

Appendix 28
Early letters from Joan to Family 1925 – 1933

1/1/1925

From Joan To Lionel

COMMENT Date unknown but Joan very young

My dear Daddy

I am much better. Peter is very well and Uncle had made a new Bunnis hutch Auntie is very well.

I pulled Buran Buns Tonsils out on Friday and Pusses on Thursday. I am writing this little letter to tell you how I am. Auntie brought a big lump of ice on Saturday morning just before the operation. I hope you are very well love from Joan.

4/5/1931

From Joan To Family

Set of little cards Easter 1931

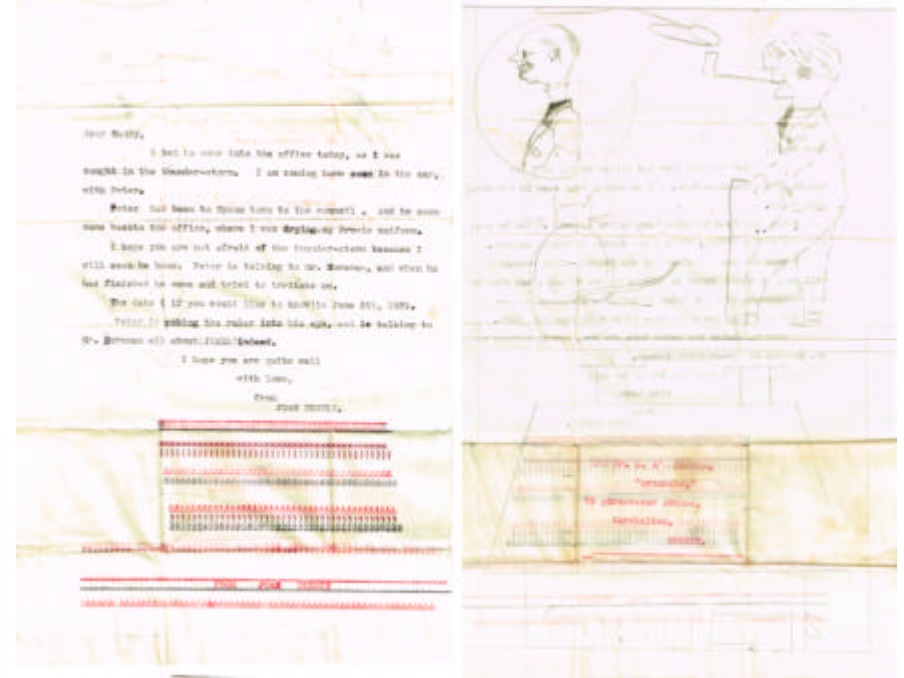


Easter 1931

6/5/1931

From Joan To Lionel

A letter typed in Lionel's office



Date unknown

From Joan To Cecily--

Ancaster House

Bexhill on Sea Sussex

My darling mother

Thank you for the card I think it is awfully pretty I enclose a note about the cotton dress

The exam went off quite well the examiner was perfectly sweet.

He gave me two extra marks

6/5/1932 DETAILS From Ancaster House Bexhill

From Joan **To** Lionel

Darling Daddy

How are you Pet.?(Excuse my words) It is lovely down here we have not had a bathe yet, but I hope to soon. I think you will get a fairly good report this term because I am doing much better. How are Spouse and Hoaseman getting on, well I hope I might see you at half-term, so ----look out

Not much to say as I do not know, but on Saturdays, we sometimes have dancing, and the seniors wear high heeled shoes like this (picture) and long dresses.

I am going in for the Royal Drawing Exam next week, it is Div I. I hope I shall succeed. Give my love to Mr Hoaseman and Mr Spouse.

Lov from Joan xxxxxxxx

(picture of penknife cutting finger)

6/14/1932 DETAILS From Ancaster House Bexhill

From Joan **To** Lionel

My Darling Daddy

Many happy returns of the day. I hope you will have a happy birthday.

This is just a little present, your old one may still be of use but you can always do with two.

I am longing to see you next week, and I wish you could bring everyone with you. Please will you tell Peter not to put Florence House on the envelope. Come down early on Saturday and don't work on Tuesday, I am sure you can leave just one day and not work. Excuse my paper but it is all I have got.

Best wishes, luck for your birthday your loving daughter Joan

xxxxx

2/1/1933 DETAILS From boarding school

maybe Feb 1933

From Joan **To** Cecily

Two part letters to Cecily

Comments about the mileage on the new Wolsey Hornet
Requests for visit and going home, camera film and someone to examine her for her horsemanship guide badge. About sliding on marsh ice. About present from friends at school - probably birthday.

Did Peter pass his exam. How was Ben and Puss. Request for a jumper to knit. Perhaps a visit while they are at Middleton.

Wished to show her dentist that her teeth were now ok. Sorry about Cecily's knee. Underlined statement that she would not be annoculated. And correction over the spelling of showed.

6/20/1933

From Joan **To** Gertie

Darling Auntie

Thank you for the washing things, I am so sorry I left them behind and gave you so much trouble.

How is Peter getting on. I don't expect he will tell me himself.

Bye-the-way Auntie will you ask him if he will ask Mrs Grosse at the office what two little lines are under a shorthand word like this : V= , it does not say in the book. How did you get on going back on Monday, was the village idiot there ? (at least I need not ask) Did he salute you ? Did he have his white gloves with him ? Mrs Maggs is pleased to hear about the violin. I wish you could keep all the things in the cabinet at Avondale and the cabinet itself.

Much love to you and Uncle .. Your loving Jo xxxxx

Appendix 29
Family Letters to Peter

From Lionel to Peter

9 Feb 1929

Cheer up old man, it is jolly bad luck, but I am glad it is no worse. As soon as I can go out I shall be over to see you. Mother tells me you are at a fine place and the Dr. gives the best possible report so you will soon be home.

Amongst my various accidents I have, so far escaped a broken bone so I can only imagine what it is like and I am jolly glad you did not have to have a reset on Friday.

Lots of people are asking after you and I expect when I get out of doors I shall meet many more enquirers.

I enclose Joan's letter, I told her she need not make another copy. I trust the pain is quieting down and that you will get more sleep. Well God bless you old boy, I know that you are taking it all in a manly way.

You must let me know if there is anything we can get or do for you.

I hope to see you before this gets through the post, and as you are so near to Sutton Common Road, I expect to look in a lot until you come home which will be soon I believe.

With all love from your old father and friend

L A Dibdin

From Cecily to Peter

3/18/1933 DETAILS From Le Bristol 112 Faubourg St
Honore Paris to 18 Mulgrave Rd
From Cecily To Peter
My dear Peter

We had a good journey over yesterday. There was a good old wind at times and we got into thick clouds but on the whole it was clear The sea was quite clear from about half way across the channel, clouds above us we past over two steamers. We got to the aerodrome at 3.45. We went to a very good show last night and left by train this morning at 7am. .. We may go through to Lugano resting at Lucerne. Will you post at once Dad's mackintosh. I think it was in the hall? . Post to General Post Office Lugano Switzerland. I hope your cold has gone. It was sunny yesterday when we got to the French Coast but wet today. .. Much love from us both. Mother..... Will you send with mack Aunt Letty's Baedeker guide. I left it in Joan's room I think. If it makes it rather expensive in weight don't bother . Letter post open each end will be best for that.

Aug 15th assumed to be 1931

Avondale

My dear Peter

Thank you for card. I am so glad you are having at this fine weather. It is very hot here.

The journey home was awful but I am daily feeling better and hope to get to Saltburn on Monday. I am so glad Uncle Bernard can keep you on. Make yourself useful.

Mr. Rowe, Mrs. Lock, and Mrs. Osdell came in yesterday and Grandma. Auntie Lettie is here, but she goes today. The porch is nearly finished and looks well. Joan wrote this morning she is having a good time. Dad is going to Porthcawl. No more now dear

Love from mother. Don't swim out too far for fear of cramps with your leg

21 Aug

c/o Miss H

Glenside

Saltburn by Sea

My dear Peter

I was very glad to get your letter yesterday and enclose herewith £1.00, go easy. We had a splendid journey here on Monday in the Pullman, quite a different route from the usual I go. Direct to Leeds and then the train looped back through Ripon Harrogate to Darlington.

Auntie he and Laura and an hour Gerard made us with Bolton car and Auntie E drove us to Saltburn. Very slow going but quite interesting. Dr. Hill came in on Saturday last and advised me not to take the journey for a week but I argued with him and he finally left it to me to see how I felt on Monday. By then I was feeling heaps better and it laity came over from nor would on Sunday night and packed for me.

The hall was nearly finished except for the paint and the canopy outside was going to be done after we left. It's certainly a great improvement. Did you see my silver fountain pen. I can't find it. Yours does not continue to write very freely. Have you noticed it.

Yesterday afternoon have we motored over two Castleton to seeing Joan. Her address if you think of sending her a card is:
C/o Mrs. Frances Heathercote Castleton Yorks.

She is looking awfully bonnie and fat and tall and was thoroughly enjoying herself. We had tea on the heather. It is a lovely part, miles and miles of great hills and valleys all around almost to the coast one side covered with heather.

Dad has just gone off to catch the 10.09 am to London. He expects to go to Porthcawl tomorrow and ends suggest motoring up to Lake Windermere and for me to meet him there about the end of next week.

I don't quite know what you can do and I am wondering if you could get back to Nottingham with them for a week after the 31st.

Emily went back on Monday too but by an excursion, and her ticket is up on the 31st. What do you suggest? She could of course stay in where she is. Joan could stay where she is till school time.

I cannot do very much yet more walked far or fast but am hoping that a week hence I shall be different.

I sent Uncle Bernard a check for £4/4/0 for two weeks for you and we'll send a further check. I hope he got it. Let me know by returned if this £1.00 arrives safely as I will not register it and tell me any news. Give my love to it Aunt Freda. Is Keiser Irene's brother I wonder? All love from mother.

I hope you get camera set right. I did not know it was wrong.

Don't tell Joan about the Hall alteration. She does not know, till she gets home.

From Rex (Reginald Dibdin) to Peter

July 18 1933

My dear Peter

Thank you for your letter.

I see no reason why you should not sign the paper if you are satisfied that your two aunts are capable. The use of the words "Curators for Guardians" relates to the specific purpose of administration of that particular estate for your use and benefit until you are 21. It does not supersede in any way your Father's arrangements.

I will arrange to see Mr. Andrews on Thursday if he will let me know time and place, preferably Sutton if he can manage it.

Cheer up

love your Uncle Rex

Letters to Peter From Uncle Bernard

Estimate Nov 1933

Dear Peter

Don't forget to let me know about the sale of, with a list. If it is in later parts of next week I shall not be able to come as Perp and Bub and I are going to Falmouth for second English trial.

Quite between ourselves, I have heard something about Joan, when she breaks up, coming to spend a few days with you at the Andrew's prior to going on with you North for Christmas.

I have also heard about some attempt to make her go to Reigate instead of to Banstead. {This is where Peter now was living}

Without wanting to butt in, I would say that the most natural and proper thing is for Joan to go to join her only brother to whom, presumably, she is much attached as soon as she can and that if the Andrew's are kind enough to invite her to stay with them she should go.

So jolly well see to it will you!

But don't seek any quarrels with Reigate.

I would much like the opportunity of a quiet chat with Mr.

Andrews.

Will you kindly tell him.

I am not at all satisfied at delays and don't understand why there need ever have been any difficulties.

Love from all Uncle Bernard

Nov 20 1933

Dear Peter

Thank you for your letter and I have made a note of your address and phone number. I expect to be in town on Tuesday December 11th the day before the Oxford and Cambridge match so you might keep that a date in mind.

I am sorry you cannot be with us at Christmas but naturally Christine will be glad to have you both are there. I go up to Birkenhead from time to time and sometimes look Christine up at

Meols but I have never met Captain Thomas as he has always been at sea.

If I note what you say the dates exam in March, it certainly does seem like trying to rush it a bit with lectures on four nights a week.

Don't get worrying about it. You can but carry on and do your best.

Some have a much greater facility up than others for letting things soak into their brain and I realise quite what you mean when you say you find it difficult to concentrate, I was the same and no one could unduly for staff into my noddle but it gradually got there and once there it's stuck.

Go your own pace, you can not do otherwise as a matter of fact and keep a cheerful outlook and as much cheerful society of other fellows as possible. It's no good overloading the scales but you'll be all right one way or another. But that was home for a few days but is now down at chapel again. He is having quite the cheery time nailing down floorboards and chucking paint about, but it is the very devil to know what to do with him later and he does not know himself, how should he?

Don, as you say, is pretty smart, he very quickly fitted into the scheme of things at the gas depot and should do pretty well as time goes on.

We play our first English trial at Birkenhead on December 2. I may take Christine to the match if she would like to go. Your affectionate Uncle Bernard.

Dec 13 1933

My dear Peter

Many thanks for your letter and list.

Aunt Freda had intended to come up tomorrow and stay over till Friday but it is so awfully cold that it is really hardly worthwhile. It is so difficult without thing seeing things to imagine what they are like and what their condition is and the only thing with which I am familiar is the small mahogany dressing table and mirror in

Joan's room (item 43 on the list) and this I could do with for Lorna's room.

I haven't the foggiest idea what it cost but I would bid up to £3 /2/6. for it and I enclose an open cheque.

Will you kindly act for me and let me know what happens and if it falls to me no doubt grandma will store it till I can fetch it away in car.

Rest of your letter duly noted but am rushing to finish and take Freda to Iolanthe (D'Oyly Carte Co here this week.)

Awaiting your news and we'll write you again later.

Keep out of any happier moments with can't go or or Uncle Lewis.

Some people get bees in their bonnet and make heavy weather out of the small winds and needlessly misjudge other people's actions and intentions.

I've had some so I know that. I never care a d-----. Yours Bernard

18 12 33

Dear Peter

Excuse peculiar note written at Stanford. My correspondents has to be done at all sorts of odd times and places.

Thank you for securing the the hole in the dressing chest for me.

I want to give this to Lorna for a Christmas present.

Our second alright by trial, which should have taken place at Falmouth, will probably be at Twickenham next Saturday and I shall be coming up to town on Friday afternoon and stay at the Metropole.

Where will you be on Friday afternoon, will you have left for Meols?

Probably my best plan would be to pick the dressing table up on Saturday morning on my way to Twickenham or else on my way back from the same for unless it is foggy I want to return to Nottingham after the match. If the thing is left for me at Avondale how can dear ask for it in, can you arrange something

with one of the neighbours, and let me know in good time. I leave home on Thursday morning.

Perp went off today in his car to London (he has had a few days' holiday) and he was going to look you up at your office. Tell him from me that if he finds an hour or two and on his hands he ought to do a scrounge round the Tower of London. It always interesting and they say there are few ghosts knocking about there just now. Anne Boleyn and a few others who finished off at of the shoulders. Perp is rather good at knocking hare and suchlike over with his car and if he can bring us down a nice plump ghost for Christmas dinner it would be appreciated.

I note what you say about Joan and letters received from Aunt E {Edith}. Why it's such heavy weather about such perfectly for simple and elementary things I am damned if I can see.

I suppose the great idea is that you have been trying to mislead them, to throw dust in their eyes etc. Now for the Lord's sake don't write to Aunt E and tell her it is freezing down in London because it will be warm in the North and then you'd be wrong again.

I think I can see through a good deal of this and as a matter of fact, I am writing to Aunt E to put her wise on one or two points.

There is no merit in going out of one's way to misunderstand people. The bother probably started at Reigate where, as we all know intentions were of the kindest and best, but you see, you again committed a crime in being 20 whereas you ought to have been only 15. They did not, I think, realise this.

I am of course a very bad father because when my sons reached 18 or 19 or thereabouts I gave them the latch key, it saves trouble and only when one very foggy night -they having gone out in their alleged motor car - didn't come in till 3.15 AM, do I kick up Hell. Ask Perp about this!

However, as I have said before "give them no cause" one is an old maid and the other a much over husbanded good aunt.

Yours Uncle Bernard

Appendix 30

Letters from Cecily to Joan at School

This is a set of twelve letters written by Cecily Dibdin, to her daughter Joan at boarding school, in the early months of 1933. Included is one letter from Joan at the beginning. The challenging question is why did she get sent to boarding school, was this some sort of rejection by her parents. This is very unlikely. In those days private education was considered to be the best by those that could afford it and very often this included boarding which ensured that the process was full time. Peter, Joan's brother had been at a local private boarding school which was quite large. Ancaster House was obviously a small school perhaps with about 50 girls and although it demonstrated the usually strictness reminiscent of the Victorian Era, there seems to be an easy relationship with parents, visiting and communication. Cecily seemed to have a strong influence on Joan's musical education while she was at school, and was probably fairly at ease with dealing with the school having a sister who ran one in Saltburn. Judging from these letters and those following between Joan and Peter during 1933 to 1936 visiting could be at any weekend. January 1933 was the start of her third term at the school.

The letter of the 15th March 1933 was the last communication from Cecily who left with her husband Lionel on the 17th March for the continent and both died on their return trip back 11 days later.

Most of the letters were written from Cecily's home Carshalton, Avondale.

22 Jan 1933

Darling Joan

Very many happy returns of your birthday. I did not get a card saying you had arrived safely. I wonder what your cake will be like, and if the icing gets broke got broken on the journey. You had a good send off at Victoria. Dad, Peter, Mr houseman, David and I went to the International rugby match yesterday England against Wales. Wales won and deserved to win. It was as usual very exciting, the Prince of Wales was there and came on the field at the beginning and shook hands with both teams. He seemed to be thoroughly enjoying the match and stopped till the end.

We have a good run home.

It is very cold here today and I expect it is with you. I will send gloves along as soon as they come. I hope by next Sunday. If not I must get you some more.

Peter and Daddy send you love and best wishes. David and Peter are playing billiards.

With all love and kisses from your loving mother

Don't run risks and get cold it will be cold weather soon.

Friday 27th Jan 1933

My darling Joan

Enclosed are your gloves mended. The new finger will soon wear down to the dark colour I expect. I have been too busy to fix up any knitting for you. What about making bed socks. I am afraid a jumper will be too long you have already had two lots of wool and not done either the scarf or jumper which I am doing for you, that I think I better send you some other sort of work. I am surprised to hear that you are likely to take the intermediate. You will have to work carefully and slowly at your practise.

Yes, we went to the Repertory Theatre and saw Mrs Moonlight this week.

Very good indeed. Robert Edison was the very good shy young man who wanted to be engaged to the daughter and was very amusing as usual.

I have hurt my knee skating yesterday. I had a pair of new skates with spikes in front which tipped me and I fell bang on my knees, my right one is rather bad and very stiff and painful. However I hope if I rest it a bit today that I may be able to skate again during the weekend. It is rather unfortunate as I had not fallen skating since I was quite a novice, many years ago. My old skates had no spikes. I was not used to these new ones and just put my right foot down too much to the front and the spikes dug into the ice and threw me. I send you also a pair of linings and we'll send you a second pair later also green hair ribbon, but keep to the slides for everyday use. I will keep watch ribbon and black ribbon here until you need them.

I am glad the cake was nice.

My car has gone today be overhauled and greased etc as I have done at over 500 miles.

Do work hard dear at all your work music and don't get a cold.

It is terribly cold here but lovely and dry. I will look for music, Beethoven.

There are two pieces for reading I am sending with Beethoven. Things that came by post from the publishers. Don't keep them, read them and then throw away.

Last night we went to a concert. Peter's singing master was singing. Peter was acting as steward (that is he showed people to their seats). We do not want you to be inoculated. I do not know if they are doing it at school. Much love and kisses from your loving mother.

1st Feb

Thank you for your letter. I am glad to hear that you are going in for the intermediate, though to practice slowly. It is a much harder exam than your last, and better play your things correctly and slowly than too fast. Do all in reading you possibly can. Ask Miss Briden and Miss Maggs to lend you music to read. I can send you some more if you tell me in your next. I am sending you the rudiments paper for the last exam. It has not got the question where you have to write a folk song melody but that is only just starting. Ask Miss Maggs if you can do the papers straight on the paper for her to correct for practice. There are two of them and you will see pages one and two and four and five. I do want you to get through both parts. The rudiments paper you will have to take the beginning of March and the piano, the end. Yes we got real ice skating all over the weekend but by Monday it was finished. My knee was better but still rather bruised and I have been feeling rather poorly the last two days, but better a bit today.

I will find out about Gardner's for your Guide badge.

Susan Richards took the part of a sort of nursemaid whom lived with the family for years and ruled them all. The play Mrs. Moonlight was rather like Milestones and I your own through the period and ran through the period from 1888 to 1928 and you saw them all grow old. I should not go as To Bowling.

Why not go as Carmen and I will send you that's pretty fancy dress of yours with Mrs. Midds Bolero. It is just the rig for Carmen – Spanish.

You will be sorry to hear the Ben slipped out of the front today after you went and got run into with a car and got his back legs broken. He is getting on very well at the dogs' home. I shall probably fetch him home on Friday. I went to see him on Sunday. He has a nice little cubicle to himself and seems quite happy moving around alright with his leg tucked up. I did not tell you before in case it turned out more serious. We thought he might be injured internally, but he is alright.

I don't know what to do to keep people from leaving the front door open.

I will send you some wool, but have not been able to get out for some days. Keep from getting a cold this term if you can. It is so warm here today so different from last week.

I expect you enjoyed the sliding. You must learn to skate next holidays. Peter has not heard about his examined yet. It was kind of the girls to get you presents. You did not introduce me to Eileen so I do not know which girl it was all which Mother. I will come down later on when the days draw out a bit. Dad and I were going to a big reception and dance tonight, but of course I do not feel able to and I do not think he feels up to it either.

Puss is on her own again sitting on the mat by the fire in the lounge all day with no Ben to worry her.

Peter and Spouse are at Middleton doing some work there for a few days. I hope that he did not find the pipes burst at Cornfield. If they were not cleared out of water in time before the frost came, it is likely that they have burst now the thaw has set in, but we hope for the best.

They will be staying at the club. The goldfish are swimming away under a solid block of ice up the garden and Peter put his skates on and skated round the pond much to the amusement of David and me and Puss. Puss sits on top of the ice looking through at the goldfish.

On Saturday I took Chris to Gatton Park to skate and Peter followed in the Unic with Joan Izard and David. Molly and Elizabeth Ouin were there and crowds more from Sutton there. Gatton Park is at Merstham not far from Reigate and belongs to Sir Eterniza [Jeremiah] Colman (Colman's Mustard). He always throws his lake open to skaters when there is a chance.

I shall try to get regular skating at the rink with Auntie Gertie for exercise. I have a nice new pair of boots and skates and I have had the spike which threw me over filed down now.

Work hard at all your work this term and practise hard at reading for I'm sure you can improve in it. That is what will pull you down in the piano exam. If you learn to read music like you would have walk, you have not got to spend so long learning the piece. Much love from all dear your loving Mother

3rd Feb

Dearest Joan

I am posting dress. I have let this go down so if too long tack it up round the waist as I know Carmen wore it short, but it the does not matter. The ribbon then will go around your hair as a bandeau or you could wear a paper rose with red paper to stick in your hair. I will see if I can find a red flower.

Take care of dress as I should not like you to lose Mrs. Midds Bolero.

I have not been out yet as I have felt rather ill although week, but I shall go out for a while this morning. I hope you have a jolly evening and get dress in time all my love from mother.

Will send some knitting next week. Give any spare time at the moment to theory. Are you learning the Stahan terms in your theory book Presto Allegro etc There is a list in your printed Macpherson book. I think it is the ones that they will give you

10th Feb.

Dearest Joan,

Thank you for your letter. I am glad you had a good time last Saturday and I was glad to hear of Miss. Burrows. I do hope that she is feeling stronger. Ben is back and quite lively, but of course his leg is no good yet. Pussy is very unfriendly still and they had a scrap yesterday soon after he got back.

I hope dear that you are altering your plate once every week.

It will be best for you to keep it till the end of time and then let Mr. Scott see it. The term is short. His bill was just come in for your teeth £19.00 so I sincerely hope they are straight and that you will take care of them and keep them clean. I think it is rather a stiff bill, but Dad does not think so. He certainly has taken a lot pains over them.

It is the England and Ireland were Rugby match at Twickenham tomorrow. Quite a party are coming down from Nottingham I believe. I have finished your scarf and started your jumper. I hope you like wool. I should do it in the thick six needles except ribbing around the neck, and sleeves and bottom these are nines. Make it like your own new fawn one but I thought you would rather have shorter sleeves like picture marked 2, only a little longer sleeve that I should do neck like the other your own only the same wool throughout. Get someone to help you if you get into difficulties. I am taking a huge sack to the Guides today for their jumble sale.

There has just been a thunder storm here, I wonder if you have had it. It is strange this time of the year. David has flu and I am finding it very difficult to get fit after mine. I still feel very shaky. Jeff also has and is a very poorly. Both his ears are very bad and he has had to have the drum pierced to save mastoid. He is in bed at school and has a lot of pain from bones but I believe is better to day.

How is your music going and your scales and reading? No more my dear.

Much Love from all, your loving mother

PS Architecture.. It was quite nice the house but wrongly spelt work it rather lose write it out and will be pretty. Work the jumper shocking stitch plain one side pearl the other. Join your new skein front always at the beginning of two and leave ends and darn in after.

14th Feb.

Dearest Joan

Just a short line. I took Auntie in my car yesterday to see Geoffrey. He is much better, in fact almost well and he will be coming home in a day or two and going with Auntie to the sea for a week. I expect he will be glad to have a letter, his addressed his

GS Davis, Schoolhouse, Tonbridge School.

Don't say anything about his being ill except you are glad he is better.

No more news dear, will write again later just going out. Write in a nice newsy the letter. Much love Mother.

17th Feb

Dearest Joan

I hear you have not been well this week. Hass it just been a flu cold.

Auntie Ger, Jeff and I and there maid are going to Cornfield next week to try and get fit. This is some music for reading dear. Pass on or destroyed when finished with it. Do all the reading you can.

I hope to have the line from you tomorrow Saturday.

David is not back at the office yet and it is a fortnight since he had flu.

Much love dear from Mother

20th Feb

Dearest Joan

I am very concerned about the diphtheria. Write to me at Cornfield on Wednesday at Middleton, Sussex as there are the other Middleton's and say if anyone else has it.

