

A Romance by Mail

A Post War courtship by mail.

Original letters by Margaret Tye (née Lowe) and
Kenneth Tye RN.

Layout, editing and Introduction by
David Griffiths
Kurrajong-Comleroy Historical Society

A Romance by Mail

In the immediate post war period, from 1945 to 1948, a young Australian girl and a British sailor conducted a courtship by mail. The correspondence was made all-the-more difficult because of the delay between letters caused by the sailor's ship being at sea for various periods.

The Australian girl was Margaret Janeway Lowe, born in 1930, living in Kingsgrove when not at MLC Boarding School. Because they had spare bedrooms when Margaret and her sister were at boarding school, her parents billeted young sailors who were on shore leave from various navy ships. Enter Ken Lewis Tye, a sailor on the HMS Implacable, which was a Royal Navy aircraft carrier of the Implacable class. Ken was born in Yorkshire in 1924.

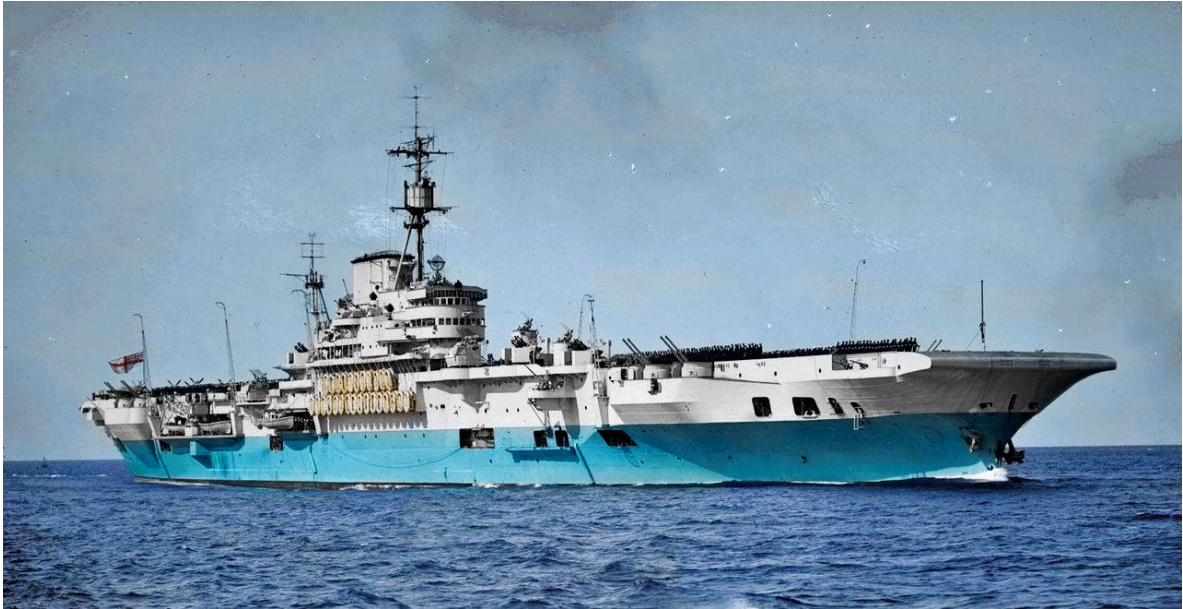
The HMS Implacable had been in Manus Island preparing for another attack on Japan when the Japanese surrendered, so she was sent to Sydney and arrived on 24th August 1945. She had a refit to install bunks in the aircraft hangars so that she could transport soldiers who were being repatriated after the war. The first repatriation trip was from Manila to Pearl Harbour and Vancouver, followed by a voyage from Hong Kong to Manila and Balikpapan, Borneo, where she embarked 2126 soldiers of the 7th Australian Division who returned to Sydney on 17th November. There was another trip to Papua New Guinea returning to Sydney before Christmas.

In January 1946 the extra bunks were then removed to return Implacable to operational status for a training trip down to Melbourne, returning to Sydney on 15th March. There was another refit lasting until 29th April, when Implacable set sail for home.

After leaving port in Sydney, they dumped 16 Lend-Lease Avenger aircraft into the sea. Britain had to either pay for these aircraft or dispose of them! (Government bureaucratic waste was alive and well even then).



The HMS Implacable arriving in Sydney in 1945.



HMS Implacable at sea in 1946.

Margaret met Ken when she returned home from boarding school for the Christmas holidays in 1945.

The letters started in January 1946 while his ship was on the way down to Melbourne. There was a gap while the ship was in Sydney (March-April 1946) and then they restarted with the ship heading back to England.

It was just over two years before Ken could make it back to Australia and in that time the romance blossomed. Absence makes the heart grow fonder they say. Ken and Margaret were engaged on his return in August 1948 and married in May 1949.

They had two daughters (Jennifer Janeway and Rosemary Beth) and were happily married until Ken passed away in 1997.

The letters were all kept (except some early ones to Ken) in a hat box. The hatbox was stored on top of a wardrobe and was the only thing to survive a major flood that engulfed their home at Cornwallis in 1956.

Margaret transcribed the letters around 2002 and added some comments at the time, these shown in magenta.

Some things you need to know for context...

- The Lowe family lived in Kingsgrove (a southern suburb of Sydney) and had a farm at Lower Portland.
- Their house was called "Kennington" and the farm was called "Staines".
- Margaret was the second daughter and had a sister, Winifred Eve (known as Pete), and a brother, William Stafford (known as Stafford), who was 10 years younger. Stafford became a Commander in the Australian Navy.

We start with the hatbox telling its story.

Memories of a Much Abused & Used "TATTY #ATBOX"

Over the years, I have had the acquaintance of a number of the species ... that is of the HUMAN variety, they are in my past, some who have borrowed, used & even abused me for a number of reasons. BUT! I know one who has loved me & rescued me many a time, yet for some inability of her own, she cannot or won't dust me or handle me unless it is a necessity...

Now it came to pass, an occasion, that one of these treasured – by me – moments occurred, and as usual, during these now rare meetings and or gatherings of friends and family I have often heard it said, "If only IT" – I beg their pardon! Could talk, what secrets could be hidden under the lid, even what it has overheard in Madam's –er - Mother's boudoir. Hm'! Or as the Blushing Brides travelling companion – or maybe when she used it as a getaway bag from the tedium of Boarding School routine.

Oh yes! I have been all those things, and can say, "Without a Shadow of a Doubt," ... I have survived all those happenings in the past 70 odd years, before and including the end of the Big Depression...

I went right through the "War to end all Wars" WWII. Of course, on the sidelines ... I even suffered the indignity & fright of the 1956 "Hawkesbury Flood" as it slowly reached right up the wardrobe I resided on, along with only two very special photographs my then & still my companion has to show for that frightening period of our lives and after being thrown into and rescued by a flood boat during –clean up time- I know she cares for me still, even if her sentimentality will not allow her to dust me.

Recently her two daughters, having both been to visit at the same time, (Without attachments) ie., Families, first time for Um! years on their own. Basically to share her 70th Birthday treat.

While here they removed me from my then secure & safe position that I had commanded for the last 25 years. Or, so she & I would not fall off either of our respective perches (so they said) while in the process of possible sorting & packing during future house sale & so to be in a removable state to a new home...

Now I think it is "TIME" She took courage, lifted my hat, er lid and, looked inside to find, read, dream & remember some of the memories I have been protecting during these many past years. Oh No! They may not set the World on fire. Yet definitely a young heart, or really two have been needing an airing away from the stuffy interior of my dusty exterior for many years. And yes perhaps the calmness to remember may help her to find again her own girlhood, through future hidden strength of Womanhood that she and or her family did not always accept as being present in that slim young body. And the laughing sense of humor that so often got her into - & out of trouble and strife – at home and abroad in her rather confined lack of knowledge of the outside world whilst growing up from the age of just 16 to 19 years.

This story is true. Written by their own hands & hearts while experiencing a very long, long, distance apart (12.000) miles day to day, month by month & years of slowly growing up & developing love and nurturing the future strength of character that eventually saw them through flood, fire & yes even maybe, Well! Not quite famine, but definitely a lot of balancing a not too secure budget. Oh yes! They were not the only ones, but the only ones I knew personally and even though I am coming unstuck (paper lining, that is) disgracefully battered edges and so dusty. I know in my Pre War Cardboard Heart, she herself will never dust me, well not too well & or throw me out or leave me behind till she is no more capable of doing otherwise. You see I am the only honest thread to her innocent girlish past....OOPS!...

I feel hesitant hands on my stiff & rusty clips- makes me shiver – I hold back, 'She' gets mad, and Voila!!! I loose (At last) she has finally 'Been and gone and done it'. Yes opened the BOX as it were – 'She' beams, and Oh! What surprises are going to keep her busy for a long, long time....Gently she lifts my lid and slowly, slowly those hands idly flip some of the many old cards, telegrams, acceptance, unable to attend. Welcome to the baby...Welcome! It's a Girl! Cards And to let the cat out of the bag as it were some written 50 years ago ... "Anzac" day 25th

April 1954 referred to one of the culprits who DUMPED me off my perch and thankfully started this ball rolling...

And now the letters – Her face lit up – would she, could she, finally have the sense to pick at least One of them up? ...Yes! Faded edges curled, some having been enjoyed by silverfish and other creepy crawlers add to their battered tattered state bent & creased from time past as spoken about earlier in this epistle. We must remember they were written on Post War Airmail paper of course and as each one had travelled over all those miles by sometimes ship or occasionally Air, Train and postman on bicycle through sunshine or snow, for such were the times.

Suddenly, after her reading the first letter I knew that my indigestion would finally be sorted out. So now, deciphered and filed and about time too. It had built up during a fifty seven year wait then another three days to read were nothing compared to the excitement, tears and laughter that erupted from front room she had escaped to so as to be by herself, re-digest the contents of the letters. Memories and the results once again of why flood, fire, snow & Love had become my lot & or because of the beginning I and they were destined to have a happy ending after a long survival inside my rather rotund & battered shape....

Well!!! After all, I am only a 'HAT BOX'...



To open cut at top

BY AIR MAIL

AIRLETTER



Mr. H. L. Dye
22 Bath St
Elland Br Halifax
Yorkshire England

Miss M. Lowe
"Hennington"
Bresford Pl
Kingsgrove.
NSW

If anything is enclosed, letter will be sent by ordinary mail.

They will not arrive for a while though, because ordinary mail takes about 5, 6, or 7 weeks to arrive, but I will send them as soon as possible.

Do you remember that I was learning to play some songs for at the club evening next Tuesday, well Pete has to sing the song "I Promise Me", and I and five other girls are doing a P.T. display, only we wear every thing backwards, and masks on the back of our heads, while all the time we are on stage we face the back of the hall, it looks most queer.

Well here I am at the bottom of the paper, and much more to tell so I will close now, and write again soon.
Yours always. xxx

looking in vitamins, or calcium dolo.

We were told when we bought Muggs & Baldie (the horses), that Muggs had only been in the Dray once, and that was eight years ago, so Dad and other shohler after feeding the stupid thing with a few cobs of corn, put on winers, collar, and harness without further trouble, and then backed her into the Dray, then after a trial run we all piled in, and went for a drive round the orchard.

We brought back a 32 oz jar of cream, and Muggs made about a pound of butter from it. Dad he said that I have to make it next week, as she found out I could, lets hope that will teach me to keep quiet.

Will if I want to catch the Post I had better sign off. (Still next time.)

Yours obang. xxx.

To open cut at top

BY AIR MAIL

AIRLETTER



Mr. D. L. Dye

22 Bath St

Elkland, Co. N. Halifax

& Yorkshire

England.

Third fold here

Second fold here

Sender: Miss M Lowe
Kennigton
Beresford Pde
Kingsnore.

If anything is enclosed, letter will be sent by ordinary mail.

Letters written by Ken

K.L. Tye L/ck c/mx 122100.
Mess 38,
H.M.S. IMPLACABLE.
B.F.M.O. SYDNEY.

To Margaret Lowe.

Wednesday 16th January 1946.

Dear Margaret,

Well! At last I have finished the Duty watch, and I am able to put pen to paper. And what a duty watch it has been, the worst that I have ever experienced, no 'kidding. Talk about work. I was thin before, but you should see me now, to get in the 'Mess' I crawl through a crack in the door.

To start with, I fried 1700 pieces of fish, that took me till 6.30pm., then after we had scrubbed the galley out, we had to cut 1800 pieces of liver up, for breakfast. When we came on at 3am. We had to cook them, also 200 Cornish pasties to make and the dinner to get on with. 'The P.O.' (Petty Officer) sent for the Chief cook at about 5am and he found us all in a panic, consequently he reported us to the Warrant cook and in turn, he reported us to the Paymaster Commander, who didn't like it, and he wasn't long in telling us so.

Well the ship is in Jervis Bay now, we don't get to Melbourne until the 28th and we leave there on the 30th to come back to Jervis Bay. What we are doing is, the ship goes out to sea early morning, does deck landing trials, (airplanes I mean) and anchors in the Bay every evening, there are two other ships with us, the "Glory" and a Destroyer.

We are at anchor now, and I am laid on the deck on my hammock on one of the open weather decks, there is no sun whatsoever, but it's not cold. As soon as I finish this and have got it posted I shall just flake out and sleep for the afternoon, then go to the pictures tonight. The name of the picture is "Sudan", that is all I know about it.

I am very tired so I will close for now. Sorry it's so short, and scribbled, but as I said, I'm laid on my bed.

Best Wishes to all, Hoping your letters arrive pretty soon.

Toodle oo the noo. Ken. "B!Z!Z!Z!Z!Z! Latest BUZZ. There isn't one.

Letter No. 2. Saturday 19th January 1946.

Dear Margaret.

Another 'duty watch over and done with, and am I glad, it was not as bad as the last one but worse than usual. There has been a bit of excitement in the mess a short while ago. The Mess has just been painted out by the mess man, and one of the cooks came in and got his hand all white, so he started calling the mess man lots of names that are not in the dictionary, and after arguing for about half an hour they went outside the mess door and set into one another. Result? The Mess man is walking around with his arm in a sling, the cook is lying in sick bay with a large cut under each eye, and a mashed jaw, naturally he would have to be in my watch, that making us a man short next time we are Duty. "Oh! Calamity" "Oh! Calamity" Stand by for latest Buzz. B!Z!Z!Z!Z!Z!.

Back in Sydney on the fifteenth of February, most likely only for a weekend, but never the less it's where I want to be.

I got a lovely surprise a few minutes ago, four letters from U.K. your letters still have not arrived, nor did I get one from my Dad, two letters from home in five months isn't cricket. One of the letters was from an old pal who I was in the States with, he was discharged on

medical grounds some months ago, it is real good hearing from him again and to know he's getting on pretty well in Civvy St. He got engaged at Christmas to a girl he met on the leave we had after we arrived back from America.

Tomorrow we sail for Sydney, but alas we do not enter the harbour, we are to meet the Indifatigable outside the heads & then proceed to Melbourne. All the seaman aboard are training for a big march past in Melbourne, I suppose the (Indifat.) and Glory are doing the same, so it looks like being a big do.

It's surprising how songs bring back memories, the one that has just been played "My Devotion" reminds me of when I had just been pulled into this regiment, and was in Sick bay with Chicken pox, that song was on the radio two & three times a day, and each time it was sung I wrote down words of it until I had it complete, there are dozens of songs like that, that take me back to different places.

Well Marg! I think I'll pipe down now, as my stomach is calling for Food! Kind regards to all, hoping to hear from you soon. Ken.....

Letter No. 3. 24 th January 1946.

Dear Marg.

Just a few lines in a very big hurry, thank you so much for the two letters that I have just received, one last night & the card this morning.

I am Duty today. It is now 9.30 and I am still working, with three ovens full of meat, and as none of the dishes showed any signs of burning. I took the opportunity of scratching this letter, so if, when the chief cook comes in the morning he says "Who is responsible for the burnt offerings", I shall have to say 'Miss Margaret Lowe'

Well we had our first trip ashore in Melbourne yesterday, and had a very good time, (That is Ray & myself) we couldn't get ashore until four, owing to the chief cook and his stand by watches. There were crowds of people at the dockyard gate, dishing out pamphlets telling where to be going & what to do and all the hospitality that has been arranged for the ships. All the newspapers are full of pictures of the ships and the men, when we were Falling in for liberty men. There was a photographer taking pictures and I was the second nearest the camera, but it's not in the papers today, so I figure my Dial must have busted the camera. After a very big feed in the City, we went to St. Kilda to 'Luna Park' and had a good time, but a BAD time on the pockets. Anyway we might never see Melbourne again so we may just a well make the best of it. Well, Margaret I must close, I doubt if you will be able to cipher this scrawl, without an interpreter, but do your best, it may take weeks. Best Wishes to all. Yours Ken.

Letter No. 4. Sunday, 27th January 1946.

Dear Margaret.

It is now early morning, seven thirty to be exact, and once again, we are duty watch. I shall be finishing this letter to-night as we have to start work at eight am and it's going to be a day today, visitors coming onboard by the thousands. The three of the carriers are open to the public on Saturday & Sunday, and if the crowds today are anything as big as they were yesterday, it is going to be a grim do.

We went ashore at 12.30 yesterday, (Stand by watch as well) and there were thousands of people lined up on the jetty waiting to go aboard at one o'clock. Yesterday's duty cooks say they had to close both entrances to the galley, as it was impossible for them to get the supper ready, it is now two minutes to eight, so I must sign off for the present.

Well it is 3.30 now Marg, and we have knocked off work until 5.15 as we have a very easy duty watch, with practically nothing to do until we make a start on the supper.

The visitors are here in their thousands, there was a long line before twelve, and all though they have been piling aboard since 1pm, there is still a queue a few hundred yards long on the jetty, they have roped the galley off, in fact nearly everything is roped off. They come on board by the forward gangway, walked across the ship up into the hanger to the flight deck, down the flight deck to the after lift, down to the quarter deck and so ashore, I think that's a pretty poor do.

Ray & I went on a bus trip to the hospitality center of Melbourne, for 150 men, there were 5 bus loads, everything was free, we had a lovely lunch at a little town right at the top of one of the mountains, Mt. Dandenong, or something like that it was called. I got quite a lot of cards for my album. Thanks a lot for the card, and Flannel flower that you sent me.

Last Thursday we met some very nice people. Pa, Ma, one daughter and one son, we were up at their house last night, at about eight thirty we went down to a little beach called Mordialloch, we had a pretty good time in the Fun Fair, it was only very small though. We are going to a picnic tomorrow with them, providing that we can get into the city to catch the train at eight minutes past two.

Well that's all this time Margaret. Best wishes to all. So long for now. Ken

P.S. Believe it or not, I have actually got a new pair of shoes

Letter No. 5. Tuesday. 29th January 1946.

Dear Marg.

Thanks a lot for your letter and photo, which I received at 1.30am this morning, when Ray & I arrived back on board after a days 'picnicing' at this joint called Mordialloch. (Spelt correctly this time. *Well almost*). The photo is pretty good Marg, and I am very pleased to have it, I was going to ask you for one next time we met.

Once again we are stand by watch, and our friend the chief cook is making us work, we shall be lucky if we get ashore for four thirty by the amount of work there is to do. This is my dinner hour, so I definitely shan't have time to finish this today, as there is only about fifteen minutes of the hour left. I shall be going ashore as soon as we finish work, so I shall most likely be finishing the letter before we turn too in the morning.

Believe it or not, but we are going to a dancing class tonight. The people, with whom we have been staying our shore leave, run this class every Tuesday, it's only a small class run in the largest hall of the town of Cheltenham, that too is small, there are only about forty people get there.

Well there's a new 'Buzz' out today Marg, it is that we arrive on the fifteenth and go straight into the dry dock for six weeks, of course that is like the rest of them, only a buzz. Well it's about time I started work. So that's all for today.

Wednesday. Morning.

And it is half an hour before it is time to go to work again. I received your letter about the exam results, and it certainly shook me, it never entered my head that you would fail, but it can't be helped. I guess your Mom & Dad are pretty cut up about it, as you say it should be O.K. at the Business College. I shouldn't fancy going back to the school.

Well yesterday was my last trip ashore in Melbourne. I'm sorry in a way, because a week is not long enough, just time enough to make friends with people and you have to say

Goodbye. We had a nice time at the Dance, I only got up once, and that was too much for me, as I don't have the faintest idea of dancing. We stayed over-night at Mrs Bradford's and caught a train at 6.15 this morning. Boy did it feel good to sink into a feather bed once more, well I don't know if it was feather, I do know it was soft.

Well I will close now Marg. Best wishes to all, hoping to hear from you again very soon.
Yours. Ken.

Letter No. 6. Friday 1st February 1946.

Dear Margaret.

Just a few more lines to say. Hello! And low you are, not with the Exam results still fresh in your mind, but you will soon get over that.

Once again, we are at sea, we sailed from Melbourne at ten thirty yesterday morning with thousands of thousands of Melbournites cheering and waving us off. There is just the "Glory," two destroyers, and us heading north, the "Indefitagable" is on her way to U.K. We now have the Admiral aboard, and another addition is the Indifitagable Mascot, a pet monkey complete with small kit bag, hammock, pay-book and his papers, his name is Marine "Stupid". His ex Master brought him aboard yesterday morning just before we sailed, it will be too cold for him in U.K. That's why he got a draft to Implacable, the last time I saw him, he was eating an ice-cream cornet.

We are stand by watch today, and are waiting for the Chief cook to make up his mind whether we are to work or not, there is nothing to do, but I would like to bet that he has us scrubbing something or other.

Only fifteen more days now before we arrive back in Sydney and the latest Buzz is that we only stay for the weekend, then we go to New Zealand, arriving back in Sydney sometime in March. I would like to visit New Zealand very much, but they could give us a longer stay in Sydney. I shall have to have a word with the Admiral about it.

I shall have to have a big 'dhobying' session before the fifteenth, as I wore my last clean shirt on the last run ashore in Melbourne. Two shelves in my locker are full of nothing but washing, so one of these afternoons, I must make a big effort and get them done. It is too much to hope to get them into the laundry, I have been asking them to do me some washing ever since I joined the ship, but I am not making any headway.

Well I must close for now Margaret, hoping there is a letter for me when we arrive in Jervis Bay. Best wishes to all. Cheerio for now. Yours Ken.

Letter No. 7. 6th February 1946.

Dear Margaret.

I have just received your letter of the 29th, it took eight days, that's what is known as speed, I don't think, anyway thanks a lot for it, I was very pleased to hear from you.

Now that is really something, being able to type with two fingers, just like my piano playing only you use twice as many fingers as me.

Well things are getting worse on this ???mark? four men (cooks) are in sick bay, thus making us short handed in the Galley, so the Chief cook has put us in two watches instead of three, now instead of having a stand by watch, we are duty again,

things were bad enough before, but now its just about twice as bad. The next one to be in sick bay will be me 'accidentally on purpose'. If we continue in two watches until the fifteenth, I shall have just about enough energy to get to Kingsgrove, and no more.

I got two other letters at the same time as yours, one from the first Pal I had in the Navy, a lad called Roger, I had lost touch with him for over a year, and whilst I was on the K.G.V. I sent a letter care of his home address, and today I received a reply. He is stationed on the Admiralty Islands. I had known that for about a week, as his Mother sent me his address on, but this letter from him really is worth having, as it gives me all the details, he is expecting leave in Sydney very soon, so I hope to be able to meet him.

Well I will close now Marg, if I don't get out into the fresh air soon I shall suffocate. The ship is going out to sea in about half an hours time, to do night flying, so that will be something to watch for an hour or so. So long for now, Best wishes to the family. Yours, Ken.

Letter No. 8. Saturday 9th February, 1946.

Dear Margaret

Your letter of the 1st February arrived this afternoon, thanks a lot Marg, I was very pleased to hear from you.

I am duty again today, 9,30 and we have just finished and I am fed up to about a foot above my head. We are still in two watches, and it is just about killing me. By the time we get into Sydney they will have to carry me to Kingsgrove on a stretcher. And on top of the work we do in the galley, they have a marvelous idea on this prison, they make the cooks mess the duty mess every so often. That means, for example, yesterday we were off duty, & our Mess was Duty mess. At 4.30 we had to clean out the dining hall after they had finished playing Tombola. (Lousy Housy) at 5.30 we had to rig the cinema in the 'after lift well' that's about 50 forms to put together and the screen to hang up, at 9.15 we had to un-rig the cinema and sweep the place out. All that is on our day off, when we should be catching up on the sleep we lost on the Duty watch, but it won't be going on much longer for me, as all men up to 50 group are going off the ship in Sydney in March. I am 51 group so it shouldn't be long now.

I thought that I had told you who Ray was, I must be mistaken. Ray was on the K.G.V. He was drafted from Golden Hind about a week after me. I went ashore with him a couple of times, before that seven days leave when I came to your house with George. When I was drafted to the 'Implac.' he was drafted to Schofields near Parramatta, there he joined 828 Squadron, and just before the Implac left Sydney, 828 squadron came on board,

I am very glad too, as before the three squadrons came 828, 801, & 1701, you couldn't have made a decent bloke out of the 20 ships company cooks put together. One thing though, he takes after George a bit, he likes his own way too much, not on board, that's the funny thing about it, only when we are ashore, especially when we were with those people in Melbourne.

One day later.....10th Feb. 1946.

Off duty, and thank goodness for that, it is nearly 7pm. now, we have a picture show on the flight deck tonight at seven thirty, the picture is "Going my way" starring Bing Crosby. Panic stations.....There has just this minute been some real panic, a boat coming back from Jervis Bay full of Liberty men, 30 or 40 in all, just went under. In fact it turned completely over, it was overcrowded, and the seas are a bit heavy and a large wave hit it just as the men were coming off the boat, it is thought that all the men were rescued they are just

having a check up now. There were ropes, cork netting, in fact anything that would float thrown in the water, I was one, of ten men on the end of a rope pulling the men on board, we pulled four up, and then while we were waiting for another man to swim to the rope, and officer came, along and seeing us stood there, told us we were doing no good and spectators weren't needed on a job like this.

That goes to show why Officers are known as pigs in the Navy. You should have seen the things in the water, caps, wallets, photos, money, shirts, all manner of things. It is very fortunate for them that there were no sharks around, or it would have been a poor look out for the men.

Well Marg, to pick up where I left off, the picture starts at 7.45, so I haven't got much more time to write, I have seen the picture before, in May 1943 at the 'Paramount' on Broadway, N. York, I saw it at three o'clock in the morning, most of the big Shows in New York go on until about five in the morning, on the same program was Charlie Spivach and his Orchestra, you may have seen them on the pictures, one of the pictures was Betty Grable in 'Pin up Girl', his orchestra was in that.

Well I am very pleased to say that we go into three watches again tomorrow, I don't know whether I shall be duty of stand by tomorrow, stand by I hope, then I shall be off Duty from 1pm. on Saturday & Sunday, if I am duty tomorrow it will mean I shall be duty Sunday 17th and off on the Friday.

Two letters arrived just before I started writing today. Pete's & yours, I sent Pete's card early, because I didn't know how long it was taking mail to reach you, it's better early than late, anyway please wish Pete Many Happy Returns for tomorrow for me, will you Marg.

I have come to the conclusion that I am mad, or that I can't read, because, I could swear that in one of your earlier letters, you said that you had started at business College. I could get the letter out of my case but there are three more cases stacked on top of mine, and I feel too idle to move them, but I will get it all straight when I see you. At present I am in a flat spin as to what has happened, at least I know you are back at school, or I think I know that.

The loudspeaker is going continually at present. Telling men to report to the leading hands of their Messes, to find out if any men are missing from the boat. I have just been up to the regulating office to report, our Mess, as all correct. That is the worst of being 'Leading hand.' We have all the running about to do such as this afternoon, I had to line up for an hour to get the beer for the mess. This beer is a present from Melbourne, every man has had four bottles now since we left Melbourne, I don't know if there is any left on board or not. If there is, I hope that when they dish it out, I am on duty.

Well Marg, you are most likely loosing your eyesight with sorting this book-let out, so I will close, hoping to hear from you again before we arrive in Sydney. All the Best to all,
Yours, Ken

I am finding the going tough re writing these letters. Filing has been a problem, due to mistakes made presently, and years ago when numbering and now those LOST AT SEA. Plus as the wartime Comic figure (WOT) would say, 'No memory!'

56 Years are a lot of years. The British slogan, 'Chin up, Cheerio, Carry On!' will have to be my Motto, if I am to get through this Epistle. I am determined it won't take 2 ½ years to battle through.

So I will pick up my oars. 'Row, Row, Row' and finally. 'Get up the creek, with, not without a paddle,' for Old times Sake, and Love for all who helped to Charter my Seas both rough & smooth, sailed along with me and & I hope will laugh and

shed a few tears and enjoy some of the memories that we shared. Also, the new Generations of the Family that have come since will enjoy reading how Ken & I spent our teen years 'After the War was over.'

Letter No. 9. 21st February, 1946.

Dear Margaret.

Well, here I am starting the ball rolling at my end, and hoping that you beat me too it by writing before me. Today I am off duty, and tired out, so as soon as I finish your letter, just call me "Rip van Tye"

Ray has been put back in the same watch as me, so we shall be ashore together in Melbourne, providing no more changes occur before then. There is a buzz going around that all the squadrons leave the ship at 'Jervis Bay' on the fourteenth of March, the day before we arrive in Sydney.

I nearly went to the pictures last night after we had finished in the galley, but after sitting down for a couple of minutes, I decided that too much energy was needed to get me as far as the flight deck, so I got my bed out instead. The picture was Shirley Temple in 'Kiss & Tell' and pretty good too, by what the boys say! Do you know what I forgot to do while we were in Sydney, I never went to see about those photo's. The Lady in the studio said they would be ready early in February. If I had gone, I may have got them before they were sent by post, at least I should have them by the time we are in Sydney again.

Well I must close before I fall asleep, I'm practically there now. Ray wishes to be remembered to the family, (me too) So Long for now. Yours Ken.

Letter No. 10 Monday 25th February 1946.

Dear Margaret.

Well, I'm adrift in writing again, I don't seem to be able to catch up with myself this trip. I must still be in Sydney, I haven't even washed the clothes I wore in Sydney, my suit is still un-pressed, in fact everything is 'topsy turvy'.

I haven't heard from you as yet, and we are going to sea today, so it will be a day or two before any more mail comes on board. During these last two days in Batemans Bay, there have been two lots of mail from U.K. But I still haven't had one from Dad too bad if at some time I have put the wrong letter in the wrong envelope while writing home, and to my civilian pal, Les, that really would cause a stir in the house, in fact, it would bring the house down, and no kidding.

Talk about panic. I was in the biggest flat spin yesterday. To start with, I got my head down on a form in the mess from about one till four, when I woke up I had a mouth like a rusty can and a face like a busted boot, and felt worse than that. So I staggered to my locker, took off what clothes I had on, got my soap & towel etc, and made off for the wash-room, about fifteen yards away. I must have been three quarters unconscious, because I clean forgot that 'visitors' were being brought aboard from Batemans Bay, the rest, you can imagine, I dived for the first door which happened to be the ships bakery, the Chief baker just happened to be stood behind the door as I burst it open, now as a rule the Chief Baker is a quiet chap who says very little to anyone. But for ten minutes yesterday the air changed colour about a dozen or more times, what he said didn't say wasn't worth saying believe me, at least it woke me up. Not half.

Well Marg I must close, its nearly 8 am. and time to turn too. Best wishes to all, hoping to hear from you soon. So-long for now. Yours Ken.

Letter No. 11 Tuesday 26th February 1946.

Dear Margaret.

I received your first letter yesterday dinnertime, thanks a lot it was very good to hear from you again.

Well there is nothing fresh happened here, we keep on popping in out of these bays, more time out than in, at least while we are doing that, there is something to look forward to; That is Mail. It takes about two hours after we anchor to get the mail on board and distributed

Melbourne on Friday, and just call me lucky. I'm duty. Anyhow I shall be popping off to Cheltenham, to Mrs Bradfords. One day in Melbourne I am having a run ashore with a cook called Steve McBrine, he is a pretty good bloke and full of life, and when I get ashore with a chap like that, anything can happen, it generally does.

Well I haven't much time now so I will close, hoping all are well.

Best wishes to all. Yours Ken.

Letter No. 12. Monday 4th March 1946.

Dear Margaret

Thanks a million for your letter Marg, I was very pleased to hear. I received one a few days ago, but with being in Melbourne I haven't had time to answer it. I am duty today worse luck and I can tell you I don't want any more duty watches in this Port, everything is fresh, such as pears, beans, rhubarb etc., and that means about ten times more work.

You know what I have told you about the marvelous cook's staff on this ship, here is just what they are doing. First of all, there is one doing 89 days cells for being 52 days adrift. Second there is one doing 14 days cells for being three days adrift, there are three cooks who went ashore the first days in Melbourne and we haven't seen them since, there is another one waiting to see the Captain. He will definitely go down to the cooler, as he was under stoppage of leave and he went ashore, therefor he is charged with breaking ship. Another three are doing No.11s for various offences, and lastly two are awaiting punishment for fighting each other.

Such a - Grand ship - this IMPLACABLE? I don't think!!

We leave Melbourne on Wednesday. Hooray! More sleep, I'm so tired now I could sleep on a clothesline. Well! I will sign off now Marg,. Best wishes to all.

Yours Ken.

Letter No. 13. 7th March 1946.

Dear Margaret.

Here I am again writing a few lines, before breakfast this time as I am duty again today worse luck, anyway if I don't have time to finish it this morning I shall have tonight.

We left Melbourne yesterday and are now just jogging along up the coast, wasting time in my opinion. Oh! There is a new buzz out Marg! That is, that we are only in the dry dock for three weeks. So as to be able to arrive in England in time for the big "Victory Parade" through London, so if we go in on the fifteenth of this month, we shall be out again early April, (that's not good). I've a good mind to see Sir Phillip about it, Hm.m.m. Yes I will!!!.

Well, those photos still haven't arrived, I wonder if I have been twisted, that studio will have to be the first call in Sydney. Try & wake them up a bit.

They say that there are thirty six bags of mail waiting at Jervis Bay for the Ship, at least out of that lot I should get a couple of letters, boy will I be chocker if I don't.

Well I will close now, hoping to hear from you again soon, "bye for now" Yours Ken.

Letters will now be under the address of the childhood home of

*Kenneth Lewis TYE. Which is - 22 Bath St,
Elland. Halifax*

YORKSHIRE. ENGLAND. U.K.

As Ken states later in a letter, the reason being he is still on H.M.S. IMPLACABLE, travelling home after WW11 ceased. & future time in the Royal Navy is an UNKNOWN Quantity. And likewise future address accordingly. SO.....

Margaret has restarted the numbering of the letters after Ken's stay in Sydney during March. It is clear from reading Ken's earlier letters that she had been writing to him before this. These early letters from Margaret don't appear to have been preserved.

HMS Implacable is now on its way back to England, sailing out of Sydney from Woolloomooloo Docks. Pay at that time 3s - three shillings a day.

Letter NO. 1. Dated 5th May 1946.

My Dear Margaret.

Well I am thirteen hours away, and more fed up than I can ever remember being before, and what is making things worse at the moment is the radio program, that being the Quiz Kids, in everything except body, I am sitting with the rest of you listening to the questions and trying to get the answers before the quiz kids do.

This morning I got on board at quarter to eight, along with about a hundred other men. I think half the ships company must have been late, there were at least fifty getting their cards when I got mine and as I walked past the gangway on my way to the mess, I could see dozens of men on the jetty. They couldn't very well give this mob the usual 181, so we get away with it.

The Quiz kids have finished now, I suppose that will be the last time I hear them, next week at this time we should be pretty near to Ceylon, so we shall be getting the B.B.C - S.E.A.C program.

Well Marg, most of my spare time this month will be spent writing to you, Pete & Mom & Dad, and I hope that you find plenty of homework to do in your bedroom. I am looking forward to the day I arrive in Elland, and get the letters that I hope will be sitting above the fire place waiting for this long lost half hearted sailor to collect. I am hoping that you will be writing quite a lot Marg, you know that I will to you. You should have some idea of how I feel about you, all though we have never said anything to each other I am hoping that you feel a bit the same way towards me. Write & tell me Marg please, because I think the world of you, I should have told you all this before I left, but I guess you knew without any words.

We are sailing past the South Coast of N.S.W. now, at about four this afternoon, we passed Jervis Bay, and for the first time I wished we were going in there. By morning we

should be somewhere near Melbourne, I had heard that we were calling in at Freemantle but they seem to have scrubbed round that. I wish we were so that the mail could go ashore, but now it won't leave the ship until we arrive in Colombo in about ten or twelve days time. I wish now that I had asked you to write your first couple of letters to the ship, then I may have received one at Colombo, or Port Said.

I have one consolation to this leaving business, and that is, the sooner I leave the sooner I get back, according to the newspapers there is a big waiting list of immigrants at Australia House, so the sooner my name is on it the happier I shall be.

Well Marg I must close before I fall asleep, at least I shall be able to catch up on lots of lost sleep during the next month. Write often Marg. I will always be looking for your letters. Goodbye for now. Lots of Love & xxx Ken xxxxxxxxxxxxx.

Reading & typing this letter, No. 1. Has brought out much emotion. And loneliness again. M.J.T. nee Lowe.

Letter No.1... 6.5.1946...from Margaret.

My Dear Ken.

Well here I am starting the ball rolling my end. And hope that you will follow suit. I suppose at this moment you are steaming towards Perth, or would it be Adelaide.

Mum went to a funeral today, so I had to stay at home & receive the parcels from the different stores, who were bringing goods for the farm. By the way, next time I write, I think I will be down there spending my holidays in a lazy style.

Cheers! Christopher goes home on Saturday, & Mum says that with you & Chris missing. 'Hmmm!' I mean the noise! And the house back to normal she will be lost.

I wrote the address first, and Mum walked in, saw the "Mr." and said, who are you writing to. When you see Cousin Peter, please remind him that his (young) Hm! Cousin still has not heard from him for ages, and also that it would not hurt him to write more often. And please give them all my kind regards.

By the way I will send you a copy of the photos when I get them, and do you want the one of Christopher & Stafford or not, also I am going to have a look at those taken at the quay. They will not arrive for a while though, because ordinary mail takes about five, six or seven weeks to arrive, but I will send them as soon as possible

Do you remember that I was learning to play some songs for the Club evening next Tuesday. Well, Pete has to sing the song "O Promise Me" and I and five other girls are doing a P.T. display, only we wear everything backwards & masks on the back of our heads as well while all the time we are on stage, we face the back of the Hall. It looks most queer.

Well here I am at the bottom of the page, and much more to tell, so I will close now and write again soon. Yours Marg. XXX

8th May 1946.

My Dear Margaret.

Here I am again, and I'm duty watch, the second duty since we sailed, honestly it seems more like three weeks than three days to me since we left. I have never known time to drag so much. Yesterday, stand -by watch, we had to work until four, that made things much worse. I knocked off work about an hour ago, Ken the other L. Hand in the watch is staying

late and I finish early, when we turn out at three tomorrow morning he will lay in till about half past four. The next time we are Duty, I will stay late and get extra sleep in the morning.

I am sitting in the mess writing this, but I must finish now, you have no idea how bad it is in here now, the ventilation has broken down and the place smells terrible, you could just about cut the air with a knife, it is so thick. So I will close for tonight and try to find my hammock, it is impossible to sleep on a form in here tonight, I don't think I would ever waken up. I will continue this letter tomorrow afternoon Marg.

Goodnight for now. Love Ken.

Continued.....Thursday 9th May.

Well, here I am again Marg. It is evening again. I was going to finish your letter this afternoon but I was too tired to stand up, never mind write a letter, so I went down to the dining hall and got my head down on one of the forms there. I had to get up at half three because the men were coming down to tea, so after a cold shower, Ken & I went for a blow on the flight deck and stayed there until supper time. We certainly got a blow, the wind was terrific it took us all our time to walk against it.

Last week at this time I was just doing my last duty watch before we left. I was 'chocker' then, but at least I knew I had two days left, but now for the next three weeks there is nothing, except the terrible chance that I may go off the ship at Colombo. They say that one leading cook and six cooks are going ashore there, my present luck will just about make me the unlucky one who goes ashore.

I must close now Marg, as I'm feeling tired, please write as often as you can as you know I am always pleased to receive your letters. The more the better

Goodnight Marg. Lots of Love.....Ken xxxxxxxx

12.5.1946

Dear Ken.

Well "Here I am beginning my second Epistle." We are just back from our proper stay at the farm. We arrive there at 12.30p.m. (lunch time hmm!) on Saturday & after eating a hearty lunch, with piles of butter made from 'Ena's milk,' we set too to clean up the old house, you would be surprised to see the No. of small rooms there were all of which were dark & dingy and fusty. Pete & I went round the every room with a hammer & opened all the windows, most of which had never been opened at all, since first put in, or so it seemed.

I did not stay up there this weekend as the club social (for Mothers Day) takes place on Tuesday night, & I have to act and play as well as the P.T. now (dreadful isn't it) or will be Monday 13th May 1946.

I will now finish this scrawl & take to post.

OOPS! Yesterday after Dad had put two cases of oranges down outside the shed, Ena (the cow) walked up & stole an orange. So Dad, after laughing decided he was not going to feed her on oranges, picked up one case to put in the car, and Ena saw this, so stuffed another orange into her mouth & raced to the second case. Pete just got to the case in time to save a few more, as "Boris" decided that her milk might be lacking in vitamins or calcium also. We were told when we bought Nugget & Baldi, (the horses) that Nugget had only been on the dray once, & that was eight years ago, so Dad & Mr. Kohler after feeding the stupid thing with a few cob of corn, put on blinkers, & Harness without further trouble,

and then backed her into the dray, then after a trial run we all piled in and went for a drive round the orchard.

We brought back a 32oz jar of cream, and Mum made about a pound of butter from it. She said that I have to make it next weekend as she found out I could. Lets hope that will teach me to keep quiet. So now, if I want to catch the post I had better sign off. (Till next time). Yours. Marg XXX

Wednesday 15th May 1946.

My Dear Margaret.

Just a short letter Marg. The last before we reach Colombo. The ship crossed the Equator last night and we arrive at "Trincomalee" tomorrow morning, I made a mistake there in saying Colombo, as we are in "Trinco" until Saturday morning, then we go on to Aden.

I am writing this in the most awkward way. Both my fore fingers and thumb are bad with the usual thing, so I have my finger curled right around the pen and my thumb just resting lightly on top, if there is any letter that is so badly written that you can't understand it, you know the reason why.

The heat now is terrific, and I 'ain't' kidding, yesterday I changed my clothes four times and at eight o'clock, was just as soaked through as if I hadn't bothered to change. At least that was another duty watch done, only six more now before we reach Plymouth.

The Captain spoke to the Ships company the other day and told us what is happening about the leave. The leave is being given in two lots. First & second leave. All men who came out with the ship will get seventeen days, those who came out before this ship will get what extra they are due for, a day for every month, so I should get twenty days, and I think I shall be unlucky to get second leave. I think what they will do

is to send the men who came out with the ship on first leave, so as to get them all back at the same time to relieve the men who are going on the second.

I must close Marg, my fingers feel as though they are dropping off. Goodnight, and Lots of Love. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx Ken xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.

16.5.1946

Dear Ken

Well once again I put pen to paper & also I hope you have done the same once or twice.

I picked up the photo in town yesterday & two out of three are fairly good, they are one of Pete, (Ken the other boy) you and myself together & the one of Christopher & Stafford, the latter looks awful, but that can't be helped. The third, which is of the whole group space is awful, because all but Chris, are frowning, even Stafford.

The first photo mentioned is good of you & I but not of Pete, as she is looking down the (deck) correct this time as it was not the floor. I am posting them tomorrow, and I hope they don't take too long to get there, I hope you don't mind. We are going up to the farm again tomorrow, and I am staying a week & then back to work again (worst Luck). I'd rather scrub floors any day.

It is raining like @# (hell). Excuse my English or is it only used in Aussie. The cows have a knack of coming up at milking time, but Boris will not come near unless she is given a couple of corn cobs with which she makes a terrible mess over, when eating.*

At last I have collected up enough photo's to start my album when I get it, after a rummage for a few weeks through a lot of rubbish. And we have or rather had a lot & as most was sorted and thrown out when some furniture was sent up to the farm, I still found round about 30 or maybe 40 snaps, but only one of me before I was 3 years and I found piles of Pete, so I am afraid she will be able to boast that she has more in hers.

*Presently we have piles of flowers in the room, that we bought down from the farm and also we have planted 20 strawberry plants for next season, which I personally hope will increase, well I have to come to the end again. Yours,
Margaret. XXX*

Sunday 19th May. 1946.

My Dear Marg.

It is about three days since I wrote last, (I'm slipping). Now we are on the way again to Aden this time, for six hours only, just long enough to take on a thousand tons of oil to take us on to a Port Saïd, where she fills up with five thousand to take us home. And will I be glad to get Home, at least we are over half way now thank goodness

Their Lords & Lordships at the Admiralty condescend to give cooks and Engine room ratings and extra 1/6 per day in tropical waters, what is known throughout the Navy as (sweat money) and believe me it is well earned.

Well Marg, in spite of all the weird tales I had been told about "Trinco", I went ashore to see for myself & for the experience if nothing else, and I quite enjoyed it. First of all we, that is Bob, the chap I went ashore with, had to get our money changed into Rupee's. I changed all I possessed that being two pounds, for which I got twenty six Rupee's. The Liberty boat was a large invasion barge manned by four jet black Ceylonese. There must have been about six hundred liberty men, and the barge was packed, so packed, that as it came to each wave instead of riding it, it just ploughed through them sending tons of spray all over us, consequently by the time we reached the jetty, known as Vegetable Jetty. We all were wet through, but it didn't take long for the sun to dry us.

It was about five o'clock when we landed, and we just followed the crowds as we had no idea where to go. After about five minutes walk down a palm fringed sandy road, we came to what is known as the dockyard gate, a gate with two armed black soldiers guarding it, or supposed to be. From what I could see anybody walked in or out just as they pleased.

Once outside this gate we were mobbed by scores of Ceylonese trying to sell us all manner of things. The strangest thing, I thought was about twenty men each with a perfectly new bicycle, of all different makes & shapes. And they were so determined to sell us the bicycle's, that the whole crowd of sailors were followed for about a hundred yards with the ringing of bells and horn blowing on top of the chatter, and weird noises from these little darkies. All the way down this sandy road at each side were men selling wooden elephants, crocodile's etc. About the best of these, that I saw, was a large elephant with a musical box inside. I asked the price of it, and he wanted a hundred & twenty Rupee's, just for a bit of fun, I bargained him down to seventy five, I would have loved to have bought it though.

A little farther down the road we came to two rather big shops, at least by big I mean you didn't have to crouch down to get through the door. They were more or less jewelers, but had practically everything on sale as side lines, in one of these I saw a watch but the price was high, very high, 200 Rupees, just 174 more than I had. Also in this shop, there was a pair of slippers, which looked just your size, and only for the lack of four rupees you would have been getting them. For forty minutes I was bargaining with this bloke and in this time I

knocked him down from forty to thirty but try as I may he wouldn't go a cent lower. The slippers were a leather sole, black suede top, with a gold edge about an eighth of an inch wide all the way round, and a golden pattern across the toes. They looked really swell, but I could see it was no good arguing with the chap any longer, so I had to leave them.

It was about six thirty by this time and just beginning to get dark, here and there little paper lanterns were being lit, the only electricity lit place that I saw was the Naval Canteen in the dockyard which we visited before we returned. We continued walking down the road and we came to about a dozen 'well dressed' men, that is lots of cloth draped around them and fancy umbrellas. These were 'fortune tellers,' and they were or one of them was so persistent, that he roped me in and told me my fortune. He told me I was twenty one, my Mother died four years ago, I had a brother, I didn't like the Navy, I would live to an old age, he said the happiest part of this year would be in September. He gave me a piece of paper with some writing on. What was written I did not know, for he screwed it up and put it in my hand. A few minutes later he gave me a pencil & paper and asked me questions about the girl friend that he had previously told me about. I answered four questions on this paper, screwed it up and gave it to him. Then he told me to read the one he had given to me, which I did, it was just the same, the same words & numbers as I had written a minute earlier, the difference was I had printed the second answer he wrote. I guess seeing that most of this concerned you Marg, I hadn't better say any more. I only hope & pray that all he said comes true.

It was dark now Marg, & what with rickshaws and oxen carts passing us in the dark, we were nearly knocked down two or three times. A little way down the road we came to the native town, and what a joint that was. Every few yards there was a different smell of incense coming out of the little dingy lantern lit shops, we went into one of these, it was called a café. There were four tables. On each table was a massive bunch of bananas, and a plate of assorted cakes, we ordered tea off the little native boy, who came to serve us, he came back with two very large beer glasses, half filled with tea, the saucers were extra large bread & butter plates.

To eat,- I had two cakes & one banana, Bob had the same. When we asked the price the little native got into a panic and ran away coming back a few minutes later with the boss, we asked him the price, he understood a little of the English language and started to reckon up, cakes 35 cents each, bananas 50cents each, tea 20 cents, making 280 cents, ie., 2 rupee 80 cents. I gave him the money, put on my cap, and forgetting for a moment where I was. I stood straight up, crashing my head violently on the roof. All though it was only wood (the roof I mean) my head hurt for ages, after paying 9 pence for a banana, that's bad enough.

In one of these native shops, I was amazed to see a stack of about a hundred or more tins of butter, 12 oz. tins. I was in there like a shot with money in hand, but the price knocked me back, four Rupees per tin, that's 6/-, so that put butter out of the question. I was lucky enough to get two - two/lb boxes of tea in this shop, for 5 rupees a box, that will be most useful at home.

The smell round here was getting too much for us. We made our way back to the dockyard where we had a decent cup of tea and at nine o'clock we went back along the jetty and back into the landing barge. So back on board, and within half an hour I had found, and carried on to the flight deck my hammock, laid it out on the deck and was gazing at the bedroom roof, (stars). Ken & I have been sleeping up there every night since we came into the heat, only on two occasions has it rained and we have had to make a speedy retreat.

