If it isn't, you <u>should</u> go to Walter - you are forever telling me to go to the doctor, but you never go yourself! Have you still got your sidewhiskers, or have you taken them off?

V.funny coincidence yesterday - on the underground platform at Waterloo, someone suddenly said hello to me, and it was Margaret Tully (I did a quick double-take - wife of Mark Tully, BBC Delhi, in case <u>you're</u> not with it.) She was up from Dorset for the day - remarkable running into her - they will be back in Delhi in about 3 weeks; she says Mark has had hepatitis while on leave. That's about all she said - we parted at Piccadilly each going our separate ways. Then today in Harrods I suddenly saw Joanna Hennings looking at dresses - another coincidence.

I was doing kitchen sink, which is all ordered from Harrods (a strange place, but reasonable, and the size I wanted). Simmonds' men will install it when it arrives next Monday. I spent the better part of two days looking at kitchen sinks all over London - things take much longer than seems possible.

<u>Bad</u> news on Kelso damp, which is now all over all walls of drawing-room-dining room. (The red will have

to come off after all, and now!) I have got the Cox guarantee, but it doesn't cover all the walls that are affected. Simmonds, who~~m~~ I think is sound, proposes a method of containing it, which involves re-doing all the reception downstairs walls at cost of £250. I am going to take further advice from Northcott of Wimpeys (which Simmonds indeed suggested), but he (Northcott) hadn't got any very good ideas before. Oh, dear - it will have to be dealt with somehow before I move in. I won't enlarge further explaining methods now, as it is all up in the air. I think it is worth doing right, or at least as far right as it is possible to do, but am gloomed by extra expense and delays! Otherwise the Simmonds builders have started, and a nice carpenter is at work, and Simmonds' foreman seems a good chap, and helpful.

I am going tomorrow, after a bit of chivvying in London, out to Jill and Harry's for the night, and back via London on Friday. This will give me a chance to see the children (whom I haven't seen since we got back, shamefully, before William goes off to his special school next week).

Mary has asked me to come for weekend at Farningham the 27th - partly to meet these friends of Dick's (oil dept) who are going to Delhi. Wiatt? - I've forgotten the name, but I did ask you about them before. The wife apparently is in some trepidation about first post abroad, and they are older than usual 1st sec, having come sideways into the office - Mary wants me to give encouraging advice about Delhi, which I told her might be difficult! But you must clue me in - what job is he going to do, and do you know where they will be living (Dick says outside)? Put me in the picture, and I'll then tell her all the nice things about Delhi - which as you report sounds very happy now: long may it last under James!

I do wish I could get into Kelso soonest, as it fidgets me being betwixt and between - but I'm sure it must be made good first, and everything will gradually come right.

The grey swatch looks fine - in fact it looked absolutely splendid against the red, but alas the red has to go. Still, I think myself that both those rooms in either white or a very pale neutral colour

will look larger and more coherent, if you see what I mean. I am longing to get everything done, but may not be as organized as I had hoped by the time you get back!

We have got too much gear, esp. too many ornaments and offments. One of my Moscow trunks is here; there is only of[42] them there, the other trunk must be a very large grey or tin one? I hope there are not too many other suitcases or trunks there - there seems to be masses here.

8.30, after pause for supper - I don't think there is much else I can usefully go on with now. I bought a winter dress in Harrods today, which is super besides being c heap (8 gns, which is very little in this day and age). It will do a lot for my winter wardrobe - in fact I simply do not like suits and never feel happy in them, so this is rather in lieu. I had a great argument with Mary about suits, because she says she has dozens and can't wear anything else - but I just feel bunched up and weighed down in them. I guess I am not English enough! But if I did buy a suit, it wd be a trouser-waistcoat suit, which I think are very with it and fun. Anyway, I must go now and tighten the collar of the dress. I hope you like it! - Joanna Hennings was saying today that she had to get everything on appro, as her John likes to have the final word on all her clothes!

I get more and more disconsolate about~~=~~ the American elections; even though I don't find H. Humphrey very inspiring, he's the best voice of reason among the candidates, and it's appalling to think that slippery Dick will probably be elected. Whereas for Wallace... Oh, dear.

I wish you were here, to talk to and to go to bed with. Hot bottle and hot brew are small consolation!

Lots of love
from Pie.

[42] orig "of of"

P.S. - Thurs. morning, and no other letter from you yet. Here is one from Poll, just arrived - she must have been daydreaming, she addressed it to me at Paddock!

Have just spoken to Northcott of Wimpys, who agrees with Simmonds' plan for damp at Kelso - he says it's the best we could have done now, and that Simmonds price seems fair enough. It means stripping off all the plaster in sitting room downstairs, fitting Newtonite (which is a damp-proof lath and plaster thing), and then replastering all over again. Also taking off all the skirting boards, being sure that they are not damp, and treating them with damp-proofing at the back before replacing them. Simmonds cannot give a guarantee, but says that he has been doing this for twenty years in old houses, with 90% success - that is, 90% are completely cured, and in the other cases there is some damp patch somewhere that just won't dry out. Let us hope that doesn't happen to us - Northcott says that owing to amount of rain, this is worst year ever for damp, and also having the heating off through the summer has encouraged the damp. In any case, what Simmonds will do with Newtonite can only help, and would have to be done anyway, so would be no loss, even if later one had to take more drastic (and expensive) measures. One of the nuisances is that Simmonds himself is shortly going away on holiday until the 16th, and I would like him to be there (and think he feels he wd like to too) while his workmen are doing all this, so that he can check thoroughness - which means having them start after the 16th. They will then take about 10 days for the job, and I just think I'll have to accept this delay. Meanwhile they can be doing all the other things.

Must stop and get this off, and be off in the direction of Jill.

Lots of love from Pie

St. Albans,
Tuesday, Oct. 8

Dear Pie,

I am so sorry, I haven't written to you for nearly a week, and have now a great backlog to catch up on. To tell the truth, I was in a rage and thought you weren't bothering to write to me since sending a letter via ASC - but now there are suddenly this morning four letters from you all at once, stretching from Tuesday 1 Oct. to Thursday 4 Oct. Perhaps the bag never went during Dussehra - some of them should have arrived before the weekend. Anyway, there's lots to answer and tell you, but you will anyway have had (I hope) my tel for your birthday. I'm sorry you didn't go to Agra then (esp. as I pictured you all day in Agra!) but glad to hear you are planning to go this weekend.

First of all, about Bun, whom I took out on Sunday: he is all right, I think, though very first-termy. I didn't get to Dragons in time for chapel, but was there to meet Bun afterwards by the famous letter-box in front of Stradlings. He was very cheerful and talking to a friend, and when I asked what he wanted to show me, took me to see his bed (where he said proudly that he had made his bed himself) and to see his form room (Lower VI B), which looked fine. There was French on the blackboard, which I commented on, and he said he thought French was easy but he hated it! He has a man for teacher, but, as he said, "lots of teachers" for different subjects, which he finds I think a little confusing so far. Well, then we set off for Paddock, stopping on the way at a convenient stationers to buy Bun some more envelopes, which he said he needed. Found Ellingworths, with Elizabeth and Henry, at Paddock - and we decided it was a good thing to have Bun and Henry together, as they immediately made contact and played together very happily all day. We had good lunch, and it was a glorious warm sunny day, probably the last of the year, so lovely in the garden all afternoon, where we had tea. But at tea time, when Bun suddenly realized it was nearly time to go back, he started poading, and he cried a bit in the car going back and said he was homesick. But when we got there, he wiped his face and bucked up, and went in and shot away while I was still talking to the Hoskens, who are

very nice. They say that it took Bun several days to settle down, and that he is very quiet. Mr. Hosken points out that he is one of the youngest, and he thinks he has been a little slower settling down because he has been put in a higher form than the other new boys in Stradlings, so that none of his room mates are in his form. I wonder if they think he is bright? - He, Bun, told me very proudly that he is in the top form of E block - he didn't actually say much about his work, but I think wd have complained to me if he thought it too hard or unusual. I think he is settling down o.k, but I rather dread taking him back after half term, when I'm sure he will poad. Mummy has now got a bee in her bonnet about believing that boarding schools are wrong (there's a new book out about it which you have probably read reviews about, and it's been commented on a lot on the TV), and she wouldn't stop talking about how wicked parents are to send their children away to school, which made Mary and me very cross!

I do not find it totally easy to use Paddock as a base for taking Bun out - it will not be good for him every time; and I feel now very much that Cudworth cottages are not right for us now. What we desperately need is a cottage of some sort within read of Oxford, which we could use for weekends and take Bun out on a Sunday. I am sorry I saw Cudworth, because I do think it heavenly; but it would only be useful for long holidays, and I cannot think it fits our needs at this point. Of course we shouldn't think of it at all unless the contract is signed for here, and even so I think the builders' expenses there would sink us utterly (besides which, I don't think I can face any more builders for some time!) I am much more in favour of looking for something (even if small and squalid) in that north Oxford south of Cotswolds area, after we have got St.A. sale settled. I know that property is more expensive in that area, and that we wouldn't get the glorious country that Cudworth is - but we would get something that we could use properly. Do you agree? I admit to being torn in my mind still - and if St.A. contract was signed I might have second thoughts - but still think we'd find Cudworth a millstone rather than a help at this stage. I really cannot face having to use Paddock as a base every time we have Bun out from Dragons - it's not good for him or us.

I sent J.W.'s latest letter on to you yesterday, which requires a good deal of comment. I too am very worried about him - but I think you must base your arguments on something other than musicality, which won't wash I'm afraid. Mind you, I cannot judge how good he could be, not concert I think, but I see no reason why he shouldn't in the end do musical research or teach music at Oxford. Have you heard from Pilk, or written to him? I agree, I had been thinking too that perhaps I should go to see Pilk, but as J.W. says Pilk is writing to you I'd like to know what he says and what you think, as I'm not totally clear what line to take. I think J.W.'s idea of postponing Oxford yet another year is utter folly, and I find his attitude of threatening Oxford with Cambridge very arrogant. I cannot see why he cannot start in Greats at Oxford, and then see. He is also being obstinate and arrogant saying he won't go to Europe this year. And how he thinks anyone is going to give him a better piano than this one I simply do not know, as even one of this standard would I should think cost over £100. I think you may be right in the end that the only thing that will pull him up is to stop supporting him - as he has no idea of the value of money or the expense of living - but it wd obviously be better to go easy on such threats if he can be persuaded otherwise. Please let me know where you are on communicating with Pilk. Now here is a letter from Poll, which also attacks you on the musicality issue - it is a bad base for argument, as we are no judges. I cannot see why he cannot go ahead and start at Oxford, and I think in the end you may have to tell him he's got to.

Kelso Place is coming on - it takes a long time, but I hope will be o.k. in the end. I won't tell you about all things, as you obvioiusly don't want to know, but am worried about finance, esp. as you hadn't yet paid that income tax and for projector, and we were, as you'll have seen, nearly £5000 overdrawn at end of month. I do not want to transfer any more dollars unless we have to - if St.A. sale goes through by Jan we will be all right. I see a hint or two of possible devaluation in the papers, but I shouldn't have thought it likely now, would you? If it's at all possible, we obviously should hang onto as many dollars as possible as hedge.

Mary and Dick have given me a key to Maunsel St., which I think may be very useful for the occasional

night for me. Dora is in Australia until the Spring, so Maunsel St. is empty, apart from all Dick's relatives having keys for when they might want to use it. I shall probably stay there for a night or so next week, while looking at builders and considering what I've got to do about Kelso. This week no time - I will go up tomorrow, but not to stay night, as James and Louise are arriving on Thursday, and staying with me till Friday. Brenda David has asked me to supper and bridge on Friday, which is nice of her. And Barbara Karmel writes and asks where I am, and has asked me for lunch - she is very warm. Incidentally, I've been taking train to go to Kelso, which takes a long time, but means I can sit back and relax, and saves wear and tear on the car. I note that I have driven nearly 1,000 miles since starting to Montacute, when Bun and I last set the mileage meter. You wouldn't believe it wd be so much, wd you?

Last Thurs. I went to spend the night at Enfield with Jill and Harry - it was very good to see them, and I am full of admiration for how Jill copes. Her nanny is away for a fortnight's holiday, so I was busy reading to the children etc. William was not well, but had still I thought come on a lot since I last saw~~x~~ him. And Charles much improved, and comic. Lucy was being rather tiresome and talking baby-talk, but not to be wondered at if she goes through difficult phases. Harry was in good form, but is having worries with his parents, who are not at all well.

J.W. says he has received the Kelso Xmas card, also Poll: which makes me cross as I haven't yet seen it myself! Very annoying of you not to send me one in a letter - I know that I will eventually receive the batch from Alan, but I wish you had sent me a specimen! Don't bother now, as I'll ask children to send me one.

Now to comment on your letters: I cannot understand who you mean by James' in-laws (parents) - not Muriel's parents surely - you are mysterious. Glad that Alan got off o.k, I hope to see them within the next week. Good that you got camp beds and sleeping bag - a third bed wouldn't come amiss, but isn't I suppose absolutely necessary. The cooking stoves sound a <u>good</u> idea, but I shouldn't think oil lamp is necessary. Funny that the

bodyguard tent-pegging has come round again - of course I remember it. And all the Dussehra things.

Good for having rugs backed, which I'm sure is a good idea, and also thank you for sending measurements. I think you are very optimistic in thinking October-shipped heavy luggage will come anywhere near Christmas - I would bet towards end of Jan. Perhaps you'll tell me in due course, when you know, what ship they are coming on? The Clarks' gear took over three months to arrive at London docks.

I'm glad you have found the Xmas decoration boxes. I agree there is no need to bring Xmas wrappings, but I am very much afraid that if you look in that box you will find that it is not only wrappings but decorations as well, so I think you should look into it to be sure. I cannot see why you pessimistically assume you will be overweight in air freight - you shouldn't be if you organize properly for packers. I haven't asked you to bring anything by air except Xmas things, which are quite light. Surely you can organize to get rid of most things with the packers, incl. one or more suitcases as all those will make you overweight; and exist on not quite so many clothes until you come? Don't forget you left two suits here, and lots of overcoats, and a total of 11 shirts (3 sports and 6 tidy striped ones).

It is hard to believe your weather still so hot, just as you can't believe hot bottles and brew - which actually I think must be very healthy, as I feel in excellent health in spite of winter setting in. Funny ASC's eggs in your bed! I wouldn't have thought for a moment that the James man wd want the Hennings to get there sooner - I only instanced it as an example of Cro mentality. Dick Ellingworth says Oil Dept is now amalgamated, with some difficulty, as customs and ideas are totally different in CRO and FO depts. I hope you have by now told me about Dick's friend Wiatt?

Noted that I will do p. 5 (American list) of Xmas cards, which I'll do when they come. The David Frost show had a funny quip the other night, when his parting remark was, "And don't forget that tomorrow is the last day to post your Christmas cards by the fourpenny post." The 4d. post is awful, and the only thing is to pay first-class rate. I forgot to tell you that Bun was very keen

to have a drawstring marble bag to keep his marbles in, so when I got back on Sunday night I made him one, and posted it off on Monday, which I hope has cheered him up. He also loved getting the book Poll sent him, but had already finished reading it.

I'm so sorry you couldn't find coasters - the kind I meant do not have side pieces sticking up as in your drawing, but are just flat, and either round or square. I'm surprised they don't have them, but perhaps will still! Now I see that you comment sourly on my not commenting on Xmas card, though I don't see how you imagine I've seen it yet!

Very decent of James to let you have a car. Re glasses, yes, do bring all nice glasses back - I don't know exactly what you mean by "nice," or what you mean to do with the un-nice ones? Surely some un-nice ones for everyday and breakable use wd also be useful - though I agree probably not in such quantity as we have there. Probably the Hennings would take over some ordinary ones from you, if you have too many. Poor Anny R. to have appendix out - is she all right? Please give her my love. Fun of Dick to give dancing party, I shall think of you all.

Funny (though annoying for you) that Clive sent wrong car part again. Do you want me to try again, or will it sell without?

Now will stop for bite of lunch, then write to Poll and post letters. I think J.W. is our big worry at the moment - I await your further comments and Pilk's. I do not see that introducing Poll's friends would do any good! What I cannot make out from you is ~~that~~ if it comes to the crunch, are you totally against J.W. going into music, assuming that they wd take him? It occurs to me that you might ask Dick Turpin's views - not on musicality, but as a very sensible chap who is also keen on music - as to whether he ever considered doing music as a profession and if so whether he regrets not. It might, or might not, give you some ammunition against J.W. (I wd have thought also that Ashley Clark, who was at Dartington, was a good example of doing music as a side-line, but J.W. doesn't seem impressed by this - partly no doubt because he's set against a diplomatic career.) Anyway- lots of love from Pie .

St. Albans,

Thursday, Oct. 10

Dear Pie,

Only time for a very short note, as I want to forward to you this stupid letter from the Bank, which I've minuted on. If you haven't got the certificate, you'd better write and tell them.

No letter from you this morning, so either you didn't write at the weekend or the post is delayed again, which is quite likely. I'm very shortly off to the airport to meet James and Louise, who will be here for tonight and go off to Washington tomorrow.

All well, but busy. One very minor point about the gear in Delhi, in case this gets to you before the packers come: When I sent that suitcase of children's stuff back with the Karmels last Spring, it inexplicably arrived with one canvas black and white boot, and one fawn-coloured chappal - the mates of these should be in Delhi. You may have already thrown them; if not, you cd send them back to meet their mates. Let me know, wd you? - because if you haven't got the odd ones, I'll throw the odd ones here.

Building progress at Kelso, but more minor things keep turning up that need doing - they must be done, but I'm frightened of bill! The nice foreman builder says that the parking is going to be much worse after introduction of residents' permit: I do not quite understand the system, and it is not yet coming into force till end of the year. Acc. to Dick Ellingworth, the same system, which they are introducing in Westminster, means that you pay for a residents' parking permit, which entitles you to park nights only, while daytime parking will be metered. (But perhaps you'll get F.O. parking permit and take car~~#~~ in daytime anyway?) But judgingby the parking and no-parking lines already laid out along Kelso, there are going to be fewer places allowed than before. I've discovered from building foreman that those lock-up garages are rented by the manager of the garage in the basement

of the block of flats opposite: so I've been to talk to him. He has parking, both in his basement garage[43] and in the lock-up garages, charge in both instances £12-10-0 per calendar month. That's high, but I think about standard. But he has none available~~=~~ now, but allowed that he preferred to let them to people in the neighbourhood, and put our name down on his list. I fluttered my eyelashes at him, and he'll bear me in mind if he gets a vacancy, which he might do at a month's notice at any time, or might not - it's all chance. I told him I thought we'd like a nice big lock-up garage - he said his basement garage, being centrally heated, was better for cars, but took my point that a lock-up one allowed for storage of gear. I only bring this up now to get your view, in case he should suddenly offer me one: it <u>may</u> I suppose mean a lower rate of insurance for car, and also save paying the residents' street parking fee; but it <u>is</u> expensive. If we did get one, though, it might help to have one in hand if we should find we needed to ~~xxxxx~~ let Kelso (when <u>will</u> we hear for sure about your job, I wonder!). I notice that the Pakistan neighbours have sacrificed their garden by building a garage in it, which occupies almost all the room: we could I suppose do the same, but I'd be very reluctant to. Let me know if I should continue chivvying Mr. Gowan, the garage man. We could I suppose always take a garage if it came up, and give it up again at a month's notice any time.

No time for more now. I must run to post, and then get ready for airport. Miss you as usual - lots and lots of love

from Pie.

[43] orig "garge"

St. Albans,
Sunday morning,
Oct. 13

Dear Pie,

Thank you so much for your two letters, of 7 and 9 Oct., which came yesterday. I am sorry you are low, gloomy, and overworked! - I do like to get letters, even just short ones, but of course I know how busy you are, and I guess you will be even more so until you leave. I have been feeling rather low myself, but feel much better now - I think it was a combination of separation, and slowness and difficulties with Kelso, and worrying about John William. But I've waited to write till today, because I went to fetch J.W. last night for supper, and we cleared the air with discussion, and I feel much encouraged.

I told J.W. that I thought you'd be much upset by his last letter (I was anyway), in that he hadn't written it in the balanced way in which he discussed[44] it with me - and he said that if he didn't, it was because he was very annoyed with you (for casting aspersions on his possible musical talents). Anyway, in spite of his last letter, he still has his head screwed on the right way, and is not going to do anything rash - in fact he seems to me to be maturing rapidly, which is all very good, and is happy about college and his teaching, and is going to write to J. Freeman to invite him down.

I started off by telling J.W. that I was worried about his idea of shifting to music now, on several grounds: first that he was committing himself too narrowly to only one of his interests or talents, when he himself couldn't tell whether in a few years more he would still want to be committed exclusively to music; and secondly that I thought Oxford should be a great broadening of his interests giving him scope for widening his ideas, whereas concentrating on music wd narrow him before he even began; and lastly that I was afraid there was some risk, if he did shift to music and wasn't ultimately top class, that he would not find that he could find a career in music that would satisfy him in the end.

[44] orig. "disccussed"

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To take the last point first (and I was very glad to have got from you Pilk's letter, which I quoted,) J.W. accepts that point, and does not really want to commit himself to music unless he is pretty sure he can be good enough so that he won't dwindle into teaching music in a school. But he says that Pilk's letter is out of date, and written before he and Pilk had taken further advice, which is that there is plenty of scope for graduate research into music and musicology, which he and Pilk are agreed that he would be capable of doing - he wouldn't mean to make a career of only that, but might for example hope to go on to a professorship in music, or some other position of musical influence. But whether he wants to go on in music at all depends on further advice as to how he is getting on and what his potential capabilities in music are, and he will continue discussing this with his mentor, Joyce Rathbone, who so far has only said she doesn't know him well enough to make any judgement.