I am going down this afternoon with Geoffrey in my car and Auntie Ger and Elsie her maid go this morning. You did not say anything about being poorly last week. I shall stay till Friday, I expect. Peter and David went down yesterday afternoon and took the their tea and lit up the stove at Cornfield. Ben sends his love, he does not use his leg yet.

Snow is thick on the ground today. I might come to see you next Saturday or Sunday. Are you allowed to go into a restaurant for tea otherwise I should have to bring food and it is rather cold this weather eating out of doors. Who was the Valentine from. I don't know about taking all three out unless you could sit in the back of my car. And I should probably have someone else with me.

Much love dear and lets me have the line without fail to Cornfield about Wednesday or Thursday, your loving Mother

PS please thank Miss MacPherson for the letter.

Throw the music out after reading it once, it is not worth keeping.

24th Feb

From Cornfield

Dearest Joan

Thank you for letter.

Very glad there is no more diphtheria and I hope nothing has recurred since. I shall not come down dear this weekend. One thing Geoffrey has been ill again

here but is better today, but I could not leave Auntie Ger. Also it is very cold and stormy and I would rather come down from home I can fit up the lunch case with food etc. It would be unfit this weather to be out all the time in a car you would not enjoy it. Perhaps next weekend it will be better weather. Dad may come down today. We got a round of golf in on Wednesday, but it was terribly windy and I'm afraid Geoff caught cold then. Tinker and the cat are here, and Bimbo is sent away to stay.

You do not say how you're feeling about your theory paper and piano. Do you now find the theory easy and your pieces and scales getting up to standard. Is your reading better. Do'nt make a low neck on your jumper. Make it quite as high as your brownie one I bought at Lewes.

I expected to be at Cornfield on Monday so address your letter here and tell me all you can about how you feel about your exam music. Keep from getting cold this treacherous weather. I will let you know when I can come, but I might not be able to let you know beforehand. It is not always possible to know beforehand if we can come.

Much love dear and kisses from your loving mother
Did you finish Jane Eyre and did you like it?

28th Feb

Dearest Joan

Thank you for your letter. I am glad you are better.

Mrs. MacPherson wrote another card this morning saying that you were better and sitting in the sun palour.

Take your plates are out of your mouth and go without them and I will let you know know what Mr. Scott says.

We returned from Cornfield yesterday. Everywhere around Pulborough was flooded so Peter and I came home through Brighton. It was a glorious day quite lovely on the front there.

Someone is after Cornfield from India and we made let it for a year. I did not see about the raid in Sutton. Ben is very well. Doris and Ben were alone here during the weekend as Dad, Peter and Uncle Lewis came to Cornfield on Saturday. Peter has passed his exams. Isn't it a good thing. He heard last Saturday.

Don't forget dear to remove your plates at once and then tell me how it feels. I will let you know about coming next Sunday.

Much now and kisses from Mother

PS Persevere with your music and theory and go slowly and do plenty of reading music. Auntie Ger thought it was about time John. I had a nice letter from John yesterday.

Don't get collecting film stars it is a silly waste of time.

16th March

Dearest Joan

Here is your album also a little netting is for your big sister, also a few more stamps much love and kisses Mother

15th March

Dearest Joan

Thank you for letter. I am sorry that you did not like the exam. Dad and I are going off on Friday to Paris and Switzerland for about 10 days. We need a holiday.

Will you write to me a line tomorrow Thursday so that I get it before I go on Friday. Then on Sunday address your letter to Lugano address General Post Office Lugano Switzerland. 2½p stamp.

I will write to you from where we are. Let me know tomorrow the day you come home for holidays.

I hope dear that you get on well at your piano exam. Look well at the heading and ket and time before you start dear. Mrs Morton sent you a Shilling today at bridge. I enclose stamps. I hope you are quite well dear. Mis s Rowe is taking Ben and Peter will be staying somewhere here and coming in and out of the house. Will write you later telling you where we get to.

Much love and kisses from Mother

Auntie Ger is sending you some homemade toffee. Be sure and write back and thank her for them. Doris is going home. Nothing is settled about Dorking. Here are all the stamps I have.

There are few letters and cards to Peter from the continent.

Appendix 31
Family and Friends condolence letters re death of Lionel and Cecily

88 letters from friends neighbours and business people including
Hotel in Chale
and Lady and Edward Holland
About 30 from Family
65 Named Wreaths.

April 10 1933

Letter from Marian to Peter Haycraft Dibdin

20 Bruce Street Toorak

My dear Peter

It is hard to write when I could have so much better shown my sympathy if I were near. When you were a baby, I had been through a great sorrow & went to see you all.

Your dear Father took me by the arm & walked me away round the garden & spoke in his old immutable way to me & comforted me as I had not known to be comforted before. So now I feel as if I was still here & as I know he is with you in spirit – urging one to be brave & go on as he did. I think he was finer for his brave clean spirit than for anything else. The night before he was married I remember him saying that it was good for a man to know he had ancestors behind him it helped in difficult times. He made a speech that I have never forgot – with all his so called erratic character he had an intense fine character and high ideals. More at home know the last ten years of his life I have missed but I know him best as a boy and all his brave struggle against ill health & medical neglect. I think too his heart was nearly broken when Stanley died but he had a sure faith & belief that helped him to carry on. He may not have left you material wealth but he has left you a wealth of happy memories and your mother's faith & love

for him. I need not worry for Joan - I know she has so many dear relations & friends, but my dear boy, as I found your Father closer to me than anyone at times of terrible so keep Joan's closeness to you. She needs you to be that one she can always hold too –

You won't be able to write yet awhile but after your lives have readjusted, keep in touch with a word now & then or a snap or something even a post card. Good luck to your work I wish Uncle Joe were in England, He could have helped you most of all.

My love to you behave & be happy too, your dear mother would wish it. I knew & loved her since we were girls

Ever your loving Aunt Marian

The day I left the Studio after Uncle Paul left for Australia, your mother & Father stayed with me all day & looked after me. I never forgot her kindness. She was a real sister to me & I loved her & will always love her for it.

25 April 33

My dear aunt Ethel Garnett and Uncle Joe

Thanks so much for cable grand and kind thoughts. At the time like this I am afraid it is hard to find words to express myself. The whole thing seems like a ghastly dream, I can hardly believe it yet.

It was the best way for them I think, it would have been terrible if one had come home crippled for life and we had to thank god for this mercy. I will not write any more now, Joan is spending the holidays with the auntie dear at Saltburn and goes back to boarding school in a fortnight.

Much love to you or your affectionate nephew Peter

2 April 33

My darling Peter

It was so wretched being suddenly cut off last night. I shall be thinking of you darling on Tuesday, and know what you are going through now and what you will have to face then.

It hurts me so much to think you were alone when you heard that voice speaking from Cologne. Poor darling boy. You have been very very brave.

I think darling you will have to keep Joan's memory fresh by talking to her about them, she is very young, younger perhaps than you were at 13.

When you can spare a moment I would like you to send me Auntie Lettie's and Aunt Christine's addresses. I don't mean great aunt Lettie. If you could spare me that postcard photo of them both taken at Le Bouquet by the airline for a few days. I would like to have an enlargement made. 1 for Joan to take back to school with her and one for me. I could see you get it back safely darling.

I know how you love mother dear. Can you feel her sometimes near you're trying to tell you of the trust she leaves with you. I can. I think sometimes, we are getting nearer and nearer to that time when spiritual communications is to become possible. I am sure their energy is going on somewhere just out of our reach at present. Have get on as soon as you are given a clearance my darling so that another Dibdin can rise up and get on with the job, just like

dad did. He did not find things too easy either. Love from your old Aunt Edith

8 April 33

My dear Peter

Thank you for your letter and for sending me Aunt Lettie's and Aunt Christine had addresses.

I will write myself to the Dutch lady and try and get Joan to answer it as soon as I can. She hates letter writing and it is a bit of a task, still I will see she does it. You'd need not worry about her Peter dear. She is not fretting the smallest bit. I don't think she grasped it yet.

Thank you and Aunt Gertie for sending Joan's of things. I amfor next term.

Poor darling boy. I know what you have been through this last week, and my heart aches for you. Peter darling, stick tight to your Aunt Gertie and Uncle Lewis and you will never regret it. Their council will always be wise, unselfish and disinterested. Your Uncle Lewis is a sterling character and he has a fine brain which sees far ahead. I implore you not to forget this, darling for I am anxious about you. It is easier for Joan being younger and a girl. I would like you to come up to me for Easter, if you would not find it boring. Joan wants you badly. Go to Uncle Stan on Thursday and persuade them to bring along on Sunday.

Aunt Edith.

3 April 33

Telegram

John

Kualulumpur

Deepest Sympathy Love you and Joan

3 April 33

My dear old Pete

This is not going to be a long letter because I know, if or rather I don't know, I can't possibly visualise how terrible the events of the last few days must have seemed to you.

I only heard the terrible news from Mum tonight and I know nothing at all of what has been happening since.

Although I know is that I have lost a jolly fine Uncle and the best Aunt I could possibly have, and although this is really a very small loss compared with yours and Joan's, I want you to realise how terribly sorry I am and how deeply I can sympathise with you. I am not going to try and cheer you up old man, because I realise how impossible this is at the moment, but if this letter is any way helps you to bear up and be brave about it all, then I shall feel it has been done some good. Yours ever
Cousin

29 March 33

Dear Sir

I greatly regret to learn of the terrible tragedy in which your parents were involved.

I met your father some years ago, when he had some interests at Porthcawl, so I hope I may be allowed to sympathise with you in your grief.

Yours faithfully F G Dibdin

30 March 33

My Dear Peter and Joan

We are all so very upset about your dear parents and the boys and Lorna and I wish to send you our sincere sympathies.

Their loving kindness will always be in your memory as he will be in ours.

With all our love your Auntie Freda. ps. please give my love to Auntie Gertie

29 March 33

My dear Peter

I want to let you and Joan know how much and deeply I feel for you in this trouble that has come upon you. We can only console ourselves by realizing that the end must have been quick, and your dear parents will have been spared any lingering illness.

Nonetheless it is a grievous loss to us all, and to you two most of all.

You must try to think of them always at their happiest times, as they would wish you to do, and I know you are steadfast to endure, and have the heartfelt sympathy of all of your friends.

Please tell Joan we are thinking of her so much. Chris is most concerned for you both, and Hilda and Alan wish me to convey their sympathy to you to. With my love to you both,

Your affectionate it Christine

7 April 33

Chaplain's House

Dinapore B& O

My dear Peter,

God bless you and give you His strength and wisdom and guidance. You and Joan are constantly in our prayers and thoughts.

My dear love and sympathy to you both from your Aunt Margaret

8 April 33

Chaplain's House

Dinapore B& O

My dear Peter,

I just want to add these few lines to your aunts Margaret letter.

The full extent of your loss you were unknown will be able to measure and that's not now. It would be impertinent for me to write much. Remember that you and Joan have my heartfelt sympathy.

Try and think always of them so. Yours is the harder part to live worthy of their memory. God bless you and strengthen you my dear boy yours affectionately Gerard Cowham.

29 March 33

125 Honor Oak
Sydenham SE23

Dear Gus (unexplained)

Please be as sure heard of the deepest sympathy of my wife and myself in the terrible loss which your family has sustained.

Your affectionate cousin John de M Absolon
Son of John Absolon

3 April 33

My dear Peter

It seems needless to say how I sympathise,... But feel I must write to you also to tell you I'm have had so many calls of sympathy from relations and old friends. Your Cousin Edward Taylor-Jones has asked me to carry to you his deepest sympathy. You may have heard from father speak of him when he was at school at Margate.

With much love dear to you and Joan

Your affectionate Aunt Katie Dibdin

Katie Dibdin was sister of Lionel father's sister.

Taylor Jones was Lionel Grandfather's brother in Law

3 April 33

Norwich

Dear so are

I hope you will not be offended at me, in me taking the liberty in writing to you. As my father and all at home wish to express our deepest sympathy in your great loss of your parents. My father was born in Camberwell and if lived there until 11 years of age, and whose parents died when he was four and he quite realise your own travels to the full extent.

I am yours truly Mr. W.C.G. Dibdin

3 April 33

Ilex House

Ray Drive

Bridge Road

Maidenhead

My dear nephew and niece

Although I have never met you I feel I should like to assure you of my great sympathy in the terrible loss you have sustained, with the death of your parents. Let me know if there is anything I can do.

Up with the deepest that sorrow for you in your grief in which your cousin joins you. Believe me

Yours sincerely your great Aunt E Dibdin

2 April 33

All my dear Peter

I am not going to harrow you your feelings about things which are past and that cannot now be altered because I know all you are feeling and you know all I am feeling.

This however you will be able to remember with pride all through your life that by all who knew him, and there were many, your father was known to be a wise man and a gentleman and one who had never been known to do a shabby action during the whole of his life.

I knew him from 15 onwards and can vouch for that and would be glad to know that I had a half of his good qualities.

As for your mother she and I were red-haired kids together and when I was a small boy I used to regard her as my special sister and I think I have ever regarded her as such, so we have both lost a lot and must take our losses like sportsman.

As you know both the Haycrafts and the Dibdins stick pretty together to the other as families.

So you have always got to regard my family as your brother and sisters and our home as your home whenever you like to use it as such.

I shall see you both soon and week and then talk about your coming down here for a bit when you can manage it for a change of air and a bit of a run round with me in the car to different parts of the country.

Also we are all going up to the Lakes at Easter for four days and I'm may be glad of a spare Chauffeur over if you can come and help me.

Love to you and Joan from a us all your affectionate Uncle Bernard.

23 April 1933 P.W.D.

Abeokuta Nigeria B.W.A.

From Kingsnorth **To** Peter and Joan

My Dear Peter and Dear Joan

It is a sad letter I have to write to you, but we all have to go through this experience at some time or another, it is only the question of a few years. I was deeply grieved to hear that your dear mother and father had gone. They were my great friends and I shall miss them very much. I do hope you are both "bearing up" under the trouble, the pain of sudden parting will pass away in time.

I shall be pleased to hear how you are getting on in business and Joan at school.

Yours sincerely Kingsnorth

Comment Joan has obviously seen this in recent years and written Northy on it.

19 June 33

P.W.D.

Abeokuta Nigeria B.W.A.

My dear Peter

I was very pleased to receive your letter of 24 May, and thank you for your good wishes.

I am glad you have recovered and hope dear Joan does is in time.

I feel it very much, myself, especially, as all my boyhood friends have gone, all in the late war, School and university, and very good men they were. But as you say, we that are left have to carry on the good work.

And of course, I am out of touch with things at home, having been abroad many years now. Your Uncle Haycraft is an engineer and should be able to advise and help you. I suggest writing the President of the Institution for advice and help. Your dear father belonged to it, I believe. Please let me know if I can help you in any way, proposals, papers to sign a etc, as you as I am A.M.I.C.E. For abroad, a government job is the best, especially at these times, a small salary but a pension early at 50,. If you are interested, and going to carry on in of the engineering profession, you can let me know, later.

I shall not be coming home on leave until next year about June and I shall then be very pleased to have a chat with you, once more.

Everyone in this country is expecting great things from the present conference in London. I hope we shall not be disappointed. Business is very hard generally.

Please give my kind regards to Mr. and Mrs. Davis.

With best wishes to Joan and yourself, your sincerely Northy

3 April 33

Telegram
LEcompte LA
from Joe Ethel Garnett

Love to all.

3 April 33

from John Davis (first Cousin)

Dear Peter

Just a short note to say how terribly grieved I am to hear the news and to send Joan and you're my most heartfelt sympathies.

I am afraid it is idle to offer my help when I am so far away though should there be anything whatsoever that I can do let me know straight away.

Sometime later on let me have a letter telling me all about yourself and what you are doing.

Things are going very well here. I have taken up Chinese and am going there for a couple of years in about six months.

I won't write any more now old chap.

Remember that your loss is really their gain and therefore the future is the only thing that counts, for the while.

my very best wishes to you both love John

2 April 33

From DG Hulsbergen – last acquaintance of Lionel and Cecily.
De Woeste Hoeve Beckbergen

Dear Mr Peter Dibdin

This moment a week ago we said good bye and au revoir to your father and mother in Cologne. We had a very good time together and had been more in a week like good friends. Circumstances made us more as common acquaintances and I had several sincere talks with your father after the ladies went to bed.

I can tell you everything of their journey, the presents and souvenirs they bought and the intentions they had to repeat the trip. Your father visited with me a Rotary lunch in Venice and in Lugano. He told me a lot about you and it is because of the way he talked about you that I write you this letter. I know, that you will pass your last examination this year, that your father looked upon you as well as a good son, but already more as his best friend in times to come.

I am sure, because of the different qualities which you must have inherited from your parents, that you will fulfil your difficult task at this moment.

Maybe, that I am coming to London within a short time and in that case I will give you a ring.

Whenever you come to the continent and in the Netherlands I hope you won't forget, that I shall be very pleased to have you as my guest.

Nobody can give you any consolation with this loss and to offer one's condolences seems vulgar at this moment, but know, that your parents left here friends, who mourn their death.

Sincerely D.G. Hulsbergen

Appendix 32

Official Condolence Telegrams and Letters at the time of the Plane Crash

Copy of a Telegram addressed to Sir Erio Geddes, London, from Lord Londonderry, Secretary of State for Air.

28.3.33.

Have heard with profound regret of accident to City of Liverpool with serious loss of life. Please convey my deep sympathy to relatives of passengers, pilots and crew. The accident is the more regrettable in view of the unequalled record of safety established by Imperial Airways.

~~~~~

**Copy of Telegram received from M Pierre Forthamme, Ministre des Transports, Belgium.**

**28.3.33.**

Nous nous ressentons douloureusement du terrible accident qui vient de se produire a Dixmude et qui frappe si douloureusement l'aviation commerciale Anglaise stop.

Priere presenter aux familles des victims nos condoleances emues

~~~~~

Copy of a Telegram addressed to Sir Eric Geddes from the Private Secretary to His Majesty the King.

29.3.33.

It was with much regret that the King heard of the terrible accident to the air liner "City of Liverpool" and His Majesty deeply sympathises with the relatives of the passengers and crew and also with you and Imperial Airways. The King is aware of all the care and forethought expended upon air travel and knows how grieved you and your fellow Directors must be that after your remarkable record of safety such a disaster should have occurred. CLIVE WIGRAM

~~~~~

**Copy of a Telegram addressed by Sir Erio Geddes, London to the Private Secretary to His Majesty the King.**

**29. 3. 33.**

Will you please kindly convey to His Majesty with my humble duty my deep appreciation of His gracious message of sympathy with the relatives of passengers and crew who perished in the terrible disaster to the Air Liner "City of Liverpool".

His Majesty's sympathy with myself, colleagues and all in Imperial Airways is much appreciated.

We have been proud of our record of safety, and that makes the shock of this disaster if possible even more acute.

I will convey His Majesty's sympathy to the relatives of passengers and crew. ERIC GEDDES.

~~~~~

IMPERIAL AIRWAYS LTD.
TELEGRAMS: IMPAIRLIM, LONDON. TELEPHONE: VICTORIA 2211.
SAD/EGS/634,
AIRWAY TERMINUS, VICTORIA STATION,
(CONTINENTAL DEPARTURES)
LONDON, S. W. I.

29th March, 1933

Dear Sir,

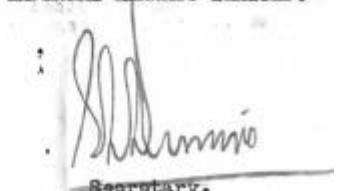
W.J.Dibdin Esq.,

31 Idmiston Road, S.E.27.

I am instructed to convey to you two telegrams of sympathy in your sad bereavement which have been received from Lord Londonderry, Secretary of State for Air, and M. Pierre Forthomme, Ministre des Transports, Belgium.

For and on behalf of IMPERIAL AIRWAYS LIMITED.

Yours faithfully,



Secretary.

~~~~~

AIRWAY TERMINUS, VICTORIA STATION,  
TELEGRAMS: IMPAIRLIM , LONDON. TELEPHONE:  
VICTORIA 22 11.  
IMPERIAL AIRWAYS LTD.  
(CONTINENTAL DEPARTURES)  
LONDON, S. W. I.

29th March, 1933  
Dear Mr. Dibdin,

It is my sad duty to convey to you in your tragic bereavement a message of sympathy from His Majesty the King which was addressed to me to-day.

This I feel I should do by sending to you the enclosed copy of His Majesty's telegram and you would I think also wish to have a copy of the message which I have sent in reply.

May I add to the telegram sent to you on behalf of the Board an expression of my personal grief for yesterday's terrible disaster.

Yours truly



Chairman.  
W.J. Dibdin, Esq.,

~~~~~  
W.J.DIBDIN & SON,

ANALYTICAL & CONSULTING CHEMISTS.
TELEPHONE: STREATHAM 0 140-

REGINALD AGLIO DIBDIN.

31 Idmiston Road,
S.E.27.

March 31 1933,

Sir Eric Geddes.
Chairman.
Imperial Airways Ltd.

Dear Sir,

On behalf of the relatives of Lionel and Cecily Dibdin, I wish to convey our deep appreciation of the sympathy expressed by His Majesty the King, and also our thanks to Lord Londonderry and M. Pierre Forthomme for their messages of condolence as well as to yourself.

In the midst of our personal bereavement our grief is extended in sympathy to all affected by this terrible disaster. Permit me, Sir, to add an expression of gratitude to the staff of Imperial Airways Ltd. for their kindness and helpfulness.

I am, Sir, Yours faithfully.