Well Marg, I must be closing this letter now. I don't suppose it will leave the ship until we get home. I should have two or three more written before then, I hope you received my other letters Marg, I am waiting for the day I arrive in home to get your letters. Love to Mom, Dad, Pete & Stafford,

Lots of Love to you Marg. Ken xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

23.5.1946

Dear Ken.....

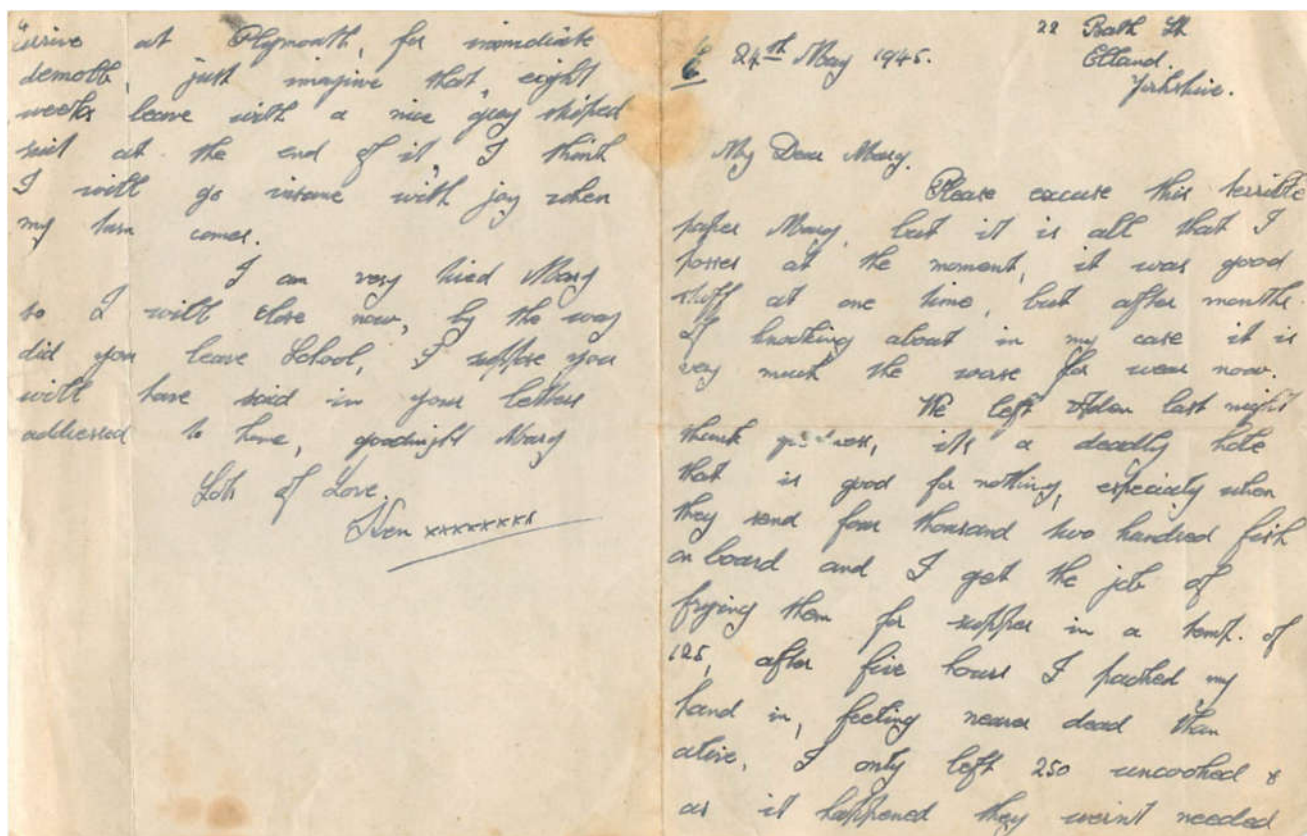
First thing I do is apologize for not writing again before this. But as I am staying up at the farm, I have to rely on the mail man bringing my supplies of paper, I have had to stretch mine over a period of 7 days, till Mum brings me another Air-Letter

Do you remember the old boat we were rowing in, out on the river. Also did I tell you about the flood in our river, this is what happened, the flood was so tremendous, that it came up our banks, and flooded roads & goodness knows what else further down, & the old boat was tied to a tree down on the beach. But in coming back the waters were so strong that the river washed mud etc., into the boat and sank it on our beach, which was also under water. When the flood went down, the boat was still on our property so Pete & I are going to clean it out & use it for fishing, we hope. You see the oars were washed away but Mr. Koehler is going to make us some paddles as long as we catch some fish so here's hoping.

Mrs. Koehler is super cook. On the sly I am taking lessons you see I don't want the family to find out for everything she cooks I am a most willing helper and at the same time I note little things in my memory for future use. First thing you do when you are de mobbed is to have a few lessons in dancing, and that will stop you being self-conscious on the floor, we are trying to get Pete to take lessons also.

Guess what, I have just bought a new coat, it has a mustard background with green burgundy, brown & other colours I can't think of in a check pattern running through it. There are two panels, one each side in which the material has been turned sideways, so as to give a different effect. Well so much for myself, so please give my regards to all your & our families. Once again. Yours.
Margaret. XXX

24th May 1946.



My Dear Marg.

Please excuse this terrible paper Marg, but it is all that I possess at the moment, it was good stuff at one time, but after months of knocking about in my case, it is very much the worse for wear now.

We left Aden last night, thank goodness. It's a deadly hole that is good for nothing, especially when they send 'four thousand, two hundred fish on board, and I get the job of frying them for supper in a temp. of 1250 f. After five hours I packed my hand in, feeling nearer dead than alive, I only left 250 uncooked & as it happened they weren't needed, so everything was honky-dory.

Well the end of the trip can't come too soon for me Marg, did I tell you that one of the cooks was left behind in Trincomalee, (in cells) he got 28 days cells for filling in the chief cook, or I should say nearly filling the Chief cook in, two men grabbed him in time to save the chief' cooks face from being a mark on the wall, too bad there was someone watching I say, the voyage would have been much more pleasant with the chief cook in sickbay

We have been passing lots of merchant ships during the day, going in the opposite direction to us, we passed a tanker going the same way as us, we were going about five times as fast as she was. So when she gets to England I don't know, this seems slow enough.

At least we have lots of films on board, we get a different one every two nights, on the flight deck, since we sailed from Sydney I have seen Betty Grable in 'Coney Island' Betty Grable in 'Diamond Horseshoe', Spencer Tracy in 'Without Love', Eric Portman in 'A Canterbury Tale' and Abroad with Two Yanks with William Bendix, as the main actor.

Ken, is going on draft to Barracks as soon as we arrive at Plymouth, for immediate demobb, just imagine that, eight weeks leave with a nice gray striped suit at the end of it. I think I will go insane with joy when my turn comes.

I am very tired Marg, so I will close now, by the way did you leave school, I suppose you will have said in your letters addressed to home. Goodnight Marg.

Lots of Love. Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

28th May. 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Hello again Marg, this time we are in the sunny Mediterranean, and life is much more pleasant now, that the tropics are past, and the weather is much more bearable. At least one can write a letter in comfort, something that I haven't done since we left Sydney.

I really feel like writing now, although I am no good at it at the best of times. I hope you are doing as much writing as you can Marg, I shall always be looking for your letters, and I am waiting for the day when I get home to receive the letters that I know are waiting there for me.

You should by now have received the first four letters that left the ship in Ceylon, I wish now that I had asked you to address your first letters to the ship, as at all the stops we have made, mail has come on board. Yesterday at Port Said I received a letter from Dad written on the 15th of November, 1945 in answer to a telegram which I sent when I was drafted on to K.G.V., it only took six months to reach me.

Yesterday we came through the canal, we set sail at 4am, and got through to Port Said at 5pm. I didn't see much of it until after dinner, as I was in the galley. But, as soon as I had eaten dinner, and showered, I took my spare hammock cover up to the flight deck, right to the forward end, and laid down to sun bathe, and view the scenery.

The first thing of any interest was a British Army camp, it seemed as though all the camp was out to see us go by. To make things worse for the soldiers you will never guess what the Royal Marine Band on the flight deck was playing, of all things it was 'Take me back to dear old Blighty' the expression on their faces was something like mine when I left Sydney.

About an hour later we could see a ship in the distance going in the opposite direction to us, it wasn't long before we were abreast of it, and blow me down if it wasn't the "Stirling Castle" on its way to Australia, full of British War Brides, well talk about cheering and shouting from one ship to the other, and then the Marines started playing "Anchors Aweigh", in true Navy fashion. Some bright spark on this ship chalked up a big notice saying to the brides, (You'll Be Sorry). A little further along we came to a native camp. The funny thing there was a crowd of little Egyptian children shouting and jumping up & down as we passed, all around this part were camels by the score, one was running alongside the ship for a few miles until the road turned off the canal bank.

By now it was time for tea, so I left the flight deck and went down below for tea. After that, I sat on the big weather deck until we were near Port Said. Then true to Naval routine all men not dressed in the rig of the day were to get off the flight and weather decks to dress the ship up a bit to enter harbour. So I took up a position at a Port hole, which by the way I only got sent away from three times by officers walking through the passage. Just at the entrance to the canal was a very large French Liner, packed with troops on the way to India. There was much cheering & shouting there, the place was packed with ships of all different shapes and sizes, and all nationalities. Another liner was the "Dunutte Castle" sister ship to the "Stirling Castle". We stopped for about half an hour for a few fresh stores to come on board, such as cabbage melons & oranges, and last but not least, Mail, of which I got one Letter

I am duty watch today, its been a pretty easy day today only steak and chips for supper, there is no messing about with a meal like that, we were finished and scrubbed out for seven thirty. It is now nearly nine and as I have to be out again at three, I think I had better close. Oh! I forgot to tell you. During the trip through the canal we had about six Egyptians on board selling leather goods, (big suit cases Three pounds each), anyway I wangled a cigarette case with pictures of pyramids and camel's cut into either side of it for a cheese sandwich, and a cup of cocoa.

Well that's all for now Marg. Love to all at home.

Lots of Love. Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

28th May. 1946

My Dear Ken.

I have just received three letters from you, and am just writing a few lines to let you know, as is very late, and any good little girl would have been asleep hours ago. Thanks a lot.

I had a good time up at the farm last week, but one has to talk all night to get a word out of Mr. Koehler, as she seems to go round in a dream, evident by different type of (I mean the dream).

"Newington College" Fete is being held next Friday & Saturday, and I have to sell tickets for a case of oranges, they have to guess a No. between 1 & 1000, someone is sure to get it (haw Haw!!!!) excuse my mirth, anyway the nearest will do me.

We started at school today, and was it murder (I'll say) and how. We are having two long weekends here that is , we have Monday as a holiday. One is "Victory" the other is the "King's Birthday." (God Bless Him) one day off duty for me, what gets me is that I don't even get the day off on 'My' Own Birthday.

In a fortnight, N.S.W. is going to try to try & knock England's head off in football, the result will be interesting.

Mum has been saying all evening that she wished we could get a couple of cases of oranges over there to all the people we know.

Uncle Jim gave me a small Atlas of the British Empire, it is 1" by 1 ½ " and a ¼ of an inch thick. It is a copy of the original made for Queen Mary's "Dolls House". The cover is red leather with gilt edges & lettering.

Well Ken I had better close now. Yours Marg. XXX

30th May 1946

My Dear Margaret.

I am writing this, sitting on the flight deck as usual doing a bit of sunbathing, although the sun is not so hot today, but every little helps. I must be as brown as possible to go home.

The ship is passing the Northern coast of North Africa now, in fact we have been within a few miles of land all morning, yesterday we passed between Malta and Sicily, but only caught a glimpse of Sicily way out in the distance, and nothing of Malta.

We certainly are moving at a speed. Early this morning we passed the Cunard liner "Franconia", and she was nipping along smartly. We are passing merchant ships just as though this was a racing car, and they were heavy trucks, tomorrow we are due to pass Gibraltar and then a thousand miles north and we are there.

When we arrive at Plymouth two thousand visitors are expected aboard, relations of men who are able to see the ship in.

They are rigging the upper hanger as a large Cafeteria to entertain them, as per usual the cooks get the brunt of the attack. Starting Sunday dinnertime, all the galley, servery, bread room and bakery Cooks start making. Cornish pasties, sausage rolls, and bread buns, 4.500 of each to cope with the visitors and ships company. We are going to try to get all finished by 8am Monday morning so that we also can go on the upper decks to see the ship in. That will mean working all through Sunday night.

On Monday afternoon, I want to go ashore to find out all information about trains on Thursday, also to send a small kit bag by rail to Norbury so that I can pick it up there at the weekend. I am hoping to go home on Sunday morning. providing of course that there is a train running to Bradford, as far as I can remember, there is a train arrive in Bradford on Sunday night at about eight from Kings Cross, it has sometimes arrived in late when I have been going back to Chatham on the 9.20, off weekend leave.

Marg, you remember Allen, the boy we met walking up the Wynyard Arcade with his girlfriend when we were coming back from Manly. He is as bad as I am as far as sceptic fingers, they are pretty bad too, his arm is in a sling and he is attending sick bay three times a day.

Before the ship arrives in U.K, everyone on board had to have a medical examination. This is on Admiralty instructions, they say that the country is in a fit state of health, and they don't want to start any diseases from incoming ships. I laughed at Ken, he had his de-mobbing medical examination a couple of days ago, and the Surgeon Commander asked him how he felt, Ken replied he never felt as fit in his life, it wouldn't do to have anything wrong for the de-mobbing Med.

Well Marg. My hammock needs slinging & I need sleep, so goodnight dear.

Lots of Love. Ken. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

P.S. Could you let me have Mum, Dads, & Staffords Birthdays, I think Staffords is the 6th of January. Love Ken. xxxx

2nd June 1946

My dear Ken.....

Well here I am again, I am sitting in front of the radiator (toasting myself) as it is freezing out here, how about there. I suppose it is warming up nicely, and nearly summer.

Referring to a question you asked in your first letter, well I don't exactly know how to put it, but I feel a bit that way myself, and I am still very young, but time will show.

What have you been doing with yourself lately? Sleeping, if you had any sense. Did you get Cyril his watch at Aden or was it Port Said? Please tell Peter, if you see him to write to me and guess what hm!!! And a pat on the back, please. You know the typing exam I did, well, what do you think I gained 81%, not bad, (Wot) no failures.

The fete was not bad, but the weather, shiver, shiver, I ended up with a cold and a headache, Mum and I sold 5 pounds worth of tickets for a case of oranges at 6p each. Also Mum bought me two beautifully made doilies you know for cake dishes, I asked her what for, and she said for the "bottom drawer" so I had to remind her of the fact that I only have one.

Next week we are going up to the farm again, we are leaving on Friday night and staying till Monday night. The Gotts are coming up to spend the day on Monday. I am doing something that is very bad for the figure, that is I am gradually eating a large bag of sweets, but Mum said that I have indulged on worse than that in the past, and have never got fatter. So I don't suppose they will really hurt me.

Well must close now. Love Marg. XXX.

5th June, 1946.

My Dearest Marg.

Hello again Marg, this time I am sat on the mess floor, with my back against the wall, just freezing to death. I am just beginning to curse the man who stole my overcoat and hoping that the first time he wears it, it falls off in ribbons.

Well we are in England, roll on Friday morning when I walk into Australia House, and see what can be done about a passage back, I don't think I shall ever be satisfied until I am on my way back to Australia.

On Monday when we arrived, Ken & I went ashore, more or less just to put feet on dry land once again. I took with me a medium sized box, which I had filled with my personal clothes to wear on leave, also I put one packet of Lux soap powder & nine blocks of toilet soap. When I got to the dockyard gates I was roped into the customs office by the dockyard police who demanded to know what the parcel contained, I told him in detail, in fact I had a list already for the occasion, he took a lot of satisfying that, that was all it contained, and he gave me a ten minute lecture on the fact that soap was rationed and I was doing wrong in having nine bars of soap, but as usual I was ignorant, and, at last he let me go without undoing the parcel, much to my joy. I sent it home by rail so I hope it doesn't take too long to get there, or else I shall be living for twenty three days with two shirts and two collars which I have managed to squeeze into one of my cases.

I bought a clothes line ashore which I have lashed around my older case to save it from collapsing under the weight that is in it, with sending the parcel, I have just the two suit cases to carry.

I got a letter from home today, posted on the third of May, the big surprise in it was that my pal, Les, has got married, this is the first that I knew of it, in the last letter I had from Les he said that it would be about two years before they were married, and anyway in a few days time, I shall be seeing him & his wife, whom I have met on one occasion, at a Christmas Party on my last leave.

Well Marg, I have a long day tomorrow, (my favorite Hobby, train riding I don't think) and I am tired now, so I will close. Love to all at home.

And Lots of Love to you Marg..... Ken xxxxxxxxxxxxx

6th June 1946 ?

My Dear Ken.....

Well "Victory Day is Over", and have you arrived at your destination., and I suppose you have been home already, and heard from me. Pete said she wrote while she was away. I received a letter from Peter last Saturday morning, which he had written the Sunday before and posted the next day, that is, it took 5 days in all to get here, not had going.

We have had a chapter of accidents to-day, first I received a beautiful burn on the arm, a friend's dog jumped at me while I was not looking and knocked my arm on the iron, and so I am branded now for a while. Then the Adamson and the Gott Families came up to the farm today, and then on the way home, firstly the Gott car load got a leaking petrol tank and held us up half an hour, next we received a flat tyre, which took a quarter hour to find a fix, and when we got to Homebush, we lost sight of the Adamson's car, and they tootled home half an hour later than us with a mended tyre to their credit.

Also, after being home a while, Dad got a ring from the man who lives opposite the factory, to say burglars had been in. You see a lot of people know that he has a lot of things half made and some completed - cigarette cases there and they were after them, they did so well they can't find what is missing.

What is the weather like over there? It has been beastly cold out here. It has been about 50 degrees about 6 o'clock most mornings, which is very low for Sydney. Did I tell you I gained 81% for the typing exam I did the Saturday morning before you left.

I haven't heard from you for a fortnight now. Well I had better close now, so give regards to all over there. Love Marg. XXX

Sunday 9th June. 1946. Home at last!!

My Dear Margaret.

Thanks a lot Marg for five long awaited letters, which I received on Friday night when I arrived home at midnight.

Well, I didn't stay in London as I planned to do, and that was entirely my own fault, I did the most stupid thing imaginable. In my last letter I told you that I had sent a parcel by rail on arrival in Plymouth, containing my shirts, collars etc., that was o.k. but I sent them all except one for Thursday to go on leave in, by the time I got to London, it was as black as the ace of spades, and I had no change.

In fact everything seemed to go wrong for me, even Australia House was closed, much to my sorrow. I arrived in Paddington Station at 9.20, Thursday night with two very heavy suitcases, the first thing I did was to deposit both of them in the Left Luggage Dept. After a cup of tea in the station café, I started trying to get a bed for the night, which I managed to do at the third port of call, a Church Army Hostel, about five minutes walk from Paddington. Once that was settled I tried to find the number of Mrs Lowe's Norbury home, but it wasn't in the book, so I went to bed early, about 11 pm.

The following morning I was up about 9 am. and after breakfast, I went over to Australia House, which is somewhere near the Strand, but as I told you before it was closed, so off I went back to Paddington, and collected my brown case and set off to Norbury, that was done in three stages, first by underground to the Elephant & Castle Station, then by tram to Norbury, and then bus to Gibsons Hill. Arriving at No 24 at about 12.30. There was no one home except the lady who cleans. She was very nice and asked me in, & provided me with a very welcome drink of tea. A few minutes later, one of the sons came home from school, it was the youngest, Michael, he said his father was playing golf so he got his bike out and went off to tell him. Mrs. Lowe had started work somewhere about a fortnight ago and she wouldn't be home until evening.

At about 1.30, Mr. Lowe arrived, and was very pleased to see me. But was disappointed as I had come at such an inconvenient time. Mrs Lowe was not going straight home from work, but was going to some other relations in the evening. It was definite that I couldn't stay

overnight as he asked me. because of having nothing to wear. So it was decided that I go into town, get both my cases over to Kings Cross station, and then go back to Norbury until later on, when I could return to Kings Cross in time to catch the last train to Bradford.

After lunch, Mr. Lowe came with me back to Paddington. We collected case No. 2, and went on to Kings Cross. There were millions of people in London, and we had a bad time with the cases. At Kings Cross it was murder and I decided there and then that if I wanted to get home, I had better go now, before things got worse. Mr Lowe agreed with me. On top of everything there was a long queue for the luggage room, so I went on the 6.10 Leeds & Bradford train. Before leaving we arranged that Mr. Lowe would send me a letter telling me when to go to their house, and I would return early, say 26th or 27th off my leave, and spend a day or two with them.

Well I have lots more to say Marg. But its getting late, the fire's gone out, but I seem to be the only one who feels it, I'm nearly shivering. All the family are fine.

Lots of Love. Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

Thursday. 13th June. 1946.

My Dear Margaret.

Thanks for another letter, which arrived yesterday, that is the sixth up to now.

My Leave is going pretty well up to now, but very quiet. Everything here seems dead, and to top everything, Les my pal has got married, his wife is very worried at the thought of me being home, and has given Les strict instructions that he has not to go out with single men. That being a broad hint for me to keep off, I keep kidding her on that. Les & I are going out one night, but she changes the subject every time I start.

I am going to Bradford this afternoon, to have tea with Auntie Annie, and on the way home I am calling at the (I.C.I.) (Imperial Chemical Industries) to have a look around where Dad works, he is on night work this week starting at 9.30 pm. and finishing at 7am.

I still haven't told him that I am going back to Australia, I seem to have told everyone else, except Dad, I have got to tell him soon before someone else does.

I am pleased to hear that your typing exam was a success. Talking about it being cold, you should be here, (wet no snow.) no but very nearly, it has been a bit better this last few days, but it can't manage a full day without a drop of rain. I have only been out once without my raincoat and I was lucky enough to get back just before the rain started.

Elland is pretty much the same as I have always known it. No new buildings or anything, I have got a few pictures of the town to send to you, also Cyril has a film in the camera so as soon as the opportunity knocks I will take a few snaps. I am looking forward to receiving those we had taken, they should be here in a week or two.

I bought a new pen this morning in Elland. My old one wouldn't write at all. You remember what shape the nib was, well it got worse & worse until I couldn't get a scratch out of it, this is only a poor one, but I was lucky to get it, I couldn't get one at all in Halifax, or Huddersfield. Well! No more room, I shall have to close. Love to all.

Lots of Love. Ken xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

....< ? > Missing at sea.

Friday 14th June. 1946.

My Dear Margaret.

Here I am again, sat at the table near the window, with the weather outside about to weep at any moment.

I have only been out once today, and that was down the town to get the rations, my weeks supply looked as though one good meal would finish it, in fact I carried the family's weeks supply in one string bag.

Dad is in bed getting his sleep, ready for a night's work. Cyril is at work, he gets home about six and Auntie is busy in the kitchen with a massive pile of rhubarb. I believe she is bottling it for the winter.

Cyril is forever in his garden, he comes home from work, he has his dinner and straight off the garden until about 10 o'clock, many a time it is dark before he gets home,

If he doesn't get some decent results it won't be his fault.

I went around the I.C.I. yesterday and the smell nearly gassed me, I went in about fifteen laboratory's where different experiments were in progress, some stirring, some boiling, some roasting in an oven, it was very interesting, but very smelly. I was going to tell Dad about going to Australia, but I was scared, if he didn't keep his mind on what he was doing the whole place might blow up, it just looked like that.

Have you seen the paper lately Marg, the sports page I mean, -O-O-O-Wot! No Wins yet. The paper I was reading last night tells of the Tourists having there fifth win at Orange, by 32 points, I wish I had been there, I believe there next game is at Newcastle, and then after that, their big test game at Sydney.

Dad seems to be making a move upstairs, I can hear foot steps. He must be feeling hungry, or the kids playing outside may have woken him up. Cyril is home now and is rushing around getting washed & changed, its only five thirty, but it is his night to go to the Teck, at least that's what I think he said as he rushed through.

Thanks for answering my question Marg, and as you say time will tell. I hope my Indian fortune teller tells the truth, well you know just how I feel about you Marg, I have told you quite a few times in my last letters.

I must be closing now, Auntie is needing the table, I couldn't go much further on here anyway, love to all in Australia.

Lots of Love Ken...XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

16th June 1946.

My Dear Ken.

Here I am again, and I am feeling great. Last Thursday I received five letters at one time, and had a lovely time reading them. The best part was keeping the family in suspense, you see I just say bits here & there, and they got annoyed (I don't blame them) but Mum says, you wrote those to me, and the others to them.

Well I am now having a grand time a Camp, Pete came too & we are having a glorious time. We are at Mona Vale, which is situated between Narrabeen, and Palm Beach. The building is big, as it was once a Hotel run on Oriental styles, & so there are plenty of verandahs, which overlooked the sea. Every time a ship went past or we could see one on the horizon I would think of you all over there. Most of the girls 'Comrades' know I write to you. I think it was Pete who told them and

no matter what size it was, every boat or ship that passed, they'd yell at the top of their voices "Hey Margaret there goes a ship!" so everyone would run out to see it.

We went on a hike yesterday & did four miles without stopping, then after lunch which we had at Church Point about eight of us climbed about 2 to 300 yds. up a steep hill so we could see what one could see when up top (naturally) it took us about an hour to get up, and ½ and hour to get down, as we found a track on the way back, so I am as tired as can be, and don't think I will hike again, (not for a while at least).

Dad & Mum are drawing up the plans for the new house down at the farm, & they are wondering whether to put 3 or 4 bedrooms in it, & Mum said that there would always be wanting extra help on the farm (Hm!!!) don't mention this when writing to Mum & Dad, or I will be murdered (no Kidding) anyway. Lots of Love. Marg. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

16th June 1946.

My Dear Margaret.

Here I go on unlucky thirteen, hoping that the previous twelve have arrived, O.K. with no misses.

Well I am nearly half way through my leave now much to my regrets of course. Yesterday night I went to the Palace Theatre at Halifax, with Les & his wife, it was a variety show with an accordion band as the main turn, that was quite good, but the rest of the show wasn't up to much. I have been to two picture shows lately, but both of them were terrible films, I walked out half way through the first one. Last night when we arrived back in Elland we had just got off the bus, and were walking home when I heard my name called, it turned out to be my cousin Helen who lives just across the road, she was looking for her son Allen who had gone on a Sunday School trip to Blackpool. She was very worried as it was turned eleven, and the little lad is only eight years old. She was thinking all kinds of things. Such as the bus crashing, of turning over etc., Anyway I took her back home, and tried to tell her that he would be all right. but she was certain that something was wrong. I think what made her worse was her husband was expected home from Italy last night and he hadn't arrived. I got her to stay at home while I went to make inquiries about the bus. But as I arrived at the Town Hall, where the bus departed from. It arrived back and the first to jump off was Allen. It turned out that the bus had been broken down for over an hour. That is why it was so late, that didn't worry Allen at all, he was rushing around telling everyone that he had eaten three ice - creams, been on donkey rides, and spent 6/7 on the days outing.

Cyril & I went for a walk this afternoon, but the weather spoilt it, we just got back home before I started raining really heavy, we were in the drizzle long enough to get nice and wet though.

Well I have just about come to the end of the page, so I must close, write as often as you can Marg. I am always looking for your letters, Love to the Family.

Lots of Love Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Tuesday. 18th June. 1946.

My Dear Marg.

Just received another letter from you, you forgot to put the date on it so I don't know how long it took to get here, it is the one telling of a trip to the farm with the Adamsons & Gotts and of leaking petrol tanks, bush tires, etc.

Glad to hear that you have heard from Peter. I haven't seen him yet, but as soon as I do I will give him your message, I should be seeing all your relations in London next week, last Saturday I got a letter from Mrs. Sylvia Lowe, asking me to go down for a few days of my leave. I wrote back saying I could go either the 26th or 27th, until the 29th when I return to Plymouth, so I am now waiting for the reply to see what she says. She sent a very nice letter, and was very disappointed that I couldn't stay a few days with them at the beginning of my leave.

I have been re-christened at home, now they call me Rip-van-Winkle, all I can do is sleep at the wrong time, only once since I came on leave have I got up before lunch, that was to go up to Halifax for the meat ration last Saturday morning. The trouble is I can't sleep at night, I seem to toss and turn for hours before falling asleep, maybe it's the ten hours difference between Australian and English time that I haven't got used to yet.

Yesterday afternoon, I met an old school mate of mine who is now in the Navy, and on leave, he was in the Pacific on H.M.S. Formidable. He came back home last October and ever since then has been trying to get a draft to a ship going back to Australia, but they won't give him one as they say that he is too near being de-mobbed, he is the same group as me, 51.

He has made a lot of inquiries about the immigration scheme to Australia, he says that at the end of this year a scheme is starting for ex-service men. They are getting first priority and a free passage. I certainly hope he is right, he also says that from the day it starts it is a case of first come first served, so that week I will have a week off and start forming a queue a day or two early.

Hm'm! It smells like rhubarb again for tea. Rhubarb & lettuce seem to be about all we are getting out of the garden at present, the strawberries, raspberries and gooseberries are well in flower, they will be a couple of months yet before they are ready for pulling. By the look of the weather today, they will be six months before they ripen. Do you know, I have nearly forgot what the sun looks like, rain I could tell you anything you want to know about it, since I arrived in England there hasn't been above one day without any.

Well once again, I have come to the end Marg. So I will close. Dad has just come home from work, he is on the morning shift this week, 7am till 2 pm. I think that about the best of his three shifts. Hoping that you have no more burglaries. Love to the family,

Lots of Love. Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

21st June 1946. ???

My Dear Ken

The first thing I do is apologize for the blot on the paper, but as you should know that is me all over, careless Cassy.

I can play Chopin's "Minute Waltz" now, and I am feeling very pleased with myself. Guess what, I have to be interviewed by the Manager of the Union Trustee Co. Where Christopher's father is Staff Manager and will most likely start the Monday After, I'll be a "Working Gail" from then on.

Please excuse the writing, but it is nearly midnight, and we are going up to the farm tomorrow, so Ho-hum!! I just thought I'd let you know that I am still alive after the shock, you see today Mum said 'If you get yourself a job you can leave school, so I took her at her word, and straight away rang up Uncle Malcolm & that was the outcome.

I won't have the excuse of 'Doing Homework' in my bedroom from now on, it does not matter, as they all say now, "Have you answered Ken's letter yet", even Dad. Wonderful he even likes to know the news now, so I read him the newsy bits, but that's all, what are the (I mean our) relations like.

I was thinking that after you had broken news to your Dad, that I should write to him now & then. Have you met that girl yet, I can't remember her name (You know who I mean) the girl who was born somewhere about the time you were. What was she like.

I am glad the clothes fitted and your Aunt liked the rug. Bu the way, did you get a watch for your brother.

Last Monday at Camp, we went for a hike. Another girl & I stole into the grounds of a beautiful home, and after seeing all there was to see, which was a great deal we saw the man who lived there and asked if we could have a look around as there were Aboriginal & other characters about. He said No!! "PRIVATE PROPERTY" (but that did not matter) Well. Lots of Love. MARG.
XXXXXXXXXXXXX

Sunday 23rd June 1946.

My Dear Margaret.

For the last three days, I have been traveling around somewhat. It all started last Thursday morning when I get a notion to go to Southport to see my Aunt & Uncle there. I set off from Halifax by the 8.30 train, and arrived in Southport at 11.15, when I got there, I suddenly remembered that all I had was an address where they used to live some months ago. After going there and finding out where Uncle worked, and then going to his works and getting his present address, I finely saw Auntie at about 2.30. She was just coming out of the house and going to listen to the band playing on the promenade.

Anyway to cut a long story short I stayed over-night and till 11am. the next morning, when I got a train to Manchester and from there to see my pal Dave, he is the third member of the trio, the other two being Blackie & myself, but Dave wasn't home, and according to the last letter his Mother had from him, he didn't expect to get to England before November, I stayed there until after 6pm, and then went back to Manchester and from there I got a train to Blackpool, arriving there at 10.30. I went to the first boarding house I saw, and booked a bed for the night.

The following morning I went to find Blackie's home, I only had a rough idea of his address, but after numerous inquiries I found it, he was not home yet, but his Mother was very pleased to see me. She knew who I was from photos that Blackie had sent, I was there for the rest of the day. Blackie is on his way Home, but not expected for another month yet as he is on a slow Merchant ship.

It's a lovely day today, this evening Dad, Auntie & I are going for a walk to a country place called Ripponden, or I mean a bus ride to there, and then walk round the place. Cyril has gone to see Auntie Anne at Bradford, I was going but decided to go tomorrow instead.

Well tea is ready Marg. So I will close, there was a letter from you last Monday, so I am hoping there will be another tomorrow. Love to all at Kennington.

Lots of Love. Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

26th June 1946.

Dear Ken.....

Here I am again, and I have to admit that I have not written since last Friday, but at last I am back on my feet, (but my head is not quite back in the air). You know I told you I was trying for a job, I was up to the mark, but I would have to work on Saturdays, which the Pater objected to, as he said he would not let me stay by myself during the weekend, I said I would be all-----

(Dear Ken,

Just as well you are not here or your neck might also be a bit squiffy., Here MARGARET, come & set the table & I find you are at the bottom of the delay as per usual.... Love Mum)

Right, but he said with the crime wave as it is, "NO!!!" so that was that. Anyway I got a solemn promise from him that I can leave in September and stay at home and do what I like (Yipee!!@ bang bang).

Anyway how are you all over there, give them my love. Have you broken the ice yet, or is it too hard. I had letters 13 & 14 from you last Saturday, thanks ever so much. When I told Mum about the part where your Aunt wanted the table, she said 'If it's not you, it's me. (By the way she got a good chaffing for the bit at the bottom of the last page. While I was actually setting the table, don't faint).

Have you met Uncle Charlie yet, he wants to come out, is he as full of fun as he sounds. We had some photos from them and Christine & Ruth (Cousins) both seem to be attractive little girls, only we still do not know what the others look like except Uncle Jim's family.

(It is tea time, so FOOD!). Ah! That's over, steak & Kidney, by the way Dad & Mr. Koehler killed the calf last Saturday. You should have been here to help them as Mr. Koehler only knew what he learnt as a boy, about cutting the choice part from the tough and Dad is no butcher, so we have been having veal, veal & more veal, Oh! And corned veal. A friend of Dad's who is a butcher look half the animal and the Koehler's helped us eat the other half. (it was the Tillman's) I think you met them, two small girls & Bill who is about 17.

Well no more paper left. So lots of Love to you & everyone else. MARG. xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

27th June. 1946.

My Dear Margaret.

Just received your letter No. 9. Which you wrote whilst at camp at Mona-Vale, glad to hear you were having a good time. You seem to be having much better weather than we over here are, all though you are in the middle of Winter, and we in the middle of summer.

Well, I should now be at your relations in London but I had to send a telegram to cancel all arrangements as I have a terrific cold, due to the fact that I still try to imagine that I am in the Australian climate, and go around dressed as such. One day last week I walked out into the street in my stocking feet but this time I wasn't nearly crippled with little stones tearing lumps out of my feet, but my feet were nearly frozen, and now every bone in my body aches. Last night I had a hot mustard bath, it has done me a lot of good, but I still feel pretty groggy,

Tomorrow night I shall have to set off back to H.M.S. Impac, but I am hoping against hope that I got an immediate draft to Chatham, but from there I stand a good chance of getting another ship to last me the rest of my stay in the Navy.

Hello its raining again at least I suppose the ducks are happy about it, the lady next door isn't, she's dashing about trying to get her washing in before it gets completely wet through.

Have you seen the London Victory Parade on the pictures yet Marg. I think the colouring of it is really something. The part that made me laugh was the buses in it, they looked so funny, if you have seen it you may have noticed when the buses came on they were all red one's of the London transport excepting one which was a dark brown, That brown one is one of many that were sent from the Halifax Corporation - buses. At the height of the blitz on London when so many of London's buses had been wrecked by bombs, during the war nearly all the buses were painted brown so that they couldn't be seen from the air.

According to the papers, the English rugby team have had these losses up to now, but I guess they have to give your teams a bit of encouragement now & again, Ho, Ho, Ho. I haven't as much as seen one of the games on the pictures yet, at least I saw the Sydney Victory Parade on the Pictures, and wished that I were there, just where the

camera man was standing near the Queens square entrance to St. James station

Well that's all this time Marg, hoping all are well, and waiting for your next letter

Love to all, Lots of Love Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

29th June 1946.

My Dear Margaret.

Well, after an eighteen hour journey I am back on H.M.S. "Belson", just two hours ten minutes adrift. So now once again I am waiting to see our friend the Commander and duly receive, the usual 1 & 1, or this time it will probably be 2 & 2, as of late I have been a regular customer of his, this will be my third visit.

I shall only really lose the pay this time, as I am not interested in the leave. They couldn't drag me ashore again in Plymouth with a team of horses, that first day was quite enough for me, the next time I go of this hunk of iron, I hope it's for good. Up to now I haven't heard a thing about drafts to Chatham as I expected to do. One thing I knew as soon as I walked into the mess, was that I am duty watch tomorrow, about six voices all told me at once, trying to cheer me up a bit, Ho. Ho. To make things worse, two of the three P.O's, are on leave, the remaining one is in charge of today's watch, so I am in charge tomorrow (Oh! Calamity) (ditto). I don't feel capable of peeling a sack of spuds never mind being responsible for meals for eight hundred men.

I am still sneezing regularly about every ten minutes. I thought my cold had all about gone when I left home, but the journey down here seems to have brought it on again. From Paddington (London) to Plymouth, six & half hours, I could not stop sneezing and the train was packed, jammed with holiday makers. It was all I could do to get my handkerchief to my nose without either knocking someone off their balance, or digging someone in the ribs, upsetting someone anyway.

One of the boys has just said, 'that no cooks are going on draft until the second leave party comes back.' So that will be three weeks yet. I have heard another buzz too, and that is, that all men who go back to barracks off a sea going ship, are given 21 days leave on arrival at the barracks, if that is true, I don't look like doing much more work in the Navy. After this next month, it looks like being nearly all leave, (just my ticket).

---O--- Wot! No more 'Chefing'. My life as a cook at an end, and what a cook, who-hoo!

Well once again the paper is full, (nearly), so I will be saying toodle-oo, till next time, please carry on using my home address, letters do arrive there, which is more than one can say for the Implac. Love to all. Lots of Love. Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

1st July 1946

My Dear Ken.....

Here I am at last, Mum was not feeling well tonight, so I had to help more than usual, so I am now able to pass a bit of news on to you.

Have you been to see them at "Norbury" yet, we are hoping that you will tell us just what they are like, as they never mention themselves and to us are just a few people explaining a bit about England.

Have you got the photos yet? Mum went to the trouble of cutting the one of the four of us up. Pete & Ken were literally sliced off the ends and she kept the remains for herself, and she will let me have it one day - (to show to the Gott family.) By the way they all send their Love to you. Anyway I have it now & found that it fits perfectly into the place for the calendar in my writing case. I had a look at the photos taken the 4th May and they were punk. "Oops! Sorry (Wot?) Is that a lady"

Poor Mum & Dad are having a spot of bother. Mr. Koehler is very nice & a good worker. But Mrs K. thinks that she can help herself to every food stuff we have up there, e.g. On Saturday morning I went to the cupboard to get poor "Moggy" some spread, & it was a case of (Wot! No Marmite) I nearly hit the floor, only a week before Mum had taken a large pot up and she had been eating it, and she had not told him that it was ours either.

You will be thinking, doesn't that stupid "Queenie" girl out in Australia ever stop moaning? Yes I do, especially when I read parts of your letters that mention food. One of the teachers at school gave Dr. Wade (the Headmistress) a letter she got from a friend in Vienna and so Dr Wade told us the amount of food they get there a week. Honestly it takes a lot to make me squirm, but when I heard that, well you can imagine the rest. Gingo's I wish you could have some of the fruit that I eat every day oranges etc., as big as two hands cupped together.

We are going to the "Gotts" on Wednesday night, the first time since you were here.

Well! Once again. Love to All at Elland & lots of Love to you. MARG.
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Thursday, 4th July 1946.

My Dear Margaret.

Here I am again, off duty today. We are in two watches now, that's not so good, but as soon as the second leave party come back, we shall go back into three, of I hope they will go into three watches, I want to be on my way to Chatham.

Yesterday I received a very nice letter from Mrs Lowe at Norbury saying that they were very sorry that I couldn't go there during my leave, and giving me an invitation to go as soon as I can. I hope that won't be very long from now. My cold is just about better now, most of the lads in the mess were down with one, during their leave, that's due to the difference in climates I guess.

Things certainly are in a state in this country. I don't think there is anything that isn't either rationed or controlled, and the bread rationing is causing riots everywhere, in Yorkshire three thousand bakers have refused to accept any ration coupons for their bread.

Housewives standing in bread queues are signing petitions, which are being sent to the Government. And another lot of bakers, have refused to work at all. Last Sunday the soap ration was cut down by 1/7, all the first new potatoes were sent to Germany, we had to have the old ones, at least fresh air is still free and in this outfit, we don't get much of that.

All my sunburn, which I got on the way over has gone, I was quite brown when we first arrived, but now I am back to normal.

I got some good information yesterday off a friend who works in the signals office, and that is, that leading cooks 51 group would be de-mobbed between Aug 26th and Sept. 16th. I hope that is correct, because Dad has booked for me to go on holidays with them, on Sept. 21st. They are going to Llandudno in North Wales. I have never been there, but they say it is very nice.

By the way, I saw the Commander and to my surprise I only got one £ one, it was a new one though, they say the old one has been made a Captain. The Paymaster Commander came into the galley this morning, and he asked me when I was thinking of going in for a Petty Officer. I almost burst out laughing at him, but I just said the next thing I am going in for is a civilian. A minute later he called me over to where he was standing and gave me a telling off because the bacon machine hadn't been cleaned off properly.

Well once again, I must sign off, hoping all the family are well, Love to all.

Lots of Love . Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

7th July 1946

My Dear Ken.....

You don't seem to be very pleased about going back to "Belson" and none of us over here blame you for that, I was improving my mind this morning (reading the Sunday Sun comic) when I noticed an essay written by a boy, of the most enjoyable visit to H.M.S. IMPLACABLE & I thought (Oh, Yeah!!) I know someone who thinks a little differently to that. Of course you wouldn't know who that is, or would you!

Pete & I stayed down this weekend & on Saturday she dragged me out of bed at 7 o'clock, as we had to catch the 8 o'clock bus and then she made me watch the hockey for an hour and believe me I sure am frozen. Then in the afternoon, we went to a games practice for the sports and Pete forced me along with the rest to run round the school playground it was to find out who would represent our Comrade Club in the United Comrade sports in a months time. I got into all the team events & the relay.

Last night we went to the Adamsons home for the evening, some people that live near are going to Fiji in a fortnight's time, so it was really a farewell party to them. Edgar Wilson & Uncle John kept us going all night with music and Pete sang a couple of songs very well, just as well she was one of the first performers, as by the end of the night she was hoarse, with an extremely bad cold.

Mum picked 20 cases of mandarins for market this weekend, (they have just come home) & Dad & Uncle Jim have been taking it in turns to take flying leaps over a wide gap in the ground where the rain washed the soil away during the flood. You see they have had a scoop and the horse has not liked going past the hole, so it rushed down the hill every time with the men flying after her.

*Well the time is late, and paper short, so Best Wishes to all. Lots of Love. MARG.
XXXX*

9th July. 1946.

My Dear Margaret

A letter this time as I have run out of air letters, and I don't go ashore in this place so I have to ask the boys who do go out to get me some. Up to now I have asked three, but have got no results, I think what they do is to go into the first boozier and by the time they come out they aren't in a fit state to do anything. Last night one bloke came back on board, and laid out on a form, fell off it and was unable to move, we picked him up and put him in his hammock, he was o.k. again this morning, but had no recollection of how or when he got back to the ship.

I am sitting on the little weather deck just outside the mess. It is about six thirty in the evening, and a lovely day, the sun is still well up, it doesn't go down until about half past nine or later, the weather has bucked up this last week, it hasn't even rained for four days.

Last Sunday it was a Visitors Day, and four wrens came onboard with two sailors. I was at my usual position in the passage running past the galley. Drinking tea, and smoking, when they came into the galley. As it happened three of them were Wren cooks, and as soon as they saw they were at the ships galley, they became very interested, and vanished from view through the galley door, to see what a ships galley was like. A few minutes later one of them came out eating a chip, and waving a lit cigarette in her other hand, so I thought now is the time for a bit of fun. As it happened I was wearing a shirt with an anchor on it, that making things more navy like, I walked up to this Wren, and said, Where did you get that chip? She said, I pinched it out of there! So I said, trying to look stern, and not laugh, well take it back, and next time ask for a thing before you take it! She looked at me enough to kill, but walked back into the galley with the chip, as soon as she was just inside I shouted after her calling her back, she looked round and I asked her how long she had been in the Navy? She said fifteen months. Fifteen months and you still don't know that smoking isn't allowed in any galley, I said.

At the look she gave me I was forced to laugh, and she eventually realized that I was 'kidding her, she was real upset though.

I am sending some pictures of Elland, Blackpool and Southport where I was during my Leave, and a few newspapers. That's all this time Marg, hoping all are well,

Love to all, Lots of Love. Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

11th July 1946.....

My Dear Ken.....

Well, once again I am about to pass a bit more news on, though there is not really much. Nothing ever happens out here now, or someone falling down a brick pit. I'm sorry I can't concentrate as Mum U Dad are talking, or rather deciding of what material the house is to be built.

I have been doing a bit of running lately, and I am running in the sports in a fortnights time and again a fortnight after that. I am going to "Kings College" tomorrow night for a dance, 28 girls from our class are going, we have never been before, nor do we know what the partners to be are like. By the way, when you get out of the (Outfit) as you call it, do learn to dance, because down at Lower Portland, they have a dance every so often and Mr. Tye will not be allowed to sit every dance out like he did last time.

Once again, Pete & I are not going down to the farm this weekend, but are going to a reunion all the girls who went to camp. It is at the Sydney Gardens,

although I have been there many times, I very often find myself lost, especially when down the lower end near the ponds.

Well Ken I know you will be glad to get off that craft, and I don't blame you, but Mum says she knows you will get bored in barracks. I am expecting a letter from you on Saturday, as I got one last Saturday. And our mails get here Sat. & Thursday, I suppose now you are pack on board, your letters will only be posted when they get a bag full to send off the ship, & from past experience I don't think that will be often.

Mum is going mad she wants a cup of cocoa and I think I had better get her one. Best Wishes to those in ELLAND. Lots of Love. MARG xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Thursday. 11th July. 1946.

My Dear Margaret.

I was very pleased today when the mail came into the mess, I got my first letter from Dad since I came back off leave and it contained three letters from you. The first is unnumbered & undated, The second is No.11, and the third is No.12. and dated the 1st July, the latter was very quick in getting here. Dad sent them on from home on the 7th.

By the way, before I forget, you will probably have noticed that the date inside my letters sent from Plymouth, are a day or two earlier than the dates on the postmark. That is because I ask one of the boys who go ashore, to post them. Some how I don't like the mail office on the ship, I think that is because of so many of my letters going missing while I was out in the Pacific.

Dad hasn't mentioned anything in his letter about me coming to Australia, he definitely says he wouldn't try to stop me if I want to go. When I am going to London again, I don't know. I still haven't seen any of your relations excepting Arthur (I think), and his youngest son Michael, nor have I been able to go to Australia House again. On the 17th of this month the information officer, comes back off leave and opens up his shop again, so then I hope to be able to get the latest information.

Every time I write I seem to have a different tale to tell of the De-mob situation, this time it's a sad one, in fact the worst yet. The Cooks divisional officer has just come back off leave, and he says No one will go on draft regardless of what barracks he belongs to, until his group number comes up, so it looks as though once again I go to sea in H.M.S. Implacable. In barracks, it is much easier to get de-mobbed because they don't have to get a relief for you, whereas you can't go until a relief arrives, making you weeks maybe months later than the rest of your group number. So now all my hopes of going back to Chatham Barracks and being out of the Navy by September or early October have been dashed to pieces.

On the sixth of August the ship sails for Belfast, and after a stay there, goes round the North of Scotland and down the East Coast to Rosyth, just a few miles north of Edinburgh, I have been there before, and it certainly is a much better place than this. It was Rosyth dockyard that I had to pass the fire-fighting exam, they dressed me up in one of the asbestos suits, talk about put out a fire, I couldn't so much a walk.

It's good to hear that your Dad is asking if you have answered my letters Marg, as you say (Wonderful!) I think it is a pretty good idea of yours to write occasionally to my Dad, he would appreciate it a lot. Please thank your Mum for the few lines in the letter I am now answering, tell her I only wish that I, was there to set the table. At home I get into hot water for using the table when Auntie is wanting to set it, or for forgetting to go on to the garden

for lettuce, onions etc., Dad pulled the first few strawberries last week 6 oz, that shows the amount of sunshine we have had this year.

Well again the page is full so I must close. Please give my regards to the Gott Family, and my love to the "Kenningtonites" Lots of Love to You. Ken. XXXXXXXXX

Sunday, 14th July. 1946.

My Dear Marg.

I have just written and posted a letter to Mrs Lowe at Norbury, in answer to her letter which I received a couple of days after arriving back off leave. She has given me an invitation to go as soon and whenever I can, but I have no idea when that will be. It seems likely that I shall be staying aboard this ship until my De-mobb Group comes up. There is just one chance that we may get a long weekend before the ship leaves here for Belfast on August the sixth, that is only a buzz, and you know what "Buzzes" are.

So now you leave school in September. Just about the same time as I hope to leave the Navy. I'll have you a race as to who leaves first, but I will put my money on you. My chances are pretty slim, it's the middle of July now, and there is still a Leading cook of 48 Group on board.