On the other points, J.W. admitted that he would like to read Greats, as his interests are wide (and also taking into account the practical advantages of having a degree in Greats behind him), but that he would also like to read music, both of which of course can't be done at once. He said that Pilk had said jokingly to him, "Well, I suppose your father would finance you if you made a hash in music and decided to take a degree in something else afterwards." I said that I thought this was the wrong way about, esp. as there is some doubt whether J.W. could shift to music, without having to prepare another year for university, whereas he already has the place, and scholarship, in Greats. I even went so far as to suggest the possibility that he start off in Greats for a year or two, bearing in mind shifting later; but he,somewhat surprisingly to me, said that he wouldn't want to start Greats unless he meant to finish it; and that on the whole, if you felt strongly about it, he wouldn't mind doing his degree in Greats, provided that we agreed that he could afterwards do a degree in music if by then he feels that is what he wants. This would prolong his education somewhat (4 years for Greats, and 3 years for a music degree) - but I feel very strongly that even if he does in the

end stick to music and want to do it, he would be far better educated in the broadest sense (as well as being fitted for any career) if he had done Greats first. I hope that you are with me on this. J.W. said that he would write you a succinct memeorandum of the alternatives! I don't at this point think that you will have to lay down the law firmly, as I think he will quite willingly go on with Greats if we say he think he should, as long as we accept sympathetically his concurrent keen interest in music, and do not try to dissuade him from eventually specializing in music if he wants to. (Really all he is arguing about is the~~m~~ principle that he should be allowed to choose a career in music if he wants to and decides to, and what makes him go pig-headed and argue only for music is any suggestion or implication that he is not good enough musically to do it. I found it much better to discuss on the grounds that he has other interests as well, which he admits: and really only knows that his inclination is to make a career somewhere in the arts-music-literature spectrum, for which he agrees that a degree in Greats would be a much better preparation, for all except music.)

Incidentally, his reference to wanting a piano for Christmas was not, I discovered, literal: he does want a piano eventually, but does not expect one handed to him on a platter: what he means is that he would like his Xmas presents to be a contribution toward saving for a piano.

Now, having got that far, which I think is quite satisfactory, I think that we will have to accept J.W.'s keen desire to concentrate on piano and music until he goes up to Oxford next autumn. And I myself would say o.k. to that, let him do music after his Dragons teaching and before Oxford, on the understanding that he goes in the autumn to read Greats. You may be against this, but I think the only way you would get him to Perugia is to drag his dead body there! What I think we must avoid at all costs is his idea of preparing (at the Royal College of Music or elsewhere) for another whole year before going to university, which would put him totally out of step, being making him in-drawn for the very year when he should be starting university and burgeoning. (Incidentally, he suggested one possible alternative (a brief one), if you are very keen he should have some Europe before university: Eton is doing a two-week trip to Russia in

the Easter holidays, which he would quite like to go on. I shuddered slightly, at the expense and also that it is not the same as living in Europe - but I suppose it would have some value, and anyway we can discuss that later.)

I think that that is about all I can say now - and I'll be very interested to know how you feel and if you're in agreement. I feel rather as if I've been negotiating the Wilson-Smith talks! but I feel less worried now than I was about J.W. as I~~m~~ see he is approaching everything sensibly. And on the one hand, he may be discouraged by Joyce Rathbone and give up music altogether (as a possible career that is), and on the other hand if he will just go on up to Oxford, which will give him time to mature and meditate, I reckon half the battle is won, and even if he still does music in the end, it won't be without having had as broad an education as poss.

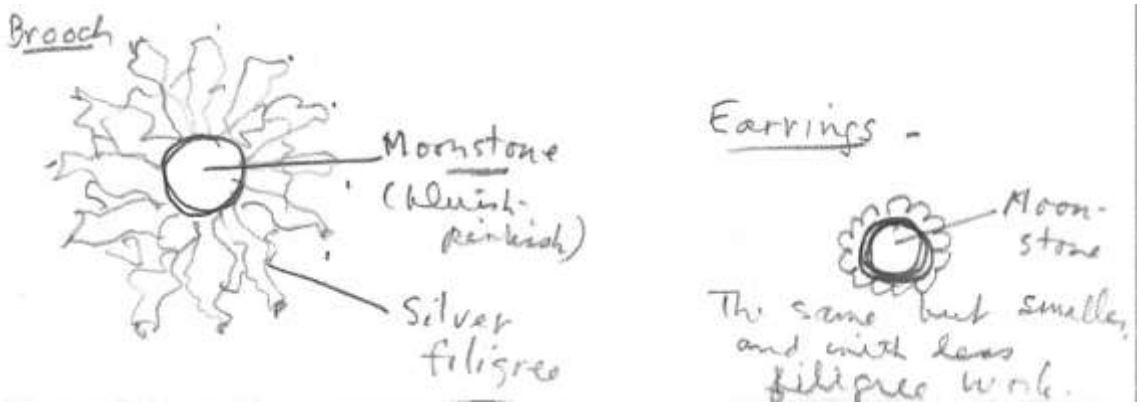
Oh, J.W. told me quite casually last night that he had invited Polly and Vicky to St. Andrews Day (as well as Jeremy and Johana), and would I mind fetching the girls and trying to negotiate them a night out. I think that's fine, and am all for it - Vicky is a very sweet girl and a good influence ~~xxxx~~ on both Polly and J.W., and it will be a good thing for J.W. to have attendant girls to show off to as Captain of the School!

Now for other news, which has mostly gone out of my head! First of all, James and Louise arrived on Thursday, spent the night and flew off again at Friday lunch-time. I think I was "a heroine" (to use your words) in fetching and taking them to airport, as it was absolutely pouring with rain both days and the mist and spray on the motorway made visibility practically nil - not the kind of weather I like driving in. (You'll have read incidentally, or will read, if you have time to read the papers, the incredible story of how the Piccadilly golf tournament was rained out at Wentworth, leaving Player and Jackling at a cliff-hanging moment of the semi-finals for over 24 hours. It just shows you the rain we've been having, and the stream has flooded up, and gone down again, three times in three days, all right over Berkshire as usual.)

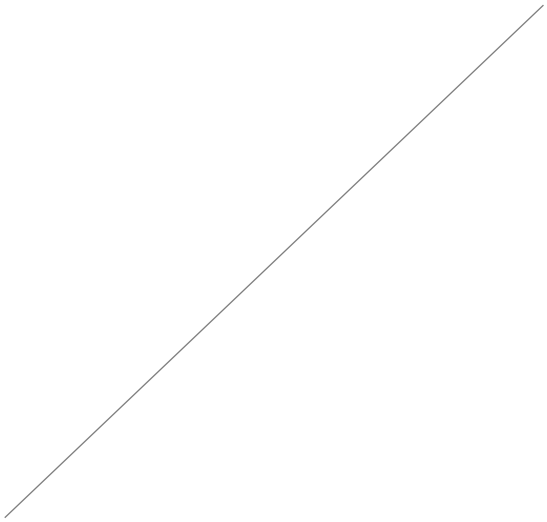
J. and L. were in excellent form, I thought, and had had a good trip all around Europe, in which they

had spent a couple of days of holiday on the coast of Italy at Amalfi (below Naples), where they stayed in, and recommended, a~~n~~ hotel that was a 12th century monastery, The coastline looked, from picture postcard they sent, quite like Porto Ercole. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary while they were in Paris, would you believe it? (The family is going to give them a celebration party at Thanksgiving, which they asked me if I wouldn't fly over for - but I declined of course on grounds of expense and also flying!) Anyway, they were given a party by Leeds and Northrup, the firm which sponsored their trip, and were taken to dinner at the Lido in Paris (which sounds a fair tourist trap to me, but which they say is the most expensive cabaret in Paris). You should have heard their description of the floor show, which was totally nudes (as confirmed by the program which they showed me) - they said it was lovely, and beautifully done, with lovely costumes (what there was of them, even if they were totally baredown the front); they said they didn't mind if the girls were bare or not, they wd have enjoyed it just as much if they had had clothes on, but it was a good cabaret. Pretty good for a 50th wedding anniversary!

Incidentally, Louise admired very much one of those Indian broo~~n~~ches I was wearing (from Tibetan stalls) - so much so that, after considerable struggle with myself not to be mean, I gave her my very favourite brooch and earring set which I got on the Tibetan stalls, although I have found it so useful and like it so much that I was most reluctant to part with it. But I wanted to make some gesture for their anniversary, and had nothing else to give them. I hope, though I know how busy you are, that before you leave you can get me another the same. The brooches are quite common, but I had great difficulty finding the earrings to match - which is partly why I was reluctant to give them away. They are like this:



Sorry - missed out this side in rush of writing!



Sorry, I can't draw, esp. the filigree, which should be a regular pattern, but that should give you the idea. It's the moonstone ones I want, as I still have a green one (though not earrings, which wd be useful in the green as well), and they cost only a few rupees (if available) on the Tibetan stalls. But maybe you have already by coincidence sent the same with Alan? - whom I'll be seeing Tuesday. They rang up on Friday afternoon, having just arrived, and are coming for the night on Tues. en route to Montacute. They sound in fine form - I got quite a jump when Alan announced himself by asking if this was bungalow 4-A! He says to tell you that, although he has already sent you a postcard, he will be writing to you soon. It will be fun to see them - they are busy doing school-visiting this weekend.

On Friday evening I went to Brenda and Martin's for supper and bridge - their fourth turned out to be Peter Brown, whose wife Birgit was fortunately in Sweden nursing an ailing father. Daughter Virginia Brown was there too, having grown up to be very pretty and golden-blonde, though a little wet, I thought. We had very amusing bridge, which went on till 1 am. (two hours or course to finish off the last rubber). Peter Brown is a reckless though shrewd player (cf. Pierre Graham), and Brenda was half asleep and played badly. Martin is very good , and I was luckily his partner for the last rubber, up until when I looked like losing about ten bob on the evening's entertainment, but by the end of which we had so far retrieved ourselves that I actually won a total of 10d. and Martin won well over ten bob, the others losing. So it was fun. The Davids must be very well-heeled somehow, as they serve copious and frequent whiskys (grub not very good though) - I reduced myself to drinking plain water for the last two hours' play in order to keep my mind on the game, though Peter Brown was swilling whisky and getting reck-lesser all the time and Martin was swilling whisky and playing just as good bridge as ever. But this will bore you - it's nearly as bad as a play-by-play account of the golf tournament, which featured largely in the conversation.

Martin had a most curious tale, which amazed me: he said that he had just turned down an invitation to join the diplomatic service. He said that officers in the home civil service of his rank and under 50 had been

circularized giving them an opportunity to join the diplomatic service (nothing to do with their area of specialization, but straight diplomatic service), on the grounds that so many people in the dip. service want to transfer to home civil service. I was absolutely staggered, and couldn't cross-examine as much as I would have liked without appearing rude and snobbish about the service (and esp. in presence of Peter Brown). Have you heard anything about this? I think on reflection it must mean transfers at 1st Secretary level, though I thought that Martin was same rank as us? But surely they can't be opting anyone into the service at counsellor level? It all sounds very odd to me, and not the service I know! - though perhaps fresh blood is good, and in fact I think Martin and Brenda would be jolly good at it. He refused however on the sensible grounds that he thought he would be at a disadvantage in the dip service from coming in late~~e~~ and missing the years of grounding in the office ~~xxxxxxxxxxx~~, and also that he'd have no choice of where he was sent - whereas if he offered to be sent abroad only in his own speciality, which he has done, it could mean only Europe. Brenda was quite disappointed at his decision, as having got the children nearly off their hands she thought it would be good for them to be shaken out of their rut. It looks as if we will now have to start training home service transfers! Thank you for telling me about the Weaits - I will tell them all the good things, and I expect they will enjoy Delhi.

Now I must stop and have lunch. I am sure there was a lot more I meant to tell you, but I don't think anything vital. I go up to Kelso tomorrow to see electricians to discuss any possible problems (we may need an extra point in kitchen for transformer), but these are all trivial matters and no point going on about them. I long to get moved, but can't do it till basic work is done. Must then decorate bathroom (stip-ulated on repairs) before the mortgage surveyor can check that all is done. After than can concentrate on other decoration.

Lots and lots of
love from Pie.

St. Albans,

Monday, Oct. 14

Dear Pie,

This is just a line to enclose Bun's latest effort, all full of marbles and complaints and mis-spellings! His complaint wasn't really justified, as I'd taken him out the previous Sunday - however, I've now spoken to Mrs. Hosken, who said he wasn't upset after being taken out before, and seems to be settling better all the time; so I will go to take him out again this coming Sunday. I have fixed to go to Paddock for Sat. night, and take Mummy to the Dragons service, which she wants to go to, on Sunday. Then we'll take Bun out for lunch at Paddock - I hope it will be a nice day, as the weather is rather uncertain already. That should anyway hold Bun for goings-out until half-term another two weeks later. It may not be so easy to take him out after half-term, if I am trying to move house.

Clarks come tomorrow for the night. Postcard today from Barbara Davies in Sweden, asking if she can have a bed Sunday night as she has dentist appointment. I wonder what their news is, but will soon hear.

Went to Kelso on electrical business today - alas, the master electrician thinks some of the wiring may be dicey - he says new plugs have been applied, but the wiring that's in use is a kind that hasn't been used for the past 40 years. You might know it! Anyway he will have it all checked, and let me have his recommendations - I will wager he'll say re-wiring. However, if wiring really is old and wearing out, I suppose it's better to have it done before decorating. More expense. Will let you know.

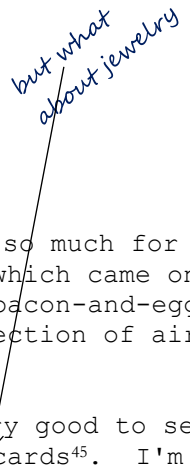
No more for now. No new letter of yours to answer. No letter from Poll - I expect she's economising with the 4d. post.

Lots of love

from Pie.

(over)

P.S - Tues. a.m. - Here is Poll's
letter just come - she also
rang up last night to ask me
for ME's phone number, and
sounded in v. good form _ No
time for more now _



St. Albans,
Wednesday, Oct. 16

Dear Pie,

Thank you so much for your letter of October 11 (last Friday) which came only this morning as Clarks and I were having bacon-and-egg breakfast, before they set off in the direction of airport (for airfreight) and Montacute.

It was very good to see them, and Alan duly delivered the Christmas cards[45]. I'm afraid I agree with J.W. - you've made Kelso look far slummier than it is; but I don't see that anything can be done about it now (such a pity you didn't have another go), but never mind, I will get the American ones off.

Clarks were in excellent form, having enjoyed sunshine in Malta, and are full of plans for working in Montacute. We exchanged all gossip, and D.I.Y. infm! We had whisky (from bottle brought by JLTs) and excellent dinner (if I do say so) cooked by me. They signed visitors' book. They pressed me to come stay and look at Cudworth cottages - but I think we are agreed that's not on now, and I am far too busy with the delayed move, builders at Kelso etc. Incidentally, I got the particulars from agents of Cudworth - amongst other things, it said that the cost of getting electricity to the door would be £375, and that the cottages have been declared fit only for storage, and that the local authority would have ~~xxx~~ to approve proposals before they wd be allowed for habitation! This all confirms to me that it is not for us at this time, but the main reason still being location. I long for a wee cottage in due course in that isolated upper Oxon country as counterbalance to Paddock for Bun.

I am sorry you say you feel awful - and indeed I was sorry to send J.W.'s worrying letter to you. We are agreed, I think, and you will by[46] now have had my more cheerful letter; so I'm glad that you weren't answering that letter of J.W.'s. I'm now waiting to hear more from J.W. - the trouble is that it's no good telling J.W. he's not good enough in music: he is so used to being top at anything he tries to be! But I think as long as he goes on to Christ Church and reads greats everything will sort out in the end.

[45] note above text is by JPW. For card, see Appendix 2.
[46] orig. "be"

Re the coasters - yes, I did mean flat ones, and said so! I agree there are some lousy looking ones in square or round, but there are also some nice ones (based on gold colour or silver colour, not the gaudy coloured ones). If you can get gold or silver ones (not colours) pray do get some for my Christmas present. Poor pie, I guess you won't have any time for shopping.

No more to add now - I'll get this posting. Alan took a couple of colour photos of the garden - "autumnal tints"! - which we'll get someday.

Lots of love from

Pie.

P.S. I bought some fireworks yesterday for Guy Fawlkes day, i.e, children's half term - only small pretty kinds, and no bangs! It reminded me very much with the smell of autumn, of the fireworks last year on the hillside at Mussoorie. Tell the Biancos when you see them that Bun and I will be remembering, when we let off small fireworks, the super display that Mario did last year at Mussoorie. Alan says the Biancos are leaving December - I didn't realize it was so soon.

St. Albans,
Thursday, Oct. 17

Dear Pie,

Thank you for your letter of Monday, which came this morning (10.30 the post comes now), just as I was going off to London. Poor pie, I am horrified to hear that your leg has played you up, and that you're in bed with penicillin and all. But I hope that you are better by now, and that I'll soon hear that you are. You made me laugh describing Gusain, as it is just what he did when I was ill: creep about slowly with a long face and consider himself absolved from any other work! You were noble to chase up those odd shoes, but v. satis. that they are there. I don't think that I have bothered you with any other points and questions - and shan't bother to now, if you have succeeded in having the packing done? You were silly to aggravate your sore leg~~s~~, but I do wait to be reassured that you are better now. Time is rushing on, and it won't really be long before you are back!

It's good to hear that they're still planning to give you a dept. even if we don't know which one, and also good that M.James agrees to your leaving on Dec. 6 (or as you say 7th). That's all very good. The only nuisance is that Kelso won't be so completely done as I had hoped - not my fault! I now plan to move about mid-Nov. when plasterers should be finished (indeed all work except possibly some exterior painting), but it will take at least a fortnight with central heating on for new plaster to dry before it can be decorated. Am not sure if it will get decorated before the Xmas hols, but I think I must try hard to, as we won't want to do it during hols. No news yet, either good or bad, from electricians.

Sensational news about M. James getting married again - no wonder he doesn't want to announce it till it's happened! I reckon we're well to be away before he settles in! Oh, Alan's only hot gossip was in re the Roberts-Shonfield-etc. lot coming to Delhi - he says only Shonfield is coming to Delhi, and only to do the information services. Did you know that by now? He told me lots of other minor gossip and stories of Delhi, and was surprised at how little you had told me! Either he or Lois has left a toothbrush and toothpaste behind, but I don't think it's worth postage to f*or*ward!

Here is a letter from J.W., only come today although he wrote it days ago - his fault for 4d. stamping it. You'll note slight contrition about his worrying you - I don't myself thing he'll do anything but go and do his Greats, though he'll be keen on music the while. I agree with you that he doesn't know the value of money.

About the office, it is obviously still in chaos with merger, which has actually happened,with appropriate fanfares from Wilson, today. Alan said everything seemed pending till completion of merger. It's good that they don't want you to start work till about mid-Jan. -satis. leave, even if it isn't a good time of year for golf or work in the garden, so you wouldn't want too much leave.

I should see Barbara Davies this weekend, and will disabuse her about your stopping over. If Madrid weren't so far, I could meet you there; but I think it wd be too Emby-dippy. I'm still not very keen on Paris in December - I like London myself, and just hope I'll get moved there by then.

No, at last report when I spoke to her on the phone a few days ago, Joan had not had her baby, and was in a fidget of waiting. It should be any time now. What did you think of the fertility-drug sextuplets? Perhaps you're having time to catch up on reading papers etc. at leisure while you're out of action? But don't jump up and do too much as soon as you feel better - I bet you will: I've never known you yet be ill without having a relapse from doing too much too soon. So please be warned, and take it easy.

Oh, Alan said with great pride that you have promised him a picture - they are obviously very pleased. They will be re-decorating at Marloes Rd. in January - Lois and I were jokingly working out exchange parties bearing paint-rollers! (Don't be alarmed, we can make it hen paint-parties in the daytime.)

No more now, I'll take this up to Sunninghill to catch the evening post, in hopes that it will get to you in Sunday's bag (when I'll be based at Paddock taking Bun out - the following weekend I will be with the Ellingworths at Farningham. In fact I think just about every weekend is now filled until the end of term.) Please write soon and say how you are - I do hope that all goes well and that you aren't already doing too much!

Lots of love from Pie.

Good that you saw Taj and Handsome Jack's grave - though I guess you were feeling lousy when you did.

St. Albans,
Saturday, Oct. 19

Dear Pie,

Now it's Saturday morning, and there is no letter from you - I was so hoping to get a letter from Weds.' bag saying how you are, but it hasn't come, maybe will still arrive Monday or Tuesday, as the mails are so unreliable now. It's very gloomy-making not getting a letter before the weekend, and we are all longing to know how you are, and hoping that you are better.

Last night J.W. came out for supper, and his first words were "Poor daddy!" And then Poll rang up (as we are engaged in sorting out a time for her to have a lesson with Orrea Pernel, who is coming for a concert on Oct. 28), and her words were "Poor daddy!" No doubt Bun will say the same when I take him out tomorrow.