R Dibdin
~~~~~

**Appendix 33**  
**Letters between Joan Dibdin and Peter Dibdin 1933 to 1936**

**15/04/1933** from Patterdale Cumbria  
to Saltburn

**From Peter To Joan**

My dearest Joan

Sorry I have not written before, thank you so much for the leather case, you have made it very well. You must enjoy the riding, I will bring some plus fours for it as I have nothing here. Am sorry I have brought no jazz music. I forgot it I have no music at all with me. I do not know if I shall have a new racket. If so you can have mine.

Doris left last Friday for good. She has another job in Sutton, at Mayfield, Grange Road. It is the same house that daddy lived when he was a boy and married from, is rather funny don't you think that Doris should go there. Ben is staying with Mr. Rowe but we shall have to find a home for him next week. Where would you like him to go, his leg is much better now.

We are staying at a house at the foot of Kirkstone Pass near Ullswater. This afternoon Bubbly and Don and I climbed up a high hill to find that when we got to about to what we thought was the top we found there was some more to do, this was very very rocky so we had to crawl on hands and knees.

The old lady where we are staying is a quaint are all Bird. If the weather is good we expect to stay here until Wednesday. Then I would drive straight across from Penrith to Saltburn. Well I hope to see you on Wednesday.

Much love from your brother Peter

PS for cakes or sends his love to four cakes

**14/05/1933** To 18 Mulgrave Rd

**From Joan To Peter**

My Darling Pierre

So sorry I have not written before but I really haven't had time.

What has happened to Ben. I can't think why you don't give him or sell him to Beryl. I do think you might .

We had a tennis match yesterday and we won. I have been put on sub. For Florence in the tennis house matches.(May 15) I am not feeling very bright tonight and am writing this letter in bed. I have just got an order mark for talking in the Ref library this morning. And this evening while I was practising some tears came to my eyes because I was playing something that Mother played so beautifully.

How are you, did you manage to get that job at Morgan Baynes Clerk.

I have just had a good game of tennis this evening and may have a chance of getting into 14 and under match, but I don't think so. No more news dear. Give my love to Mr Spouse and everyone else in the office ( ask Mr Spouse how many nobs of sugar he has had lately)  
Your loving Joan xxxx Do come down soon

**16/05/1933** From Office L A Dibdin Victoria St. or Mulgrave Road

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

How are you enjoying school this term and how is the tennis. I hope you have started the violin, do you like it.

Aunt E came down last week. She looks very well. Aunt Lettie came to Reigate last night and I took her back and put her on the train at Sutton just after 11.00. I saw great Aunt Letty on Friday. She is keeping fairly well, but Miss South is ill and has to go to the hospital, they don't know what the trouble this.

Mrs. Smith has asked me to spend next weekend with them at Weymouth, but I don't think I can as I have to be in town on Monday.

I have a letter from Uncle Joe, I will show you later also one I sent you from Aunt Marian and I have many others I will show you later.

Keep well and work well and playing well

With love darling from your ever loving Brother Peter

**19/05/1933** From work address Mulgrave Rd

**From Peter To Joan**

My dearest Joan

I received your letter on Wednesday morning, it must have crossed mine.

Auntie E went back today and I went to Kings Cross with Aunt Ger and Geoff to see her off.

We all went to the theatre last week and Wild Violets. It was all about schoolgirls at school every thing they do..

Ben is at present with the Muirs but I don't think he can stay there for long. I don't think Beryl would be allowed to have him, you ask her. Jolly good being put as a sub, you must get in the team next time

It won't do, you getting order marks, you must see to it that, that it does not happen again.

I did not go to major Baines and Clark. I have not tried to. I may be going to town soon. Auntie Ger and Geoffrey have gone away for a week or so to the

lakes, and Uncle and I are left alone. He has borrowed the Unic and called it the Cumbus. He doesn't like it being so big.

Do you want your Mendelssohn, that Auntie Lettie gave you left, if so let me know. I would like one of the tennis rackets presses, you have you won't want two of them.

Joan darling bear up and go on playing that piece and play it well like mother did and as you know she would have wished. Remember dear that although we have lost them temporary there will be a reunion and it is not they we have to be sorry for but ourselves. They have done their work in this world and have been called to do greater things in another; although we have lost they have gained. And it is up to us to carry on the good work as we know they would have wished.

Cheer up old girl and hold a strong face as others have done before. All my love to you Peter

**30/05/1933** From Sutton

**From** Peter **To** Joan

My Darling Joan

I received your letter this afternoon thank you my dear. Thank you for the horses they are very well done. I think one is going to win the Derby.

It is difficult to get rid of Ben. I have asked Mrs. Berry if she knows anyone who would have him and she thinks she does, and may sell him for £4.00 to somebody in the Sea Lane. She will let me know tomorrow, as I am going down to Cornfield can clear up the house to let for three men from Sunday again. Maney say she wanted a dog like Ben, but I have heard no more from her.

On the other hand, I have the Muirs to have her, I said I would give him to them for nothing, rather than sell him to some stranger for £4.00. They are looking after him now. Well on Sunday night they were out all for a walk with old Dan and Ben, when poor old Dan was run over by an motorbike, he died within a short time. Of course of they were all very cut up about it, and poor old Ben was very sad at the loss of his pal. So you see they might change their minds now and keep him after this. Don't you think you would like Muirs to have him rather than anybody, I would.

Auntie and Jeff are still away and may be back on Wednesday so we will be able to come and see you, that was very kind of the Kerrs to take you out with them.

I say Joan keep Auntie Marian's letters and all the others. I would like to see them some time, I have some more for you to see.

John, you know is going to China for two years to learn Chinese, so we shan't see him for two years or so, he was due home in two years from last Christmas.

Tell me do you want me too keep you Mendleson little ornament on your bedroom mantelpiece, if so let me know.

Puss has quite settled down at the Redfords. I called for her over the fence the other day but she wouldn't even look at me as much as to say, who are you, I don't know you. She seems very frightened when she comes into our house. On Saturday nights we had a treasure hunt in cars, we started at Croydon and finished up at the top of Box hill, at about 12.30 AM. Sunday morning, we had supper there, about 30 cars in all, and after then eight of us in two cars drove down to Middleton and arrived at Cornfield at about 3.00 on Sunday morning, we got the blankets out of the airing cupboard and made the best of it. The four girls have the two double rooms between them and myself and the other chap call Brian made ourselves as comfortable as possible on two chairs put together in the lounge. The result was we did not get much sleep. The people opposite woke up and poked their heads out of the windows wondering what was happening.

In the morning they had a bathe and in the afternoon we went on a speedboat, about 50 miles per hour on the sea it was pretty bumpy.

Well dear I must close now as it is after 10.30 and I have to go to bed and get up in the morning and go to Bognor. All my love to you your ever loving  
Brother Peter

**06/04/1933** To 18 Mulgrave Rd

**From** Joan **To** Peter

My Darling Pet.

Thanks for you letter I will send the racquet press as soon as possible or can you wait until you come down. I tell you what I want. I want a photo album as you have a spare one with corners for the photo's.

Peter I do want you to keep my Mendelssohn ornament also the centre picture of "Notre Dame" and my big hanging picture over my mantelpiece of "the little girls and the kittens". Also any other nice pictures in my room Chris topher Robin Etc. I wish you could send me a shorthand book, haven't you got one in the office.

I have just written to Mrs Hulsberger the Dutch lady. Auntie says she might ask me to stay next holidays and perhaps you as well. It would be lovely if we could. If not I was thinking if there was any money going, for you and I to go to Chale say for a week or two. It would be very nice just you and I.

I am sorry the Hornet has got to go. I wish you could just "let" "Avondale" instead of selling it. I'm sure it would be just as good. Did you draw a horse for the Derby. There is here a girl whose father drew Heberinian the winner and I think he got something like £30000 (thirty thousand pounds).

I wish I could have been with you at Cornfield, who were the girls and the boy who slept ( at least lay awake) with you.

Will you tell me as soon as possible if you can come down next Saturday or Sunday, then I can ask Miss Burrows, and tell you what time I may be out. Can I go home half term? Did you get a note from Miss Burrows saying that anyone within reasonable distance may go home and a girl is going who lives in Dorking and quite a lot of the others. I am very sorry about Dan and I hope the Muirs do change their minds and have Ben. Beryl said she couldn't have him because they would not be able to keep him in although they all wanted him.

I am looking forward to playing tennis with you, my racquet is still marvellous, the strings are still as good as they were when I bought it.

Peter is your violin any good because Miss Maggs said it would be very nice if I had my own violin and she would string it up for me, that is if you didn't mind me using it. If it is any good would you bring it down when you come, also some "racquet gut reviver"

must stop now Your own Joan xxxxxx

**06/07/1933**

**From Joan To Peter**

Dearest Darling, Duck Divine

I am writing this to ask you exactly what I am going to do at half term. Can I come home or are you coming down. We had to give in our names today, and and say what we were doing and I had to say I don't know, but I must know as soon as possible.

How is Ben? Did the Muirs change their minds, I hope so.

Please don't forget the shorthand book. I was thinking, if we did not go to Holland or to Chale, it would be rather nice if you and I went down to Cornfield for about a week, that is, if it was empty. We should have to do all our own work, and if you did not make your own bed and clean your shoes and mine, I should be very cross with you and not give you any dinner. I could take a cookery book with me and get help from Mrs Verey. Must stop now Dear, no more time

Your loving sis Joan xxxxx

Give me John's address in Malay

**Comment** Chale is on the Isle of Wight . The family had spent a summer holiday there in 1932. No doubt happy memories of Joan. Lionel did painting of Shorwell Church

**06/08/1933**

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

Thank you dear for your letter; it doesn't matter about sending the racket press. And I will keep all the things you said if I can. I am enclosing two shorthand books as you asked, don't lose them will you.

Don't count on going to Holland, I don't think Mrs. Hulsbergen will ask you. I don't know who told you about Avondale, but I am afraid it will have to be sold as I did not draw a horse, but I went to the derby with somebody.

The people we went with to Cornfield were named Stone. I'm sorry I cannot manage to come down this weekend as I have a tennis tournament on. When is your half term, you did not say when it is. You may come home or I could come down, but you may only come home if other girls are going home. Let me know when half term is. The Muirs still have Ben but have not decided yet and to keep him.

Sorry my violin will be no good to you as it is cracked down the middle. I am also afraid that we cannot go to Cornfield and it is let until the end of August, and I have sold it after that, but Mrs. Berg says that she would like to have you to stay for a week in the holidays so I said that I was sure that you would love to do so.

Mr. and Mrs. Andre have moved up to Langcroft and I went to spend the evening with them last week. Geoff is going back to school this week end. It is very difficult living at Reigate after one's own home, I have a feeling that I am butting in, but never mind we must say nothing.

Uncle Bernard came down last night, I like Uncle Bernard don't you, he's a good sort. I am still kicking my heels about doing nothing and getting a bit fed up with it. What a pity that you are not a little older. Well all the best girl, keep fit all my love to you Peter.

**06/11/1933** From Ancaster House. To 18 Mulgrave Road

**From Joan To Peter**

Half term is the 17th Saturday till Monday 19th. If you will fetch me on Saturday I will be ready at 12.45 and come back to school on Monday at 6.30 in the evening. Are you going to the Tatoo on Saturday, I have never been. One or two of the girls are going.

My Dear Pet, I am older, now I have got the shorthand books and will help if you will let me.

I hope the Muirs change their minds.

Yours very own Me xxxxxxxxxx

**Comment** Enclosed photo of Miss Burrows.

**13/06/1933**

**From Peter To Joan**

My darling Joan

Many thanks for your letter. It will be quite in order for you to come home on Saturday next and I am to fetch you and take you back on Monday in the car. Isn't it terribly sad about Mrs. Hulsbergen loosing her little daughter. Sorry I have to go to the Tattoo on Thursday with the Redfords and the Ropers. Please excuse scribble I am in a terrible hurry and am still in the office and it is 8.00.

Very much love looking forward to seeing you on Saturday all love Peter

**20/06/1933**

**From Joan To Peter**

My dear Peter

How did you get on yesterday. I got back to school yesterday evening about 6.15.

Are you not keeping any of the furnishiture at Avondale. There are a good many good things in the cabinet all that china the best tea set was mother's wedding present wasn't it.

I did quite a lot of shorthand last night in bed. Why don't you tell the Muirs that if they will have Ben, he is theirs or have you told them. I hope you will keep that oil paint box, because I would like it at school next term and do some oil paintings. If you have a photograph album will you send me one with some corners to stick the photos in with.

Have you got any Diggings yet, I hope so. Give my love to all at Ridgeway Good luck dear your loving Jo xxxxx

ps. if possible will you send me a wooden pencil case about 4"x9"x1 1/2" (picture) please.

**07/10/1933** From East Court Woodmansterne Lane

**From Peter To Joan**

My darling Joan

Thanks awfully for your last for 3 letters. I do feel ashamed for not answering them before. I have there been so busy that I did not seem to find time to sit down and write.

Do you mind if we leave the photo album until the holidays and the shorthand I have not had time to ask Mrs. Grosse about.

I do hope you are keeping fit and doing well.

My new job is going fine awfully busy though I get down from town about 7.30 to 8.00 and often later, so do not get any time in the week.

I hear that you are going to Holland after the first week in August. I don't know whether I shall get a holiday this year. I feel I want to go away now. I am very comfortable with Mr. and Mrs. Andrews.

You will be sorry to hear that I sold the old Unic on Saturday so I have no car now.

I had a letter from Uncle Northy, he sends his thoughts and best wishes and he may be home from Africa in a year or two.

The last two Sundays I have been to tennis parties in the afternoon. Next Saturday we are having the Sutton and Cheam hospital fete.

As I was going to town in the train the other day, another train came alongside ours and was level and I saw Uncle Lewis sitting in the carriage reading his paper. He didn't see me rather funny. Must close now dear always your loving Brother Peter

**07/12/1933** On College of Estate Management Paper To Ancaster House

**From Peter To Joan**

My darling Joan

Thank you for your letter is dear to watch I suppose you want a new strap. I have been so busy lately. How nice to go and see a play, I wish I could.

I'm getting on alright I don't know what I am going to do yet.

You know that form that you have to sign, well it's got to be done again.

You ought to have had it by now but I am holding it up as there are one or two questions that I want answered before I sign it.

Keep well and have a good time always, your loving brother Peter

**08/10/1933** From Mrs Hulsbergen de Hulsenhof de Woeste Hoeve post Beckbergen

**From Joan To Peter**

My Darling Peter

I hope you got my card. It is lovely here with all the animals. I went up into the tower yesterday afternoon and saw the foxes bring fed, it is a wonderful sight. It is very funny because the driving wheels are on the left side of the cars and we drive on the rightside of the road. They have got a beautiful pianola here and the piano has a lovely tone, it is an English one.

There is a man, at least I think he is a boy, here, and he is awfully nice. He has his meals with us and looks after the farm too, he does speak English.

When you next go down to Carshalton please ask Mr Muir if he has done the violin or will it be ready for next term.

That was a real snub to Auntie and Uncle because I loved the sea and Geoffrey said that even if I said I did, I had not been on the sea where I could see no land round me. But it did not make any difference. He is jolly mean, he just

loves to BULLY me when I am up there. I do not mind being teased but I cannot and will not stand being bullied by a boy of seventeen or any other. He thinks too much of himself and he is often very rude to Auntie. Pat is quite different.

Really Peter dear you must find a place for Ben to go, it is like plomping a burden on your neighbour which he does not want.

I am going to feed Trudies mice now.

Must stop darling yours ever loving Jo xxxxxxxxx

**15/08/1933** From de Hulsenhof de Woeste Hoeve post Beckbergen  
To East Court.

**From Joan To Peter**

My Own Dear Peter

Thanks for the letter, I am so glad the Muirs will have Ben, I hope you did not badger them though -- no I am quite sure you didn't and woundn't, it not like you.

I am enjoying myself with "Jan Pleunes" that is his name (I love him)(that's a secret you must not tell anyone) he is twenty three.

Joyce Stanning my friend at school (she lives in Southampton) has asked me to stay for a week in September, I would like to go , but you need a holiday and I don't like to go for 2 or 3 and you have no holiday at all dear.

Why don't you go up to Auntie Crist? Saying that you don't think you can get away is no excuse at all. You must ask Mr Martin, is it. That reminds me I dreamed about Mr Martin the other night I will tell you after.

You can go to Middleton instead of me, because I can't go everywhere. I shall write to Mrs Verey and say that you are coming there for a week as I can't come. I know her address. That is if you won't do it yourself. If I go back to school next term knowing that you have not had a holiday I shall not do well then if I take the bad report back next term Auntie E will not give riding and hunting, because I did not have a good report last term and she told me that herself.

I shall be thinking you will get ill and overworked or you will have a nervous break-down. You are pale and thin now (Aunt Lettie is right) so you have a holiday, darling, even a long weekend might do good, and dear you must not work so hard at night. I would rather have you and be penniless that be rich without you (or penniless) so take my advice dear. I have been playing the piano quite a lot at least everyday.

I won't bother myself about Geoffrey, I hate him and he is not worth bothering about. The foxes are harmless so I am alright, but it is you I am worrying about.

I have just finished reading "Daddy Long Legs" you remember I saw the film a long time ago. I don't know if you did. By the way you will keep the Marjong won't you.

Now the dream, it was a scientific dream :-

Mr Martin was coming to see the Andrews and because it was rather cold his mother or wife ( I don't know which) made him have a hot-water bottle ( I don't know why) but he warmed { weighed } himself three times, when he got up in the morning, when he had warmed himself and when he went to bed.

Result

1st weight of Mr Martin = 6 stone

2nd weight of Mr Martin 6st 6 lb

3rd weight of Mr Martin 6 st

That was the end. Then in the morning I thought about it and decided that it had a conclusion (that is if you know any science) it is :-

That an object (rather an insult to Mr Martin) expands on heating and contracts on cooling. (this is an experiment with a method result and conclusion.) You will probably hear this dream twice because I told Mrs Andrews.

I did have to take the mothersills and they did not make any affect on me.

Auntie Ger tries to make out that it was because I took those that I was not ill, but she is wrong

Well dear, I think I must stop now. My news is getting exhausted, it need more petrol, shell I think, it is best isn't it.

Your sister for ever Jo. Xxxxxxxx

ps just three more things -1. the clouds have been howling all day and have just stopped. 2. I will write again soon dear 3. I have give up Jan as I like Pleunes better

**Comment** The film wasmade in 1931

**29/08/1933** From c/o Mrs Thomas 35 Queens Ave Meols Cheshire

**From Joan To Peter**

My Dearest Peter

I arrived safely yesterday and Auntie and Chis were just standing opposite the carriage. I had a 3/6 dinner on the train but it came to 4/2 as I had a glass of lemonade. I do think they might include a drink.

Last night after having put Chris to bed Alan and I went down on the prom in the rain and he showed me the baths, they are lovely. About four times as large as the Sugar bowl, just a few people were there. After watching them for a bit we went in and had a cup of coffee. By that time it was 9.00pm and they close at 9.00 and open again at half past for flood light bathing with different coloured lights all round. We are going one night soon.

I am so glad you can get down here next week. Alan started work yesterday after a fortnights holiday. It is now raining but is very hot.  
I bought some stamps yesterday but not note paper because Auntie said you can't buy very nice paper here.  
I hope you kept up to your saying and went to bed at 9.30 last night.  
I really must stop now as I have three other letters to write in a short time  
yours ever Jo xxxxxxx

**30/08/1933** 35 Queens Ave Meols

**From** Joan **To** Peter

My Darling Pet:

I have to write to you again because I haven't a postcard. I told Auntie you sang so she wants you to bring them. If you are here with Auntie Lettie it will be very nice.

I have got the Gramy on. Alan got a lot of modern records and as he hasn't a wireless he amuses himself with the Gramophone.

This is my new note paper 6d. It is very nice to write on. Do you like it ? 480 pages and 3d packet of envelopes. It is very difficult to write and listen to the gramophone at the same time so I will stop. This note was only to ask you for songs. My love to Mr & Mrs A  
love Joan xxxx

**Comment** Auntie Lettie, a Dibdin sister, was a professional singer.

**22/10/1933** To East Court

**From** Joan **To** Peter

Darling Pet.

Please will you tell me the colour of your sweater. Put something in your letter, to show the colour because if you say blue, well, I don't know which blue.

We had a kind of film last night, it was a sound film, some people came to it for up. It was about Stanley and Livingstone in Central Africa. After it we had a "Mickey Mouse" it was jolly good.

I have been put in the 2 VII netball 14 and under (age). Miss Burrows is letting us come home this half term if we can be fetched (the same as last term).

I have to go to the dentist about that time to have two teeth stopped. Bill (Hilda's Hubby) said they would need doing in about six weeks time.

Peter dear! Did I every congratulate you on winning your section in the Reigate tournament the Saturday you could not come up to Meols. Auntie Ger told me. Why did you not tell us you silly boy (man on Feb 26th). I suppose you cannot get down here before half term. Auntie won't come because she does not feel like the journey. But you could come with David couldn't you.  
How is Auntie, does she seem better ? Now she have had the operation.

Must stop now dear Much love your Jo xxxxxxxxxxxx

**Comment**

David was David Muir the boy next door.

**29/10/1933** To East Court

**From** Joan **To** Peter

Darling P

Thanks for your letter.

On Dec 2nd we are to do a play of Water Babies in Bexhill. I think everyone is going to be in it. This is an IMPORTANT NOTICE about it :- Tickets for the Water Babies on Dec 2nd Saturday at 2.30 and 8.00pm, may now be obtained from the Barker's Library Devonshire Road Bexhill prices 5/-, 3/-, 2/- reserved, 1/- unreserved. Miss Burrows very much hopes you will come preferably to both performances. If you like to send money there, one of the mistresses will choose your places on the plan and send tickets. Peter dear! Couldn't you come with Auntie Ger, stay the night in Bexhill and take me out on the next day (Sunday). I hope you are not working that day. Will you please send me a little piece of the wool of your sweater. Can't you cut a little end off that is sticking out, you see I want to know the thickness.

Please excuse such a short untidy letter, dear! But I haven't much time or news. Give my love to W & P

Yours ever loving Jo xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Is Cornfield empty ? Did you go there? When you come down will you bring your oil paints, you know you have some. I would love to do oil painting also bring the violin if finished please.

**11/05/1933** From Ancaster House Bexhill To 35, Lincoln's Inn Fields

**From** Joan **To** Peter

Darling...

This is a very important letter. Do you think you could answer it by return post. You see it is half term on 11th 12th 13th and Auntie Ger says that I may go home if some girls here can bring me so far and she would meet me as she does not feel like the journey down. No girl can bring so I was wondering if you were free on Sat and could meet me dear. You see I have to go to the dentist about half term and the school one, I have heard, several girls say is rather rough. If you can would you ask Auntie if you may have the car. But please answer this by return post ( a pc will do) I must know by Wednesday. If you can I will give in to Miss Smith the time that you can fetch me, as being 1.0pm to 1.30pm. If this is not right please say.

I have been put in the 2nd XI hockey team ( for Florence). We shall probable have the house matches soon. Did you understand about the play? I hope you



can come. I am in the very funny scene and shall be dressed as a man. It isn't really a babeish play.

I had a letter from Aunt Teen (Christine in Meols) yesterday, she sent me 2/- for my half term sweets.

I suppose dear, you know about the death of Mrs Burrows. I have a lovely photo of her it comes out in the school mag. I must stop now. Please don't forget the pc if you have time.

Yours ever "Bitter Mary" xxxxxxxxxxxx

What do you want for Christmas

**19/11/1933** From Ancaster House To East Court WoodmansterneLane

**From Joan To Peter**

My Darling

Thank you so much for your letters. Do you mean that you are selling "Avondale" next week. Don't let it go for too little, for it's a good old house.

Peter dear! Can you send me that old suit of yours as soon as possible as Miss Burrows has asked us to write for our clothes. Just a very old one will do, as small as possible. I think an old one of yours will do fine because you see, I'm growing fast. I'm nearly up to you.

We were going to have the house match yesterday but Miss Burrows decided to wait until after the play. I have got the wool for your sweater. If you could possibly give me your measurement round you under arms, it would be very helpful.

By the way, the suit does not necessarily have to match.

Please book a seat as soon as possible or there won't be any left. Can you get a car.

I don't see why Billy Muir can't lend you his. Hire one from a garage, oh!

Perhaps that would be rather expensive. Do try and get down. Well dear, I think I must stop now.

Yours always

Mary xxxxxxxxxxxx

Give my love to the Andrews and tell Winifred that Ben is on my mantle-piece.

**22/01/1934** East Court to Ancaster House

**From Peter To Joan**

My darling Joan

Many thanks for your letter, so glad you liked the violin case and bow. I did not know what to get you for your birthday and on Friday afternoon at 3.00 PM rushed up to the stores and got them just in time to give you on the train. That old wooden case was not very nice and the old bow was no good, Miss Muir said.

Did you get the £1.00 I send you at Meols John's £1.00 if not let me know.

Also it Lettie forgot your umbrella and so I sent it to you on Friday evening let me know if you get it, will you.

Grandma has left with me six volumes (books) of the "daily sketch my own library". What shall I do with them, keep them for you or send them to Bexhill. Will you write to me about it.

I have to wear my glasses most of the time but for dancing and romantic adventures I take them off, they get in the way at such times.

Yes we had a jolly party on Saturday there were 18 of us but none that you know, several medical students from Saint Thomas's Hospital.

We have quite a bit of dancing in the large room with the wireless and gramophone.

I met a little French girl who has come to St. Elinoss School Eastbourne. She is 16 and speaks English very well.

I rang up Uncle Gerard on Friday evening to find out how they were, he is alright but Auntie Margaret was in bed with two black eyes and a cut face.

The car seemed to be pretty well smashed up.

We'll have a good term and do well and join in everything there is, with all the other girls, don't get left out of things, good or bad, and let me know how you get on. Many happy days to come my dear your loving Peter.

**02/07/1934** From Victoria

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

Many thanks for your letter.

So glad you are doing well with the violin and the piano too I hope. That's right play the piano for the dancing when you have a chance.

I am sending the two papers you're asking for.

Oh, dear will you were right to grandma and thank her for the set of books she gave you. I have them for you. They are called "daily sketch my own library".

Will you do this straight away or she will be writing to know if you have had them and why you have not thanked her for them.

When is your half term.

I think I will come down if you let me know maybe with Aunt Ger. How about staying at Reigate before going to Saltburn. Let me know when you break up.

I am afraid I have not thought about Vivienne (Dowdy) or anybody else as far as that goes.

She is a very nice girl and I hope you keep friends with her, you never know.

Well must close now. Oh, we gave Ben a bath the other day in the big bath in the bathroom, he was so pleased.

All love dear Peter  
PS I wrote to Aunt Garnett and Uncle Joe for both of us for Christmas and the letter has just been returned to me it never got there I shall have to write again now.

**03/10/1934** From East Court

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

Many thanks for letters dear. Sorry I have not written, but have been so busy working and taking exams this week, all over now though. The drawing of the gipsy girl looks alright.

What about you taking up the cello, have you ask about it? If not could do then you can have mothers old cello at school. Besides the cello is a more natural instrument for the pianist to play than a violin, it helps with the accompaniment and left hand base work of the piano.

Uncle Bernard and Aunt Freda are coming to town tomorrow. I am going to spend Easter with them at Paignton in Devonshire not far from Torquay.

I gather from your letter that although you only touched the ball once you won the match against the convent.

You know that the PO you gave me back well I have opened an account for you in my bank, in my name and put the £1.00 in the account. If you have any other money you want to bank and save send it to me and I will put it in the bank. While it is in the bank it is making an interest of 2 1/2 %.

Hope you are well and that nobody has got scarlet fever. All love Peter

**15/05/1934** From the College of Estate Management

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

Many thanks for letters dear. Sorry have not written before.

I am sending the sweater and the colours already made up, so all you have to do is to finish the sweater completely and then work in the strip as on the old sweater, you will see how it is done.

Nobody else has caught the measles and Winifred is better now. Last Thursday evening I took her to Brighton and she stayed until Sunday. I went down again on Saturday morning and stayed the night; we went to a dance at the grand hotel which was very nice.

We stayed at the old ship hotel. On Sunday we motored to Seaford and Newhaven. After lunch we went on the Worthing and Littlehampton, stopped at Crawley. Bran also went to Brighton. I am better now and I think the weekend away did a lot of good. Last Tuesday night I saw Aaaunt Margaret and Uncle Gerard off at Victoria at 11.00. I think they had a pretty rough

crossing that night. Are you better from your cold, if you play a lot of tennis it will keep you fit.

I have joined the Sutton Town Tennis Club and hope to play next weekend. Tell me where you would like to make your permanent home. Is it at Aunt E or with Auntie Christine. Let me know this dear soon I must know what you want.

Let me know if everything is done about your summer holidays and where you will go.

All my love darling your loving Brother Peter

**24/05/1934** From Quintana

**From Peter To Joan**

My dear Joan