Did I tell you that Dad has booked for me to go to Llandudno on holidays with them, on the 21st of September, but I think it's dead certain that I shall still be a Naval rating at that time.

The 'bubbly' has just come into the mess, in other words Rum, and you should see the scramble to get round the table, where the 'Duty Rum Boson' is serving it. It seems as though everyone in the mess makes a rush, and sits there watching each man drink his 'Tot', hoping that he will give a sip of it to some one, and hoping that he will be the lucky one who gets the sip.

Apologies for the blot above, my pen, the new one that I bought on leave, has gone all wonky lately, sometimes it writes and other times it won't run at all.

Today I am Duty watch, I am only duty one day in four just at present. Another leading cook came back off leave and was put into my watch, so we are working it between us to take charge every other duty watch. The Chief doesn't know about it, and we don't intend to let him find out, he lives in Plymouth, so every day a 1pm. he goes ashore and we don't see him again until eight next morning.

There will be peace in the mess once again tomorrow night as tomorrow is pay day, this is the first time we have been paid since we returned from leave, and believe me, that out of the twenty men in the mess it would be impossible to raise ten bob.

The battle ship "Duke of York" arrived in Plymouth last Thursday, and at the end of this week the newest battleship, The Vanguard is coming in, there's a buzz that a lot of men off this ship are going on to her.

I am going to write to Dad now, or I should say, start a letter to Dad, it will be time to start work in about twenty minutes time, so until next time. Love to all.

Lots of Love. Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

15th July 1946.....

My Dear Ken.....

I received another letter from you on Saturday when I came home from town, and wondered what sort of a Petty Officer you would make coming back late every so often., anyway Congrats! On gaining the appointment stage at least. Also glad to hear your cold is better now. Evidently you sent the germs out here, because as days after receiving your letter, I discovered I had a very bad cold, which I have now passed on to Dad, Mums turn next, and she threatens to go on strike if she does.

We are sick of the sight of oranges, lemons & mandarins and still have to spend a few more weekends packing them.

When I leave school at the end of August and if I do not take a job, I will stay at home till Xmas, and then go up to the farm to live till about February. You see we start sending plums to market in November and finish up with pears at the end of January. The new house ought to be on the way by then. The tanks were ordered today for it and a special pumping system is to be used in getting the water up from the river, if it does no look alright by the time is finished, it should.

I have just finished reading "The Lifeboat" by Ballantyne, which happens to be the story of sailors back in 1824 of so, it was a good novel of an adventurous type. I suppose in a few days you will have a bit of leave, or maybe you might be off the dungeon. We had a letter from George and he said that they are having a summer cruise round your coast, and spending a much better time than one might have in barracks, maybe they might find something for your ship to do.

Anyway enjoy yourself in Wales. Mrs. Koehler has lived there at one time and she said it is a beautiful country round there, she has told me so much that I am a little envious that I cannot go too, anyway I might get to that part of the world one of these days.

Well once again, Best Wishes to all at Elland. Love to all "Et Vous" (French)

Love Margaret. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

18th July 1946.....

My Dearest Ken.....

Once again I am doing my homework (Oh yes) Mum is out at Lodge, Pete is in bed asleep, Dad is bathing, & Me, well I am just doing my homework. Dad says that if I spent as much time really doing homework as I do fossicking around in my bedroom, he would give 100 pounds, but as I prefer to be just "Me", he can keep the money.

How is your cold now? It looks as if we are in for more cold weather out here, the temperature was down again this morning brrrrrrrrr.,

Have the photos arrived yet, they were posted about 10 weeks ago. I really should have sent them by ordinary mail, but I did not think at the time. I went to a Rainbow Dance last night, and had my photo taken, if they a fairly good I will forward a copy on to you.

By the way I hope you are receiving my letters, as I have been getting one a week, (if I am lucky) from you, do please write as often as you can, because I do look forward to getting them.

There is some terrible music being played on the wireless at present. Oops!! Sorry, it was drums only were included with an occasional bang, bang, clap from those little hollow things they have in a line in front of the drummer.

Do you remember Ruth, the lucky devil is going on a trip round the world, or practically. Her father works for the American Army on the 'Food Front' so his job takes him & family to Manila and then on over the continent, Mrs Lindsay is glad as she is really Swiss, so will be able to visit her relations while over there.

I have often wondered what will happen to you, I mean when you have finished with the "Implac". Whether you will go onto another ship or not. I hope for your sake that you don't have to go into barracks, I have heard from others that it is painful. (Or nearly)

I can now finish the letter as I had to get Dad a boiling hot lemon drink. Mum hopes to go for a trip to Adelaide in September or October, for three weeks, so I will not be working for that time, but I suppose I will have to keep our barn, or is it a bear garden tidy.

You say that your Father had written to Mum, she has not received the letter yet, I will let you know when she does. Well once again I have to close (my letter) Best Wishes to all a Elland. Lots of Love to you.....Margaret xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Saturday 20th July.

My Dear Margaret.

Another air letter, the last of my present stock, I went ashore last Wednesday and forgot to get some more, I will ask the chap who got these for me to get some more when he goes ashore again.

Well, we had a pretty good day on Wednesday. We went ashore at the usual time, ten past one, and got a train to Newton Albert at five minutes to two, arriving there at nearly three o'clock. It was a smaller place than we had expected, and in half an hour we had seen everything, we had tea in a café. I was starving but the biggest meal I could get was a salad, minus meat of any description. At about four thirty, we decided to go to Torquay which is half an hour's bus ride, I had always imagined it wasn't half the size that I had expected. The harbour is full of sailing boats, and motor launches were taking visitors out into the bay to look around an aircraft carrier, which is there for Navy week,

We went to the pictures in the evening, and as soon as we came out we had to start on our way back owing to the trains.

Today I got a letter from Auntie Annie, and a Birthday Card, my Birthday tomorrow, and I am Duty watch would you believe it, at least it is the last Birthday I shall have in the Navy, that's one big consolation.

The Chief cook told me yesterday that I 'may' go to Chatham on the twenty ninth after all. I don't think they know their own minds, if I do go, I bet I am de-mobbed a month sooner than if I stayed on board this ship. I have written and told Dad not to expect me to be going to Llandudno with them on the twenty first of September.

It is wicked trying to write a letter in the Mess these days. Someone has found a dartboard, and someone else has produced a set of darts. I don't mind them playing darts, but as each one is waiting for his turn to throw, he sits on the table, and it wobbles at the best of times, never mind when two or three blokes are sat on it.

Jack Warner is on the radio at present, singing one of his own songs about ('is Bruver Sid) ask Mom if she remembers hearing him that day we went to Manly, he has started

another song now about (E didn't Answer it). Well that's all this time Marg, Love to all the family and, Lots of Love to you. Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Letter ??? Missing at sea again.

21st July 1946.....

My Dear Ken.....

First thing I do is Wish you "Many Happy Returns" for today, we all were thinking of you this morning at breakfast.

We have packed 48 cases of mandarins, (hand grading) this week and I am as tired as possible now.

Really your last letter sounded as if you were down in luck, but things really are not as bad as they seem, so cheer up!

Mum is going to Adelaide by Air in a few months time to visit elderly Aunt who is 80. I have to be chief cook & bottle washer. By the way, did I ever tell you that Letter No 4 has never reached "Kennington", it is the only one that has not. Do try and visit our relations before you go travelling, but I know they are dying to meet you, & I am sure you will like them.

We are getting a holiday next Thursday week (because of General Northcott). Which I have no objections too what so ever. I was thinking of trying sending letters to you on board while you are on the trip. You will have to let me know if you receive them or not.

This homework stunt is becoming too much of a joke. Just as well for you, you are not here or that Pug nose of yours would be a bit more "Pugger." Just you wait.... Mum.

Aren't we smart, I think I will charge her so much per word for these interruptions.

When Dad said Mum could go to Adelaide, Pete & I put in a spoke saying we both wanted to go to England, all he said was, "You'll both have to wait till you are older. Pleasing aspect is it not - funny joke -"

Have you had any more bad fingers since you arrived home, Mum says the sooner you get out of the Navy, the quicker it will be for you to get rid of those horrid things. Talk about strawberries, we have not had one this season, let alone 6oz, you can think yourself lucky there, but here's hoping we get some fruit next season.

Once again I am at the bottom of the page, So give my regards to all those at Elland & Norbury. Lots of Love to you. Margaret XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Letter No. 22. 22nd July 1946.

My Dear Margaret.

Very many thanks for three air letters and the Photo's from you, also an air letter from Mum, and a letter from Pete, all of which arrived in a letter from Dad yesterday morning.

Your letters are No's 14.15.16. dated 4th 7th & 11th July, so now only one of your letters hasn't turned up and that is No13 (the unlucky one). I got a bit mixed up with my numbers, but I think that I have got them in order again, did I write two sixteen's or something, I know that they got mixed up somehow or other.

Well my Birthday yesterday went off something like my last one at Nowra, except that it didn't rain, but I was duty watch, and didn't get ashore to notice whether it was raining,

snowing, or what it was doing. I was in my hammock by half eight, thinking out how to be in the (Colony of Convicts) for my next Birthday. Five times last week I was down at the Intelligence office, trying to see the Resettlement officer about it, but I can never catch him in. I'm going down again later this afternoon. At least we do know that the Authorities are making some headway in getting people from one country to another. The married servicemen are getting first priority, as you will see by the latest notice that has come to the ship, which I am enclosing in this Letter

Thanks for the parcel you have sent for my Birthday Marg. It hasn't arrived yet, but I don't think it will take long to get here, they seem to have speeded them up lately. I am going to write home and tell Dad not to send it on to me, but to leave it until I go on leave again, then there is no chance of it getting lost over here.

Sorry about the 'Blot', that is not due to writing in bed though. Just think, soon you will have no homework to do in bed. What will you do with your school uniform after the last day at school, the same as I will do with mine, tear it off, and wipe your feet on it. They say it is the "King's uniform," I had better parcel it up and send it to Buckingham Palace.

I was working it out this morning. How many days of my life I have spent in this regiment, and up to 4.30 pm. today, it is 1,243. If I am de-mobbed by the 14th of October as I am supposed to be, it will be 1,327 days, 31, 848 hours. (Oh! Calamity)

We are changing Messes today, into a mess even smaller than this one, it is one of those messes in the dining hall near the bread & butter room if you remember that part of the ship. They are turning this mess into a laundry, or extending the original laundry, with this mess as a sorting room.

Believe it or not, my Best Friend the Chief cook is going on draft, he finishes his twenty one years next month, I don't suppose after so long in the Navy one could expect him to be any different to what he is, it would drive anyone off their rocker, I mean look at me after only three & a half years.

Well I'm at the end of the paper once again Marg, I am going down to the office now, and after that a game of chess with a friend who beats me every game, but I am getting in practice so that I can beat Dad when I get home.

Love to all the family & Lots of Love to you Marg. Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

23rd July. 1946.

My Dear Margaret.

Here I am again, stand by watch today, and we finished at noon. We have never worked on a stand by watch since the ship arrived in England, that's because the Chief cook lives at Plymouth and he goes ashore at 1pm, every day, and has every weekend off, He's as nice as pie these days, never says anything wrong to anyone. I for one will be very glad to see the back of him though, I certainly pity his wife.

A new notice appeared on the notice board to the effect that, any Royal Navy Rating wishing to transfer to the Royal Australian Navy may do so now. Providing that he can be spared by the R.N. will be accepted by the R.A.N. and he will sign on for a period of two years. If I was about 70 Group, and had about another eighteen months more service to do, I wouldn't hesitate, but seeing that I am only a two months man H'mm. I will leave it to the immigration department.

I went down again to see the resettlement officer yesterday, but once again I was disappointed. I just can't catch him in his office. I must have been there at every hour in his

working hours, that was the sixth time yesterday, I will try again early tomorrow morning, and see if I can catch him at home.

I received a Birthday card from Cyril this morning, but no letter from him. So I don't know whether he has got this new job at a large Estate, he says 'It will be less pay than what he is getting now, but he will learn a lot more than he is doing now'.

A friend of mine (Larry) is making a rug, sat here next to me. He just finished one 5' by 3,' last week, and has just started his next one tonight, this one is the fifteenth he has made since he joined the Navy six years ago. He has just done a year's extra service, and next week he is signing on for another three years, he keeps trying to explain all the advantages of staying in the Navy, but I retaliate with about twice as many advantages in Civvy Street., every time we argue I have something new about civvy street, and he usually has a new line on the Navy.

I do my writing in the dining hall now, this new mess is even worse than the original one, and the inevitable dart board has got a prominent place right in the middle of the mess, just in the right place to stop everyone from writing a Letter So here I have to wait until all the suppers are finished in the dining hall, and the servers have swept the place out, that takes until about 8.30 each evening, and at ten o'clock pipe down is sounded, off and the ship's company have to go to bed, no choice, the Duty R.P.O.walks round the ship , and anyone who takes too long over it finds himself on the quarterdeck the following morning, and the usual "Off Caps" (E! wot a Life.)

Here I go, dripping again. One of these days I am going to write you a letter with no drips, grumbles, or grouses, or is that an impossibility.

Well the paper is full again Marg, so once again I sign off until next time, hoping that all are well and that everything is O.k. up at the farm. Love to all at Kennington

Lots of Love you. Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Letter No. 24. 27th July. 1946.

My Dear Margaret.

Here I am again, duty watch, and just as fed up as usual, this is my dinner hour from eleven to twelve, so I shall have to break off writing before long, and hop up the galley for the rest of the day. It's a pretty easy supper tonight, so I am hoping to get finished early, and then get my washing done and after that if I am still on my feet, I will try to write a little more on to this letter again.

This time, believe it or not, I went to Plymouth. I didn't leave the ship until the 6pm. Liberty boat. All I did was go to the pictures and have the biggest feed I could find. That was sausages, chips and tomatoes which cost me 1/11 including a cup of tea. I paid for it before she brought the tea. Well after I had waited for twenty minutes and still no sign of the cup of tea I asked her for it, in a few minutes she brought it and said tu'pence please. This was too much, I said 'What!' I pay for, and wait half an hour for a drink of tea and then I have to pay again for it, not me, so I just drank the tea a quick as I could, put on my cap and walked out, leaving her rushing round calling the boss.

I saw a pretty good picture, it was 'Allen Ladd and Veronica Lake' in The Blue Dahlia. The only trouble was that I got cramp in my knees and I nearly started running round the theatre, Had I been on an end seat instead of the middle of the row, I most certainly would have.

Well it's five minutes to twelve so I must be off, so until tonight when I can say, well that's another duty watch nearer the last one I send my love and hoping in the meantime that a letter from Dad will arrive containing more mail from you.

It is now about eight thirty and I have finished washing as well. That is one of my favorite jobs, (dohobying), I don't think. I have a lovely task ahead of me, either tomorrow or Monday, and that is to get all my bedding cleaned in case I go on draft to Chatham on the first of August, that is a hammock and a bed cover to scrub and a blanket to wash. What a life! I have got my three kit bags scrubbed, dried & stowed away at the back of my locker, so by Wednesday I hope to have everything clean for I should say the hundredth time.

Have you got a gramophone yet Marg? Just before I left, you were talking of having one to take up to the farm. Is there any music that you want Marg, any pieces that you are unable to get in Australia that I may be able to get here in England. If there is please tell me. I know there was something that you wanted and couldn't get when I was there, but I can't remember the name of it.

Today we got an official signal that bread is to be rationed on the ship. Twelve ounces of flour a day per man. That goes for bread, cakes, pastry, puddings and everything that is made with flour. For a man who has got heavy duties it is eighteen ounces, but which branch of the Navy does Heavy duty, I don't know.

Well I will close now as I am tired, I am sending a few more of our magnificent newspapers, H'mm, it is going to be very nice when we get over the paper shortage, and once again get a decent sized newspaper. So until next time, I send love to the family, and Lots of Love to you Marg. Ken xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Letter No. 21 Missing at Sea.

29th July 1946.

My Dear Ken.

Very many thanks for three letter's from you, one last Thursday, one Saturday, and one today, I am so pleased, that I am making mistakes already, you see. I have only been getting one a week up till now, anyway keep it up.

Mum said that you may send your uniform to "Buckingham Palace" if you like, but mine has to be turned into a skirt. (Wouldn't it!!!).

As to the present, which is not much in fact it is not what was intended, but the other parcel could not be sent yet, as it is not food etc., but will try to send it again later when the parcel position becomes a little lighter.

You say I will not have any more homework to do soon, as if I care about that, as a matter of fact, they might consider me as a "Working Gail" then and think up some new phrase which does not sound so "Childish". Ha! Ha! @@. Anyway all the more time to spare for correspondence, when I really have not any more proper Homework to contend

with.

You did not say what you thought of the photos, I had a look at the proofs of the one taken of me the other night at the Rainbow Dance, Mum said they were alright, so I have ordered some.

A girl I know has a pen friend in Lancashire and she has just come back from a weeks stay at Llandudno, and the weather has been wonderful, also the scenery and places around, including Conway (and the Castle) are very good. So I hope you can get away to go.

Please give the Chief Cook my best wishes, N.B. no capitals, or love for him. Personally I do not know how anyone could stay in one job like that for 21 years and as you say "Look at you after 3 ½ years in that outfit.

Dad is making a fuss because I still have the light on, the time by the way is exactly 11/30 p.m. so here's hoping I hear again from you soon. Lots of Love to you Ken, Margaret. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx P.S. Best Wishes to all.

29th July 1946.

My Dear Margaret.

Well, this one makes my letter score half a century. Wrong again, I mean quarter century. My cricket is terrible, isn't it. Even the spelling is wrong, anyway this is the twenty fifth letter to you, since that fateful day May the fifth when I started using pen & paper in place of voice.

I am going to have to break off writing. Marg something has come on to the radio that I have been waiting to hear for a long time. And that is the fight between Bruce Woodcock the British heavy weight champion, and the French heavyweight champ, called Rennie, or some name like that, it's a very big fight this, as the Frenchman is the fourth champion of the World.

Half an hour later, and here I am back again, the fight only lasted half the allotted time as Woodcock knocked out Rennie in the sixth round. It was a really exciting fight, with the first two rounds pretty tame, and then in the third, things began to happen. In the fourth & fifth, Rennie went down three times. Then in the sixth he went down twice, and on the second time failed to rise before the count of ten. Now three parts of British Isles are waiting for the 17th September, when Woodcock has a return fight with Freddie Mills, he won the last one on points.

Well now that my bit of excitement is over I will carry on I will carry on where I left off at the first paragraph.

I was my Auntie Annies Birthday yesterday, I haven't been able to get her anything yet, I sent a card last Friday when I was ashore, so she should have got that this morning. By the way Marg, you never sent me the dates of Mom, Dads & Staffords birthdays, isn't Staffords the 6th of Jan. Please send me Mum & Dads next time you write.

There is practically a new Ships Company on here now. All the faces are new, nearly every day there are drafts going to and from the ship, and now you get talking to anyone, and ask what group he is, you can bet your life that he is 70 group or over. When will they get de-mobbed, heaven only knows.

Well that's nearly it again Marg, so I must be closing. Hoping all are keeping fit, please give my regards to Jim when you see him again. Love to all and

Lots of Love to you Marg. Ken. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

1st August 1946.....

My Dearest Ken.....

I am just back from my trip to the farm and tomorrow is the great day, I have to start at 9 am. And I jolly hope I can have a cup of tea at 11 o'clock. Anyway I will be writing again on Tuesday to let you know what I think of the big World.

Do you know what the name of the carnation you mention is? & as a matter of fact it has always been my favourite flower, ever since someone told me when I was quite small that it was called after me, but although it was the "Margaret"

carnation he was only pulling my leg about the other bit. There is another pale yellow with red on it with some other name, it might be that one which you have, but I think the other nicest of all.

You ask which day was my "D" day was the 22nd Aug, I am afraid I beat you to it this time. But I am glad you can go to Wales with the others.

We went out to tea with some people who were visiting the farm to-day, the "Crows" by name, I don't think you know them, Judith Crow & I baked in the sun on the rocks all day, & I am now getting a bit brown.

Did I tell you that I am going to a ball with Uncle Jim, the 'T.N.G.' Annual Ball I think it is tomorrow night, & as I am going as his partner, I will be at the Official Table, I nearly could not go for I twisted my ankle on Friday night & banged my knee on Saturday night, so have had a lazy time all the weekend.

Well it is late, & I am nearly asleep as you will notice by the scrawl, so till Tuesday, I will say Good-night. Lots of Love to you Ken. Margaret
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Monday 5th August. 1946

My Dear Margaret.

First of all I must apologize for being so long in writing, but everything seems to happen at once. To start with I got drafted from the 'Implac.' to Chatham Barracks last Thursday, that took all the day arriving in the barracks at 8.30 at night, early next morning I started doing the joining routine which is practically a days job, seeing doctors, dentists, pay office, "Vittialuy???" (Butchery) Office, one thing and another, I had nearly finished all this when I went to the cookery office, to get to know which watch I was in and what galley I was to work in.

I got all that, and found I was in the watch that was on long weekend leave, from Friday to Tuesday. So I had to start rushing around getting a railway warrant and ration card and get washed & changed to be out of the barracks by 5.30, which I did with 5mts to spare.

As you know I was going to go to Norbury on my first weekend leave, but this happened so sudden, that I had no time to let them know that I was coming. In two weeks time I have another weekend so I hope to go and see all your relations then. Auntie May & Uncle Lewis have come over from Southport and are staying at home for two weeks, so with me being home as well there has been quite a house full this weekend. I have to set off back tonight, so that I can be in the barracks before 8.45 tomorrow morning. It can't be very long now before I come home and don't have to go back, 47 Group of leading cooks are being de-mobbed tomorrow the 6th.

Dad sent a letter containing three letters from you to the Implac, but I had left before they arrived, but I have a friend on the ship who is going to forward my mail on to Chatham, so I am looking forward to receiving it tomorrow morning.

It is dinnertime now, Uncle Lewis just came to the sitting room door and said, Kenneth its Five Bells, dinner's up, so I must go, Love to all, and Lots of Love to you Marg. Yours.
Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

5th August 1946.....

My Dear Ken.....

(Pete Hurry out of the Bathroom, Margaret for goodness sake hurry with the drying up). Does this remind you of anywhere, or maybe it does. Anyway here I am again feeling a little bit down in the dumps. For the first time since you left, I
A Romance by Mail

did not receive a letter on a Saturday morning, so I moped all day, but bucked up again this morning when the postman came along with No 25, so that means that No 24 has been lost.

One of the girls from school, her brother was killed last night riding a motor bike, I feel so sorry for her. Her Father was killed about 4 years ago, her sister died about the same time and her Mother has just gone blind, so they have had some really bad luck.

There is a concert on a Stafford's school next Thursday night, I hope it is all right.

Mrs. Koehler's nephew "Reg", (from the British Fleet) came up to the farm last weekend. We were not there, but Mum said he is nearly as bad as George as far as being shy & quiet goes, though she said that when you get to know him he might be as bad as any other English sailor. Ha! Ha! Pete said that if he was like George, she will hit him on the head or something nearly as bad.

I think I will place my bets on leaving this dump shop, 'School' before you, and so will Mum. The classroom in which we work is "rotten" literally, but today a piece of ceiling, about 6" by 6" fell down just missing me, and hit the hand of the girl sitting next to me, which was right near my elbow. Nobody saw it falling till we heard a bang and a squeal from Fay. Did I jump, and how.

Just listen. Oh I'm sorry, they are playing "Alone am I" by Chopin, it is my favorite next to Debussy's "Clair De Lune" and Chopin's "Polonaise" Pete & I asked ourselves down to the Gotts on Saturday night & had tea there. I am afraid I will have to close now, as it is late and also the paper is short. Best wishes to all at Elland. Lots of Love to you Ken. P.S. Please excuse mistakes.

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Thursday 6th August. 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Here I am back off my weekend this morning. And I've just done my first mornings work in the dreaded Chatham Barracks. The said mornings work consisted of standing there in nice starched white clothes, looking very important, with a watch list of fifteen names of very young cooks, who have been in the Navy, say about six months and know less about cooking than I do, which is less than nothing. And my main job was to see that they all were working and none were missing.

Early on someone handed me a large bunch of keys, and every five minutes after that, someone, was wanting them, but they always brought them back to me, why I don't know. As soon as 11am came, the Chief told me to send my watch to dinner. Which I did by calling out at the top of my voice "Red watch to Dinner", and it seemed as though half the galley made a rush for the door where I was standing, practically knocking me into a tub haricot beans which was just behind me. Anyway, now its nearly 11,30, and I am in the mess, (a H... if a mess) writing to you.

I got those three letters, which I told you about in my letter yesterday, they were in Dad's letter, which I collected from the cooks mail office this morning. My friend Larry had re-directed it from the Implacable. They are letters No's, 18.19.20. What numbers of mine have you received up to now?

Well Marg, now I have the opportunity to go to see your relations in London. And also to go to Australia House and see what can be done about a passage back. It takes just an hour in a no stopping train to get to Victoria station in London, and I should say about another

hour to Norbury. The weekend after next I have a short weekend leave, which I hope to spend at Mrs. Lowe's, (England).

I have met three of the lads who joined up at the same time as myself, one of them, Dick Williamson was the first real friend I had in the Navy, something like Dave & "Blackie" are now. Dick has just gone 21 days compassionate leave, as his father is seriously ill, he lives in the smallest County in England, (Rutland) and I live in the biggest.

Well I am near the end again Marg. Oh! By the way, another of the food parcels that I sent, has arrived home, that making three, out of thirteen. At least that gives us hope of more arriving. Did you write to my Dad, I hope so Marg! Love to the family, and, Lots of Love to you Marg. Yours - Ken. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Thursday 8th August. 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

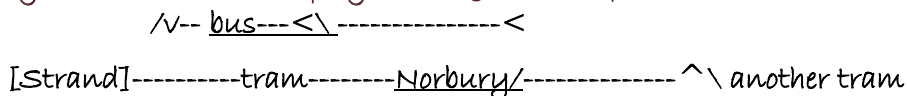
Here I am writing in the Royal Navy House, Chatham, it is a place after the style of the "British Centre" only about half the size and about twenty times older. I spent a lot of time here the last time I was in Chatham, especially in the billiard room which is just behind where I am sitting now, but things have changed since then. There are very few men that I know in the mess, but I suppose my old mates will soon be back ready for de-mob, so we may again spend afternoon after afternoon playing snooker & billiards in the Navy house.

I posted two letters yesterday, one to you & one to Mum, that was about dinner time, and as I was walking back to the mess I suddenly decided to go to Norbury to see your relations, also to Australia House in the Strand to see what could be done.

I arrived at Victoria at 3pm. and went by bus to the Strand, via Fleet St. where all the newspaper offices are, then down Whitehall where New Scotland Yard is, past Downing St, where the Prime Ministers home is, all this was very interesting, as I have never seen any of them before.

At Australia, I got to know just about as much as I already knew. That no applications can be made until the immigration scheme actually starts. At least I filled in a form in which they gave me. That, in its self is at least a start.

From there I got a tram to Norbury, but I missed the stop where I should have got off, and got completely lost;;;;, and ended up by making a kind of a circular tour, something like this



Anyway I got to 24 Gibsons Hill, at about seven, once again the only person at home was Mr. Lowe. Peter and Michael were out at their music lesson. Mrs. Lowe was over at Wembly, her Mother had a stroke about two weeks ago, so she had to go over after work most nights.

It wasn't long before Michael came home, then half an hour Peter came in, it was the first time I had met Peter, he is a grand fellow, up to the neck in homework in preparation for a big exam near the end of the year. He will be going into one of the Services in February next year, but which he doesn't want to go in, he doesn't know. Two of Peter's friends came in at about 9pm. Then at about 9.30 Mrs. Lowe came home and just a couple of minutes later, your Dad's brother Charles walked in, and if I hadn't known, I would have thought it was your Dad. They are very much alike in looks, Charles I should say is about two inches taller.

I had to leave at just turned ten to get back here, Charles & Mrs. Lowe walked down to the Station with me, and it is now arranged that I go there for my next weekend, which is Sat & Sun, the 16th & 17th of this month. We didn't have a lot of time to do a lot of talking, I

answered their many questions and inquiries as best I could. I am writing again tomorrow Marg. Love to all, and Lots of Love to you Marg. Yours Kenxxxxxxx

Friday 9th August 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

This time I am writing from the Royal Sailors Home, (Chatham) I came ashore too late to get a bed booked at the Navy House, owing to queuing two hours for payment, so I have done the second best thing and got a bed for the night here.

I arrived at this place at three this afternoon and immediately sank into a large easy chair, no intentions of sleeping at all, but the next thing I knew, it was 5 o'clock. I went into the restaurant and had a meal, (Fish & chips) and after that came straight back to the reading & writing room, where I am now writing to you.

After I had posted your letter last night I went to the pictures to see Tyrone Power in 'Jessie James', it is an old picture but I really enjoyed it, Tonight I intend to see Bing Crosby in 'Bells of St. Mary's', that is showing at the cinema in Rochester, a town one mile from Chatham, it is more or less a part of Chatham.

This morning I went to see the Resettlement Officer in barracks, to find out if it was possible to get to Australia, and be de-mobbed there through the Navy. But the answer was no, he said if the British bases were still in operation it could be done, but as there are now no shore bases in Australia it is impossible, well if I don't get back soon it won't be for the want of trying.

I am looking forward to a photo of you at the rainbow dance, all the "Lowe Family," that I met at Norbury the other day, were very interested in the two photos taken on the Implac. They say that Stafford is very like Graham, but I don't know who Graham is yet, I suppose you will know who he is.

This is my last run ashore until Monday, as I am duty weekend. That is duty on Saturday & Sunday, there will be no P.O. and no Chief. Excepting the duty chief of all the galley's in the barracks, and him, you hardly ever see. So in naval language, I shall have it on my own back this weekend. Something that I am definitely not looking forward to, because I haven't the slightest bit of interest in the galley or the Navy for that matter, at all.

Since I left the Implac, I haven't been getting any duty free cigarettes, and am I missing them. All I get now is '50cigs' from the N.A.A.F.I. each week, they cost 1/6 for twenty. The rest I have to buy ashore which cost 2/4 for twenty, I am not smoking as much these days and am trying to cut it down till I am a non-smoker, but it is going to take some doing.

That's all this time Marg, as the page is full, so give my love to all at Kennington, and Lots of Love to you Marg. Yours Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

10th August 1946.....

My Dear Ken.....

I suppose by now, you are at Barracks? The last letter I received from you written 10 days ago you said that it was nearly all new Ships company on board, it seems as if they don't want to loose you.

Now the fruit is off the trees, a lot of improvements are taking place up at the farm. A tank is being put in next week (if it comes) and a pump will be attached, so we will have as much water as we need during the summer up there. For with that we will be able to have a shower bay. Also we hope to get the house started

within the next few months, failing that it will be first thing after the stone fruit season, which will be from November -February.

Everyone out here are starting to wear summer clothes now, the winds have been very hot and last weekend. Pete & I were doing what I am sure you would like to be able to do again and that is, to get into as few clothes as possible, and lie in the sun. Pete is a bit red now, but I will be able to boast of nice brown back soon. I suppose your coat of chocolate did not last long after you left our half of the world, never mind, you will be able to make up for it when once again you come back.

I don't know whether there is something wrong with your new fountain pen or not, but it does not seem to do much overtime lately. Please don't think I am rude, but if I were you I would take it back to the shop that you bought it from & complain that it gives you writer's cramp. I am always complaining, but Mum & in fact all the family tease every time I walk away from the mailbox without a letter, and I would much rather make them envious, wouldn't you. (I hope so) I'll try to do the same my end of the line.

Once again, the paper seems to get filled up so quickly before I have said half I want to.

Anyway Best Wishes to all over your way. Lots of Love to you
Ken.Margaretxxxxxxx

Saturday 10th August. 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Well this time I am in barracks, in the mess, and it is just 7.30 in the evening, I left the galley at 7. After being there since 8.30 this morning.

It's a job, is this, a chief cooks job, no work but all the responsibility, I have now 17 men under me, and no one else above me, that is in the galley. Today I split the watch, sending half off duty for the afternoon, and the other half off from 4 till 8, or that is 4 until 4am in the morning as they don't have to come back at eight. The main trouble is I have to be there all the time, during the day until all suppers are finished at night, and the same tomorrow, there isn't even another leading cook who could give me a relief, so I have really and truly got it on my back.

I hope you haven't sent too many letters to the Implac, before I sent the letter telling you that I had been drafted to barracks. It is much better if you send them home, as it only takes at the most two days for them to reach me as soon as Dad posts them on.

I think Mom should have heard from my Dad by now, that is providing that this one doesn't go astray like the last one that he wrote.

It is now Monday the twelfth, I had to break off writing on Saturday night, because an Officer, walked into the galley and wanted to know where the person in charge was. When I got there & saw him he gave me, 'a mild,' telling off and said I should stay there until eight o'clock.

I was too tired to write yesterday, but after five hours sleep this afternoon I feel much better now. Next Tuesday I think I am going to cry my eyes out. 51 group of cooks are going to be de-mobbed, and here I am with an anchor on my left arm that is keeping me a prisoner for at least an extra month. I guess I shall be glad I have an anchor when the extra money comes through with my gratuities, but at present, I curse the sight of it.

I have just heard that my old friend Dave is at home, he came into Plymouth on the 'Vengeance' last week. The bloke who told me came into barracks of the same ship today, he says Dave has his arm in plaster so he must have broken it at some time or other. While I was on leave I wrote to him, but have never had a reply.

Things are getting bad, I actually have to shave my top lip every week now. The whiskers seem to have started growing all of a rush.

Well the page is full again Marg, so until next time my Love to the family, and Lots of Love to you Marg. Yours Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

13th August 1946.....

My Dearest Ken.....

Yes, I have broken the ice & written to your Papa, and it took a long time to construct, anyway I hope he writes back because then I might feel that I know him better.

Did you know that you left a bottle of Brill Cream here, anyway Stafford has mad himself owner and goes about telling people that it is yours and he hopes you don't really mind, for he is sure you liked him so it doesn't really matter.

I hope you don't have to spend too much time in barracks, at least you might get a weekend or two off. Please boost us up a bit when you see our family, for my letters to Peter are generally written in a hurry, and so I suppose they must think us a mad lot out here.

Did I tell you that I am going to a dance at "Newington College," (Have no fears) I am going with Mum & Dad & also Pete, we hope. It was to be held last April but the organizers thought that every one would be too tired after the Regatta, so they are holding it on Thursday night.

I have to apologize for the last letter I wrote you, really I'm sorry but I don't know what got into me, and I have since had two letters from you, so you are forgiven Z, (me on my knees). I had not heard from you for over a week and it was the time you were going back to Barracks, so please forgive me.

*I am counting the days before my hol's start. I still don't know what I will do. I had better sign off now, as it is 11-45p.m. & Ho-Humn "I am getting tired, so Bye till next time. Love to all, with lots of Love to you Ken, Yours. Margaret
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX*

19th August. 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

First of all my apologies for having been a few days late in writing since my last letter, up to last Friday, I was waiting for a letter from Dad, with some mail from you, but Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday went by, and nothing arrived. Then on Saturday morning I went on Weekend to Norbury, and here I am. Monday morning now, and back in Belson with still no letter from Dad.

In four days time, that is Friday the 23rd, I am going home on a long weekend. So I will get your letters then, and I hope the parcel you sent Marg. I am beginning to wonder if it has got lost like ten of the thirteen 'food' parcels that I sent. It would be very interesting to know where all these missing parcels get to wouldn't it?

Do you remember the day you & I posted the two parcels that your Mother left at Kingsgrove post office. One of them was a soup parcel, they arrived at Norbury about ten

days ago in a shocking state, one would think to look at them that they had been thrown over rather than shipped.

I am feeling very fed up today. Had I been a cook I should be leaving the Navy tomorrow. All the 51 group cooks are doing dispersal routine today, and tomorrow morning at nine o'clock, they walk away complete with kit bag & hammock to Collingwood barracks the demob center of R.N.B. and by midday they are fully pledged civilians traveling on leave. (Indefinite)

Well I haven't a lot of room left to tell you about my weekend, so I will leave that until later, I have a few picture postcards of Plymouth that I haven't yet sent, so I will write on ordinary letter, and send the lot by air mail.

By the way, Charles was telling me that he saw in the paper that the immigration is starting January next, and here I am supposed to be watching for information, and I missed it. But its dead certain that on the day applications begin (I'll be there) and no mistake. That's all this time, Marg, so once again my Love to the family, and please give my regards to Jim when you see him. Lots of Love. Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

21st August. 1946.....

My Dearest Ken.....

It is 12 o'clock p.m. & we have just said Good-bye to some friends. You might remember them, their name is "Lowe" (never heard that name before have you?) And I think you met them at the Newington regatta. Mr. Lowe is the man with the unique 'hair style.'

I was going to write last night, but when I got home, Mum said 'Don't forget you promised to go and see Shirley at Lodge tonight & as I was an Honorary member for the evening, I had better go.'

Peter Lowe has taken a fancy for our Pete, so all he did all the evening was to give her hints on running as she has to run against me at the Comrade sports on Saturday. The trouble id that she is a much better runner than me without that, so it looks as though I haven't got an earthly chance, anyway I hope she gets a good run for her money.

Mum has still not heard from your Dad & we can't understand it as I get your letters & you seem to get mine, of at least I hope so.

It is now Thursday morning, nearly 8mts. past One. O'clock. I had to help Mum clean up, in the mean time, & "Today is my last day at school"....Yippeeeeeeeeeee etc.,

We have not heard a word from our relations, so evidently they do not like the sound of us or maybe they have been waiting to hear a lot from you last weekend. I hope you had a good time. I don't like this, I mean you visiting them all, & us stuck out here in "Aussi" miles away from you all. Anyway we hope to see them all soon. (Maybe)

Mum says you will have to wait till next time for the rest of the news, for if I don't catch up on my sleep there won't be any ME to write to you. So Love to all at Elland & London. Lots of Love to you, I am yours...Margaret...XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Thursday 22nd August 1946.

My Dearest Margaret

I am in the Mess at present, just finished a morning of walking round the barracks going to different officers doing de-mobb routine. I found out for certain, that it is the 9th of September when I once again walk the paths of 'civvy' street. All of what I am doing, is in preparation for that day. Such as returning life belt and gas mask, which I did yesterday. All loan bedding, tin hats, water bottles, gaiters, etc., I had to return this morning, but I had none of any of them, so all that happened was that I got the de-mobb routine paper and my pay book stamped and signed to say that everything was in order.

In one of these offices known as the R.F.R office, some bright spark of a naval rating asked me if I was interested in signing on for the Royal Fleet Reserve, you can guess what I told him.

This afternoon I have to go for a medical examination, which I am going to make last all the afternoon. A Petty officer has taken over my watch for which I am very pleased, so I have no need to rush back to the galley, (as if I ever rush there).

I am going home tomorrow for the weekend so I hope to get three weeks mail from you, I haven't had a letter since I came back off weekend three weeks ago when I got the three letters that I told you about. I, am having to pay my railway fare this time, as I clean forgot all about putting in for a railway warrant. That is nearly 40/-, when I was in barracks before, it cost 32/-, but all train fares went up about five weeks ago. Just think, when I am in the train traveling from Kings Cross to Bradford, I can safely say to myself, well this is next to the last time I shall travel on this train dressed like a taxi driver. I only hope that my 'Civvy' suit that the R.N. give me, fits then I can change at the Navy House in Chatham, and go home as a "Mr." Making tomorrow the last Naval occasion.

Yesterday I wrote to your Mum, & Dad telling them about my weekend in Norbury, so I will leave the ordinary letter that I told you I was writing, until later when I have more time.

I saw a marvelous photo of you & Pete, I should say you were about two & three years old. You were sat in a garden of another house, not Kennington, then there was a photo of your Dad before he left England, I should guess about twenty two years old, and one of them in Fancy dress at a garden Party.

That's all this time Marg,. Please write as often as you can, because I do look forward to your letters. Love to the family, and Lots of Love to you Marg.xxxxxxxx

Saturday 24th August. 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

"Home Sweet Home" again, but only for a very short time. I have to start on my journey back tomorrow night, definitely the last time I shall ever go back.

I didn't come home by rail after all. I had a go at hitch hiking it. The main trouble was crossing London, which took three hours, and four buses. Once I got on to the great north road it was easy. One truck took me all the way to Doncaster, and I was lucky and got another truck which took me to Bradford. There I got stranded and slept the rest of the early morning hours on a form in the bus station shelter. Then this morning I caught the first bus home.

I haven't seen Dad yet, he is working the morning shift, that is 7am until 2.30pm. Auntie had gone to Huddersfield to meet him as he comes out of work, then they are going shopping or something, so there is just Cyril & I at home. Cyril is getting the tea ready, or I

should say attempting to get it ready. By the amount of skylarking that has been going on in the last hour between he and I neither tea of this letter will be finished for ages.

The house is decorated with my favourite flowers, some of the loveliest carnations that I have ever seen. Dad has got a new species in the garden this year, they are a yellow carnation with the edges tinted with red, Cyril's contribution to the decorations, is a large bunch of sweet pea's and some dahlias. His garden is very nice just now, last week he pulled the first of the ripe tomatoes out of the greenhouse.

There were four letters here when I got home, very many thanks Marg, they are No's 22. 23. (25; or 26) & 27, so 24 is missing. I think that number 24 of mine that is missing is a sea mail containing picture postcards and newspapers, so it may turn up later, there is also another sea mail about the 27 mark.

I can't figure out how you are only averaging one letter a week Marg, it is 16 weeks tomorrow since the Sunday the Implac left Sydney, and this is letter No. 33, but of course a few are missing. I hope you will be noticing a distinct improvement soon, once I get demobbed, I shall have more time, and have a very big load off my mind, being once again a free man.

You have no idea what a big difference there is in writing in the peace and quiet of a home, and writing in a navy mess, with as much noise and commotion as a main street in London. And here and now Marg, I start on your suggestion, which I heartily agree with, and write to you at every opportunity, and hope you will do the same. Well the page is full again so I shall have to close. Please give my love to the family. Regards to Jim and the Gott family, and All my Love to you Marg. Yours Ken. xxxxx

Letter No. 34 Monday 26th August. 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Well if that was my weekend leave, "I've had it" but much happier than usual, and well I might be as I know that I have returned off leave for the last time.

I had quite a decent journey this time, the train wasn't too crowded and within an hour of it leaving Bradford, I was in slumber-land, and I didn't wake up until it was within ten minutes of Kings X. It was 4am then, and I got a taxi over to 'London Bridge Station, and had to wait till 5.19 for the Chatham train, arriving in Chatham at 6.30. It is now 8.10 and I have washed, changed, and breakfasted and am now waiting for the time to roll round to 9.15, when I start work, or at least go to my place of duty.

Yesterday, Day, Auntie, Cyril & I went to Bradford to Auntie Annies, My Mothers Sister she is keeping fairly well now, but can only hobble around the house, she is much happier living with this friend of hers, than she was before. When I am de-mobbed, one day I am going to bring her to Elland, it will be the first time she has been since Mother died, no doubt it will be a great change, but she says she will be alright.

Another of Butties parcels (Campsie) arrived home last week, that makes five in all, still eight missing, by the way Marg. Who is first out between us, ninth of September is my D.Day, what date is yours.

I, like you don't know what I am going to do when I get out, any suggestions? I shall be able to go away with the family to Llandudno that's one good thing, but after that and until I come to Aussie, I don't know.

Please excuse the state that this letter is in, it is the last of my present supply, and had been the outside one of the dozen. I will get some more as I come to dinner, the post office is between the galley and the mess.

Well I have all about filled the page Marg, so I must be closing. Please write as often as you can, I am doing the same and hope to write more still, when D.Day comes, my love to you all at 'Kennington" and Lots of Love to you Marg.xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

P.S. I am looking forward to the photo of you at the dance, Hope it isn't too long in getting to this side of the lake. Love Ken.xxxxxxx

also Monday 26th August. 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Dinner hours, and I have just returned from the post office, with these new air letters, so I must try one out.

Most of my time this morning has been spent checking in stores for the day's duty. I thought one item was 35 1/3lbs of custard Powder, and I could only find 26lbs, so I went smartly down to the issue room to complain, and was told that I couldn't read, as it turned out to be oxtail powder for tomorrows soup.

It looks as if I am going to have to a spot of work today. We have a very heavy duty today, and only eight cooks on the watch. And believe me if you put all eight into one you couldn't make a decent worker of him, they are absolutely useless, just like me, little or no interest, the only difference between them and me, is that I shall be losing all that I have gained, which isn't very much after all.

Just behind me is a bloke just climbing into his hammock for the afternoon, how I wish it were me. I am just about tired out, and to make things worse I think the P.O. is putting me on the middle watch tonight, that is, midnight to 4am. The reason is because it is ham for breakfast, and he says he can't trust any of the cooks to cut it up without the possibility of them selling it or giving it away to save them the trouble of cutting it, and of course a little money for themselves.

Another (crowd) of leading cooks were de-mobbed this morning, some of them were as low as 44 group who had been detained onboard ships. I think I was lucky getting off the Implac when I did. What a terrible thought having to do more time in this outfit than is (necessary,) necessary, I think I need my school money back, for the life of me, I can't think how to spell that word.

My favourite modern song is being played on the radio now, it is (There I've said it again) that S (Starry Night) always take me back to Australia,

Well this is two letters in one day Marg, I am breaking all records, I hope when I go home in two weeks time, there will be quite a few waiting for me. My love to all the family and All my Love to you Marg. Xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx Yours. Ken

Date unknown.....I presume... 26th August. 1946.

My Dearest Ken.....

Well here I am again, not so late at the job this time. Guess what, I have got myself a position as a shorthand typist at the Union Trustee c/o in Town. I was also offered a position in the general office of Nock & Kirby retail store in town, but the conditions were worse, for it I went there I would have to work every Saturday & on weekends from 9am. Til 5.45pm, and get less money not that the money really worries as it will nearly all be put into the bank for myself, but at

the Trustee Co/o. I get every 3rd Saturday off, and I only have to work from 9am. Till 5pm. & you know yourself I will not work when I do not have to as Pete ways 'too true'.

Pete is having a gay time lately. Last Saturday night she went out with Peter to the Minerva Theatre, to see 'The Third Visitor and this coming Saturday night she is going to a Masonic Ball at Eastwood. I am going up to the farm this weekend, as we are having visitors, but on Monday night, Uncle Jim is taking me to a Ball at the Paddington Town hall, 550 people are attending, I am going as his partner and will be sitting at the Official table. Dad said tonight. "Waall, Waall?" our little "Moggy" is growing up, but but only in some ways I think, anyway I don't want to be 50 before my time.

Well this is very hurried as you will perceive, I stole the paper from Mum, so I had better (shut eye) now, & write again soon. Lots of Love to you Ken, & Best Wishes to all over there. Yours. Margaret. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

27th August. 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Have just sorted out the latest ten of your letters, and I have them all lined up, over the table so I will give you the dates and numbers so that you know which has reached me, and those that failed, Here goes.

Numbers 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, (25 or 26) 27.

Dates July 4th 7th 11th 15th 18th 21st 29th Aug 5th (10th) 13th

That is all the letters I have with me, all the others I left at home. By the way Marg, did I ever tell you that the letters you sent from Jim's log cabin arrived, they reached me just before I left the Implac, I can't remember having told you.

I discovered last weekend whilst at home, that Dad has done the same silly trick as he did before. He sent this second letter that he has written to your Mum, by sea mail, I told him it will take ages to get there, if it ever does. So he is going to write another, this time air mail. He was under the impression that all mail went by air these days, but as I explained, only for the forces.

How are things at the farm these days Marg, I guess it will be lovely up there now with the warm weather just coming on. Did you get the old boat fixed up, and has Dad started any fishing expeditions yet. I have been thinking, I know, (what with!) as I was saying, I wonder if jelly fish bite, because it will be rather awkward if one is swimming when a shoal of jellyfish come around.

You sure made me envious in your letter, when you & Pete had been doing some sun bathing, and here I am hardly daring to take my collar & tie off with out fear of catching a cold or something. Just lately we never seem to have two days alike, one day it is lovely and the next, it is dull and raining.

You still haven't told me if there is any music you are wanting, Marg, please do when you write the next Letter

The Blue Rockets (R.A.F.) Dance Orchestra) has just come on the radio, they are really good, just about the best dance band in UK at present. I like 'Joe Loss' as second best, they are just playing and someone is singing, "A'int you glad your you". From Bing Crosby's film, (The Bells of St. Mary's) I saw that last week but didn't think it was up to Bing Crosby's standard, that song finished and now a girl is singing "Laughing on the outside, crying on the inside," (My signature tune).

Well that's it again Marg. Please give my love to all the family, and All my Love to Marg. Yours Ken xx.

28th August.1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

A few more lines to say that I am still joggng along faithfully in my last two weeks naval service. Today I am stand by watch and have to work until about two thirty this afternoon, or at least I have to be there, I will not be doing any work (its against the rules & regulations) so I stand there and be Lord Muck.

I may go ashore tonight to the pictures to see Margaret Lockwood in "Bedelia", they say it is a very good show. When I was at home last weekend Cyril & I went to see Edward G. Robinson in "Scarlett Street", and came out half way through, bored stiff.

Do you remember me writing and telling you that one of my old pals had compassionate leave owing to his Father being ill. He came back today and is getting de-mobbed tomorrow, compassionate de-mob, he is due to go out on the 16th of September, but has managed to get out straight away owing to his Father.

I met a lad who had just left the Implac yesterday. He says things are fine in the galley now. My old friend the chief cook left just after I did, and His relief is looking after the bakery. My old pall Larry is working down in the bread room. You remember where the machine is that cuts & butters the bread. All the galley cooks are working in the servery, and the servery cooks are in the galley, so it has been a very much needed change ever. The ship is now doing flying exercises from Rosyth, with new squadrons of jet planes on board.

The K.G.V. is cruising round the coast as far as I can make out. In a letter I had from Blackie, he said it was in Fleetwood a few miles from Blackpool where he lives. I wonder how George is going on, I don't suppose even Blackpool the playground of the North will suit him.