I am forwarding with this a letter for you from J.W., which he gave me to post as he hadn't got a 5d. stamp. I have not however read it, but he told me more or less what was in it, and that he has "almost" decided to read Greats. I think that now is the time for you to reinforce him on this line - I know that you deliberately didn't deal with it in your last letter received by him (written when you were first day in bed), but the impression he got from your not dealing was that you didn't feel strongly one way or the other and that it was up to him! Whereas you write to me feeling very strongly indeed about it!

The argument with which I persuaded him last week (and which he said he had since been realizing the force of) was that this should be a time for him to go up to university and expand his ideas and horizons, rather than contracting them only to music - and you should reinforce along these lines (indeed you said all that in your first letter to him, which however he didn't seem to properly take in). But you would be very unwise to use any argument (or even possibility) that he is not good enough in music, as this only puts his back up and makes him feel that he wants to do it just to show that he can. The argument should be of course that he can do the music "in tandem" as you say - and you ought

also to avoid suggesting that deciding to read Greats is the "sensible" or "practical" thing to do; both words are anathema to J.W. at the moment - after all, if he has logically argued himself into the position of giving up everything for music, he is at the moment too romantic and idealistic to do other than react badly to counsel of sense and practicality. I have stressed instead the excitement of ideas, and the pity of giving up all his many interests (literature, philosophy etc.) before he is sure how his interests will best combine. (Here I think Pilk made a bad argument with J.W., which J.W. repeated to me last week - he said that Pilk said he wd like to see J.W. as a top civil servant, perhaps in charge of education - J.W., though very fond of Pilk, told me this somewhat scornfully. Sensible though it may be, it's not exactly a glittering ambition to hold up before J.W. at this stage. Your argument was much better before when you said he might be an Ayres - or a Tolkien (though I don't think you specified the latter). Strangely enough, J.W. was saying last night that he now feels inclined towards making some kind of academic career, but he ~~xxxx~~ feels that if he is going to be an academic, he would rather be in another field than music. Which is a strange come-about, as he first talked himself into academic life as a way into the musical field! Well, I expect he will change his mind a good many times more in the next few years, as he really is an all-rounder - but I hope that you agree with my present position, and that you'll reinforce it on the lines I suggest. But without any arguments against music as such, as J.W. then just thinks you are a philistine who doesn't know what he's talking about! He was admitting last night that he would find it a relief not to have to concentrate so much on musical theory, which would give him more time to devote to things that he is more interested in. So I think all will work out, as long as too many people don't try to argue him into being sensible or practical! That can all come later.

Incidentally, J.W. was very agitato about whether the girls are going to be able to come to St. Andrews Day (they are in the midst of exams then, think they will probably be able to get away, but can't be sure yet till the exam schedule comes out). I think J.W. may be rather keen on Vicky, which I find highly satis!

Now, what else? Oh, yes, J.W. was adamant last night about not going to Europe, but using his "heaven-sent" six months of freedom to re-do his piano technique - I think we have to accept this, as long as he carried on with plans to go to the House in the autumn. And for his own satisfaction in playing the piano, at least, he won't feel that it is time wasted. (Thanks incidentally for asking D. Turpin's advice - I didn't use any of it in argument, as overtaken by events, and J.W. doesn't go for personal-type argument or advice.)

Now I must clear up my papers, post letters and then get ready to go to Paddock. I spend night there tonight, and we'll take Bun out tomorrow. (J.W. takes a very avuncular sort of interest in how Bun is getting on - he himself approves of Dragons, as opposed to Granny!) Tomorrow night Barbara Davies will come late to spend the night here, and I'll hear her news. She rang yesterday on arrival - says Derek is also here for this weekend, when they are doing school-taking-out, but will fly back to Madrid late tomorrow.

I wish that you were here, or at least that I had a letter from you to say how you are. Oh, a parcel has arrived from Alan, with lovely stole and geegaws (which I'll sort out with Poll) which were in his air freight. Super - and thank you so much for sending them. I meant to say this straightaway, but got sidetracked on J.W.'s problems. Bun is the easiest of the three at the moment! I would rather be in Delhi than doing all this children taking out and sorting out - and Kelso sorting out; but at least thank goodness I have been here, as starting from the time when I persuaded J.W. not to write to Christchurch in Sept., up until now, I can see that if we had both been away misunderstandings by letter might well have become irretrievable. And I hope that all will be well now.

Lots and lots of love

from Pie.

Enclosed is a memo on Xmas cards, which I did yesterday.

Memo on Xmas Cards: Oct. 17

I have now done the envelopes for the U.S.A. list (Page 5 of typed list). The following points emerge:

1. I do not have Bayard King's address - shall I send c/o State Dept, or have you got address? I have an idea we had it last year from the Georges.

2. Equally I do not seem to have Moya King's address - I can't think why not, but I know you've got it in the address book.

3. The Philbins are surely still in Germany? Do you have their address? I have only the Wash.D.C. one, and they should be on the "abroad" list.

I have not the three above - will you either let me know addresses or do them yourself?

4. I have added to the U.S. list
Dick and Dottie Slater
and have done them. They were on abroad list last year, I suppose.

5. It occurs to me that all the U.K. list could be left till you get back, if you bring cards and list with you. They would certainly not need posting till well after Dec. 7 - so if you are pressed, we could very well sit down one evening at Kelso and do them. That would only leave you now the non-U.S. abroad ones, which need getting off in good time.

~~xxxx

read out to them - he said that his was "pretty good," whatever that may mean. After tea I drove him back - he didn't want to go to the film, which he said didn't sound very good, so I said he could go back just in time for supper, which made him rather indignant - he said, certainly not, he wanted to get back in time to have a little time to himself anyway. So I took him earlier than necessary, which was just as well, as on the way back it became apparent that the snuffle which he'd started out the day with was making him rather low, and I suspect in fact that he had a temp. I made light of it, as I wasn't sure if it was poading about school; but he felt hot and said he was headachy before we got there. So I went in with him (he was quite cheerful apart from that) and told Mrs. Hosken, who said that she wasn't surprised, as several of the boys had very sharp colds, so she cosseted him and bore him off, asking if he'd like to go straight to bed or stay up for supper; and he didn't poad at all about going back. But I wouldn't be surprised if he has one of his feverish cold-throats.

By then it was dark, or nearly so, being 6.15, so I had all the way to drive back in the dark, which I do not much like, esp. on the Oxford-Henley road, which is crowded with glaring traffic on a Sunday evening. So I turned off via Peppard and Sonning, which was much better, and was back in good time before 8.

Barbara Davies turned up just after 10, having seen Derek off to Gatwick. She was in good form and they had visited all their children at the weekend. She had many messages from Derek about expecting you in Madrid, so I explained about Mr. Stewart visiting India, some doubt about when you'd get away, and that you wanted to be back before J.W. left Eton, and that it might not work out for you to stop over, all of which she agreed with. So it's up to you. Derek is now travelling all over Europe on some kind of inspecting jape for Shell; they had thought they might be sent back to London, but that seems to be off for the moment, so they are still based in Madrid, but as there is not much for Derek to do there he has been put onto this travelling job now. The only trouble with Barbara is that she has no sense of humour and is so earnest! - but apart from that she is sweet, as well as very chic - she had smart boots on! She has now gone off to London, after a morning of dentisting (she says Lemasney's replacement doesn't seem much good) and looking at the problems of their house - gardener deserted,

garden in a mess, sink literally sinking into kitchen floor, and shower in bathroom showering through kitchen ceiling! So she's coming back on Thursday, for more dentisting and dealing with her builders.

Now I must hurry if I am to get this into today's post. I don't think there is much else to report at the moment. Everyone talks about Jackie Kennedy, on lines of "How could she!" Do hope there will be news from you tomorrow, and that you are better and are taking care of yourself properly.

Lots and lots of love

from Pie.

St. Albans,
Tuesday, Oct. 22

Dear Pie,

Your two letters of last Weds. and Friday both came this morning at last, as I hoped they would - and I was so relieved to hear that you are getting better, even though still dopey and drugged. You were noble to get the packing done in spite of all, and I think it's awful that you have to conduct your office while you're in bed - they ought to let you have a good rest, and have everyone else get on with it.

But I was so unhappy about your letter that I just sat down and burst out crying - (it was the one in which you complained of getting no loving and said you could get it from plenty of people there, and that all I wrote was problems and requirements) - it was a bit too much, after I had waited for five whole days in much anxiety to hear how you were, and kept worrying about whether I should telephone to you to find out, but felt it would be an extravagance and that it was probably because of this beastly post that I hadn't heard. And I think in retrospect that that letter of mine you got probably was mostly business, as there was so much to say about J.W. (with whom I'm thoroughly bored) - still I had thought that you would be cheered up by my letter on him, as it represented a major change on his position of wanting to throw his life away on music. Anyway, I had of course not heard that you were ill when I wrote that letter - the time lag is too great, and you are probably going to have still more letters of mine ~~xxxxxxx~~ written before I heard about your horrid leg.

Besides that, you ought to have realized by now that, unlike you, I find it very hard to express my emotions, either on paper or in person. Of course I love you, and miss you, and want you here all the time; and I have never been so miserable, and hate being here by myself. And I am so glad that it is only about seven weeks till you come, because I really feel I can't cope much longer on my own. I try to write to you only when I am reasonably cheerful, as it doesn't seem much use writing miserable letters when you are so far away, so I write chatty ones about gossip and such when I am not too depressed. But if you think I am finding it any fun being here while you are there, you are quite in the wrong. (Funny, Mummy admitted at

the weekend that ever~~x~~ since Dadddy died, she has taken sleeping pills at night as otherwise she can't get to sleep on her own because she hears noises - I hear noises too in this creaky old house, and I know it's unreasonable, but I do not sleep at all well when I'm alone - but I don't take pills because I don't approve of drugs. And I suppose I won't like your snoring either, but I least I'll remember it's a substitute for creaks in the night!)

Of course the jewelry I asked about, and the things Poll asked about (I don't know what - I thought it must be something she wrote to you about) don't matter, and we wouldn't have asked about them if we'd known you were in bed, so forget about them.

But I am so miserable, because you don't seem to think that I care anything about you, and if I express any problems you just say that I'm worrying you. In fact I am very depressed because of Kelso Place - I hate having to put off moving until after mid-November, which is now the earliest target date, as that means I won't have time to get it in good order before you come back, which is the one thing I really wanted to do. And I am worried about money, and about whether the van der Eykens are going to buy this house (I don't think they are Rattenburys, but admittedly money and mortgages are still tight - they want to buy it, which is more than anyone else does), and I am worried about J.W. But any time I write any of these worries to you, you tend to say don't bother you with them - so I've stopped writing about problems of Kelso, and you now seem to say stop writing about J.W. - so I feel that we are growing further and further apart. And you write that "poor Carole" has a throat and is in bed "all on her own in Dorset house" - I have been on my own for months - no husband, no sex, no Kashmir, no fun, only endless children's problems and house problems and money problems, and if you think any of those are fun you are wrong. The only way they could be fun at all is to share them with you, and you do not seem to want to share them. So you see why I am unhappy, and have been all the time you've been gone. I am so glad it is only seven weeks to go, because I really couldn't take it much longer. But I am sad that I won't have got as much done as I'd hoped before you get back.

So please believe~~x~~ that I do miss you - I have the feeling that you don't care whether I do or not - and don't write any more beastly foul things. We are not on net, and the post lag is awful, and I hope that you are

getting better all the time - and I am sorry if I am writing a gloomy letter, but at risk of depressing you, I thought I'd better for once express my feelings.

Let me now see what points I should acknowledge, as you say I usually don't: I really do take in all your points, but I probably don't ack all when there is no action to be taken, as it wd be so late by the time you got the acknowledgement that you would have forgotten about it. First, very good news that you've sold the car well - that is splendid. And in spite of nonsenses over light switch! Next, I am in agreement with Gusain over the missing teaspoons - he is quite correct, and if you hadn't been in bed and had had a chance to look at the silver check-list, you would have realized that that was all noted. I am slightly horrified at the quantity of glass, and of gear in general, that will be arriving! Nothing to be done about it though.

I think you should try to ignore Dick Turpin's advice that you would be prudent to plan for Dec. 10 - after all the Office, and in theory Sir James, have agreed for you to leave on 6th, so surely you are being generous to offer to stay until 8th or 9th? You won't want to overlap with Henning anyway - and if you come on 10th, it will be too exhausting to fetch J.W. on 11th - you know that he gets out at crack of dawn on 11th, in indeed not on the day before - I haven't queried him on this yet. If you can possibly make it before 10th, I think you should - and I do think we are entitled to a little time to ourselves before facing children's problems!

Yes, J.W. got anAir India bag, or possibly two - I cannot remember now, but certainly he got at least one. He never answers the questions I put him either - he has got his head in the clouds.

I have written to A. Clark asking about your M.andS. trousers. I've said keep them for you, as he spent 4/6 postage sending that stole and jewelry to me from his air freight. (On that, you are probably going to complain that I wasn't enthusiastic enough, so I'll anticipate you: I was very glad to get a present, but in fact I don't think the jewelry, apart from small green brooch, is very nice - but I hope Polly may find it useful for presents. And in fact, as regards the stole, it is lovely soft wool, and very luxurious, but you have no doubt forgotten that I got a very similar

one last year in Kashmir, and do not quite know what I am going to do with two! I do not think that you are the world's best shopper, and know that you wouldn't claim to be - so it's just as well that I don't ask you to bring anything else!)

Poor pie, you must have been dopey when you wrote, because you surmised that I may have been busy with half term, which in fact is not until weekend after next!

As regards gear again, which you go on about, I agree that there is too much, and we need dumping ground for less nice (and also for less nice furniture here); but I do not think that is an argument in favour of Cudworth. It is still the wrong location - and I say it again with feeling having done Bun yet again, in spite of your arguments of not having had a firm base when you were taken out from Dragons. The point surely is that neither were your parents trying to maintain two bases - because there wd be a permanent conflict if we were trying to do cottage in one direction and Bun more or less in another - whereas in roughly the same direction we could enjoy a country weekend and still take Bun out quite happily on a Sunday - or possibly indeed on a Sat. and a Sun. Anyway, you simply cannot ask me at this point to take on Cudworth - I cannot face any more builders, about whose problems I have not worried you; and Cudwork, being unfit for human habitation, would require essential and extensive building works before we could begin to enjoy it, and I do not think that we will have time and energy to cope with all that on top of Kelso. Besides which, I doubt very much if van der Eykens will sign contract in time, though I've had conversation with Philip today, and he has been chivvying v.E's solicitors (I trust not too hard - Philip, though a milksop, when he decides to grip a point, gets rather rude; and ≠I trust he hasn't pressed those solicitors too hard so that they'll all do a Rattenbury, because as I say we have no immediate other interest). Philip is anyway writing to you, and sending you St.A. contract to sign, which of course means nothing except that he'll have your signature on tap when he needs it.

Funny to have Dorothy Cole call on you! but I'm glad to hear that she seems in good form, even though not on net with you.

About your air freight - I agree about dumping Delhi papers, though honestly I would really like to have for my file any lists of goods imported. You say that's behind us, but so did B'ko seem, and yet the Bamako lists were very helpful to me when planning for Delhi. So I would like to keep any firm order lists (not catalogs) to remind me. But surely you could put any such info into an envelope and post them through the bag, if you don't want to be bothered with bringing them? But any local orders and local Delhi papers you can certainly throw, with my comps.

Good to hear about the Georges, though I'm sorry to hear about Clair's insides again. Alan's impression was that they were gaily trying to live their time in Delhi out, and were really longing to go. That sounded to me perhaps less like the Georges than like Alan's interpretation of them. I'd like to read the John Updike. With reference to which, you'd be amazed at the very sexy looking books on sale everywhere, such as even in the book machines at Waterloo - I keep thinking I'd like to buy one and see what new revelations are there, but there are so many, I wouldn't know which one to pick! Also the theatres are said to be very abandoned now, with much criticism as you'll have read on whether lack of censorship is worthwhile or not. I think it's very healthy to bring sex out into the open instead of suppressing it, though the manifestations will probably be very tiresome for some time. And I think it is, and will re~~m~~main, harder on girls, who are the ones to be caught out, both physically and emotionally, by sexual freedom.

I see a couple of new Ambassadorial appointments in Times yesterday and today, so I suppose it's beginning of the new lot of announcements.

I note that you have packed 24 sheets, and 22 pillow cases (I hope we haven't lost any, but cannot find my check list here, I expect it's in Delhi - anyway some had worn out). That is good, as we are short of sheets here. Hurrah for bringing Nivico with you - it will be good to have. It's funny that you follow Olympics avidly - a pity you aren't here, as there is nothing on TV but Olympics, which I consider a bore, and too much happening too quickly, though it all goes

on for hours. I'm more interested in Am. presidential election, of which little, though Humphrey seems to be doing better - or at least Muskie is. I think Jackie Kennedy's marriage must have been a big shock to Americans. I can't think why.she did it!

Now I go back perforce to your comments on J.W, though I feel it awkward to comment when you will have had later letters by now. I agree with what you say about his saying to Ch.Ch. that he wanted to learn about people before going up: on the other hand, he is now, as Captain of the School, learning about people, and he will be as well when he teaches at Dragons, both of which account for half his year before going up. I wonder if you may perhaps have too much a fixed idea about his learning about Europe, and how important it is. I agree with you in being somewhat appalled that he wants to stay at home with his music instead of Perugia, though I think you are unfair to phrase it "slouch about Kelso and pretend to do music", as in fact he really does practice very hard, and with audible improvement. But I do not want, any more than you do, him to be about and practising[47] all the time. On the other hand, I do somewhat feel that perhaps we should accept this, as we are luckily going to have a house in London, and he is obviously longing to participate in it - we have been so much away, and I think he still does need the security of a home, with luck for the last time, ~~xxxxxxx~~ - but I feel that to force him out of it might be wrong,as I think young people today seem so very precarious that anything might happen - drugtaking (like so many, and obviously attractive in ways), nervous breakdowns (like Duncan, or like Ralph Hancock, who has taken a long time to straighten out again), or just becoming a bum (like Stephen Bell and others). It's not altogether coincidence that the last two examples are office children, as I think they may be especially vulnerable owing to the life we lead. And I do think that it is very important not to alienate J.W., as once that happens, one has no chance of influence any more. He is still very young, and he is longing for your advice and your wisdom, and was disappointed I think that in your last letter (this is, the last he's received when I saw him) you seemed to give him laissez-faire - though I admit if you had taken a very strong line he might well have reacted against it.

[47] orig "practicising"

On this same dreary music subject, I am incidentally sick and tired of your family (Jill and Mary) taxing me with the music coming from my family: I do not think that this is so, as the Herschels were strong musicians, and Mummy told me this weekend (which I've never heard before) that Uncle Bill was a very keen pianist, who played Beethoven sonatas ad infinitum to the detriment of his wife and children, and when you combine that with Siepmann inclinations to music, it seems to me that my side of the family has little to contribute - and I feel now that I never would have let the children listen to music at all ifI'd known the difficulties it would lead to! - although I do think everything will probably sort out all right in the end.

I agree with you too about J.W. not realizing value of money and expecting too much subsidizing, but I think that is a common complaint of this generation - and I think that, though you can come down gradually at him on this, the main thing is to support his enthusiasm for general learning, which will keep him out of narrow specializing in music. But I can't go on~~=~~ more now about this, as I'm beginning to repeat what I said before and you ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ haven't had a chance to answer. And as I said before, I think J.W.'s problems a bore, and wish we could be without the responsibility, and just looking forward to Kelso on our own (and movies and theatre as you say, which I find myself very much longing for suddenly, though I feel still so far away from Kelso Place. It's funny that you say movies suddenly, because I've been thinking recently that there seem to be a good number of movies which look worth seeing - and yet we've always neglected movies. I wonder if we're getting old, or if good movies are getting better? I'm not sure if I want to see "Hair" though!)

Yes, Louise liked my brooch and earrings[48] very much indeed, and so did I! But you didn't comment on their views of the nude show in Paris!

I'm glad to hear about the Clark camp beds and stoves and sleeping bag. I'm not at all sure that we should go camping though, as it always rains! But I think they'll be useful, and think we should aim, once we've sold St. A., at a cottage, possibly ~~one~~ two-bedroomed, one with a bit of extra room, such as barn, stable, or whatever, where we could lay out campbeds for

[48] orig "earrrings"

children's friends to come - this will give necessary expansion, and the young are very adaptable, unlike me who feel older all the time and in need of a proper bed!

I always explain to children why you don't write - first that you were too busy, and now that you are not well - but usually I find when I explain that you have in fact written briefly to them. This is fine in point of view of Bun, but I suggest that J.W. and Poll, though they love to get anything, are deserving of more serious letters, even though less frequent, and it's not so good as with Bun to fob them off with quick stuff. But they are lucky to get anything now that you are in bed, and in point of fact it is, hurrah, not so long till you are back.

I note your explanation of Martin David's "invitation" to join the dip service, and thought in fact I said I realized that it was a general circular, but I see that you agree with me that you're surprised it's at counsellor rank. No, thank you, I doubt if I'm for it, or not at least until we see how expensive it is to be U.K.-side! I'm surprised you do not classify Peter Brown as a "sexy 50 year old" - do you think he is too young to qualify? I do not find him attractive, whatever his age, but then I cannot think of any S'dale man I do think attractive, and I do not at all think that that was the David's point anyway.