Thanks for your letter, how would you like to do the cruise, it is 13 days going to Madeira Las Palmas, Casablanca and Lisbon from Southampton and going ashore at these places and excursions are included. It leaves Southampton on August the 15th. Let me know at once dear if you want to do it, don't wait until the weekend to write as I shall have to book very soon if we go. I think it would be rather nice.

Could you let me have this sweater back as soon as possible as I have no other to wear for tennis.

Winifred and will come down one day, I will let you know when. All love darling Peter

**Comment** The address indicates that Peter has moved to working under a subcontractor Quintana

**28/05/1934**

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

Thanks for the card. Dear, I have been thinking about the cruise, it appears that you will be with a set of girls and in the charge of some lady which alters the idea of the holiday together, we won't be able to do much as we like, when we like, you will be restricted to certain things.

Besides those cruises are all very fine but there is not much rest about them, you have to be doing things all the time, which is very tiring and especially with such a crowd as 200 people.

I was thinking that it would be nicer for us to go off to Dinard or somewhere like that in France, the Brittany Coast, a fortnight there would I think do us more good than racing around in a boat where you will get little sleep and feel very tired when you return.

At Dinard there are lovely sandy bathing etc beautiful country for walking and motor rides if you like them and dancing.

We would stay at a very nice hotel and incidentally it would be cheaper than the cruise. Everything is arranged for us by Sir Henry Lunn including the journey. We could leave Victoria Station at 7.00 PM and be there for 7.00 the next morning. What you think of it. Let me know soon dear.

May I have the sweater back pleased as soon as possible. All love darling Peter

**06/02/1934**

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

Many thanks for the sweater dear. As regards the holidays I don't know what to do. Aunt Edith turns down going to France. She says you need a woman's care and advice, if you were 26 or 7 it would be easier, she says I could not have the experience necessary for the guidance of a highly spirited in the irrepressible young sister when I am the only just 21.

She says that when you are 18 and I am 28 it will be quite different and we will be able to go abroad by ourselves.

She is terribly old fashioned and she does not realise the capabilities of the modern youth of today. Apparently she will have you, there with a lot of Danish and German and Belgian girls. Much love darling Peter.

**Comment** An example of the limitations imposed by Aunt Edith.

**27/06/1934**

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

Many thanks for letter, I am very well and very busy, Mulgrave Road is closing down all rather part of it and I have a lot to clear out.

So glad you are alright, I am afraid the holiday is off this year. Aunt Edith doesn't want you to come with me, so that seems to settle it, we have to think of something next year.

I couldn't read what it was that you said the girl had broken and had put you back up over.

I do not think I can manage next Sunday, but propose taking a week holidays soon and could come down one day then.

I hope Florence wins the cup; you will have to pull up a bit to do it. I wish you all the best of luck.

You seem to give the boys a beating in the cricket, next time you will have to get them all out and get an absolute win.

How is the tennis going, I cannot have you beating me again. That was a terrible thing to do to defeat your elder brother at tennis. It is very kind of Ann to invite you to stay with her in the holiday. You go, write and tell it Edith and say you want to go if you do, do not leave it too late.

No, the people have not yet moved into Avondale. I don't know a girl named Jean Bishop, I suppose she is a new girl. Winifred sends her love

All the very best dear

Always your loving brother Peter

**Comment** The injustice of Peter not inheriting a proper position in his father's company

**07/06/1934**

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

I had a letter from Aunt E this morning, this is what she said

"I should like to Joan to come straight up to me by the 1.20 train from King's Cross on Friday the 27th which is the date she breaks up. We have some very jolly girls here from Norway and Belgium, Germany and Sweden and I would like her to enjoy all the bathing, picnics etc with them."

They are all girls from 17 to 25 years of age.

I don't know why you shouldn't go with Ann to stay, I think it would be very nice and this is the time to make my friends while you are at school.

I am going away in the last week in August for fortnight with David to Jersey. It is all arranged and E said you could not come with me. When you are 18 it will be alright.

Yes, I have a letter to show you saying that you must not spend too much money or else you will not be able to stay at Ancaster House, and also that you must not expect the pleasures and holidays you would have had, had daddy and mummy been still alive. You know that you and I share everything that they had and that the money is invested for you and that you will have to live on the interest from that money which is not enough for you to live on so you are using up the capital each year, until you are 21, when you will be able to handle it yourself, in the meantime the public trustee do it and pay for your school fees out of the money and as it cost about £220 per year to keep you and pay for school, you will have to be careful. Yes Mulgrave Road is been given up and everything with it. I wrote the envelope of last letter all love Peter.

**23/07/1934** From Quintana 86 Eccleston Sq SW1

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

I hear you are going to stay with Mrs. Spencer Smith. Will you let me know the train you come to Victoria on. All love Peter PS you may write to this address

**31/07/1934** To c/o Mrs Spencer Ssmith, Hallamgate,Staines

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

Many thanks for letter. I have written for the umbrella and hope to hear in a day or two.

I am looking forward to coming down next Sunday. Give my kindest of the regards to Mrs. Spencer Smith. All love dear Peter

**08/07/1934** To c/o Mrs Spencer Ssmith, Hallamgate,Staines

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

It was good to see you on Sunday and to see you looking so well. It was very nice of Mrs. Spencer Smith to ask me down.

On Monday, I went to Reigate to lunch; Uncle Stanley and Auntie Jean were there and ask after you, also Helen Ouin.

I arrived back just after midnight on Sunday night. I have been trying again to get a bust of Chopin. When you come up on a Friday, bring me the one with you and I will change it for a better if I can get it.

How much do you want to pay for it, let me know is 10 shillings too much.

The kindest regards to Mr. and Mrs. Spencer Smith all love Peter.

What were the names of the people who took me back?

**Comment** Helen Ouin four years older than Joan and married John Davis.

**09/10/1934** To the Towers

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

Many thanks dear for the lovely sweater, it fits beautifully. Thank you very much I think it is jolly good the way you have made it.

I arrived back on Saturday night, have had a very good time. I only stayed in Jersey a week as you know, Guernsey is much nicer in every way. The bathing was marvellous and the food quite the best we had on holiday really enjoyable, cooked by a French chap. Sark is very nice I've bathed there in Venus Bath a pool in the rocks which is 20 feet deep and every stone can be seen at the bottom it is so clear. I dived down several times and brought one

up. The people were very nice and I connected up with several of them who knew mutual friend, one lady with two daughters are great friends with a cousin of our cousin Haycraft at Newton near Porthcawl and thy remembered when daddy's started road making on the sand dunes. I do hope you are having a good time and keep well. What are the girls like you are with. What have you been doing with yourself.

When you come down next let me know beforehand and I will get the busts for you they are keeping them at of the stores for me.

Did you know poor old Mr. Rowe died last Wednesday week. He had been ill for a long time and would not have been able to recover. Poor Miss Rowe is very upset. I saw her yesterday. I think she will leave Grosvenor Avenue and go away now, they were so devoted to each other.

Avondale looks quite smart now painted black and white outside and the people are working hard with the garden. They have been in now nearly three weeks.

When do you go back to school let me know.

All love darling Peter

**21/09/1934** To Heathercote Castleton

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

I am sorry darling to hear about you, I did not know until yesterday. Why did you not write and tell me you have been unwell all the holidays, then perhaps you could not write because it would have hurt your wrists. I hoped dear by the time you get this you will feel much better.

The sweater is marvellous and fits perfectly. Thank you very much dear. I was going to see the school train off today but I had to go to the courts and was detained so missed it, I thought I would see Mr. Burrows.

Take care of yourself dear. I hope to have the busts when you come down. All love darling Peter

**18/10/1934** To Ancaster House on Quintana & Co notepaper

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

Thank you dear for your letter is. Poor old girl having to have your tonsils out, it is not the nice thing at all times and it will put you back in your work for school. Yes I am afraid it will mean staying in bed for some time afterwards, not just for the reason that you will have your tonsils out, but because of the ..... which otherwise might turn sceptic and infect the other organs and the heart and make them a weak. You do not want to become one of those persons

who have to go throughout life suffering from weak heart and having to give up all sport and anything that needs a little energy.

We don't know yet when we can get you into Saint George's Hospital, we have to wait for Miss Posy to get you a bed.

I am going to discuss with Miss Thrupp today, this afternoon so will know a little more about things then.

Auntie Ger has very kindly invited you to stay there after you come out of hospital, but you will have to lie on your back, you see dear you must, you have got to be so careful now at your age when you are a developing into a woman, and we don't want you to become an invalide, which is possible unless the greatest precautions and care are taken it now.

I will send you the Busts as soon as poss, no darling you will not be able to go back to school until next term, if all goes well that is certain. it is unfortunate as it will put you back so. Never mind the old girl, we have all sorts of troubles in this life, and the best way is to keep smiling and make the best darling Peter

**29/10/1934** To Ancaster House

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

I hope you receive the vast safely, are they all right. The small one is Chopin, it is was 5/6, it is the best that they could get me, the other was a gift from a friend of mine. I could get a beaten bronze one of Chopin . It is only one sided as it is in a picture frame. This sort of thing.

It is like a picture and it is made of beaten metal and has raised surface like the King's head on a penny but more so. They are 12/6 each.

I stayed at the Muirs for the week and they are all well and very sorry to hear about you. Ben is very well, David and I took him in the park and he has a fine scamper around and would go into the water and get his legs dirty.

Yesterday afternoon we walked over to see Grandma. She was in the bath so we had to wait outside until she dressed. She says if you do not want those books perhaps you would like to give them to your cousins Mary, Christine and Hugh. I could take them over to them as a present from you. How do you feel now, any better. It has turned very cold now although the sun is not. Well must end now dear and catch the post. All love darling Peter

**23/11/1934** To Radcliffe Ward St Georges Hospital

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

How do you feel today? I hope much better dear. Will this do I could not get plain paper so I thought that the small squared would be better than lined. I do hope the grapes were alright, were very sweet.

I am very busy and have to go to Wandsworth now. And all love darling from Peter

**12/08/1934** To Ancaster House

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

How do you like being back at school, take it easy and don't go and get ill just before Christmas.

If we go to Uncle Bernard's what about your clothes, have you them all with you, you don't want to be wearing the school clothes at Nottingham and you may want a dancing frock, don't leave it too late before thinking of these things.

Have a good wind up of term.

Which day do you break up.

I have sent a letter to Aunt Marian on the Australian mail, it leaves today and should get there on the 20th of December. Write me soon dear all love Peter

**01/01/1935** From East Ct To Heathercote Castleton Yorks

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

A very Happy New Year dear. I am so glad you enjoyed your stay at Nottingham. I did the same.

I shall be seeing Uncle Bernard on Friday or Saturday at the match at Twickenham. I hope you're Trunk arrived alright.

I had a very late night last night 4.00 am. Went to a dinner and dance with Winifred and Paul and several other people at the Aro Hotel. Some of our party went up in an aeroplane over London. We had a very jolly time. The Weston Brothers came down to do a turn.

I am going to Auntie Ger on 9th they are having a party or something. I bet it's pretty cold at Carshalton now.

I only had about 3 hours sleep last night. Have just finished my first lunch for the New Year. Hors d'oeuvre, Fillet of Whiting, Roast Turkey, Sausage stuffing and sprouts and large Christmas pudding and cream.

It quite warm here all rather muddy. I suppose you sat up to the sea the New Year in. Did you listen to the wireless. All love dear from Peter

**22/01/1935** To Ancaster House.

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

Very many happy returns of the day, it doesn't seem 15 years ago since that morning that you first made a noise and I saw you in the little crib. All of the

same it is, and many things have happened since then, now you are becoming a woman, no longer the child.

Keep it out der, and keep going ahead as you are now, as everybody speaks so highly of you, good luck in the future and God bless you.

I am sending you the hockey pads as a present as I did not know what else. Use them and play well. I hope you get into the team, if you do you will find it will help you in other things.

The petticoat I am sending also . Grandma was so pleased to see you and also great aunt Letty and Katie. I saw them on Sunday. Billy Muir is getting married on 29th of June.

Ben is just the same he is going to see another Vet today but I don't think it is any good. I went to see Miss Grosse last night we are having a party on the 27th of Feb.

With all love darling and best wishes Peter

**Comment** Aunt Kate was W.J.Dibdin's youngest sister 6 years younger.  
Joan's Great-aunt

**30/01/1935**

**From Peter To Joan**

Thank you for your was of the 30th instant enquiring after Miss Katie Dibdin. Do you not know who she is. She is your grandfather's sister. She and her sister Mrs. Jones Mrs. Jones are the only ones left of their generation besides miss someone. I hope you receive the package all right. Peter

**Comment** Mrs Jones was Mary Emily Dibdin, a year older than Katie

**30/01/1935**

**From Peter To Joan**

My Darling 15 year old Baby

With this I enclose the Picture Goer you asked for, the pads I am changing, but the stores are out of stock of ladies at the moment, they expect come in tomorrow, Thursday, so I will post them straight away.

You will be sorry to hear that Ben was put to sleep on Monday the something got worse so I took him to Stowe Young who saw Ben that was Saturday. He suggested taking him to the royal veterinary college in London on Monday morning I took him up there with Winifred, we left him there and I saw him go to sleep, he didn't feel anything.

Poor Winifred is so upset and cries most of the day. She loved Ben more than anything else in the world. He is being cremated and his ashes to be buried in the garden with the following inscription on the stone

"Ben 28th Jan 1935

in the light I will always remember him

and in the darkness my darling

I will never forget."

We had a heavy fall of snow on Saturday and Sunday. Many people go snowballing on the downs. It is still thick on the ground and freezing.

I have been at Leslie Howard House at Westcott all this week or rather last Wednesday Thursday Friday, There is a picture of him in the Picture Goer.

We are having a party on Saturday, David and Winifred upcoming. I have to get out some games, it will end up with a dance if I expect. Must close now dear all love Peter.

**13/02/1935**

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

Many thanks for letter. I am glad the pads were all right. I have put 7/6 in the bank for you. That is very charming of Ann I hope she is well. Dear I don't want anything for birthday don't you bother about that.

Sorry to hear about the cold but that is all over now I expect. We had snow the other day quite a heavy fall. I saw the Scarlet Pimpernel on Saturday with Leslie Howard, very good show.

Last night I went to a dinner at the Holborn Restaurant. The Valuers Institution Annual Dinner as the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Shorland , it was very good. They have asked us over when you return from school, and want you to bring your music and my songs next holiday, they live in Dorking and are very charming people, you would like her. Excuse the awful writing and mistakes it isn't because I had too much to drink last night.

I shall have to talk to Winifred about coming down to Box hill.

I had a letter from Auntie E the other day. I will enclose it with this letter, will you let me have it back. She also sent a photo which is very nice. Must close now dear all love Peter.

**18/02/1935**

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

Thanks for letter received this morning, enclosed please find PO value 5/- as requested.

You must be more careful how you go about and not fall downstairs you'll break your neck one of these days.

I spent the weekend at Muirs, went to Stsburys is on Saturday evening with David.

I wonder if you have received your piano accordion yet. How is the music going. Hope you've come down soon. Much love Peter

**26/02/1935**

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

If thank you dear for your letter and wishes good. I am off sorry that Anne had an Order Mark, I told her to go in and not to get wet. Why didn't the mistress come out and tell her to go in instead of letting her stay outside if she knew she ought not to.

We got back to Banstead at 8.45. It took 1 3/4 hours from School. I drove all the way and we did not stop. What rain, it simply poured all the way. We fetched Otto directly. Paul had gone to bed.

As you see this letter was started on Tuesday morning. It is now Thursday evening, I had to stop and have not had a moment to go on until now.

I met with Paul at the Central Hall Westminster last night choral work. We had snow yesterday quite heavy. Must go dear have to go to lecture now all love Peter

**13/03/1935**

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

Many thanks for your letter last week. I have been so busy last week I simply did not find time to write.

Otto is very nice and Winifred loves him. He is about half of the size of Shanghai. Directly we get to bed he starts putting up an infernal dim. He goes to the kitchen door and batters his feet on it as hard as he can, this sort of thing continues for a long time, intervals of about 2 minutes each lasting 1/2 minute. He, in the meantime between these regular bombards, he rushes round the room upsetting everything in his way, baskets, fire guards etc.

I saw the "Creaking Chair" on Saturday night at the Fortune theatre. An amateur show not badly done.

Saw Aunt Letty Sunday morning she has had a bad for about six weeks but is getting better now.

Has Aunt Ger been to see you this term, I heard she was with you last Sunday week.

David is very well. I had tea on Sunday there and we had some music.

Tell me dear when are you taking your exam, is it this month.

The weather is so cold here, it has been freezing for several days now, the pipes outside are frozen and I have to let the water out of the car every night. Have been so busy in the office for last few weeks. Write and tell me all the news and when your exam is dear. Must close now all love Peter

**26/03/1935**

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

All the very best of luck and success in the exam. It will be a neat thing if you passed this one as I am sure you will. Take it naturally and don't rush into things. All the very best of luck old girl.

I have not heard anything from Auntie E for months. I was at Reigate on Sunday Dick was there all seemed very well.

Otto is growing fast and scraps with Shanghai most of the days. He got hold of one of my new socks that Auntie Lettie made me and has eaten the heel right out of it. He has done the same to the other up.

It is a perfect day and very warm, I must close now to catch the post all love Peter

**04/02/1935** Written on old PippBrook Mill Estate, 18 Mulgrave Road paper.

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

Many thanks for your letter. I am so glad you liked the exam and got on well with the examiner. It makes a lot of difference who you get.

I'm afraid I will not be at home much as I have to be in town every night and don't get back until about 10. It 30.

What time does your train arrived, let me know Joan. I will have to stay in town on Fridays until I come down as Winifred will be out late perhaps you could go to Mrs. Middleton. Much love Peter

**Comment** This was one of the 9 estates known to have been developed by Lionel Dibdin

**05/03/1935** To Castleton

**From Peter To Joan**

My Dear Joan

Many thanks for your letter; I am so glad you had a jolly Easter. School next week.

Aunt Lettie is going to be married and she has asked me to tell you in order to save her writing. It is to be very soon, to Mr. Frewin. Perhaps you will write to her at the hospital. She is moving from Norwood in two weeks. The weather is just like summer days, I only hope it lasts over the weekend.

The crowds in London are tremendous everywhere you go. And the declaration grows more every day.

The floodlighting is wonderful. Let me know in good time what you are doing about returning to school, don't leave it to the last minute. All love Peter.

**Comment** Event 6th May 1935. King George V Silver Jubilee.

**05/11/1935**

**From** Peter **To** Joan

My Dearest Joan

I hope you have settled down all right now at school and have lost the cold you had.

I expect you were rather tired when you arrived.

That evening the I saw the King and queen at the palace, also again on Thursday night I saw the whole family. Winifred and Davies and his sister came up we got into such a crowd that we simply could not move, many of the women were fencing and had been crushed.

The floodlighting is really wonderful. I'd told you that Aunt Lettie was getting to be married soon didn't I.

The weather here is lovely, so warm. I am just leaving the office now so must close to catch the post and go back to lunch. all love Peter

**27/05/1935**

**From** Peter **To** Joan

Dearest Joan

Many thanks for letter. I'm afraid I have been rather bad and writing of late but have been so busy. How is the tennis going. I enclose the address you asked for its

Miss M. Simmons 42 Crescent Belmont, Sutton, Surrey

I'm afraid I shall have to close now dear so much to do, lectures every night and all that. Much love dear Peter.

**06/12/1935**

**From** Peter **To** Joan

Dearest Joan

Will you write by return post. What a time are you able to leave on Saturday. If you can get a way about 9 or 10 in the morning, Geoffrey can be there with the car and bring you back to Reigate for the weekend.

There is not much time to arrange so you must write straight away. All love Peter

**Comment** Geoffrey is Gertie's son

**19/07/1935**

**From** Peter **To** Joan

Dearest Joan

I have bought two seats on the 1.20 from King's Cross for you and Anne. They are opposite corner seats on the window side of the train.

I am afraid there is no 10.15 from Bexhill, there is a 10.10 Victoria 12.11.

This is the latest train you must catch. How long is Ann staying at Saltburn. I hope you have a good time. My exam starts on 30 July for three days, then I have a week's holiday until the 10th of August. I also have the first fortnight in September.

Will you try and keep the luggage as small as possible on Friday as it will be difficult to cross London if you have large cases. All love dear Peter

**Comment** Peter's crisp organisation skills with his gentle caring approach are a delight to observe.

**21/08/1935** c/o W.B. Haycraft Cumberland The Point Chapel St Leonards Lincoln

**From** Peter **To** Joan

Dearest Joan

I would have written before, but things here are keeping me on and ago night and day.

There are three away from the office so I get away late every night, then I am busy in Sutton in the evenings. Sunday was the best day even though half of the day was wasted. I have to go to Chichester on business that finished at about 3.00 PM. Went on the ..... had lunch and a bath.

How are you enjoying yourself I .... with D .... was with you well.

Let me know how you are all getting on.

My love to you or Peter

**10/03/1935**

**From** Peter **To** Joan

My Dearest Joan

Many thanks for your letter, it appears that you are not going to do much work this term as you say that you have not started yet, but seriously Joan this is the time in which you must work harder than ever before. I take it you are now definitely starting on a course for the school certificate (SC). I remember from my own experience that this is the important time to get down to work seriously if one is to have the slightest chance of passing the SC.

You are starting a on a course of work which is to set out to cover the standards of the SC and you are only given a certain time in which to do it about three or four terms, the last term is nearly all revision work. And if by



chance you should miss something due to absence or inattention there is no time to go over it again. And you are going to be the loser not the teacher. So it is up to you dear to get down to it now and if there is anything you do not understand don't be afraid to stand up and say so..

I am telling you this dear because I know from my own experience and I do want you to get SC.

"I am glad you have been made a prefect but do not do too much ordering about because if you do you will not be liked and they won't have you as a prefect. .. The idea is to set an example to others, and to have respect and control over your juniors without being a schoolmarm or whatever it is you call some of the old teachers you do not like. I do not know whether I shall be able to be present at your confirmation, but will make my best endeavours to do so, I should not like to miss it.

When Auntie Gertie and John return from Aunt Edith I am going to bring John down one Sunday. Please thank Ann for her sympathies.. There is a lesson for you . See what happened to me.

On Monday I am due to commence my new duties under His Majesties Treasury in the Office of Commissioners of Crown Lands in Whitehall. That is why I doubt about Dec 11th.

I bought some silk pyjamas the other day and wore them 3 times and then Otto took the seat right out of them. They are now a very expensive car rag. I had to parade last night in my new Russian ones.

All love darling Peter.

**Comment** Good to have a brother giving such caring advice. Presumably the sympathies are over his exam results.

**25/10/1935**

**From Peter To Joan**

My Dearest Joan

Many thanks for your letter, so sorry I have not answered it before, have been so rushed.

Very busy now on the new job making plans of under sea quarries (Coal mines) studying 3 to 4 miles out to sea.

I shall be coming down to Bexhill at half term and on Sunday morning and will bring John and Auntie Ger. I did not really mean that you were not working, I was pulling your leg, but at the same time this is the important time for you to do your best.

Must close now dear to catch the post. Look out on Sunday November 3 dear all love Peter

**Comment** By now Peter is working for the Crown Commissioners

**29/11/1935**

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

Many thanks for your letter received this morning. Thank you for reminding me of the ..... I had forgotten.

Will you tell me your program for Wednesday December 11 and what time I should come. I have not heard any more from Aunt Ger about Christmas. I have been very busy of late and little time in the evening, but things are better now.

Tell me dear what is it you would like for Christmas, I haven't the faintest idea what you would like. You are growing up and no longer like the things that you used to, so be a good girl and tell me, or perhaps you could rather have the money to spend as you please.

How are you getting on with the confirmation class.

All love dear Peter

**12/06/1935**

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joan

Many thanks for your letter. I have had an invitation for tea on Wednesday. I have written to Mr. Burrows to say I will come down. So glad to hear Miss Brightman wants you to play. Also Miss B tells me a about your good conducting and the winning of the "House" singing competition. Very good Joan keep it up.

Please excuse the scrawl of this letter but it is so cold that my hand won't keep still.

Went to a dance last night the Rugger Club at the Drift Bridge.

For Christmas, dear I should like a blue tie, what do you like please tell me and what, are you going to get for John and the other two boys also Auntie and Uncle. Let me know what you think. I am writing to Uncle Joe and Auntie Margaret from a us both. I thought of sending a cable to Australia at Christmas Eve. I will try and get down .....on Wednesday love Peter.

**02/04/1936**

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

Many thanks for your letter. I am so sorry I did not write for your birthday although I remembered it.

That's very good to be a head prefect, that means you takes on certain amount of responsibility.

I have ordered the book and will send it when it arrives as a rather late birthday present of which I hope you will make full use of.

I have heard nothing from Riegate since you left there or from anybody for that matter except grandma who is sending you 2/6 in stamps. I have been helping her to buy a new wireless set.

We had been slack at the office since the King died. I was present at the proclamation of King Edward and I watched the funeral procession from a balcony in the Mall. It was a wonderful sight and took over an hour to pass. I wish you could have been there.

Winifred and Paul had some seats in Piccadilly and had to climb over roofs of buildings and down fire escapes to get to their seats. They left by train at 7.20 having refused a lift in my car and reached their seats at 10.15.

I left by car at 7.55 and arrived at 8.35.

We had a party on Saturday night about 24 of us in all. I made about 40 mince pies of. It went on until about 2.00 AM, after the same, we had dancing.

The weather is getting much colder. I think we may have some snow. If Auntie E starts making any more plans for you I should say "well what does Peter say about it ". I hope you are keeping fit. I may come down soon one Sunday.

All love dear from Peter

**Comment** Vision looming of the clashes with Edith

**27/02/1936**

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

Many many thanks dear for the nice present of 50 fags. You should not have spent the money.

I enclose the short note the Company band suit and the gray bags, I hope you can make them fit.

I had two ties from Winifred and Paul and 25 fags from Otto Mada.

I have had a holiday all this week. Spent the first two days decoking by car, took Wilfred to see Charlie Chaplin on Wednesday.

Do you remember Uncle Northy. How fond he was of you down at Portcawl.

I'm sorry to have to tell you that he died after a very severe operation in the cottage hospital in Abrakuta, Nigeria on the 28th of December last. With all love Peter

**Comment** A sixteen year old buying her brother 50 fags!!

**20/04/1936** To Castleton

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

If I was am sorry to hear about the measles when did you get them, you were lucky enough and two have had them so a mildly.

I expect by this time you are feeling quite fit again.

We had an excellent Easter in Paris. On Friday we had lunch out of doors and we did not wear coats the whole time.

The crossing going over was pretty bad. All the crockery was broken in the kitchens and it was impossible to stand up without holding on tight. Once when I was on the top deck I let go to go down and was soon shot across the deck receiving a nice bruise on the eye.

We travelled all night arriving in Paris at 6.00 AM. Are you playing tennis this term if so how is your racket, don't get a new one, but have it restrung, if so let me have it done for you. It will be better than it was when it was new.

I have just had mine done by a friend and this will be its fourth season. Let me know what you're doing about it.

Always your loving Brother Peter

**27/04/1936**

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

Many thanks for letter.

You remember my old Spalding racket that you liked so much, it had rather a thick handle, well I have had it restrung for you and you can take it back to school with you on the 5th of May. I don't expect that the one you have at school is any good now if you left it in the pavilion.

Tell me about and the measles. When did you get them and what did you do.