Well the page is pretty near full again, Marg. So I will be signing off, my Love to the family, and regards to Jim and the Gott family, with All my Love to you Marg.

Yours Ken. xx

31st August/ 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Well Marg. I am having a great time in the last two weeks of naval service, all my old pals are coming in to be de-mobbed. The blokes that were in the same joining class as me. Two of them I have corresponded with ever since we left barracks two and a half years ago, only ten minutes ago, Andy Williams a little 'Scotsman' walked in, he is just out of hospital and is going on fourteen days sick leave today.

Yesterday I went ashore with two other friends. We went to see the R.C.N show, (Meet the Navy) it is a very good musical picture. On the news it showed a woolen mill on fire at Sydney, quite a fire too. Another Australian item was an annual show at Brisbane, it was good to see the sunshine and say to myself it won't be long now. The picture I saw the night before last, was very good, it was called "Bedelia", you should see it if you can.

Tomorrow I start my last duty weekend, that consists of Saturday & Sunday and finish 10.30 Monday morning. After that I have only two more duty watches to do. Wednesday & Friday, can you imagine what I am going to feel like. On Friday when I can safely say, this is the one, "Whoo - Roo."!!!!

Guess what. I actually work in the galley in my best shoes these days, and never as much as get them dirty, or I mean go to the galley, for I never did less work in all my life, as per usual I am down & out as far as shoes are concerned, my old galley shoes are just about on their last legs, in fact you can see daylight through the left one, the right one has its sole hanging off and as I walk it goes C.o.r.r.r.s.t.-clap., If I had a hammer I could tack it on, if I had some tin tacks and a last. But if I had all those I wouldn't have the energy to lift the hammer, so I continue with ventilated shoe's. (Gee what a mouthful).

Well that's the page full once more Marg. My love to all the family, &

All my Love to you Marg. XXXXXXXXXXXX Yours Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

3rd September 1946.....

My Dearest Ken.....

Well! Here I am keeping the promise I mad on Sunday. I had a grand time on Monday night, it was really super. Just one of two things made it miss the mark. I danced quite a bit & the supper was very good, & as I was at the Official table, we were served much better food than the rest.

First we had little fish balls and long sausage rolls both of which were hot, then oyster patties which all but myself went at like a bull at a gate. After all this sandwiches & cakes happened along.

So I am sure you can guess, Yes! That is right, I was "Chocka". (This is beside the point but I have just opened a tin of Herrings, & Oh! Boy, (Ain't they super.)

I did not bet home till 2 o'clock this morning, & so I am tired now so if you see a lot of twaddle here, I hope you will excuse me for I no9w know what you must feel like at times.

I am enclosing a photo, but it is really not much like me, for once again it makes my eyes like saucers, & I am sure they are not, my hair was untidy etc and altogether I am a big blob.

As for work., Well!!! It's not too bad, but today a new typewriter arrived, & all the girls wondered who it was for, & it turned out to be mine but the bar from the front was missing, and so it took me all day to type out a Letter The getting up in the morning beats me.

Mum had an air letter from your Dad today & said 'When you were in America it was a grand place & now it is Aussi, so he wants to know what poor old England is doing in the meantime. (You had better not mention that he told Mum that, as I think he was just being, well you know, sort of teasing.

Did anyone (pinch) I mean steal any Ham while you slept, or did they do the decent thing and eat it them selves.

As a matter of fact, 'Starry Night' & 'A star fell from Heaven' are two of my favorites at present, I like 'Symphony' 'The Gypsy' & Spike Jones & his City Slickers singing "Cocktails for Two" are my favorites now. (Modern).

I think I had better shut up shop now, as I have to be up again at 7am and it's Ho; hum; ho;ooooooooo. Well 'Good night' till neat time, best wishes to all at Elland.

Lots of Love to you Ken, Margaret xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

P.S. Please send me a small photo of yourself in civvy clothes, as I am not writing to al sailor now, but to Mr. Kenneth Lewis Tye, and I want to know what h looks like in that outfit. (ML).

Tuesday 3rd September, 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Six more days now and I am a free man, today, Stand -by- Watch. Wednesday -duty, Saturday & Sunday off for a short weekend and Monday is D. Day.

Last night I was ashore with my old pal Bobbie. 'He was de-mobbed this morning.' After about five games of snooker we went to see "Courage of Lassie" it was good, but not as good as the other "Lassie" pictures. We slept at the Sailors Home and just before we turned in, Bobbie said 'I shall be up with the larks in the morning!' It being his de-mob morning, and sure enough, at a quarter to six he was knocking on my cabin door disturbing my dreams, we were back in barracks at 5.30, and at seven he left for the de-mob center.

The weekend after next, Bobbie is coming down to Elland to stay for a few days, Dad doesn't know yet, but it will be O.K. with him, then later on I am going to Scotland to stay a weekend at his home in Ayleshire.

I certainly am in a state today, with missing payment last payday and not bringing enough money back with me, when I came back from weekend, I am just about stony broke now. The jingle in my pocket amounts to 1shilling 3pence & a halfpenny. No Cigarettes, no matches, no hopes of getting any until Thursday at 10.30 when I line up for my pay for the very last time, there is a saying in the Navy, to write home, "Dear Mum, No Mon. Your Son", and receive a reply, "Dear Lad, Too Bad, Your Dad", maybe two days without 'cigs' will stop me off smoking, (I hope.) I think paying 2/4 a packet in Civvy Street will cut down my smoking quite a lot.

The page is full again Marg. So I will be signing off, . Hope you are writing all you can Marg, and hope that when I arrive home on Tuesday morning there are quite a few letters waiting for me, please give my love to all the family,

All My Love to you Marg. xxxxxxxx Yours Ken. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Letter No 39. Friday 6th Sept. 46.

My Dearest Margaret.

Many thanks for three letters, which I received today, none of them are numbered. The last one I had before these three arrived, was 27, so I presume these are 28.29. & 30.

The latest of the three is undated, but I know it's the latest because you tell me of getting a position at the Union Trustee C/o, the letter before that is the 25th of August in that one you were waiting to hear from Christopher's Father. I too, don't know what I am going to do in Civvy Street until I come back to Aussie, my biggest worry at the present is what I am going to wear, I have no civilian clothes at home, I shall get a suit (of a kind) on being de-mobbed, but one suit is no good, I was in Chatham yesterday trying to get one, there was only one shop that had any ready made suits. They had six, and the only one that was any good at all cost -£-2/2/10 in Australian money. -£- 25. And I am no Baron. At all the other tailors, the other fifteen that I went to, it would take 3 to 6 months to get one made, and at a cost of about -£-15. for a half decent suit. I have been getting as much out of the navy as possible, for instance 12 shirts at three bob a time, two pair of shoes an two pair of boots, and lots of underwear & socks, all useful for civvy life. I just can't realize that today I did my last duty watch, that in three days time I shall get the return half of that ticket I got three & a half years ago, it just seems too good to be true. In Dad's letter today I got some bad news. Both Grandad & Gramma are very ill, Dad has sent to Southport for my Uncle Lewis to come over, so things must be pretty bad. G, Dad is 79, and Gramma 82. You

remember, I told you that G. Dad was struck by lightning a few years ago, and it took his speech away. And his memory is going as well. When I was on leave we had to dig out photo's of me, from being a baby till the one I had taken on joining the Navy, before we could make him realize who I was. He didn't know me at all. Well the page is full and still lots to say, please give my love to the family, and All my Love to you Marg. Yours. Ken.
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

10th September. 1946.....

My Dearest Ken.....

Well how are you? Mr. Tye, what's it like up where you come from? I wish I had nothing to do, like you. How many days leave do you get & do you know what you are going to do for a crust.

Every time I write, you tell me you have seen another picture, while I have been once since 4th May 1946. I would very much like to see 'Bedelia' as I have read the novel, just quietly she is a bit of a , well, an so & so, don't you think.

Guess what! I have got a new evening frock. Pete got a new one. So I said well, she got one I can also sing out for one, but that does not say I can have it, but this time Mum agreed, so it is white net, (no coupons) Actually a brand new mosquito net. Which was my idea. Therefore my share of the coupons went on the choice of blue taffeta petticoat so with dark blue narrow velvet ribbon trims on it, round pleated frills at neck, sleeves and hip line where the skirt joined the top creating a double very full skirt. These things, are frills. [Picture drawn on original letter]. Mrs Bourke, from down the road has made it for me. You see we are going to the "Old Girls" Younger Set Spring Ball. For girls who have left our old school, Peter is taking Pete, so I rang up Bill Tillman, you know him, I hope you don't mind, but as you were so far away, you could not very well come too. Anyway I'll do the next best thing & tell you about it after I have been, next Friday night.

Dad said there is another old saying in the Navy, that is, "Dear Mum sell the cow & buy me out".

I got a letter 38 yesterday, & 37 today, how I don't know, anyway thanks a lot. I was in a bad mood last Friday night when I wrote, & Mum said today, 'I hate to think what Ken will find to read in that Letter' It has all blown over now, so if you can't understand it, don't worry, as I lost my temper with myself for the first time in months & I promise I will try not to do it again.

You seem to have the next few weeks planed, Scotland & Wales, gee I am jealous, how about booking me a bed too. You would have thought it was Me being de mobbed on Monday morning, every five minutes. I would wonder what you would be doing next and Mum would say "Come back to Australia, the train leaves the station - Kingsgrove, Sydney, N.S.W. Australia", not "Kings X London, England at 10mts past 8 am."

Do learn to dance as the people down at the farms nearby said that they have one at least once a fortnight at Lower Portland, & other things in Windsor at different times, and I will be wanting a partner, & I object to dancing with the broom.

I am glad you are giving up smoking, - not that I think it is awful or anything like that, -- but, so many were not good for you and I am sure when you do stop a bit, you won't get so many bad fingers etc., I know, don't tell me. Oh, but you're wrong. That comes from bad food; 'But' all the men on the ships did not get them, No! "But" they did not all smoke like chimneys 'but' here's hoping that you stop getting them also boils etc.,

You ask me to tell you some Music I would like, well I seems awful of me to ask, but could you get a copy of 'Handels, Largo'. I like it but can't get copies except now & then in simplified version.

Would your Aunt like our Australian Woman magazines to read, if so, I could send ours on to her. I had better close now, Best Wishes to all at home, as well as the Lowe Families.

All my Love to you, Kenneth Lewis Tye. Margaret.xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

P.S. Dad says I ought to start my own Post Office. Haw Haw! M.L.

Date Unknown.....

My Dearest Ken.....

Here I am again, I wrote an air letter the other day, but Pete forgot to post it for me, so I am posting it tomorrow with this.

I am feeling a bit fed up tonight. Pete is out & Dad, Mum & Stafford are up at the farm. Not that I mind her going out, but when it comes to me having to do things for her, and when I tell her the truth that she is lazy etc., which she is. For instance, Dad asked her to help him do something, she couldn't, because she was going to bed she said, but that did not stop her asking Dad to turn out the light for her, Mum goes mad & says, Oh, don't you go spoiling her life grumbling. But I leave at 8 in the morning and get home at 6,,,o'clock at night and still find the table not set, while she spends her time doing nothing, she is on holidays and all she has done is go into town & play tennis all the time. I feel annoyed & mad and I couldn't keep it to myself any longer. So you got the lot & I am beginning to feel better now. It seems a waste of paper grumbling, but I just had to tell someone.

Hit me will you & hard I need it but I feel like howling at present, so I had better close now, or I will ruin the paper. So lots of best wishes to the family. All my Love to you Ken. Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

14th September 1946.

My Dearest Ken.

Yes, the dance is over, & I am now feeling a bit more sober than before, I had a nice time, but was sorry you could not go too. There were a lot of girls I knew there, & Peter knew a lot of the boys from football, & school. We did not get to bed till 3am. Saturday morning & I had to get up 6.30am. and go to work & was tired. Then tonight we went to the pictures to see 'Our Vines have tender Grapes' which was very good, Margaret O'Brien was in it and was also very good. The supporting film was 'They made me a Killer', which was not much like its name but pretty gruesome.

I hope your Grandparents are feeling better, and that their health is restored to them in the near future. I did not get a letter from you today, but I hope there is one waiting for me, when I get home Monday afternoon. I myself had run out of airletters and only got to the Post Office this morning, as during the week they are not open in the mornings when I am going to work. And are shut by the time I get home in the afternoons.

What are you going to do when you have finished your 'Demob' leave. 10 weeks is it not. I did not want to tell you this, but within the next fortnight I am posting a food parcel home to you and the family for Xmas. I hope it gets there, I had to let you know, so as to tell me if it gets there or not.

The weather has been beautiful this last week & I know you would enjoy it.

Have you heard our new hit tune winner for the week, it is 'It's been a long, long time'. I think it is good & it has a catchy tune too.

Well, the page is nearly full, & so I had better sign off for now, so Best wishes to all at London & Elland and All my Love to you Ken. Yours Margaret.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

p.s. Next time you see Peter tell him to write if his exams are not too near. Marg.

P.p.s. They have just started to play 'Au Clair De Lune' by Debussy gosh it's a beautiful thing, Mum says, I always look sentimental when they play it on the wireless. You ought to hear it though. M.L.

17th September 1946...

My Dearest Margaret.

Once again I start with apologies for not writing, it is about ten days since I wrote letter, No. 39. That was I think, the day before D.Day. and since then I haven't had a chance to put pen to paper at all.

First of all on arrival home, Tuesday morning I had to knock Dad up as it was about 4.30 am. I got a surprise and not a very nice one either, the house was full of relations come over for Gramma's funeral, I didn't even know 'Gramma' had died. Dad had sent me a letter saying so, but I never got it. The burial was at 2pm. So I went and got into bed until about 12 noon, then you know what life is after a funeral, a house packed with people and everything. One old Aunt & Uncle of my Dad's who had come from Bolton in Lancashire stayed until Thursday. Then on Friday my friend Bobbie came down from Scotland, he is going home tomorrow. At present I feel like a Baron, as he is cleaning my shoes, but all the time he has been here we have been out all over the place, Leeds, Bradford, Halifax, Huddersfield. It is the first time he has been to Yorkshire and I have been trying to show him as much of it as I can. He has only one complaint about it and that is the hills. He thought Scotland was Hilly, but it's got nothing on Yorkshire he says. Please excuse the state of this letter Marg, but once again I have lost my pen and am

without any means of writing except for this old relic which has been lying in the drawer since heaven knows when. I am going to write a long letter tomorrow and makeup for all that I have missed in the past two weeks. Bobbie & I are going to the pictures in Elland tonight, the first time we have stayed in Elland since he came.

That's all this time Marg. Please give my love to all at home, and all my Love to you Marg. Yours Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

18th September 1946.

My Dearest Ken.....

{Ps Please write back & tell me what types of food you need most, or like best.
ML.}

This was scrawled across top of page after letter complete, only room left on paper}

Nine days have gone by, & do you like the life, better sleeping time, better food etc., I bet you do, I suppose you have already torn my good stitching away from the sleeve of your coat, and cut off the figured buttons.

I am very pleased with myself, I have nearly finished a new skirt, pleated all round. It is the first one I have made by machine. So I have to hurry up & finish that white jumper I was making when you were here, I only have the top of the back left to do now.

One of the girls at the office was talking about the forces in general, and another said 'Oh. Yes, I have not had such a good time since the "Implacable"'. By the way, does any one know when it left Sydney, and I plucked up a meek little voice, Oh yes, that was the 5th of May... Well all eyes came in my direction with a lot of why and wherefore etc., So I said, oh I had an exam the day before that, so that is how I remember.

Gosh they are terrible, they treat a boy like a penny whistle, you know, when you have all the good out of it, throw it away. Now I know what it must have been like for the boys when they were out here, it gets me mad, they say to one another, 'How is your man, or have you thrown him over, phew, I can't keep up with their men as they call them.

November, Dad says I will have to leave work, as they are all going up to the farm for the picking season. Then when I come back in January, Mum is going on that trip to Adelaide & I have to be Chief Cook, so maybe it is just as well, Stafford will be at school or he would be peeling spuds, I mean potatoes. Then we hope the house will be built, & so I will be a little Country Girl then.

Well the paper is nearly finished, and so please write as often as you can, because the postman is getting sick of being kicked out of the gate since last Thursday (you impatient wretch) Lots of Love Ken..
Margaret...XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Sunday 22nd September. 1946. Llandudno.....

My Dearest Margaret.

We arrived here yesterday at lunch time, after setting off from home at 6am in the morning. Up to now it has been shocking weather, rain & wind, Dad, Auntie & Cyril have gone out this afternoon for a walk around, but I said I would stay indoors, the blowing about we got this morning was enough to last me for a long time.

We went to a variety show last night, which we all enjoyed very much. Yesterday afternoon we were looking over the town, & Auntie ended up by buying an electric kettle. I had always been under the impression that Llandudno was a fairly big place, but I was wrong, it is only small compared with the other seaside resorts such as Morecombe & Blackpool. What are we going to find to do for nine days I don't know, unless we go out on these bus trips up Snowdon & other Welsh Beauty spots.

Just before we came, (that was Friday). I sent that music and three copies of 'John Bull' for your Dad, I had no idea if it was possible to send it by air mail, so I asked in the post

office how much it would cost, you would never guess, \$ 1/13/6 pence. I sent it by ordinary mail for 1/2¹/₂. Did you ever hear of such a ridiculous price. I haven't stopped smoking yet Marg, but I am smoking a lot less than I did, it is a very expensive habit now, with the duty frees at an end.

I haven't found out what the name of that carnation is yet, I have asked Cyril to find out from where he works, but he keeps forgetting, at home now in the garden we have a great display of dahlias, the best I have ever seen them.

I don't know what it is, but since I have become a civilian again, I have developed an enormous appetite, I eat more than either Dad or Cyril and when I have finished a meal, I am still hungry, nobody can understand it, because when I came on leave, I couldn't eat at all, Dad used to say he didn't know how I existed on the amount of food that I ate.

Well the page is full again Marg, so I must close, My love to the family, and regards to Jim. All my Love to you Marg. Yours Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

22nd September. 1946.

My Dearest Ken.....

Well I have been a working girl for three weeks now, it is quite fun, I get 35/- a week, and as I am paid once a fortnight, that makes 70/- a fortnight. I give Mum 20/- of it, Dad said I had to, as I would never learn to be independent if I did not pay my way a bit. But I don't mind as that leaves 50/-, it takes 10/- a fortnight for a 5/- weekly ticket to town, and that is about 30/- I have left after keeping some spending money. Last time I bought a new pair of shoes. This time I intend to buy a few Xmas presents, to save a big rush at the end, and this time I hope to get them all something good, last year I had to buy on savings for quite a few weeks. By the way could you give me some help by suggesting what I could get for Dad.

Stafford had his sports yesterday, and he came 2nd in his age handicap, he was on the back line as he is really fastest runner in his group. 2nd in the obstacle race, and 2nd in the half mile. That was a big race that all the boys from 5-14 entered, a handicap of course,

the family is pleased the poor thing was tired by the last 30yds & just about the entire crowd start singing out 'Come on Stafford' so he really tried and ran in a close second, not bad for 6½ years.

After the Sports we went to the farm. Pete stayed in Sydney and went out with Peter in the night. On the way home from the farm tonight, Mr Blundell one of the local farmers gave Dad a big bundle of fish, and as we were going along, we went over a rather large bump in the road. I happened to look out the back window just then and I saw fish of all shapes & sizes flying at me, heavens I had a fright. Well I am nearly at the end of the paper, so Best Wishes to all the family and All my Love Ken. Yours Margaret. XXXX

25th September 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Just finished lunch, Dad & Aunty are writing postcards to send to friends at home, so I thought I would follow suit and get my pen & paper out. I don't know what is on the program for today, Dad talks of going to a place called Happy valley for the afternoon, but it's looking a bit like rain. All trace of the few hours sunshine we had this morning has gone, and it doesn't look as though it will be back, I certainly envy all you lucky people out there with all the sunshine etc., and here we are not daring to venture out without a raincoat.

I took three more photos of Auntie yesterday, and she finished up by getting mad, so now I have finished taking or trying to take her, it's a pretty hopeless job trying to take her unawares, because she usually spots me & does her best to spoil the snap. We still have another film which Dad, Cyril & I are going to use ourselves.

What has happened to your two kittens Marg? They will be fully grown cats now I suppose, and the best of friends, do you remember how they fought each other at the beginning.

How is work going down now Marg. Do you still like it as much as you did. Now if I were still a halfhearted sailor in Woolloomooloo, I might be able to just manage to be on the same train at the same time as you heading for the same destination, something like the bus to Campsie, remember? Mother would say. Not coincidence again! And Dad would look & say nothing.

I don't know about your Mum saying to you to come "Come back to Australia, with it's "Look he is off again, back in Sydney!" Dad told me yesterday to try and remember that I was in "North Wales, Not, New South Wales." I don't think Dad has answered your letter yet Marg, he was saying before we came away that he got pen & paper ready at work one night, but then discovered that your letter was in his other coat. He does all his letter writing at work, I keep telling him that he must get me a job there.

Well every one is about to go out again now. Auntie had donned her hat, & is sitting on the edge of a chair patiently waiting, it doesn't appear to be decided where we are going to, Maybe Happy Valley if the rain keeps off.

That's all this time Marg. My Love to all the Family, and All my Love to you Marg.
Yours Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

28th September 1946.

My Dearest Ken.

Many thanks for the air letter which I received yesterday., It is my turn to beg forgiveness now. As I have not written since last Sunday. You see, Mum got down on my air letters to send to family in England. On Wednesday night we had to go up to the Church to practice for the Comrades Anniversary on Sunday night, which I do not think I will be going to as I am now crawling around the house with a stiff neck ' and not from looking through Keyholes".

Thursday night was a big Installation at Rainbow and all the girls were presented a 'New Testament' covered in cream imitation leather, with the badge on the cover. They used to have a white ivory cover before the War. And also I was given a spray of flowers, daffodils & wallflowers, and a powder puff in a pink case, But I do not use powder, as yet as Mum says I do not need it for my skin is not the shiny type.

After the end of October, you will have to change the address on the front of the paper to "Staines" Lower Portland, as from November to January, we will be living at the farm for the stone fruit season.

What was it like in Wales? I hope you are having a good holiday, but of course I could not be as good as "Aussi". Wouldn't I like to be having eight weeks holiday, you lucky thing.

You know about the music, they have a much more simple edition arranged by some other composer "largo by Handel" and is the only one I seem to be able to buy. I did not know your father either played the Piano or sang, as I don't think you mentioned it at all.

I just can't finish this page, as my neck is aching, so will write again very soon. All my Love to you Ken, and the family. Yours Margaret. Xxxxxxxx (Ho! Hum! Good Night.)

1st October, 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Well this is the last day of our holiday. The train leaves at 12/30 for Manchester, so we are staying in Manchester until the evening and seeing what there is, decent to

buy in the shops there.

There should be a few letters from you, waiting in the box behind the front door when we do eventually arrive at '22' tonight. Two, three, of maybe four, I hope. I don't think you will be walking out to your letter box, and coming back empty handed very often now Marg"? You would for the ten days after I was demobbed. But since then I have tried to make up for it, every time I sit down with pen & paper, Dad says, "There he goes again, " but I surprised him yesterday, as I wrote a letter to my friend 'Blackie' at Blackpool. When it was all sealed up and addressed, I showed it to him, and he said, "Ah!, he does occasionally write to this side of the world".

Last night we went to the Grand Theatre to see the Musical Comedy, "No No. Nanette", and it was very good indeed, something like that makes a very pleasant change from pictures.

Dad Auntie & Cyril have just this minute gone out. I said I would stay in this morning! So I have been detailed off to strap all the cases up, and put labels on them, and to have the table laid for 11.15 ready for lunch. It is 9.45 now, so that, gives an hour and a half to do it in, at least there will be no panic.

Today I have once again donned my uniform. To travel back at Servicemen's fare, all the time here I have been wearing these sports trousers I had in Aussi, and my de-mob jacket which I have been wearing as a sports coat, and believe me it is colorful enough to pass as a sports jacket anywhere. When I have the full de-mob suit on I feel as if the correct place to go in it is a fancy dress ball.

Talking about balls. I have discovered a little dance hall in Huddersfield. Where people learn to dance modern Ballroom dancing in an afternoon, so for a few of the afternoons of my 56 days leave, I will be there, and I really mean it, if it is the last thing I do. I am determined to be able to dance by the time I walk up the gangway of my last ship. (H.M.S) or S.S. so & so, and that's a promise.

Do you know if George is still a would be sailor, or has his dream been realized and he back in Mussleborough, digging out the dough bin, worrying now about the B.U. (Bread units) 4 for large, 2 for small loaf, I wonder!

Well this is the page full once again Marg. So I shall have to close, do write as often as you can. I am always looking for your letters. Love to all the Family, and All my love to you Mar. Yours Ken. Xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

1st. October 1946.

My Dearest Ken.

Home again and I am very pleased, as I have just finished reading three letters from you, I guessed three an how right I was, they were written on the 14th 18th and 22nd of last Month.

Pleased to hear you enjoyed the dance Marg, and I guess you would be pretty with only three hours sleep that night. How are you going on with the early rising, 6.80- five mornings out of seven, and how many times have you turned over, and woke up too late to get to work on time, and what does the Commander have to say, One on One? I bet some mornings the early risers on the way to the station, see you running down the road at a terrific rate. They used to see me doing it anyway, especially that morning when I had to get a taxi as far as Tempe, talk about 'Flash Gordon', he wasn't in it.

Well to be perfectly honest Marg, I haven't the faintest idea what I am going to do for work. Its dead certain that I shall not be able to get my old job back, because the meat ration is still on and is likely to continue for a long, long time yet, and with the amount of meat my old boss has to distribute. He has more staff than he could manage with now. Out of five of us that went into the forces of his staff of nine, he has only re-started one of them. And the reason for him being started was because one of the lads had reached the age of eighteen, and had to join the army for his two year service.

Bill was de-mobbed about the same time as this lad went, so he more or less took his place. There are no orchards of any description around this district, so I can't do anything in that line or I should have been learning all I could about fruit trees that way, so my little bit of knowledge about them will have to come from books. I think the best thing I can do is to find a job with a good wage no matter what kind of work or how hard it is, so long as there is a good bit of money attached to it.

The "Ink Spots" have just come on the radio, singing 'Ring Telephone Ring". I think the Ink spots are super. And now there is Glen Miller and Orchestra playing & singing "Jukebox Saturday Night" which is not so good, just a while ago they played "Indian Summer" which is one of my favourites. And now here are the "Ink Spots" again singing, "Maybe it's all for the best". This is a kind of request program where Listeners, send in for records they want to hear played, it's called "Family Favourites".

I'll tell Peter what you said about writing when I see him next, and many thanks from all of us at Elland for the parcel you are sending for Xmas. Talking of parcels, another of the thirteen that I sent has arrived while we were at Llandudno, I think makes six all told.

Well the end is near again Marg, so I must be saying 'Toodle-oo-the noo.'" My Love to all the family. And all my Love to You Marg. Yours Always, Ken.

xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

P.S The only way they can get me up in the morning is by calling out. Hey Ken! There is a letter for you. Love Ken. xxxxx

2nd October 1946.

My Dearest Ken.

I am glad your stay with "Taffy" is proving satisfactory, and thanks very much for the bundles of newspapers, one containing the postcards & letters. Nos. 18 & 24. Were included, which makes them all here. Could you tell me how many I have sent since 27, as I lost count, you see I was marking them off on the calendar, & Pete decided. She wanted to mark a few dates, so I got lost then.

Mum is glad to hear you have got your appetite back again. I suppose your Aunt would laugh, if Mum told her that if she mentioned FOOD while you were staying out here, you would just about knock the wire out of the back door to get in the house, and so to start eating.

Did your Pops ever receive my Letter, if so I have not received an answer yet. (Thursday night) I had to finish this tonight, as Dad turned the light out last night. I often think of the No of times we managed to get the same bus or train, as you say "Mum would always remark". She also told me the other day that you were carrying my birthday present one day when you got the same bus as me.

You asked me how the kittens, now cats are getting on. As a matter of fact very well indeed, they are up at the farm, and out of five cats we have up there, four are having kittens, mine is the only one that is not.

I have just got home from 'Rainbow' we had our 7th Birthday party tonight, which was very nice. It was Ruth's birthday yesterday, I sent along a gift, but haven't heard from her yet. This pen is bad and the ink won't run properly, so please excuse.

So I will say Good night for the present my Love to all the Family & to you Ken. Yours. Always. Margaret.xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

3rd October, 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Thursday morning & I have just staggered downstairs. This Life of ease is just about getting me down, the more sleep I get, the more I want.

I have the second of your three letters here on the table, which I am going to answer today, then the third one I will answer tomorrow, and then there should be another letter come on Saturday.

I still have all badges, buttons, etc., on my coat, so your stitching is still intact, the reason is. Because I am making two more trips yet, one to London, and one to Scotland. And by travelling in uniform I shall save about 30/- in train fares.

I received a letter from Larry, on the 'Implac' the other day, and he gave me all the latest news about what is happening these days with the old ship. There are only two lads left in the cook's staff, do you remember me writing about a leading cook whom I was always playing chess with about the time we were in Plymouth. He disliked the Navy especially the 'implac' even more than I did, he was dripping from morning till night and was forever talking about his home and his job that was waiting for him as soon as he was de-mobbed. Well, Larry gave me a big surprise when he says that this chap has now passed for P.O. and has signed on for twelve years. From the 29th September, to the 8th October, the "Implacable" is at "Spitsbergen" in Norway on a visit requested by the Norwegian Government. Tell the girls at the Office that, and see what they have to say. I don't know so much about the girls treating the boys like penny whistles, I think the shoe is on the other foot. If you knew some of the "carry on" that went on with a big majority of the lads that were out there, I think you would get a much bigger surprise than you did with the way the girls carry on.

Aunty has just come back from the garden. With a basket full of lettuce, onions, cucumbers etc., and a big arm full of flowers, dahlias and asters, with the garden being neglected for nearly a fortnight now, it is overrun with weeds and the hedge around it is completely out of control. Yesterday I had a go at cutting it but only got about a quarter of the way around it, some of the branches were thicker than a mans thumb, there was I was trying to hack them off with a small pair of garden shears.

About the food that you asked me to find out about Marg, Auntie says the things she is most in need of a 'fats' and dried fruits, especially currants, and she is more than grateful that you are sending her a parcel.

Well I have just been knocked off the table again. Lunch is ready, and just this very minute the postman has come bringing two more of the parcels I sent through the Navy, the cost 5/- each, and contain - 1 tin dripping, 1 tin jam, 1lb of sugar, and 1 tin of camp pie. That is three that have arrived this week.

Well again the page is full Marg, so I must be saying so-long. My Love to all the family and All my Love to You Marg. Yours Always. Ken XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

5th October 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Well it is Saturday morning and there has been not letter from you since we arrived back on Tuesday. I felt certain that there would be one this morning, but I shall have to wait and hope for Monday now, and of course now that you are a "Working Girl" you won't have as much time as you did have.

I had a very busy day yesterday, Auntie said, seeing that you have nothing to do you can do all the messages, so I spent most of the afternoon in a queue at the grocer, then went to Halifax for the meat and one or two other items, after tea. Which by the way didn't happen till after six o'clock. I went to Halifax again, this time to the pictures, it wasn't a bad picture but I'm blown if I can remember what it was called, something about a face I think.

Since I wrote the above, I have just been on another message. This time for some bread, and a very strange thing has happened while I was away. The letter I was expecting from you has arrived, there is no mail delivery at this hour of the day, so the only conclusion that I can come to is that it had been delivered at the wrong house, and whoever had it has just been, and put it through our letter box, it is the quickest letter I have ever had, written last Saturday, the 28th posted on Monday the 30th and arrived here on Saturday the 5th October, that is just five days & one hour from posting to delivery. I think they must have brought it over in the "Gloster Meteor" that smashed the air speed record a few weeks ago.

Is this the address I shall have to write in a few weeks time. "Staines" Lower Portland, N.S.W. Aust. It seems to me to be very vague! Isn't there something missing?

Family Favourites are on the radio again just now, 'Frankie' seems to be the high spot today, the Ink Spots have only been on once so far. 'Tommy Handley' in "ITMA" has started again last week, with Mrs Mopp and all the rest of the crowd and two new one's, a Scotch woman, and a Yorkshire man called 'E. Bi. Gum' who claims to hail from Huddersfield.

Dad doesn't do any singing and very little playing at all now. When he was younger he did a good deal of singing and organ playing at the Church he & Mother used to go to in Bradford. And once I can remember him in the pulpit preaching the sermon in the absence of the Minister, I couldn't have been much above five years old then because at that time I was forever in trouble with Mother for crawling up & down the pew's and refusing to sit still. Mother used to sing in the choir as did Dad, this was long before I came on the scene though. I remember her saying that she hardly missed a service for the four years that Dad was in France in the last war.

Well I have come to the end of the page again Marg. My Love to all the Family. All my Love to You Marg. Yours Always. Ken XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

7th October 1946.

My Dearest Ken.

Yes, Here I am again, after rather a noisy weekend. You see it was 8 hour Weekend this time and Jeannie & Peter Lowe were up at the farm, and both are noisy like us. Then Mr & Mrs Lowe came up. And bought Jeanie's boy friend, a New Zealand boy who is doing Vet Science at the Uni, and Neil Yarheem, you met him when we were at the rowing races, it was the boy who was in the Prisoner of War Camp in Japan for six years.

We have done nothing else but eat sleep & walk all the time, on Sunday morning, J, and I, went for a walk along to the boarding house by the road, and walked back along the edge of the river, as I think back now. We narrowly expected drowning a few times while climbing along walls of rock. One of these days I will show you where we went. Anyway, in the afternoon we both slept for about three hours while Pete & Peter played "Monopoli" with David & John Adamson.

After tea we four (P.P. J. & I.) went for a walk, about 2 miles both ways and then this morning the cows had got out, and we had to chase after them, that meant another walk to and from the boarding house.

From the 8th November to January, I will be up at the Farm, for the fruit season, so I hope to get my Fan Mail just as often, 'A gentle hint'.

There will be two "Miss M. Lowe" at Lower Portland, & I would hate to think what she would happen to think if she opened my mail by mistake for hers. "She is about fifty and although she is not married, it is not because she did not have the chance, it was because she stayed at home to look after her Mother, she is very nice though. So Please put Miss M.J. Lowe, or Miss Margaret Lowe when I am living up there. I hope I don't have to write many more letters after Xmas, don't you?"

Well it is 11 o'clock, p.m. & I have to go to work tomorrow. Best Wishes to the Family, All my Love to you Ken. Yours Always, Margaret xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxx

P.S. Ruth Lindsay leaves for Manilla on 30th Oct. & is having a farewell party on 18th Oct. Mum, Dad Pete & I are going. Please excuse this ink as I have come to the end of the bottle. Xxxx M.L.

9th October. 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Just a few lines, before Cyril & I set off to the pictures, he is getting ready now, we are going to see 'Smiling Through' Auntie went to see it last night and she says it is quite good. I got my first cheque from the Navy today, for Two weeks pay, £6. I had to smile at the way in which it was addressed. Name, Rating, Official Number, and in front of that my Gratuities in another months time, also my service certificates and medical History sheets, it is going to be very interesting looking through the service cert., as I have never seen them since I was called up.

There has been no letter from you yet this week, I am sad to say, but my hopes are high. For tomorrow, I am going to stand at the door with a rolling pin when the postman comes, and just let him walk away without bringing one for me.

I have been over to Wakefield (15 miles away) this afternoon to get a driving licence, just in case I get a driving job, at least I am prepared for it now. I have had half of my leave now so it won't be long before I must be off to work.

There is the weekly Royal Navy show on the radio at present, and one of the comedians has just cracked a joke about Navy food, he said he had served on Implacable, Impregnable, Indefatigable, but never before been served with Indigestible.

Did I tell you that all my sores on arms & legs have gone, they both took a long time to go, but since then I haven't had a thing wrong at all. I cut my finger with a razor blade a few weeks ago and it heeled up as good as new in three days, no poisoning, no nothing, at one time if I as much as pricked a finger it would turn septic.

Well it's time to go, Cyril is sat saying, 'Cum-on -Lad' in the broadest Yorkshire dialect, and last night I caught myself saying to a bloke who asked me where I was going, that I was (Barn whom!) meaning going home in English.

Well that's all this time Marg. My Love to the family, and All my Love to you Marg.
Always Yours. Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

11th October. 1946.

My Dearest Ken.

I have just been sending my Xmas (English) mail off, another year nearly over, and this one seems to be taking ages to get there.

Stafford is representing his school in the combined State (G.P.S. - Great Public Schools) sports, that is all Private schools throughout the State (N.S.W.) You can imagine, Mum & Dad, the only drawback is that he has to get running togs, that means coupons, of which we have only six left till December. I will let you know how he gets on.

I received letter No 48 yesterday, and only now am answering, as last night, I had to finish the famous skirt. It is of navy blue Serge, has pleats back & front, and Yes! Believe it or not...It turned out a success, so now Mum refuses to make my summer clothes, and as the dressmaker has a last gone to Queensland, It looks as if I will be the Skipper.

This was not in the Letter.. My personal Memory, was that whomsoever made the first respectable outfit, could claim the sewing machine as their own. As Pete & I had never been taught to sew. The serge material was my old school winter uniform turned inside out, & was I glad to do it. I finally had to replace the dear old Machine when it was (Drowned) in the 1956 Hawkesbury, Floods. Along with everything else we owned.

You mention in your letter that you were (kicked) off the table again, I couldn't count the times Dad has threatened to take my bed lamp away, as I still like to write in the bedroom.

Do you remember our lizards. Dad killed two & today Mum was out in the back yard and the third has decided to come back & haunt all those who on entering our back gate, happen to wear skirts.

*The weather is simply beautiful, sunny and warm in the day, and cool to a bit coldish at nights. I have written trash & not very much of that and it is 11 o'clock so I will close promising to write again on Sunday or Saturday night, you see I have just 8 more airletters and I will have to use them. Goodnight to the Family
All my Love to you Ken.*

Yours Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

12th October. 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

First my apologies for the condition of this air letter, it is battered about more than my Navy suit, and that's saying something, the post office is closed now till Monday so I shall have to make this do. A letter from you arrived yesterday and in it you ask how many I have received since No. 27, well I have just had a count up and find that including the one just received, there are 11 more.

On Thursday I sent a parcel off for Staffords Birthday, so please let me know if it arrives O.K. and if it arrives before Jan 6. You might be able to stow it away somewhere until his birthday. I sent it to the farm address.

There sure was a panic on that day I boarded the bus with your Birthday present, we had to change the wrapping paper from green to brown or I should say Mum changed it over the following morning while she was alone in the house.

I have just answered an advertisement in the paper for a job, it is the first one I have seen with a decent wage £5. A week, and the work is a van salesman (bread & confectionary) at least it will be an outside job, I definitely don't want an inside job. I should have an answer back by next Wednesday so I will let you know if I get it.

Cyril & I are going to the pictures again tonight, to see Bud Abbott & Leo Costello in "Here come the Co-Eds". I was going to go to the theatre in Halifax with my old Pal Les, but his wife wouldn't let him come out. Only once since I got back to England have I been out with Les, and his wife came along too. I don't know what she thinks I am going to do with him. But her opinion of me is certainly low, and mine of her isn't very much higher. Les sure spoke the truth when on the day of his wedding, he said to the parson, "if Ken was here I wouldn't be getting married!"

Well I have to have the tea ready today, Dad & Auntie have gone to Huddersfield, so I had better get started. Write all you can Marg. My Love to all the Family. All my Love to you Marg. Yours Always. Ken. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

13th October 1946.

My Dearest Ken.....

Well, another week over. Here I am again. We had good fun at the Scavenger hunt last night, we took everybody home, then all the boys & girls had a cold drink at our house, then they all went on to the next house, to drop a few more, and so on. I wish you had been here too. Since I left school, we have had so much fun.

You mention that you might happen to get the same train if you were here, to tell the truth, I very often find myself looking up the stairway, and then all of a sudden I realize just what I am doing and rebuke myself for imagining the impossible. Mum said, I will stop dreaming one of these days.

I am glad you had a nice holiday, and do please send some copies of the films as soon as you can. I do hope the parcel gets over to you by Xmas, as it has a pudding in it, some fruit I can't remember what else as Mum had it sent, & I gave her the money. The shops are closed by the time I get off in the afternoon.

Don't forget to address the letters to Lower Portland after the sixth November (I suppose I don't really deserve any after reminding you so many times)

Pete has to have Ray treatment on her right foot, as she has 9 Verookas, they are like Warts or corns I am told. But if she does not have them seen too she sill not be able to walk after a few weeks, & she starts her exams in five weeks.

I made myself a sun frock toady, out of a pleated skirt I had last summer, it was mauve material, it also turned out a success. (Drawing in original letter) I has white trimmings so I am feeling pleased with myself.

Stafford came up to Mum the other day, & said " You know what Mum I believe I know who Father Xmas is) Mum laughed it off and said then, "Who is it," he said " It's our own "Farver," and not the one you see in town at all", so he said then "I am going to look at all the Santa's in town this year to see if they are all the same man or not." Wouldn't it!

Well once again the paper is full, so regards to the family. All my Love to you Ken.

Yours always, Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

14th October. 1946.

My Dearest Ken.

Yes! Ken here I am again, trying to catch up on the letters that you have sent me.

Yesterday I think I mentioned that the weather was beautiful, this morning at breakfast Ut was about 86° or so degrees on our back verandah, and now 'tonight' it is raining cats & dogs, though it is not very cold.

Dad's brothers' Wife Alma, is being flown to New Zealand, via Australia this week, she had developed a cancer and as they have not given her much longer to live, she is

going to spend the rest of her life with her parents in New Zealand. Her husband, "Uncle Bob," was killed in the War. Can you ever remember hearing the pair, Namely Judith Sylvo and Bob (Robert Lowe singing over the B.B.C., well they were Alma & Uncle Bob.

Tuesday. I am sorry, I did not finish this letter last night, but I dropped off to sleep with the pen in my hand, 'Dreaming of the future'.

Pete & I have just got back from choir, and it is freezing outside (for here any way)

Do you know what you are likely to take up when you start work, or are you just spending a lazy time.

We have not heard from George for ages, so cannot tell you how he is getting on.

Another letter came from you yesterday, thanks ever so much, the more letters I get, the more I want, being the greedy type. The are lots of things I want to tell you, but I can't remember one of them, so I will close now. Best wishes to all the family.

Lots & Lots of Love to you Ken. Yours Always. Margaret XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

15th October. 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Many thanks for another letter just received dated 7 - 10- 1946. Seven days in transit this time. You all seem to have had quite a weekend up at the farm with all the visitors. I can remember Neil, but I still can't place Jennie & Peter Lowe, and I think Mr. Lowe is the chap with the abundance of hair. Or I mean a good head of skin, strictly between you and me of course.

Yes Marg, I too am hoping that after Xmas we won't have many more letters to write. I believe I told you a couple of letters back that I had written to Australia House in London, but so far I have had no reply.

This morning Dad & I went to Halifax with an Insurance Policy of mine. You see when I came the age of 21, I should have the option either to keep it on for 10, 20, 25 or 30 years from that date, or to keep it on for a life policy with £100. at my death. I am paying 19/1 a year for it, so it is impossible for me to pay in as much as what comes out. On the other hand I had the option to make it an endowment policy for so many years. Which I did this morning for 30 years, that means at the age of 51 I draw £with profits which are about £1 a hundred pounds a year, so the total that I shall draw will be £100 or there about & I have only paid in £51-19-1. Which is £48- 16- 7. And the policy is World wide, so I am quite happy about it. Dad says it is one in a million, and but for the fact that the Insurance Agent and Dad were very good friends at the time of my Birth, I should never have got it.

A week or two since there was an advertisement in the paper for a baker & confectioner wanted in a big shop in Elland. Dad told me to go after it, but I said I hadn't enough experience. Well! I just found out today that a relation of mine (distant) has got the job and he has never seen the inside of a bakery in his life. Boy, could I kick myself.

It sure is cold around here now, I came in last night and I didn't know I had any feet, they were about frozen. We had been to the pictures in Halifax to see Deborah Kerr in 'I see a Dark Stranger', and it was a very good film, you should see it if it is showing your way. I am going out regularly with that friend who was on the 'Formidable' now, he was de-mobbed about a month before me and is working now, back to his pre-war job.

Well that's the page full once more Marg. My Love to all the family and, all my Love to you Marg. Yours Always. Ken XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Wednesday 16th October. 1946.

My Dearest Ken.

It is now Wednesday. One day more of this year over, & one day nearer next, which I wish would hurry up & come, the days seemed to fly till May & since then, even the minutes seem to go twice as slowly.

Stafford only came forth in his race today, he competed against ten other schools, so that was really not bad at all.

Did I tell you we had a letter from Uncle Charlie the other week, & he still hopes to come out, so that will be another ship we will have to meet. Do please try to get me a small photo of you, as the other is getting a bit battered, as I can't get a small case to keep it in. (Not the studio one.) (beautiful English) but the one of us all on the "Implac" You see I cut the other two off the ends, so of course it has grown smaller.

This was a coincidence, the other day as I was reading your last letter, they were playing "Clare de Lune" on the wireless, and when I got to the end I noticed

that they were playing it, whilst you were writing it. Do you like a song 'It's been a long, long time', out of the present hits, I like it best with 'Some Sunday Morning' & 'Let it Snow' coming next. They played 'Gypsy' and 'Personality' to death out here, and people began to moan when they heard the recordings, so we don't hear them very often now. Although I rather like the 'Gypsy' still.

Somebody is trying swing 'The Desert Song', now it is terrible.

The Gott Family sent their regards to you Ken, & said you will have to visit them again one of these Days, and tell them what it is like over there. (Yorkshire) I mean Mr. Gott's father is coming out here as soon as he can get a ship, next ship, of course they are all pleased.

It is raining and windy just like the night we went to see 'Road to Utopia', and we walked from the station and both got soaked, and, when we got home we had to get our own tea, as the others were finished.

All my Love to you Ken, yours. Always. Margaret xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

P.S. I hope I get another letter tomorrow.

17th October 1946.

My Dearest Ken...

The Postman did not stop here for me today, but I hope he will do so on Saturday. In the meantime I am trying to catch up on you, I think I am still about two behind you, but I am determined to catch up, before I go up to the farm in a fortnight's time.

Aunt Almas' plane arrives at 5pm on Saturday, and Mum, Dad, Pete, Uncle Jim & myself are going to meet it at the Airport, it is a flying boat and will be landing at Rose Bay. Mum is either going to spend the night with her at the "Guesthouse", Potts Point, where all the passengers are booked in for the night. Or if she is able, and they can get the ambulance, they hope to bring her home, but of course that will depend on her condition, and also herself, she may not feel up to it.

Uncle Jim said that his Mother said that Uncle Charlie hopes to be out here shortly, so it looks as if it won't be long now. He has written to the Unions to see what chance there is for his type of work out here, so evidently he is determined to make it.

I had rather an awful time at work today, as there was nothing to do you see we caught up in our work and have not had any other important business to do, so I have been utterly bored. Yes me of all people, so instead of posting a letter, the man who is in charge of the section of the work, I and some others in our room have to do, said if I liked I could go up to the place itself & deliver it, so I took an hour to walk up Phillip St, and back that is the Street that runs parallel to Elizabeth and Macquarie Streets.

I think I had better say Goodnight now, as I have two late nights ahead of me, (Ruth's party) and we will most likely be up late on Saturday night. So Best Wishes to all at home, *Aunty, Dad and Cyril, All my Love to you, Ken.

Yours always, Margaret. XXXX * I can call them that, please may I.

19th October. 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Many thanks for two more letters just received, dated 11th & 13th October. In fact I have had five letters today, your two, one from my friend Bobbie in Scotland, one from the

Admiralty containing my Service Certificates, and the fifth was three copies of the 'Dittybox' (the Navy Magazine) which I have paid for, for the next six months.

Nothing came of the job I wrote after, Marg. In fact I have written to two more 'Adverts' since then and nothing has happened. The only kind of work that is plentiful around here, is in the woolen mills and they can't get anyone to work in them, at least if anyone new does start, they usually give in their notice after a week of it.

Your glorious weather over there, is making me very envious, here it is just 5pm, and it is practically dark, it is cold and windy, but at least there is no rain, we have gone three whole days without rain now, it is almost unbelievable.

Have you sorted out your letter Numbers yet Marg? What I do to prevent me from forgetting the number, is to number all the air letters as soon as I get them, and I try to get a fresh supply before the old one runs out, then I always know the last number.

I am pleased to hear that your skirt turned out a success, and the new sun frock. I think you had better pop over here and have a go at making me a suit, I could get butter in Australia much easier than I can get a suit here, I am wearing my de-mob suit now and honestly I feel like a scarecrow.

I don't know about you being looked on as very young Marg! I have been properly insulted by the Navy. In my Navy History sheet, it says "Excellent worker for a youngster." Oh! And in spite of all the times I was before the Commander minus my bonnet. My character was assessed as "Uniformly Very Good".

Well that's all this time Marg. My Love to the family, and all my Love to you Marg.
Yours always. Ken. xxx

20th October. 1946.

My Dearest Ken.

This week is nearly over, 'Two more hours to go' and so here I am again, I am starting this in small writing just in case I can't get it all in at the other end.

We all had a nice time on Friday night, and my feet were sore the next day. We danced all night, and when we were going home, just as I got into the car, one of the boys standing near offered to close the door, but he did it too soon and jammed my foot in the doorway so that my foot feels worse. But as they say, 'All good things come to an end', & I got over it by lunchtime.

The supper was very nice, done in Continental fashion, no sandwiches & cakes, of course the ordinary style - but savories and savories, and more savories, all together turned out to be a very nice evening.

On Saturday evening, at 5pm, Aunty Alma, was supposed to arrive at "Rose Bay" but when we got there to meet the plane, we were told that she had been put down at Singapore. So immediately Mum & Dad tried to find out all they could about her condition, but the Airport could not tell them a thing, except that the plane was late, and would not be in till 8pm.