I am indeed economising, and hope that you are - but we will need all, and possibly more, to pay Kelso repair bills. As the Clarks said, "What a pity, the re-plastering won't show, nor will the re-wiring." (if the latter is necessary, I am promised the answer tomorrow), which means that the necessary showing things, i.e. hall and stair carpeting, kitchening, and general decoration, will have to come after we've dealt with the non-showing essentials. But here I am boring you with Kelso again, and I now must stop, as it is bedtime. Have painted two bookshelves today (I did not after all go to London, because I was too put off by your letter, but I now feel better having written it all out of my system), and I will now go up and try to sleep with the noises of the night, as tomorrow I go to London to lunch with B. Karmel, and to check in with progress on Kelso.[49]

Lots and lots of love from Pie.

I hope you haven't found this off-putting, but felt I had to write it. I hate going up to bed alone now!

[49] A Sun Telegraph article about the awfulness of builders and conversions enclosed: 'it amused me very much as I'm in heartfelt agreement with it all!'

St. Albans,
Friday, Oct. 24

Dear Pie,

No letter from you since Tuesday, I suppose because of Diwali upsetting the bags, but now (according to the present mail pattern) I probably won't hear till next Tuesday, which is very annoying, especially as I am longing to hear how you are getting on, and if you are really better, and are not overdoing things. And I wrote you a poady letter last time, for which I am sorry: but I was feeling poady. But I really am worried about you, and wish that I were in Delhi, and keep wondering if I ought to come, and I can't help fidgeting about not knowing how you are. But there doesn't really seem a lot of point in coming now, esp. as the packers have done their work and you are really nearly poised for departure. And you've no idea how much there is to do about Kelso, and how long it all takes, alas.

Tomorrow I'm going to Mary's for the weekend, so I'll get this off before, as otherwise I'll forget half the things I meant to tell you. While I'm rushing around London I compose mental letters to you, and then if I don't get the things written down I can't remember later if I've actually written them or only thought about it! And the beastly time lag of letters is so horrid anyway, that I never know if you've noted all I say, because you don't always acknowledge either, or whether you're answering earlier letters. End of moan.

Wednesday I had lunch with Barbara Karmel - delicious Italian lunch cooked by Leonardo - with three other dames. One was a rich Jewish wife of stockbroker, one a Peruvian whose husband buys for the National Gallery and who carries banners in protest marches (she is allergic to smoke, and Barbara asked me if I'd mind not smoking all the time - a great penance, esp. with the coffee after lunch! but no doubt good for me), and the other was the wife of Dingle Foot, who seemed dismally poady to me at first, as well as plain as a pike, but warmed up by after lunch when she and Barbara (after the others had gone) exchanged some malicious gossip about the world of judges, which was fun to hear. Lady Foot seemed to warm to me (perhaps because I somewhat ill-advisedly admitted to knowing Robin and Ted Howe, who are great friends of hers) -

apparently they are living at Datchet now, and I had to backtrack to avoid being put into instant contact with them, which I don't want to be!) But Lady Foot said she'd ask me for cocktails in their new flat in Ashley Gardens, and offered me the name of a good house-painter (I didn't admit to doing it myself!). But the great gossip is that I can now tell you (possibly) why Jackie Kennedy married Onassis: B. Karmel says she lunched with Onassis in south of France a few years ago - a dejeuner a trois, with just her hostess, Onassis, and her - and her firm view is that Onassis is without doubt the most fascinating and attractive man she has ever met, and that she could well understand why anyone would want to marry him, and that all this rubbish in the paper about wanting security and a father figure is just nonsense. So. Trust Barbara to have always met everyone! She told a funny story too about an elderly bachelor friend of theirs~~*~~ who was picked up on a plane by Christine Keeler (who announced that she was the wickedest woman in England, much to his embarrassment). She and David send you their love, and hope to see you soon.

After lunch I got on with my various errands (you have no idea how long it takes, or perhaps you do), and then I went and spent the night at Maunsel St., because I still had more to do the next morning. It was funny being at Maunsel St. all on my own, but v. pleasant - it looks quite different with Dora's things in it - it was very quiet, and yet I was surprised at how many street noises I heard; car doors seemed to slam and cars start up until all hours of the night. I wonder if it will be like that at Kelso. (I expect you will be saying why didn't I go and get a bed with the Lloyds or the Sarells or someone else: I still will,sometime, but when I have a lot to do, and want to sit down quietly after looking at things, and work out what other thinks I have to look at, it's nice to be at peace and not have to make conversation all evening.) Yesterday I went to the American embassy, where I had to get a new passport as mine is expiring next week; and I got that done, at some length, as the Consul (they seem to get younger every year!) wanted, as they always do, to offer me full information on our dual-national children, which I needn't bother to repeat to you now: but they change the rules all the time, as you know.

I came back here for last night, to look after Tumble the hamster, and also Barbara Davies, who arrived

in yet another hired car before I had been back for long. Incidentally, she says that by renting a car from the Budget Rent a Car people she paid only £9 for a three day weekend in which she drove over 400 miles - that sounds remarkably cheap to me. Perhaps one should live on hired cars and not maintain one?

I went again to London today, and am just back, to collect myself before going off for weekend. As a result of my three days' efforts, I feel I've got on quite a way (in my own explorations as least) on thoughts on Kelso. Have visited Design Centre, Buildings Centre, Heals, etc. etc. - and at last I think I've found the kind of kitchen units I want (and not nearly so expensive as some) and have found out from building centre who the merchants are for them, but haven't had time yet to chase them up and see what the ghastly delivery schedule is - I hope only two months' delay: some makes are three or six months delay, which makes you think. (esp. in view of all our gear from Delhi). Have gone over all electrics with the electrician - and have got his horrid estimate just this evening by phone: £275 for the whole job. This is more or less what I expected, as I think (?) St.A. re-wiring was about 200 a few years ago (but that file of St.A. maintenance, as I asked you about before, is simply not here - I do wonder if it's in Delhi - so I couldn't check.) I looked at the Kelso wiring with him - it did look very dangerous and also very old, and loose wires everywhere, very rickety. There were even bits of old wall bracket wirings hidden in the walls under the plaster which has just been stripped off, dangerously left there in a live state. So I reckon it's worth doing it all properly, and as I went through with him I stipulated everything very liberally (13 amp. ring main everywhere, with lots of outlets - which means that we could use an electric fire in any room, viz, for chilly evening when we didn't want to have the heating on~~x~~, and new light in some places in passages, and more points in the kitchen). I might be able to cut it down a little, but I think it's probably better to have lights in all the right places while one is doing it, don't you? And it's[50] certainly important that it's done <u>now</u>, at least as far as downstairs is concerned, while the walls are still unpl~~x~~astered, which means they can embed all the new wiring and not have any unsightliness of wires showing. But I am bad at visualizing where one needs light, esp. as I've never yet been at Kelso in the dark!

[50] orig "its"

Anyway they will start at the beginning of next week - I am not sure how long they will be. He did not want to start next week at all, owing to busy-ness, but as he works in with Simmonds the builder, Mr. Simonds told him he's got to get on with it. But I suspect this may mean some further delay in my getting in (I feel rather like the three sisters trying to get in to Moscow), but there is obviously not much point trying to get in before the wiring is done. I've also said light in shed (essential don't you think, as boiler is there?) with an outlet to put a garden light near back (garden) door, to make light when one empties things outside into the dustbins at night. But poor pie, I guess you don't remember Kelso very well, and this will all be Greek to you! But it's funny what has turned up on the electrical front, which I didn't know about at all: first, there are strip lights inside our bedroom cupboards, which I hadn't realized, which light up when the doors are opened - I consider that height of luxury, but as they are there, we are going to keep them (though they have to be rewired). And secondly, there is a heater, thermostatically controlled, inside the linen cupboard in the sep. W.c., which I never knew about at all, but which will be very useful as it will be a gigantic airing and linen cupboard. So that's enough of electrics.

And I didn't mean to go on so long, as I reckon you will not be much interested at this point, but it gets it off my mind to write it down! I'm horrified at the extra bill too! And all basics, without showing.

I've nearly finished painting bookshelves here, the ones that are going to Kelso. I think we will want eventually to have some kind of teak-ish system of shelves going up the wall in living-dining room - but these work out very expensively. We could have one with a built in closeable desk unit, or even two? But I think better not to rush into that, esp. as I haven't yet seen the new teak furniture which it ought to match (incidentally I saw a teak Danish sofa in Heals today which looked much like ours as you and Alan described it, so for curiosity I looked at the price, which was £155 for sofa alone. Good!) Anyway, re shelves, we have enough shelving to cope with books for the moment, including those that come from Delhi, though not enough to take all when we vacate St. A., unless we get a cottage soon.

There seems to be a lot of good movies on now, including one called "The Graduate," which is advertised very sexily, and I see is directed by Mike Nicholls, who is said to be the latest thing in directors. B.Karmel said Mayerling was good, though David didn't like it. They were going to re-see "Look Back in Anger," which is revived at the Royal Court - I don't think somehow I could bear to see it again! B.Davies was full of the "must" movies, mostly European and sexy, which she said I should see - but if you are now deciding maybe you like movies, perhaps I should hold off till you get back? Anyway it doesn't look as if I'll get moved soon enough to have much time for other than "decorating" before you get back, if indeed that.

Mary says that Dick has got to be on duty in his office this weekend "manning the office" - everyone is obviously very frightened about riots on Sunday at the Vietnam~~se~~ demonstration. The Am embassy people are already reconciled to having some of their enormous plate glass windows broken - the consul told me that they didn't mind that, but did mind the last time when their friendly policeman who usually guards the door had his eye put out by a penny thrown by a demonstrator. I do think these student riots are v. tiresome; though I sometimes wish that J.W. would get more politically involved, I certainly wouldn't want him to throw pennies. And I can picture M.E. in there with the best of them somehow! What peculiar times we live in. B.Karmel's friends all assured me that I wouldn't be able to control Polly at all by the time she is sixteen! - they said girls go out of control. Barbara said that Lavinia didn't, which they all thought remarkable, and said that it was because David laid down such hard-and-fast rules! So I suppose in a year or so we'll have problems with Poll as we are now having with J.W., in one way or another; but I just wish that Poll would acquire a bit of worldly wisdom, and then one would feel happier about her making up her own mind what she is on. Mummy says that Peter and Rosemary Waterfield have endless trouble with Jenny, as they can't control her and she stays out all night (this is probably paddock dramatization); but also she says that, no sooner had Peter and Rosemary gone on holiday to Greece than they had a telegram saying they must come back at once, as Robin, their

eldest, had had a "breakdown" (not further described) at school. How awful. They obviously didn't take it very seriously, as they were coming back by car; I agreed with Mummy, which I seldom do, that if it were us, one of us at least would have flown back straightaway to see what the trouble was. But how difficult children seem to be. Which reminds me, I have heard nothing from Dragons about Bun being in sick bay, so perhaps he was after all only playing me up with his cold, or else he has overcome it without being put to bed. I do hope that he is not just struggling on in order to collapse at home at half term!

Here is a letter from Poll, come today - she doesn't address it to you as well, so may have written to you separately, but I may as well send it on. She is mixedly grown up and yet only medium able to look after herself!

No more now - I will post this in the morning, and if by any chance a letter from you I may have time to add a scrawl. I miss you dreadfully, and wish that I could fly out to Delhi - but it's only about six weeks now, so that's not so bad - I only hope I get properly moved before you get back: if not, it's not my fault, but I am so frustrated by all these delays, as I had hoped to get things in good order to greet you when you get back. At least ~~#~~our bedroom at Kelso is in good order (and apart from it and Bun's bedroom, nothing else is), so I am afraid we are just going to have to go at it gradually, which is a bore as I am wasting time now that I could be using to paint things at Kelso. But it's absolutely no use doing it till builders are out, as their equipment is everywhere, and also their mess.~~#~~

Sat. morning - Hurrah, your letter of 19 - 22 Oct. came this morning, just as I was leaving the house. You do sound better, and I am so glad - but am sorry you thought I wasn't sympathetic enough before - I meant to be, and felt so. Poor Mahindra - I'm sorry about that too,

-7-

and esp. for it falling upon you as extra burden now _ I agree possibly better for <u>him</u> to die quickly, but what a shock. I <u>am</u> sorry.

I'm writing this at Victoria, having read your letter coming up, and now just about to catch a train (To Swanley!) for the Ellingworths.

Poor R. Bolt too .

But poor you esp - I hope that you are continuing to dis-engage: to tell the truth, I can't imagine how that H.C. is going to run without you there! -but it will have to somehow.

I <u>do</u> wish I were there - the smells of autumn remind me of the nice time of year, and the hills _ and India <u>is</u> nice, outside of the compound, and esp. out of

-8-

Delhi. But London is good too -
it's all misty grey weather
now, which I rather like
Now I must go and find a
post box and my train _
Lots and lots of
love from Pie.

St. Albans,
Tuesday evening,
Oct. 29

Dear Pie,

How the time does fly, thank goodness! Nearly the beginning of November already, which I can hardly believe, as the weather is so summery and the Kelso repairs so slow! And all the children for half term this weekend.

No letter from you today, which makes me feel low, but I haven't properly answered your last, except briefly on Victoria station.

First of all, to report on weekend: I had a nice time with Mary and Dick, whose house has come on amazingly fast and begins to look super (though the disadvantages of site still remain, and I wouldn't choose to live there myself). They have had their floors sanded, which is nearly done now - the dining room was just finished, so we put all the furniture in and arranged pictures and ornaments: I wished I could be doing it at Kelso. The Weaits came for tea on Sunday, and I thought them an exceptionally nice couple, both intelligent,but him especially, though somewhat apprehensive (she esp.) of going abroad in the service, which they haven't done before. I told them all the good things. You won't be interested, as they come after you go, but for goodness sake I hope your chaps are looking after arrangements for them well: they have three children of five and under, and another baby as well expected in a few months - so I trust they are getting one of the largest Antrim flats? You'll say this is none of my business, and so it isn't, but having told them I think they'll like Delhi, I hope they won't be too put off on arrival. Incidentally, he said he had met M. James last week, and thought him very pleasant and kind. (I see no announcement of M. James' marriage - surely it must be happening about now, if at all? Weait said to me, "And there's no lady high commissioner," to which I agreed!) They will do well in Delhi, and can jet set and Peter Hall set as much as they like, as they are that sort: but I am worried about the number of children they have!

I went up to London with Dick on Monday morning, and came back here to deal with correspondence, arrangements etc., bringing the clock from Dora with me (and here is a letter from her). I can't make the clock go, but will put Polly to cosseting it. Dick said you were lucky in not being back quite yet - I assumed him to mean because I was having all the work of Kelso repairs and house-moving and concurred heartily; but it turned out that he meant that the office is in such absolute chaos owing to merger that you are very fortunate in coming back to it a bit later. I think Dick fusses about small things that upset routine, but by all accounts it is pretty much a mess at the moment. I still wonder what job you will do.

Poll said to me today,"Whatever do you do, Mummy, just sit at home alone?" You may well be thinking the same, but I assure you I am extraordinarily busy, even though frustrated because I can't get on with the move; and it is difficult trying to be at both ends at once. I am now here till Thursday, and have got to try to get Pack's to come and fix the TV before half term (they were supposed to come one day last week, when I stayed in for them, but they didn't come, and they came two days later when I wasn't here) and Mr. Simmonds the plumber to come and look at the pipes because there must be a leak or some blockage as the water runs into the house constantly (he too came when I was out, and I'll have to ring him again). But it is very hard trying to cover two houses at once, and I could well be at Kelso even more than I am, as every time I go,there is some problem or other that they want my advice on. They are now starting outside painting, which is good: I had to tell them to take away first floor window boxes, (which as they forecast broke in taking them off), as the sills had never been painted and wanted doing properly. We will either have to repair window boxes later or get new ones, but it's better to have the basic fabric done right. Am in battle with electrician, who says about a month to rewire, so I am trying to get Simmonds the builder to urge him on: it certainly doesn't take a month to do wiring if he puts men on the job; but of course he didn't really want to do the job at all at short notice, as he's got too much work; so I am in gloom about when this will all be finished. And I only hope that I've got the points arranged more or less right.

Joan has had a baby boy, of which I've just had the announcement, and you probably have too. I'll see if we can go over to see the baby sometime during half term. I go to Paddock for Thursday night, to pick up Bun early on Friday. (Here is his latest letter, which I think sounds just like him and well balanced - I fear his style of correspondence tends towards puzzles etc!) I asked Mummy if she'd like to come back with us to stay and see the children at half term, and she sounded much touched and said she'd consider it - she assumed at once that I meant stay the whole half term, which I didn't actually mean, but never mind, she probably will decide not to come anyway, though I think she does miss J.W. and Poll; and we hadn't made any special plans for half term, as it seems to have come on so suddenly. It makes me laugh now to think that I had thought I would be moved to Kelso by half term.

Now, today I went up to London to meet Poll after her lesson with Orrea Pernel, and to discuss further lesson plans. It is all very complicated, so this is going to go on a bit, I'm afraid. In the end, what I have settled is that Poll will go on with interim lessons with M.E. (who was there today, and who went out to lunch with Poll and me afterwards) until Orrea P. comes again in June-July, and then Poll can probably, depending on how the dates work out, go out to Switzerland with~~x~~ her in later summer for a considerable spell, or go out in October or so also for a considerable time. It will all work out, and seems satisfactory to me. Polly is I think a little disappointed because she had hoped to go to Switzerland in Jan. for a week or so, which I do not think <u>essential</u> (nor does O.P.) and so resisted. M.E. anyway says she will try to arrange some string quartet playing for Poll during the Christmas hols and introduce her to some young musicians at about her stage, which I think is all round even better for her at this ~~xxxxxxx~~ point.

Why I was against Switzerland in Jan. for Poll was partly or largely expense, which is considerable for going just for a short time; but also the difficulties of getting her there as it is a slightly complicated trip, which I would not like her to do on her own just yet. I <u>wish</u> you were here to talk this over with, because it has been worrying me and it very long to write out. I am <u>all</u> for Poll growing up and getting independent and

able to get about on her own (and I half accept what everyone tells me, that by 17 she will be completely independent). But she is not yet 17, only15 going on 16; and I would have been happier about her traveling on her own a year or two ago, when she looked and felt a child, than I do now. At the moment she is burgeoning and begins to look quite dame-y, and yet she has little idea of this herself or of how to cope with it. I would hate to send her off on her own at this age, with the risk (very slight I admit) of her encountering some nasty experience that would set her back in her happy growing-up time. Perhaps I wouldn't now be so reluctant to discuss sex if I hadn't been shocked by an exhibitionist in the public library when I was 14 - at that I suppose that I was lucky that he only tickled his piece in my full view and wasn't a raper! Young girls can be extremely put off psychologically by such experience, though one of course can't guard against it completely. Mummy says that the Chevivix-Trench twin girls of 14 were attacked, in the Eton grounds, by a man who didn't actually do anything, but they were very worried about the girls because it was such a psychological shock to them. So one can't guard against it altogether, and I said goodbye to Poll quite happily today as she got into the tube to go to Paddington and catch her train to Newbury and then the bus up to Cold Ash - that is all good experience, and she is getting quite good at finding her way about London. But I feel that changing from plane to train in Europe on her own, or going on an overnight couchette in the train on her own, is quite different, at least until she has done it and knows the ropes. Because in that case she wouldn't be on her own home ground, so to speak, at all; and wouldn't know where to go for recourse if needed. She is not yet enough experienced, and has no idea that if she smiles sweetly at someone who helps her, that there is anything at all of sex in her smile; but there now is, even if she doesn't know it. (I ticked J.W. off the other day, when he made a plot for him and Poll to go to a London concert tonight, a plan which didn't work out in the end anyway, because I asked him what arrangements he had made in that case for Poll to get back here, where the idea was that she would spend the night, and he said casually, "Oh, she can catch the train from Waterloo." I was quite fierce with him, and said that if he asked a girl out, his sister or anyone else, he should be sure that she could arrive home safely. Because it has just been reported

on the radio that a 16-year-old girl has been attacked in the train to Guildford, in the daytime even, and been found unconscious in the carriage on arrival at Guildford. I told him I would not allow Poll to come down to Sunningdale on the late train on her own, which I find a depressing half-~~x~~empty train with a number of half-drunks - and if they had gone on with their plan for the concert (which it turned out that J.W. couldn't go to anyway) I would have arranged to stay at Maunsel St. for the night and had Poll stay there with me. At that, J.W. was reluctant when I told him that he'd have to see that she got to Maunsel St. and not just turn her loose.) Are you with me so far, or do you think I am fussing? I am really all for the present more permissive[51] sex, and am all for girls getting about - but Poll is at a very tender age for the next year or so and needs bringing on gradually - and, as you comment about the Krays, London is a rough place; I do not think that we can let Poll be on her own at night in London for a year or so more without risk. Indeed there is always risk, but I mean until she is more grown-up to cope with it. But what, you may say, has this got to do with her going to Lugano on her own: only that it is not a simple trip - the easiest way, which I thought she could manage physically, is the non-stop train route, but that involves an over-night train trip, which I am against. The plane route involves changing from airport to train station at either Zurich or Milan, and this change I also don't think she should do on her own, at least until she has done it once. So I came to the conclusion that if Orrea Pernel said it was necessary for Poll's violin playing that she should go in January, then I (or you) should go with her, at least as far as seeing her through a change from plane to train - but this of course would vastly increase the expense for a short stay, as she would have to be got back again as well. Unless of course we know anyone at the consulate in Zurich who could be relied on to see her through? But I think this doesn't arise now, as it is now fixed that she will carry on[52] with M.E. for[53] the moment. I wonder if you think I am fussing - I thought that maybe I was brooding on this too much, so I asked Mary what she thought, and she said certainly not, she would never allow a daughter of hers to travel alone at that age. Mummy of course said the same, which you would more expect as she is more old-fashioned. It remains a fact, I am afraid, that a girl traveling on

[51] orig "permisive"
[52] orig "one"
[53] orig "with"

her own is considered by men to be fair game, and one feels that one wants one's daughter at least to have a little more experience of the world before doing it. Poll, by the way, has just got her periods, so this is the year when she is going through a psychological-growing-up stage: it's funny how shy girls are about their periods, she does not like to discuss it. I remember being the same, I wonder if it is innate in women. I do want to see, as far as possible, that Poll grows into being a woman without being offput by any horrid manifestation of sex - without holding her back, but also without exposing her to any risks that can be avoided. I'd like to hear your reactions, though it's not an immediate problem for action at the moment. Poll is growing up rapidly, as you comment from her letters (and in fact I'm told that that Iris Murdoch play, "The Italian Girl," which J.W. and Poll went to see with Duncan, is the most overtly sexy play which was on in London until the censorship was lifted last month - I wouldn't have gathered that from the children's comment about it! I think that is also typical of this age - I remember thinking I was entirely grown up, and facing any written or theatrical display of sex without a qualm, but finding when it was a question of actual fact that it was quite a different thing from theory! I think that J.W. and Poll both still have to get to the fact stage.)