We start tennis on Saturdays so I will try the racket out then if I play.

Give my love to Auntie E and Laura.

Always your loving Brother Peter

**14/05/1936**

**From Peter To Joan**

Dear Miss Tramp

Enclose please find one pair of old or tramping "Gray's" which I sincerely hope will meet with your entire satisfaction.

Should you require anything further, I shall be only too pleased to supply and to furnish you with the articles on hearing from you.

Assuring you of my best attentions at all time. I am your obedient servant P H

Dibdin PS so glad the request is as you like it Peter

**06/08/1936** To Ancaster House

**From** Peter **To** Joan

Dearest Joan

I'm afraid I am unable to let you have the dress perhaps Mrs. MacPherson can find you one.

Yes I wrote Miss B last week's saying I would bring you back with me to Reigate on Saturday.

It will not be possible I'm afraid for me to reach Bexhill until the afternoon as I must be in town in the morning, but will try and get down to you as early as possible. So look out for me or bout 3.00. All love Peter

**07/08/1936** East Court to Ancaster House

**From** Peter **To** Joan

Dearest Joan

Many thanks for letter. I hope and felt all right for the exam and did well.

Enclosed please find pro for five shillings as requested. I am afraid that photos I took were not much good, not worth sending.

I'm surprised you have not had decent weather, we had have had it very hot in up something. I am very busy at the office as so many people are on holiday and I have to do two people's work as well as my own.

Tell me have if you bathed in the sea yet, because of next time I come down I should like the bathe.

I have not put your name on the PO in order that you may be able to change it with anybody.

With all love dear Peter

**Comment** Last Letter as Joan left School at the end of the next tern in London with easy access to Peter.

**Appendix 34**  
**Letters between Joan Dibdin and Peter Dibdin 1936 to 1943**

**25/08/1939** 325 RE Camp Rowhook Station 3 Attachment 6 To Joan at 95 Queen's Gate.

**From Peter To Joan**

Here we are back again.

Same old crowd. Arrived about 10.30 last night with the rations, whatever. I am not at the above camp, you remember the one, but on detachment you remember that fellow running that night from the chequers and we gave him a lift to his site. Well that's where we are,, the same site and the same little Fellow was here last night. They left early this morning. Have not yet taken any clothes off. They have built the hut here now.

Most important my sleeping bag left behind could you get it down here somehow or by post. We look like being here at least two weeks. Love Peter  
Can you let office know my address for letters to be forwarded please.

**09/02/1939** 325 RE Camp Rowhook Station 3 Attachment 6  
To Queensgate.

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

Thanks for sending the clothes and sleeping bag dear, not that I get much sleep in it, there is also a little time. Have to do 2 hours air entry every night, after the night it is 1.00, up at 6.30 to 7.00 and work again until dark with the only one hour's break for beer or two down at the local at Runswick. The King's Head

Could you forward the back door key of number 56 per to Whitaker Rd Sutton to Mr. Forde. I have sent him the front door key and told him the other will follow. With regards to the other house number 54 it is now vacant. I enclose the keys herewith. Would you see Captain Hugh Hind of Lewis Hind and Son of Sutton Estate Agents personally and ask him to collect the rents of number 24 and 26 and number 56. his rent is not due until next Friday. Also ask him to endeavour to let number 54 which is now empty on the same terms as Mr. Forde has taken number 56. You can copy of terms from the letter in the file signed by Mr. Forde on the 23rd of August last. If Hind will do all this, let me know and I will let the tenant know that the rent is to be paid to of the agent until further notice.

I enclose a letter of application for number 54 from a Mr. Andrews or somebody would you passed this over to captain hind to deal with if he takes on the job.

I am writing this to Queen's Gate as I do not know where you are, perhaps, you are at Reigate. If you are still in town gets out quickly to Gertie's or Aunt Edith's. The name of this place we are at is Hoopwick Farm between Rowhook and Rudgewick. If you come down here sometime I should like my camera. Of course you could not come into the camp. Let me know where you are. Love Peter

I am writing this on sentry I have no other time as fast as one job is done there are is another waiting to be done.

PS. Please put the keys on a proper label before giving them to Captain Hind.

**09/07/1939** Hoopwick Farm Rudgewick Sussex  
To Joan at Gertie.

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

Sorry I missed you Tuesday. I saw Captain Hind in Sutton. Can't write much just off to had a bath.

Leave has been cancelled until weekend. Hope to see you at Aunt Gertie's Saturday afternoon or Sunday. Cannot say for certain which. I shall want to get at my brown trunk from the office. Also will you have Whittaker Road houses blue file handy. Love Peter

**09/11/1939** From Hoopwick Farm

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

I enclose cheque for £5.00 herewith, don't spend it all at once.

I got back just after 630 last night it was all right. I should be a away again on Fridays, all being well, don't forget the land army. If you'll write me here as above, address letter to me in my private capacity. This is an official address, should you give my address to anybody else give the full army description.

2088311 Sapper P.H.Dibdin

325 co. RE Camp

Rowhook Horsham

Love Peter

**10/06/1939** To Joan at Gertie's

**From Peter To Joan**

Many thanks for the find supply of fresh fruit darling also for the cigs and washing things. Just came at the right time. Shall expect you Sunday at noon and will be able to come out for the afternoon. Will you try and bring down the writing case with the certificates inside, the one I said take care of. Tomorrow I go to Cranleigh School to rugger.  
Love Peter

**11/09/1939** Rowhook To Joan at Granville Place Portman Square

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling

Many thanks for letter, so glad you arrived back without trouble.

It was very nice to have you down for the weekend. You must come again sometime. What a night that was.

Barrett gave me your message about Thursday night next, unfortunately all my leave has been cancelled so you see it is no good. I shall have to wait now until we get the seven days, if at all. The two Mitchell Brothers Reg and Charlie have been taken away ill to Dorking with temperatures of 101 and tummy aches.

We have been on guard alright now through being short and more to do by day. The M.O. has ordered that the camp be moved to a dryer spot, but not while we are here we hope, we have enough to do without having to move the whole camp.

We have us stuck up with the mud all this time and another week won't hurt us. Well must close now to go out in the rain on guard so cheerio for the present dear

love Peter

**17/11/1939** Rowhook To Joan at Granville Place Portman Square

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

Have no time to right now.

Have been transferred to Dunsfold as section driver. Do about 60 miles a day taking stores and rations around to sites.

I expect to go two DB next Thursday for seven days. Enclose cheque for £3.00 and love Peter

**01/04/1940** From Broadbridge Heath Horsham

**From Peter To Joan**

My dear Joan

I tried to get in touch with you by the phone but without success. I only heard from Aunt Gertie on Saturday about our grandmother, her letter took five days to reach here. I have been terribly busy and have had my leave cancelled this week owing to pressure of work.

I had a feeling when we left grandma last time that I would not see her again. I have had a semi business letter from Uncle Stanley asking me to arrange for the removal of our affects at Medmenham as soon as possible. Must close now no time. Hope to be in town Saturday lunchtime we'll phone you then love Peter

**Comment** Frances Georgina Haycraft nee LAWTON must have died late December 1939

**24/01/1940** From Broadbridge Heath.

**From Peter To Joan**

Dear Joan

Many happy returns for yesterday. I had hoped to be up in town for two days. In fact my leave has been had been granted and I was all packed up in the car said cheerio to the boys at Pinkhurst and left the site when I arrived at C hill for further instructions I was informed that I was not now due to report at Shornecliffe until the 29th so had to return to site. I had thought I would give you a surprise for your birthday, anyway all being well I shall get away on Saturday lunchtime. So cheerio till then love Peter

**15/02/1940** From Broadbridge Heath

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

Well here we are back at C.HQ again for another spell of leave. We left Pinkhurst yesterday morning at 11.00 hours after a weeks hard work cleaning up all equipment. We stay here until the 21st when we get our 7 day leave. I have manage to get a decent job while here, that of section driver on the company's staff. It means getting up at 6.30 and having the lorry ready at 7.30 when I have breakfast with the other drivers ( that is before the main body of men have a is ) at eight so go round to the rations store and load up and move off on the 50 mile round. Get back for lunch at 1.00 sometimes in CHQ or SHA. In the afternoon I go around with odds and ends to those sites requiring little things and also act as postman at same time. Quite interesting and finishing about 4.00. The other boys in the detachment have to do guard duty with the exception of Cooper for who will probably have to be Orderly Sergeant some days..

All men have to be in at night by 11 except CHQ staff who are allowed out until midnight – that's me.

We sleep in dormitories which we call a spider. In my spider there are 16 beds, iron with springs and mattress, the side of each is a wardrobe and hanging cupboard. Central heating baths washing basins showers h & c, are adjoining by means of a corridor, well so much for all that.

Your letter has just come up so sorry about the sickness you must take care of yourself. It is now the 17th and this letter is not finished yet. I had to stop as we have a film in the NAAFI at 630. Ginger Rogers's in Carefree. Quite good. It is 1.30 Saturday have just had lunch or dinner, after driving the old lorry round in thick virgin snow for 40 miles. We had a terrific snowstorm last night real gale. It was nearly 2 foot thick. I had to fit chains before starting out I don't know yet whether I have to go around with the laundry this afternoon. I must go and telephone about it, if not I finished for the day. I must go and find out and post this at the same time.

Bill Gee has just heard that his cousin had been killed on a trawler of Scotland. About 20 of our lads left yesterday for France well I must stop so cheerio till Wednesday or Thursday. Love Peter

**03/02/1940** No 1 Company 163 OCTU Risborough Barracks Shornecliffe  
Kent

**From** Peter **To** Joan

Dear Joan

Just a line to let you and no where I am. My directions here was so vague that the first night I spent in the wrong OCTU. Anyway it was rectified the next day. I was not sorry to change as the blokes were a funny lot from Reception Units mostly North country and Welshman.

Most of the chaps here are from the AA quite a different type. I have never known such a cold place. There is a continual wind and we are right on top of the cliffs.

Well dear will close now so cheerio and take care of yourself. I hope you have stayed in and are getting rid of the flu. By the way we get a fortnight at the east or so we'll be seeing you. Love Peter

**Comment** OCTU = Officer Cadet Training Unit

**03/11/1940** Cdt DIBDIN PH 2088311

163 OCTU (Artists Rifles) Risborough Barracks Shornecliffe

**From** Peter **To** Joan

Dearest Joan

I have received your letter and the one from Edith. I do think she might have given us more definite information as to when she was cleaning the house. Anyway can you arrange to have the remainder of the things removed to Montfords.

I will phone you tonight if I can get through. I enclose a cheque for twenty pounds as promised. Time is so short here we are on the go from 6.0 am without stopping until 10.00 pm. By the way my Easter leave, if any, will not start until the 30th. (March)

All love Peter.

**Comment** The house must have been Medmenham

Easter Sunday was on 24th March.

**17/03/1940** Shornecliffe

**From** Peter **To** Joan

Dear Joan

I now have a moment to sit down and give you the news. I tried to phone you on Tuesday evening but it was no good. I wonder what has happened about the things at Medmenham. I wrote to Edith and informed her that had she given more definite notice as to when the sale was to have taken place, everything could have been removed but as she writes about six days before hand. I also told her that being in the army I could not cope with things as I it would in civil life. My time he's not my own and until the war is over I cannot be expected to deal with things outside the army. You understand Joan, I cannot carry on civilian affairs while I am here. I live here and this is my home as long as I am here. I have enough to do and think of here without other things and stupid letters from Edith anyway so much for that.

Now about my life here at the Risborough Hotel as we call it. Of course I am unable to give you certain details and information you understand. We are the artists' rifles of the TA. We live in barrack rooms holding nineteen men and I am in the upper floor with a damn good group of chaps from different parts of the country, many from AA units like myself, some from infantry battalion of course, they have the advantage over us as they are used to be work of infantry units. We'll rise at 6.00 AM not at 6.02 AM. if you are caught in bed 2 minutes after when the the Sergeant comes in there is trouble. We made up beds, wash, clean up the room and parade outside at 7.00 for gargling parade, again at 7.15 for breakfast parade, at 7.45 to clean up outside parade at 7.55 for inspection of rifles and kit etc., at 8.00 and we start lectures etc up until 1 o'clock dinner. At 2.00 start lectures etc, until 5.30 to six. Wednesdays and Saturdays finish at dinnertime and games in the afternoon, tea at 5.00 after which our time is our own unless one is on special duties as is the case sometimes. Well after tea, we clean up our equipment etc ready for the morning, polish boots and all the rest then right up notes and read our books probably a snack in the NAAFI which closes at 9.20 and retire to bed with

lights out at 10.15. So you seen we have no spare time at all, it is one of long rush from 6.00 AM

The only time we get out is on a Wednesday evening and Saturday and Sunday. Last night having cleaned up in the afternoon went into Folkestone about 6.00 had a few beers and a meal which was much appreciated, some more beer after that. Peter Graves one of the boys here has his people down staying at the Queen's Hotel so Alan Glover ( who by the way is a nephew of the Glover's who live in Carshalton Park Road, you may remember ) and I joined Peter and his family at the Queens and stayed there until about 11.30. We had to be in by 1.00 am Sunday morning so it was all right. On Sunday like today's we get up at 7.00 breakfast at 8.00 Church parade at 9.10 finish church and back into barracks about 11 read the paper do a spot of polishing boots and other little things that all take time, lunch at 12.30, rest after lunch, write letters as I am doing now which is the only possible time in the week to do it.

Later on after I have had a rest I shall make my bed, wash and smarten myself up, to go into Folkestone for a spot of tea with one or two of the blokes and probably go to a picture after which we shall have a few beers and returned back here about 9.45 for bed.

Next week we have a lot of marching to do. We are not looking forward to it at all. Well there is not much more to say now so will close dear. By the way I shall not be getting leave at the Easter, we work over Easter except Sundays but on 30th we all have leave for 10 days leave, so will not see you until the end of the month.

All love Peter

**27/04/1940** St Martins Plain Shornecliffe

**From Peter To Joan**

My Dear Joan

Sorry I have been so long in writing but you know how things are here, as you see we have moved to the plane into the huts, it is really more pleasant than the barracks during the summer months. I hope you are keeping fit and the job still going well, I suppose the cut down in ATS personnel does not affect you. We have been having a pretty thick time this month. Every Friday night for 4 weeks we have been inoculated for this and that TAB etc.

I am learning to ride a motor cycle now 500 cc BSA. We hope to go out next week to Dover and back, quite good fun.

Oh, by the way if you go down to the Montfords could you get out of one of the big trunks Daddy's Sam Browne belt. I saw it the other day and forgot to take it out.

That C/O is coming round now to inspect and then I go and make a sand table after that. So must close so cheerio old girl love Peter

**05/07/1940** Card from St Martins Plain

**From Peter To Joan**

I am coming up to the Drift Bridge on Saturday. Shall be returning Sunday evening. If you care to come down from town, shall be very pleased. I am bringing a friend Bob eke with me. We propose going to the club Saturday night. I hope things are going well with you. All love Peter

**Comment** Club was at East Horsley. Joan did go and played darts

**27/05/1940** St Martins Plain

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

I am sorry I have been unable to write for some time, we are on the go the whole time here since Whitsun. We cannot even get out of the camp now except for about 2 hours every 10 days. I don't know what he's going to happen to us. There are rumours that we are moving or maybe sent to other OCTUs to complete our training although there is not much more for us to do, as we have all along been working faster than the previous companies.. We are engaged on those home defence and are on a 24 hour guard every third day. The other two days we get up at 3.00 AM and work all day on digging and wiring with stand to 1st thing in the morning for and last thing at night, so that we get about 4 1/2 hours in bed providing there is no air raid

We usually get than one and have to turn out of bed and man the defences so our 4 1/2 hours is cut down to about 2 hours. So you see every spare moment we get we snatch for a lie down. It is all good training and they say it makes us tough as we shall have to live under worse conditions in France.

I have just watch 12 of our bombers with 144 bombs go over to towards Belgium and am waiting to see how many comeback. We make a habit of this when we have time.

The weather here is breaking up and I'm afraid we don't see much more settled weather as the continuous gunfire breaks it up and causes rain. Let me know how you are getting on. I have a friend here who goes over to France on the ferry and has seen the swine bombing the Red Cross and refugees for 6 hours continuous. I missed a bomb by 25 yards the other day in Belgium. Well cheerio old girl and all love Peter

PS bombers just come back only nine so far up

**14/07/1940** St Martins Plain

**From Peter To Joan**

My dear Joan

Well we had quite a pleasant journey in the train slept, most of the way, arrived Folkestone at 8.05, went to the esplanade for a cold meal of roast beef

and salad and were back at camp at 9.30. It's very depressing in the town seeing no vans and very few people. I went out last night and had to walk back until a tram happened to come along. We all piled into it, about nine of us at a shilling a mob expense and just as we got back me all clear went, so we had bread and cheese in the Star Inn across the way. Am on guard all day today, have done quite a bit of it this week.

I think I will go on and see about a uniform on Wednesday if I am being passed out time is getting short, so will you send off me Sam Brown as soon as possible so that I can get one of the regulars have it to start working on it. It will take a week or so to getting up to a decent polish.

It is difficult to know what to write about one cannot talk shop.

Well cheerio for the moment all love dear Peter

PS has David joined up yet or is he going to.

**26/07/1940** St Martin's Plain

**From** Peter **To** Joan

Darling

Many thanks for the Sam Brown and your letter. I shall not be needing it after all as I shall not be going on with the commission. I'm afraid I have never been interested in the infantry and shall only be too glad to get out of it. I'm trying to get back to 325 Coy if possible. If I can get some leave before I leave here I shall be lucky. There is little I can say at the moment so I will write again later on.

All love Peter.

**08/08/1940** 325th Bty Coombe Place

Offham nr Lewes

**From** Peter **To** Joan

My dear Joan

I am surprised at your letter received today asking so suddenly for all that money. Why did you not say something about it the other day. It is impossible that you have had to require it since then and cannot be in need of so large a sum. It was not so long ago that you had £20 to settle debts etc.

Before I can pay out any more money I must know why you want it so

suddenly and how you propose to use it.

I am sorry to sound hard but you must let me know the reason for this sudden demand.

As you see I have moved. I left 163 on Sunday and here with the old Coy.

I don't know what they are going to do with me, at the moment I go round site giving them a ????? amount of training in different things, will write later when I am settled down

Love Peter.

**Comment** Joan is still not 21 - still under the Public Trustees.

**14/08/1940** 325 Battery Coombe Place Offham

**From** Peter **To** Joan

I am so sorry I could not send you the money but you understand I think, anyway now that you given some explanation I am quite prepared to send some to the sum of £5.

What has happened why don't you tell me, both your letters arrived at the same date and I can gather nothing from them except surmise. In the mean time I will try and phone you darling Love Peter.

**11/12/1940** Coombe Place Offham

**From** Peter **To** Joan

Darling Jo

Terribly disapointed to have missed you yesterday, you had only left Middlesex 20 minutes. Jack told me on the phone that you were to be moved at 11.00hrs.

It was impossible for me to get out to Mount Vernon and back in the time. I spoke to the sister and she is very concerned about you. She said you have been overdoing things and have not taken care of yourself.

I am greatly relieved to hear that you are getting over this attack but you do not realise how serious it is. You will have to put yourself in the doctors hands. I understand that you have the best man there.

When you come out I want you to go to Auntie Ger at Reigate to rest and not go back to town. In fact I would like you to come here for a while and stay at the Bull Newick (7 miles from Peter's Camp).The people who own it Mr and Mrs Wilson are very charming, there are 4 or 5 residents who would be good company for you, a comfortable old world lounge with Radiogram and Grand Piano. It is only 1 1/2 miles from my billet and lovely country around. I hear Ancaster House is moved to the West Country and is now used as a depository, isn't it a shame, the tennis courts have been badly bombed. Let me know if there is anything you would like. I hope to get some leave next week but of course it is not certain. We are having some wet weather at the moment but hope it won't completely drown us. I spoke to Auntie Ger yesterday on the phone, also your note I received this morning on the back of her letter - thankyou my dear.

I only just been moved into my billet. It is an annexe to a country house of course, it is absolutely devoid of all furniture but it has a sink with some cold water a W.C. and electric light - my room I share with another fellow Sam Tolly . Had roller blinds and a curtain faces south across the grounds.



Well must close my dear with the best of luck and get well quick  
All love Peter.

**Comment** Joan was ill at this time and start at the Middlesex Hospital before moving to Mount Vernon. Ref Letter from Margaret having a go. Needless to say Joan did not seem to rest up when out of hospital.

**21/01/1941** Coombe Place Offham Newick 67

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joan

It was good to see you over the weekend but a pity your stay was so short darling. I'm sorry you had to go off in such a rush but you were quite right, duties come first and I am proud of you for it. In fact I am proud of you all the time, my dear, knowing that you are doing a great thing, right in the front line because that's where you are in this war, all people in London and the big cities doing work like yours. I know our Mum and Dad would feel the same, and that you have grown up to womanhood to be worthy of them and those before them. You are now a soldier and a true citizen of the state and may God hold you and preserve you to carry out your responsibilities as such.

I have no doubt in my mind that we have to face harder things in the future and we shall need all the self control and courage to overcome them which we shall, we must do so. When this war is over there will be a new era and social revolution, life will be very different - there will be social reform and nationalisation it is bound to come.

Well I won't go ambling on as there is no time now, but I'd feel very proud of my little sister and wish her under the present circumstances all the very best I can for the future. I'm afraid there will be a delay in obtaining a suitable present to commemorate the great day of Thursday, but we shall have to celebrate later.

I hope to be in town on the 28th Tuesday next so could you arrange to be free. Give me a ring Monday night after 10.15pm

I went to the Strachaus Coatstale Sunday 12.00 to 2.30 quick hand at the Drift Club and reported back here at 4.00pm

So cheers for the time being with all love your Brother Peter.

**Comment** Joan will be 21 years old in 2 days time.

**21/07/1941** Offham Lewes

**From Peter To Joan**

My dear Joan

I arrived back at 10.30 the other day without incident except for giving 12 soldiers lifts, as soon as I dropped one I had picked up another etc.

There has been trouble at troop HQ (domestic) so I am at battery HQ now on the operational staff.

Personally I am not sorry. Gerry Goddam is very fed up and so in is Shuttleworth and both are trying to get moved now. I have not written to Mater but must do so soon as possible.

At the moment we are terribly busy as the whole of regiment is moving so it will be as one you ringing up again.

I will let you know new address as soon as possible it is near Farnham and Aldershot and the conditions are not too good, I understand mostly under canvas.

I shall be sorry to leave this area in a way it is very pleasant. The whole thing has been kept so secret that there is no time to say goodbye to some of my friends here. We are all packed up and you had to leave tomorrow. Had hoped to set get into Lewes tonight but the rumour is going around that all leave cancelled (they are afraid the chaps may get drunk being the last night) anyway rumours are rumours and you know what they are.

Well cheerio darling for the present love Peter

**23/07/1941** Westfields, Wreccelesham Farnham

**From Peter To Joan**

My dear Joan

Here we are at last up to our eyes in work, the move went off and very smoothly but what a place this is.

I left Coombe Place for here by car having received a petrol ration to cover the 60 mile journey at 10.00 hours arriving Farnham 13.00 had lunch in the town and reported here at 14.00 hours.

We have a small country house situated in a wood. (stopped for supper now 20.30 hours).

About 30 miles from Farnham and seven from Aldershot. Various huts are dotted about under the trees, what it will be like in wet weather goodness knows.

We spent all yesterday afternoon and evening unloading lorries and getting our kit in.

I have the good fortune of living in the house as our operation room is on the ground floor. We have to be a short notice call 24 hour duty.

I am living in a small attic room with a dormer window on the top floor with sharing with three other Fellows, Blaber, Oscar Wilde and Tom Davis a Welsh boy.

The place was absolutely filthy when we arrived but we have put in a hard day's work cleaning up and it doesn't look so bad now just a little cramped, we have collapsible camp beds and mine collapsed under me at 5.30 this morning fortunately I have a lot of baggage which has to go under the bed so I did not

fall very far. I have been on the switchboards all the afternoon and can tell you it take some sorting out. I start operations very shortly for an all night session I until 8.32 hours tomorrow. It is quite in the affair what will happen tonight I don't know. It will be rather funny. We just come in and the other people went out and we have to sort the whole thing out ourselves. Any way it is quite interesting and by the way owing to the move I have not done myself too badly by getting on this job. I will tell you when I see you. This pen won't write or the paper won't take I don't know which.

Hope you are getting on OK. Don't know when I shall be able to see you as there is no leave granted yet and I understand there will be none until after August bank holiday.

If you see Mater or the girls give my love and hope to be over soon.

Must go now, have to work and cleanup to get ready for the night now. So cheerio darling lots of love Peter

**Comment** Joan had first gone to 4 Pinfold Road in May 1941 and met Tony on 7th June 1941.

**20/08/1941** From Westfields To Granville Place

**From Peter To Joan**

Darling Joe

What a pity you could not stay Sunday. Even so it was quite a pleasant surprise you being there. Everyone seemed very well. Jim left at 6.00 to hitch back to Warrington and I left at 7.30 called at the Drift deposited my kit bag and squash racket, saw Hath who was in good spirits and Miss Griffiths and others. Miss Griff told me to go and see her find brother at a farm house; he and his wife keep a guesthouse called The Temple Lounge after his name.

So yesterday afternoon I was out with Norman Appleby rather early and as a loose end so we called on Mrs Temple just after lunch.

His wife a very pretty charming woman entertained us with a cup of tea and after we had introduce ourselves, her husband joined us later, a very pleasant fellow who has been blind since the age of 18 has three children who he has never seen, two boys and In the AA guns the other still at school, mad about aircraft draws posters etc FLY WITH THE RAF an all that sort of thing, very good work, and a daughter aged 7 interesting child.

Well we stayed to tea which was a very good one, talks in general and Mr. Temple took us round his garden, a very large garden to show us all the staff he is growing and in fact we had a very excellent afternoon. Of course they want us to go again and he is very keen on chess in fact he plays chess with people out East by correspondence.

They have a large guest house and have got over all the staff troubles by making all the rooms self contained with hot and cold, small gas cookers and

rings etc so that the people may sort the room to what they like in it and entirely look after themselves rather like yours.

Unfortunately we will not be able to visit them again as we are moving on Friday or Saturday back to Combe Place, Lewes. So you will write there again dear. As far as I know at the moment my 7 days leave starts on Wednesday 3rd September.

So cheerio for the present, have to go to lunch now then on duty until 8.30 tomorrow morning love Peter

**27/11/1941** Coombe Place Offham To 4 Pinfold Road

**From Peter To Joan**

Joe Darling

How are you - have tried to get in touch with you by phone but without success your number does not seem to exist any longer. I do think you might keep me informed and at least let me have the correct one.

How are Mater and the Girls. ... Hope to get some leave on Monday so give me a ring here at Lewes 1077 sometime on Sunday ..... Pretty busy .... playing Rugger .... Let me know how things are and ring me up.

All love Peter.

**Comment** Joan had moved in with the Guise family

**18/12/1941** From Bexhill on Sea To 4 Pinfold Road

**From Peter To Joan**

Joe Darling

How are you, well you seen where we are now I never thought when you were at school that I should be at Bexhill under the circumstances.

What a place, it was bad enough then, but now.

Most of our of battery are billeted in Normandale school, opposite St John's about 3 minutes walk from Bexhill West station.

I have just had my first meal for two days. We arrived here yesterday morning and hung about all day no food no bed just a blanket on a hard floor no fires, no lights and no blackouts. Oh I forgot no hot water and the Colonel says it's 12 times better than the other place we were going to "Micheldiver". I suppose there is something in it. Rick Madge and I are sharing a room at the moment until we gets thrown out by some wretched little Sergeant. Well they are all gone for the present so that won't happen.

We stuck it until 4.30 yesterday afternoon, doing nothing, so slipped into the town or what's left of it. Came back it 10.20 and were told we were on charge. Apparently the DSM put me down for guard with another 3 HQ staff and they were only 3 of them at 5.30, so what the hell. There were no orders again today, so went out again this morning and came back for lunch. As soon as I

have finished this, if I shall go out again, can't sit on the floor all night and all day. I suppose those are couple of hundred of us but where they all hide, I can't say. Oh it's really a B... Rick's on guard today so can't go out. Of course we have to stand up for meals in mess tins. Just as we had got well settled in at Combe Place with the central cook and ATS to wait on us.

Of course many tears were shed when we left. We haven't been given a new name yet so for the present we are still a sub regiment although we have nothing to do with S/Ls now. Tomorrow I suppose we start our toughening up training, one feels like a turkey being fattened up for Christmas.