We went back to Kings Cross to have some tea, and then after that we went back to the Airport about 7, and discovered that one of the people waiting was Aunty Almas' cousin, so Mum & she got talking and discovered that Aunty Almas' Aunt, who is a trained nurse was to meet her at Auckland, any way, when the plane, finally arrived and the people had been passed by the customs, Mum found out from a passenger who had come from England that she had been put down at Karachi, 3000 miles nearer England. She was in great pain & had to be doped to get her off the plane. What made it worse for her is that there were only

male stewards, so the two other women passengers had to do everything for her. The Dr. over there told the other women that she will make it, but will have to do it in easy stages. Mum & Dad have cabled her to let her know, we will be there to meet the plane.

Well there is only enough room to say Good-night Ken. Best wishes to the family. Mum has not written to let them know in England yet, as this is my last air Letter But will be writing to-morrow.

All my Love to you Ken. Always yours, Lots of Love. Margaret. XXXXXXxxxxxxxxxxx

22nd October 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Your numbered letter No. 44, arrived half an hour ago, Marg, many thanks, I was just feeling a bit down in the dumps but your letter has revived me quite a lot.

I have just got back from Huddersfield, where I have been after a job as a van driver, the works didn't open until 8am. And I was there at 6.45am. By the time eight o'clock came I was first in the queue of thirty or more seeking a job, and now I just have to wait and see if I was the lucky one. When I was in the navy it never entered my head that there would be any difficulty in getting a job, but as I said before the only places where work is really plentiful is in the Mills.

Last Saturday we had to take Grandad away to the Welfare Home. I told you before, that he had been struck by lightning about four years ago, and that it took his speech away and all the use out of his legs. Well since Granma died we have had a house keeper in to look after him, but last Saturday morning she got down to find the room practically wrecked, everything was upside down, pictures off the wall were in little pieces, plant pots were broken and the soil was thrown everywhere. We called the Dr. straight away, and he had to send him to this Home, he said it was his brain that was weakening and he wasn't safe to live with, he is 79 now.

On Saturday night there was a big fire in Elland at one of the blanket mills, it was just about burnt to the ground. Of course the great Elland Fire Brigade was there on the spot, but as per usual they had to send to Halifax for reinforcements or they would never have put the fire out. It's a marvelous fire service in Elland. A few years ago there was a big fire, and the driver of the fire engine staggered out of a pub dead drunk, and instead of getting in the fire engine he got in the dust-bin wagon, and drove it right into a telegraph pole. Once again the Halifax service came to the rescue.

Well that's all this time Marg. Love to all the Family, and All my Love to You Marg.

Ken. XXXXXXxx.

23rd October 1946.

My dearest Margaret.

Very many thanks for another letter Marg. (No 45) It arrived this morning.

I am hoping for next year to come around very quickly, I can't very well explain in letters the second main reason, but things are not going very well at home. In fact they are exactly the opposite to well, and you know what the main reason is Marg. don't you?

I think Stafford did very well to come fourth in the race, and did very well to be picked out to represent the school, how did you manage with the tog's, (No coupons)

Well I am not going to keep my troubles to myself any longer, Marg! So you had better brace yourself up, because believe me I could go on for hours.

To begin with, when I was out there I told you all about my family. How Mother had died & that Auntie had more or less taken her place, and I have always thought that she was as good as second to Mother as it was possible to have. I mean shortly after she came, I went into the Navy and everything has seemed to be O.K, when I have been on leave, but since I have come home six weeks and two days. And I have yet to hear her say anything nice to our Cyril. He comes in from work at night and she all about throws his dinner on the table as though it's a nuisance for him to be there to eat it, and for her to have to give it to him. He can't have any pals let alone a girl friend, because he couldn't as much as bring them into the house. On his fourteenth Birthday he had one pal, and he invited this pal to his tea at our house. When the day came, Auntie decided she would go to Halifax to do some shopping, so Cyril had to go and tell his pal he couldn't come, then come home and get his own tea ready, 'On his Birthday!'

There are dozens of incidents like that, and all added up they point to one thing, that Cyril is not wanted by her in the house. The worst is that Cyril is under her thumb, he dare not say a word. Dad appears to be ignorant of the fact that anything is wrong, and Auntie & I know, what are on each other's minds. But neither of us has said a word about it yet. In fact today we haven't yet spoken to each other and it is 3pm. Dad & Cyril are at work, and just the two of us are here, both ignoring each other. Where & how it will end I do not know, but I thank God that next year Cyril will have to go in the Army. That's not a nice place to go, but it's ten times better than the life he has now.

I was talking to Cyril about it last night, & he says he's just been wishing the away till I got back and I could see just what was happening.

Well there's the outline of it all Marg. What will happen when the cloud bursts and she says her bit and I unleash my mind I don't know, but it won't be very pleasant.

It had to come out Marg, and you got it all, sorry! Please write as often as you can Marg, as you say the more I get, the more I want. Love to the Family, all my Love to you Marg. Always Yours. Ken XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

25th October 1946.

My Dearest Margaret...

Well it's happened Marg, and How! The house very nearly fell down, we both went on worse than I can ever remember Pete losing her temper, until last night I never realized just what a dead loss I am. To begin with, she says I am bone idle, lazy. And if she had had been me she would have been working the first week of my leave, she says she feels extremely sorry for the girl I marry, for she will have a thankless task, in fact I am everything that is bad twice.

Dad was sat in the middle of it all, and first would give me a telling off for saying something nasty, then Auntie would get a telling off for the same thing, and so on, and to end it up we both decided to leave home. I have got a butchering job in Halifax so I am going to try & get lodgings there or near there. And it's certain that if I get out of the way, Auntie will stay here, the best of it is that she denies ever having done anything wrong against Cyril, I wish Cyril had been here when it happened, then he could have put his spoke in. Today just she & I are at home neither saying a word, except when it is absolutely necessary. Oh! She said last night that I have never liked her as long as she can remember, I don't

think you ever heard me say anything wrong against her, did you? Except that she could not possibly replace Mother, and no one ever could.

Well let's forget about all that for the rest of the letter, and just say instead, "Roll on my Group. Roll on next year."

Joe Loss and his Band are on the radio now, but up to now they haven't played any of our favorites. That one, "It's been a long, long time", has been very popular over here, do you like that crazy tune called 'Cocktails for Two' where they go mad in the middle of it. It reminds me of a show I saw in New York, where on the last tune that the orchestra played, they went mad and wrecked everything, the music, music stands, fiddles, tore one another's shirts off, in fact it was advertised as the World's Craziest Band, and it sure was crazy.

Every Saturday afternoon Les & I go to a Rugby match, our favourite team is Halifax, but we can only watch them every other week when they play at home, tomorrow they are playing away, so we are going over to Bradford to watch Bradford Northern. v. Hull. So far this season Hull is unbeaten, but, I think tomorrow they will lose their record, because Bradford is one of the last teams in Yorkshire. (next to Halifax of course) 'Humm!'

It is Saturday morning now, yesterday as I was writing I remembered that I hadn't been to Bradford to see Auntie Annie as I had promised, so I just got ready & went, sorry I didn't finish your letter I am not going to that butchering job after all, but I will tell you about it in the next letter as this is pretty near full.

I shall probably be writing again tomorrow Marg. My love to the family & All my Love to you Marg. Always yours. Love Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

27th October 1946.

My Dearest Margaret...

Your letter No 47 arrived yesterday afternoon while we were watching Bradford knock the stuffing out of Hull, that is three I had from you last week Marg, many, many thanks, I hope there are another three this coming week, greedy aren't I!!

It's Sunday afternoon once again and as usual I am listening to my favourite record programme. "Family Favourites", about twenty minutes ago they played "Clare de Lune" from four soldiers serving in Hamburg, to their Mothers in various places in the British Isles. 'Bing Crosby,' has just finished singing the 'Anniversary Waltz' from a soldier in Germany to his Mother & Father for their Silver Wedding Anniversary.

Well, I was to have started butchering again tomorrow. But on Saturday morning I got a postcard from one of the firms where I had been after a driving job, saying that I could go for a further interview, so I did and have got the job out of sixty four applicants, so I feel quite proud. I didn't really fancy butchering, not at this shop anyway because I wouldn't learn anymore about the job than I already know, it is a much smaller shop than where I used to work, and don't do half the trade that we used to do.

The best of it is, I got a driving job. Then rang up this butcher to tell him I had got another job. And then I discovered that I had lost my driving license, and I still haven't found it, so one day this week I shall have to make another trip to 'Wakefield' and get a duplicate at the cost of one shilling.

Things are still at a dead end at home, we just say goodnight and good morning very reluctantly and that's another day passed. That is just Auntie & I of course, Dad has not said anything about it since the day we busted up. I think he is just trying to keep the peace, the only time I am at home, Dad is working, (and boy does he hate working on a

Sunday). Auntie has gone to Huddersfield to see her sister, I don't know how I am going to pass the time away this coming week during the day I mean, it's definite that I am not going to stay in the house with Auntie. When I start work, it won't be too bad, from 8am. to 5.30pm. I shall be working, then by 6.30pm I shall be out for the night, or should I say evening.

Well I have just about filled No. 57 Marg, so I will close. My Love to all the family, and, All my Love to You Marg. Yours Always, Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

28th October. 1946.

My Dearest Ken.

I am starting this tonight, as I will be out again tomorrow night with Pete at choir, and would not have time to write it all.

I have now received No 51, of your letters and thanks, and thanks ever so much, {the more the merrier.} You, or maybe I made a bit of a mistake in the date of Stafford's birthday. It is Jan 12th, not the 6th, but thanks from Stafford, I will get him to write after his birthday, he hates writing letters, but I am sure he will when he knows who sent it.

I hope you put Master Stafford Lowe, as like me, there is another little boy by that initial, Stewart Lowe, living at the post office, so I am afraid their mail may get mixed.

Tomorrow we will be up at the farm again, and we are going to one of the 'Local Hops' for the first time, will tell you all about it in Sunday's Letter

I bought myself a hat to go with the frock, it is floral on top and mauve underneath, it has got a crown, but had straps over the top in floral and I have got a pair of blood red sandals Mum gave me to go with it.

Some new people have moved up to the boarding House, and they have a Daughter of about the same age as me, and, they have a tennis court, and riding horses, where as, we have a swimming beach. So if we become friendly, we will have them all between us, (the Scotch in me). I do not have to work tomorrow, so that is why I will be able to go up.

Your letters used to get here on Mondays, Thursdays & Saturdays but the past few weeks it has been Mon. Wed. and Friday.

I have to iron some clothes now and Pete is waiting her turn, so Best wishes to the Family. P.S. I received a letter from your Father, will answer next week. Thank him please. Also please excuse the pencil and the mess on the front as it was in an accident. (Spilt ink) All my Love. Margaret XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

31st October 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Here I am in the last week of my leave, only three more days and off to work I go, and will I be glad, believe me I am just about bored stiff with nothing to do.

Today has been a busy day, we have been moving everything out of Granma's old home to the sale room at Huddersfield. And what a job it was, you should have seen the wagon driver & me staggering down the curved staircase with a massive old oak dressing table and washstand. And slinging smaller things such as pillows and cushions through the bedroom window on the wagon below. The worst job though was the coal, which we bought up home. There were ten bags full and you should have the state I was in after filling the bags and

throwing them from the wagon down our coal grate, I looked just as though I had come up from a coal mine.

I certainly is cold around here now, yesterday I spent the day in Halifax and when I wasn't indoors believe me I was just like an icicle. I met Les at about seven and when he saw me he said. "Where have you been, you look as though you've spent the day boozing, your nose end is like a raspberry," and my ears were all about dropping off.

We went to see "Anna & the King of Siam" last night, it is quite an unusual picture, but we both enjoyed it. On Monday I went to see "Humphrey Bogart in the Big Sleep" while Les went out with his Father, and it's a good picture with three or four murders etc., quite exciting.

Things seem to be a little bit more settled at home today. Auntie & I have been speaking a little more often, that is because I got busy and gave them a hand with removing etc.,

I think last week, or I mean this week is making up for last week, as so far I haven't had one letter from you, you remember last week I had three. Guess what? They are playing on the radio, 'Ilkley Moor Bart'hat' remember Yorkshire's one & only smash hit.

There's another big fight on the radio next Tuesday evening between Freddie Mills (British) and Joe Baskie U.S.A and I hope that the 'Yankie' wins, then he will be fighting Bruce Woodcock, and that will be really something.

Well the page is full again Marg, so I must close, my Love to all the Family, & All my Love to you Marg. Always yours. Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

1st November 1046.

My dearest Ken...

Yes, here I am at long last, Aunty Alma is here and will not be going till next Thursday, as they cannot get a plane till then.

She is very nice, and since she has been here, she has had the wireless on, and also got out of bed and listened to Dad playing the piano tonight. She is also eating Three meals a day, whereas she did not eat once, while on the plane from Karachi. There is a nurse here with her, from Karachi, and she is the funniest thing out, she is so used to ordering the natives around and not doing anything herself that she doesn't know where to start, consequently Mum has to do the lot.

Have you seen "The Seventh Veil," We saw it the other night, it was very good if you have not seen it, do try to.

We took Mrs. Cross, (the nurse) into town to do some shopping. She stood with her mouth open and said, "I've never seen such big shops" It really was funny, and she took from 11 O'clock till half past twelve to walk from David Jones corner to the bank in Martin Place to change her money. I discovered that 100 rupee is 9 pounds 9 shillings & five pence.

I was sorry to hear about your Grandfather, but it is really hard for him to look after himself at that age & he should be better looked after there.

I am awfully sorry I have not written before but I know you will understand, and still keep up the good work over your end Ken. I will answer your Fathers letter in a couple of days, I have such a lot to tell you, and cannot get the time to write a long letter, as I have to help Mum, as the Nurse is useless, and I am away all day.

I will close now and will try to write a lot to make up for last week.

*Best wishes to Dad & Auntie. all my Love to you Ken. Always yours. Margaret
xxxxxx*

1st November 1946.

My Dearest Margaret...

Sunday afternoon again and here I am as usual, and it sure is cold, Auntie has just put a load of celery leaves on the fire and they have just about put the fire out. So far we haven't had any snow, but I think it is about cold enough for it. The thing I dislike most about cold weather is having to get out of bed in the morning, today being Sunday I didn't get out till after eleven, shameful isn't it. Through the week I get up with Cyril at 6.45 you should see me standing over the gas stove while waiting for the kettle to boil, & shivering, from top to bottom, and saying out loud, "Roll on next Summer".

Yesterday morning I put the radio on and heard part of the test match broadcast from Brisbane, the commentator was saying how the Englishmen had been through a grueling day in the heat of the Australian sun.

I am staying in all day today, as I did yesterday and Friday. Reason? My mate is ill, that is Les, of course, I went down to see him on Thursday and he was pretty groggy. I was going down to see him tonight but I don't think I shall as the weather is too rough. Tomorrow I shall be coming through Elland with the van, so I will pop in and see him then.

Did I tell you, that I! was pulled up by the Police the other day, but luckily he let me go without giving me the usual ticket. I was approaching the traffic lights pretty fast and they changed from green to amber. I put on my brakes, but as usual, it was raining and the van skidded. So I just accelerated and went straight through the crossroads, but I didn't see the policeman standing on the corner, anyway I talked my way out of it and got away with a caution, I thought I was going to be there with my cap off again though... No Commander this time!

Well that is about all that I can fit on this page Marg. My Love to all the Family.

All my Love to you Marg. Always Yours. LOVE Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

I find that the dates on some of the letters are hard to decipher. 57 years on, so I will No. a few as (.....) eg. Letter No 50 .Date Posted,

3rd November. 1946.

My Dearest Ken.

I have now received Letter No 57, from you. Hope the mailman brings another when he comes at two o'clock. Please excuse the delay in my letters, as we have had a dreadful week, fruit picking, seeing Aunt Alma's plane off. Every time I hear from you, you are either about to start a job, or you did not get one, anyway I hope you got your Licence, and also that you like the driving job.

We are having a terrible time with the fruit, all hands are helping, & I am chief cook (needing a Leading, I mean Helping hand though). But it is ripening so quickly, that they hardly get time to breathe. So this is being written in haste, but have promised myself I will 3 times a week, as the mail goes then. Dad has told the Post Office, they had to get more air letters in, as they only had three.

Thanks ever so much for the Music but I will not be able to learn to play it till March next year, as we have not got our piano up here.

The mosquitoes have had a great game chewing me, and my legs are covered in spots. The three ducks have brought out 48 ducklings' altogether, but the fowls don't seem to lay at all, why I don't know.

I have a case of peaches & a case of apricots I have to cut up for jam, so next year when you get back you may be able to have some, so I had better go or you might miss out.

Best wishes to the family. All my Love to you Ken... Always Yours.
Margaret.xxxxxx

3rd November 1946.

My Dearest Ken...

Honestly I don't know how to start, but here goes. I received a very nice letter from your Dad, then two from you, really I feel awfully sorry, I can't make a person like that out. But don't worry, we don't think that of you, neither do our relations nor any of the people that met you while you were out here (strictly between you and me of course). Looking at the funny side of it, I could not imagine you losing your temper. Thanks goodness I, am on the right side of you. (Or am I? Ha! Ha!)

A word of advice! The sooner you get a job, and get away from your Aunt for a few hours a day, the better off you both will be, I know that is more easily said than done, but I am sure it will help a great deal to ease the strain. It must be hard for you to accept someone else in the place of your Mother, I know I would feel that way myself, although I don't always agree with all her ideas.

There are millions of things I could and would like to tell you, but I don't know where to start, and would never finish this side of Xmas, but cheer up, it won't be long. Just as well Mum & Dad seem to accept things as they are, of there might be more trouble. Oh heck! Tell me if you get sick of my blabbing, but all I wish to say won't come, and vice versa.

Pete & I took the nurse on the Manly Ferry trip & I could not help feeling sentimental, (blabbing again. - Shut up Margaret), and today I took her to the Zoo.

4th Nov

I hate writing letters because unless I have a fountain pen, every time I dip into the ink, I think over what I have just written and it generally sounds silly.

How did the Rugby finish up, remember that game we saw the day we went bike riding.

Pete said she went in swimming, up at the farm today, the water was a bit deep though. How are the dancing lessons getting on very well, (I hope), or maybe you have not started yet, with all the extra worry that has been cropping up.

My writing is still as bad as ever, as I still write my letters in bed. 'Why?' you ask Because, I like to be by myself, when in the act of letter writing. Anyway, till next time, best wishes to Dad Auntie & Cyril. All my love to you Ken. Always yours.
Margaret xxxxxxxxxxxx

Many Letters are No. though many are only able to be filed by Date. As many were lost due to the 1956, Floods waters. Re being on the bottom of the "The Old Tatty Hatbox. Mildew forming on folds, plus lack of fresh air, silver fish etc., enjoying an undisturbed meal for all those years.

8th November 1946.

My Dearest Margaret...

Once again I have to ask forgiveness for being over a week in writing, as you will have noticed, letter No 59. Is missing. What happened to that one was, on Sunday afternoon as usual I was writing, in fact I wrote to you, sealed it, and put it in my pocket. On Monday I went off to work, (the first days work in 3 years and 9 months) still with the letter in my pocket, during the morning I had to deliver goods over Bradfield district, and with each parcel, there was an invoice. That was about 20 in all, these I just stuffed into my pocket as usual, but when I pulled out the last invoice, out came your letter as well, and what a horrible state it was in, crushed, crumbled and dirty, so I had to destroy it.

It is my dinner hour now, and I am sitting in the van just outside the warehouse, so the steering wheel is the writing desk with the latest Edition of the Ditty-box for a support.

This morning I have been delivering just around Halifax and its been a lovely morning, I don't think the fog was so thick in some places that I couldn't see above ten yards in front of the radiator. It is clearing up a bit now, but I don't know yet if I have anywhere to go this afternoon, or whether I shall have to spend the rest of the day in the warehouse getting the orders ready for tomorrow. I would much rather be out there, there is so much dust and dirt inside that it gets up one's nose and in the mouth, and you spend the rest of the day coughing and sneezing.

It's pretty near 1.30 now and the Boss will be back any minute, so I shall have to knock off and get the van doors unlocked-----

Well I am home again now and just finished a whacking big plate full of tripe & onions, with a mild pudding to finish it off with, "Food!!" It's too bad I couldn't finish the letter earlier, as this is another day gone by. The last collection at the post office is 5.45pm and it is 6.45 now. I shall have to send it while I am out tomorrow.

On the radio news this evening, they have been telling about the food situation for Christmas. There is to be an ounce of butter, instead of an ounce of margarine, and extra 1½lbs of sugar and 8p worth of meat. The under 18s. & the over 70s, are to get an extra half a pound of sweets, and that's about it all.

That's another page full Marg. So I must close, Love tot all the family, and

All my Love to you Marg. Always Yours. Ken XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

10th November. 1946.

My Dearest Margaret...

Sunday afternoon again and this time I will make certain that nothing happens to this letter, I will send it off tonight.

Les & I went out shopping yesterday afternoon, it's a good the shops don't close here on a Saturday afternoon like they do in Sydney or us 'Working Lads' wouldn't have a chance. Les got measured for a suit and an overcoat, the suit is taking five months, and the overcoat four months. I was lucky and picked up a ready-made suit that nearly fits, so I am having it altered which is taking a fortnight. I also was measured for a blue striped suit, which is taking 3½ months, then I bought a light coloured, (putty colour) raincoat.

Auntie May & Uncle Lewis have come over from Southport this weekend, they are just about ready for going up to the hospital in Halifax to see Grandad, he was a little better yesterday when Dad & Auntie were up there, but he is still very weak.

Auntie & I are getting on so much better since I started working, that's because I am very rarely at home. I get home at about six each evening, and then rush around getting washed and changed and meeting Les at a quarter to seven and we either go to Halifax or Huddersfield.

Last week I had two letters from you Marg. Many thanks, they were 47 & 48. I'm sorry that I got Stafford's Birthday wrong, anyway if you can get it off the postman without him knowing and give it to him on his birthday, and if I know anything about the mail situation it won't arrive anywhere near the time it was planned for. As far as I can remember I did address it to Master Stafford, and not just S. so I don't think it will get mixed up with the boy at the post office.

How are you getting on with the piano these days Marg? Still getting into trouble for being elsewhere when you should be on the piano buffet (seat). You won't have a lot of time for it now with working will you, and of course I think this Sunday you will be at the farm. I think you said the fifth of November you would be going up for the rest of the year. I shall have to be closing now Marg! The page is just about full, so Love to all the family, and, All my Love to you Marg. xxx Always Yours. Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

12th November 1946.

My Dearest Margaret...

Two letters from you today Marg! No 49 & 50, very many thanks I was so pleased to receive them.

I am also very pleased to be able to say that things are decidedly better at home since working, and it's a good job too. Of course I don't stay in above two nights a week, the rest of the time I go out with Les. By the way the blots across the way have just happened, the little writing table that I am using had just collapsed, and everything went down with it, air letters, ash tray, ditty-boxes, ink pen & all.

Auntie May & Uncle Lewis went back home to Southport today, after going to the hospital again this afternoon to see Granddad. They called at the firm where I am working, and I saw them just before they went for the train. I had only just arrived back with the van when they got there. And I had been rushing around to get back to Halifax in time to see them and only just made it.

Your Aunt Alma had a terrible time getting out didn't she, but I am pleased to hear that at last she is at your house for a while, I bet she is glad that the journey is nearly over and that she has somewhere to stay to break the journey.

Dad & Auntie are at present checking up some old things of Grandma's which are going to the sale room tomorrow. Nearly everything is over fifty years old, but owing to the shortage of nearly everything, they can sell anything at the Sale room now. An example, before the war, Grandma bought a lot of wall paper at a sale for 1/- during the time she had it she papered three rooms, then last year sent what was left of it to the sale room and got ten bob for it. When I get my new suit next week Marg, I will have a photo taken and if it turns out at all decent, I will forward one on but don't really expect one, because you know what my photo's turn out like. I haven't had the snaps we took at Llandudno developed yet, but when I can remember to pop in to the chemists I will do. I have been walking around with the film in my pocket for weeks now, but always forget. Well I must be saying goodnight now Marg, and hop up the stairs to bed to get my beauty sleep (Ho Ho) My Love to the Family - All my Love to you Marg. Yours Always Ken XXXXXX

13th November 1946.

My Dearest Ken...

The mailman will be here in another hour so here I am again. I am sitting on the kitchen table with my legs up too as the mosquitoes chew my ankles my ankles if I dangle them overboard, or if I rest them on the deck.

Do you remember the two cats, the big one has had some kittens and they are playing hide & seek round the corner of the house. One has white stockings in front, and black at the back, a black nose and black spots on its body, two of them have crosses on their backs and the fourth is just like the mother.

Since I came up here, I seem to find something to do every minute. I have fed the fowls & ducks, set the table, eaten breakfast & done lots of other things and it is now 9 o'clock when I have to get morning tea for the picker, Mum, has to pick as we can't get extra labour. How is the new job. What type of driving do you do, I mean, butcher, baker, candlestick maker or what? On Saturday night they are having the Cricketer's Ball up here.

Have you been to Scotland yet, I suppose it is getting cold over your way now, it is so hot here, that I am, all but stuck to the table I am sitting on. The water is beautiful for swimming in at present and the only trouble is, one can't spend all day in it.

I hope to get another letter from you today. (Here's hoping) Well I have nearly filled the paper so once again, Best wishes to the Family. All my Love to you Ken. Always yours. Margaret. XX.

14th November 1946

My Dearest Margaret...

Hello again Marg, its Thursday evening. And this is the second night this week that I have stayed in. Both Les & I are just about stony broke so we decided to I should say our pockets decided that we stay home, that's the result of going shopping on an afternoon buying suits etc.,

Now I am going to get this off my mind before I write any more. I have slipped up on Christmas present for you Marg. I was going to get you something like a broach or something, but I have now found out that any jewelry sent overseas will be charged the same price at the other end for customs. So that has torn my plans up completely. Now I have decided to send you something by ordinary letter mail so please accept my apologies for it being late, say early February if it is lucky that's not quite three months so it may be later than that. If I had been able to send a broach I could have sent by airmail as it wouldn't have weighed a lot. Last night Les & I went to the pictures in Halifax to see "Van Johnson, Pat Kirkwood" in "No Leave-No Love" and we really enjoyed it.

Tomorrow night there is another big fight on the radio between Bruce Woodcock & the French heavy weight champion whose name I can't even pronounce. It is said in the newspapers the Woodcock will probably knock the Frenchman out in the first round but that, remains to be seen. Friday Night. 15th November 1946.

Once again I say Hello Marg. Last night I was broken off writing your letter as Dad & Auntie came in from Halifax and suggested a game of cards, so I had to agree. The fight tonight lasted a little longer than expected, Woodcock knocked the Frenchman out in the third round, the first and second rounds weren't too bad to listen to but the third was like listening to slaughter.

You must be getting the same kind of weather in N.S.W. as we have over here, for the last two days the report on the M.C.C. has been that the game couldn't be played because of heavy rains.

Well it's late Marg so I must finish off the page and get to bed. So far this week I haven't been late for work, (touch my head) but if I don't get some shut eye I shall be late tomorrow, so Goodnight Marg, Love to all the family, & All my Love to You Marg. Always Yours.
XxxXXX Love Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

17th November 1946.

My Dearest Ken...

I am going to apologize for the pencil, a thing I have not done before, (I don't think so anyway). But as it happens the door is locked, and I can't get to the ink, as everyone else is in bed, and the door locks on the inside, & I am on the outside.

I am in a bad mood tonight, you see there is a boy helping on the farm and he nearly drives me crazy, he talks all day long, and about the most stupid rot imaginable, he is 16. Are all boys mad when they are 16. The worst part is that Mum tells me to keep quiet every time I tell the silly (Goon) that you can't live without your brain or heart, or that you find rattlesnakes running wild in the bush up here. It's not as if he were mental, but he is a windbag. Because if someone told him they had seen monkeys in the bush up here, he would argue with the next person who bought the subject of wild bush life up, that a Monkey had really been seen up here. Have you ever met that type of person. Checkers with Mr. & Mrs. K. tonight, and he talked, and in the end I told him to keep quiet & let everyone else have their turn in peace.

*I don't know what has happened, but Mum seems to treat me like a person who is working here * this boy like a jolly son, you can imagine how I am taking it. She says I talk too much, am stupid, and treats me like a hired hand, I can't understand it. Dad was up in the weekend, he didn't say much except for her to leave me alone. Maybe I shouldn't tell you all this but at times Mum & I don't hit it off at all. I don't know whether you ever noticed it yourself.*

Change of subject. Four of my ducklings died in the weekend the big Drake trod on them. I have made a pen for (himself) now. If I go any further, I will not have room to say Best wishes to all the family. All my Love to you Ken. Yours Always. Margaret.XX

19th November. 1946.

My Dearest Margaret...

Tuesday night again, this seems to be my regular night, at home, Tuesday & Thursday. Les stays at home so I may as well.

There had been no letter from you since a week last Monday, when I got two at once, well I hope two arrive at the same time again, tomorrow I hope. Greedy aren't!! Believe it or not, today I took that film to the Chemist, the one we took at Llanduno, and it should be ready in ten days time, so if there are any successes among the eight, I will send some along. Have you got any more Photos, snaps, etc.,

So far this week I haven't been out delivering with the van, today I made two little trips with each of the boss's cars. I have a fairly long journey to do tomorrow morning in the van, and plenty of weight to carry, and this van with any weight in it is not so good. It is not so
A Romance by Mail

good, it is a Bedford van, fitted with Hillman springs, and they don't take half the weight that they should do.

Did you ever get that old boat patched up Marg. In one of your letters you say your Dad was going to have a go at repairing it. Did he ever get it seaworthy, or do I mean river-worthy.

Last night Les & I went to the pictures and on the news they showed, guess what? The K.G.V. and the Implacable, while on the home fleet exercises last month, I wonder if George is still on the K.G. Maybe he has been de-mobbed by now.

The rains came in great style in our district this week. The river has risen about two feet so far, and it's looking pretty grim for the people who live near the banks, they were flooded out about 2½ months ago, and relief fund amounting into the tens of thousands of pounds was organized to help them.

Well I am tired Marg, and I must close, promising to follow on the No. 65 in a very short time. My Love to the family.

All my Love to You Marg Dear. Always Yours! Love Ken XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

20th November 1946.

My Dearest Ken..

Once again I open the line of fire, but today I am in a better mood, you couldn't say I have a bad temper, it goes just as quickly again. Anyway how are things over your way, no more troubles. (Oh, Shut up! And let's be pleasant for a change. (to myself).

The Les you often mention, is that "Blackie" of the other Les, you said is married. Did Blackie ever give a reason why he did not turn up the night of the dance, or was it strictly a personal reason.

The weather is beautiful, though a bit too hot, for the fruit, well you can imagine that. We went to the Cricketer's Ball up here last weekend & had a grand time, the people are 'bonza Aussies.'

We have just about got the fruit, the grader is finished after a year waiting. Dad threatened the man, he would go elsewhere if it were not bought up this week, as the good peaches were going to market without being graded.

Both Mum & Aunt Sylvia said they would write to you, as they both owe you a letter They never tell us much about themselves so you will have to pass the news on for us. Aunt Sylvia wants you to stay with them again, to show you a bit of London, and to meet the remainder of the family, which by the way are quite a lot.

If I don't move off this verandah, I will bake and I am afraid I don't want that to happen, I also have to wash the grey matter, "brains, I mean hair". So after that I will send my Best Wishes, to the Family.

All my Love to you Ken, Always yours. Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

22nd November 1946.

My Dearest Ken

Letter No. 62 arrived yesterday, which makes me feel ashamed of myself as I am only up to 54. I nearly caught up to you when we were in the 40's "Ho! Ho!" But during the time Aunt Alma was here, I was not able to keep up with my mail, but leave me alone I will catch up again.

My ducks are just beautiful now, do you think 8 weeks is too young to eat them, 14 will be 8 weeks at Xmas, and 23 will be 7 weeks, these I will keep & sell for the New year. I had 46 at the beginning, but one of the big ducks killed 9, so that means ducks & more ducks.

I told Pete about wanting beauty sleep, she remarked "Yes & he needs a lot of that too."

Cheers our 'New Grader' is at last ready for use, the plums & peaches make me feel sick to look at them, the apricots are nearly finished, and the pears nectrines & slipstone peaches have still to come. I went for a walk yesterday about ¾ of a mile, and took some butter to one of our new neighbours. They were very nice and seem to have taken the idea of some total strangers to the district, you see up here every one has married someone else along the river as they get old enough, and as strangers, we are lucky to be welcomed here, as we have been.

I hope to buy a horse with the money I earn during Xmas, and Dad said he might get me a saddle, so here's hoping.

I can't fit much more in here, so Best Wishes to the family

All my Love to you, Ken. Yours always. Margaret. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

P.S. I hope the parcel gets to you by Xmas. M.L.

24th November 1946.

My Dearest Margaret...

Another two letters arrived, No 50. & 51. Last Friday, that is the third week in succession that two have arrived in the same post.

Well you certainly sound to be up to your eyes in work, and don't I wish that I was mixed up in it, mosquitoes or no mosquitoes, where does all the fruit go Marg? Windsor? That's about the biggest town near Lower Portland isn't it, or does it go direct to the market in Sydney?

This Sunday afternoon I had intended to write a long letter to try and make up for a few missing, but I have just found out that I have hardly any writing paper left, not above three sheets and this is my last air Letter just look at the dirty big blots on the back page, that's the result of the table collapse of a couple of letters ago.

Just before I started writing, Dad & I had two games of chess, and through it we have upset Auntie again. We get settled in front of the fire and rather than tell us that we are keeping most of the warmth from her, she marched off into the sitting room and still is in a bad mood. That could all have been avoided if only she had said something to the effect that we had most of the fire. The effect is now that she gets the tea ready and bangs the pots about, and does everything to let you know that she is in a bad temper, but she never says anything. It would be much better if she flew off the handle and got it over within a big hurry.

This afternoon on the Family Favorites they played my favorite record, 'Vorne Munro' & the Norton Sisters singing "There I said it again" I even stopped the game of Chess.

Yesterday, Les, & I went to Huddersfield in the pouring rain specially to get my suit, and it wasn't ready. Boy! Was I Chokka, to think that I have to go another week in this De-mob sacking.

Well that's the lot this time marg. My love to all the family, & All my Love to you Marg. Always yours. Love Ken xxx

25th November 1946.

My Dearest Ken...

Today everyone is rushing round like scalded cats. Dad gave Joe (that's the boy) a day off, his family are going into Parramatta to do their Xmas shopping, so Dad said Joe could go, as he has not been for six months so that means someone else has to do all his jobs.

Pete & I are giving Mum a joint present, we had a photo taken together last September, and it turned out to be a success so everyone tells us, so we are having it enlarged & coloured for Mum at Xmas. Also we have {I mean I bought a nice jug} with an old English scene on it so I think she will get that for February, on her Birthday. We have got Dad a white sleeved jumper, and I bought Pete the cutest little vase in the shape of a basket in autumn shades, to go on her dressing table or to do whatever she likes.

I think Dad is going to have a look at a 'skiff' type of rowing boat with an engine in the middle. It will hold about 8 to 10 passengers I think, and that is what we want, something to hold a crowd as you ought to know that we hardly ever go out in ones or two's in our family.

Pete and I went for a dip in the Briny yesterday. I spent half an hour washing my costume, {it is white}. It was low tide and the seaweed and mud were thick at the edges, but once you got over that it was lovely, though you could not stand up in it, you had to swim.

Well after that nasty dig, I think I had better sign off before you refuse to write to me again. Kind regards to the Family.

All my Love to you Ken. Yours Always Margaret xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

25th November 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Tonight letter No. 52 arrived from you Marg, many thanks. And I am sorry to hear that things are not so good at your end now. While the situation over here now had improved considerably in the last couple of weeks.

I can still imagine what you feel like to have a little chatterbox more or less taking your place. How long will he be staying Marg? Right until the season is over, (I hope not).

There is just that type of a working Lad working with me, he has more tongue than the cow has tail. And what he can't do is not worth doing. I have just got to the pitch where all I say is yes or no, and every now & then ask him if his tongue isn't tired yet. Whatever I do in the warehouse is always wrong. So I just walk away from the job I am doing and tell him he had better finish it so that he can see that it is right, mind you he is the magnificent age of 14 and has been working there for seven whole months.

Well nothing new has happened since I wrote yesterday, except that the Sun shined for about twenty minutes this morning then it rained for the rest of the day and is raining yet, time 10.15pm.

How is Pete going on at the Uni. Does she lodge at the Uni, or live at 'Kennington' or what, it should be somewhere near examination time now isn't it Marg?

There's been quite a joke on the Radio tonight, they announced on the nine o'clock News that Mr Strackey the Food Minister said today that before Christmas, people in England will be able to send food parcels to Germany, to their men folks of course. Where on earth

they are to get the food from no one knows, but parcels are not to weigh above seven pounds, they will be lucky if they weigh seven ounces.

When I wrote last, you remember that I said that Auntie was in a bad mood again, well it didn't last long. Dad & Cyril go her to join in a game of Ludo just before I went out to meet Les, and she came round to normal again. Today she is quite cheerful, she has been laughing and joking all evening and is really very nice.

Well this is one more letter nearly finished Marg, I wonder how many more letters each of us will write Marg. The way this shipping situation is that is a very hard question to answer.

Well so -long for now my Love to all the family, and All my Love to you Marg Dear.
Always yoursXXXXX Love Ken xxx

Letter Nos. ie., mostly Kens letters became sparse due to Christmas Snows in the North of England, as well as others posted later. I can only remember back, and come to the conclusion that they were among those letters that unfortunately were on the bottom of the pile when the 1956 Hawkesbury River decided to invade our home, and so while rising to an unbelievable height & therefore our Rooster seeking shelter through open doors (as suggested by Police & Local Helpers as known back in those days) The water could then escape and hopefully wash some of the Flood Mud & debris that would accumulate. BUT--- Aforementioned Rooster had a Merry time, as he discovered the Baking Dish that I was to prepare and cook the evening dinner in -before Phone call- "Get Out Fast"! River rising both sides of property.---Rooster was dripping wet, & sailing round Kitchen when help arrived a week later....

27th November 1946.

My Dearest Margaret...

Just arrived home for my dinner and what do I find but another of your letters, No 53. It's not very often that I come home for dinner but today I am going delivering over the other side of Huddersfield and Elland is in between Halifax & Huddersfield. So here I am. I really mean lunch, because in the normal way we have dinner at night, that is Cyril & I, when we get home from work.

I thought that you knew who "Les" is that I knock about with now. No! it's not Blackie or the Les who got married while I was away. Do you remember those church letters that that I used to receive every so often, and if you do you will remember that in one of them, it said that a Leslie Challenger who was on-board H.M.S. Formidable was looking out for Kenneth Tye who was on H.M.S. Speaker. Of course at that time I had left the 'Speaker' and was on the K.G.V. but they didn't know that. Well anyhow that's the bloke, he was de-mobbed a month before me but I didn't know until I happened to meet him in the Halifax bus queue about a month after I was de-mobbed, and since then we have been going out four or five times a week together. Until this week, I arranged to meet him last night, but yesterday morning I got a phone call from his Dad to say he was off work, I think he said Tonsillitis. After work tonight I will go down to see him, I certainly hope that he is fit by Saturday as we were going to Halifax to watch a rugby match between Wigan and Halifax.

In my last Letter Marg, I told you about the lad I am working with, the one who is like your chatterbox. Well this morning I got mad with him, he has a very bad habit of throwing things around the place. Yesterday the hammer he was supposed to be throwing into a box, just missed me, but this morning, I was doing something, and WIZ, a knife stuck into the counter about half an inch from my thumb. Talk about getting mad, it's a good job the boss was in, or anything may have happened.

Well it's time I was off on my way to Hudds. And as per usual it is raining cats & dogs. Oh for a bit of Dinky-di sunshine. Don't you think my Aussie is good. My Love to all the family & all my Love to you Marg. Always yours Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

1st December 1946.

56.

Sunday 1st December.
1946

"Staines"
Lower Portland
N.S.W.

My Dearest Ken.

This time I am writing on ordinary paper, as I feel like writing a longer letter than usual, and I don't think it would fit on an air letter. I have to apologize for being a while in writing this epistle, as I went to Sydney for a few days, and while I was down I made use of the time and machine and made myself a summer suit it is a miniature imitation of the Royal Stewart Tartan in a silky type of material instead of woollen cloth. I also made a glengarry to match.

Stafford's parcel arrived yesterday, and everybody wanted to see it, so I opened it, passed it round, and popped it back in the wrapper till next January. I am thinking you on behalf of the cum, at present, but after his birthday, I will get Stafford to write to you himself. He often asks me "do you still get letters from Ken" but I don't know that he ever mentions George. I think that is because we don't mention him very often.

I feel very sorry for George, as he was kind at heart and even though he was

My Dearest Ken.

This time I am writing on ordinary paper, as I feel like writing a longer letter than usual, and I don't think it would fit on an air Letter I have to apologize for being a while in writing this epistle, as I went to Sydney for a few days. While I was down I made use of the time and machine and made myself a summer suit, it is a miniature imitation of the Royal Stewart Tartan, in a silky type of material instead of woollen cloth. I also made a Glengarry (ie., hat) to match.

Stafford's parcel arrived yesterday, and everybody wanted to see it so I opened it, passed it round, and popped it back in the wrapper till next January. I'm thanking you on behalf of Mum at present, but after his Birthday I will get Stafford to write to you himself. He often asks me, "Do you still get letters from Ken," But I don't know if he ever mentions George, I think that is because we don't mention him very often.

I fell very sorry for George, as he has a kind heart even though he was a bit hard to get on with at times. I personally will always thank hi for one thing, I don't think I need to explain what it is.

I am sending a couple of dozen "Women" magazines off to you on tomorrow's mail, I have been saving them as I came across them. Your Aunt will like them, as they are really much more interesting than your "Woman," that you have over there.

Three more days, and it is seven long dreary months since you left here Ken, and 18 more days since I first met you. You must have thought me awful, because George rode my bike down the hill to meet me and I made him get off and carry my bag up for me while I rode up. Then I bowled into the house, hardly noticing you in the front garden (sorry jungle) and started talking about some thing or other to do with Ruth. By the way I had a letter from Ruth, and she sends her regards to you.

When I started to write this letter, I felt as if I wanted to fill the pad, but now I can't think of much to tell you Ken. I am determined to fill at least one more page. Did I tell you that Dad might be going to buy a skiff, I think I did but as I am not sure, I will tell you as much as I know about it myself. It is about 15' long, and holds from 8 to 10 people at a time.

I hope this time next year, I will not be feeling like I do now, that is, not so down hearted. All my friends that have gone overseas such as Ruth & Miriam who went to Manila, and Canada, respectively, I am lost.

Also no sooner had Gwen, another friend come back to the city to live, I bunk off up here, and I see her only when I go to Rainbow. Honestly I am feeling awfully lonely, and I have never felt like this before in my life. I can't talk to Pete as I did then, as she lives in another sphere to me, everything has to be technical or you are not talking sense when she is around. And if I did not get your letters, I think I would go mad, as they keep me from thinking about my losses all the time. It sounds mad, but I think you will know what I mean. Just write as often as you can Ken, I don't mind. You must be sick of hearing that.

Did I tell you Pete & I went for another swim the other day. And my costume is white, I mean was white, & is again now a pale fawn, and as they say the material can't be boiled, I will just have to wash it over & over again till the colour is white once more.

It is nearly lunchtime so I think I had better be off to set the table.

Best wishes to Dad & Aunty, and Cyril.

All my Love to you Ken. Yours always. Margaret XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

3rd December 1946.

My Dearest Ken.

Here I am once again, feeling very pleased too, as yesterday letters No's 64, 65 & 66 arrived. I had not had anything for a week, so I all but hugged the

mailman. I am going to try to answer all the questions you have asked then I am going to ask a few.

The fruit goes straight to the Sydney markets, but most of the plums have gone to the jam factory, as they are much too ripe for market. I will never but plum jam as long as I live, after seeing what they make it out of, but as the saying goes, "What the eye doesn't see the heart doesn't grieve over." The only photo we have had lately was one of Pete & I taken together, I only got one cope at first, but as they turned out fairly well I will be getting some more, and so I will send one on to you.

Pete's exams are over now, and she is up here picking, I personally will not go down & pick, as Joe drives me mad, and Mum is all the time telling me what I can't do, and what and how I should do things, and it gets me down. I can't stand people nagging all the time, and since Pete has come it is much worse (sister or no sister) You know what she is like yourself eg., I took the afternoon tea down to the yesterday and Pete was -literally- yelling at Mum and I said 'keep quiet for a few minutes and have your afternoon tea,' the answer I got to that was a ripe plum on the back of the head, but if I say anything you know what Mum is like. (That is enough of us).

Who is this Les, I keep getting them muddled up, they I mean all your Pals seem to be called Les. We have not had a wireless up here. And the place is dead (Except when we are all arguing). I think I had better shut up shop for tonight.

Best wishes to all the family & All my Love to you Ken.

Always yours. Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

9th December 1946.

My Dearest Ken...

It is now Monday morning, and the postman will be here in about an hour, and I have to make the butter and take the men morning tea before then, so please excuse the pencil.

I hate writing letters in pencil myself, but Mum went to Sydney with Dad last night and she took the fountain pen. And the only other pen up here is Petes, and I will only be able to borrow that to address the front, as is good pen, and she uses it in her exams.

My ducks are getting very big now, and it has got to the stage where the others all go up after tea to see if there is any improvement in the size.

Pete & I have been in the river four times in the past week and there are two boys, Med students, Friends of Pete up here, both called David. The three them swam over the other side of the river yesterday, then we climbed the big hill behind the farm, and pelted rocks at a goanna in a tree for 40 minutes, as one of the boys wanted its brain. We gave up first and so climbed as far as we could go, then spent another 40 minutes coming down again.

I have read five books in the past fortnight, and am now reading "Kim" by Rudyard Kipling. I read it ages ago, but decided I would like to read it again.

Well I had better close now. Best wishes to all the family. & Merry Xmas.

All my Love to you Ken. Yours Margaret XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Posted 11th December 1946.

My Dearest Ken...

Here I am again, and I am tired as can be because every night this week we have gone walking, and so I can hardly stand up. Once again the butter has to be made and I suppose I had better get it off my mind.

The weather is beautiful, and we are all as brown as a 'Kanaka' Do you ever do any reading, if so you should read some of H.L. Gee's books, most of them are good. We have nearly finished picking the plums, and the big yellow peaches and the pears should be ready by Xmas.

Dad has not got a boat yet as the man had not bought it up to our place, so till he does or rather till Dad can look around a bit more we will have to go without. Did I tell you that we went to a Xmas party & out of three competitions, I won two, & Pete got one. It was a case of take a present & get a present, Mum got Dusting powder, Pete got a vase & I got face powder, which I don't use at all.

Koscha's kittens are really beautiful at present, and they spend all day fighting each other. You would not have thought three of the household went to Uni. Before tea last night we had a pillow fight, and all we managed to break was a glass cup.

Well I think I had better skip up to the post with this. Best wishes to the family. Lots of Love to you Ken. Yours Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

19th December 1946.

My Dearest Margaret...

Please forgive me once again for the ten days between 69 & 70, I don't know but I don't seem to have a minute to myself these days. Another of my friends has come from the Islands, Kenneth Broadly. Did I ever mention him. Anyway it so happens that the nights he doesn't go out with his girlfriend are the nights I don't go out with Les, so at present it is every night of the week that I dash home have dinner, wash & change and am out again within the hour.

Just now it is my dinner hour, and I am at home. The little old van is just outside the garden gate, or I mean hole where the gate used to be, it was an iron one so it had to go with the rest of the iron gates, railing etc., up and down the country, to make weapons for the war.

Last night Les & I went to see the Australian Picture, "The Overlanders" it was a real treat for Les & I to hear the dinky-di Language again, such as 'Good on ya' & 'it's crook,' etc., The other picture was Barbara Stanwick in 'The Bride wore Boots', but as we were late getting in we only saw half of it.

Well it looks like being a very poor affair in England this Xmas. Only this morning I was looking in a green grocer's shop and much to my surprise there were some very small oranges in the window. You would never guess the price of them they were 8p each. Grapes were 7/6 per pound. Apples are non-existent to say nothing of such things as... grapefruits which six years old children have never as much as seen.

There I go, moaning again, one of these days I shall possibly write a letter free from moans & drips.

Well it's time I was setting off on my journey to Wakefield about 15 miles from here, I have had 10 minutes over my hour now... Love to all the Family, &

All my Love to you Marg. Always yours Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

21st December. 1946.

My Dearest Ken...

Once again I am here, and as hot as is possible. The temperature in the shade is 90° so far and it is only half past eight 'am'.

There is a dance in the hall tonight, a Xmas party of the local children, and a dance afterwards.

The ducks are just big enough for Xmas, and so we are having a couple of ducks, some fowls, bonbons, sweets, cakes and lots of other things we have not seen for years. The bonbons were rather expensive, but as Dad & Mum said, Stafford has never seen any, so he will get a thrill out of it.

We are going to Windsor the day before, and staying for tea, so I will write again for next Saturday's mail as that is the next mail as he won't come on Xmas Day, which is the usual day for him.

We still have more plums to get off and the big yellow peaches are just about ready now.

We made a boat out of two kerosene tins and a packing case and called it, "Bill-der-bote-", you can imagine what it looks like, we took it over the other side of the river the other day, two people swimming on either side, it was fun.

I think I might be going into train as a nurse next year, it all depends whether I can get into a hospital at 17, as you really should be 18 years. It is not final yet, as Mum & Dad have always wanted it.

Merry Xmas, and Lots of Love to you Ken. Yours Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Letters No's 61 & 62 Missing at sea. Or wrongly numbered. ????? OOPS!!

Explanation re big muddle up at end of No. 63... so read on ...