Now, that has gone on far too long, as I said it would. I would rather talk to you about it! Or about John Updike's book, which I must try to get out of the library - I would take issue with it as you describe it, but you may not have given a balanced description of it! I've just finished reading a Kingsley Amis novel (not his latest, but I think the one before, called "The Anti-Death League), not a very successful book, but one with more open descriptions of sex, both hetero and homo, than I have read for a long time. These new books make James Joyce seem old-fashioned, and yet I don't think reveal any more of what makes people act the way they do than was revealed by less explicit novels. This is not to say that I'm against the explicit descriptions, only that I think it probably needs a really good writer to make a lasting novel, rather than a peep-show, out of sex. Perhaps Updike has done it? - You describe it as a

peep-show.

I am so sorry about Mahindra, and Poll asked today with great concern and was very sorry when I told her. He was a good man, even if he did look villainous, and I wonder if we should have realized before, or had it checked, that he had high blood pressure. I thought that it was just his temper. (Which reminds me, whatever happened to Dick Turpin's old butler who had a stroke and was in Safterjang - did he ever recover, or did he die?)

I am glad that in the end you said don't send a stiff collar - esp. as I opened your letter on the way to Kent for the weekend, and was in great doubt whether by the time I got back I'd be in time to do any good. I would have sent you an extra one for good measure, and for possible better fit, except that I don't think by now that it would arrive in time.

As I said in my last letter, you are not to worry about the coasters, or the moonstones, or anything else I may have asked you to bring. Nice if poss, but not to worry about. You've no idea of the number of things I could ask you to get if I tried! but I won't. More to the point, I am a little worried about the things that Gusain probably didn't put out for the packers - I had great trouble when we packed for leave to get him to release anything at all from the kitchen, and I suspect that now he has probably held back all the things that are used in the kitchen, and I doubt if you had strength or energy to check. Do just remember that everything in the kitchen in theory belongs to us (anything that wasn't ours we paid Williams for) - you might look sometime and see what's there. If there's anything left behind, you probably won't have room for it, but you might charge Hennings or sell things. I thought of lots of kitchen things while I was at Mary's but now can't remember what they all were. We did however have a good bread knife there, which you could bring, as well as small saw-toothed knife. Prestige egg-beater- was that packed? And my kitchen scissors, which I miss very much - I can't think why I took them to Delhi anyway, and I'm too economical[54] to buy more. If there looks to be a lot of ours still there, you might consider getting someone who is coming by sea to bring them gradually. We are very short of kitchen things here, because of so many being in Delhi.

[54] orig "economcial"

You ask again about car - it goes o.k. unless I write otherwise! I do wonder still if we ought to cut all overheads and sell car and hire when we want - the garaging and insurance costs would just about pay for hiring; and I feel that London is very much becoming as N.Y. was - i.e. we will only use car weekends, as parking is so hard midweek, and even for going out in the evenings I'm told it is now very hard to park one's car unless one happens to be a resident of the same area and have a permit. Equally I'm told it is increasingly difficult to find a taxi at night in London, and their fares have gone up, so I just don't know. I'm used to footslogging or busing, which I think is the answer when one is right in London, but you may feel you want car to take to the office. I think anyway that this is something we must wait and see about. Is Mr. Barnes I wonder still expecting us to sell the car back to him, or did you tell him not before you left? I've had no word yet about any lock-up garage being available. I think car is a liability in London, but for the moment anyway we can base it here, and see.

I'm sorry about Xmas decs in your air freight trunk! It can't be full of them, or a lot aren't necessary. Have you checked?

The time gap is too long for letters, which makes me increasingly depressed - and I can't go~~n~~ on answering questions that seem very old now, or overtaken by later letters. Thank goodness it is not much longer till you get back! I like writing to you because it cheers me up, but then I read something out of date and think we are too far apart to communicate properly. You haven't answered, except in a p.s., that you'd had J.W.'s encouraging letter; and I haven't seen him since, and hope that you have by now answered[55] it, and have told me what you said, because I'll be up to him again this weekend at half term. And I may not know what to say to him! You say I must sort out children's affairs, but they rely on your wisdom too, so you are pretty cool to leave it all up to me! But I am sorry to have worried you about my thoughts on Poll - I bet just when you thought she was the only one that didn't need thinking about - and Bun is I think o.k., and I hope J.W. is, but if we don't get him thrashed out by letter it will be a great bore to have to consider his problems on your arrival back, because I can think of other things to think about, incl. sex?

[55] orig "ansered"

Have just had a letter from Aunt Louise, who reports well and likes the moonstone joolry I gave her. She says my uncle William Thomas, whom I never knew but talked to on the phone in Texas last year, has just died. She also says in re children, first Perrine (as Anne has been professionally on a conference in Texas and stayed with Kitty):

"The news Anne got in Dallas is that David Perrine is not in school - because he won't cut his shoulder-length hair. He had a job as a dish-washer but gave that up and was looking for another job. I guess the parents agree that the schools have not the right to say - and maybe they are correct. I'd hate to decide."

And re Lulu - Louise told me when they were here that L. Cleaves had thrown up her college education (at Annapolis) in favour of going with a friend to Boston to live independently and look for jobs -

"Louise Cleaves had a job in Boston but after a week she got sick and came home. Mildred thought it was mononucleosis, but it turned out not to be. Believe it or not Mildred says Louise does all the cooking and marketing. She expects to go back to college the second semester[56]."

Which just shows you that other parents of teenagers have problems! It sounds to me (totally unjustified assumption) that Lulu Cleaves may have had a psychological-sexual-setback of some sort, as I can'tthink why else she would come home docile after years of rebellion. I would hate to be David P.'s parents - they have got a real problem!

I am v. interested in Am. presidential campaign, which is at last going. M.E. says she was in Williamsburg coinciding with a Nixon campaign visit there, which every-one was disgusted by. I wonder if Humphrey could possibly pull it off - Nixon is getting more slippery every day, and that might turn the tide. I see little hope other-wise, except after the next four years. But I think Nixon is too unreliable to be a president - anything could happen. Are you reading B. Kennedy's account of the Cuba confrontation in the Times? - It makes one terrified to

[56] orig "sememster"

think what Nixon might do in similar circumstances - he would be bound to react in all the wrong ways. I was rather frightened swearing my oath of allegiance for my new passport - I almost wanted to say, well if Nixon is elected I'm not sure how I'll feel about this. Aunt Louise says Nixon reacts to everything by saying "Ask Strom Thurmond," which damns him in her eyes.

I am sorry I wrote you a poady letter a few times ago - it still worries me, which shows that I shouldn't have written it! And I knew really that you only wrote a poady letter because you didn't feel good. But I still~~x~~ cannot think how you can have been so stupid as to let your veely place go so badly infected - Poll asked me today how on earth you got a hole in your leg two inches in diameter to begin with, and I was hard put to answer her. In fact I can't understand it myself - it is surely Christian Science run[57] mad~~x~~? and very stupid.

I'm glad you think Xmas card of Kelso looks cute! I have looked again, and it certainly looks better than I thought at first, though not as good as it actually looks. The electrician[58], Mr. Williams, with whom I am now at odds over time, told mex~~xxxxx~~x with great glee that Kelso Place used to be all working class (after telling me how nice the house was),and that he had just been to the funeral of an old lady of 93, mother of a friend of his, who had lived in Kelso Place. The inside looks so horrid now that I didn't dare to take Poll to see it today, but I reckon it'll be cute enough when we've finished, if the money lasts out that is!

Thank you for the Harrods bill, which I have paid, and changed the address. I meant to do it before, but hadn't realized how quickly they would have got out the bill! That is our kitchen sink for Kelso, now all installed, and I hope good, and also Bun's Dragon~~x~~'s trousers and a new dress of mine for the winter, which I am wearing all the time. I think I told you that I am in pursuit of the other kitchen fittings for Kelso, which I think will not come to over £100 - horrid thought, but could be much worse, esp. as I have strong views about kitchens, and would pay nearly anything to get it right, so I'm delighted if I can really find what I want for less than £500! A funny thing, Dick E. was very worried at the weekend about

[57] orig 'ru'
[58] orig 'elctrician'

their kitchen at Maunsel St., which had got woodworm behind the sink, which meant removing sink and replacing, etc,: Dora had approved before she left an estimate of £600 for the job, which Dick thought crazy, and I agreed: Mary just thought it was London prices. It worried Dick terribly what to do about it. That was only sink area - if I can do our kitchen[59] all told for about £150 incl. the sink from Harrods I will be doing very well. But I am not doing anything about mutual wall of kitchen, except having one piece of plaster repaired - there is some damp, but not serious. Mr. Simmonds reports to me that the new owners of No. 31, which we looked at, a Mrs. Rodda whom I've not yet met (name of Poll's teacher at Hurst Lodge in early stages, but it couldn't be the same) came to him for advice on repairs in general[60], esp. damp, as she heard they were doing us, but had already contracted elsewhere; but he advises me that they are concerned over their kitchen damp opposite us, so if we do anything we could concert - the owners other side (Paks) were not concerned about damp on our mutual wall with them (the foreman builder went in to look and ask them) which is partly why I said go ahead and Newtonite our side and protect us. But oh, I wish you were here to help deal with all this- I don't think you would know much more about it than me, but I would like reinforcement in what I am doing! I just hope it will turn out all right, and I mustn't let myself get depressed by all the awful builders' muck about. If those electricians are really going to take a~~n~~ month, which I am fighting against as hard as I can, would you be horrified if I didn't move till after you got back? That is unfair, I guess, and I want to get it done before and think I'll be able to; but as the weeks rush by with more and more delay, I realize that I am getting nearer the point of saying that if it's only going to be a week or so before you arrive, how much easier it wd be to do it while you are on leave, as just the physical business of moving, meaning me rushing from this end to that and supervising both, is a pretty formid~~n~~able task (which I was well prepared to do at end Sept. so that I could get all decorated before you came - now that I obviously can't do much more than barely get in~~n~~ there, I am discouraged!) But this is unfair, and I think I had better try hard to get established before you come, if the building works allow. Yes, I know you will be unused to doing anything for yourself - but once you get used to not shouting for a bearer it is surprising how easy it is, esp. when the children are not here. I was really amazed how

[59] orig 'kitchn'
[60] orig 'genreal'

much Dick and Mary got through without benefit of servants (not even a char) and decided that I must be rather used to bearers too! Polly says they will cook at half term, which cheers me, as I have probably forgotten how,; I don't bother for me.

Now I must to go to bed, even though I don't like to go up alone, because I have so much to get through tomorrow - I haven't even dusted house for about a fortnight, and must get all prepared for half-term before going to Paddock on Thursday[61]. Have had first telephone bill for Kelso and tel. rates have gone up. Nothing to do about it but pay, as it's in advance and we will soon be in. Gas not yet connected there so no bill. Otherwise think I have been economical this month, partly owing to deferred moving, deferred builders' bill, etc.

Weds. morning - no letters today, but an invitation from the Karmels, viz:

Mrs. David Karmel
at Home
at Annabel's, 44, Berkeley Square, W.1
on
Sunday, 8th December 1968

Dinner 9.30 p.m.

Wow, they do themselves in style, don't they? I wonder if it's just general festivity, or if they are going to announce Lavinia's engagement or something? I don't suppose by any chance you will be back in time for it? It wd be fun to go, but I don't want to on my own (I'm sick of going places on my own!) - it wd be interesting to see Annabels, and fun if you were here. Do you think there's any chance?

Now must go off to library and Camberley super-market, and then sweep down some of the cobwebs from the house.

Lots and lots of love

from Pie.

[61] orig 'Thrusday'

St. Albans,
Monday evening, Nov. 4

Dear Pie,

I got back a little while ago from taking Bun and Poll back to school, and sat down by the fire to thaw out and watch Panorama (on U.S. election), and nearly went to sleep. Copying your habits! Will not write much now, as I want to go early to bed, but will report briefly on half term before I clear it all away and get on with all the other things.

J.W. and Poll both wrote to you this morning, I know, and no doubt gave you different versions of the weekend. Bun showed me with pride his latest letter from you, received Friday just before I fetched him: but he is a hopeless non-writer except when compelled to write at school, so I'm afraid you'll get no letter from him this week. J.W. enclosed Bun's half term report, I trust; it sounds pretty solid to me, even if not outstanding. Bun is in pretty solid form, and didn't really mind much going back this afternoon, though he made some half-hearted protests.

I spent Thursday night at Paddock, and to my surprise~~s~~ Mummy decided she wd come for the weekend. So she went with me to fetch Bun and then Poll on Friday morning, and we got back here all in good order just before 12, to find J.W. already here (he had cleverly arranged his driving

instructor to pick him up at Eton for a lesson and leave him here - and again the same to get back this afternoon.)

The weekend seemed to fly very fast, esp. with Mummy here until Sunday p.m., when she went back by train, and with the children's non-stop music, and Bun wanting to play one thing or another (mostly marbles). Half terms are either too short or too long! There's no time to settle properly before unsettling again. No sooner had Granny left yesterday than Polly and Bun were both starting to poad about having to go back to school. We had some minor fireworks for Guy Fawlkes last night - lucky it wasn't tonight, when the temperature by 7 oclock when I got back was already down to freezing. Mummy helped me to do some tidying in the garden at the weekend, cutting down dead herbaceious and raking up some leaves, so it looks rather tidier now than before.

It was crisp sunny day today, even though cold, and bright moonlight tonight on my way back from Downe. We nearly had to toss a coin to decide which was going back to school first: Poll had to be back by 6, and Bun anytime between 5 and 7, neither of which would be precisely poss, as it takes over an hour between Oxford and Cold Ash. I finally decided to taken Bun first, as Mr. Hosken had said it didn't matter if he was a little earlier, and I thought to go straight to Dragons wouldn't prolong the agony, if any, for him, and he'd also have Poll's company in the car; and then by my

leaving Poll last I would have only the familiar country lanes between Downe and here to do after dark. It all worked out like clockwork, we left here shortly after 3, deposited Bun at 4.40, arrived at Downe at 5.45 to unload Poll, and I got back soon after 7. Bun doesn't appear to mind being left, and in fact I think he likes Dragons, which is very good, although of course he poaded,before going,about the end of the half term. And he wanted desperately to be assured that he would be taken out once more this term, so I said I'd take him out on Nov. 24, half-way through the second half of term, which is the same day that the Ellingworths take out Henry; so we'll foregather at Paddock, which the boys will enjoy.

Mummy is not very well, and is going into the Radcliffe tomorrow for a small operation. She wouldn't talk about it at all (just about as bad as you, who can get a hole in the leg before getting medical attention), so I rang up Mary tonight to reassure myself about it: Mummy seemed very well at the weekend, and was a very easy guest, but she has lost a lot of weight, and I began to wonder if she was really ill and just not saying. But Mary says it is a small operation, to do with her tinkle place and relieve discomfort; and she agreed that Mummy is difficult to deal with, as she wishes to keep her health secretive and not tell anyone anything.

4

With the weather turned cold this weekend and most of the beds filled, I suddenly remembered that, although you enumerated the sheets and pillowcases packed from Delhi, you didn't mention the blankets. I trust you packed all blankets and rugs? We are desperate for them, as we are short here for everyone. And did you rememberx our secateurs (minor point, but I thought of them when gardening). Re the garden, I've had a notice from the Atco people offering to do the mower - I remember we used them once. Do you think they are better than Andrews, and do you think I should send the mower now, to be done before the winter, or shall we wait till later?

I see the announcement of Sir M.J.'s marriage, and I expect that you are very busy now that they have arrived But not for much longer, thank goodness! I feel rather out of touch with you - your last letter was of Sun. 27 Oct and arrived last Friday, just at beginning of half term: but it really didn't say much. And I am begin-ing to feel it's not much use making points now as the time is getting so short until you come. Good! I really feel like sitting by the fire and going to sleep, but I will soon go up to bed instead. J.W. has pressed upon me a paperback philosophical book, "The Concept of Mind," by one Gilbert Ryle (formerly of Christ Church, now of Magdalen - do you know him?) - it looks a

fairly heavyweight if interesting book - I will try it. J.W. seems now so convinced of the values of a university education that he thinks Polly should be persuaded to go to university, to"wake up her mind!" I said there was plenty of time for Polly to decide about university, as she is still very young.

I see nothing in the Sunday papers but reviews of Updike's Couples! I also see (and you will) a big splurge in Sunday Times about Marya Mannes, with glamour photos and a silly woman's-feature article by Ernestine Carter - but it appears that Marya has written a book, which sounds quite interesting (insofar as one can tell filtered though E. Carter) and which I wouldn't mind having for Christmas.

I am fascinated by U.S. election and will stay up tomorrow night to see first results on TV. I fear it's Nixon. Wednesday night I've got to go to Carol Herschel's for supper and bridge - egad, you'll say. She asked me weeks ago and gave me open choice of days, so I couldn't get out of it. But the bridge will be good anyway. I may go on Friday to Eton to see college production of Antony and Cleopatra, which J.W. asked me if I'd like to see, and then he decided he wasn't sure if he wanted to see it - so we've agreed to wait until he hears reports on it as to whether it's worth going to. I'm not specially fond of school-production Shakespeare.

6

Tomorrow I must start thinking of houses again, which I've let slip over weekend of half term. (Your sister Mary actually forgot her girls' half term - would you believe it, she thought it was next weekend, and didn't realize until they rang her from Charing Cross station, where they were stranded with no one to meet them and no money! Poor dears - but you'd better not refer to it to her unless she tells you, as she was absolutely mortified about it. But I can well imagine how easy it would be to forget something vital when one is busy with house repairs etc. as well as every day living. Hope I haven't forgotten anything vital about Kelso! - at least I remembered the children.)

I'm sure there was lots else I was going to say, but I am too tired now. The car goes well, and has now done over 27,000 miles! I miss you and wish you were here, and am so glad it isn't much longer now. It must be horrid for you to be in the empty house alone, but at least it's good that the packing is done. The Clarks write that there is still no sign of their heavy luggage - gracious!

Lots of love from
Pie.

Cont .. Tuesday morning,
Nov 5

Now here is your letter of Weds. last, just come. The mails are slow now. I'm glad if you weren't too poaded by my poady letter - you have written a much nicer one this time, which I am very glad to get. But there are not many points to comment on, and I must now get on with things.

It is very cold this morning, and white frost everywhere, and I must do something about adjusting the heating timings, because the house is still v. cold now at 9.30, and my hands are so stiff from the cold that I am finding it hard to type! So winter is upon us.

I agree about the break in Paris, but don't think you realize the season of the year. Anyway I still think we could make a break here, that is if you can get here in time before J.W. breaks up. I do hope Sir M.J. isn't going to put difficulties in the way of your leaving.

Am not sure I want "Couples" for Christmas. The reviews aren't all that good, except about sexual novelty. Why can't I read it out of the library.

I must now get on. Wish you were here.
Lots of love from Pie.

Have I got the new DSAO
address right? You didn't tell
me it, only the children, who
wouldn't show me your
letter because they said it

had "secrets".

St. Albans,
Friday, Nov. 8

Dear Pie,

Thank you so much for your letter of Sunday last arrived today, and also two letters, of Friday 25 Oct. and Friday 1 Nov., which both came two days ago. And that's afunny thing to note, because your letter of Oct. 25 was nearly two weeks in coming (it answerec~~x~~ my question belatedly about FCC address), and so I have to point out to you again that you are posting with 4d. stamps, which you must not do please, at least when you address me, because 4d. letters are subject to all kinds of peculiar delays - so please put 5d. on.

In spite of that, I agree with you that I am bored with writing letters (but do put 5d. on when I do!) and to tell the truth, even though I think you have now answered all my points, the answers come~~x~~ so late that if I were impat~~xx~~ient I would snap back at you for answering old points, and as it is I just get bored because your answers don't apply any more!