Well I am so cold now dear we'll write again later.

Give my love to Yvonne, Mary and Mater

**Comment** Address torn off letter. But he is near Ancaster School

**29/12/1941** Gunner P.H.Dibdin 2088311 325/31st s/h Regt RA First House Clavering Walk

Cooden Beach Bexhill on Sea

**From** Peter **To** Joan

Joe Darling

Thanks for the letter and smashing pipe. What a beauty. It nestles down very nicely between my coat collar when I am on guard at night without being conspicuous and it is easy to slip into the pocket if anyone comes along.

Do hope you are fit and have lost your cold.- I have just developed one, most unpleasant and did you have a good Christmas darling. Sorry I could not appear. There is nothing more I can say about happenings here than I said in my letter to Mater and as you have heard all that you won't want it all over again here. When is Tony getting home. It seems I shall not get leave till the end of January. I was hoping to get up over the New Year and bring the car up and store it in George Flowers garage at North Sheen, there seems no point in taxing it again as we shall be moved right away from towns soon and petrol is so difficult to get except for army motors and it seems likely that we shall get quite a lot of them in the near future. So I have decided the time has come to give up running the car.

Have you heard any more about your job yet and whether you are likely to be kept on or transferred to another post.

Thank you for doing the socks darling. Don't bother to send them. I can manage without them at the moment.

Had a letter from Auntie Ger thanking me for my card. They are not sending them this year.

She said she has not heard of you since you stayed weekend early in the year but is writing you again in the hope of an answer.

Uncle is doing the garden, they have no maid, the camouflage officer is still there, she has not heard from Pat and wonders whether we are still together. They have some fowl now so get a few eggs now and again.

She had a letter from John written on 17 November. He had just returned from a visit to friends at Alorstart and has been walking all around Kedah (Malaya). He is attached to the service though still in the police. He is unable to tell them his job, so they think it is intelligence.

If fact John was working in the Jungle with the Communists behind the Japanese lines.

Jeff is still at Horton, gets over occasional weekends. Uncle Stanley is at Epping and has not been seen for some time.

Pat is here with me. I saw him over Xmas and he enquired after you. He has his second pips now. He seems fairly fed up with the job, he says the only good the regiment has done him is to find him someone (my last piece of paper). He is unofficially engaged to her an ATS. Quite a nice girl so someone tells me.

Apart from this I have heard no more news of any one.

We have no wireless and gets no papers and it is very cold, so you can not be surprised if we are browned off, we can get out quite a lot to pictures and pubs but money is running short so there you are. Well all the very best darling in the New Year and my love and best wishes to the family, Peter

**Comment** Kehah was the first bit of Mayala attacked by Japan. Later John Davis, their cousin, was working behind the Japanese lines in the jungle with the communists.

**20/11/1942** From 408 Lt AA Bty RA c/o GPO Ryde Isle of Wight To Stanthorpe Road

**From** Peter **To** Joan

My Dear Joe

I expect by now you have moved into the flat and I am sure you have made it very attractive. I do hope the curtains turned out well. You poor thing having so much to do on you own. I shall be really interested in hearing how Tony liked it or didn't. Did he enjoy his leave. I would like to have seen him but perhaps it is better that he should settle down in his own home first before having to give homage to various relatives. I do hope you are happy old girl and that you have had a good leave together. What on earth did Tony say to all that stuff - I should think he had a fit.

I am sorry my dear, I wasn't too bright on my leave but I feel it will be different next time as a matter of fact, I felt better when I go back here, I think the air over here is just what I need.

It is useless me seeing that the doctor here for reasons I cannot explain now but will do so later.

How are things at home .. Mater well I hope and the girls getting resigned to troubles. I feel very sorry for them but they must try try not to worry, it is jolly bad luck.

Excuse this awful scrawl this is all the paper and the pen and ink in ?????

I have sent some Pyrex dishes under separate cover. If the large one is too big give it to Mater. I thought the small casserole would be very useful to you being a small family.

If Mrs Midd offers you the quick fry, take it, it is a marvellous thing.

There is no news to tell from this end dear, I believe Pat is back in the neighbourhood. Tell me how did you get on at Gertie's. Did you have a good reception, I mean a genuine one.

There is nothing very exciting doing here darling and I shall be looking forward to seeing you in your new little home of your own so God bless you All my love Peter.

**Comment** Joan and Tony were married on 3rd Oct 1942

**26/12/1942** From 408 Lt AA Bty, Att 11th Lt AA, Training Camp, Stiffkey, Norfolk

**From** Peter **To** Joan

Joe Darling

Have been trying to get a letter of to you for some time now but something always seems to butt in at my letter writing time.

I only just managed to send off one of to Mater in time for Christmas.

I do hope things went well with you dear. I take it you went to Mater's for Christmas

It does not seem a bit like Christmas with us. Have been working pretty hard lately and only setting out after dark and the shops are shut. We left Cowes on the 23rd early in the morning and arrived at this dead hole late at night.

What a lousy place. There are 3 pubs one won't serve soldiers and the other two will only serve us with beer and if you say anything they threaten not to serve us at all. Oh your parcel has just come in and I am glad. I'm right out of both and unable to get any. Only five fags a day from the NAAFI on coupons and one has to queue up for 45 minutes or more. On Christmas day they wouldn't sell any. They worked every day here starting before 8.00 in the morning except Christmas day. Of course there was a Church parade that took about an hour and 1/2 to form the parade up and get to the service which took 20 minutes, the parade after and march back just in time to march to the Christmas dinner at 12.30 and after the sergeant had shifted us about so as to sit by the troop and not with one's friends dinner was served by the officers and

sergeants who enjoyed and got more kick out of it than he did out of the dinner. They dished up some cold beer. I had 2 pints by the time that was over we had to get ready for guard and have tea and get on guard at 40.45 hours all night. I tell you I am not surprise Rector did what he did and as it's cold no fires till after tea and the dining hut with concrete floors are very cold. What a surprise Tony arriving. How is he settling in and has he begun that IFCS course yes. There was a dance last night with about 30 girls between 1000 men. As soon as we get away from here the better.

I don't know when you will get this letter. There hasn't been a post out of for three days, it is very spasmodic. This place is right out of in the wilds miles from anywhere. No one has had any mail in except for that which was bought for over from the island.

I saw Ian Peak the other day and had a drink. Marjorie is expecting in about a month. He works with the firm of Saunders Roe. I was very friendly with the works manager and his family. They have and very charming house next to our old site. We spent many evenings with them playing table tennis and there was always plenty of hot water for baths. Miss Watson was very good to the fellows and was preparing a big Christmas feast for us had we stayed. It was very unfortunate we had to move away just before Christmas.

I have tried to get you something darling in the way of presents but it has been impossible to get out to the shops. Miss Watson managed to get me a small tin of baby puried pears from Shanklin, I will b ring when I get some leave if any. At the moment it is all stopped.

I expect to leave here on the 4th of January and returned to the Isle of Wight, same old address. The regiment is still there it's only my battery that's away. They said it was an honor to come here but we don't.

You can't see the sea at all at, it is all marshes in front of the gun post miles of it. Most desolate place. Cromer is about 16 miles to the west of us. Isn't it amazing. I had been just put on a generator course for a few days, to learn how to work petrol motors. I could teach the instructors more than he knows. It seems you have to know nothing to get on in this Regiment. Well I must get back to the gun Park and learn how to clean a sparking plug and turn the petro on and off. So will wish you all the very best darling for the New Year and God bless you and your yours my sweet with all my love darling Peter

....

**11/01/1943** From 408 Lt AA Bty RA, c/o GPO, Ryde Isle of Wight, To Stanthorpe Road

**From Peter To Joan**

Joe Darling

How are you and how are things going. As you see we are back again. It appears dear that leave of any description has gone right up the spout. For some considerable time to come. It may be that we will only get one more on leave which might be 14 days.

I hope all is well with you, fortunately I am pretty fit myself. We had a rotten time over Christmas and don't want to see that place again, the less said the better.

I have absolutely no you news to give you a except that everyone is thoroughly fed up about leave.

I had a letter sent on to me from Mater and am very sorry to hear of all the trouble of sickness, she tells me she had seen is very little of you these days and feels very sorry for herself and is trying to get her old job back.

Poor thing she has had a lot of worry this last year, and I only hope things will be better for her in 1943.

Had a letter, oh you sent that it of course from Auntie Ger, sorry to hear about and Mrs.Sansbury.

I suppose you have written, did you include me if not I must write. Mr. Sansbury is still about I take it. He will be very lonely.

Gertie said she was very pleased to see you looking so well and happy and he is hoping to see Tony one day. Well darling must close and take great care of yourself and God bless you all love Peter

Is it possible to get my fountain pen repaired.

**26/01/1943** From Ventnor, (Isle of Wight)

**From Peter To Joan**

Joe Darling

Your letter of the 12th January arrived and I thank you darling. I see from your letters things won't be long now and that you are very busy preparing baby clothes. I can't quite imagine it, it is not so long ago that you were so hopelessly undomesticated, and all in a year you changed so completely and are running a house and without doubt will be a splendid mother. Are you having Winterton the man you saw earlier. Is there anything you want or need that I can help you and if so don't fail to let me know darling. It is so difficult when one is so out of touch and not on the scene.

I see that Tony is in South Wales for a time, two months you say, so there is not much chance of you seeing him for a while, so glad you were able to get together for Christmas.

Have been staying at Freshwater for a few days and came back here yesterday, next week I shall be going to Burnham but doubt whether I shall have time to look you up on the way, anyway I may get a chance to slip up to town from there, it is not so very far out and I think I should get a day off during the month there.

It doesn't look as if I shall need that coat after all unless I get a new job because at the moment it looks as if I shall be joining the other boys shortly, April I expect.

I told you Ian Peat has just been presented with a daughter, Mary Elizabeth, I think they are ????????? her.

I had a letter from Mater dated 16th Dec last telling me of all her troubles with sickness and others and I wrote again the other day and suggested she should go away for a change and let the house look after itself for a change. I suggested she might like to come to Burnham while I am there officially as the raids are starting again and it is pretty clear that they are going to intensify as the German fronts are getting smaller. In fact it would be a good move for you to get away from them in your condition. Why not join her and come together. What do you think about it. I hope you don't attempt to go outside during the raid, it is so much more dangerous now than last year as the barrage from our AA guns is so much heavier than anything before and can and does inflict very heavy casualties of the unfortunate people who have to stay out of doors so be careful.

Fancy you hearing from the Muirs and a card from David. No news of him I suppose and apart from Miss Francese conveys nothing to me I am sorry to say. I haven't written to Evelyn Stansbury and I fear it is too late now.

Did you get that box from the trustees. I'm longing to see you little home darling but God knows when I shall be able to see you, things are just the same as before Christmas and look like continuing to be so for a long time. Gertie says they had a cable from John and all is well with him - no news of the boys yet I suppose. When is Marie joining up and what in.

Well darling will close as no more news or was there any, so take great care of yourself and God bless you

All my love Peter.

**17/02/1943** From 12 Commongate Road Hythe Kent

**From Peter To Joan**

Joe Darling

It was very good to see you last weekend and thanks for putting Jack up. I hope you did not mind my bringing him along but it would have been rotten for him there alone. He enjoyed his weeken I know. We made the train ok with

about 15 minutes to spare and arrived back at Dropmore at 5.15 just had time for tea and then to the Concert. ....

.. Got up at 2.00am and marched 5 miles to station -travelled by train - slept the night in a Martello Tower on the sea front and now in Bed with Flu in R.A.P. at the Small Arms School.

Surprisingly the Medical Officer know him from School- Epsom College and said staying in R.A.P. was better than Hospital. Peter left the batteries with Joan, please could she sent them and get some more.

Regarding Wedding present- Peter will give money so Joan and Tony can buy something they really want.

...

[Regimental Aid Post (RAP) is a front-line military medical establishment incorporated into an infantry battalion or armoured regiment for the immediate treatment and triage of battlefield casualties.]

[Dropmore was probably a building in Canterbury, maybe near St Martins Church. The train journey after the 5 mile march must have been on the old Elham Valley Train arriving near Folkestone and then they marched a few miles to the Martello Tower on the way to Hythe.]

**Comment** Wednesday -Date estimated

**27/02/1943** From 12 Commongate Road Hythe Kent

**From Peter To Joan**

My Dear Joe

How are you getting along dear. I'm sorry not to be able to get up this weekend, there may be a chance next month. On Wednesday I expect to be at leave so my stayed here is not long.

I am probably being discharged from the RAP today. I got up Saturday and the M.O. told me to get out, so I slipped into Folkestone to have a look around the old place.

You remember Squad Barnett's at Hoopwick Farm, well I met him on the bus so we went to the pictures a most peculiar film called The Thunder Rock awful tripe, and then we went to the esplanade, a place I used to frequent a lot two years ago and ran into John Grace, as big as ever he's lost a pip any two now. Well I got back at 8.30 and the Sergeant wanted to see me, apparently he had had a fit, did not know I was out. I told I'd been to Folkestone and all about it and he was annoyed at my doing such a thing. Their own men apparently can't get out without a pass and then only in Hyde itself. He couldn't understand how are we in the RA were allowed so much latitude anyway I smoothed him over and then he said you ought to have known better than stop out in the night air, anything might happen and so forth. Anyway it was all right in the end

and he said it was thoughtless of me. He's knew I did not mean it so I did not disturb his mind and we parted good friends so I expect to be out to day.

Captain Bosworth my OC called to paying me yesterday and said he heard all sorts of stories about my meeting with the M.O. and shaking hands and all that and yesterday said it was about time I came out. Anyway I feel better now and can't bear to stay in here just walking about the place fully clothed. I don't mind when one is in bed. I wrote Mater yesterday told her I was here so wouldn't see her for a while.

Have they come to see you from Reigate yet. You don't get many visitors dear, don't you get lonely at times. I wish I was nearer to town and could slip in now and again. Chin up old girl it won't be long now and I think of you a lot so God bless all the if you my love darling Peter

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**05/03/1943** From c/o GPO Leigh on Sea, Essex

**From Peter To Joan**

My Dear Joe

Many thanks dear for sending the socks and thank you for the Tobacco and Cigs it was sweet of you a very nice little parcel also the batteries. I say if you can get more do so they are impossible to get round here and even if they weren't I never get out when the shops are open.

So glad you received the parcels ok. That's great having the Ascot fixed and so quickly too, what a shame they messed up your lovely kitchen when you keep it so nice.

Oh don't worry about me I am quite ok now I had four days in bed and feel better for it. How was Neil when you saw him let me know and give him my love.

I hope you are not feeling too bad old girl chin up and don't worry. I must say I was was surprised to see you look so well. I only hope you feel as well as you looked. Will write later - have just been called out by the Police to see about some lights or something on the W/Ls. They want a white light instead of a red one so will have to go now.

Much Love Dear Peter.

**13/03/1943** From 408/123 Lt AA Regt RA, c/c GPO, Leigh on Sea Essex,  
To Middlesex Hospital

**From Peter To Joan**

Joe Darling

Great News old girl. I had a wire from Jean arrived yesterday. Did you get my telegram sent off yesterday. Heartfelt congratulations. A boy I bet you are pleased its what you wanted wasn't it. I tried to ring the hospital but couldn't

get through. First it was not St Georges, I don't know I seemed to have it fixed in my mind you were going there. Phoned Mater found she was ill. I bet Marie answered said you were in the Middlesex had heard the baby had arrived but no details. So tried to get through and again tonight but air raids on and no lines available. Jean said you were both doing well. Great stuff and God bless you both. I am thankful that is over and I bet you are too.

I expect you have seen Tony by now, so sorry I can't get up, it impossible. All out on schemes day and night and tomorrow might be starting on a four or five day mobile scheme. So I don't know where I shall get to my address will still be here though.

Your letter arrived last night, am so glad you had Jean to look after you she is such a kind girl.

It has got much colder today and it is practically freezing in my room here so am going to crawl into bed -am very tired after driving about all day in an open truck. So God bless my darling and your little one

All my love Peter.

**Comment** Raoul born Thursday 11 March 1943  
letter -Saturday

**21/03/1943** From 408/123 Lt AA Regt RA, c/c GPO, Leigh on Sea Essex  
**From Peter To Joan**

My Darling Joe

Your letter reached me on my way back from our mobile scheme and very welcome. I am so glad it is all over and has turned out so well 8 lbs 4 1/2 ozs is very good and above average. I like the way you say he is the ugliest little thing you could possibly imagine and then in the next breath you say he is just like the photo of me when a baby. I was considered, I'll have you know, quite a magnificent specimen for one so young although I cannot recall the weight. Anyway the nurse says he is beautiful and I am sure she knows.

I am so glad they make you comfortable and look after you well. I wonder if Gertie has been to see you. I hope you let her know.

Will you thank Jean for sending the Telegram as I do not know her address.

How is she and her family. I am very pleased she was with you and she is such a decent girl. What are you going to name the little one, perhaps you haven't thought yet and has Tony any ideas. I suppose you haven't seen Mater as she is not too well.

I go off on another scheme tomorrow or rather Tuesday, it is a business moving about all the time and sleeping where ever one happens to finish up at the end of the day, sometimes in the open, sometimes in a barn and one night we got into a house and slept between sheets . Tres bien !

I fear it will not be possible to get up to town until next leave and when that will be goodness knows. [7 deleted lines]

Sorry I can't put the above in, it is too risky only don't worry because you can't read it. Oh by the way my detachment has won the Best Bofor Cup for the fastest gun to be put into action and taken out of action. In action 72 sec Out in 78 secs.

We are now waiting to compete with 121 LAA Regt who are down here so wish us luck.

Well dear so long for the present and take care of yourself and baby too, am looking forward to seeing you and my nephew too

My love to you both Peter.

**01/04/1943** From c/o RAF Station, Nrth Coates, Nr Grimsby

**From Peter To Joan**

Joe Darling

I am writing this in the train the dawn has just broken and the sun is peeping up across the long outstretching countryside on Lincolnshire, the clouds are fairly low and it seems there is a possibility of rain. Have had a rather rough night but a little sleep. We left Leigh at 20.30 and marched to Southend Station, the train left at 23.00 hrs. I think we are due to arrive at some place about 7.00hrs. I am travelling with John Hailey, you remember him at Chailey and the Bull. He slept on the table.(we are in the dining car) and I across the seat with my feet up on my pack.

One of our officers has just come along to say start getting our kits. And so I won't be able to finish this here, of course they always start getting ready hours before we are due to arrive but that the army way. I suppose one can't blame them when you consider some of the fellows they have to deal with. They broke the parade off at the station last night for the chaps to rest instead of waiting in ranks. They were told not to go away and to fall in exactly as they were before the order being given. Well when it was given there were about 16 missing out of our troop alone and it took them nearly half an hour to round them up, so you see one can't blame them.

The sun has gone in now and it generally overcast. I suppose you are out of the Hospital by now and hope you are getting your strength back and you are at home or staying with Jean. I hope the latter. Excuse this awful scrawl but the train is rather inclined to sway.

How is baby Raoul. When am I going to see him, about the middle of this month I hope my seven days is about done in this third batch, the start tomorrow 2nd.

Now we are going to settle down to a 15 hour a day sort of life but not for long. We have done too well on the mobile course. Am without report for the

brigade which means we won't stay in ADGB about two months I should say and then across the water possibly the far East it seems the popular opinion of those in official circles.

I could just about do with a bloody good breakfast now but no such luck. John and I went to Southend after lunch yesterday and had an other one at Garons the big caterers. We had braised steak pie savoy cabbage chip potatoes tea. Apple pie and custard with stewed rhubarb. Marvellous such a meal I haven't had for years. The girl piled up our plates with it and was it good and the amazing thing the price was 1/8d . Then we went to the pictures and saw Bette Davis in the Marked Woman. Wonderful acting. We came out and then back to the Garons and had Lager and a terrific plateful of wilkes and cockles and butter then some very fine cold Veal and ham pie with French dressing and chip potatoes. After that special cream trifle and finished up with coffee.

We arrived at our station so had to stop. Have now reached our position on a drome [aerodrome It is pretty exposed to wind etc but if the weather plays fair with us it shouldn't be too bad. I don't know if I shall have a chance to go up in a Beaufighter. I hope so it is sometimes possible. Oh thanks for sending the announcement of Winifred ~ I can't quite imagine it somehow.

Well dear, will stop now. I have plenty to keep me busy for sometime now sorting things out on a new site and Reconning local conditions.

With all love darling Peter.

**08/04/1943** From c/o H.m.Fuel Depot,East Halton , Grimsby

**From Peter To Joan**

Joe dear

I am in a bit of a quandary about my leave, it has just been granted for next Monday the 12th for 9 days. The point is I have just developed a bit of a cold and I don't want to come and see you while in that state and introduce it to young Raoul at his young age. So if it is not better by tomorrow I will try and prospone my leave till a later date, say the 21st. If I get it then of course. I may not be able to change it at all, in that case it will just be unfortunate as I won't be able to see you. It is an awful nuisance as everyone is clamoring for leave and they won't all get it in the short time available.

As you see I moved again - only got word at 7.00hrs this morning and had to be on the road at 8.00hrs. Arrived here no food of course everything is in a filthy state and it is now 21.15 and no rations yet. Oh I managed to get an hour and a half flying in the other day but the weather was not too good for visibility. Anyway it was quite a good trip and the old kyte was very smooth. The post is just going so must get this off now dear  
all love Peter.

**05/01/1943** c/o RAF Station, Bircham Newton , Kings Lynn, Norfolk

**From Peter To Joan**

Dearest Joe

Many thanks for your letter which I have miss laid. Pat's letter I have sent on by Regt D.L.L.S. as I have no idea where he is at present. Perhaps you are now staying with Jean if so give her my kindest regards. Since my return from leave I had three moves and may be another shortly. They appear to be fixing things things up for us to settle all domestic affairs so that there won't be any inconvenience when the time comes for us to go overseas.

Oh can you get me some tobacco and matches, not Balkan Sobrani, a mixture if possible it is unobtainable here and have [not] been able to get any since leave also matches, unless I am with someone else I am unable to get a light. Would you look around for a lighter as none of mine work, could you get me a utility one I can always get the petrol. Will you please treat these as urgent darling, I have never been in such a fix before over such a small matter but I assure you it means a lot on the job. The food is bloody and very little of it which is just as well.

How is the little one is his breathing any better -oh are you going to have him immunised against Diptheria.

Also will you forward me an Income Tax 1943 - 44 Return of income form you can get them from the Post Office I think.

About my coat I shall leave it until I come to town again. How much did you say it cost. I shall have to give some money to pay for it. Well dear all for the present I wrote to Mater why don't you take Raoul and Mater and have a week or so in the country somewhere in Sussex while the good weather is about, it would do you all good, think it over.

All Love Peter Thanks for the labels.

**Comment** estimated date - Pat is probably Pat Haycraft. One of Gerties 3 sons.

**14/05/1943** c/o GPO St Olaves, Nr Great Yarmouth

**From Peter To Joan**

My Dearest Joe

Bags of thanks for the parcel. The lighter is fine and the tobacco is very good just the right kind. I'm giving it a pretty good bashing and its ground. I hope you enjoyed your stay with Jean, I suppose her baby is quite grown up now. I am so glad Raoul is fine he is a great little chap.

You are luck to have Tony home at weekends. How is he liking his course. I must finish this letter and get it off. I started two days ago, it is perfectly hopeless here to get any time to oneself. As you see from the address we are in a hot spot and were hurried here last week as a result of the raids. The ATS got



it rather badly about 70 killed. Fortunately the weather is good, we cook on open fires and the cook has been taken away so we all have a turn at it when we are off the gun which isn't very long as its full manning all the time. Now I have to go to dinner so shall have to finish off.

Today I am (in my spare moments which are long) building a field kitchen fire complete with oven and flue pipe. Oven made out of an old milk churn from the local farm. Of course we have tents which I like at this time of the year.

We are only two miles from Oulton Broad where I used to spend Easters before the war on tour. Must try and get over there is possible.

Myself I have just returned from a weeks course at R.T.W. headquarters - a good time. Just Drill and Duties course. No Guards or duties out every evening and the beer and dancing in the village four nights. I was hoping to be sent on a gunnery course as well but owing to this emergency they have been cancelled for the time being and of course leave is stopped, so will not get mine as soon as I anticipated. Anyway we don't expect to stay here longer than a week or so. I have a hunch we shall go south soon.

Will say cheerio darling as a bloke is going to the post now  
All love Peter.

**Comment** estimated date

**02/06/1943** From Waveney Hill, Oulton Broad, Lowestoft

**From Peter To Joan**

My dear Joe

How are things with you. I had hoped to see you before this in fact I was due to go on 48hrs last week but it was cancelled at the last minute. The last one I had was for your wedding. We are kept pretty busy with practically no relaxation day and night, the only consolation is the weather being good, if it wasn't it would be bloody. We are terribly short of men and it means being on most of the time and then there are the fatigues to see for the collection of water and wood for cooking, maintenance of the site and general equipment.

I don't expect to be here much longer, I fear there is a more strenuous time ahead. I have managed to get out to the Wherry, the pub we used to stay at over Easter before the war. Of course they remembered me directly but its all very different now, in fact most places are closed or have no beer.

It is coming on to rain now so will have to get the kits inside so cheerio for now

all love darling Peter.

**06/08/1943** From Waveney Hill, Oulton Broad, Lowestoft

**From Peter To Joan**

Joe Darling

Many thanks for your letter with all the news. I am afraid there is none from here as usual except that everybody is browned off through lack of sleep. You wouldn't believe we're working 24 hrs on 5 hrs off ditto ditto continuously and nerves and tempers are almost at breaking point. The sooner we leave this place the better for all. Well apparently we are going in a few days. An advance party has just arrived to relieve us. I'll let you know as soon as we get a stable address. You can still use this one in the mean time as the GPO forward our letters on.

So glad you have been able to have Tony home and he passed his course at Larkhill that's good. Now he goes to Cambridge, that will be nice for you to go and stay there.

So sorry you have not been so well and Raoul too now that he is on the bottle you should feel stronger, he's had a pretty good run. How funny why has Raoul gone bald, is it his teeth or is the colour of his hair going to change.

You like the photos, now you are satisfied, for years you have badgered me to have them done. I suppose they could be worse but you know I don't take well. I enclose the two proofs most people here like the smiling one. Perhaps when they are touched up they will look better.

My dear girl its not a question of arranging leave now, there's none of that sort of thing these days, they just tell you a day or two before and then probably cancel it at the last minute. As a matter of fact I am overdue 9 days. Whether this move will delay it I can't say. I wish I could get a weekend. I could do with that much sleep at the moment. The men are moaning day and night and one has to be careful how one speaks to them when one wants a job done.

Thanks for the kind offer to darn socks dear but I have just changed those you sent me and others and am well off for them at the moment. Thanks for asking.

How is Mater is she better will you give her my love . I must write her a wire  
God bless dear with all love

Peter

**18/06/1943** From "C" Troop, 408/123 LAA Regt AA, Evans Barracks , North Camp Blandford, Dorset

**From Peter To Joan**

Jo Darling

How are things going, I hope you are feeling better and Raoul too. I think I told you in my last letter we hope to get out of Lowestoft, well as you can see we have and here we are for a short while. The weather is inclined to be wet

but then we don't mind that as the quarters are very good with all conveniences self contained. I believe it was built as a military camp before the war and you know the standard of accomodation is high for the army. The town is only 50 minutes walk and there is a good bus service up till 21.00 hrs. Several good pubs which have good beer, quite the best I had for 18 months, when we were at Wrecclesham and Farnham. Some are going on leave from here in special groups and I hope to get mine before we leave if not I shall lose it. As you know I was nearly three months overdue last time and it should have been rectified by now as it is I am overdue again. If I don't get this one it seems I shall have to wait till we get some beginning with E [embarkation] thing are moving pretty fast now.

Oh by the way Dick Madge is engaged to a girl at Epsom, the daughter of Charlie Edwards the trainer. Happened on his last leave.

Well dear must get this off now, sorry there is not much news but you understand how it is. Just training

Parade now so cheerio

All love Peter.

**07/09/1943** From 16th LAA , Clacton on Sea

**From Peter To Joan**

My Dear Joe