So 63, or Date unknown . as envelope lost, silver fish ? have eaten the of the letters.

After Christmas 1946...

My Dearest Ken...

Yes here I am again hoping you had a Merry Xmas, and also that this year will be a happy one for you.

Have your Mails been held up, as I have only had two letters from you in one month. This last Xmas was the strangest I can remember, as we were up at the farm, also not having the Gott's for tea, we also had bonbons for crackers as most people call them, and I can't remember the last time we had them. I think it would be easier to describe the table than to keep on saying "We also had?????"

I now find I have four missing pages from this letter, so each page here begins and ends out of context. But I will type as each holds a memory. On reading back, letter No 60 ie., 21 December. 1946. refers to what was proposed.

Page ? possibly no. 5

Tomorrow will be the same.

When you reminded me of Xmas day you forgot about the Phillipino's (remember)

This refers to a game played by the eating Almonds when taken out of shells. One often has two seeds or nuts to the shell. The idea is to give (Preferably your

girl friend or the one you Love, one half, eat the other half yourself) then the next time you meet the first one to say 'Phillipino' has to be given the chosen forfeit by the loser. The fun can be hilarious.

Dad says he thought you were going to break your neck when he heard you jump down the front verandah, also do you remember George at the Gott's Family evening with singing 'We Doch & Doris' he would have entertained us all night if he had his way.

By the way he is home back in the old Baker-ing game and he also sends his regards to you. In his letter to Mum he wants to know whether I am still as big a pain in the neck as I was when he was here, or what he said meant that. I mean that is what it looked like to our family anyway I hope every !!!!!????? Possibly Page 7 " & that these are the names of the books I received for Xmas" Interesting in their own way, they were "This above All" "The Snow Goose" both about Dunkirk. "What chance had Love" a romance. And "The River Road" and American novel.

I think we might have a storm as a breeze seems to have sprung up and we don't often have a breeze up here in summer.

It is Rainbow in another week so I am going back to Sydney next Sunday to look after Dad, so I hope there will be a few letters waiting for me when I get back. The week after that.

Nothing interesting seems to happen up here, everyday is like yesterday, and we know?????? This is becoming a jigsaw puzzle. On reading back, page could have followed what I presume is page 7. Yet where does No 7 come from?? I will leave this all in as it gives me great pleasure, in stating that I finally found by (was it fair means or foul) that two letters were compressed together due to Fifty seven long years, Flood, moisture. I notice 'that even torn edges, and bent corners are identical'. Etc., One little corner finally relieved the secret, as I fiddled with it. So I will retype both letters, and so refresh my memory. Now Letter No. 63, or is it the missing No 62. Yes I think I will call it that, as otherwise all others will be thrown out of context.

So No 62. No Date...

My Dearest Ken...

Yes, here I am again hoping you had a Merry Xmas, and also that this year will be a very happy one for you.

Have your mails been held up, as I have only had two letters from you in one month. This last Xmas was the strangest not having the Gott's up to tea, we also had bonbons or crackers as most people call them, and I can't remember the last time we had them. I think it would be easier to describe the table than to keep on saying "We also had" There were nuts, almonds, walnuts, peanuts, brazil nuts, sweets of nearly every kind, bonbons (afore mentioned) fancy serviettes with Xmas Greetings & Father Xmas on them. Lemonade etc., by the gallon, cake, pudding loaded with trinkets & threepenny bits, jazz caps, whistles and blowers, and on top of all that we had salad & duck. The room was decorated with blue & yellow crepe paper, and the usual hangings such a father Xmas etc., I wish you could have seen Stafford's face. I can hardly remember most things myself, as I was only ten when we had a wax sweet dishes & plates at Xmas.

In one of the bonbons, I got a tape measure, which had your fortune on the other side, we all measured our waists before we started, and found that after eating dinner we were all two inches larger.

Thanks ever so much for the card, I would really love to see the snow, as the card seemed rather haunting and to use a romantic word, enchanting. I sent one off to you, three months ago by ordinary mail though, it should have reached you by now.

We went to a Fancy Dress Ball on New Years Eve. Pete the two boys & I went as a "Bridge Party" We made a four foot model of the Harbour Bridge. Out of Plum sticks, and put a toy train, air-plane & car on it, and Mum sewed a heart on my back, club on Pete, and the two David's had a spade & a diamond on their backs we gained the first prize for the most original. Mum went as "Seasons Greetings" & Stafford as Huckelberry Finn.

Within about another month, I hope to get quite a few films developed that have been taken during the holidays, and will get extra copies to send along to you.

I have to go and feed the ducks, so Good bye for the present. Best Wishes to all the family, and All my Love to you Ken. Yours always. Margaret.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Sunday 29th December. 1946.

My Dearest Margaret.

Well that's Xmas 1946 done with, and I must say it wasn't a patch on Xmas 1945, for me anyway. Let's see Xmas Eve George & I were working, at 1pm on Xmas Day & Boxing Day we left the K.G.V. and got to "Kennington" at about 2pm. I couldn't help thinking on Christmas Eve of what horrible mess George made of the pork, do you remember.

What kind of Xmas have you had Marg, did the neighbours up & down the river have party's, I should imagine they would have. Les & I have been to two parties but they couldn't put on a big spread owing to the food situation, most places only had two days off work, Wednesday & Thursday, and are getting New Years Day off.

Aunt May & Uncle Lewis have been over here since last Tuesday, and they just set off back to Southport about an hour ago. Aunt May says that she wrote to your Mom a few weeks ago and has sent a Calendar on, have you got them yet. I think I told you that your Xmas cards arrived O.K. But if I didn't, thanks for them, I hope mine weren't too late in arriving.

Les can't make his mind up whether he wants to go back to Australia or not, the reason being that he has an exceptionally good job here which offers much chance of promotion and he is doing very well at it. He worked in the office of a large textile factory where he was before he was called up, and instead of going back to his old position, he is about three steps higher, so it is quite a decision to have to make whether to immigrate or not.

Well I still have to get washed & changed, so for today I haven't as much as put on a collar & tie, just lazy. So my Love to the family, & All my Love to you Marg.

Always yours Love Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Dateless.

My Dearest Ken...

Hello! Here I come again just as noisy as ever, and hoping you are feeling well, no colds & sores this winter.

Nearly all the fruit is gone again but the pears are just beginning to ripen, and the big Blackburn peaches are being packed at present. Mum & I bottled 18 large 4 pint jars of peaches & pears, besides 20 jars (all sizes) of plum jam.

Guess what, I have grown an inch since you left, so that makes me five feet 4 ½ inches tall, I hope to be 5'6" before I am finished as a tall girl is not so likely to get very plump, & I hate big people (women I mean).

Have you got the photo's yet, or is your suit not ready. I hope the photo's I told you about turn out all right, by the way, What colour are the suits?

The other day I was sitting under the willow trees on the bank of the river when the sky became dark, then all at once the clouds seemed to part as if being drawn back, and the most beautiful shades of blues were revealed. While all this was happening, it started to rain. As I had been reading, I was quite annoyed because I thought I would have to go inside. But all of a sudden the sun popped out from nowhere and all the orchard seemed to come into colour there were greens, yellows of every shade, and I just sat there, staring and wondering why I could not paint.

Well that is all this time, so lots of Love to you Ken. Always yours Margaret.
XXXXXXXXXX

7th January 1947.

My Dearest Margaret...

Well Winter is here in fine style and no kidding, the snow is about three inches deep so far, and the snowflakes that are now falling are about the size of a sixpence, and boy is it cold. Every door in the house is very heavily curtained and Auntie rolls up a mat at the bottom of each door and we all sit around the fire complaining about the draft that we just can't find.

Tonight as per usual, Les & I were going over to Huddersfield to "Browns" Dance Hall, where I am trying to teach my feet a little rhythm. But at about four this afternoon Les rang me up at work and we decided that the best place to spend the night was beside the fire.

Well Marg, both of us seem to have been lagging in the letter writing since Christmas, I am sorry to say, for myself I am going to revert back to the old routine with at the very least two a week, how about Marg? Please say Yes! I received a letter from you last week, in which you talk of training for a nurse, please tell me more about it Marg, I can't remember you mentioning it when I was in Australia. Have you recently decided on it.

Things are certainly in a bad way with the English cricketers' in Australia. They have lost the first two tests and are well on the way to losing the third one, not half as good as the rugby team are they. Do you remember when we were playing cricket that day we went up to Christopher's place? Do you remember how Chris, beat his little sister when we were playing that game with the rings, does he still knock her about like he used to do? I'm blown if I can think of her name. Was it Sylvia? --- (No it was Ann)

Please excuse all the blots and changes in thickness of the writing. Tonight my pen is doing anything but what it should do, you should see the state of the Radio Times which I am writing on is in. It is covered in blots and marks from where I have been trying - in vain to make the ink run properly.

Well that is all this time Marg, hoping we can get the ball rolling to the old speed, at least two a week, so till next time. Love to all the family. Many Happy Returns to Stafford, and a Very Happy New Year to you all.... All my Love to you Marg.

Yours Always. Ken XXX

11th January 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

It's mail day again, so here I am. The weather is beautiful, and the river is great for swimming at present. We have had terrific storms both at Sydney & at Lower Portland. At Sydney we had 150 tiles smashed by hail, most of the tiles have holes the size of tennis balls right through them, and the rest were smashed by the weight of the balls, then two days later, we had a terrific hail storm up here. One ball came through a hole in the shed and hit me on the head, I have just got over the headache.

Pete's exam results come out today, here's hoping she passes, I don't know what she will do if she has not managed.

I am glad to hear that your Pal is better and also some of your other mates are coming back, mine are going away, such as Ruth, by the way she has a job over at Manila a assistant Kindergarten Mistress, for £4. A week, not bad seeing she has never had any training.

There is a meat strike as well as a gas strike on over here. And I think I'll cause a train strike if Stafford doesn't stop racing his toy engine all over the verandah, it is driving the whole family mad, it is his Birthday tomorrow. Mum and I are busy making a few cakes, he is not having a party, but just a small one between the family.

Have you been to see any of our relations again, I know they would like you to visit.

Well time flies, so I had better do the same. Best wishes to all the family.

All my Love to you Ken. Always yours. Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

12th January 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

At present the whole family is in the middle of a writing bee. Stafford included, as you will see. He is taking great pains and it is his first effort in ink, so I hope you consider yourself honoured.

I have got a craze for walking, but there are only two ways one can go and they are back to Windsor or on to Wiseman" Ferry, also the others don" like it at all.

I have read four books since Xmas and they were all rather interesting in their own way. They were 'This above all,' 'The Snow Goose', (both about Dunkirk) 'What chance had Love' a (Romance) and 'The River Road' (An American Novel)

I think we might have a storm it seems to have sprung up, and we don't often have a breeze up here in the summer. I have just realised that this letter is word for word similar to one written & called JUST AFTER CHRISTMAS . 1946. So I continue...

In his letter to Mum George wants to know whether I am still as big a pain in the neck as I was when he was here. Or what he said meant that, I mean that is what it looked like to our family any way I hope every on I meet doesn't think that. If so I think I will buy me a little old shack in the west & lock me in with myself.

The rain has started now, so that will mean nothing much to do tomorrow except preserve more pears & quinces.

Did I tell you Aunty Alma passed away on the 29th December, it is really hard to realize, as she was so cheerful.

It is getting rather late, so till next time. Best wishes to all the family/

All my Love to you Ken. Always yours. Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

15th January. 1947.

My Dearest Margaret...

At long last things are happening Marg Dear. Yesterday a letter arrived from Australia House...Here is a copy of it (it's a long one).

It gives me great pleasure to advise you that your application for settlement in Australia under the provisions of the Free Passage Migration Scheme has been approved.

You have been selected for settlement in the State of New South Wales, & your occupational classification upon arrival in Australia has been noted in our records as (a Farm Worker). I should add, however, that there is no direction of labour in Australia and you should be free to change your occupation at any time.

Any employment reference you have should be taken with you to Australia. And if you are a member of a craft organization you should take your Clearance Certificate or any other evidence of having been employed in your trade. Any tools which are likely to be of use to you in your work in Australia, should also be taken.

Action will be taken by this office to arrange your passage and you will be advised of the date of Embarkation in due course and given full instructions concerning shipping arrangements. Pending receipt of advice of your sailing date you should endeavour to continue in your employment and do not take any steps to finalize your affairs in the United Kingdom.

All British Subjects going to Australia under the terms of the Immigration agreement are issued with a Document of Identity. Application for such a Document must be made without delay on the enclosed form and returned to me at this office.

A Document of Identity will then be sent to you free of charge when your actual sailing date has been arranged. Yours Faithfully.

So now Marg, the day is much nearer, I think about a month or six weeks, and I should be on my way, I can hardly wait. Last night I was so excited after getting this letter I couldn't go to sleep, there were castles in the air all round my bedroom, and you were in every one of them. I wonder how much we both have changed since we last saw each other, I know one thing about myself that hasn't changed Marg, I think just as much about you as I did before and you know that's an awful lot.

Well I have to write to your Mum & Dad tonight & also your Aunt in London so much as I would like to carry on writing and telling you just how much you mean to me. I shall have to close, hoping that tomorrow I shall be reading a letter from you, it is over a week since one came so my hopes are high. Love to all the family &

All my Fondest Love to You Marg Dear. Always Loving You. Ken. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

16th January 1947.

My Dearest Margaret...

Many thanks for another letter from you yesterday. No 6, and as I said in the previous letter that I wrote a few days ago, I'm sorry that my letters slowed up in the last month, but my New Year resolution is to write at least two a week.

Well Marg I have nothing new to tell you, since last Saturday I haven't been out at night at all, we have just sat & played cards until it was bedtime, Auntie & I are doing fine now, we never have a wrong word, tonight Cyril has gone to the 'Tec.' Dad & Auntie are playing a game of Pacheesi, amuch like Ludo until I have finished this letter then we shall have a game ofwhich is Dad's favourite game.

Tomorrow night I shall be going out with Les, Friday being Payday, thank goodness. After I have paid my sixpence bus fare in the morning I shall have the terrific sum of 1½ in my pocket, so believe me it's a good job Friday is payday.

No I haven't had a photo taken yet, but I will do so soon. I have got one suit, a greyish blue striped or I mean blue & grey, and the other one is ready on the 1st of March I hope. That is a blue chalk stripe. I am looking forward to receiving some photos from you, providing as say 'if they turn out alright.

Tuesday evening there is a programme on the wireless called 'Focus on Immigration' so I am hoping it will give some news on the progress they are making. Dad was telling me that he read in a newspaper that they were only allowing 6,000 essential workers to go to Australia this year, I hope that is not right, if it is so, that I suppose will be building workers only. (Please excuse Blot, it has just happened,) as usual my pen is writing just how it likes.

Well it looks like I shall have to be saying so-long again, sending my Love to all the family and, all my Love to You Marg. Always Yours. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

18th January 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

Yes Here I am, and yes I will try and write at least twice a week, and unless anything unforeseen happens, I promise I will. I have made a promise, so I guess I will keep it as I don't make a habit of breaking promises.

Your know I told you about Aunty Alma. We had a letter from her Sister yesterday she wished to send us all a gift for Aunty Alma, so she wrote saying what they were to be, hoping they all got here. They are a solid silver watch (which was Uncle Bobs) for Stafford, a cigarette case (Uncle Bobs) for Dad, her engagement ring for Mum and it had beads for the girls. I know she had some beautiful cultures pearls in her luggage, and she lost all her other jewelry in the Blitz. When she was injured & her house was bombed. Also enclosed in the letter there was a paper cutting and it had quite a bit of her life History. One thing they omitted, she has a B.sc degree at Auckland University, as well as her other talents.

I was contemplating the life of a Nurse, but I have decided against it, as I am an outdoor person, getting up at 6am in the morning and retiring a 9 at night, would knock me out, and perhaps I would want to go out or write letters etc., I would be dead next day, so I think I will just get another job in Sydney when we go back to town. One job I would like is at the Book Depot. Can you remember it as a big book shop, I think it would be fun selling books etc.,

It has been so hot that we have gone swimming a 6 O'clock at night.

So till next time. Goodbye, love to your Dad & Aunt & Cyril, and lots of Love to you Ken. Always yours Margaret. XXX

22nd January 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

At last I am able to write to you, I tried to get air letters at the post office on Monday & they did not have any, so I went again yesterday as I came home from town, and they let me have two.

We had another letter from Aunty Sylvia and she said she has been hoping you would be able to get off to see them sometime. (I don't know whether she wants a third son) but I do know that if you do, you will meet plenty of people, relations etc., also, she said that as Uncle Arthur has his job back and she is leaving hers, you will be able to go sight seeing, in London. Peter has been sent his papers etc., and was going for his Med. The day she wrote, she is awfully disappointed.

I am glad to hear 'Les' is better now, please give him my regards. Also you had better look after yourself Ken, and not get any colds or sore fingers.

I am writing this in the lounge room, and you should see the roof, there are brown patches everywhere and plaster all peeling off, this was all caused by the freak hailstorm on New Years Day. Dad & I had to put 50 tiles on the roof the other night so you could imagine what I felt like climbing up the ladder and carrying a tile under my arm, it was rather terrifying looking down.

Next Sunday we are all going to the boat races at Wisemans Ferry, it is an all day affair with races, picnics etc., I wish you were able to come, as it is simply beautiful. I mean all the boats are different design, and racing everywhere. I know you would enjoy it.

I had better close now as I want this to get off to you, and the post office will be closed for lunch. So love to Dad, Aunty & Cyril.

All my Love to you Ken. Always yours. Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

29th January. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

Once again I will try & cramp all our doings into one little bit of paper.

I went into town today to see about another position and got it (good English but who cares) I am to learn Advertising & printing of magazines for a firm that sell farm produce etc., such as separators, butter churns, sheep shearing clippers, refrigerators etc. It will be an interesting job. I will also be getting 5/- more a week than the money I was getting before. Anyway I will tell you all about it next week as I don't start till Monday.

I am awfully sorry to say that Pete did not get through first year Med. And I think she has decided that it is a lot of study that she will have to go through. So I think she has decided to go through a Nursing training, and Dad had promised her a trip to England when she has finished so I think she will like that. (I only wish he would say I could treat myself to a trip to get over to see you. Maybe in time I might but till the food and shipping situation clears, I don't think he will allow either of us to leave Australia, but anyway, by the time I will not have to receive so much English mail (I hope you understand what I mean).

We went to Wisemans Ferry by launch last Sunday, it was beautiful on the river, and the picnic was rather fun. The heat was rather grueling, and I came home with a burnt nose, and filthy clothes.

I wish you could have seen some of the speedboats racing at about 50 to 60 miles an hour. Power Chief & Miss Barbara are the names of the best. You'd have enjoyed the watermelon we ate also.

I will close now, and most likely write tomorrow and tell you about our trip to the other side of the river. So Love to Dad, Aunty & Cyril, & all the rest to you Ken.

Yours Always. Margaret XXX

2nd February. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

Yes here I am doing my Homework again, in my own bed & feeling like my old self again. I have been waiting all week hoping that when I got back to the farm I would find some mail. But there was not a single letter from anyone, so here's hoping for next week, by the way I will be in Sydney from now on, and only at the farm at weekends.

Last Monday some friends who had a boat took us over the other side of the river, and we climbed the top of the cliff and some of the men took photo's of the orchard. They are quite good and maybe if we can get them from the chemist, I will be able to let you have some copies within the next fortnight.

On Thursday last, Mum, Stafford & I went to town in the morning, & I took Stafford to the Zoo in the afternoon, & I can honestly say that I wore my shoes out. (But of course I don't tell him that they were rather thin before we started) we had to see the African Elephant that has just arrived, and to find it, I think we walked the whole zoo.

This weekend was dreary, as we could not go in swimming, or the bike riding as it was raining so Pete and I spent the entire weekend choosing people to invite to her 18th Birthday Party in a fortnight. After doing all this we learned the Mr & Mrs Koehler are leaving, so we might not be able to have it, it is awfully disappointing for Pete, as she was beginning to look forward to it (not to say I wasn't enjoying helping her). That is all for now, so till next time. Love to the family & all MY Love to you Ken. Yours Always. Margaret
XX

5th February 1947.

My Dearest Margaret...

Here I am again on my night off work. It was not until last Friday that I started with the taxi again after the lovely weather we are having. By the look of things today it will not be very long before the job comes to a standstill again, it is snowing again as hard as ever, and I still got stranded out on the moors today. I was going to a place called Penistone and it was blowing like ????? and the snow was just piling up feet deep on the single track of useable road between the piles of snow ten feet deep on either side, in a slight hill I had to stop because of a wagon getting stuck & consequently I also got stuck, this was the van of course, it cost fifteen pounds to have it repaired after the tram hit it last week, and now the exhaust pipe has burst, so that is another item for Messrs. Moore & Walker Ltd.,

I wanted to write to your Mum & Dad tonight, but honestly I am too tired. I shall have to write this week though if it is the last thing I do, because I noticed a very small notice in the daily paper this morning, the best bit of news since I came back to England. It says two

schemes are to be opened on March 31st. The first is for intending immigrants personally nominated by friends or relatives in Australia. And the second for those employed in certain industries. So you see how important it is that I write as soon as possible.

Well Marg, Auntie has just got the supper ready so please excuse me this time for not finishing this page, but I am just about dropping off to sleep now. Best wishes to All. & All my Love to You Marg. Always Yours. Love Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX P.S. I hope that the next letter from you may be the reply to the one I wrote. You know the one mean. Lots of Love. Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

9th February. 1947.

My Dearest Ken..

Yes once again I am here and hoping you are doing the same. I have had one letter in five weeks, so I suppose it must have been snowing very heavily at the airports.

How is the young boy getting on at work, I hope he hasn't thrown any more hammers at you Ken, also that you have not caught any more colds or sore fingers lately.

Yesterday we all boiled in the heat, it was 104° F, at half past nine in the morning, in the afternoon it was raining cats & dogs, and has been ever since.

Talking of work, I don't particularly like the woman in charge, she is a typically nervous old lady, you know the type who can never find her glasses when they are on her nose all the time, she is driving me mad. She is driving me mad! Much more of her for one week, and although it may sound funny, I am a complete wreck. You yourself know that I never worried about homework etc., in fact anything else before, well I'm actually driving myself mad worrying about all sorts of little things & not having had a letter from you Ken; well I don't know where I am, or what I could have done.

We are not going up to the farm next weekend, as Pete is having a Birthday party at the local Hall. We are having dancing, and 60 girls & boys will be there, only I wish you were able to come and enjoy the fun we hope to have. I remember you were not well, or were worried at my party, and I looked everywhere for you at suppertime, you were out in the street, I began to wonder where you had got to. When you turned the corner under the light at the end of the street, I now know it was rather hot that night ---

(Comment by me fifty years later, on reading mail & returns from you at the time, I now understand what the problem was) --- Ah! Sweet mystery of Love, and the ignorance of youth. Mine that was.....

Well if I go much further, I will not be able to assure you that I send all my Love to you Ken. Yours Always. Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Sunday 9th February. 1947.

My Dearest Margaret..

Many thanks for two more very welcome letters which arrived here this last week. One on Wednesday and the other on Friday. I am ever so sorry to hear that Pete didn't pass her exams. She will be very disappointed won't she, it isn't possible for her to have another try at it, is it?

Well I certainly wish that you were coming over to England for a trip. I was only thinking the other day what a marvelous time we could have if it were possible for you to

come over to England a couple of months before I come to Australia, but I suppose I shall have to do as the song says and "Dream Again"

In the newspaper the other day, it said that the liner 'Aquittainia' was being transferred from the Canadian run to Australia so as to help out on the task of transferring the 600.000 would be immigrants. It can carry 9.000 at one go, so at say five round trips a year that is 45.000. It will be a big help but it's a good job they have a lot more ships or it would be twelve -year job to get 600.000 people out.

We are just about ready to have dinner now. It is nearly 1pm we always have dinner at lunchtime on a Sunday. During the week we have it in the evening when three of the four of us arrive home from work, but Saturday & Sunday we have it at lunchtime so that there is no more cooking to do for the rest of the day. Well it is on the table, steaming hot, so here I go to "Food".

Well that was dinner and very nice too and here I am with a cup of tea to finish it off with. By the way, I knew that I had something to tell about food, you know that time of honey that you sent in that parcel, you have no idea how useful it has been. To begin with we ate quite a lot of it, then Dad got a very bad cold, & the one thing that did him the most good was some honey in hot milk just before going to bed. Then I got these two boils, which have turned out to be carbuncles' and the honey has just about cured it. A few years ago when we were on holiday at Blackpool, I had a septic leg and the landlady at the house we were staying at, cured it for me by making a mixture of 1 spoonful of honey, 1 spoonful caster oil & 1 spoonful of flour, & bandaging it up with that on, it sounds silly, but it works wonders with septic sores & boils etc.,

We still have tons & tons of snow around. In fact it is still snowing and the roads are in a treacherous condition as you will see by the paper cuttings that I am sending, we should be getting signs of spring before long, and it can't come too soon for me.

Well I will close for this time Marg, hoping you will like your new work and don't forget to tell me about it when you write. Oh! And did you get my letter numbers sorted out.

Love to all the family & All My Love to You Marg. Always Yours. Ken. XXXXXXX

Notice I am back at "Kennington"

16th February. 1947.

My Dearest Ken.

The party is over & I will tell you as much as I can remember about it. We nearly had a good time, I mean I felt awfully mean, you over there without gas and light. (I hope you had coal for your fire & you have not got any colds out of all this bad weather). We had dancing & games and novelty jazz-caps and all sorts of other things that go with parties. Mum & Dad said they would give me a party like it next year - 1948 - so I hope you will be able to come to it, you have 1 year, 2 months exactly.

Joy Austen stayed the weekend and after the party we walked part of the way to the station with a few of the guests, and afterwards! Dad happened along in the car and took them the rest of the way; and we walked back to the hall. I walked 1yd. & took off my shoes off, Joy went 3yd's & pulled hers off, just as well we had evening frocks on and Mum could not see our feet. By the way I hope you are not disgusted, as I would feel awfully humiliated (ha! Ha! Boo Hooooo)

Pete had some very nice presents given to her including a vase that looks like a goldfish bowl and a writing case, underclothes & chocolates. Also you remember Mrs Moore, from down the road, she could not come but young Anthony came

A Romance by Mail

V1 12/20

Page 108

along and gave me a nice toast rack, which he has had since last year and has never remembered to bring when she came. Of course I have not heard the end of the toast rack yet. Mum said girls should have a drawer made at the bottom of their dressing table, at times I think it would be a good idea as every thing gets stuffed into them and they generally break under the strain.

I had better close now as Dad & Mum and Cousin George, who has just arrived from Western Australia and is leaving for New Zealand on Saturday, and is 71 years of age. His father was the eldest & my Grandmother was the youngest of the Harris family. Best Wishes to the family. All my Love to you Ken. Margaret.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

18th February 1947.

My Dearest Margaret...

Once again I am here with pen & air letter answering your letter No 69. I am very sorry to hear that only one of my letters reached you in five weeks, they must be held up somewhere, probably at this end in all the snow. In the last two weeks I wrote two ordinary letters, and this is the second air Letter

Tonight when I arrived home and read your letter I just felt as though I could sit down and write page upon page, but I had promised Les that I should meet him at seven. The weather is terrible but I had promised so I went. We only went to the pictures at Elland and I was bored stiff with the picture. What it was called, I haven't the faintest idea, I know I would have much rather have been sitting by the fire writing a few lines then dreaming for a few minutes then writing for a few more lines, then thinking about what was happening last year at this time.

At this precise minute last year, "H.M.S. Implacable" was at Jervis Bay and I was counting the days before we sailed into Sydney, two years ago today I was on the "Slinger" hunting for survivors in the Indian Ocean. We arrived in Sydney for the first time on the 25th of February, I think at this minute I should be asleep because at that time I was on night work and the time now in your half of the world is about 9,30am. and I used to go to bed at about 8a.m. in those days. On that morning I was up again at 11.30 and at 12.30 stepping onto Circular Quay for the first time.

Hello here I go again with blots of ink all over the place, the only way I can get this pen to work is by shaking it violently, and you see what happens. Ink all over the place.

Auntie is very busy here at the other side of the fireplace, she is surrounded by socks & is trying her best to get them all darned before midnight.

On the radio, I am listening to the "American Army" Program called "Midnight in Munich," at present they are playing "Carnival" with Harry James and his Orchestra.

Well I must be saying Goodnight Marg, and hoping that the snow doesn't hold this one up. Love to all the Family & All My Love to You, Marg.

Always Yours XXXXX Ken XXXXX xxx

18th February 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

All today at work I felt very down in the dumps. As Mum said a letter had arrived at the farm and she had forgotten to bring it back with her. I had not heard from you for three weeks, so I was awfully disappointed, and for some

reason or other I had a queer feeling inside me all day. Then when I arrived home, another letter had arrived, I nearly fainted on the spot.

When the thought has sunk into my thick head, I saw a quick glance on Dad's face. He is quite used to the idea of all the letters now, and even asked me if you had stopped writing to me, when I told Mum I had not heard from you. Thanks for them both, I sort of feel relieved now. Of course, I know the snow would hold things up a lot, but still having womanly intuitions I began to wonder whether you might have been hurt with the truck. (Horrible thought).

Anyway all is forgiven, and now for less gruesome thoughts, you mention, it would take 12 years to get all the people wanting to immigrate out to Australia. The thing that could be worse would be, that you should be on the last boatload in 12 years time.

What are your favourite jams, (please don't say strawberry or black currant as we can't get it ourselves). Also I will try to send more honey, only next time I hope you will not have to use any for colds, & sore fingers etc., but will be able to eat it all anyway I am glad it was useful.

I hope you are not trying to drive the truck round in all the snow. I will never forgive my loss if you are. (And I mean that too.)

It is raining cats & dogs again out here, and not nice at all. We had fine weather during the weekend an right up till tonight. I hope it does not rain tomorrow, as Mum leaves for Melbourne by plane.

I am enclosing some photos, will send more on to you later as Mum wants to take them to show her relations in Adelaide & Melbourne. Did yours turn out all right, I mean those taken in Llandudno.

Tomorrow I have to go house hunting. There will be no room in the car for me in the weekend, Dad is going up at lunch time Friday, as he has to take the new woman an her two little children, one 3 and the other 18 months I think. It will be funny having little babies in the house after all these years. I was at boarding school when Stafford was small, so it will be all new to me. Anyway if we don't get our house soon, I won't go up again till it is built. I think Arthur Lindsay (Ruth's Brother) is doing the Blue Prints now so here's hoping.

Did I tell you about Stafford's pup, if so, it is getting beautiful now and learning to chase the cows etc., As I was saying before I so rudely interrupted myself that I have to find someone I can stay with in the weekend, it may be with Gwen Murray, on an occasion like this, I used to go to Ruth's place but she is in Manila having a wonderful time at present.

It is just on 12 o'clock (no kidding) so I had better close before my eyes do. So till next time, look after yourself and Best wishes to Dad & Auntie & Cyril,

All my Love to you Ken.

Always yours... Margaret... XXX

22nd February. 1947.

My Dearest Margaret...

Here I am, once again, hoping that my letters are arriving a little better than they were doing when your last letter arrived here. Since I wrote on Wednesday, no more letters from you have been through the letter box of 22 Bath St, but that is only four days ago, not five weeks like my letters.

The "B.B.C." is just broadcasting the weather forecast, it says the further outlook is more snow over most parts of the country and road conditions are gradually getting worse. There is an ice flow half a mile wide round part of the coast & in one Northern Port, ten ships are unable to leave because of the weather.

On Wednesday I got the van back after it had been in with a broken spring for nearly a week, and since then I have been out in it all the time. On Thursday it was nearly 7.30 before I got the van back to the garage, at 6.30 I was twelve miles away crawling about in the snow changing a wheel. I don't know why it is but whenever I have a puncture, it always happens when I am in a hurry.

Did Pete get my card in time for her Birthday, I was a little late in sending it. Oh yes, and I must remember to send a card for Dad tomorrow, it is his birthday on Monday the 24th (that is Herbert's Birthday).

Cyril will be getting called up for the forces this year, so Dad has let him choose where he would like to go for the holidays this year, and he has chosen Rhyl in North Wales, so Dad Auntie & Cyril will be going together probably in June. As I told you I hope to go away to the Isle of Man with Les, that will be the second week in August.

Yes Marg! I remember very well indeed your Birthday party last year, I honestly remember that day better than any other day that I spent in Australia. As you say at supper time I vanished for a short time, I couldn't have told you why at the time, but I don't see any reason why I shouldn't tell you now, that is if I can put it into words. You must know by now Marg, that I think a terrible lot about you. And I hope & pray that you think as much about me as I do about you. That afternoon of your Birthday Party after I had been down to the shop for the candles for your Birthday cake, your Mum & I got on talking, first about your surprise party. Then about you. Then about you & I. We had quite a long talk, for there was nothing in the world that I would rather have talked about. It was by no means the first time we had talked of these things, nor the last and I believe that you had these little talks with Mom in the same way, and I hope you still have.

One the day of your party I hadn't more than a couple of weeks left in Australia, and I had a hundred & one things I wanted to say to you, and yet I knew that I couldn't say anything. Firstly because Mom had told me over & over again that you were still very young, secondly I wasn't sure just how you would take it, thirdly I knew that I had to come home and it was hard enough task to drag myself away without possibly adding anything more. Please Marg! Don't misunderstand anything that I am writing. All this nearly came out ten & a half months ago, for I had never seen you looking so lovely as you did that night. I am sure that if opportunity had knocked, I couldn't have resisted taking you in my arms and telling you everything that was turning over & over inside me. That is why I had to go outside and try to persuade myself to control my feelings, before I did anything which I may have regretted. I had to make some excuse for going out, and I said I felt bad, which I definitely did, only not in the usual sense of the word. Well there you have the explanation Marg. I can't make up my mind whether I have done the right thing in telling you all my secrets or not. I shall just have to wait with my fingers crossed for nearly a month until this reaches you. And then hope that you get pen, ink and lots of paper, and do exactly what I have done today. And if about a month today I get that letter I shall feel like taking a week off work and celebrating the fact that for once I have opened my mouth without putting my foot in it.

Well I will leave the rest to you Marg, and close, hoping that your homework book is already on its way out and you are just about to do the best bit of homework you ever did. Love to all the family. § All My Love to You Marg.

Yours Always....Love X Ken XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

25th February 1947.

My Dearest Margaret...

Today when I arrived home in the van, as I called on the way to Huddersfield, the postman came § brought me two letters from you, one an air letter, and the other containing the photos. They certainly worked wonders on me, for I was down in the dumps. Everything seems to be going wrong, but after I had sat down with some hot tea and read your letters and looked at the photos, I felt ten times better.

I am certainly relieved to hear that my letters are coming through again, and more than anything I don't want anything to delay, or happen to the previous letter to this one. If it has arrived you will know why, § I hope by now another letter like it is in the air heading for Elland.

Thanks for the Photos Marg. The one of you is not very good, as your Dad says but it is a photo of you and that's what matters to me. I am looking forward to the others, which your Mom has at present, those we took at Llandudno, were a complete failure, there were only two turned out at all and those were hardly visible.

Well I was in real trouble yesterday. I was stopped at a cross-roads by a policeman on point duty, and a tramcar came up and crashed into the van from behind, just about knocking me right through the windscreen. It dazed me anyway, and how on earth the glass didn't break, I don't know, anyway the impact knocked the clutch out of action and about six men had to push it into a side street to clear the road. I spent most of the afternoon in the police station making a statement and having all particulars taken. Thank goodness no blame for it is on me. I suppose the tram driver will get into trouble for it. Repairs to the van will cost about £15. This all happened in Bradford near (West Bowling) and I had to be towed back to Halifax.

It's a funny thing Marg, in the letter just received you were saying you were thinking I had been in an accident.

Well, that is all I have room for this time Marg. Best wishes to all, §

All My Love to You Marg. Always thinking of You XXXXX Love Ken XXXXXXXXX

5th March 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

This is only a quick note to let you know I am still on the face of the earth, and as it is very late and I am going out tomorrow night, I thought I would drop you a line tonight.

Mum spent one week of her holiday in Melbourne having a good time, and the second in a hospital in Adelaide with Dengue Fever. She is feeling better now and I think she will be out of hospital by the end of the week.

Dad, Pete & I went to the pictures last night "The adventures of Rusty" and "The Wicked Lady" were showing, both were well acted although one was very American, the other typically English.

Way back in November you mentioned that you were posting a parcel for this side of the world. It is now March and it has not reached port also a card you sent Pete for her birthday. I thought I would let you know as a matter of interest.

Also did you ever receive a letter from Stafford it was included in one of mine, about the second week in January.

I have nearly finished a cardigan knitted in royal blue, I intend to knit a pair of white gloves with blue tops when I have finished the cardigan, something to do on the train to & from work to keep me from dreaming otherwise I would get carried on....Dad says I must get some sleep, so Goodbye till next time. Best Wishes Dad Auntie & Cyril.

All my Love to you Ken. Always yours.
MargaretXX

Dateless.... Between 18th Febuary, & 6th March.

Me Dearest Ken...

Many thanks for the last letter posted (16th-2-1947). Also on from your Aunt May. {from now on I will refer to her as that as I have permission.} I was awfully pleased & surprised as well. I will answer it tomorrow I think. I think also I will write to your father again.

LISTEN MY FINE FEATHERED FRIEND, you get home at midnight, 5 nights out of seven & get up about 6 in the morning, that means 6 hours sleep, for heavens sake don't knock yourself out. Get as much sleep as you can possibly squeeze in as it would be awful if you walk off the boat in your sleep, or even get carried on perhaps.....

I hope I start saving soon. I have been saving £1, a week since I started work now that is £3. And about £7 I earned at Xmas helping Mum make preserves, so that means 10 pounds, not a bad effort to start with. If I keep that up it should be well over £50 at the end of the year, and in the bank. Fares take a bit and spending money all seem to fly....

It is raining cats & dogs here all the week; and if it does not stop soon, I will go mad & I get drenched, I mean soaked through. It sounds awful for me to grumble to you Ken but it is just as hard for us as it is for you with all the snow as you are not used to all the rain in the summer time. I can't remember it raining so much, often, for more than a week in years.

Please forgive me for all this grumbling, but I get dressed for hot weather or Vice Versa, and it turns out the exact opposite by midday, & my clothes are turning to ribbons & we can't be as free with the coupons as we used to be. Only 56 a year now instead of 112, & some goods are rationed, that is all cottons & woven wollens, which mainly wear out here. I know wool is not rationed, but we are not allowed to send it over to you, and we don't use much ourselves, compared with cottons, also I cannot save and spend that amount of money at the same time.

Any way till next time, I will say Goodbye Ken, and all my love to you.

Always Yours.
Margaret...XX

This letter Sent in envelope, therefore dateless. ??? March. 1947.

No! I can't rewrite this letter as only a small part of it needs to be deciphered, & I can read it when necessary. It was & is the first & only time I have tried to explain my own feelings on Paper, & at the age of 16 years & 10 months. On rereading

it for the first time in 50 years, I found it very strange to feel so strongly about my own maturity. I had even used proper writing paper instead of Air letter, and it still means as much this morning as it did then...

My Dearest Ken... God rest your soul... Much Love... Margaret...

Yes here I am at my homework again... Dad & I went up to the farm for the weekend... Pete stayed in Sydney and went to the Test Cricket Match on Friday and was to have played tennis on Saturday morning. It rained, consequently the court was soaking by the afternoon. It also rained up at the farm and on Sunday it was fine but the ground was still wet, and the water still dripped from the trees.

It was one of the most beautiful sights I have ever seen, the grass was a deep emerald green and the trees all shades of green & yellow while the river was brown with mud and the sky, all shades of blue. I wish you had seen it then, the smells, or 'perfume' (not nice word but it describes what I mean) was beautiful; Orange blossoms, animals, fresh grass, spring, 'summer' flowers and rain all mixed into one.

I am feeling pleased with myself at present as I have gained a rise in pay also I won a prize for deportment at 'Rainbow,' I think it will be a book.

Dad & I went down to the local shop (supposed to be 3 miles away, but seems to be 5, miles to me.) anyway Dad managed to wangle 4oz of tobacco out of the storekeeper after paying him by cheque.

You have caused me to come to one of those moments when I don't find talk easy, you ask me to answer you. Yet as you do not specify exactly what you wish me to say, but Oh! Gosh!, I don't know what to say. Yes Ken, I do think a lot of you, yet at times I think I must be mad, other girls my age spend their time "going mad over boys" as the saying goes, but I am afraid I don't. All I do is wonder what is the difference between them & myself... And I get all sorts of answers from my own mind. Such as 'Perhaps you don't have it in you to be hankering after whistles and looks from the male species, or sometimes it is just, 'Perhaps you are wrapped up in your own happiness and don't want to spoil it by having too many strings to your bow. And in the end, having a big disappointment by choosing wrongly in the end. This may seem mad. At any party I have a wonderful time and never seem to be a wallflower or have to twiddle my thumbs during dances like others do. Yes I too, at times find myself thinking of the other side of the world and of the things you might be doing, and then my mind wanders and I find I am wondering at myself of what it is, that makes me feel so queer at times. And then I say to myself 'You are young! Only just left school, yet girls at least 10 years older must wonder at you, and your happy content at times.' I doubt whether you will understand how I feel, and what I am trying to express as I am not very good at letter writing. This sounds funny, but I wake up in the mornings and remember the way you sat on my bed when I was not feeling too well, that time last March I think, then I wonder what Dad & Mum thought of you & me.

Ah! Well! As I said last time, 'Time will tell' but at present I can say; "I think a great deal of and about you Ken." I know I seem to have grown up too quickly at times. And frighten myself at times when I think how I used to giggle if a boy looked at me or whistled, but now I just go my way and wish they would grow some sense, and, let girls walk along the streets without having been subject to rude remarks.

Please do not take all this the wrong way as I dare not read it over for fear I have said too much or maybe not enough but till next time I think I had better close as I owe Mum a Letter So Love to Dad, Auntie also Cyril.

All my Love to you Ken. Always Yours. Margaret XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

This letter had to be finally 'reviewed' as it is a critical part of our story.

10th March 1947...

My Dearest Ken...

It is awfully late & I have been dressmaking all night, also I have a cold which stops matters every now & then while I have a sneeze & a cough etc., It's a wonder I don't get Flu. Or pneumonia or something as I have been running round in my next to nothings trying on the skirt all night and now I am sitting on the bed in my night attire and watching the door with half an eye for fear it bangs and wakes the house up. I can hardly see what I am doing as I have been gathering a skirt to part of the waistband, you might not know what I mean but it is the essential part that the skirt hangs upon.

I am sorry I did not finish this last night, I was as tired as I possibly could be and nearly fell asleep writing.

Mum was to leave hospital yesterday, but we have not heard whether she has or not. You always seem to be lucky, (as that card that you have says you are), always missing out by the skin of your teeth, such as falling down the hangar on H.M.S. SLINGER and the recent car accident, glad to hear you were not hurt or anything like that.

It has been boiling out here, and I suppose it will suddenly change again & we will freeze in a couple of days time, strikes me the weather has been most unusual all round the world during the past year. I wish you could come to our Easter Show... We have everything exhibited from sweets to engines, & it is like an enormous Bazaar, or Fete. Our firm known as 'Dangar Geddye & Malloch', have two large stalls, they are and were involved with selling everything the country man needed for house farm and shed. I am getting experience in the art Dept.

I think the paper will not stretch after the bottom of the page, so till next time, Love to Dad, Auntie & Cyril. All my Love to you Ken.

Always Yours... Margaret XXX

27th March 1947...

My Dearest Ken...

Firstly I must apologize for the pencil as we have run out of ink or something. Pete had some in her pen & I had to get her to address it as she refuses to lend her pen to a soul.

I started a letter at work today and had two pages down, and blow me if I left it with my other belongings, so I am writing tonight to tell you now, I still have a fair idea of how to write a letter to you Ken.

One more letter of yours arrived yesterday, thanks a lot. I have been very busy this last fortnight, sewing etc., I have nearly completed my new winter outfit, also a cardigan for wearing to work.

I did not know what to give Mum for her Birthday last February. So, I decided to have a studio photo taken as I have not had one taken of myself. And all that meant something decent to wear, so I have not had it taken yet as I am waiting till I finish my outfit, by that time it will be Dad's birthday also, so I think I will get a large coloured one between them.

I have just finished the book, "The Story of San Michele" by Axel Munthe a Swede, it was very good, I enjoyed it very much.

Stafford has been learning to play the piano this last month and he is doing very well at it much to our surprise. We thought he might not practice, but he won't miss for anything or anybody. Pete starts nursing on the ninth.

Once again I am sorry about the pencil but the thoughts are here and really think I had better come back to 'Kennington' and go to sleep, as the time is 11.30pm.

So till next time. All my Love to you Ken. Yours Always..Margaret...XXXXXXXXXX

30th March. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

Firstly I must say I am sorry for this long break since I wrote last. But it is not that I have not wanted to write, and I have, as I hope you know. But time seems to fly and I start sewing about 8 o'clock in the evening and all of a sudden Dad or Mum come out and say 'Come on, off to bed' and it will be about 11 to 11.30. While I don't seem to have done anything at all.

While all this is going on, Mr Inner Man keeps saying and protesting, 'but I must write to Ken', this can't go on forever, all this rushing around. On Friday night, I was starting to write. When a knock at the door came to interrupt, it was one of the Church Club members dropping large hints that it was Club night. 'Was I coming?' Mum said I had better go, seeing I was stopping down in Sydney for the weekend. I did not get home till half past eleven, feeling like a big heel for still the letter had not been written, but here it is now, and how are you Ken, no bad fingers etc., etc., or colds.

I have not heard from you for a week or two, but the weather is so awful over there at present that it's a wonder you can get outside the door, let alone get to the post box. I hope things are a bit better soon for you, I suppose Cyril's garden is ruined now with all the snow.

Guess what happened! Remember our old school. It was burnt to the ground, or nearly. The only part saved was the big Assembly Hall and the few classrooms underneath, there were three explosions in the Science rooms, and then the fire started, all the boarders lost their clothes except their pyjamas that they had on, there are 140 boarders in all. The Police think somebody had a hand in it, as M.L.C.

Adelaide was burnt down a few weeks ago. Our School was worth well over Fifty thousand Pounds, so the commentators say.

I went to a Rainbow dance on Saturday night, and had a fairly decent time, I wish you had been there too. I also played tennis all Saturday afternoon, and was awfully tired by about 10 o'clock. I stayed at the Tillman's for the weekend and went for a car drive round Centennial Park and a walk through the Gardens then I came home and got the tea for the family who arrived from the farm about 8 o'clock.

We are all going to the show on Wednesday night, and will try to explain all I see in the next Letter They sell small paper bags with string handles for 6 pence, and 1/- a bag, you pay 1/- and get a sample of every kind of chocolate they make. It is quite fun.

Also they have cattle judging and horse riding and hurdles etc., as well as sideshows & dog judging.

I think I had better close now, as I have got to get a new job to start tomorrow and I had better not sleep first day. The hours 9 to 5 and no Saturday, which is very good and better wages. I have been trying for better hours for ages, and on Friday morning I saw this job in the paper and went down to see them, and they accepted me, it will be much better altogether.

So till next time Ken I send my Love to you, and Best Wishes to the family.

Always Yours. Margaret. XXX

Presently, as I am copying these letters, the day being Wednesday 20th March. 2002. I find it strange that the date is similar. The fact that my daughter, suggested that she take me to "The Show" next Saturday, a fifty klm's there & back, the trip, for her will add another 100 klm's all together, and the bags are now costing anything from \$15, to \$30 or more, and have very little in them. It is years since I have been able to enjoy this Annual pleasure, and I am looking forward to it as I did in March 1947. And now, once again in the year 2004, I am having to retype many of the letters. As unfortunately, an extra careless person wiped a hundred or so from my Computer, as well as the Floppy disk being mislaid during the transfer of all my belongings to my present home in Richmond.

8th April 1947...

My Dearest Ken...

First of all I must apologize for the delay in this letter, but there are no mails during 'Easter,' so this will go first thing after next week on the 16th. It will be 2 months since I last heard from you Ken, and honestly I do miss your letters. I hope mine have been getting through to you. I certainly know how you feel when the postman turns up without one.

I will be glad when you are having better weather over there, for then our letters will be much better. I know it sounds selfish but I do think of you an awful lot, and the letters help, so here's hoping for better times all round. Just think, today week it will be my birthday again. By the way, I wanted to send something to you for your Birthday in July, and personal presents were ruled out. So I have sent you a cake, I hope you like it I don't think I would be able to send icing sugar but will find out, and send it on by airmail if I can.

I wish the year would go a little quicker I don't exactly know how to say this but I do know when I am out at parties or picnics or dances etc. I wish you were able to come along too, it seems funny you not being there. Heavens I wish time would fly a bit faster & things turn out the right way & you won't be unlucky enough to be chosen for the last boatload of people coming out here or something as bad as that.

I bought myself a set of 15 volumes of encyclopedia for £18 at the Show, all my savings went up in smoke, so I will have to start again next week.

And would you believe it! Along with everything else we owned, (except, my "Tatty Hat Box" and these letters that resided inside) my special Books also went under the 1956 Hawkesbury River Flood waters. Hence the reason for hopefully rescuing our past Memories for Family History...by nothing more than a grand effort of "Stickability"

Pete starts Nursing training tomorrow .at 9 o'clock. The boat races are on Saturday. The critics think Newington will win this year and the average weight & height are 12 stone & 6ft, tall not bad for school teams. I will close now but will write again Thursday night.

Best wishes to Dad, Aunty & Cyril and Lots of Love to you Ken.

Always yours Margaret. XXX

P.S The other day I was walking along George St, City, & I saw a sailor outside a shop he looked so much like you, also when I stared rather rudely he would not let me see his face, as I walked past he turned the other way, what made me get such a shock he was a Cook he said?? He could have passed as your twin brother as he walked like you; about the same height & had a serge suit like yours & not the issue suit like George had. Gosh I got a shock, I wish I could have seen his face to convince myself a little better, only I know you are 12.000 miles away. I would have spoken.