In re the most important subject, I'm afraid that I do very well take your point about your date of return. Mostly because I think you are fairly well indispensable there, and I cannot think how, with a new master, any new h.of c. (esp. a CRO one) cd take over without a handover - in spite of which I do urge you to press to come as soon as poss, because no one is really indispensible in the~~x~~ end - surely 2 days are nearly as good as two weeks? - and if you~~x~~ are really expected to go to work in the FCO by mid-Jan, and besides considering that you need sick leave to recover, I think you should get away as soon as you can. I wish we knew what your next job is! As regards your arriving - it would obviously be so much better if you could come well before the Xmas hols, to have as you say at least three days of peace, but if you can't, these are the dates to note (to repeat) : J.W. 11th Dec., and Bun 13th Dec. (I have not yet ascertained the time of day, but suppose that it is morning - so bear in mind that that day will be largely occupied in fetching Bun). Poll not till Dec. 18, of which she moans - but she like J.W. has too much gear at school to be done other than by car - and Bun I think deserves to be fetched by car in his first term.

I am not sure how best to give you a few days' peace on arrival, which you will need (and Lois and Alan also said it took about three days to readjust) - your idea of Paris was perhaps a good one, but if you don't get away till holidays are upon us it won't work anyhow. And the real nuisance is that I had hoped to have Kelso in such good order that we could relax there - now it will be an effort, as there will be things crying to be done. Can you face up to ignoring the squalor around you for a bit (the bedroom will be all right anyway) - I think we will have to face disorder till after the Xmas Hols, partly because it will be impossible, owing to drying time of plaster, to get corridor and drawing rooms painted before hols start - and I think in that case we may as well wait till lift van comes from Delhi, because I'm not at all sure of look of furniture you bought, and it would be better to get walls right. But corridor I will try to paint as soon as dry (white walls), but am not sure about the carpeting, because all paint and woodwork all up the stairs ought to be done before it is all carpeted - I put a high priority on this, as it is entrance to the house and makes a lot of difference. but I have also got to put a high priority on kitchen and bathroom as well: kitchen because I conclude that I must do something about walls before our gear is moved in (and have spent a lot of time yesterday and today looking at wallpapers and vinyl wallcoverings - my inclination now is to get in and paint it light yellow or some neutral colour and then decide later if we want to do anything else). The point really is that once cooker and fridge are in place it will be difficult to do anything sensational about the wall coverings.) Bathroom too must be high on priority because of mortgage requirements - I agree that I will speak to Onyx as soon as I can validly say that the repairs are done, and ask them if they will release the £500 before the final bathroom decorations are done (specified), but so far we are not at that point, as the bathroom cupboards are still not built in!

But back to the point, can you relax, do you think, in fair squalor? Mummy says to me why don't we stay here where it is[62] all organized, and there is something to be said for that: but I think that you (as well as the rest of us, except possibly Bun) would rather be settled in London? Anyway if I make it over the hump of the moving it will mean that much less of immediate problems to face, even if we have to face things undone at Kelso.

[62] orig "as", overtyped "os"



At least we would be there to deal with them, and you would be there to go in and consult with the office if need be, and no more commute, except possibly for weekends. But Poll anyway keeps saying don't move in squalor, J.W. says move to London in any state, and Bun doesn't want to move to London at all! And I keep half thinking the office may do the dirty on us and send us abroad again, so that we had better get organized at Kelso while we may.

The more I think about it, the more I think that there is something to be said for your idea of a stop-over in Paris, to get us out of all our problems for a few days! But it doesn't look as if it will work out. Anyway, I have told Mr. Simmonds the builder that I mean to move shortly after mid-November - actually I am thinking of about Nov. 25, but it may in the end be better to wait until after St. Andrews day weekend (nov. 30) as it will be difficult for blankets here if I have to take them back and forth, but if builders get out I would like to use intervening time for painting kitchen and corridors.)

I am so glad that you agree about what I say about Poll - I will as you suggest try to talk to her about it, but with some hesitation on my part, as I was terribly put off by a lecture that Mooie gave me, when I was about 16 and before she let me go off to Chicago on my own, about "white slavers" and how I should beware of any man that was nice to me! I thought it very old-fashioned, but at the same time was terrified nearly out of my wits; and I wouldn't like to frighten Poll - I think what I say may now seem old-fashioned to her, but I think I've still got to say it, as you say. I've written to ask her if she'd like to come out next weekend (when owing to Michaelmas market at Downe they are entitled to a night out), as I really can never talk to her when all the family is about, and she is the one who is really sweet-pea and doesn't bother me with her problems - I think she is the only one who has listened to you and has really tried to be helpful to me, which she is, and I may be neglecting her therefore.

It is funny that you are worrying about Bun - I think this is irrational, although perhaps you have some grounds if there has been fighting amongst the

masters at Dragons; but I think that Bun is so far all right - he is a real conformer, and seems happy at school. (unlike the other two). There is only one point as regards Bun - Granny said to him last weekend that she thought him a very big boy now and very grown-up, to which he shrewdly replied, "Then why does Daddy address me as "small Bun"? I think you should amend this, he is not small Bun any longer, although he still prefers "Bun" to "James", but I think you shouldn't perpetuate his baby-ness any longer. Likewise your addressing J.W. as "dear old J.W." which I think he doesn't like, and also "sweet-pea" Polly - You should be addressing them all as individuals, but without these strange descriptive adjectives which, fond though you mean them to be, they do not like. You needn't consider Bun really grown-up just yet, but the other two like to be thought grown-up, and don't like parental diminuatives applied to them.

Now, re your letters: first the two cheques you queried: the first to A. Gifford was in respect to the master bedroom curtains, which in fact I queried and reduced - half price to what they paid (incl. brass curtain rods) was £40, and I said I wouldn't pay more than £35 at most. Petty reduction perhaps, as it's still a lot of money - it shows you what curtains cost if one has them made up properly, and I wouldn't I think have paid it if it hadn't happened before I heard anything about curtains from Delhi - anyway those bedroom curtains at Kelso match the wallpaper, and are now the only curtains we have got installed there. (I had a letter from Marion B. to whom I'd written about the Delhi drawing room curtains - she wrote a long gossipy and I thought rather lonely letter, but the essence was that she had had to send her excess baggage unaccompanied[63] across Europe, and would let me know when the trunk arrived. As you said you sent it unlocked I pessimistically wonder if it will arrive with anything in it!)

The other cheque to Mr. Ingleson is J.W.'s driving instructor, for lessons - I bet you thought it was a boy friend! J.W. is coming up soon for his next test - I think instructors put young people up for tests far too soon. J.W. is longing to pass, but it wd be even worse if[64] he did, because he wd then think he could drive, which I don't think he can! The only advantage to his passing is that we then wouldn't have to pay £25 extra to the

[63] orig "unaccomapnied"
[64] orig "is"

insurance if he washes up the car. But I wish you were here to help teach him drive - I get too nervous and so go too quiet, and I suspect you get too nervous and so shout too much. The instructor is no doubt better, but what any young driver needs is a lot of practice under guidance, and I am too nervous to do it.

Re cheques again - I was astounded that they were the Sept.cheques, well behind-hand of you - I think Oct. has not been too bad on the whole, though I am terrified of mounting expenses. On the Sept. cheques, I thought you would have queried the Tyler bill - it was beer and cider in the summer hols, and a bottle of whiskey that I took to Montacute, as present, but Lois and I in fact drank it all. I don't in fact like whisky any more, and am out of practice: I drink a lot of brews which alas make me fat!

Which reminds me that I drank three large brews at hourly intervals while watching the U.S. election returns the other night - unless you were following it hour by hour, you probably don't realize how exciting it was. There was a period (middle of the night here) when Humphrey was actually ahead for a few hours, and I simply couldn't stop watching (by satellite it was - Huntley-Brinkley and all their team). When I finally gave it up, at after 4 in the morning, Humphrey was still ahead, and if Illinois had fallen right he might have won. But I think there is a lot in what you say about Nixon being more responsible (I hope) and about the need for a change in regime, though I was very disappointed that after such a very close fight H.H.H. couldn't pull it off. You may be amusedby enclosed cutting from the Londoner's Diary interviewing J.F.. I kept thinking of Clair George during election, as he was such an admirer of Humphrey, which I'm not myself, though I would have voted for him.

I wonder in fact if it is worth answering your points - the thing is that your answers to my points come so late (though you have answered them v. assiduously) that I have to think very hard to realize what you are answering. Nevertheless I'll go through and answer briefly what you've said.

First, your letter 25 Oct: I note your answers on Xmas cards U.S., and will deal. We can do U.K. ones after your return, but can you possibly do other abroad

ones? I could do them, but haven't got the cards here. I could start U.K. envelopes if it looks as if you'll be late back? Though there are a lot of U.K. addresses that are in your mind rather than in the address book.

I'm glad the autumn fair went well (that shows you what out-of-date letters I'm answering!). And I hope that the R. Bobb scandal is sorting out - is that why you said Collett is a fool, or was that just general? How funny that Bianco and co. nearly cut up 2 K.G. bed! M.James' wife sounds as if she may be nice?

I do hope your leg~~s~~ continues to improve - of course I wasn't belittling it, but only wondered how you cd let it go so bad! Bu Valentine is an exaggerater - all the same, please to take care that you don't overwork it. I daresay you will come back very tired and irritable - and so *y*ou should if the nerves hurt, because that is very irritable-making - and I can't think how to provide an established easy-running house except at St. A., which I think wd annoy you because we wouldn't be on the spot at Kelso. Do tell me if you have any strong views on this.

How funny that Pickering is going to Delhi - how they do go round and round. I think you were noble if you saved Sartain from the sack - I'm not sure he's worth it. Pickering much nicer.

I wish J.W. weren't quite so pie in the sky - but at least it's better that he is generally idealistic rather than only on music? I have a feeling that adolescents go through a growing-up stage that is very selfish - almost perhaps as selfish as young engaged couples - when they think only of themselves - and I think J.W. is going through this now. At least, as Mummy says, it is indeed something that he is still asking our advice, and so perhaps we should be glad in a way that he hasn't yet cast off home ties altogether. I must say I would be terrified if he were anything like David Perrine!

Interval - phone has just rung, and it was Mr. Simmonds the builder - I had written him a semi-ultimatum about moving, but alas he reports that the plasterer has gone off sick again today and he' s not sure if he will be back to work by Monday and so can't be sure till then

when they'll be able to finish the job. Indeed the plasterer told me yesterday that he was not well - did I tell you that he is a splendid old Cockney type, who does a beautiful~~x~~ job of plastering (as smooth as a pane of glass), and I told Mr. Simmonds before that I hoped he'd keep him on the job for us, as he is very sympat~~x~~ico besides; but I knew, because he told me, that he'd been off sick a lot last winter (he says it's his chest, and that it's the plaster dust that he can't take). Anyway, Mr. Simmonds says he can't replace him for a week anyway, so I must just hope that he gets back to work. I expect you have forgotten how much everyone battens down in England in the cold (which it now is) and just tries to endure through the winter, and things get done slower and slower. I can well see it, because all I want to do is curl up in front of the fire. But this may put off my move to Kelso - I don't think it's going to matter much really, because it is now anyway going to be disorganized by the time you get back, and until after the hols, and we will just have to try to get in and endure unfinished walls until we have time to deal with them.

I'm sorry it doesn't look likely that you will be back for the Karmels' party at Annabel's - I will not go on my own, because it will be an enormous swarm no doubt, unless I hear of some friends who are going with whom I could go. You ask where I have been going out to complain of going alone - well, I haven't, but I think often of going to a movie or a play, and then I don't want to go on my own and think it's too complicated to organize someone to go with and that it will be better to wait until you are back. I just get tired of having no one to share views with - though I am conscious that you complain of too long letters, so I had better not write much more.

Which reminds me that Alec Adams rang up yesterday - and I was very cross, because although I made it as plain as poss that I was free to be invited to anything anytime, the best he could do was ask me to come sometime and look at his flat and see how nicely he had fixed it up - teatime would be best, he said! I guess he is lonely, but he might at least have asked me out to a meal or to a movie! He asked me to send you his regards, and looks forward to seeing you. I will try to go and see him sometime and cheer him up - but he might have realized that I need

cheering up. I guess he is so used to being a bachelor that his imagination doesn't stretch to people being lonely on their own. Speaking of which, did I tell you that Dick E. says that Sir E. Dening has become the club bore at Boodles?[65]

I finally got Joan on the phone yesterday, she was only just back from hospital, as it turns out that she had to have a Caesarian after being two days in labour. But she says the baby is sweet, and she sounds cheerful, and I said I'd go and see her after she has had proper time to recover. She said she had had your letter asking when she was going to have the baby.

Very funny that Milo Talbot thought you had poisoned him! It's too bad that James Lunt has left already - you will miss him, though I hope you won't be far behind.

Thank you for sending the packers' list, and the list of things left. I don't see blankets mentioned, but assume they were packed!

Funny to think of your going to the softball - I suppose Amb. Bowles will be retiring now?

I shall not as I said before ask you to bring anything else from Delhi! But I asked Poll to write to you about a Kashmiri rug (small size) which she seems very keen on, and I told her ~~xxxx~~x you might be able to bring one little one, if you cd find it, in air freight. She swears she wrote and asked you in the summer.

I'm not sure myself about selling the car, and propose to wait and see. I must chase up that garage man to see if there is any hope of a lock-up garage. I've just had the parking scheme application for Kensington - it does not appear too bad. We must apply for a residents' parking sticker (free), and then can either have a residents' season parking ticket (£7-10-0 a quarter, or £26 a year) whichentitles the car to be parked anywhere in Kensington from 8.30 a.m. to 6.30 pm (night is either free or metered); or if one is not there all the time, one can pay by the day - 2/6 a day from ticket machines of which there is one just across the road from us, Sundays and nights free. This works out at rather more than a season ticket if one is there all the time. It doesn't start anyway till Dec. 2, and as I probably won't keep

[65] orig "Boddles"

the car there all the time until you come, or until St. A. is sold, I will start off with 2/6 tickets and see how it works out.

I'm sorry I've gone on too long, and you needn't bother to answer precise points, because you won't have time. But I wish you wouldn't make stupid remarks!, like about Kelso tel bill -"but I can't think you need to telephone too much." Surely you know that the tel bill is for rental in advance, whether one makes any phone calls or not? I won't go on rebutting silly points like that. I wonder if I will like your side-whiskers?

To report on great social on my part! I went to Carol Herschels to play bridge the other night - it turned out only to be her and Mrs. Toogood and Eileen Shorland, and I was rather cross because I had wanted to hear Nixon's speech on election on the TV. I was even more cross when it turned out to be rabbit casserole for dinner, esp. as Carol would keep calling it "bun" or "bunny", which made me feel quite ill; but I pretended to myself that it was only meat and so got through it all right. The bridge was good (Miz Toogood and I won 4 bob), but the conversation was generally deadly. The only item of interest that emerged was that Eileen Shorland has a Shelton clock (of which there were apparently only six made) which now appears, from obscure evidence, to be the clock that Captain Cook took on his voyage to Australia, which afterwards came into Herschel hands. The expert on this is shortly coming to see the clock and verify from screw-holes whether it is the one that Captain Cook had. She does have a lot of interesting things, Eileen Shorland - I must get her to show Polly the clock. Alas, she has asked me to bridge in a fortnight's time (so that she and Carol can regain the 4 bob they lost) - v. boring, but at least I'll be able to inspect that clock.

So much for my social, and so much for this letter - I'll go now and watch the news on the TV.

Lots of love from
Pie.

P.S. - Just rang Paddock, as indeed I did yesterday, when Mummy came home from hospital. Mary has gone down today, and she says that mummy seems to be all right (she complained to me yesterday of feeling rather cut about, but said the surgeon didn't do much). Anyway she is pleased to be home, and though she fusses about the cold winter, she is cosy in her little house. Mary must go back tomorrow, and I'll try to go over to see Mummy early in the week - though I'm never sure whether it's more trouble for her to have visitors than to be on her own - but Mary says she thinks it wd be a good idea for me to go see her.

Contd. Sat. morning - No mail of interest today, only some King Wood house ads for London, which I am cheered to see all look much more expensive than Kelso.

But M. Roberts just rang - I rang him last week, and at intervals since, and have been waiting for him to return the call. Which he now has, and has spoken to v.d. Eyken, who is he says still very keen, and has now (as of Nov. 1) been approved for a mortgage here so the mortgage surveyor should be coming to look at St.A. very soon now. <u>That</u> is progress, I think - I don't think you realize how tight mortgages still are (and money in general), though mortgage money as I read in the paper has just gotten easier in the last week. So if v.d.E. has already got approval for a mortgage, that's good, and we must just assume that the surveyor won't find anything dreadful and offputting here - and that's further on than any other prospective purchaser would be for some time. On the other hand, v.d.E. has had a setback on sale of his house, as his purchaser has backed out! but his broker has now got a mortgage approved for his house so that it is now offered for a purchaser with mortgage already approved, and it ought to sell if anything does. I think we must be a little patient until the surveyor has done St.A. - I agree with your impatience but think we mustn't press so hard and rudely that v.d.E. withdraws and gives up. He does seem to be getting on, though everything goes slow - but after all we don't <u>want</u> completion till late Jan. do we? I'm sorry if all this seems inconclusive, but I think it's coming on all right. I don't see why you assume that a professorial type like v.d.E. should have enough "substance" (i.e. capital!) to embark on a new house without selling his old one - after all, we would <u>never</u> have dared do it with Kelso if it hadn't

been for my money behind. Nor do I think it at all likely that we wd find a purchaser with enough capital to go right ahead with buying St.Albans, because it's not the sort of house that people with ready money would go for. But I see no reason to despair over v.d.E., unless you want to present him with such an ultimatum that he gives up and withdraws? I can't think there is any wisdom in that.

Lots of love again

from Pie.

St. Albans,
Monday, Nov. 11[66]

Dear Pie,

Herewith a letter from Poll, which she forgot to sign! She does sound cold and remote - I will go and take her out this weekend, and have sent her a h.w.b. and some gloves. I see by the notice that the beastly Downe michaelmas market is being opened by "Mrs. Chevivix-Tranch" - is she I wonder the biggest celebrity they could find!

A lot of nonsensical press comment on J.F.'s appointment to Washington, which you'll no doubt have been reading. But see my query on enclosed cutting[67].

I went over to Paddock yesterday to see Mummy, going after early lunch and coming back before dark, so as to avoid mist and fog. I don't really think she is very well, but don't know how serious it is. She said the Radcliffe was so awful that she'll never go back there again, and indeed I think she came out too soon. It's hard to make out how she is, but she says they haven't got to the root of the infection yet and don't know what it is - she is to go on with drugs for the next month, and see. Dickson tells her she may have to go back to hospital if the drugs don't work, but she says she won't. She is difficult to deal with, and she exaggerates so much

[66] on file, this followed the letter of Nov. 27
[67] 'enclosed cutting' - not preserved

that it's hard to know what's what - esp. as she seems to take a low line with me and cheerful line with Mary. I think it's a pity she is on her own at Paddock, but she wouldn't go to Mary for recuperation, on excuse of needing to be near her doctor, but also largely because she finds Mary's house cold. But she had decided, I hope, to stay in bed~~s~~ mornings and generally get a good rest to make the drugs work. What I don't like is that she has lost a lot of weight recently, so that her clothes hang loose on her, and this must be a sign that something is wrong. But no doubt Dickson is giving the right drugs, if only she can be persuaded to take them. She asked me to take her out for a drive, to get out of the house, and we drove all over the place, almost to Brill, looking for likely parts for country cottage, which she is very keen we should get. Wallingford paper has many interesting ads, all the way from Faringdon to nearly Brill - but we much clinch St. Albans sale first.

Elizabeth Rose rang up yesterday, and has asked me to dinner on 26th (also to stay night if I like, which may help). Did you know that Clive has been posted to Washington, "right after Christmas", says Elizabeth, who is full of moans because they had been promised to be here. She says he is going to do "internal," which I suppose means no promotion? I asked if Clive had heard any gossip about you, but she said not at all. I wonder if they will shunt us off somewhere? I'm feeling rather sad, because I'd rather Washington than most places I can think of,

and as everyone we know seems to be going there, it seems likely they may send us to some stinking place!

Also Jill Lloyd rang up, they had had your letter and she rang to ask progress. So I'm going to spend tomorrow night with them, and I'm busy today organizing all the things I must do in London the next two days. So no time for more now.

Lots of love from Pie

St. Albans,
Wednesday afternoon,
Nov. 13

Dear Pie,

Hurrah for your tel which I found waiting here when I got back after lunch today - what very good news, I wonder how you have managed to extricate yourself by Dec. 10, but I am very glad you have. Splendid. J.W. coincidentally has rung up just shortly after, so I passed him your message to give to Pilk.

How super to know definitely when you will be back - I had felt that it might be receding further and further into the distance, like the builders' finishing date! I also got your short letter of last Friday, Nov. 8 - I bet you're busy, and will be till you come - but you put a 4d. stamp on again - otherwise I wd have had[68] it yesterday before going up to London and to stay with the Lloyds, which I did last night. It was v. good to see them, and they were in good form, with lots of good views and gossip, but no time to tell you all now. Dick says he is going to write to you.

Less than four weeks now till you are back! I have already fixed, definitely,as of yesterday, with Sirl's to move to Kelso on Dec. 3 (packing up here) and 4 (moving things into Kelso), so that will give me about a week to get a little in order before you come. I'm not certain if builders and electricians will be finished, though I am pressing them hard: the Lloyds say that builders never do finish until one actually moves in on top of them, and it's more or less in that spirit that I went ahead and fixed the date. Though in theory they are supposed to be finished at least a week before then, so I reckon to have a week clear to paint over the kitchen at least before the things are moved.