The first opportunity I have had to get a few moments to myself since returning from leave. Thank you both for looking after me so well, it was grand also thanks for the very delicious sandwiches and they were marvellous. I missed by 5.00 train, just saw it go out but found that there was one going to Salisbury

Piece missing from corner of letter

Seemed to have had an eventful journey with other onther soldiers on the train.

We arrived at Salisbury just after 8.00 and found that one of our lorries was returning to camp at 9.30 so we had a few beers till then and were dropped off right outside our spider from the lorry.

By the time a I found myself a bed and unpacked all my bits it was near midnight and I don't think I had much sleep.

I feel so uncomfortable. A at 6.00 next morning, being duty troops I had a squad of men to work all day on grass cutting. It gets pretty long, anyway we managed some how with a broken scythe and a couple of sickles. All evening I was dismantling new equipment etc up till 10.00 then had to pack everything and load on to the tractor and had a couple of hours kip till 2.00 on Wednesday morning when we started our journey here. They gave us a meal that wasn't fit for pigs just like swill.

The food is awful everyone is creating about it. We arrived about 8.00 in the evening having travelled on two sandwiches and a piece of cake.

They discovered yesterday for rather today why potatoes are sour. The containers up our cooked in haven't been cleaned out for 12 months, by the look of the tea churns, I shouldn't think they have either. Anyway things can only improve they couldn't be worse.

We don't get a moment's rest from 6.00 AM reveille I until 7.00 PM as we have too march a mile to and a mile from each meal. Of course sometimes some of us miss them as you can imagine. By the time one gets back in time parade again. I had no breakfast this morning and no tea tonight. It is not worth it.

Sunday we are out on a scheme all day so you seen they keep us on go. We start at 4.00 I think. We hope to do a bit of firing, that is why we came here, but haven't done any yet, maybe we will fire a few rounds before we go back when the fortnight is up.

We shan't be sorry to get back to "B". In are billets we have 24 chaps and one sink with cold water tap to wash in and one WC, no lights, with no means of drying clothes when we get wet.

One just has to put them on wet. Well I mustn't bore you with all this and the light is going I can hardly see the paper I am writing on so cheers old girl and God bless you love Peter

**Comment** Date Estimated Damaged letter

**08/06/1943** From "C" Troop, 408/123 LAA Regt AA, Evans Barracks, North Camp Blandford  
Dorset

**From Peter To Joan**

Jo Darling

Many thanks for your letter and the news contained a there in.

I think I wrote last from Clacton or was it just after we arrived back here.

Things go on much the same day after day so there is little to tell.

In fact we are going at it all the time and our leisure hour was a cut down to the minimum.

We have been preparing for Battery Command inspection for a week. We had the first half of the week three days of it. At the moment I and many guns offsite around the camp. For three days it pretty rough and uncomfortable but all the other Batteries are not on the scheme so there is no one else to do it. Major D.C. Paster has been in hospital with a broken foot for a fortnight now. The Engine Shaft connector on the gun fell on it I think two of the men fixed it for him, he is liked by them, so I have had to do all the work his and my own, to have not had much spare time.

I am glad that Tony has got back to his old units. He likes it with the heavies doesn't he. As regards leave I can't say anything at the moment. Oh thanks for asking but I don't want any of those clothes thank you. I have a complete set here and those you have will be ready for me at any time to have I may get leave.

I am glad somebody is out and about again give her my best respects and hope she stays with you for a while. It will do her good and will be company for you. So Raoul is teething. How is it going I suppose he does cry a lot with its, excuse all for scrawl I haven't cropped up against my knee.

There are six of us out here and they bring the food out in a truck so by the time we eat it, it is freezing cold.

I hope darling you are keeping well and are not getting too tired or horrid over Raoul and his teething. Our be BSM. and one or two Sergeants have been posted overseas, well in fact we all are but they have gone or rather are going this weekend. They go to Woolwich for a time. I have to start maintenance now dear so cheerio and god bless you your loving Brother Peter

**24/08/1943** From Queen Bertha's School, Birchington, Westgate on Sea Kent

**From Peter To Joan**

My dear Jo

Your letter arrived four days ago, thanks very much, I received the others before I moved. Am working pretty hard and long hours. To days ago I didn't have time to wash and shave until after dark and then no light so couldn't see. The weather hasn't been too kind, have got a bit wet at times. I am glad to hear that Doreen is better and that you had a her to stay. Give her my very best respects. I suppose she is at EX04. How are they all there, is Mater still keeping well and still liking the job.

What happened to Neil, is he at Woolwich now or has he been posted?

I suppose Raoul is getting quite a big boy now, fancy holding his own bottle. He isn't going to be a platinum blond is he. Who does he get that colour from, not from our side of the family.

How did you get the film, you were very lucky. I don't think you will be able to manage that cameras you know it is rather complicated and the exposure gauge is even more so. ....[this is followed by 8 pages of detailed instructions on using the gauge and taking a photograph by Peter] and try and get some more film if you can.

Well dear I must get this off, it has taken four days to write snatching odd moments here and there. We don't even get a break for meals so you see how difficult it is.

Sorry I have no news. My love to you and Raoul and Mater and family, So good luck darling and cheer up  
Always your loving brother Peter.

**Comment** Except for a short note, this is the last letter from Peter.

**31/08/1943** From Stanthorpe Road To L/Bdr Peter Dibdin 2088311, C/o Queen Bertha' School, Birchington, Westgate on Sea, Kent

**From Joan To Peter**

Dearest Peter

How are you? As a matter of fact I am a little worried – I have a feeling that it may be a very very long time before you get another leave (if you know what I mean) If it is so, always remember Darling, my best wishes go with you – God speed and safe return.

I hate to think of it but I suppose it will have to come sometime. However, perhaps you will get leave soon I do hope so. Tony will be home, I think at the end of Sept or beginning of Oct. He has put in for it anyway.

Oh dear it is now the 3rd Sept and I haven't finished this letter. I must really finish it now and get it off to you to night. I had to go to the dentist again on Wednesday so I took Raoul up to Victoria and had lunch with the "Midds" and Mrs Midd looked after him while I went over to Harley St. I am going to do the same on Monday. Incidentally here at last is your letter from Lilian. I'm terribly sorry it has been so long darling. And talking of letters when you write to these people who write to you at Pinfold Road will you give them this address because I don't go round there now and it means that your letters will just lie in the hall for ages before Mater thinks of forwarding them. I sent two letters on to you at Blandford the other day and it looked, by the postal mark as if they had been at No. 4 [Pinfold Rd] for about a week.

I got you letter dear and note the change of address – afraid those other letters will be a long time getting to you.

I shall really have to study you letter carefully and see if I can take some decent photos of Raoul.

Jean came over for the day yesterday and I went back with her for the night – that is really why this letter has been lying here half written – We took Raoul between us in the cot and dumped everything on top of him. However he thoroughly enjoyed it and this morning he had a bath – a tremendous thrill! Doreen is still away with Terry and Vincent – I believe she comes back this weekend.

I haven't seen anything of the others for about three weeks. The two girls used to ignore me when I went round there – then I had a little trouble with Mater one day when I bought her mattress from her and I finally gathered that she hadn't much opinion of me anymore. So I decided it wasn't much point in

going round there anymore. Anyway I certainly shan't without an invitation (which I don't think I am likely to get) so that is that. I have always felt that Mater thinks less of me since I married her son and I sometimes think too that she really was only really pleased to see me because of Raoul - well I'm afraid it doesn't worry me a scrap - but for goodness sake don't mention to Mater if you write to her. I expect it will all turn out right after a time. This sort of thing is always happening but it will never be the same again for me.

Poor Darling, you must be having a lousy time and I don't like the sound of your address

No I don't think Raoul is going to be blond - I really think it will turn out red! I'm enclosing a photo for you, it was really about the only decent one amongst them. Perhaps I will have him taken again when he is about a year old but I hope I shall get some decent ones with your camera.

Well Darling I must go now- it is getting on for 6.30

God bless you dear my fondest love

Joanna.

**Comment** Picture of Raoul enclosed

**09/09/1943**

**From Peter To Joan**

Joe Darling

Hope to see you Saturday Afternoon. If so will stay the night. Have to catch early train back Sunday morning.

Forgive short note dear but no time to write more and have to get this off by special courier. All love Peter.

**17/09/1943** From 81 Stanthorpe Rd To C. Troop 408/123 LAA Regt RA, Evans Barracks, Blandford Dorset.

**From Joan To Peter**

Peter Darling

Here are your socks. I'm afraid I can't get them any cleaner. It was so good to see you on Saturday, I only wish you could have stayed longer.

Mater rang me up the other night to say that Mr Rayment is selling up all the furniture so of course she will have all her stuff back that we have here - I don't know how they are going to manage, because she only has two divan beds - no bed linen or towels and only about three or four blankets.

However as always I suppose they will get over the difficulty somehow. I shall have to start looking around for bedroom furniture - and we shall have to manage without the dining room suite - eat off the kitchen table.

But now I have some good news for you - Raoul has a tooth. We spent the day at Mrs Midd's on Weds. and in the evening, just before we left he put my

finger in his mouth and I felt something prick it. I was amazed because he has been so good. I should think it must have been breaking the skin on Saturday when you were here. If he gets them all as easily as that life will be quite peaceful.

Tony sent a little stuffed animal today that his batman made for Raoul. He is going to make an elephant and a bear for him too.

Well Darling, I'm afraid this must be all for now. I have started to unpick my costume - it is going to be a hell of a job

God Bless you dear

My Love Jo.

**Comment** This last letter to Peter was followed by the one from Mater inviting him to Marie's Birthday Party on 2 Oct

**From Mater to Peter**

19 Sept 1943

My dear Peter

I feel rather guilty for not writing to you before but Ive been drivingly busy lately at work, each eve . overtime and Saturday.

I hear you came to London on Saturday eve. I met Jo and she said she might be seeing you and then Mr Bass at Thresher told me you had been, I should like to have seen you, we went in a crowd down to the Manor 8 of us in all, quite fun for a little merry and did a great deal of laughing, it was quite impromptu, which is much nicer,

Marie and I have been away for a few days to Cambridge to my sister in law, it was quite nice and a change, went back to the village where we used to live but somehow one cannot recapture memories, people had gone away etc etc. but it was grand all the same, Peter came down for a day and we wandered around the village and did enjoy it.

We are celebrating Marie's 21st birthday on Sat Oct 2nd - any likelihood of your being on leave, should like you to come along if you are. Victor, we hope will be on leave again, also Johnnie Sloan has come back into the fold and we were delighted to see him. I can tell you it was 9 months since we had seen him, it was a grand reunion. Hope you are well my dear

With love, your as ever after Mater.

**Peter Died 28<sup>th</sup> Sept 1943 - 4 days before this party**

## Appendix 35 Regarding Mr Kingsnorth (Northy)

This Appendix could have been inserted at the end of Volume II, however as Northy had some significance to Peter and Joan it is here in Volume 3.

There are a number of letters to the Dibdin family from a gentleman named Kingsnorth who called himself Northy. This correspondence started early in 1918 and there is evidence that he met Lionel on the front during 1916-17. From a Curriculum Vitae that he sent Lionel six months later it seems that he was probably about 10 years younger than Lionel but they had a common interest as engineers. His letters with are summarised following this, give us snippets of insights not just about him but also about Lionel and his family. In 1920 Lionel was obviously looking for work in the drainage business for his father and Northy, in a letter from The Borneo Co.Ltd Bangkok Siam, discusses the need for sewage and drainage in the area and refers to passing information on the an engineer going to Shanghai. We are reminded of the influence of the colonial powers in the East.

The Borneo Company Ltd, 1850-1919 may be accurately described as a multinational company and to and theory suggests that it should have been extinct by the end of the Victorian era. Theorists concerned with the development of modern multinational enterprise suggest that it was new, more efficient forms of administration, allowing the internalizing of production units, and enabling foreign direct investment abroad to take place under conditions of reduced risk.

Four years later he is still in Bangkok but a couple of years later he is back in England for while and plans to meet up with Lionel and Family.

In 1926, he is pleased to go with Lionel to Porthcawl, a snippet that informs us that Lionel was working on this project by that date. His letter refers to the issue of moving sand from the sand dunes and suggests the cost may be 5/- a cubic yard.

This was about a year after his father had died so Lionel may have been pleased to share thoughts with another engineer about his project.

Judging from the letters, it is possible that Northy settled for a few years in England and then in 1930 there is a letter from him in Nigeria.

This is followed by letters to the family each Christmas and one is to Joan signed Uncle Northy, indicating that she had written to him, so while in England he had probably become part of the family.

On the death of Lionel and Cecily in 1933 he wrote a condolence letter to both Peter and Joan and as was so often the case in those days the "stiff" upper lip was the approach.

"I do hope you are both "bearing up" under the trouble, the pain of sudden parting will pass away in time."

At Christmas 1935 Peter wrote to Northy in Nigeria but sadly he had died after an operation and so the letter was eventually returned. From Peter's letter we see that Peter felt at ease discussing his issues to do with work and his plans for the future. There is some discussion of the Porthcawl project in Volume II Chapter 15 and it seems that it was quite an undertaking.

There is a suggestion the Peter was involved in 1931 and that he may have met up with a young lady called Rose somehow while in the region. There is a letter from Rose in South Wales during the early part of WW2 and it would seem she was very attracted to him.

The following website may give some idea of what work was being done in Porthcawl at the time.

[historyofporthcawl.weebly.com/](http://historyofporthcawl.weebly.com/)

### Summary of Letters from Mr Kingsnorth

**22/07/1924** From The Borneo Co.Ltd Bangkok Siam  
**From** Kingsnorth **To** Lionel

Herewith is the 2nd order no not of the White Elephant. We are selling our mess to some Beligues and within a few days shall be in another until I leave in about 2 months time....

Do you know of any firms analysing and testing Cement at home ? Privately I am after an analysis of the cement manufacture in Siam as it does not cost too much. Of course we have our own tests but I know that it has some undesirable qualities.....

**15/07/1918** In pencil on graph paper, probably military  
**From** Kingsnorth **To** Lionel  
Letter from the War.

He is with an American Division  
Glad Lionel ok and got a good job in UK ( Draining Airfields )  
Northy had had a rough time and had been cut off.  
As he write he can here the guns  
Will ring Lionel when he gets home.

Enclosed a Statement of experience and training  
3 Years pupilage with Fraser and Chalmers  
2 year London University  
2 years with Port of London as Engineer  
University of London OTC 1913-1914

Royal Engineers 4 Nov 1915  
active service France Feb 1916  
Wounded may 1916 Pleurisy july

**12/04/1920** From The Borneo Co.Ltd Bangkok Siam  
**From** Kingsnorth **To** Lionel

The Engineer going up to Shanghai, I saw, before he left here, and will do what he can. He has a relation high up in the Service there and I shall be glad to know how it comes off. Have shown your booklets to several people here and it is bound to come forward in a few years as country opens up more. Most unsanitary towns in land at present. The city Engineer here is a Mr Bethomane, a Frenchman, so you can in magine it. Bangkok is in no better state than some of the French towns we have been it....

We expect trouble in India soon and I hear that a number of woman and children are being cleared out. I am also afraid the U.S. would come off badly with the Japs - they are up against each other, over the Californian business.

**Comment** India launches the Non-Cooperation Movement under MK Gandhi's stewardship

Issues to do with Japanese immigrants on the west coast of USA in the 1920.

**23/11/1921** From The Borneo Co.Ltd Bangkok Siam  
**From** Kingsnorth **To** Lionel

**22/07/1924** From The Borneo Co.Ltd Bangkok Siam  
**From** Kingsnorth **To** Lionel

Herewith is the 2nd order no not of the White Elephant. We are selling our mess to some Belgiques and within a few days shall be in another until I leave in about 2 months time....

Do you know of any firms analysing and testing Cement at home ? Privately I am after an analysis of the cement manufacture in Siam as it does not cost too much. Of course we have our own tests but I know that it has some undesirable qualities.....

**20/11/1926** From  
215 Shooters Hill Road Blackheath  
**From** Kingsnorth **To** Lionel

Dear Dibdin

I thanks you for your letter of 19th inst. Re South Wales inspection etc.

Shall be very pleased to proceed there with you on Tuesday next and will phone Monday

With kind regards Kingsnorth.

**30/11/1926** From  
215 Shooters Hill Road Blackheath  
**From** Kingsnorth **To** Lionel

My Dear Dibdin

I trust you arrived home without much trouble. Unfortunately I missed the last bus and consequently had a long tram across heath.

The M/cycle is completed but LCC require for licence more information as to Import which am obtaining. Photos are herewith of Site of New Porthcawl on Sea. The dunes look formidable

Have you any quantities yet, from levels as to amount of sand to be moved ? From information it may work out to 5/- per cub yard. With kind regards to you all Northy.

**01/06/1927** 27 Berkeley Road  
Bishopston Bristol  
**From** Kingsnorth **To** Lionel

Am returning home tomorrow and will visit you as soon as possible

Yours Truly Northy.

**21/09/1930** From Ospringe  
Downsview Road Seaford  
**From** Kingsnorth **To** Lionel

**11/07/1931** Maiduguri  
Borno Nigeria

**From** Kingsnorth **To** Joan

My Dear Joan

I was very plased to receive your nive letter, sent a long time ago. Am sorry it was not answered before, when I wrote home it must have been mixed up with my many papers. I thank you very much for your very kind wishes and hope you are well and doing well at school. I have a new school near here nearly finished for the boys and girls of this town. They are very funny to see coming to school I their long gowns and books carried on their heard, no shoes or stockings.

With all best wishes, Dear Joan, for Xmas and the New Year

Yours affectionately Uncle Northy.

**Letters from Northy to Peter after Lionel and Cecily's Death and one last letter to him from Peter unopened.**

**23/04/1933** P.W.D.

Abeokuta Nigeria B.W.A.

**From** Kingsnorth **To** Peter and Joan

My Dear Peter and Dear Joan

It is a sad letter I have to write to you, but we all have to go through this experience at some time or another, it is only the question of a few years. I was deeply grieved to hear that your dear mother and father had gone. They were my great friends and I shall miss them very much. I do hope you are both "bearing up" under the trouble, the pain of sudden parting will pass away in time.

I shall be pleased to hear how you are getting on in business and Joan at school.

Yours sincerely Kingsnorth

**Comment** Joan has obviously seen this in recent years and written Northy on it.

**19/6/33**

P.W.D.

Abeokuta Nigeria B.W.A.

**From** Kingsnorth **To** Peter

My dear Peter

I was very pleased to receive your letter of 24 May, and thank you for your good wishes.

I am glad you have recovered and hope dear Joan does in time.

I feel it very much, myself, especially, as all my boyhood friends have gone, all in the late war, School and university, and very good men they were. But as you say, we that are left have to carry on the good work.

And of course, I am out of touch with things at home, having been abroad many years now. Your Uncle Haycraft is an

engineer and should be able to advise and help you. I suggest writing the President of the Institution for advice and help. Your dear father belonged to it, I believe. Please let me know if I can help you in any way, proposals, papers to sign etc, as you as I am A.M.I.C.E. For abroad, a government job is the best, especially at these times, a small salary but a pension early at 50. If you are interested, and going to carry on in of the engineering profession, you can let me know, later.

I shall not be coming home on leave until next year about June and I shall then be very pleased to have a chat with you, once more.

Everyone in this country is expecting great things from the present conference in London. I hope we shall not be disappointed. Business is very hard generally.

Please give my kind regards to Mr. and Mrs. Davis.

With best wishes to Joan and yourself, your sincerely Northy



**30/12/1934** P.W.D

Akure Nigeria B.W.A.

**From** Kingsnorth **To** Peter

My Dear Peter

Pleased to hear from you

Sorry to hear of Joan in hospital

Rather warm - went mountain climbing on Xmas day

Cocoa and Timber booming in this area and my roads have very heavy traffic on them

Have a lot of travelling to do

I send you both my very best wishes for the New Year and also to your Aunt and Uncle Mr and Mrs Davis. Please convey this.

Uncle Northy.

**17/12/1935** To P.W.D.

Abeokuta Nigeria B.W.A.

**From** Peter **To** Kingsnorth

Christmas Card and letter

I hope this will reach you alright. The PO here see very vague about airmail to BWA

We are spending Christmas at Riegate with the Davis. John is home on leave from Canton

I left the firm I was with when I saw you last and now with the Commissioners of Crown Lands in Whitehall. Only 2 Gns per week but better than the other. My time is now been occupied drawing in the estate maps section and there seems little hope of change. I am looking out for something better but there seems little over here, the only job that surveyors Institution can offer the full members is up to 5 gns per wk. Its not good enough. If I thought there was a chance abroad somewhere I would take it, if only for a few years

I can down in the exams and I feel it is waste of time and money to continue, especially when one sees fully qualified men no better off than oneself.

All the very best to you and yours Peter

**Comment** Sadly returned as Kingsnorth had died after a severe operation on the 20th December 1935

**Appendix 36**  
**Letter from Rose to Peter**

**7/9/1941** DETAILS From 147 Bridgend Road

Maesteg

Gam.

S Wales

**From** Rose **To** Peter

COMMENT Maesteg is about 5 to 10 miles from Porthcawl. Coincidentally or not, Porthcawl is where Lionel, Peter's father, had a major engineering project, building a road on the coast and perhaps a harbour, some years before and there is vague evidence that the family may have holidayed in the area.

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Dear Peter

Thank you for your letter, wished it had arrived before I left, Irene readdressed it home.

Darling, I am sorry you are not feeling well, wish I were able to nurse you, would love to do so.

Please take care of yourself and don't tire yourself.

Glen and I arrived home on Friday at 11.10pm. Mummy was very happy to see us, Saturday, we lazed greater part of the day, visited the local dance hall in the evening, most of my friends have joined up. Sunday we attended chapel in the morning, had tea at auntie and uncle's in the evening took their two lovely evacuees out walking, they are lovely children Brenda and Len. Monday Uncle Garf took us along the coast, bathed and sun bathed, getting a glorious brown, toured back and stopped at a little country pub in the beautiful Vale of Glamorgan. Peter dear, it is so beautiful there.

Tuesday Uncle Garf, Glen and I left for Cardiff at 10am to meet our sister Beryl, lunched at the "Continental" strolled around the

shops (spent a lot of money) (and coupons "laughter!") Today we had Mummy's two sisters and our Uncle's hired a second car toured along the coast, stayed at Porthcawl for two hours bathing then on to Pont-y-Garu, spent the whole afternoon sun bathing between dips, few all burned up now, Mother is continually oiling me and begging me to put my dressing gown on, oh Peter – how could I on such a day??

Peter darling I wish I were seeing you soon, I miss you lots, thank you for sparing thoughts for me, I have lots and lots for you.

Please may I see you soon on my return? We are returning on 19th July but if there was a possibility of staying some place near you and being able to see you I would return an day or so earlier. I would do so, could you possible manage it?

How I must have bored you with this running commentary, forgive me Peter.

Please write soon dear, always in my thoughts

Take great care of yourself, bye-bye Peter God Bless

Yours Rose xxx

PS Kindest regards to Joan. Peter please gargle frequently with saline and alternatively with peroxide, weak solution.

Take lots of fluids sweetened with glucose

God Bless you

Rose. Miss you terrible much. R?P

**Appendix 37**  
**Letters regarding Joan and Public Trusteeship**

**Correspondence from Ancaster School Head regarding Joan.**  
**A fantasy about her parents**

Joan obviously 18 months on from her parents dying was having difficult time fully accepting the situation, particularly as it seems likely that her domestic arrangements were not really as cosy as one would have hoped.

The fact that she created a dramatic narrative of the situation to share with her close friend who she had spent some of the summer holiday with, is not really surprising.

Peter's approach seems much more balanced than Miss Burrows.

From Frances Burrows to Peter

28 Nov 1934

Dear Peter

It has come to my ears in a very roundabout way that Joan has told one of the girls that she does not believe that her father and mother are dead but that they are living in Belgium in great poverty. I do not want Joan to know that I have heard this story as I think she would be very distressed, nor do I feel that it would be very wise to tell her aunts as it would only upset them very much. I think that you are the person to tackle the job. Can you do so? Can you talk to Joan about your parents and see whether she will tell you anything about this strange idea. I wonder has she really said this. I hardly think that the other girl would invent it, in fact the I am sure that she would not do so. How can Joan possibly have such an idea? It is incredible. Do get to the bottom of it, Peter, and put the matter right.

Yours very sincerely Francis Burrows

5 December 1934

Dear Miss Burrows

Thank you for your letter received yesterday. It seems incredible that Joan should have said this. There seems no motive in doing so. I see no reason to believe that Joan invented it any more than the other girl. I can quite imagine that Joan has a feeling or rather tries to think of her father and mother as still living. The affect of this would be to weaken the shock of realization.

Joan does not, I am sure fully realized the ghastly circumstances of their deaths and as far as she is concerned when she last saw them they were perfectly fit and well. A child of her age cannot I think, think of death as we do.

It seems to me that this story is something that has been greatly enlarged upon. However I will do my best to find out something from Joan. Although it is very difficult for me to do so as I see very little of her and one cannot just start on a conversation of this kind. It must come gradually and naturally from when we have been together for a while.

I quite agree with you, I think it would be very unwise to tell her aunts or I think for them to question her.

It could be more useful if you could get more definite details as to how this story started. I will write you later when I discover some more. Sincerely PAD

6 December 1934

Dear Peter

I don't want to give away Joan's friend, but I think that it is impossible for you and me to clear up this mystery without being quite frank with each other. I will therefore, tell you just how the matter came to my notice. Anne Spencer Smith is a great friend of Joan's. This girl has been confirmed this term, when she was talking to our vicar, she told him this this story in strict confidence. She said that she was very troubled about it, as she did not know what to say to Joan. The vicar told me, because he felt one of us ought to do something on the matter. He does not wish me to question Anne about it, because he feels, justifiably, that Anne would consider that he had betrayed her confidence. My hands are therefore, tied in that direction and I cannot cross examine Anne.

I think that what you say in your letter is very wise and sensible and that perhaps Joan tries to think to herself they are not dead and will come back again one day.

When next you see her you may be able to talk to her about the mercifulness of sudden death saying that it is not the ghastly thing that some people feel it to be. Possibly this conversation could arise out of something seen in the newspaper about a motor accident, or you could ask her whether the hospital gave her an impression of sadness and you could comment in the wonderful cheeriness of the staff and patients and that it is marvellous considering the long drawn out suffering that they must see and go through. This is would bring you round to the mercifulness of a sudden death such as that of your parents and you might be able to say something about it being so difficult to realise when death is so sudden.

I only make the suggestions because I feel that one or other of these Lines might lead to Joan unburdening herself if she really feels like this. Personally, like you, I cannot imagine her telling this story to her friend, but there is a very narrow dividing line

and between "Sometimes I almost feel that they have never been killed" and "do you know I don't believe that they were killed". I am so sorry to worry you with all this. And Joan is certainly looks well now and as if she had nothing on her mind.

Kindest remembrances, yours sincerely Francis Burrows

11 December 1934

Dear Peter

In further explanation of the paragraph in my letter which you do not understand: what I meant was that I presume that at first Joan said to herself and possibly to Anne "Sometimes I almost feel that they have never been killed and that this led on to her saying later "do you know I don't believe that they were killed". The second suggestion is only a step beyond the first in the mind of an imaginative girl.

I have not discussed this matter at all with Dr. Gardner or anyone else. As the Doctor at Reigate was perfectly satisfied with Joan, I did not think it necessary for her to have another overhaul, as I do not want to take advantage of the doctors kindness to her. She looked remarkably well when she came back, but we must expect this last fortnight of normal school life to tire her up to a certain point.

With kind regards, yours sincerely Francis Burrows

17 Nov 1937

My dear Joan

In working through some old letters, I came across these. It seems a shame to tear them up when you have, I expect, so little in your mother's handwriting. I don't know whether you will care to keep them (one hasn't room to keep a lot of old letters) that you may like to read them and realise all the trouble your mother took about you before you came to school. It just shows how keenly interested she was in every detail, serving you.

I have been thinking of her again when this terrible news came of the smashing up of the airliner in Belgian. Do you remember how at one time you almost persuaded yourself that she and your father were not killed at all? It was quite natural that you should feel like that because they were taken from you so suddenly that you could hardly be expected to realise that they have gone from you.

I daresay it will encourage you in your work to remember how eagerly your mother looked forward to you doing well at your music. I remember so well her talking to me about it. How are you getting along? Do you ever see him in dally for any old girls?

Love from Francis Burrows

This last letter written 3 years after the original event seems to be awfully loaded.