13th April 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

I have just written to your Aunty May, which I should have done a month ago but could not bring myself round to do so as I hate having to write a letter to someone I have never seen, but it will be easier next time.

Oh! Ken please find out why your letters are not getting here, as I have not had one from you again this week. There is only one birthday present I want, & that is a letter from you, I am sure I will cry with joy if I do, and I mean that more than I have ever meant anything in my life before. It is now either seven or eight weeks since I heard from you. I hope you have not been hurt or anything dreadful like that.

Well, I start my eighteenth year turning seventeen on Tuesday next week, & I hope by the end of it you will be back here at "Kennington". It seems a pity without you here also Pete has started nursing now & she was my confidante so now I am even more alone than ever.

You will never guess what happened, "Newington" won the "Head of the River", and that means a big dance on the 1st of May. I do wish you were able to come, as they will all have a good time. I went to a 21st birthday party last Friday night, and did not get to the Regatta as I was too tired, so when I have finished writing to Aunty May, I will crawl into my hammock and be rocked to sleep by the waves of dreams. (Ho! Ho! Ho!) Wouldn't I make a good novelist.

Dad asked me what I would like for my birthday & I said I really needed a raincoat for the winter weather, so he told Mum to get me a plastic coat & cap, Mum said she would try & get one in yellow as it is my favourite colour. I think it will have to be a present from all. Best wishes to all at home. Lots of Love. P.S. They are playing, "I'm a little on the lonely side" on the wireless.

14th April 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

You'll never guess, but the first letter in seven weeks arrived today, and I have had my wish (only next time put it in the right envelope & not one to Mum & Dad). Yes I have written to Aunty May and I hope to find time during this week to write to your Dad again. When I got home this afternoon, I did the usual thing & looked on my dressing table for a letter & another disappointment, that was too much and I felt the grumps creep on & then Mum called out, 'A letter from Ken inside!' I got a surprise & said 'Where?' at the top of my voice & rushed in, kicking Dad in the shins trying to get there fast as possible I have not heard the end of it all night from Mum & Dad, they have been teasing me since tea time.

You ask me what I think of your coming out. Well it is hard to say. I would like you to come back, but you must remember that although you want to get back

yourself, you have many people who are Dear to you, & it would not be fair of you to offend them by saying too much. Please don't think I am trying to give a lecture, but if you really want to know, I would not mind how soon you are able to come back to "Kennington."

And I don't think Dad & Mum would be at all surprised if you walked in the gate tomorrow.

You know your relations have known you all your life, where as, I have not. So, it is hard for me to help you in your decision as to what to do. - But whatever it may be, I hope, yes hope I have not offended you & it is the last thing I would ever want to do. But I hope you understand that I don't want to hurt anyone's feelings, especially yours by saying or should I say swaying your decision in any way on the balance.

I will be one year older next I write, so till then, I will send all my Love to you Ken, & my regards to the folks at home.

Always Yours... Margaret

XX

Memo.... Yes I turn 17 years the following day.

17th April. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

First of all, I thank you for the card you sent it is really the nicest card that I have ever seen. It strikes me you & I like the same type of beauty, that sounds funny but I think you know what I mean. I like it so much, I am going to frame it as I did the one you gave Pete & I the Xmas before last, they will look very nice in my new room at the farm.

By the way Mum has to go to see the Architect about the plans next week, & when the Council had approved of them Dad will be able to get started with the building itself.

It's a funny thing, I start a letter to you Ken, & I have all sorts of things I want to tell you about this & that & then after I have written a few lines I don't know what to say next.

Dad gave me a plastic raincoat for my birthday, & Mum gave me three books "leaves in the Wind," "Day will break" both by Elizabeth Blackhouse, and "Cobbers" by Thomas Wood & 6 handkerchiefs. Pete made me a pretty lace dressing table set, and also sent me Irish linen handkerchiefs & telegram from the hospital. Also there was a beautiful china (Wedgewood) sauce jug, and a solid silver ladle for table use, these both belonged to my Grandmother when she was first married, and she had given them to Mum, and Mum thought I might like them. She gave Pete a ladle & a little jug on her birthday.

You don't happen to have a photograph of yourself in Cissy clothes do you Ken, as I would like to have one, I only have one photo of you on the d/table, & it can't be up at the farm & down at Sydney at the same time.

I am including some snaps taken at Xmas time, when Mum remembers what she did with the others, I will let you have copies. It is awfully late Ken so I think I had better get some sleep if possible. This past week I seem to wake up a lot & find I have been dreaming but a little bit of good sleep would not hurt me.... So till next time, I send my regards to Dad Aunty & Cyril & All my Love to you Ken. Yours Always. MargaretX

P.S.....18/4/47...This morning just before I left for work, it came over the wireless, three ships were going to be detailed off to carry 7000, Immigrants (British) out of Australia, so here's hoping you are on either, preferably the first. This nib is new, so consequently it is very fine & light so, I will write again Sunday.... Love Margaret...

This day, Wednesday 16th October 2002, that is early morning, this day – (And again 14th April 2004) due to all but my copies carefully filed presently, not unfortunately in order of original dates, but in Ken's & my separate folders. Yet still the Floppy missing so as the words I had written back in 2002 nearly repeat the same theme, I will stop digressing and continue as before... So as they say, continued in my next... I woke due to not being used to traffic sounds at 4.45am; I showered, cooked a hearty breakfast, and decided to get back to the task of completing the "Computerising" of the Letters from the "Tatty Hatbox." And because my brain refuses to accept most possibilities that are not immediately in my thoughts, I started to check throughout the remains of dust, mothballs, cards & nibblings of silver fish and other creepy crawley's still residing in the Case.

As usual after an hour or two remembering this , that & 'tother', I had to once again accept, it is not to be, that I will ever find Ken's missing mail, and that our story will have to be remembered in those stages of the SAGA, from my replies that escaped the ravages of FLOOD, FIRE & TIME, wherever his letters appear to be missing.

Once again I digress, as I stop for a 'Cuppa coffee' and quaff it with relish. Carry on.

21st April 1947.

My Dearest Margaret...

Yesterday & today have been two horrible days, until ten minutes to six tonight when I arrived home from Halifax and found two most welcome letters waiting for me. Very many thanks for them Marg, they have done me more good than anything or anyone could have.

I have had the van and the taxi broken down at once, all day yesterday I was crawling about underneath the taxi as black as a 'Kanaka' until about 7pm when I downed tools in disgust, went home & had a very much needed bath, then went to bed. Today I have had to work in the warehouse, something which I detest, owing to the van being in the repair garage. I hope to goodness that it is ready for tomorrow morning, because I am sure that another day in the warehouse with that young lad that I have told you about will drive me raving mad. He's a little know-all, and talks about nothing all day long.

The Taxi is running again now, the Boss must have been repairing it today while I was at work. I forgot to bring any writing paper down with me tonight, this is a page out of the taxi job book. It's to be hoped that Mr. Wilkinson the Proprietor doesn't come in or he will go mad, well he's mad already. Someone once lost the wash leather, so what did he do, but stop three taxi drivers and three wagon drivers from doing their trips so that they could look for the wash leather, and then they never found it. STOP.

That was another customer, and naturally something had to go wrong with the car. This time it was the steering. I came to a corner and the blooming thing wouldn't go round it, anyway I managed to get it back to the garage and for the past half an hour I have been oiling and greasing the steering connections. Huh! The paper is looking dirty already. Please excuse it Marg I have no means of washing my hands down here at all. I am certainly wrecking my clothes these days. My old faithful navy suit is just about on its last legs, and at present I am using the demob suit for working in & after two weeks of work that is looking a bit shaky.

Pleased to hear that you have written to Auntie May, they have gone back to Southport now, the day after we buried my Grandad so when we shall see them again, I do not know.

Tuesday 22nd. April.

Here I am again 24 hours later, this is what they call 'Letters by the installment Plan'. But I'm afraid it's the only way Marg, and I hope you don't mind

Believe it or not I'm as black as a again, not with the vehicle's this time, but with poultry equipment. .

Mr Wilkinson keeps a lot of poultry on the hill side behind the garage, & today he has been to a sale and bought two hen huts, and four of us have been carrying them up the very muddy hill. I did well, only slipping twice, you should see Tommy & the other taxi drivers. He's been down about six times and is just covered in mud.

Please excuse the odd bit of paper, but it is all I can find without taking another sheet from the taxi book.

Well I suppose a few customers will be ringing up before long, the pubs will be closing at ten and that's the time when we are busiest so I will say goodnight Marg! With Love to all the family & All my Love to You Marg. Always Yours xxxKenXXXXXXXXXXXX

P.s. My two nights & days off are Wed & Thurs. Wed. I have promised to meet Les & Thurs. I have promised to write No. 84. (FAIR DINKUM) Love Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

21st April 1947.

My Dearest Ken..

Hello! Again, I am writing tonight instead of the usual Tuesday as I am going ice-skating tomorrow night, do you skate at all, if you do you will have to come along when you come out. I have never been before, but I intend to learn as quickly as possible. Pete has been before & rather likes it as a matter of fact.

Mum said she & Dad were talking up in the car the other night. And said that he thought it would be better if you went to different farms in the season to gain experience on the way other men run their farms. The man working on our farm presently does not know much orchard work as he has always worked on a dairy before. There is a big Agriculture College a matter of 18 miles away and during the holiday times it is open to any farmer who wants to learn more about their work. Dad said it would be a good idea if you were able to attend their lectures the first opportunity, as you would be taught pruning, and other types of orcharding. I know this that Dad has to have someone to work the orchard and he would rather have someone who would be willing to read, attend collage and also take more of a personal pride in the way the orchard is kept. At present the man won't plow the ground around the trees unless told to, or won't cleanup the shed unless reminded to & I think Dad would like you to work the place.

*Pete & I went down to the Gotts the other night and had a great time, we sang & danced from half past six to half past eleven & did not get up till 10 o'clock the next morning..So till next time. Best wishes to the family. Always Yours. Margaret
xxxxxx*

30th April 1947.

My Dearest Ken..

On arriving home today first thing I did was look in the letterbox and I was pleased as there were two letters in it for me. They were soaking as the box was

full of rain water, but it only took a few minutes to fix that, as I put them in the oven.

Last night Ruth's brother Arthur came out for the night as he is going to be our Architect for the new house, & he wants to build it on Swiss lines. I myself think it will look very nice... I told you I went skating a week or so ago and I had a grand time, I would, I should say, I hope to go again some day very soon and try to do a little better at it. I only hung onto the edge for the first 10 minutes and after a while I was able to move round with someone else holding hands.

Tomorrow night is the "Newington" Victory Ball, & we are all going along in a party, but I wish you were going as my partner instead of my girl friends cousin. I have met him before, at the regatta & he is an awful bore & it is awfully hard to be nice & have a good time when you know you would rather be with someone else...

I have been doing a bit of extra Piano practice lately, & found my playing greatly improved & really I am surprising myself. My Encyclopaedia arrived the other day & they are very good, well bound & are nicer than they appeared when I first saw them... I think I had better close now as I have a frock to iron for work & shoes to clean, so till next time. Best wishes to Dad, Aunty & Cyril.

All my love to you Ken. Always yours. MargaretXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

5th May 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

Hello! One whole year has gone & here I am at my homework again (hoping) you are doing yours as well. I have changed in some ways, -not much- I am taller 'but still as thin as a rake.' I have seen more of the outside world, and a pretty bad world it is at times. I have been out more, seen more people & generally my ideas on most things have taken on a very different outlook. Yes Ken! Although it sounds funny, I have considerably grown up, but I am still as mad as ever in other ways, changed, but other people say I have... So I suppose I have... But not enough to stop me dreaming of all sorts of nice things you would like me to dream about Ken.

I often dream about, what it would be like when you first come back. I hope they hurry and wake up at - Australia House - as they are taking long enough to do anything about helping you all get out here. I think you had better change your name to "Adolf Cohen" of some other name like that & you would be given the Royal suite on the 'Queen Elizabeth' on her next trip out. Please don't let it be too long, as I am afraid I'm not very good at letter writing & I am sure I would much rather have you there too.

I never feel like going walking now I have taken up making slippers as a hobby so please let me know what size both your Aunts wear. And please shake the inside out of "Australia House." If they are bit abt help, I don't care what you do, but please don't be long.

Best

Wishes to Dad, Aunty & Cyril, And all my Love to you Ken.

Always Yours. MargaretXX

15th May 1947.

My dearest Ken...

Yes here I am again at long last. I had been waiting till I had signed that for for you. You have no idea the fun Mum & I got out of answering the questions, as all the way through, Dad was saying, "A Mans' a Mug, a B..... Mug" in fact I have never heard him swear before, not continuously at least.

In fact I don't think I will forget it, as it was funny as a circus, and you got it for nothing, and all through Dad was vowing "He" would have nothing to do with it, and "He" would not be responsible. I would love to be able to explain it better but I think that would be impossible.

These are some of the questions I had to answer - Your name - Address - Age - Present occupation - Married etc., - Relationship to Nominator - Which 'Brand-Oops! Branch of U.K. Forces you were in - Official No. - Rank - Unit in which you served - What you intend to do when you get out here. Then I needed a witness!!!! That was when the fun started.....

Arthur is coming up this weekend to finalize the plans of the house at the farm. It looks as if you may be out before it is finished.

When I started to write this letter I had been storing up things to tell you Ken, but now I can't think about any of it, in fact, I am too excited, in fact I can't think straight. I hope that Indian fellow was correct in his statement, I think it would be about a year to the day, or just about a year to the day, when you visited the native quarters in Trincomales, Ceylon, and you had to pay 9 pence for a banana. By the way, which Country is it in, I can only find 'Trichinoply' in India.....

I started Ballet lessons last Monday, it is something to do, also it is good this way, I get exercise & fun all at once, I am in the Advance class as the teacher, a Miss Dollie Brooks considered that I am rather good at it. The Advance class do all the Ballet for the "Campsie & Ashfield Musical Society." I will be in the next production. (Perhaps,) it is fun, and it fills in the weary weeks. We saw "Song of the South" last night, and "Ceasar & Cleopatra" will be starting next week in town, I hope to go to that, it should be good.

I will post the form tonorrow, and it says on the back that if approved they will let me know when you will arrive and by which boat. So next time.

I wish Dad, Auntie & Cyril all the best. My Love to you Ken..

Margaret...xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx P.S. Peter goes to camp next Thursday.....M.L.

20th May 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

Hello again, it is five days since I wrote, but I never seem to have time to turn round these days. We had visitors at the farm all the weekend so that was out, it was dancing last night and I was tired when I got home, so here I am tonight.

Stafford's latest craze is to be a Minister, well he is really funny, you see you should be 'brev-erent' (reverent) to God, and also one should be serious when referring to the scriptures etc., so we were informed and you had better not laugh at God..

We have moved down to George St at work and it is much nicer, I have a big office all to myself, and the tram stops right outside the door.

In town at the present moment, one can't move for "Yanks." At least, this lot seem to be fairly well behaved, and the girls seem to behave in a better manner.

Although I heard our Station Master say the other day that he has not seen so many blondes go through the barrier for the last six months.

Pete officially starts her first year next week, & she goes on the pay roll. She is a year older than I am & she will get only 30/- shillings a week, out of which 20/- shillings goes to board. When she is finished 4 years training she will be getting the amount I get at the present time which is awful, as she will be 22 years old then.

I seem to be stumped for news, & I have nearly finished the page so I think I will "Bo-peep," so, best wishes to Dad, Aunty and Cyril & wish him all the best while he is in the navy.

All my Love to you Ken. Yours Always...Margaret...XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

25th May. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

At it again, so I hear from Mum & Dad. At least I would if they were here, but they are not, so I will get on with the good work.

Last Tuesday Mum was doing the washing. The phone rang, she went upstairs to answer it, and afterwards had to go out. It was not till the next morning, that she remembered the copper, (and the clothes.) Anyway you can imagine what happened, the copper is burned out, and a pile of Dad's shirts & pyjamas, and two of my best dresses, plus a lot of underclothes, towels etc., were ruined, plus a lot of unrecognizable things that were just black and crumbled to dust when touched. I hope the insurance man gives reasonably good compensation.

I did not go up to the farm this weekend, but stayed to go to 'Comrades' for a change, as I hadn't been for months. I went to town on Saturday morning, and at 12 o'clock, I went to dancing, as I had nothing else to do. At 4 o'clock I went down to tennis, and then went to the pictures with the others in the evening. They were two crime pictures that we saw, remember the big lout of a boy that lives over the road, well he kept leaning over my seat all the time, so I was nearly sitting in the seat on the other side. Just as well it happened to be my girlfriend in the spare seat, and she didn't mind.

Well I had better close now, and write again during the week, so best wishes to all.

All my Love to you Ken. Always yours. Margaret XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

3rd June. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

I am awfully sorry that I have not written in the past week. But I have not any feeble excuses to offer, I can only tell the truth & say I have been tired out & still am, as well, I have a splitting headache, but I could not leave it any longer to write to you Ken, as even a week is too long. Please forgive me.

By the way I had a letter from your Dad last week which I will answer soon. Also I would like to hear from you again Mr. Tye, one in the past fortnight, you (Bad Lad). I can honestly say that if the authorities don't let you out soon, either I will have to

'hitch hike' over there, or you will have to 'hitch hike' over here, only you are not likely to get a couch to lie on this time, as it is too far.

(This reference relates to Ken hitching a ride from Sydney to the Blue Mts. On a furniture wagon, during the Xmas of 1945. The family were staying at my Uncles Log Cabin at Faulconbridge, and when Ken had leave, he found a way to join us, unexpectedly according to Mum.)

Pete gets every weekend off down at the hospital now, so she will be home for the weekend, so we are going to a concert at the school, it is called "Music through the Ages" and the present pupils are acting in it. Also in about two months time I will be dancing in the Musical Comedy, "Miss Hook of Holland" you Father may have seen it as it is a very old play. We will be doing it at the Campsie & Ashfiled Town Halls.

The other girl came back to work today after a month away, she had he tonsils out, and did not pull through, so well, that is why she was away so long.

Stafford has gone into a higher class this term, as he was doing too well in the other class, and his teacher could not keep him occupied. Pete got a letter from him, his first effort in ink, he wanted to know how the little girl with the 'brocin' (Broken back, was getting on, and he does not write on a 'bawd' board now but uses ink.

Dad, Mum & Arthur, are still discussing their plans for the new house, it should be finalized very soon. I will be glad, as this business of going up every weekend is driving the whole family mad.

By the way Ken, this may sound funny, but when you left I was still at school. I don't know how to put this, but well, we appeared to get on very well, but as you say, you did not want to offend Dad & Mum, but, I think they know the worst by now, and I would so like to know what you intend to do when you come out. I had to fill in the form with such particulars, and it seemed so ridiculous that I had to ask Dad what to put on the form. You see to complete the form, I had to put in what relationship you were connected to me. There was only one thing I could put, that would help in anyway. 'Well' you know what that was, 'well' it was a big step to take, you said you would like me to do that much for you, so as it was all right with Dad & Mum, I did. I suppose it is only natural now to know what you intend to do. Mum says you want to take up farming etc., but I would like to know from you, your ideas, incase I may be of some help at any time.

Ken it is half past eleven, and, well I started to write with a headache, I am nearly asleep, so please write as often as possible, as I do like to hear from you Ken, so Best wishes to Dad, Auntie & Cyril. All my Love to you Ken.

Always Yours. Margaret. XX

8th June. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

Hello! Again, I hope you are enjoying the heat wave we are reading about, or hasn't it reached you up there.

I still have not heard from you. Your last letter was written on the 21st May, and you mention that you were going to Blackpool, so I suppose you were too tired, and busy to write round about the weekend, I hope you had a good time over there all the same. Has Blackie lost his twitches yet (ha. Ha!). Please try & write more often, as at present it is awfully lonely at home, as Pete is at Hospital, and Stafford is at school, while in the evening Dad reads the paper & Mum goes to bed. You can imagine the difference there would be from when we are all at home, so you see I am leading a different sort of life to the one I am used to. In fact there is nobody to talk to really from Sunday to Friday each week, Pete is home Saturdays but we are generally at the farm, so I don't see her.

I don't mean to grumble, but I think you would understand, and I only have your letters to look forward to. Before I used to be about 10 letters behind you, now I am a couple ahead, so you see I get awfully lonely. All my old school pals come from miles out in the country, and those that don't, all seem to have gone overseas so please don't grumble if I get the grumps, as honestly I will be glad when I see you again. The house seems so dead compared with last year, especially the first half.

Pete & I went to a concert the other night. It was called "Music through the Ages" It started with cave men up to 'Bobby soxers,' swooning over "Franky Sinatra".

Well next I will try & be more cheerful, so Best Wishes to Dad, Auntie and all the Best to Cyril while he is away from home. & All My Love to you Ken.

Always yours Margaret XXX

10th June. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

First thing, I promise I won't grumble about anything but the weather, which by the way is awful, it was not cold till about 5 o'clock when everyone started to move homewards. But now the wind is whistling round the house, the shrubs in the garden are all blown out of the earth they grow in.

Tell Cyril I am awfully sorry his 'slave' was off duty, but really we must not be selfish, and surely I can have a turn once a week. By the way I hope he gets a good price for his garden also I am sorry if in my last letter you are annoyed with me, as a letter came from you the day I posted it, and it was too late to get it back.

I had a letter from the Immigration Bureau today, they asked my age. Which, by the way I put a 18 with Dad's & Mum's permission. As you see I will be that by the time you get out, so if you have to answer my questions like that, I think it would be best if you put 18 years, it would carry more weight Dad said, strictly confidential of course.

You say you will be back by the 19th July, I do hope your cake arrives while you are away. By the way I have never received the parcel you sent last October.

I have written at least once a week for the past four to five weeks, so I don't understand why you have not had a letter for a fortnight. By the way you are up to No. 90, you forgot to put the date so I can't tell you when you wrote the last letter, but it was posted on (3rd July??). I am going to write to Dad & Auntie now, so till next time. All my Love to you Ken. Always yours, Margaret.

XX

17th June 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

I have my homework books out again, I received your letter written on the 10th June, you poor old thing, 'Grumble! Grumble!' I hope poor Cyril's Garden hasn't suffered too much. By the way they are playing "None but the lonely heart" on the wireless at present.

Guess what, I received a letter from Ruth today, the second since she left last November, so I am going to write to her tomorrow night.

Today seems to be my lucky day. With a letter from you, one from Rufus, by the way she sends her regards to you. I got a lift in the local taxicab to the station

and it just saved me missing the last train to town this morning. Also I have been trying to buy a 'grey suit for better wear, and I managed to get one today. In fact it has been an all round good day. I hope it is tomorrow as well (greedy, 'A'in't I.')

Did I tell you I started to knit a jumper about a fortnight ago, I have only got the back to do, and it will be finished, then I think I will finish my white doe-skin gloves that started to sew last year.

At the present moment I am as hungry as a hunter & Mum won't bring me any Food!!!@#&##' she declares that I will have to finish my homework! And get some for myself. Have you had the photo taken yet, as I am getting a bit sick of the sailor that persists on sitting on my dressing table.

Well, I think I will out after food, so Best wishes to Dad, Auntie & Cyril. And all my Love to you Ken. Always Yours. Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

P.S. I will be posting the parcels to your Aunts, so could you give me your other Aunts address, I will send a pair to Aunt May later on...M.L. xxx

1st July. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

Yes it's homework time once again and as "George" would say, "I hope this finds you as it leaves me, in the pink for now"

A letter came from you yesterday Ken and as we had made arrangements to go out last night, I could not answer it. The family went to the pictures tonight, they wanted me to go too but it was a week since I wrote last, so I was not going to wait any longer, so here I am. I can't wait till you get this to tell you I had my photo taken and for the proofs last Friday, and they will be finished on the eleventh, so by the 21st I hope you will have one. Mum & Dad say they are very like me, but they are rather nice, so I find it hard to believe that I looked like that. Tommy Handley is on the wireless at present with the usual noise.

You know that I filled in the form, well! I didn't think they would accept it but Dad said that he would nominate you. It looks as if things are moving, as I had a very nice letter from them when they sent me the other form, the next day another form turned up, so I said to Dad that he had better fill that in as well. Mum rang them up for me and said that we had a crop coming off and they said that (Mr. Calwell, the Prime Minister.) was going over to see if he could get more ships for all of you to come out. So you may and I hope you do get out by the end of the year.

I made a shirt, ie., blouse in the weekend and finished my jumper.

Your holidays start on Friday, so I suppose you won't receive this till you get back, so I am saying "Happy Birthday, Ken Dear" with a Happy Year to come with an Extra Happy Future. Lovingly Yours. Margaret.

XX

P.S. I hope Dad, Auntie & Cyril had a nice stay in Wales. M.L. xxx.

7th July 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

I am sorry I have not written before, but Mum is in bed with Bronchitis, and I have been looking after her as well as going to work. By the way please forgive the scratchy writing as the pen nib is rusty, and won't write properly.

Stafford is in bed with Chicken pox at school, so with going down to see him, and everything else, I am fit for bed myself.

I was asked to enter a Queen competition to night to aid the R.A.A.F. Memorial Hall and Mum said she thought it would be all right & that she would help me.

The eleven o'clock news is on now, and I can hardly see what I am writing. But please forgive me, as when I got home from dancing tonight I had to wash up two lots of dishes also get Mum two lots of orange drinks, besides have a bath and wash my hair, usual Monday or Sunday procedure.

A letter came from you today, thanks a lot, it helped my morale quite a lot only I wish you had walked instead of the postman. By the way the Gotts' paid their way out, and had to wait 18 months for a ship, so it is just as bad whichever way you come, (sorry)

I think I will close now & write on Thursday night. All my Love to you Ken.
Dear.

Yours Always. Margaret. XXX

9th July 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

At it again, only for the first time I am not on my bed. I am actually sitting on the floor of the lounge with one leg over a cushion, and the other curled under me shivering like a leaf out in the cold wind. We didn't light the fire tonight, but put the radiator on as we were going to see "Gone with the Wind", but at about 7 o'clock we discovered that yesterday was the last night. So I decided to write to you instead, and do a spot of practice which I have not done properly for months.

Do you remember Pete's girlfriend Joy, she is friendly with a boy (ex R.N.) anyway after he went home he evidently joined the Australian Navy straight away, and at present he is in Japan, and will be out here in September (Lucky Devil). If Mr Calwell doesn't hurry up and get some work done, I think a lot of people will have something to say.

Of all things to do, I went to sleep in the lunch hour at work today. And the pbss said I must be dreaming, because I would smile all of a sudden, then stop, then I would smile again. Anyway about an hour after my lunch hour finished they decided to wake me up, so about five people started to throw things at me, then one started to bang the typewriter near my head, anyway I slept on till Mr Mac. Lent right over me, and touched my face, and I got such a fright, I sat up and called out "Ken" as he did it the way you used to do it. They asked me what I meant, but of course I did not let on, so they are none the wiser, but you can imagine the shock I got.

There is a session on the wireless at present, it is music played with a steel guitar, it is good too. I rather like the twang the get with it, don't you?

I am just cutting my last Wisdom tooth, consequently every time one gum touches the other I hit the roof, Oop's !!??@ ** There I go again, bang crash etc., (Just the ceiling falling in).

I get the photographs on Friday, so I will post one on Saturday, they are a bit big. But to have it coloured I had to get a large one, as they would not colour a small one as they said the artist did not get enough scope. I hope you won't mind, I will try to get hold of a smaller one if you prefer it, just you say the word. Ken, do please get me one of you in Civvies, as I do want to get one of you without the wretched cap.

Mum, Pete & I are going to start some knitting for the young cousins, such a gloves, jumpers & berets, ready for next winter, or we hope so. By the way thanks ever so much for your Aunts address, I will be posting a small parcel to her within the next fortnight. Please tell her I send my Love, also I hope she is feeling much better since summer began, and you have had some sunshine.

I have not heard from Auntie May again, so if she wrote, it must have been by ordinary mail, also I will be writing to Dad again soon.

What did poor Cyril say when he discovered that you had not looked after his plants as you promised, also I gather you did not starve while you were away.

There are rumours in the paper, that we are going to finish with clothes rationing out here by the end of the year. I wonder how long they will keep it on in England etc., It seems that over in Paris that if you have money you can get any amount of clothes you want, it is certainly not right.

I noticed in the paper the other day, that Patti Morgan a Sydney Model, just over in England, took 35 swimsuits, 25 evening frocks, 15 suits & 30 dresses over with her. How she got them with her coupon ration, I would like to know, also they must have cost a small fortune.

It is nearly eleven o'clock, so I think I had better go to be now. So Best wishes to all at home, and once again. All my love to you Ken.

Always yours. Margaret...XX

13th July. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

Hers I am once again sitting on my bed at the usual Sunday night studies. I hope you are enjoying your holidays, I suppose they would be half over by now.

I got the photo's on Friday, everybody that has seen them says they are very like me, so I suppose they are, but you will have to give me your opinion when yours arrives.

I hope it will not be ruined getting over there I will send it by Air mail, so it won't take so long to get there, and also there is less chance of it getting lost.

Before I go any further, please excuse the awful 'scrawly' mess on the paper. But I am writing with a rusty nib in an ordinary pen, as Mum has taken our fountain pen up to the farm, as she will be away for a fortnight, I think I had better buy a new nib before I try writing again. Mum spent all last week in bed with her bronchitis, so that is why she is spending all next week etc., up at the farm.

Ken, would you see if you can get a copy of "I know that my Redeemer liveth". It is out of Handel's Messiah, I would prefer it in Mezzo Soprano key if you could, I can't get it anywhere in Sydney, and they told me at Palings that it is not being printed out here any more. I want to get a copy to give to Pete for Xmas, do see if you can, if you can't I will ask Peter next time I write.

I will close now, but I will write again next Thursday 15th.

Best wishes to Dad, Auntie & Cyril. All my love to you Ken.

Always yours... Margaret. XXX

16th July. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

The wind is nearly blowing the chimney off, (outside), the fire is so hot that I am gradually moving inches further away from it (inside). I will get my grouses all off at the beginning of this epistle, (1) I have one letter from you in three weeks, (2) If I don't hear from the immigration board soon, I'll refuse to be called a British subject, but become Jewish or something and I'll go and see Mr. Caldwell personally and being Jewish, he'll listen to me, and maybe I'll be hanging round the docks in about a month after that, waiting for some ship or other to berth etc., etc.,

How is your holiday going, I hope the weather is fine with plenty of sunshine. How is Les, & the twitch. Did I tell you that I have to go into a debate. It is "Should Married women go to work" we are for, personally I think it is silly, and I hope the other side don't argue back too much otherwise I will be tongue tied as I am last speaker for our team. It is something to do with Rainbow.

What do you think of the latest hit tunes, I think most of the latter ones are awful but I do like the lot out of "Zip Ed-de-Do-Dah", were good especially "Sooner or later you're gon'a be coming around", don't you. But that thing 'Open the door Richard' and 'I'm a big girl now' are simply awful... Did you see 'The Magic Bow.' If you did, you would remember the tune he, (Paganini) was always playing to the girl; I can't remember her name, did or didn't you like it.

Stafford has 'Chicken pox', and has given it to all the prep school, also a couple of Masters. Remember the time he had measles. Xmas 1945 and you & George tried your hardest to get it, you even kissed him at one stage, or was it George, I know you sat as near to him as you possibly could, by the way, how have you been keeping lately, no bad fingers colds or grumps lately.

Aren't you positively sick of this business, I know I am. I was asked out to some dance or other tonight, for next Thursday night, and I could not refuse, but honestly I wish it were you, who had asked me Ken. I hate going to things like that. Oh! I can't express my feelings, it just won't come maybe it will come to me one of these days. Then you will get the lot, in fact the whole shooting match, which by the way seems to be the latest saying out here.

There is a man who comes into work to see the boss quite often. Don't try to guess where he comes from, but anyway I look forward to his coming in now, just to hear the sound of his voice. Yes! It's England he comes from, and Yorkshire the County, and Yes! I feel seasick every time I hear him speak.

Talk about sea, there are some funny types in this world, the different nationalities I see go past our shop door at work. Chinese, Yanks, Indians, Dutch, Maori, Fijians and others I can't tell whether they are black or brown.

I will close now as it is half past ten, and I am nearly asleep.

Best wishes for now to Dad, Auntie & Cyril. All my love to you Ken Dear.

\always Yours. Margaret... XXX

20th July. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

Tomorrow is the Great Day, I am so sorry you will have to start work as well, anyway as I will be going to bed as you are getting up, I will most certainly have time to think of you.

I posted the photo on Friday, and it should be there during the week. You will find the stamps on it rather interesting, it is a 10/- stamp & worth keeping, I had never seen one before as a matter of fact I did not know there was such a thing.

I will now proceed to tell you why I am tired. First of all, on Friday night, Jean & I were invited to a BarO-b-que, but after second thoughts, we decided not to go, as we would be late home (Just as well, as they all missed their last train home. That meant they had to wait for the paper trains in the morning.) Anyway Jean decided that she would go to the pictures, so asked me to go along as well, which I did 'Three little Girls in Blue', And Breakfast in Hollywood' were showing.

When I got home I did not feel like going to bed, so I had a hot bath & washed my hair & went to bed at two o'clock. Shame on you Margaret). And anyway, I was up at nine next morning at Ballet for lessons at Ten, and eleven till two, then I went straight into town and skated from three till five, came home, and was out again at seven, as Jean had asked me to the local school dance, I had a great time till some silly fellow asked could he take me home, I quickly replied with a rather hurried & I suppose impolite NO. Which rather set him back on his tracks, but it made me feel uncomfortable for the rest of the evening. I did not even know his name, let alone seen him before, so I will let you imagine what I refrained from saying to him, for politeness sake. Anyway way Ken, as this page is nearly full, I will close now & write again on Tuesday, as Wednesday night is the 'Debate and Thursday night I have been asked to A Ball at Drumoyne with the Tillmans, so.

All my Love to you Ken, Always Yours. Margaret...XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

10th August. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

I think it is about a fortnight since I last wrote to you. But I know you will forgive me when I tell You I have been in bed with influenza, and although I wanted to write, I could not stir enough energy to sit up, but I will not waste anymore of the letter telling you about that.

The weather had been beautiful up till yesterday, and all yesterday morning it rained, and it rained all the time we were in church. It poured cats & dogs just as we came out. And so that is why, when I finish this letter, I have to get hold of a stiff brush and try & get the rain spots off my hat. Did I tell you that I saw the Borovansky Ballet at the Theatre Royal, they were very good, and I am going next Thursday to see them again.

I don't know, if a few weeks ago I complained of being home too much. And now I have every Monday from six to eight booked with dancing, Tuesday with letter writing, Wednesday tennis, Thursday home, Friday Comrades, Saturday usually the pictures, Sunday Church, so I hardly seem to get time to breath.

Last Thursday night, after Rainbow, I met Dr. Gott & Mrs Gott for the first time. They were nice, but he is 80, and as energetic as a man of 20, he walked to the Quay for something to do, last Wednesday, not bad and two days before that he walked down to Uncle John's works.

I am so glad you liked the photo and that it arrived safely, and also thanks a million times for the notebook, it is lovely and it was a great surprise.

I will close now Ken, sending Best wishes to Dad, Auntie & Cyril and please tell Dad I hope he is cured of his trouble very soon, and also that I hope Cyril does not have too long a stay in the Army.

All my Love to you Ken Dear. Always yours. Margaret...XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Due to that nasty flood, once again many of Ken's letters are missing, as quite a lot of water seeped up through the top of the wardrobe & the bottom of the Tatty Hatbox. Unfortunately quite a few from now on either were water logged, disintergrated and or were badly eaten by silverfish etc., I have tried to rescue the remainder, and have spent many hours using Magnifying glass, Memory & much patience & yes even rude remarks from family & friends have not deterred my stubborn effort, which I hope one day will be appreciated by one & all...BUT... I procrastinate long enough and so 'Up and ever onward' toward attaining the completion of this muddled or was it Muddied effort...

17th August 1947.

My Dearest Margaret...

Well Marg! Tomorrow it will be three weeks since your last letter arrived, and believe me I am somewhat worried about it, I have never gone so long without a letter from you before, surely there will be one tomorrow morning.

Dad & Auntie have just gone out for a walk, it is a lovely evening, well its been about the best week of the year this last week. The temperature even rose to 93° in London yesterday, it was about 87° up here in this part of the country is just about unknown.

I haven't been able to get that music for you yet Marg, but I have gone over to Bradford to se Auntie Annie. I called to se her yesterday morning when I was in Bradford with the van, she isn't too well again, but said she was feeling a little better that she did a few days ago. Cyril seems to be faring very well in the Army, and hasn't grumbled about it at all yet, at least not too us anyway. He comes home in the evenings and does his best to please Auntie, but she seems to try her best to be as awkward as she can be. I think the only time when she will be satisfied, is when I am in Australia and Cyril is somewhere in the Army and there is only Dad & Herself to cook, wash & look after in general, but I suppose even then there will be something wrong. She very rarely says anything to me though, but she knows that she would get just as much back as what she gave me, but still I shouldn't grumble Dad could have married someone a lot worse. We always have the best of what is available to eat, and the house is kept spotlessly clean, in fact too clean sometimes I feel I ought to take my shoes off before entering the door.

By the way, since I have been writing this last paragraph they have come home and Auntie is now preparing the supper. Dad has to work tonight, starting a 9.30. until 7.30 in the morning.

Please Marg write as soon & often as you can, I have missed your letters so much this last three weeks, I will have to close now. Love to all the family &

All my fondest Love to you Marg. Always yours. Love Ken...XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

17th August. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

One of these days, I will find myself writing at a respectable hour, once again it is 11 o'clock, and I have at last got time to think (no rude remarks please).

I am so glad to hear that Dad is not as bad as was thought, & I do hope they will soon put his trouble right.

They are playing the Ballet music of "Beau Danube" that I saw the 'Borovansky' perform a couple of weeks ago, "Strauss wrote the music, Choreography was by Borovansky himself, it was really marvelous.

We had learned two of the dances for "Miss Hook of Holland" The Musical Society decided to do "Rose Marie" instead I am pleased as though it means we have to learn more dances.

I went to a concert last night, and it is the first time I have been really bored, and I was well & truly this time. The compare was 'corny' as the saying goes, and I could hardly raise a laugh, which is rather out of place for me.

I read in the paper tonight that they were bringing out German displaced persons by the thousands soon. Also a woman who had applied for immigration has been waiting two years, and has not heard yet. Dad suggested that you get a job on one of the ships as he said it is awfully boring being a passenger. Also you have no chance of getting out here that way, as things don't appear good for British Immigrants.

It is now lunchtime (Monday) and I am just finishing this off before I go up & post it off to you. I have been up to my ears in work all the morning and still have not got my head above water.

So till next time. Best wishes to all at Elland, and all my love to you Ken,

Yours Always. Margaret...XX

18th August 1947.

My dearest Margaret.

Very Many Thanks for a very long letter, & I am so sorry to hear that you have been down with the Flu. Now I understand why I went three weeks without a Letter. You don't want to be ill very often, for your own sake as well as mine, I lost pounds in weight with worry, I couldn't imagine what was wrong, in fact all the family were wondering every time I came home Dad or Auntie would say, 'Still no letter from Margaret' but this morning when I called at home with the van, I had hardly closed the garden gate before Auntie was at the door telling me a letter had arrived.

Well the heat wave is still on, it is actually 14 days since we had any rain in Halifax, it was in 1938 that we went so long, but so far this year we have heard nothing about any possibility of a water shortage, you couldn't call it a drought.

Next Saturday the football season starts, 'Ho-rah' I certainly enjoy watching a good game of rugby football on a Saturday afternoon, Les & I usually watch either Halifax or Huddersfield, this year Huddersfield have two Australians playing for them, but they say they are very good players.

Ted Heath & his music are on the radio just now, and they are playing the tune voted as No.1 tune of the moment, & that is 'People will say we're in Love'. As No 2, they have 'Girl in Calico'. No.3. 'Down the Old Spanish Trail'. And you would never guess what they have for No. 4. You remember what we all sang round your piano on the fourth of May last year. I could hardly believe my ears when they played it a few minutes ago. 'The Maori Farewell song 'Now is the Hour', talk about memories I was back at your piano feeling just how I felt that Saturday Night. Well I can't get much more on this air letter Marg. So I must close. Love to All the Family &

All My Fondest Love to You Marg Dear. Always Yours Ken XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

21st August. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

Time has flown again and here is Thursday again, so don't try to guess the time, Dad has just come in from a meeting.

It was too wet to play tennis last night, so the club went to the pictures and saw something to do with 'fear and "Hibarbarri" with Van Johnson and June Allyson. It was quite nice but I have seen better.

The night before that Jean asked me to go to a dance with her. Which I did although I really didn't want to go, but I did not enjoy it as something seemed to worrying me, so at half past ten, I came home & went to bed. I don't like to admit it but I am sure this waiting is getting me down. I get awfully quiet all at once, and after about an hour or two. I'm all right again. I seem to wonder what I will say when you get back, whether I will recognize you etc., It sounds so silly, but I just can't help it the more I try to stop it, the more I go on thinking. I walk round in a dream at work, and forget what I have heard most of the time. I don't ever mention it to anyone, but I think you will understand.

Stafford comes home on holidays tomorrow. I am sorry that is wrong, he came last week & it is his young friend Barry who Dad is bringing home for the holiday, he is in the same class as Stafford. His Grandfather looks after him, as his father was killed in action, and his Mother does not worry about him very much, so the poor little fellow has nowhere much to go. And Stafford asked Mum if he could come home with him.

I must close now Ken Dear but you will hear from me on Sunday next, so Love to all, and All my Love to you Ken. Always yours,
Margaret...XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

24th August. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

Here I am as promised. At the moment I am very worried, it is half past ten & Dad is not home yet, and he usually gets home at half past seven, and I don't know where he is or what could have happened, in fact I am in a dither at the moment. Pete is at the hospital, Mum and Stafford are up at the farm, and I have been at home all the weekend.

I went Ice Skating on Friday night & had a great time, and can now get round by myself quite well. On Saturday I went to dancing as usual, and on Saturday night I went to a dance & enjoyed myself. I have been asked to one on Tuesday night, but I don't want to go. So I won't, as it is tennis on Wednesday night, & Rainbow on Thursday, so I don't want to be dashing out all the week.

Did I tell you that Jean & I are running a dance in aid of the Spastic Centre at Campsie, it will be on Friday 5th September at 2/- each, we had 100 tickets printed, but I don't know how many will turn up. I hope it will be quite a few, If sixty attend it will be good.

Dad has still not come in, & I don't know whether to ring up the farm of what to do. I wish he would hurry up. I had tea ready for him at half past seven, and I turned the gas out hours ago. I am awfully tired, and I don't think I will go to bed till he comes. Oh! Ken I wish you were here and I had someone to talk to, it has just struck a quarter to eleven, I can hear the clock ticking away. I can't understand it, he would have told me if he would be late, and he has never stopped away so long before.

I will close now Ken Dear, Love to all, especially you,

*Always Yours. Margaret...xx P.S. I just rang Mum up and she said he is staying up at the farm tonight & will be back tomorrow.
Love Marg. xxxxxxx*

1st September. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

It is Monday night, first night of spring, and a full moon shining with very mild wind blowing.

First I must tell you that the Australian Light weight Champion Boxer, Vic. Patrick was knocked out in the last round by the Negro, Davies.

I feel in one of my quiet lonely moods today, they just come & go. Yesterday I made the costume I wear next Wednesday week, I represent a Gypsy, it is made of hessian material with a very wide skirt just hacked to pieces. It is worn right off the shoulder, and has one long sleeve hacked like skirt, and one short sleeve. It is worn right off the shoulder, and has a piece of coloured material sewn round the neck. We carry & bang a tambourine.

I told you Dad filled in the forms, as mine would not be accepted, because I am under 21, but he said he would write about it, but does not think people will get much chance on the immigration scheme. Also he thinks you are more likely to get out here by working as a lot of people want to work their way to "England, but not many want to come out here by doing that.

I do hope something happens soon. You know that if you wrote to them out here yourself, and registered it, they would have to answer it as registered mail must be signed for, and this what I am going to do with Dad's letter, I will let you know the result Ken Dear.

The dance is on Friday night, I do hope it is a success, so far it is, and we have sold about 80 tickets, as some people have given us money but did not take tickets.

The time is half past eleven once again, and I' still writing rubbish to my favourite 'Pin-up-boy', but I had better stop. So till next time. Love to all the family. And...

*All my fondest thoughts & Love, keep to yourself Ken. Always yours. Margaret
xxxxx*

10th September 1947.

My Dearest Margaret.

Well I am again ten or more days behind hand, today another letter arrived from you No 104, which was very welcome. I have had a letter in my pocket for over a week, which I should have posted to you, but honestly I was in a horrible mood when I wrote it and was full of nothing but grumbles, so tonight I tore it up and flung it in the fire.

I may go over to Liverpool on Monday and see how the shipping situation is, we are having Monday & Tuesday holiday at work, also I will write to the Immigration Authorities in Sydney as you suggest. Honest Marg I am sick & tired of waiting it seems never ending, it is over sixteen months now since I left & I don't seem to be very nearer to coming back.

Dad is working on nights this week. He starts at 9.30pm, and goes to bed in the morning and gets up about six in the evening. Then when we have had dinner he likes nothing better

than a game of cards, when it is about 8pm he has a snack before going to work, then Auntie & I have something to eat & before you know it, it is 10pm. It is usually the case when Dad's on the night shift. I get very little chance to write to you.

In your letter Marg, you say it is the first day of Spring. Well it is Autumn here, the leaves are falling of the trees & the wind & rain are coming again, the Last five weeks have been really lovely, but now I suppose we shall only have a few odd days of sunshine & then weeks of snow & ice.

Well this is another one Marg Dear. I wonder how many more we shall write. Love to all at Kennington. All my Fondest Love to you Marg. Always Yours. Ken....

XX

Saturday 20th September. 1947.

My Dearest Margaret.

Here I am at last after another week, we both seem to have slowed down in the letter writing don't we?

Last weekend, I spent most of the time doing things to try and speed my departure to Australia. To begin with I spent three hours in writing a five page letter to the Immigration Dept. in Sydney, with which I have done with it as you suggested and sent it by registered airmail.

At the 'Information bureau in Huddersfield.' They told me that the best thing to do now, was to ask my friends in Australia to write to 'Australia House, Strand London' and tell them that it is very important that I get to Australia at the earliest moment. I think it may help quite a lot. So do you think you could persuade your Dad to write to them Marg.

Last night on the radio they played 'Clare de Lune', it was lovely I just sat back & thought and wished, & wished & thought for ever so long after they had finished playing it.

How did your dance go Marg, a success I hope. You must excuse the state that this writing is in, you have probably guessed by now that I am writing with a pen that is practically useless, I have left my pen at work, & after rooting around drawers & cupboards for about ten minutes, I came across this article.

Well I must be closing Marg, promising to write again either Monday or Tuesday, & hoping very much that there will be a letter from you first post Monday morning. Love to All, & All my Fondest Love to you Marg. Always Yours. Ken.

XX

22nd September. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

Here I am again. This time just getting over a sprained ankle. I received a letter from you on Friday, which was very welcome, I thought you had been lucky enough to get the taxi job, & so had not had time to write.

It is now Wednesday 24th, two days have gone since I started to write this. Please accept my most humble apologies but every thing seems to happen at once and at a last minute notice I had to go out on Monday & Thursday evenings.

I do hope that your going down to see the shipping Co brings forth some good news, it would be great if you could get here by Xmas or even April next year.

We held another dance last Friday, it was a great success, and we all had a great time. I could not dance as I had a sprained ankle, but I sat on a chair

near the pianist and got him to play all my favourite songs for the others to dance too. Remember you used to sing, "Don't Fence me In" out here such a lot, I had exhausted my supply, and couldn't think of anything else and the pianist suggested it, If I hear or see anything that reminds me of last year, I mean when you were out here, I seem to turn over inside, and can't do another thing.

I suppose I don't have to tell how glad I will be when I seal the last air letter to you, and more so when I receive your last. Oh, for then!...

We have the last of the wretched Debates tomorrow night, I will be glad when it is over. I will close now, and see if I can catch the midday mail.

Best wishes to Dad, Auntie & Cyril. All my Love to you Ken.

Always Yours. Margaret...XX

28th September 1947.

My Dearest Margaret.

Well you certainly have me worried this time Marg, it is twenty days today since I last heard from you, the longest I have been without a letter from you yet.

Each day this week I have rushed home perfectly sure that there would be a letter and each day I have been more disappointed than the previous day.

Cyril is at Aldershot now, doing ten weeks training as a Medical Orderly, then he has a ten days leave. The army camp at Aldershot is one of the biggest in the country.

I haven't had any reply from the Immigration Authorities in Sydney yet, but it isn't a fortnight since I wrote. Have you heard anything from them. I thought maybe on receipt of my letter, they may contact your Dad to confirm what I told them.

Yesterday afternoon, we, Les & I went to the Rugby match at Halifax between Halifax & Huddersfield, naturally we were shouting for the losing team, Halifax lost

18-7, we go & support Halifax nearly every Saturday, and they have only won two matches so far this season.

Please Marg write just as often as you can. I have missed your letters so much these last two weeks. Someday soon I hope we won't have to write any more letters, and believe me that day can't come too soon for me. And don't forget that in the days between the arrivals of my letters to you there is someone thinking about you and wondering what you are doing, and wishing he were with you, so till next time I write my thoughts are with you.

All my Love to you Marg. Always Yours, Ken XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

1st October. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

Please excuse the pencil, but the pen refuses to write. And Dad does not let anyone borrow his, so hence the pencil.

A letter came to Mum & Dad from you today. And you said that I had not written for a fortnight. I made a promise if you remember, that I would write at the very least once a week and you are the last person I would break a promise to. But these last three weeks I seem to have done something I am honestly ashamed of, that is not keeping my word. I can guess what you have been thinking of me, but please Ken, don't get worried.