But I am worried lest you expect things more in order than they can possibly be: I do hope that you realize that it will still be pretty good chaos as far as walls and painting are concerned - and most of that will probably have to wait until after Xmas hols. I keep telling you this, but you don't ack if you have hoisted it in! But I guess the main thing is to get installed on the spot,

[68] orig 'hzd'

and then I can go at things gradually. As Gill Lloyd says, when you move about a lot like all of us, you can never expect things all in order at once, and one's friends must just expect to see an unfinished house. She says it will be a nice walk across the park for them to come see us on a Sunday morning, and so it will be.

I won't take time to tell you all the ins and outs of repairs etc., but would like your view on whether you want to go straight to Kelso or to St.A. on arrival from airport. I think Kelso, because it will be such fun to be there even if untidy; but on the other hand, with J.W. to be fetched early on the 11th, and with St.A. handier both for airport and for Eton, perhaps you think we should come here for that first night? Let me know if you have strong views. If you have air freight to be fetched at separate time from airport, it also might be handier from here; but can we maybe do that on your arrival? It's a bore, whenever one does it. Speaking of arrival, don't forget to bring your quota of whisky and tobacco - duty-free makes a big difference.

J.W. was ringing about weekend plans, having heard from Poll that she is coming out - he wants to come for Sat. supper. I'm complicated for weekend, because Mummy says she wants to go to Gerald Moore lecture at Downe (to which Poll asked us) on Friday night, and will I spend night with her and take her - except that she may not feel well enough to go. Undecided yet. And I've just had a letter from Mrs. Hosken saying that Bun has a slight temp and is in sick bay, and the doctor has seen him; she doesn't say what, but I suppose his usual sort of cold-throat infection, unless he's got the flu bug which is sweeping about. (Here incidentally is his letter, also arrived today and v. cheerful if illiterate, but obviously written before he got at temp.) So if I'm going over to Paddock, and Bun is still in bed, I may try to get on over to Dragons to see him, and take a book or something to cheer him up. But he may be o.k. by then. Mrs. Hosken says "he has a companion in the next bed so he won't be lonely" - I expect in fact that is better for him than when he is ill at home, and has no neighbour in bed.

I also received copy of your letter to Hibbs - you are cuckoo though, as you said our phone number was "Ascott 3225" - that is Paddock's number, ours is 20510! But I expect the Kelso number will do for Hibbs, as I shall be moved before the stuff arrives. If it really

does arrive early Dec. I am not sure if we will be ready for it at Kelso - that will be remarkably quick, but perhaps better to get it and see the worst! The Clarks' gear, they say, has just come now, and ruined by damp, from Alltransport. I do not think however that I can face having Delhi gear unpacked at Kelso before you come, even if it should prove possible to get it by then - it wd be much easier if we did that tog ether. I am longing to see the furniture - Alan says their Ahuja stuff looks fine.

No more for now, as I've got a lot to get on with. Am so glad to know definitely that you'll be back in less than four weeks; that makes it begin to seem not so long, when one can count the time off definitely.

Lots and lots of love
from Pie.

St. Albans,
Friday, November 15

Dear Pie,

Thank you v. much for your letter of Monday, which has just come. I suppose you must be out of 5d. stamps, as you keep putting 4d. ones on! I thought it was a lovely fat letter, but it was mostly the returned cheques! Never mind, I know how busy you are, and I'm so glad to have had your tel before about your coming on Dec. 10.

But it isn't clear to me if you still want me to talk to Pilk, even though you sent tel message that you will be back to fetch J.W. I have got a lot to do, and do not want to start worrying about J.W. again! - and agree with you that he seems much better to me, and that it sounds as if Pilk is exaggerating. But no doubt I could see Pilk either on St.A.'s day, or the Sunday after when we are all going over for the Eton carol service. I will talk to J.W. tomorrow when he comes over for supper - I have already urged him to participate in college and take his duties seriously, but he is sublimely unaware of things that don't interest him; and I am sure that he will be able to argue me to a standstill on the principle of general participation! But he must certainly attend to his duties as captain of the school.

Mummy says she is better, and she wants to go to this Gerald Moore lecture at Downe tonight - so I will go over to Paddock this afternoon, and we will go to the lecture. (G. Moore, in case you don't know, is the famous pianist-accompanist, author of "Am I Too Loud," which I haven't read.) I will stay the night at Pad, and tomorrow morning go to Poll's beastly Michaelmas market at Downe (There's participation for you; as Poll shrewdly says, it's the only way they can get parents to come, because they won't allow the children out for the weekend unless their parent comes to the market!) But first I will go over to Oxford in the morning and see Bun - I have just spoken to Mrs. Hosken, who says he is better (it was a throat and temp), but he still has a slight temp and is being kept in bed. I will take him a book to cheer him up.

I have put the car in to Halfpennys today for putting anti-freeze in - it is lucky I made the appointment, as it is freezing cold today, and I will have to leave the car out at Paddock. Will go to fetch it as soon as I've finished this, and written some cheques for outstanding bills.

Thanks for Army-Navy bill, which I will pay and change address - I keep forgetting which addresses I have changed and which not. You may well wonder at that bill! - it is a new pair of sheets I bought, partly because of replacing gradually those wearing out, partly because I needed sheets to stay night at Mausel St. and as we needed more gradually anyway I thought it a good time to get some, and partly because I wanted to try this new kind (half terylene, half cotton),which I think are probably the sheets of the future - they are fitted, and drip dry, and don't wrinkle, and feel like proper sheets, not like those horrid nylon ones. I think we will probably want to replace all sheets as they wear out with this kind, which is why I didn't ask you to replace any sheets in India - the wash and drip quality should eventually save a lot on laundry bills.

Re Poll's rug: she does mean a tiny one: I am not sure of the measurements - 1ft. by 2ft., or 1ft 6 by 2ft 6 - something like that. Smaller than any that we have, and they did cost something like 15 or 18 rupees, I think (though it might have been 25 or 30 - I get muddled because of the devaluation). If you haven't got time to do anything about it, don't worry.

Must rush now - don't think there are any other important points. Re J.W. I think a sense of "community" develops slowly, and he is deficient in it, but I wd have thought Pilk cd encourage him more than I can.

Lots of love from Pie.

Here is a thing for you from Inland Revenue.

Only just over 3 weeks till you come -
hurrah! I am lusty too, though
you don't believe it!

St. Albans,
Tuesday Nov. 18[69]

Dear Pie,

Thank you so much for your letter of Weds. 13th, arrived yesterday, and of Friday 15th, surprisingly come today (I see you found a 5d. stamp, which accounts for speed). But it's a pity you didn't put 5d. on the Weds. one, as I wd have then got it before the weekend and could have given your messages to the children and Mummy.

Haven't time to write much now, and can't answer all your questions about what I am like! Yesterday went to London, and checked Kelso and chivvied. Did I tell you that I am planning to move definitely on Dec. 3-4? - I think it's important to get in and get the heating going and everything warmed and dr~~e~~y, even if it means a fair amount of chaos. Poll is against moving with any chaos at all! - but I don't see how it can be helped, as one can't really settle down to paint walls and such till we are in. And they've got to dry out first.

I had a very busy weekend, which I must recount before I forget or think I've told you already, though it will have to be brief. First, I went to Paddock for

[69] Tuesday was the 19th. - the overtyped '8' makes it look like '10'.

Friday evening, in freezing weather (literally) and took Mummy to the Gerald Moore lecture at Downe. It was quite amusing, I thought, but Mummy enjoyed it much more than I did. After spending night at Pad, I went on Sat. morning to see Bun in sick bay at Dragons - he was almost well again, and was in altogether excellent form and not poading. It was plain to me that he had his usual feverish cold-throat, which he is pretty slow at getting over. I played a few games of Peggity with him (which I had taken over from Paddock) and gave him a puzzle book to amuse him, and an Enid Blyton thriller to read; and he was generally cheerful and didn't poad when I went. I asked him if he was surprised when I came to see him, and he said,"no, not at all, I knew you would, because the other boy's mummy can to see him ! " So it's just as well I went!

Mummy had by then decided she wanted to go with me to the Downe House Michaelmas market, so I went back to fetch her. And I'd asked her if she'd like to come back with us for the weekend in that event, and to my surprise she said she would. She seems to me to be spending a lot of time here! - I think she is lonely and misses J.W. and Poll, but perhaps she thinks she is cheering up my loneliness! Anyway we went to the market, and saw there all and sundry, incl. Charles Neufeld and his twins, who says he will ring me up to get together for dinner sometime; and Ian Hill and his

old mother, whom he brought up to talk to Mummy. Then Poll collected her things, and we drove back here, where we found the house very cold, I suppose since I had been away for 24 hours. Also the weather was icy, blowing gales and a few snow flurries. J.W. arrived for supper (via a driving lesson). Just as he walked in, John Bushell rang up, very warm, and asked me to come see them sometime. They have rented a house! - It looks pretty inaccessible to me, but I will try to go see them sometime, though I am rather pressed for time. I don't think I poad about no social, but about frustration from not being in[70] London, from which base it would be so much easier to do things and see people. I have anyway got quite enough to do now, and will have until you come.

When I drove J.W. back to school on Sat. night, I was most interested to hear all the things he is on - I am not quite sure, not having seen Pilk's letter which you quoted, what he meant about J.W. not contributing enough: but it may be now out of date, as J.W. changes chameleon-quick now. He was full of his activities: he and his mates are reviving pressure for abolition of compulsory chapel and are writing a petition for signature, and are considering agitating for abolition of compulsory team games, and one or two other agitations as well - none of which Pilk may approve of, as it all sounds pretty revolutionary for Eton! but it

[70] orig "in in"

indicates to me considerable interest in group activities. I rather agree with Pilk about only music until Oxford not being good for J.W. - but then I don't really take that seriously, as J.W. changes his own aims and interests so often at the moment, and may well be on a different tack by the time we see Pilk at the end of term. (Anyway J.W. is going to teach at Dragons before doing music.) But I think in a way it's a pity we originally agreed to Perugia, as it now makes it hard to reverse and say that J.W. must go off and support himself or do some kind of job till Oxford. I wish we didn't have to deal with this the instant you get back.

Sunday we had a quiet day here, and I got a lot of painting and sanding done, and Poll made music, and Mummy sewed on her rug. Then we drove back (by pitch dark) to Downe by 8.30, then on to Paddock, and I got back by 10.30 accompanied by snow. But it has warmed up again now.

Must quickly answer any points of yours, and get this into the afternoon post. I have to go to Eileen Shorland's to play bridge tonight - I wish I weren't, as I have lots of other things I would be better employed on.

J.W. says Philip Snow says his father thinks his new book is his best one ever. The reviews didn't think so! Do you want it for Xmas?

5

Cecil Waterfield's address is:
48 Beverley Roadd
Leamington Spa, Warw.

Mrs. Briggs' cottage in Cornwall sounds rather fun, but I doubt if J.W. and Poll wd be much interested, but maybe. Bun might be. Perhaps we should go ourselves not in holidays?

Here is a thing about school fees insurance for Bun - wd you deal if you are interested?

I have dyed some old curtains (old nursery curtains embroidered by Phyllis Stanley!) to go at least temporarily in Poll's room at Kelso (they seem to be coming out a rather nice gold-y colour), and have borrowed Paddock's sewing machine to make curtains for Bun's room. Now that it has got so cold I reckon curtains for all rooms are important - I must chase M. Binnington as I've heard nothing more about her gear with our curtains - I hope they are safe and arriving.

Have also re-surfaced Bun's Chile furniture for his room, and reconstructed lots of bookcases for Kelso. Yesterday took apart and re-did one of those white Chile bookshelves (to put narrower shelves at the bottom to fit by a radiator at Kelso). I was reminded vividly of that idiotic gold-toothed Chilean carpenter who made

6

them and put them together upside-down - do you remember? They are still upside-down.

Must run now or this will miss the post. Will try to write not so much in a rush next time.

Lots of love

from Pie.

St. Albans,
Monday, Nov. 25

Dear Pie,

I wrote on Sat. an answer to your foul letter of 20th Nov., but I have now torn my answer up as it would only make you cross. I do not think I can write anything now without writing an even angrier one.

Bun is all right - I took him out yesterday.

I am moving on December 4th, so please address letters if any to Kelso, but kindly do not bother to write to me again when you have a hangover. You are spinning like a top and have got all your priorities wrong.

Lots of love
from Pie

St. Albans,
Wednesday afternoon,
Nov. 27

Dear Pie,

No new letter from you, and I'm still very angry about your last, but still I'd better write as I've much news and gossip, otherwise if I get another putting-off letter from you I'll never answer.

First, to clear away briefly why I'm cross (and you can skip this paragraph if you like, but I think you'd better attend): first, I have told you before that I am longing for you to get back, and I cannot endure without you, and yet you send me a poady letter saying you don't want to leave and that you don't care where we go,and in effect don't care about me or family at all - and this is one place where you've got your priorities wrong, unless of course you wd prefer to give up family altogether. Also you say that you can say anything to me, but I ask you please to reconsider this, as if you say things that hurt me dreadfully, which you did, then you cannot expect me to be otherwise than reserved on your return. Surely you have realized by now, after 18 years of marriage, that (apart from my natural reserve, which you knew about before you married me) my reserve always comes in answer to some unforgivably rude remark to me by you (I cannot bear always being called a fool or an idiot, even if it may sometimes be deserved). You say that you always get affection and mossing up there, but please ask yourself seriously if those who show you loving attention haven't seen your good side and all your charm - if you bothered to show them to me, you would get my mossing-up and loving attention too, but I get so put off to be called a fool and then expected to be loving-kind and sexy in bed less than an hour later: it is not dame's human nature to be sexy unless they are treated sweetly. You have got me mixed up between a mother-symbol (to whom you can say anything and expect automatically to be forgiven) and a tart (from whom you can expect sex at any time), and I do hope that you can sort yourself out and treat me as a person. If you come back exploding with rude remarks, then I agree there is not much hope for us.

Secondly, we have got lots of real problems - [71] which J.W. is one - I know of course how busy and hard-pressed you are, but you are failing him, and he is waiting for your advice. But I realize you are too tired and hungover to cope, and more of this later.

Thirdly, you are a real poad, and quite out of touch, to complain about getting NATO department. You should be pleased - it is in the heart of what matters for the U.K., and seems to me about the most important thing to do. Nobody here really cares about India, and even if they do, what on earth do you think can be done about it? I'm puzzled by your saying that your're pleased to have got "north India" under control - surely nobody can possibly, or should, have north India under control but the Indians? If you mean the H.C., or the British community, then that is surely something that will continue to be done, either better or worse, by successive members of the B.H.C.; and you have only got so involved that you cannot balance out the picture (much as in Bamako, where Mali seemd the world.)

About NATO job, I say hurrah and congratulations! It' been a long time coming, but I can't think of a better dept., and as for your thinking you're too important for a dept - well really! I dined with Clive Rose (in company) and stayed the night (not in company!) with them, and got some gossip. I'm afraid I was not very open with Clive, but was height of discretion, as you hadn't told me whether your job news from Jock D. was for public consumption or not. And in company it became a bit difficult. First of all, Clive had rung me a few days before, just before I got your letter saying that Jock had confirmed your job, to say very kindly that he had been asking around for the gossip, and had heard from three good sources that you were definitely having adept., but none of them would reveal which and were very mysterious. He couldn't understand the mystery, and nor could I. So when I got there for dinner last night, they were saying that all the gossip is that John Barnes is getting an Embassy, but no one knows which, and it hadn't been announced yet. So I put in a discreet comment to say, well maybe after all you were getting his job, and the reason for the mystery was that it couldn't be announced before Barnes' appointment is announced. (Which I think must be the case). But Clive then said, alas he feared that couldn't be so, because all

[71] hole punch here may have taken out an 'of'

the tipping in the office is that David Bendall is getting the NATO job! To which I liestened with interest, as you may well imagine! Bendall is after all, I suppose, senior to (or at least older than) you, and I guess you should be pleased if you have got it instead of him. Though I guess it is good if you are getting back before he gets back from D.C., so~~e~~ that you can stake your claim properly.!.

Clive's other news was that his job in W'ton has been changed - did I tell you that it was going to be internal political reporting? And someone called Antony Williams (? I don't think I know him) had at the same time been appointed to do the NATO job in Washington. Clive was rather unhappy about it, but has just heard that their jobs have been switched, so that Clive is going to do the NATO in Washington. He is <u>much</u> happier about doing that one, and said with a great burst of enthusiasm, "Oh, how good it wd be if John~~e~~ <u>did</u> get Barnes' job in London, because we wd be on opposite ends - but I fear it is not to be." According to Elizabeth, over breakfast coffee, (but she is not always to be relied on as a gossiper), when Clive said in personnel that he said he was glad the jobs had been switched, he was told that J.Freeman personally had done the switch! ? Of course they wanted to know all about the Freemans, and were also offering keen gossip on Paris, where they are going next week to stay with the Logans and catch up with what's going on.

I haven't yet been to see the Bushells, which I'd like to do, but may wait till you get back - I'm rather afraid now to go into office gossiping circles until I hear that your job is public. I shall probably have to apologize to Clive next time for being secretive - they are very keen to see us before they go to U.S. (Jan. 21.) They have still got that nanny (Barbara) that they had in Paris, and are taking her to Washington - surely she is <u>not</u> the one that Clive~~w~~as involved with? Their house is very cosy, and modern like an American motel - I thought horrid, but very well done up and chi-chi. It takes <u>ages</u> to get there - it is on altogether the wrong tube line.

I had lunch yesterday in London with Carol Howard, who was just the same and in excellent form. Mary and Dick say their new house is absolutely super (14th century thoroughly modernised). Lots of gossip with

Carol, but not worth repeating at this point, except that one of Tamara Gilmore's daughters is at school with the second Howard daughter, and Carol talks of getting us and Tamara down sometime, and Busheslls, Sarells, etc. I like Carol, and always find her sensible and of good value.

Also B. Karmel, to whom I'm feeling v. warm - I got back this morning to find a letter from H. Crookenden saying that Barbara had suggested he might escort me to their party at Annabels. Good - I will go, and have fun, and it will be nice to see old Henry. I had written to Barbara (not according to your advice) and said that we couldn't go as you wouldn't be back. I didn't ask her to do anything about me, as everyone is always telling me what a bore women on the own <u>are</u> and that no-one likes to look after them; but I thought that if Barbara felt kindly she might do something about it without my asking, and so she has - so I've rung her up warmly and thanked her and said of course I'll come and how nice of her to fix up Henry.

So <u>I</u> for a change will probably have a hangover by the time you get back! On the subject of which, in spite of my poading about your attitude in general, I do agree with you completely that you are coming at a <u>very</u> awkward time and especially when you have been so pressed at that end. I remember how sordid Rome looked to us when we got there from Delhi, and I think it is expecting too much for you to step off the plane here into squalid domestic life and family problems, as it takes at least 48 hours to adjust. I am sorry it is the wrong time of year to meet you somewhere in Europe - but everyone agrees with me that that just isn't on, as a waste of time and money at this ghastly time of year (Paris anyway uncertain now with franc crisis). But I <u>do</u> think we should have anyway a couple of days off on our own when you get back - what do you think? I can, and will anyway, talk to Pilk before about J.W. (though you never sent me Pilk's letter, so I don't know his views), because I'm not sure if you'll be in recovered state enough to talk sensibly to Pilk on the 11th. I would suggest that we might go straight away somewhere when you get here, to the most de luxe hotel we can find, and just recoup until the morning of the 13th, when Bun has to be fetched from Dragons. What do

you think about this? We could either spend the night of the 10th here, possibly fetching J.W. next morning, and leaving him at Paddock and disappearing ourselves for two days; or we could just opt out altogether and have him go by taxi to Paddock for two days while we have a slight break - and I think this might perhaps be the wisest plan, though I'm not sure where we'd go. The weather will be equally foul anywhere (as it would anywhere in Europe), but we could try somewhere not too far in the west country (? perhaps Bath, which we've never seen and which ought to have decent hostelries). I say not too far, as Bun anyway has to be picked up early morning on the 13th, and then the holidays will be really upon us. But I do feel that, if we went to either Kelso or here, you would see at once,and be impatient with, all the things that have to be done (which I am well aware of, but which it just isn't going to be possible to get completed) and that it wd only provoke friction between us (let alone coping with J.W.'s philosophical arguments, which require all one's brains) - and I think that you deserve a break before being thrown into all these things. J.W. will be expecting all your best and considered advice when he sees you, which is partly why I think we should allow a little time after your arrival, as you will only be in a mood of wanting moss-ing up when you arrive! Do Please tell me your this on this - I expect you won't, as every time I ask your views you tell me not to bother you. I know you are busy, but I wish that you will spare a thought please for what is going to happen when you get here. I was so depressed by your last letter that if I'd been suicidal I wd probably have committed suicide last weekend! Everyone here tells me they admire how I am coping with all the problems, and why don't I wait till you get back to move and deal with this and that - I'm sure you wouldn't like it if I left everything till you got here, but I wish you could express a little appreciation of what I am getting on with on my own, instead of commenting so sourly on Kelso that it sounds as if you wish you'd never heard of it. It isn't you that's been having the work of it.

I am moving next week, as I said; we will not be well installed before the holidays, but I must get in if I'm to get the heating on and things working to dry it all up, and we will then have flexibility for a bit about which house we use. There's no percentage in sticking here, as we will anyway have enough left here to use

St. Albans, and until the furniture is moved we cannot use Kelso at all. But I'm not sure which will be more chaotic while we're betwixt and between!