~~~~~

Managing the Family and the Public Trustees – Them managing Joan

Not only was Joan under the influence of Ancaster House School, and the Spinster Aunt Edith, relying on Peter to fight her corner against School and Aunts but also she was under total financial control of the Public Trustees. Their job, for which they seemed

to be paid handsomely, was to watch over all aspects of her life that had impact on her finances, but note, only over such matters.

It quite unclear who was actually responsible for Joan at a pastoral level and in reality Peter was the one person who really cared and took responsibility where he was allowed. Edith made it clear she did not want the job and Gertie already had 3 sons. On the financial side, as was explained in Chapter 22, Peter was the one that Joan finally was able to chose to work on her behalf in dealing with the Public Trustees and no doubt this entailed a lot of work.

The narrative in Chapter 21 and 22 indication the battles that Peter had and it is interesting to note that Uncle Bernard in Nottingham seemed to have the situation in perspective.

From Uncle Bernard to Peter

“Quite between ourselves, I have heard something about Joan, when she breaks up, coming to spend a few days with you at the Andrew’s prior to going on with you North for Christmas. I have also heard about some attempt to make her go to Reigate instead of to Banstead. {This is where Peter now was living} Without wanting to butt in, I would say that the most natural and proper thing is for Joan to go to join her only brother to whom, presumably, she is much attached as soon as she can and that if the Andrew’s are kind enough to invite her to stay with them she should go. So jolly well see to it will you! But don’t seek any quarrels with Reigate.”

And a few days later

“However, as I have said before "give them no cause" one is an old maid and the other a much over husbanded good aunt.
Yours Uncle Bernard”

Dear Sir,

In reply to your application of 14th November,
I beg to enclose report on the work and progress of Miss
JOANNA DIBDIN.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) Stanley Marchant.

Principal.

Trust Officer,
Public Trustee Office,
Kingsway, W.C.2.

R E P O R T.

PRINCIPAL STUDY.

Punctuality and Attendance. Excellent. Conduct. Excellent.

Examinations taken.

Examinations to be taken.

Any Other Remarks. Considerable talent. Is progressing
very satisfactorily. Extension of
Scholarship recommended.

(Signed) MAX FIRANI, Hon. R.A.M.
(Professor of Pianoforte)

SECOND STUDY. *Elocution*

Punctuality, attendance and conduct good. Shows
considerable ability for this subject and should do well.

(Signed) CECIL MARTIN, A.R.A.M.
(Professor of Elocution)

HARMONY.

Punctuality, attendance and conduct exemplary. Musical
ability very fair. General progress very satisfactory.
Extension of Scholarship recommended. The quality of her
work is variable; at its best it is encouraging.

(Signed) H.V. JERVIS-READ, F.R.A.M.

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RMT/AH/EMP

Chques, Postal Orders, etc., should be made payable to the "Public Trustee" and crossed.

Letters should be addressed to The Public Trustee, and must be sufficiently stamped.

Telephone: "Public Trustee, London."
Branch Office: Holborn 4300

Ext. 247

Branch Office—
Astrakhan House,
Parsonage Gardens,
Manchester, 1.

N.B.—Please quote fully the following references.

Mrs. C.G. Dibdin deceased. A.559/Y

Public Trustee Office,
Kingsway,
London, W.C.2.

24th December 1936

Dear Sir,

I am directed by the Public Trustee to

/ enclose herewith a copy of a letter he has received from
/ Miss Haycraft, together with a copy of his reply.

He will be glad to hear from you that you agree to his writing to Miss Burrows asking her to permit Joan to return to school next term, whether she has or has not passed her examination, and should she have passed, to waive the question of a term's notice.

I am, dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,
R. D. Freyff
Trust Officer.

Peter Dibdin Esq.
East Court,
Barnstead,
Surrey.

P.P.S. 1/1/31. 12/36

Form C39.

Public Trustee Office,
KINGSWAY,
LONDON, W.C. 2.

4 APR 1936

Branch Office—
Astrakhan House,
Parsonage Gardens,
Manchester, 1.

N.B.—Please quote fully the following reference) Dibdin Trust No. A.559

DEAR SIR or (MADAM),

The undermentioned payments are due to be made in connection with this case.

Will you therefore be good enough to prepare the cheque(s) sign the enclosed cheque(s) and forward it them to this Office at your early convenience.

| Payee. | Particulars of Payment. | Amount. | | |
|----------------|---|---------|----|----|
| | | £ | s. | d. |
| PUBLIC TRUSTEE | Refund of amounts advanced by the Public Trustee spec. Income tax @ 4/6 on £15.5 Deposit interest. Income fees. Fares. Lying-in. Withdrawal fee @ 10/6 on £46.30. Income fees @ 4/6 from 25.03 to 25.2.4 on £62.5.3 (Mrs. C.G. Dibdin) 61.4.11 less drawn 1.2.4 on £17.4.2 (Residue) 6.11 overdrawn (see below) 19.4 cheque stamps 3/8 Postage £12.5 less already drawn:— acceptance fee on £490. 62.9.0 Income tax (see above) 12.5 | | | |
| | | | 5 | 8 |
| | | | 2 | 5 |
| | | | 1 | 10 |
| | | 23 | 3 | |
| | | | 2 | 7 |
| | | | 12 | 5 |
| | | 29 | 14 | 2 |
| | | | 3 | 1 |
| | | | 26 | 12 |
| | | | 9 | |

P. D. Dibdin Esq.

Yours faithfully,
H. ERNEST FASS,
Public Trustee.

Within the archive is a folder containing well over 200 documents of this type.

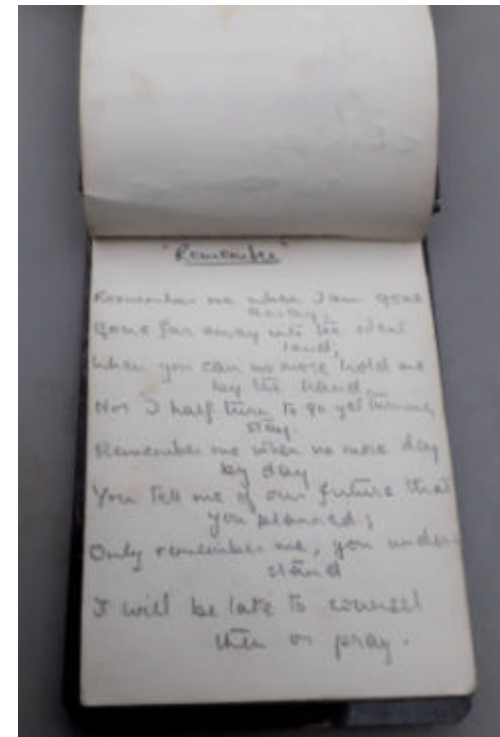
Appendix 38 Remember Me

This poem was found in both Peter's wallet in a printed form and in amongst Joan's diaries in a tiny hand written phone book 2 inches square with imitation tortoise shell covers.

Although Joan never really made a fuss about the Pre-Raphaelites, a number of items and memories come to the fore and I now have every reason to believe that she quite appreciated them. I feel she would have been impressed by their romantic nature and yet precision in painting.


Remember Me Christina G Rossetti

Remember me when I am gone away,
Gone far away into the silent land;
When you can no more hold me by the hand,
Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.
Remember me when no more, day by day,
You tell me of our future that you planned:
Only remember me; you understand
It will be late to counsel then or pray.
Yet if you should forget me for a while
And afterwards remember, do not grieve:
For if the darkness and corruption leave
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
Better by far you should forget and smile
Than that you should remember and be sad.




Appendix 39
Some Certificates and Documents

2/100922 (2/100922) Effices Form 596


NOTIFICATION OF DEATH.

CERTIFIED that it appears from the records of this Office that
No 200234 Lance Corporal Peter Haycroft DIBDIN,
100th Battalion, London Regiment
died at *Cyprus*
on the *Twenty Ninth* day of *September* 1929
Cause of death: *Internal injuries as the result of an accident.*
Dated this *Thirtieth* day of *October* 1943

Signed *H. Gray*
The War Office.




(343/554) W. 14607/2042 3/1 1/48 L. E. & Co. Ltd. 385 13992

Notification of Death of Peter Dibdin.
Due to internal injuries as a result of accident.

Printed in Great Britain by James, 1938

Guide to those who wish to obtain commissions in the
TERRITORIAL ARMY

Précis of the conditions of service for officers
1938.



THE WAR OFFICE, 110 COVENTRY STREET, LONDON, W. 1.

Printed in Great Britain by James, 1937

GUIDE TO THOSE WHO WISH TO OBTAIN COMMISSIONS IN THE TERRITORIAL ARMY, 1938

ARRANGEMENTS No. 1

By Command of the Army Council.

H. Gray

THE WAR OFFICE, 110 COVENTRY STREET, LONDON, W. 1.

W. A. TRUELOVE & SON, Ltd
A. 522 4

ROLLS ROYCE FUNERAL FURNISHERS PRIVATE MORTUARY
MOTOR HEARSES AND COACHES MONUMENTAL MASONS CHAPEL AND SHOWROOMS

ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO Head Office: **118, CARSHALTON ROAD, SUTTON.** TELEPHONS VILLANT 5211 (4 LINES)

HIGH STREET, SUTTON VIO. 0327 BRANCHED HIGH STREET, EPSOM PHONE 327
STAFFORD-WALSINGTON PHONE 1032 HIGH STREET, CHEAM VIO. 3500


DARLINGTON D. A. TRUELOVE
Mr. A. B. Guise 61, Stanthorpe Road, S.W.16 11th October 1943

| | | |
|---|---|-----------------|
| Re: - PETER HAYCROFT DIBDIN dec'd | | |
| To arranging and conducting interment of Ashes Casket at Carshalton | | |
| Churchyard..... | 7 | 10 - |
| Churchyard fees..... | 4 | 16 8 |
| Church Pess (Holy Trinity) | 1 | 6 - |
| | | 5 - |
| | | £15 17 8 |

Account No. *A-5224* No. *237*

Peter Haycroft DIBDIN dec'd

Received for W. A. Truelove & Son, Ltd, the sum of
£ 15 : 17 s. 8 d.



Date *October 20 1943* Funeral Monument.

THIS INDENTURE made the First day of June, 1931 between LIONEL AGLIO DIBDIN of 18, Mulgrave Road, Sutton in the County of Surrey (hereinafter called the Father) of the first part PETER MAYCRAFT DIBDIN of "Avondale", Grosvenor Avenue, Carshalton in the County of Surrey son of the said Father (hereinafter called the Pupil) of the second part, and LIONEL AGLIO DIBDIN of 18, Mulgrave Road, Sutton in the County of Surrey Engineer and surveyor in Private practice in Sutton (hereinafter called the Principal) of the third part,

WITNESSETH as follows :-

1. The Pupil of his own free will, with the consent of the Father binds himself to serve the Principal as his Apprentice to learn the Profession or Business of a Municipal Engineer and surveyor from the FIRST day of JUNE 1931 for the term of three years thence next ensuing.
2. In consideration of the sum of one pound now paid to the Principal by the Father (the receipt whereof the Principal hereby acknowledges) the Principal hereby covenants with the Father and the Pupil and each of them severally as follows:-
 - (a) That he will accept the Pupil as his Apprentice during the said term, and will, during such term, to the best of power skill and knowledge, instruct the Pupil, or cause him to be instructed, in the Profession or Business of a Municipal Engineer and Surveyor

Compare the difference between the two indentures for Peter Dibdin. The first with his father in 1931 charge £1, and the second on 17th October 1933 about 6 months after his father had died with Maurice Andrews who had worked with his father for a charge of £140.

How different the situation would have been had Peter been old enough to already become a partner in the Company.

Articles of Pupilage.

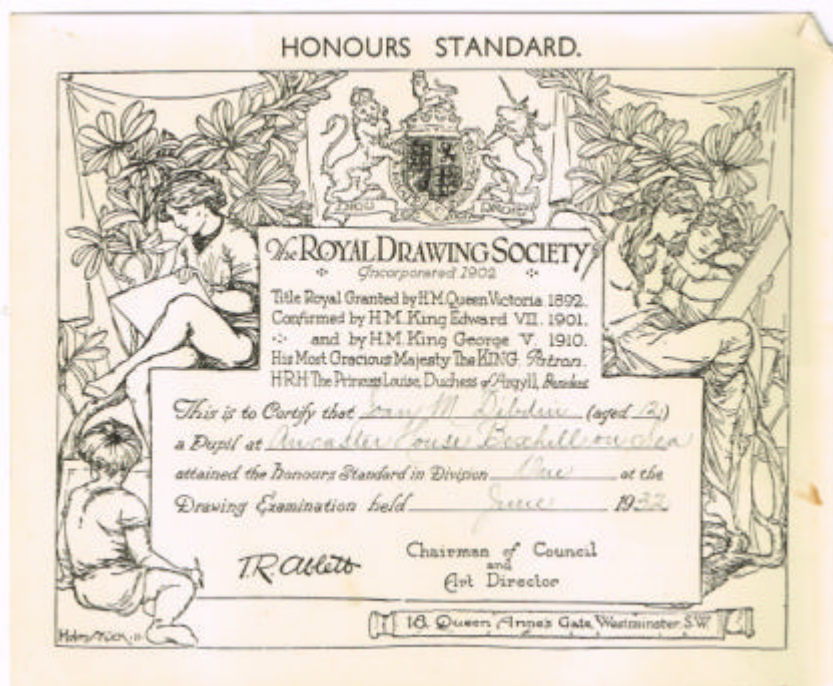
[Form for payment of Premium in One Sum] approved 1927.]

An Agreement, made the 17th day of October 1933

between Maurice Andrews of No. 18 Mulgrave Road, Sutton in the County of Surrey hereinafter called the Father or Guardian of the first part, Peter Maycraft Dibdin of the said Sutton hereinafter called the Pupil of the second part, and Charles Francis John de la Beunton Harold Woodman Morgan and William Clifford Davy trading as Deacons Company of The Old Collection Square, E.C.1 in the County of London hereinafter called the Principal of the third part,

WITNESSETH that the Pupil of his own free will, with the consent of the Father or Guardian doth bind himself to the Principal as a Pupil, to learn the Profession or Business of a Chartered Surveyor from the second day of October 1933 for the term of two years thence next ensuing.

And that, in consideration of the sum of one hundred and forty pounds the Principal paid by the Father or Guardian on the execution of these presents (the receipt of which said sum of £ 140 the Principal doth hereby acknowledge) the Principal doth accept the Pupil and take him into his service for the said term. And the Father or Guardian and the Pupil do and each of them doth hereby covenant with the Principal that he, the Pupil, shall and will during the said term of years loyally execute and perform the lawful instructions and directions of the Principal, and serve him as his Pupil, and he secrets keep in all matters relating to the said Profession and other the business of the Principal and will in all respects conform to the Rules of the office of the Principal. And that he will not do anything that shall cause damage or injury to the Principal or his goods, nor knowingly suffer the same to be done or attempted by others. And that he will not absent himself from the service of the Principal, during the usual office hours



An indication of Joan's artistic potential.
Certificate received soon after arriving at Ancaster House

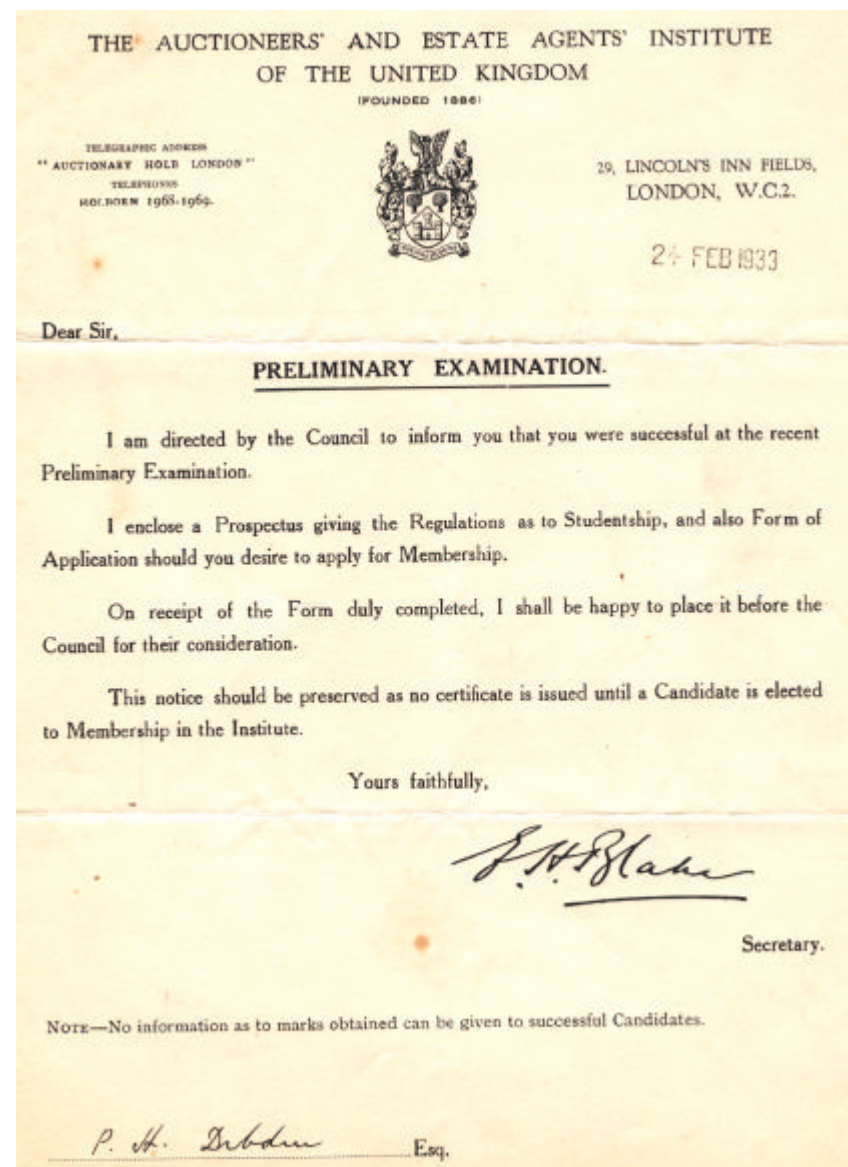
The **Royal Drawing Society of Great Britain and Ireland** was founded in 1888 in London, with the aim of teaching drawing for educational reasons.

The methods of instruction were based on the idea that very young children attempt to draw before they can write. They have very astute perception and retentive memory. The society aimed at using drawing as a means of developing these characteristics of children. It promoted the teaching of drawing in schools.

Lord Leighton, Sir John Millais, and Sir Edward Burne-Jones aided in the society's activities.¹⁴¹

The society awarded the first annual scholarship in 1892 to a Miss F M Price.

The society ran an annual children's art exhibition from 1895 in London, in 1978 this was taken over by the Federation of British Artists but they announced in 1980 that they did not have the funds to continue to run the exhibition. As well as the exhibition the Federation also took over the other functions of the society.



Appendix 40
Some Pictures and Photographs



"Leladene"

Details of Leladene - Camilla Lacey

Two Pictures from a Catalogue of the Estate
and a recent Photograph.

The Estate is Located in West Humble in the Mole Gap next to
Box Hill

It was the last estate purchased by Lionel Dibdin and was to be
developed into a housing estate. The main house was to be kept
as a useful property such as a school.





Peter's colleagues in the drawing office
at Commissioners of Crown Lands Office in 55 Whitehall.
1936

Peter seemed to have settled well at his new job, but we have no first hand knowledge of how he felt about leaving his father's property company other than letters from Rex and Northy.



These photographs show us that Winifred referred to in a number of letters is Winifred Muir, "the girl next door" to Joan and Peter. It is no wonder that her name comes up in the context of social life just as that of her brother David Muir.