I wish you were here - I think you must have changed very much since you went back to Delhi. Do you remember that you said you were reluctant to go back, and get into that spoiling unreal and hard-drinking atmosphere again? And now every time you write you say that you have a hangover, and you don't really seem to write sense, which all seems very unnatural to me.

Anyway, please tell me if you agree we should go away when you get back - I won't do anything about booking or plans until I hear, but I should think you'll need as many days as possible to recover from Delhi.

Lots of love from
Pie.

P.S. I did ask you, and you didn't answer, whether you are organizing your air freight so that it will be ready to pick up on your arrival, or whether we will have to fetch it later? That may make a difference in arrival plans. Also, you are crazy to be overweight - you cannot blame much of it on the Xmas decs, which are very light. You must have kept out too many clothes. Surely you can find someone coming by sea, and send one case with them. Do not forget it is winter here - I bet you are planning to bring tennis clothes, summer shirts, and lots of other things that you will not want to see here for months. Do not forget that you left 12 shirts, 2 pairs pyjamas, and a number of other things here, so you won't need all that much clothing for going on with. It would be utter folly to pay for any excess weight, and I cannot believe it is necessary.

P.S. Here is a letter from Poll _ though it doesn't say much.

I hope you're not put off by my letter - I nearly tore it up again, but can't go on tearing up letters just because they say what I think! I really am longing for you to come and am just trying to think of the happiest way to arrange it.

St. Albans
Thursday morning,
Nov. 28

Dear Pie,

Just a p.s. to my last, to warn you hastily please not to tell Clive R. that I knew about your job and ~~xxxxxx~~x didn't tell him! Because the thing is that he rang me up again last night, being so helpful and pleased with himself for helping me that I just hadn't the heart to tell him I'd known the night before. He was tremendously secretive over the phone, and said that he had found it out with great difficulty from a very reliable source in strictest confidence, who wouldn't be at all pleased if the news was leaked. So please don't reveal that I knew about it the day before - I think in fact I would probably hav e told him, except that Elizabeth started cross-examining me and in front of other guests, which I didn't think discreet, so I clammed up. And it would be a bad excuse to admit that I knew it and didn't want to tell Elizabeth - though I expect in fact Clive has told her. Anyway I've now written in a p.s. to my thank-you that I have now heard from you and that you have heard from Personnel, though you didn't tell me if it was still in confidence or not (I wish you would tell me, as I'm frightened of seeing the Bushells who will no doubt try to get it out of me, and J. Bushell is about the

worst gossiper there is!) I suppose all the mystery is that it won't be announced till John Barnes' post is announced.

Clive expresses himself terribly pleased that you and he will be on opposite ends, and he says that D. Bendall is going to the Cabinet Offices to replace Nigel French (this also confidential, I think).

You'll be too busy to be interested in this, but I did just want to warn you quickly, in case you suddenly decided to write to Clive - so please don't tell him I knew. I probably would have been indiscreet with him the night before, if only Eliz. hadn't been around, whom I never quite trust, and by the time the other guests had gone home it never came up in conversation again.

You will be busy with Sec. of State by the time you get this, I suppose. No letter from you in fact today. I am excessively busy preparing for move - Vernons are here now disconnecting the transformer etc. No time for more.

Lots of love
from Pie.

P.S. Have just heard from Mummy that Harry Norris' father has died - "several days ago", she says. She is funny, I don't think she would have ~~xxxxxxxxxxx~~ told me at all if I hadn't rung her up to discuss weekend plans and she had to say she was waiting to hear from Jill about whether Mrs. Norris would like flowers for the funeral. I asked her to include us if so, and am writing to Jill and Harry.

St. Albans,
Sat. evening,
Nov. 30

Dear Pie,

Thank goodness for your letter of Monday 25 November saying that you had recouped over the weekend - though you didn't say where or how! I really thought that you sounded a complete nervous wreck in your previous one, but I hope that you'll be a little better in order now.

No time to write, as it's late - after St. Andrews day: satis but pouring with rain - Poll and Vicky are here now, and I'm trying to shoo them off to bed. Mummy comes for lunch tomorrow and we all go to Eton carol service, which should be nice (though I don't feel like Christmas yet) and then I have to drive them all back, which doesn't please me in the dark. I am also excessively busy doing last-minute organizations for the move.

J.W. says that you write to him that you are looking forward to coming to fetch him for the last time: so I'll anticipate that your answer to my previous question of whether you want to go away on arrival will be no, or at least not until J.W. has been fetched? It <u>did</u> seem a good idea to me, at least when you sounded so absolutely as if you couldn't possibly cope. You may by now have let me know what you think. You were <u>foul</u> to say you

didn't care which house we went to, and in effect didn't want to go to either. But you did tell me to decide, which I will do depending upon the conditions prevailing by the 10th.

In any case, of course I will come to the airport. I have your flt. no. from your tel as BA 785 ETA 1530 - if for any reason that should not be correct, will you please let me know? Look for me at the airport - do not take a bus to the terminal, because I have not yet decided which house will be more habitable, or if either will! If any further snags develop at Kelso, it may be better to come here for first night, which is nice and cosy, and still will be quite so after the gear has gone to Kelso. So I will decide in the end, and any case will come to the airport to pick you up.

Am sorry to sound so curt, but am trying to write in a great hurry. I think it is better to go ahead and move, even if it will be chaotic for a bit, as just being in and being able to get on before you come will start making Kelso more habitable. It will look ghastly, I guess - drying plaster on all the downstairs walls, and scars everywhere from the rewiring. I hope by getting in that I will succeed in getting the builders finally out. The outside paintwork of the house has been done, but nothing inside of course.

I wish I had time to write more, but I don't, and you told me some time ago not to bother you about Kelso, as you hadn't got time to think about it. So I guess you can't imagine it now at all. You needn't expect built-in shelves everywhere - not yet, anyway, as plaster still wet, builders not yet out, repair bills incl. electricity now standing at over £1200, and v.d.E's purchase here not yet assured (I am chivvying in all directions, but expect they have been badly hit by squeeze until they get a sure purchaser themselves. Have been expecting a letter form Barclays telling us no more overdraft, but haven't had one yet. Times are grim.)

Sorry no time or energy to write or comment more - you will be busy with S/State now, whom I follow in newspaper.

But I don't mean to sound gloomy - everything will work out all right in the end. It's just to warn you not to picture perfection (or indeed anything more than awful squalor!) - I think maybe we ought to have a couple of days' holiday? But J.W. went by Kelso yesterday when he was in London (he hadn't actually seen it before) and though he was a little put off by bareness and dirt, he is still as he says longing to get moved and see all his friends in London and have them round- which sounds nicely sociable. And all our friends are waiting to see you and all ask when you'll be here - the only trouble will be having any peace and quiet! But after the Xmas hols I should

Lots of love from Pie.

have plenty of time to work on Kelso, and after all we've had "instant Christmases" before, so I guess we'll make do.

And I just hope that I calculate the move more or less right - I am trying hard to allow space for the gear coming from Delhi, which rather frightens me by its bulk. I will speak to Hibbs about when he reckons it will arrive. Just one thing: please don't start saying to me as soon as you get here, "Why didn't you do this, or why didn't you do that?"! because I will find it very off-putting! I know that I am well behind schedule, which is builders' fault (and also extra work they had to do), but I have done as much and as well as I can - and it has not been all that easy, esp. with this constant school-taking-out, and visiting Paddock (who says again today that she is not well, but is still planning to come tomorrow.) And now towards the end of term there's nothing but school concerts coming up - J.W. has one on 9th (I haven't promised to go, though I'd like to); and I think we'll have to go to Poll's concert on 16th, as she's playing Mozart. M.E. is beavering on their behalf on musical matters in London.

Now I must go up to bed - I have beavered very hard this evening trying to organize books for the move (while the girls were studying Richard III and making music) - inevitably they won't all turn out to be right, I suppose. I have bought a new nightdress against your arrival, but it is too cold for me to wear it in bed alone! Thank goodness you are coming soon - long-distance misunderstandin is awful, and you write so impatiently. I hope we can relax and have a happy Christmas. Am not sure alas if any more of my letter will reach you - I'll see you at the airport anyway.

St. Albans,
Tuesday evening,
Dec 3 .

Dear Pie,

I really don't have time to write, but want to send you this letter from Bun, which will make you laugh. He sounds very all right, and you'll note he has signed himself James for the first time - so it deserves preservation.

Everything is packed up and away now - the Sirl men seemed very quick and efficient, they will deliver tomorrow at 10 a.m. at Kelso, so I must now finish up last-minute things to make an early start tomorrow. J.W. has been here helping me shunt around the furniture that is left. All in order now. J.W. is all right too - I have spoken to Pilk, who is on net with me. All when you come - we can go to see Pilk on morning of 11th when we fetch J.W., or if you should be too exhausted, we cd see him later. But I reckon you'll want to go to Eton "for last time," and J.W. and I think it wd be fun to have last-time lunch at the cockpit.

Poll is also o.k., I think she and Vicky had a good weekend. I was very exhausted by the time I got back at 10.30 on Sunday night, after taking Paddock and girls back. Too much driving, and thick fog on the way back from Downe. All day

yesterday I was non-stop organizing for the packers, and supervising them today. Nearly all in order now - I hope to get Kelso so soon. Poll rang up tonight that she is coming to London for a lesson with M.E. Friday, and will come to lunch and supper with me Friday. She seems to spend as little time at school as J.W. - he is going to Dragons on Friday (Founders day).

What I really set out to tell you was that no sooner had I seen the packers off today after lunch than the phone rang: Mr. Roberts of Frost, who says v.d.Eyken tells him he has had no success in selling his house, and thinks he is being unfair to us in asking us to wait longer and feels perhaps he should withdraw. Roberts told him to have another go at selling, but says he will find us another purchaser. I have no obs, except that I am surprised Barclays haven't yet asked us to pay off our overdraft, which I've been expecting, and also that I've been half-expecting v.d.E. difficulty since the latest squeeze. V.d.E. cd always I suppose suddenly find purchaser, so this might change before you come; but I thought I'd better warn you now instead of at the airport when you arrive!

Also it just occurs to me that even if v.d.E. comes through, it may be later than planned; if by any chance you should hear (in your last moments I admit) of a B.H.C. family coming on leave who might like to rent St.A., it might help us as well as them - it's all working and warm and cozy though not elegant. (We now have sleeping for 5

with one double and 3 single beds, also the put-u-up for extra). Someone like Cotons only keen on golf? Don't know who's there now, and you probably won't have time to think about it so don't worry; but I think by end of Xmas hols we wd be glad to rent this temporarily if poss. It wd pay for heating anyway and keep it cared for in winter. Perhaps Welfare Sec. listing.

I'll take this to post now as I don't expect to have time tomorrow. And I'm afraid it's the last letter that I can write to reach you, so I won't try again. I do hope I don't mind sleeping at Kelso on my own for first time - I hate strange house noises! and indeed I wish you were here, it wd be such fun doing all this together J.W. helped me to set up our second-best bed here, which I will sleep in tonight.

A warm letter from Clarks today, asking if we'd like to come to Montacute for a few days to "de-Indianize" you, and J.W. too if he was loose. What do you think? It wd be fun, but I think we haven't time, with Bun to be fetched on 13th. Though we cd I suppose pay a fleeting visit, after picking J.W. up (for one night I guess) and then return for picking up Bun. Mostly going to and fro though. J.W. expressed great keenness until he heard that Philippa wouldn't be there (the girls don't break up till 17th), then he said he couldn't as he is anyway going to a concert with Duncan on 12th. No action to be taken at the moment anyway - I will reply pro tem - they say anyway ring them up after you appear.

Now I must stop - you will be too busy to read this anyway, and there is not time for an answer. I wonder if this will get to you by Friday's bag or Sunday's - if Friday, don't expect another from me, and I'll be thinking of the dancing party at Dick's on Sat. If you get it Sunday, you'll have a hangover and won't want to hear the news anyway!

I expect you are copious at giving everyone there my love, but please continue to do so as you leave! And special greetings to Gusain and the others. You will give all proper messages I'm sure.

And you can think of me trying to install in Kelso, and going to Karmel's party on Sunday. I'll see you on Tuesday at the airport!

Lots of love
from Pie.

Hibbs says ship due in 18th, and we'll probably get gear about New Year's - I've sorted him out.

30 Kelso Pl.
Wednesday evening.

Dear Pie,

Here I am, bag and baggage and chaos! The move went well, and everything will gradually get sorted out.

Many thanks for your tel, which was here waiting for me when I arrived at 10 a.m., and was very cheering-up. Hurrah for Tuesday!

Kelso is going to look cute when we've got all our things in and got it fixed, and it's such fun being here for the first time. But I guess the walls and halls will look like hell till after the Xmas hols! But nothing to be done about it except tidy it up and wait to do decs after hols.

See you at the airport on Tuesday!

Lots of love
from Pie

Positively my last letter - I wonder if you'll get it!

Appendix 1: office reorganisation

MERGER OF FOREIGN OFFICE AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

HL Deb 16 October 1968 vol 296 cc1368-71

LORD SHACKLETON

My Lords, if I may I will now read the other Statement which is being made by my right honourable friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in another place about the merger of the Foreign Office and the Commonwealth Office. It reads as follows:

"On March 15 my right honourable friend the Prime Minister announced the intention of Her Majesty's Government to bring about the amalgamation of the Foreign Office and the Commonwealth Office and in a Statement on March 28 he explained to the House the reasons for this.

"It was announced on September 18 that the new Office would be called the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and that it would come into being on October 17 this year.

"This change will take effect from to-morrow and for the first time in modern history the external affairs of this country will be in the charge of one Secretary of State and one Department. For good historical and political reasons, we have been the only country in the world to maintain separate Foreign and Commonwealth Offices. As my right honourable friend the Prime Minister said in April the time has now come to amalgamate these two Departments. We shall continue to do everything possible to promote good relationships with the world community, whether through the United Nations or with individual countries and groups of countries. We shall continue to play our full part as a member of the Commonwealth and to maintain our close association with other Commonwealth Governments. In forming the new Office we have made certain that the interests of the dependent territories will receive the close and sympathetic attention which our responsibility for them requires.

"We have not merely put the two existing Departments together: we have examined the tasks of both and constructed a new Office to perform those tasks.

"In the planning of the merger, and in the work of both Departments over many years, the country is greatly indebted to the devotion, industry and skill of its permanent civil servants.

"The handling, under Parliament, of the external affairs of this country over the years has called for sensitive judgment, continuous hard work in numerous fields and the initiation of, and response to, peaceful change—all this in a restless and sometimes violent world. It is in this progressive spirit that this new Department of State will meet the challenge of the future."

LORD CARRINGTON

My Lords, the House will be obliged to the noble Lord the Leader of the House for repeating that Statement. I must say that ever since some years ago I was a High Commissioner in a

Commonwealth country, I have always felt that this amalgamation was the right thing to do—not in any way in a spirit of criticism of the Commonwealth Relations Office, as it then was, but because I thought the division between these two different Departments did not lead to efficiency. I do not think that the Commonwealth as a whole will regret this step; although I think they will wish to be assured that the service they get from the new Department will be as good as if not better than that from the Commonwealth Office. The noble Lord mentioned in the Statement that there is going to be some special attention paid to the dependent territories. May I ask him exactly what form that will take? Finally, may I ask whether he could give us any indication of how many Ministers are likely to be in this new Department? In the two old Departments, I think there must have been something approaching double figures.

LORD SHACKLETON

My Lords, poised as I am between the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of State for Commonwealth Affairs, I would hesitate to speculate on how many Ministers there will be and who will occupy these posts. Here again no doubt time will shortly show. But on tilt particular point of the dependent territories—I know that noble Lords, including my noble friend Lord Shepherd, have worked manfully in this area and shown great interest—in order to maintain a body corpus of specialised knowledge of the problems of dependent territories, and to ensure that the welfare and interests of their inhabitants and our responsibilities for those territories are taken into account in our external policy, special arrangements are being made; and these are explained quite fully in the White Paper. In fact, there will be a special branch, or department, or division which will look after dependent territories which are close together, even though in other areas there will be geographical departments. So very special attention has been paid to that.

I am grateful that the noble Lord, Lord Carrington, sees this as an inevitable and rightful development. I assure him that the whole object is to produce a greater and more efficient set-up. For instance, relations with High Commissioners will be just as good; in some ways they may be made easier. High Commissioners will still retain certain special rights, and they may find it a simpler operation to liaise with Her Majesty's Government than in the past.

LORD BYERS

My Lords, we, too, welcome this change very much. I am sure that it could—and I hope that it will—lead to greater efficiency. May I ask the noble Lord whether the White Paper will show the exact division of responsibility within the new Department regarding the different aspects of its work? If not, perhaps that could be done at some time for the benefit of Members of the House.

LORD SHACKLETON

My Lords, this White Paper is now in the Printed Paper Office. It explains in a good deal of detail what the arrangements will built may be that it does not give all the answers, but obviously, if the noble Lord or Members of your Lordships' House want further information on organisation, an opportunity can be found to provide it on some other occasion, either in answer to Questions, or perhaps in a debate on the Queen's Speech or on foreign affairs.

May I also refer to the point made by the noble Lord, Lord Byers, in relation to the earlier Statement? There have been quite significant savings. For instance, in the merger the number of Permanent and Deputy Under-Secretaries has been reduced by 25 per cent. and there has been a

significant reduction at Assistant Under-Secretary level. Over 100 posts have been saved in the first phase of the merger, in addition to the 398 previously saved at home since the unified Diplomatic Service was set up in 1965. There is also the further investigation, the Duncan Inquiry, into the Foreign Service.

LORD BYERS

My Lords, I was proposing to express the hope that a place would be found for the services of Mr. George Thomson in the Government, but in the light of the noble Lord's previous answer perhaps I had better not press the point.

LORD GLENDEVON

My Lords, may I join briefly in the welcome of this proposal, having myself served in both Departments as a Minister? Does not the Leader of the House agree that the best result will be that from now on we shall be able to have the best men available in the most important capitals without the necessity for cross-posting, which sometimes gave rise to rather unhappy comparisons of status?

LORD SHACKLETON

My Lords, again I am much obliged to the noble Lord. This is an example of the advantages that will flow from this combined arrangement. It will take a little while to settle down, but I am sure that the noble Lord, who has had great experience in this field, is right in his judgment. I would only say to the noble Lord, Lord Byers (all your Lordships are being extraordinarily kind and tactful), that I understand that the services of my right honourable friend Mr. George Thomson, certainly during this crucial period in relation to Rhodesia, will not be lost.

http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1968/oct/16/merger-of-foreign-office-and

Appendix 2: The 1968 Christmas card



Appendix 3: main people and places mentioned

Context will probably have allowed interpretation of all these, but in case:

Family:	
J.W., John William	elder son
P., Poll, Polly	daughter
Bun, Bunny, James	younger son
Paddock, Mummy	JPW's mother, Doris Mary Waterfield ('Paddock' was name of house at Brightwell cum Sotwell; see 'Paddock' as *place* below.)
Ellingworth	Mary, JPW's older sister, married Dick. Children included Katherine, Marian, Henry and Elizabeth. Recently moved to The Mount, Sparepenny Lane, Farningham. Dick's mother was Dora, who owned a house in Maunsel Street, London.
Bow	Bow, JPW's brother. Children: Mandy, Tim. Lived in USA.
Norris	Jill, JPW's younger sister, married Harry, who worked in Wimpey (a large builders). Children: William, Charles, Lucy. Lived in Woodbridge.
Herschel	various cousins and forebears of JPW's, esp. Carol Herschel
Places:	
St. Albans, St.A.	not the town, a house on the A30 (now 'Magnolia Cottage') - OS grid reference 944662
Berkshire	a county, but also (and in the letters, always) that part of the garden at St.Albans beyond the stream (the map now shows the boundary going down the A30, but in family legend it followed the stream).
Paddock	The name of JPW's mother's house in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell. This was the third iteration built on the successively smaller parts of the land.
Kelso	Not the town, a house: 30 Kelso Place, London W8
Cudworth	Not the hamlet, the cottage in Somerset that wasn't bought
Downe	Downe House, a girls' boarding school near Newbury.
Others:	
J.F., J.Freeman	High Commissioner in India at the time
Joan	Bun's nanny during previous posting to Mali; married Terry Knowles.

Appendix 5: what happened next

After such a vivid slice of narrative, readers may wonder what happened next with respect to certain main narrative lines.

The house at St.Albans was eventually sold. The 'country cottage in the Cotswolds or otherwise within striking distance of Oxford' idea never took off and in 1970 - after about a year of legal difficulty with the title - they finally purchased 5 North Street, Somerton, Somerset (reportedly, using MLW's dollars to do so).

The house at Kelso Place remained a base for about eight years, and did indeed look "cute" after my mother had "got all our things in and got it fixed", though the fixing included an extension to create a new room on the second floor over the bathroom at the back. They then moved London base to 17 Vincent Square Mansions.

The cottages at Cudworth were done up by someone else and are very nice now. They can be found at OS reference 375108 (and indeed, seen on Google Streetview).

The next job: JPW continued to work at the FCO, as Head of Western Organizations Dept.; he moved into the business sector as managing director of BEAMA in 1971, but returned to public service in the NI Office after only a few years.

J.W. did go to Oxford, and at least started with Greats, but switched to English after a year, in which he continued, doing a D.Phil. He had a piano in his room at Christ Church and music continued to play a large part in his life.

Polly duly took A levels and subsequently studied violin in Switzerland under Orrea Pernel before a career as a musician. O.P. "was not really suitable for a young pupil," she said recently.

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