I don't know what has come over me lately, but every time I think of you something seems to go snap. I start getting hot & cold in turns. I want to write to

you, but when I get the pen & paper, words won't come and I don't know where to start. One of these days in the not too dim distant future I will be able to think straight and Oh! Here I go again, I'm stuck for words so I'm afraid you will have to fill in the rest for yourself. All I can do is keep on hoping that you will be here soon (Interval) to drink a cup of coffee. By the way, is coffee rationed over there if so I will send you some within the next week of two. I hope to send off a Xmas Hamper (hoping it arrives there by Xmas.)

At present I am looking for a job, the last employee would not let me work in an office, he said I was wasting my time, and rang Dad up & told him so. So I don't know what I will do, as only office jobs are being offered now. I may get an opportunity as a model, D.J.'s. said they would ring and let me know if there was any work to be done. "Mr Mac" (One with an I,) as I used to call him actually, it was Mr Mc Onie (a braw Scotsman) My last Boss. Gave me Five pounds when I left last Friday, he said 'Just a little spending money till you get yourself a better job'. Well it looks as if I can't get anymore on the page. Best Wished to Dad Auntie & Cyril, & need I say more. All my Love to you Ken, Always yours
Margaret...XX

10th October 1947.

My dearest Margaret...

Very many thanks for two very long awaited letters which arrived together this morning, it was just eighteen days since I had heard from you Marg. & believe me I was worried. I don't know about me finding a new girl friend, I was coming to the conclusion that you had a new boy friend, especially when it was over a fortnight between the previous letters to these two.

Well Marg, I hope to be receiving two a week as from this week, & also I will promise to write two a week as from now until I board the ship, which I don't think will be too long now Marg Dear.

You look like sailing or I should say flying to New Zealand, it must have been a great thrill to receive the telegram and learn that you are on top line for winning, I hope you have heard more good news since that telegram.

Winter is catching up with us again, it is pitch dark at 5pm in the evening and getting very cold at night.

Cyril is home on leave for ten days, he returns to York, about 40 miles away, so is very lucky. He should be able to get home regularly.

Well I have only this page left to finish the letter in & that doesn't leave me a lot of room to tell you , how much I am thinking about you & wishing we were together. It seems years & years since we said 'So long' that Sunday morning, I wonder how long before we say 'Hello' again. Love to all the Family &.

All My Fondest Love to You Marg. Always Yours, Love Ken xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

12th October. 1947.

My Dearest Ken...

At last I can sit down and write you a few lines, I have been washing, ironing, & mending my summer clothes. At the beginning of last week I appeared to have nothing to wear, so I made a couple of coloured skirts out of a bit of new material, and of frocks I had grown out of. I made three of four blouses of different design. Also I let down a few hems and so on, and when I had washed &

ironed them and took time off to look in the wardrobe, it was full of quite "Springy" looking clothes all out of old clothes and a few yards new material.

I will have to get some new shoes, as I have got a corn from my old ones' as they are too small. Only my white sandals fit me properly now.

Guess what Ken, I may be doing modeling as a part time job, it would be great.

Jean told me that her father nominated an English boy to come out here, and about two months ago, they got a letter from the T & I. Board to say that the particulars were being sent to England for check up with the Authorities there. The other day, they received a letter to say he will be here by Xmas. We got a letter that said, I desire to advise you that the nomination submitted by you under the Immigration Scheme in favour of K.L. Tye, has been forwarded to the Commonwealth Authorities for approval and transmission to London. Then they say that because it has been sent on, it does not mean that an early passage will be available, so advise your friend not to be in a hurry to dispose of any property etc., other wise embarrass their present arrangements. No further communications will be addressed to you from this Office until it is possible to advise you of the name of the ship, and the date of arrival in Sydney of the nominee's.

So it looks a little closer Ken dear. I hope so. We all miss you, I mean Mum & Dad do, and young Stafford often mentions you, though he doesn't remember you to well, as he was just 5, and he is nearly 8 now.

I will close now Ken. So till next time. Best wishes to you and the family.

All my Love to you. Always yours. Margaret...XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

27th October 1947.

My Dearest Margaret.

This time it is me who is ashamed, it is fifteen days since last wrote to you, I did write half a letter last Sunday, but we had visitors and I wasn't able to finish it.

Your letter 108 came today Marg, that one like the one I am writing was two weeks behind its predecessor.

Well I am certainly pleased to hear that you have heard something from the Authorities. Everything seems dead over here, except one thing which gets my paddy up, that is the advertisement which periodically appears in the papers, asking people to apply for application forms and telling them of all the good prospects awaiting the immigrant. Every time I see the Advert, my blood boils & I feel like writing and telling them to get rid of the would be immigrants that are waiting, instead of asking for more. Letter

We have visitors staying all week this week Marg. They are relations of Auntie, who come from Liverpool & are Musicians on the stage, this week they are playing at the Halifax Palace theatre, there are just two sons living in Liverpool with her mother. It was funny last night, I had to meet them at the station at 11pm, I had never seen them in my life, had no idea what either of them would be wearing. And I only learnt their name ten minutes before I set off to the station. Mr & Mrs Meador is their name, but when the train arrived I had clean forgotten what the name was. What a panic I was in, I didn't know what to do, so I ran to the barrier and every man & woman who went through together I asked if they were going to Elland & the couple who said Yes, turned out to be the two I was looking for. I had ordered a Taxi, so everything turned out to be O.K, except they thought I was Cyril.

That reminds me I must write to Cyril tonight, & it is getting late now, so Goodnight Marg Dear, I will write again this week, that's a promise. Love to all, & all my fondest Love to you Marg. Always Yours. Ken...XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

29th October. 1947.

My Dearest Margaret...

[GAP HERE ???]

Here I am again, hoping, as Mum says, "that you have not been & gone & got yourself another girlfriend," it is what I deserve, as I can honestly & with Mums permission say I have been too busy to write. Every Saturday, Sunday, and Monday we have been practicing for the Show, which opens tonight. I think I told you it is "Rose Marie" in exactly 2 ½ hours from now. At the moment I have about five or six songs running round in my head, and my feet feel as if they wont move for another year, and inside my tea is going up & down as if it were tidal.

Mum took photos of me in all my costumes, if they are any good I will send you copies. One of the Costumes supplied to us were the original costumes used out here for the first time 20 years ago. They are of the old Neck to Knee style with big pleated collars, so the producer said "We can't have that, and had better do something about them", so now they are scrapped, and we are wearing two piece playsuits or sun suits as they are usually called. It makes the whole number modern and is really quite nice.

The performances are on for four nights at "Ashfield" Town Hall, and one night at "Parramatta" Town Hall,

I found a photo of me taken a couple of years later sitting on top of family launch. (Actually I was Pregnant with Jennie.)

Anyway, enough of myself for now. How are you and all over your way, I will be sending another parcel as soon as the show is over, and I have time to breathe, I will finish this letter tomorrow, as it is time to get ready as we will be leaving in an hour, and I have to pack my bag yet. First night is over and was a great success.

Also I must tell you this. I entered an intelligence test in one of our magazines. It was to do with Fashions. I received an urgent telegram last night to say. 'My results are of a very high rating, and would I send details of myself & photos, so it looks as if I have a chance of winning, it means 50 pounds, and three weeks touring 'New Zealand,' and a new wardrobe to take with them. The first person the meet on arrival & getting off the plane at Auckland, will be the Prime Minister. All expenses are paid.

Second night of the Show, starts tonight, so till next time. Best wishes to all.

All my love to you Ken Dear. Always Yours. Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

Letter No. 110 Missing

30th October 1947.

My Dearest Margaret

Here I am again as promised. It is Thursday evening & I have just finished eating. Talk about eat, these days- fifteen days ago I stopped smoking. I have often said I would but never managed to do without a cigarette for much more than half a day. But three Wednesday nights ago, as Les & I were coming home on the bus, I had only one cigarette left to last, until I went to work the next morning. So I made up my mind that I wouldn't buy another packet after that cigarette was smoked. That Thursday, Friday & Saturday, I

was in agony, my stomach felt as though it didn't belong to me. It is funny though to think back now. I did buy another packet, I thought I couldn't live without a cigarette & one of those cig's, was in and out of my mouth four times but I never lit it, & now that same packet is on the shelf.

After fifteen days I don't want one now & my appetite has increased by half. I am in & out of cafe & snack bars all day long. This morning I had three breakfasts. First at 7.15am before I set off for work, second at 8am in the little café at the bottom of the street where I work, and the third in the same café at 9am after I had loaded the van and was ready to set off. All together I had, 1st five slices of marmalade & bread, 2nd one buttered teacake, one small bun, 3rd one meat pie two jam tarts, still it's cheaper than smoking a 3/4p a packet of twenty, at the rate of 20 a day, & does a lot more good.

Well Marg Dear I have some better news today, a letter came from London, to quote.....
"I am pleased to inform you that Mr. W.C. Lowe of 'Kennington' Beresford Pde, KINGSGROVE has nominated you for settlement in Australia under the provisions of the free passage scheme. Your application form has already been received in this office and you will be advised in due course as to further action required. It would be most unwise however, for you to take any steps to finalize your affairs in the United Kingdom until definite advice of acceptance and the date of embarkation have been forwarded to you from this office."-----

That's not so bad is it Marg, it mightn't be so long after all before we start where we left off eighteen months ago.

I had a better close now Marg, Auntie wants the table & that means more food is forthcoming, so Love to All the Family. (It won't be long Marg!)

All My Fondest Love to You Dear. Always Yours. Ken XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Letter No. 111. 3rd. November. 1947.

My Dearest Ken.

There is not a soul in the house at present, as Dad & Mum have gone back to the hospital with Pete, as it is like winter outside at present, so they decided to drive her back. Pete has started singing lessons, and she is not allowed to sing songs for six months and has to do exercises all the time but her teacher says she will sing well when she starts.

Mum is taking Stafford to the eye specialist, as she thinks he has not been as bright in himself as he was before he had Chicken Pox about two months ago.

I have just come home from my Ballet lesson. My teacher wants me to do an exam, so it will mean some hard practice for a few weeks, I don't particularly want to do it, but it will fill in the time & give me something to do.

The second night of the Show is over and was a bigger success than the first. Everyone said I did very well, it is so good to be told you have made a success of your first show. Next Wednesday, we brave the third attempt, so wish me Luck. When I look out over the audience, I wish you were down there. The next show is in April, so you should be here for that. I hope so.

How are things getting on over your way, I have not heard for weeks. I think it will be three weeks tomorrow. I know I don't deserve any, as I haven't been doing too well at the writing game lately, but I do love to hear from you and I miss your letters as much as you miss mine. So from now on, it will be at least two a week.

I will have the photos back on Friday, so will send some on next week. Mum is calling out for something, so I will close now. Best wishes to Dad, Aunty & Cyril.

All my love to you Ken. Always yours, Margaret. xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.

Letter No. 112. 9th November. 1947.

My Dearest Ken.

I am at home by myself, Mum & Dad are up at the farm. Pete is at the hospital, and Stafford at school.

I am stretched out on the back lawn with only a two piece playsuit sunning myself like a lizard, do you remember ours, 4 of them, about 2ft long each. I hated them anyway and Mum got so sick of them basking on the path just as she decided to go into the yard that she got Dad to kill them.

If you remember, last letter I told you about a competition I entered. I have to go before the judges on Tuesday, so keep your fingers crossed.

How is Dad, I hope he is not feeling the cold weather we read about. Does Cyril know if he will have to go overseas or not. I have a girlfriend, who wants a Pen friend in England, preferably a boy. I was wondering if Cyril would like a girl Pen friend from over here. I will give you her address, and you could pass it on to Cyril, so as he could write to her, as I don't know his Army address to give her, also I think he should be asked first.

I do hope the authorities decide to shake a leg and give you a passage very shortly, it would be wonderful if you could get out in the next three months. I have missed you so. Like the people you know, the people out here say "I suppose the 'Sailor Boy' has been forgotten now," they usually say that with a smug "I told you so look on their faces," and they get a quick short answer "NO!" which takes them back a few paces.

Wednesday, 12th....

The ordeal is over & we now have to wait the results, and the Judges decision, which will be worse than anything else to do with it. Our photographs will be appearing in the Pix (magazine) in one months time, also one of the group of the girls was in the paper last night, so after Mum has seen it, I will send it on to you.

So till next time. Best Wishes to Dad, Aunty and Cyril.

All My Love to you Ken Dear. Always Yours, Margaret. xxxxxxxx

Letter No. 115. 15th November. 1947.

My dearest Ken.

At last I feel as if I can think properly. Yesterday I had an abscessed tooth taken out, thank goodness it is gone, my head was in a constant whirl.

Last Friday night I went I went up to the farm and got there about 8.30 p.m. By the time we had heard all the farm news from Mum, and she had heard all the Sydney news from us, it was well & truly bed time. Next day we had one of the worst thunder storms ever had out here, it cleared up about 5 o'clock so Mum, Dad & I went to the local Fancy dress Ball. The two children who won were dressed in swimming costumes, with

Fig leaves attached. They represented Adam & Eve, the little boy refused to take his shoes off though, which made it quite comic.

On Sunday we went down to Mum's Cousin's place about 10 miles away at Mud Island, it is one of the best properties on the river. Kim (his wife) was giving him a surprise Birthday party & about 4 car loads of friends of theirs came up from Sydney, all very nice people. Mum gave him a sugar pig & I gave him ½ a whistle, which caused a laugh. I won't give you the details of what we ate, it would be cruel, anyway we cleaned up a whole ham & two roosters - (Capons).

How are all of you over there, I hope the winter is not too cold. I don't see you mention any sore fingers etc., maybe now you have stopped smoking you won't get any more.

Have you heard any more from the authorities, I hope it won't be too long Ken. I

Only wish this trip was to England instead of New Zealand, but anyway I have to win it yet.

I am enclosing some snaps taken during the show, also a paper cutting of the day we met the judges. So till next time. Cheerio! Love to Dad, Aunty & Cyril. And

All my fondest thoughts & Love to you Ken Dear. Always yours.

Margaret. XXX

Letter No. 113. 16th November. 1947.

My Dearest Ken.

Yes! An exciting week is over, on Tuesday morning after getting up etc., I went into town (Sydney) & found my way to the Associated New Papers Ltd., in Elizabeth St. I went up in the lift 12 floors, & after looking round, found the door leading to (Office)

Started a wonderful day.

First of all I was introduced to the "Heads" & the Editor of the Magazine, & then the Fashion Advisor came & I had to go through a small test on Design, colour & fashions. And.....

(This I can't decipher from original letter, as it was waterlogged due to either rain or snow when Ken received it in 1947.)

..... What was the correct style to wear?

While this was going on, some of the others arrived and the work of the day started in earnest. After all introductions, we trooped round to a big room that looked like a large dining room, and there we met the Judges. They were very nice gentlemen, one being the head or rather the Manager of Advertising etc., for David Jones, & the other was the manager for "Cole of California" Swimsuits a big American firm. After seeing them in turn, we were marched out on the roof to have photographs taken by ourselves & in small groups, that took till 12 o'clock by the time the girl had taken notes to put beside our photographs in the Magazine next month. She asked our Hobbies, ambitions, careers & personal likes & dislikes. We were then asked if we five Sydney girls would take the Country & Interstate girls out for an hour & show them the City, which we did, and so went back to lunch which was made ready by Sydney's leading authority on cooking, Ann Maxwell.

There were all sorts of savories, sandwiches, oyster patties & other dainties with tea & fruit salad & ice-cream, quite a party.

The head of the Associated Newspapers a (Mr. Kennedy) was present & talked quite a lot to me about England & his opinion of the present food situation &

Immigration scheme, I wish you had been able to hear him. The "PIX" photographer was so taken by the long conversation he appeared to be having with me, that he made all the others group around us and after the usual procedure of 'Get ready! Smile! Hooold Urüttt! Flash & the bulb is finished off, the photo taken, we were allowed to relax again.

That happened about 20 times during the day.

Some of the girls photo's did not come out very well so they were driven out to Centenial Park to have more taken. There was room in the taxi for one more so Miss Riddell (the Editor) asked me if I would like to go with them which I did and they drove us all round town after that. Then it was time to go home & get ready for the Theatre Royal, we were invited by J.C. Williamson's to be guests of the Company for the evening.

On arrival we went back stage & had photo's taken on stage with the leads in the cast, then we obtained autographs all round and went back to our Boxes, and the comedians passed remarks to us all about "Rich people, Friends of Chiffley's, - Tax

evaders" they said. "If we paid our taxes we would not be able to afford to sit in the box.

The show was "No, No, Nanette" with Pat Keating a Melbourne girl as Nanette. It was really a good show. When it was all over, we were driven home in a Rolls Royce Taxi, the end to a perfect day away from work.

Now how are all at home, I suppose you will not have left before Xmas, they certainly seem to be taking their time, yet you hear nearly every day how people get here

After about three months wait, it is not fair. I think of you every spare moment I get, and I wonder about all sorts of things, but maybe I will not have to spend so long by myself in lonely thinking after the New Year.

I will have to start Xmas shopping next week. Remember the year you & George helped me do it. It was the day I first met you. You were in the front garden in old working clothes and poor old George rode my bike down the hill to meet me, I being the nasty little critter I am, took the bike and left him to carry my bag up the hill. I can't even remember if I was polite enough to say Hello! To you, or whether I just nodded & went in and started to talk to Mum. Anyway if I were rude I hope I am forgiven now.

Another time we chased each other round the house over an almond nut, remember. Heavens, I could go on all night long, but have to write to Mum & Stafford before Dad gets back from the farm, so I'll say Best wishes to Dad, Auntie & Cyril.

All my love fondest Love to you Ken Dear.

I remain yours Always. Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Letter 116 Missing.

Thursday, 11th December. 1947.

My Dearest Ken.

I am sorry I have not written for a week, but I have been up at the farm for the past week, and we have been flooded in and the waters are just beginning to go down now. It has been raining cats and dogs and today is the first break we have had.

Every one else is in bed, and really I should be there also, but really I was ashamed of myself for not having written before now, so I thought I had better let you know that I am still on the face of the earth.

I cannot tell you anymore about the competition as yet, but hope to know if I have been lucky or not in the next few weeks, I hope so. The waiting is awful, even if I don't get it, I have had great fun, and a day off work.

You ask me to guess what I said to you when asked if I made all the noise in the family, I give in so you will have to tell me. I can only remember you ringing me up.

16th November, as on letter, yet should be December.

I have not finished this letter before, as we have not been able to send any mail out. We have been flooded in, and the Postman has not been down for days, and days, so as it has been raining for over a month & we have not done anything but sit inside & watch the rain. Wonderful occupation for ducks. In fact it has been the negro version of the flood. "Didn't it rain". In fact the worst part of the flood has not reached us yet and I do not know if the postman will come or not tomorrow as usual.

Could you let me have your Aunt's address (the Aunt in Halifax) as I would like to send a New Year card, as I will be a bit late for Xmas.

Food is on, so till next time. Merry Xmas.

All my Love to you Ken. Yours Always. Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

Thursday 18th December 1947.

My Dearest Margaret.

Well Marg, at long last I have some really good news. Things are at last beginning to move, on Monday last I received a letter from 'Australia House' and it was for me to have a medical examination, they gave me the address for a certain Doctor in Halifax who examines all immigrants in the District, I passed A.1. The Doctor was telling me that I was the fourth for Australia. He has examined over 200 for Canada, that is because it is easy enough to get there, not like trying to get to Australia. So believe me Marg I have all fingers crossed that I shall be leaving, either January, February or the outside March.

Well I now have confidence enough to get up for three most popular dances, I have been going all out to learn this last week. You have no idea what a load I have off my mind, I didn't like the thought of coming back to you and still not able to dance even a little bit, but now I can manage a Waltz, Foxtrot and Quickstep.

Auntie May & Uncle Lewis are coming over for over a week at Xmas, & Cyril is coming on leave for the New Year.

Well it's a poor Xmas present I have sent you again Marg, but at least it is something to make do until I come back and am able to make up for it, I hope I am able to give you your Birthday present in person.

I was hoping there would be a letter from you today Marg as it is ten days since I heard, but I guess the Xmas rush has slowed the deliveries down somewhat. Well, that will have to be all this time Dear, I am always thinking of you Marg, & hoping for the day when we shall be together again to hurry along. Love to all the Family &

All my Fondest Love & Thoughts to You. Always Yours. Ken XXXXXXXXXXXXX

Letter No. 119 26th December. 1947.

My Dearest Ken.

Owing to Xmas, we did not have the usual mail days, so I am writing ready for tomorrow. I am awfully sorry to say that I did not win the competition, a girl from Melbourne was the winner. They gave me a lovely write up, and the photos are quite nice. I will be sending copies of the magazines to you by the next post. I will not send them by air as they are very heavy.

Santa visited me on Wednesday night & left some very nice gifts. Some beautiful

"Pompadour china" from Mum & Dad, a very nice fountain pen from Pete, some gift sets from Stafford and other people.

Stafford received a pony, and we gave Mum a water set, and Dad silver backed hairbrush, I think Mum gave Pete the same as me.

Really Xmas was very quiet this year, but as the other people are leaving very soon, or were. They are now staying till we hear that you may be coming out, they are very unsatisfactory, The man does not believe in working for wages, and gets drunk periodically etc.,

At the moment I am suffering from the sun, we went boating on the river today, and as the sun was very hot, and I only had shorts on, my legs are as red as the ribbon

in my blouse, which is scarlet.

All the family are playing cards and are passing rude remarks to the fact that the plane ought to wait for this epistle, and it wouldn't matter if I got them a drink in the mean time. Dad says would that be airmail, they all say they will autograph it for me.

Well Ken this is one letter nearer and I will not be here to meet you if I don't get them a drink. The temperature is about 100%.F. So till next time.

All my love to you Ken dear. Yours Always, Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

Letter No. 119. Monday 29th December. 47

My Dearest Margaret.

Well another Christmas has passed Marg, & I for one haven't come off so good from it, today I have been in bed for most of the day, Cyril telephoned to my work to tell them I was in bed ill. I have had a light cold for about a fortnight, I suppose it is with neglecting it that I have now got a really bad cold. After staying in bed most of yesterday & today I am now feeling much better, so after another day off work tomorrow I should be fit to start again on Wednesday.

Auntie May & Uncles Lewis have just left after being with us for a week, Cyril also returned to York at 6pm. After having a weeks leave so now the house feels very quiet, which is quite all right with me. Now I have a chance to think of what is going to happen within the next (at the outside) three months.

We shall very soon be together again Marg & I feel as though I can't wait for the day, I think from now until it does happen will seem an age. Now that Xmas is over I have finished dancing or learning to dance with that girl Jean. So as to be perfectly fair with you Marg not that there was anything in it besides learning to dance, but now I can struggle around & have a certain amount of confidence, that is all I wanted. Also now Marg Dear, I should be able to write more regular in the few (Months? - Weeks?) that are yet to wait.

I hope you get the handkerchiefs alright Marg & not too late after Xmas, I was rather late sending them.

Dad & Auntie are waiting for me to finish so we can have a game of cards so I will write again tomorrow as I am not going to work. Love to All the Family & All my Fondest Love as Always to You Marg. Always Yours Ken XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Letter No. 120. 30th December. 1947.

My Dearest Ken.

Here I am for the last in 1947, knowing that it is another year over and another letter nearer.

Thanks ever so much for card & hankies, it was a lovely surprise. I also received an air letter from Aunty May, she is wondering why I did not write to her more often, but I answered her letter and had not heard that she had received it till yesterday. I will answer it for Saturday's mail. Also I owe Dad a letter, which I must see into, but with all the past excitement I have not been keeping my correspondence etc., up to date. But! It is all over now, and I can think a bit more clearly now.

Tonight we will all be going to the New Year Celebrations at the local hall, one arrives about 8 or 9, but the fun does 't start till 12 o'clock, & goes on till about 3am. and

And you are lucky you have a car, and don't have to walk home. The time is 5mts to 8pm

& the temperature is at 90o already. I hate to think how hot it will be at 12 o'clock, it has been so hot that Mum & I have both been wearing shorts & light blouses, the only time I wear shorts in Sydney are to tennis, and the whole team of girls & boys wear white shorts & shirts.

I think (I am not sure yet) that I may be going to the technical college to study Dress Designing, Mum wants me to, but it all depends on Dad. As I won't be able to work and no work, no cash, so I will have to start getting pocket money etc., again it will be funny. By the way Mum said she received your card and will be writing shortly. The temperature has gone up to 49o and is it hot. (Ooooo)drops of perspiration.

I have to make 5 beds now, and I feel as if I could lie down & go to sleep instead.

So till next time I will say Bon Jour, and Best Wishes to all.

All my Love to you Ken Dear. Always Yours. Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

Checking all folders, looking for any possible missing letters, to make sure of my thoroughness Ha! Ha! This letter shrieked at me for inclusion, and on noting the date when written, I knew why. It was exactly 50 years from then to the date Ken was buried at Richmond N.S.W. Lawn Cemetery. And strangely enough Daughter Jennifer had suggested she drive me down to check all was well. Are there really Angels out there...

31st December. 1947.

My Dearest Margaret...

Many thanks for your letter - no.118 - which arrived this morning and thanks also for the little paragraph about the dancing, I knew you wouldn't mind, but as I told you in the last letter I have finished going with Jean. Opinion violently disagreed with me. Dad &

Auntie didn't like it at all, & everyone who had seen me with he said. Huh! You're a fine one. What's happened to Australia now, little did they know that as I danced round & round with Jean my mind was transforming her into 'You' and all though I was in the Alexandra Hall or Empress Ballroom Halifax my thoughts were twelve thousand miles from those two dance halls. I hope you enjoyed the dance with Pete's boyfriend, tell him he doesn't know how lucky he is, taking the nicest girl in the world to a dance.

Sorry I didn't write yesterday as I promised, I didn't feel too good and went to bed very early, but this morning I felt much better so I went to work, but about two o'clock I came home not that I was feeling any worse do it. Tomorrow being New Years Day, we half a day off so by Friday I but I thought I wouldn't over do it. Tomorrow being New Years Day we are having half a day off so by Friday I should be completely fit again.

Dad & Auntie thank you very much for the Xmas Card & the hankies, Cyril isn't here so I will thank you for him. Auntie say's the hankies are lovely.

Well I certainly hope that I shall be back with you all before your Dad has to start someone else, and honestly Marg I think it won't be many more weeks before I am on my way, I have heard nothing more since I had the medical examination but I feel certain that it will be very soon Marg.

I must be closing now Dear, as usual Dad & Auntie are wanting to play cards, hoping another letter from you arrives soon (I thrive on them), & wishing you every possible happiness & success in the New Year. Marg Dear. Love to All the Family.

All my Fondest Love & thoughts to You Marg. Always Yours. KenXXXXXXXXXXXX

6th January. 1948.

My Dearest Ken:

Here I am again, I have been pulling plums all the afternoon and am I tired.

I was awfully happy to hear that you have had and passed your Medical exam with flying colours. It appears that it won't be long now, I wait every mail to hear whether you have heard any more or not. I hope it won't be long.

Do they do any 'barn dances. Such as the "Pride of Erin, Mazurka, Canadian Three Step, or Gypsy Tap" etc., they are awfully simple to do, as a matter of fact I did not attempt a Foxtrot or Quickstep for quite some time after I could waltz, let alone at once, like you. They are my favorites though. I will finish this before the mail goes in the morning.

The man who works here has gone to Sydney to get another job. So that means that Mum has to milk the cows, separate the milk and make the butter, while I have to do all the household chores, such as, get the meals, make eight beds, wash up, take the morning & afternoon tea down to the pickers. Thank heavens they won't be working this afternoon.

I am going to Sydney for a week to do some dressmaking for Pete, she is going away for a few days, also her holidays are on the way, I have to make her an evening frock, a good frock and some sports frocks. I told her that instead of paying me she could buy some materials for me to make some winter clothes for my self.

There is no work this afternoon, and just as we all decide to go for a swim some one appears to turn the cold weather on just to annoy us, anyway we are going for a row in the boat just to fill in the time till tea.

I will close now, hoping to hear some more good news next time you write. Best Wishes to all the family. All My Love to you Ken Dear.

Always Yours, Margaret. XX.

Letter No. 122. 9th January 1948.

My Dearest. Ken.

Mail day again tomorrow, so here I am with my paper & pen, I don't know what is wrong lately, but Mum seems to find fault with everything I say or do, in fact I will be

glad to get back to Sydney and get a rest from it & the general racket the others(kick up) real Australian in fact I have a raging headache at the moment.

How is the cold progressing Ken. All over and done with I hope, also how is Dad getting on with his Diabetes problem. I hear they are able to do all sorts of things towards helping people with such complaints these days, and that I caught in the early stages it helps a lot towards curing it.

I am awfully glad you have learnt to dance. I think you can have twice as much fun dancing as wasting time watching some of the films they manage to show these days. Although some are very interesting and you can enjoy watching them, I did not like the 'Wicked Lady' as the whole background to the story appeared to me as a fairytale that you read when you are quite small. Most people think I am silly but then I don't agree with them either.

Did you see 'Nicholas Nickleby' it was acted very well, and very different from the American films they are re showing at present. We are getting very few American films out here at present and all the old pre-war films are being shown again, the 'Wizard of Oz' is showing for the third time in town.

I hope to see, 'Under the Counter' some time. As three girls I learn dancing with, were chosen to dance with 'Cicily Courtnage', in the show, also I want to see 'Ballet Rambert' and 'Lawrence Olivier' and the 'Old Vic Co.'" early this year, it has been said that the "Tivoli" theatre will be lent for the season.

They have just brought in a big basket of beautiful peaches that can't be sent in to market as they are a bit bruised, so till next time.

*All my Love to you, Ken Dear. Always Yours. Margaret.
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.*

15th January 1947.

My Dearest Margaret...

At long last things are happening Marg Dear, yesterday a letter arrived from Australia House. Here is a copy of it (it's a long one).

Dear Sir...

It gives me great pleasure to advise you that your application for settlement in Australia under provisions of the free passage migration scheme has been approved.

You have been selected for settlement in the State of New South Wales and your occupational classification upon arrival in Australia has been noted in our record as (a farm worker). I should add however, that there is no direction of labour in Australia and you should be free to change your occupation at any time.

Any employment references you have should be taken with you to Australia and if you are a member of a craft organization you should take Clearance Certificate or any other evidence of

having been employed in your trade. Tools, which are likely to be of use to you in your work in Australia should also be taken.

Action will be taken by this office to arrange your passage and you will be advised of the date of Embarkation in due course and given full instructions concerning shipping arrangements.

Pending receipt of advice of your sailing date you should endeavour to continue in your employment and do not take any steps to finalize your affairs in the United Kingdom.

All British Subjects going to Australia under the terms of the migration agreement are issued with a Document of Identity. Application for such a Document must be made without delay on the enclosed form and returned to me at this office.

A Document of Identity will then be sent to you free of charge when your actual sailing date has been arranged.

Yours Faithfully...

20th January, 1948.

My Dearest Ken.

At last I am able to devote my time wholly to writing to you, by the way, I have only heard from you once in the past three weeks, I hope you have got over your cold and that it has not developed into anything more serious Ken.

I have been in Sydney for a few days making a frock for Pete and also curtains and bedspreads for the farm house and I've "Had it" as the saying goes.

Continued.26th January. 1948.

I am so sorry that I did not finish the letter before, but I hurt my finger and could not bend it to write etc., it is nearly healed now though.

I am back up at the farm for the weekend and back to work on Tuesday. I have got an awfully good job at Bankers & Traders Insurance Co, and you should have read the paper I had to sign before I got in. All about my past, where I went to school, how long I stopped at each school, what my parents do if they are alive, married, single divorced etc., Had I worked before, if so where, & for how long, and why I left.

Your letter just arrived telling Mum & Dad that you will be sailing soon. Well! I don't know what to say, it is wonderful, I am just waiting till my own letter arrives. One thing spoilt the news, Mum had to tell me instead of me telling her. I hope you can read this, as my finger is still tied up, and I can't write properly.

I am going to bed as I start work tomorrow, and even if I have not said how excited I became, I can tell you I was panting for breath when I found Dad & told him, and I collapsed in the orchard, nearly at his feet, my mind isn't clear yet. I keep dreaming all sorts of things, and will have to force myself to concentrate at work tomorrow. So till next time and it won't be long now. Love to all at Elland.

All my fondest thoughts & Love to you Ken dear.

Always yours. Margaret. XX.

Letter No. 123? Monday 26th January. 1948

My Dearest Margaret.

Here I am again, this time no more good news, but I think the last lot will last for a week or two.

I am very excited about it Marg, knowing that very soon the day when after all this time I shall see you again, I wonder how you have changed, a couple of inches taller no doubt, a

Well this is another day almost over, it is after eleven pm. now so I had better get off to bed or I shall never be up for work in time, so Goodnight Marg. Love to All the Family. All my Fondest Love & Thoughts to you Dear.

Always Yours. Love Ken xx

Letter No. 124. 1st. February. 1948.

My Dearest Ken.

This will be one letter nearer and I have a feeling there won't be many more. You said in your last letter that you wondered how much both of us have changed. I for one, am not quite the scraggy school girl with long skinny legs etc., that I was when you left. I have grown taller by about four inches. My hair is longer, and my face was getting longer till last week. In fact I don't even jump the neighbours' fences now. But for all that, I don't think I will appear much different, although at times, I, do feel a little bit different. But I must be honest & say that (please understand me, as I was only just out of boarding school etc.,) at the time you left.

I was only just beginning to realise that there were things in this Complicated World, other than pens, pencils, playing fields, and dorm feasts etc., and I did not properly realize then my feelings, but that was nearly two years ago, as I don't have to remind you I have seen a bit more of the World, and I do know that I will be well and truly on the wharf the day you arrive Ken Dear, and I can honestly say that although I have been asked out quite a lot of times, there was always that something in my thoughts, that reminded me of you, and Oh! I don't know how to explain it, but I have not wanted too. I would say to Mum, "If I go out with them, I can't expect them to be very friendly with Ken when he gets out here, if I let them waste their money on me now, and I do so want you to know them, and of course be friends with them, as I have known them since we were in kindergarten together.

I will have to close now, as you can see. I am writing to Dad tomorrow.

All my Love to you Ken Dear. & Always Yours. Margaret. Xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.

Letter No. 125 7th February. 1948.

My Dearest Margaret.

It was a happy day yesterday for me, two letters were waiting when I arrived home, yours, and one from Mum also Dad got one from Mum, very many thanks for all of them.

I still have not heard anything more Marg since I last wrote, but still it's great to know that it won't be long now.

I don't know how it comes about that you have only had one letter in three weeks Marg, I think you will have had a few more since you wrote this one haven't you! This one is No. 122.

Dad is working nights this week, & having to work extra hours owing to a man being off with the Flu, so he starts at 7pm, until 7am. and over half an hours journey going & coming home, so it is just a case of work & sleep - work & sleep for him.

It is now 9pm, Marg & on the radio, Bing Crosby is singing for fifteen minutes.

Guess what his first record was, it has sent me all starry eyed & dreamy, it was "Now is the Hour", the one song that takes me to "Kennington" & the piano in the lounge, & your hand in mine. Oh! Roll on the next few months. Just think what we have been missing all this time. But no it is better to think of all the happy times that are to come very soon, when

I sit and start dreaming Marg, I suddenly sit up with a start and realize that it is about an hour and a half later. I have spent more time sitting doing nothing but think in this last eighteen months than I thought possible.

There must be a fire in Elland somewhere, the air raid siren has just sounded to call all the local firemen together. The last fire we had in Elland was a woolen mill, which was absolutely gutted.

Well this is No. 125 coming to a close Marg, how many more?

Love to all the Family & All my Fondest Love & Thoughts to You, Marg Dear.

Always Yours. Ken XXX

Letter No. 125 9th February

My Dearest Ken.

Here I am again Ken Dear, you say in your last letter that you are clinging to the hope that we are unofficially engaged etc.,

Listen Mr. Kenneth Lewis Tye, do you think that I am letting you waste a good job, plus money and family & friends just to ask you "How the weather is" when you come back to (Aussie) Australia. You are very much mistaken. Also I would definitely not let you leave your family etc., just so I could have a partner to take me out to dances etc. What sort of a girl do you think I am. And by the way if you were here I would give you a good, "Well!" Never mind just now, but don't you ever say anything like that again, or else.

I have been away for a while to get some ink as my pen was dry, the shop was closed, so I got some from Elaine (she lives down the road). At the moment I am the only person at home. Stafford is at school and Mum, Dad & Pete are up at the farm Dad did not come home on Sunday night as he usually does, but he should be home tomorrow as it is Wednesday.

I spent all Sunday boating on the Harbour with friends who live at Manly and by the way you and I have been invited over together when you get back. I wish I could give a definite date to people when they ask me 'When are you leaving?'. My one and only hope is that I will like you as much as I did before you went away, and Oh! I think I will wait till you get back, you know two years is a long time, and sometimes I find it hard to remember what colour your hair is, and what height you were & so on. You see I have grown so much myself, that I keep thinking you would have too, when you would not.

Well once again I can only say that I hope it won't be long before we can see each other again Ken, so till next time. All my Love to you Ken Dear.

Always Yours. Margaret. xxx

Letter No. 126. Monday 9th February 1948.

My Dearest Margaret.

Your No 123. Arrived today Marg, it did me the world of good, time seems to be dragging worse than ever now. Knowing it won't be very long, yet not knowing just how long. As soon as I know the date of sailing Marg, the first thing I will do is to send you a telegram, so you will know at least a couple of days after I get to know. I think it takes two days for a telegram to travel half way around the world so as soon as you see the telegram boy heading towards "Kennington" you know what it is.

I don't think I shall look very little different to you Marg Dear, except that I shall be a civilian & look perhaps a little older than I did two years ago, two years waiting hasn't done me any good at all, (but No! I take that back) I think that there is that certain something between us that has kept us both writing and thinking of each other all this time. I know that just like you Marg, the very thought of You has kept me away from other girls except one, Joan the girl who was teaching me to dance, and that was only for a few weeks. I do appreciate that you have done the same & I will do all in my power to be the best of friends with all the friends you talk about in your letters.

It is going to be so wonderful when we can go out and talk about all these things alone together, instead of having to try to write what we are thinking, I know Marg Dear when I post the last letter, probably in Ceylon, the last stop before Australia I shall breath a sigh of relief just to think that the next letter will be one to 22 Bath St saying that at last I am with the girl I have been thinking - Dreaming about for all this time. I must close now. Marg.
Love to all the Family.

All my Fondest Love & Thoughts to You Marg Dear. All My Love & Always Yours.

Ken XXX

Letter No. 126. 16th February. 1948.

My Dearest Ken.

Your letter 125 arrived today, and was I glad to see it, as I did not get one last week. We have been having frightfully hot weather out here, and when we are dancing, perspiration just runs down my neck in rivers. It is awful.

Once again I am stuck for words. It is becoming a habit, but it will take me months & years to say all I am thinking and feeling. Something inside me keeps wishing you were out here, I hope it is soon as now the day is drawing nearer, I am beginning to realize it and I dream all day long about it. I have even made a new coat ready for the occasion. It is pale Duck egg gray, and I have a frock to make as well, it is a pale mustard lemony yellow, with white daffodils on it. I will have to make a hat as well or get a new one.

I don't know, but every time I think of you I am happy and a shiver goes up my spine, or at least that is the nearest explanation I can get to my feelings. All I know is that I am longing to see you again. Every time I go to a dance and they play "Now is the Hour" I also think of you Ken dear, and wish you were holding my hand too.

You know when you were out here, I used to feel funny whenever people looked at us. But I would not care if the whole world stared at us now, I am awfully glad that in these two years I have had time to sort myself out a bit and see a bit of the world, as now I can face it with a more mature mind. That sounds funny, but I am not the little schoolgirl you left behind as I have grown up considerably, especially these last few months. I have noticed the difference myself.

I will close now, and please give my regards to all. Always thinking of you and sending all my Love to you Ken Darling. Always Yours. Margaret.
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Letter No. 127. Monday 16th February 1948.

My Dearest Margaret.

Once again I am here with pen & paper writing yet another Letter I was expecting a letter from you today Marg, they usually arrive on Mondays but I was disappointed. And before I
A Romance by Mail

go any further, sorry for being over a week again in writing. When Dad is working on the morning shift and is at home each evening that week, as soon as dinner is over, out comes the card table and the cards & well I just don't get a chance to write at all. This week Dad is on the afternoon shift 2. Till 9.30, so no cards, Auntie is busy knitting a jumper or something, (On inquiring, it is a jumper) a gray one with red & green stripes across

I have just been listening to the third episode in the radio serial of 'The Four Feathers', and now it is my favorite musical programme, "Band Parade" featuring 'Geraldo & Orchestra' Joe Loss & Orchestra' & Jimmy Leach & the New Organolians'

Last week at the Victoria Hall Halifax for one day only (Friday) there was Ted Heath & his Orchestra, "Britain's No 1 Band". Syd & I went for tickets about a week beforehand, but they had sold out. On the 26th February, 'Terry Foster & Band' are there so we are going early for tickets for that dance.

I still have no more news about coming out Marg Dear, how I wish I was just writing telling you all the details of sailing etc., Don't forget about the telegram I told you about in the last letter, as soon as I hear anything I will let you know. Honestly Marg I am just aching to be with you again, I am sure time is dragging more than ever now, if it is a sin to wish time away, I am well and truly a sinner.

Well my wish for tomorrow at 5.45 on arriving home is that there is a letter from you, it is a week today since I had one, but it seems an age. Well space is limited Marg, so Love to All the Family & All my Fondest Love & Thoughts to You Marg Dear.

Always Loving You, Yours Always. Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

Letter No. 128. Saturday 21st February. 1948.

My Dearest Margaret.

Your two letters arrived on Thursday, one for Dad & Auntie & one for me. Many thanks for both of them, as well as the 'Glamour & Pix Magazines' which arrived the same day. I could hardly wait to get them opened, when I saw them waiting on the piano along with the letter, and how wonderful it was when I did eventually get through the sticky paper. And find the page with the one photo in, the other eleven didn't interest me one little bit, then the picture of you all walking. Yes you certainly have grown much taller. Dad & Auntie think they are lovely, Cyril who come home on a weekend leave last night is at this very moment looking through the Glamour, he hasn't come to the page with the photo's yet.

Oh! before I go any further, a few days ago it suddenly dawned on me that it was Pete's Birthday on the eleventh, it was much too late then to send a card, so will you express my apologies to her, it never entered my head until it was much too late to do anything about it, the one date that is a fixture for life in my head is 25th April and dynamite wouldn't shift it. (Before continuing, No this is not my Birthday, which is 15th April, but 6 years later our 2nd Daughter Rosemary Beth Tye was born at 3pm. Sunday 25th April, 1954). Maybe wishful thinking that really came true.)

Thanks for putting me in my place Marg Dear, you have made a new man of me. How I wish I were there so you could give me the good telling off you nearly did in your Letter it's dead certain that I am not coming out to ask about the weather, in fact, as long as you are on the jetty it can be snowing, raining or hailing, but it could be sun shining to suit the occasion. They are going to have to get a move on if I am to be there for your Birthday, counting four weeks for the journey only leaves five weeks here, and knowing at what speed the people in Authority work, I think the chances are pretty dim. Still on the other hand, looking on the brighter side, the 25th of February is my lucky day, !. The day I joined the

Navy 1943. 2. The day I arrived in Sydney 1945, so I have all fingers and all toe's crossed for next Wednesday.

It is about 2.30 pm. now Marg, and I have promised to go down to Leslie's for tea so I had better get washed & changed or it will be tea-time before I get there.

Sunday Afternoon.

Here I am again, sitting near the fire with writing pad on my knee, outside every thing is white with snow, & believe me it's blooming cold. Yesterday I got down to Leslie's about four, we talked, had tea and talked again until about six thirty, then we went to Syd's Place, it took us until seven thirty to decide where to go, John, (Syd's Brother) wanted to go roller skating at Bradford, I said I would like to go, Les didn't want to go and Syd didn't want to go, anyway to settle it we tossed up a coin, heads we went, tails we didn't it came down heads, so we went, to Halifax.

We went in John's van, he dare not risk taking it to Bradford with the petrol restrictions, so from Halifax we had to go by bus. It was a shocking night, the roads all covered with snow, and very slippery. The snow coming down as fast as it could restricting the bus drivers vision to only a few yards, well by the time we eventually got to the roller-drome it was 9pm, and to crown everything they had no skates left. Can you imagine how John & I went on.

Les & Syd gave it to us good and hard, as we were the two who wanted to go skating, to put the top hat on everything the last bus back to Halifax was at ten thirty so our evenings entertainment was a complete washout.

Soon it will be time for my favorite meal. How I enjoy Sunday tea-time, I don't know why it is but it is the meal I look forward to most, it is not as good in winter because there is no salad etc., but in summer with lettuce, tomatoes etc., etc., etc., then fruit & custard, cakes, hmmm! My mouth is watering at the thought of it.

Cyril has just gone to Bradford to see Auntie Annie, he goes every time he is home, today he has taken a big bowl of flowers that he brought from Stratford on Avon where he is stationed.

Well Auntie is laying the table now so I will be closing, this is yet another letter nearer to the last one, I wonder how many more. Love to All the Family.

All my Fondest Love & Thoughts to You Marg Dear.

Always Yours. Love Ken. XX

Letter No. 127. 22nd February. 1948.

My Dearest Ken.

I have been working hard today, washing, cleaning the house up, and I can hardly walk, as yesterday we learned another dance for the show, it is Russian, and we are (rushin') here, & (rushin') there all the way through. It is very good but hard dance, you know how the Russian dances are done, by jumping in the air, then squatting on the ground and throwing the legs out in front. And another step we do is that we are balancing on one leg and crouched on the ground spinning round in circles as fast as we can go, then all of a sudden we have to stand up while we are still spinning. It is as hard to do as it is to explain it. When we stop we are supposed to be facing the audience, and then we stamp our feet in true Russian fashion, and throwing an arm in the air, sing out Hi!!.

Consequently all the muscles in the top of my leg are aching. I hope you are out here for the show it starts on the 21st April.

I wonder how much longer it will be before we see each other again. I did not mind so much before, but now I know it won't be very long, I think I am getting impatient. ?

Tuesday. 24th. What no letter? ? They usually arrive on Tuesday, but I am afraid I will have to wait till tomorrow and see what happens. Pete & I are going to a Birthday party on Thursday night. I wonder if I will get the train on Friday in time for work, I doubt it, or if I do I will fall asleep at work.

It is very late now, so hoping "The Postman Knocks", tomorrow. Best wished to all the family. Always (getting into trouble whilst thinking of you.)

Lovingly Yours. Margaret. XXX

Letter No. 130 Monday 1st March 1948.

My Dearest Margaret.

Well it is the first day of another month and still I have heard nothing more, honestly Marg I am just sick & tired of getting up each morning going to work, rushing home each evening hoping that the letter will be waiting, and then being disappointed. I think if there is nothing here by next Monday, I will write them again and see if that will do any good.

I can never remember anytime before when I just couldn't go to sleep at night this last few weeks no matter what time I go to bed I just can't go to sleep. Last night I made my mind up not to think of anything and listen to the clock ticking until I dropped off to sleep, but that didn't last long, about a minute I think.

Before I knew it I was being awakened by the alarm clock and was folding blankets up etc., then making tea & creeping in the back door of your bedroom sitting holding your hand for ten minutes before running at breakneck speed down to catch the train. Next time Darling there will be no train to catch, no H.M.S. to back to.

Thursday.

I am so sorry I had to break off. Dad kept saying - 'Haven't you finished that letter yet?' You can guess he is working on morning shift this week so it is out cards each evening. Tonight Dad & Auntie have gone to the pictures, so I can once again sit down and write to the girl who makes me daydream all day and keeps me awake at night. I never had such wonderful thoughts & dreams in all my life, I know if I don't get cracking and steaming towards Sydney soon I shall be going crazy.

I was sure there would be a letter from you today Marg, that is the trouble I look forward to getting home and reading it, then when there is one, I am more disappointed. I shall never be satisfied Marg Dear until we are together and no more letters.

Well space is limited again Darling so I must close. Love to All the Family & All my Fondest Love & Thoughts to You My Darling.

Always Yours.

Ken. XXX

Letter No, 128. 3rd March. 1948.

My Dearest Ken.

Hello! Ken dear, one more along the line. First I must tell you, that it came over the wireless the other night that about 2000 to 3000 migrants are leaving England within the next five weeks. I do hope you are one of them.

Also I would like to remove from your silly head the fact that my Birthday is the 25th of April. It is not! It is on the 15th of April but I forgive you for making that mistake and by the way, I am to have my party that night, I would rather wait till you get here, but it is the only night we can get the hall for months, plus the caterer's, and orchestra, all on the one night. I am awfully sorry, but that is what has happened, and it is a case of take or leave it nowadays out here. If you do hear that you are leaving within a few weeks we will still be able to cancel the hall and perhaps try for another one for later.

I got a craze a few weeks ago to do fancy work, and I have finished one dressing table set, two doilies and half of another, and also I have started to do a picture of "Ann Hathaway's Cottage". I hope I get some nice cloths etc., to do soon, I find that by paying a few shillings for the material and stopping home in weekends I am saving a lot of money. Which seemed to be running away like water.

Another thing, do please tell me about that Indian who told your fortune, my curiosity is getting the better of me, do just tell me part of it even if you won't tell it all.

You know Ken. I, don't think people realize, that besides you leaving all you have got to come over here to me. I have the rest of my life to spend in not letting you regret it. Which I sincerely hope you don't, but if things do not go as I would like them to, & I think you do as well, I will have to take the knocks all the rest of my life. But enough of that, lets look to the happiest future ever to be spent by any boy and girl in the whole world & let anything as horrid as that take care of itself, if ever it comes along.

Ken, you will have to absolutely haunt the officials of Australia House to get you out here before the end of April, but I don't think I can tell you how much I hope you can.

Last Saturday I went down to Stafford's school as they were holding a Fete, I was on the fruit stall and from 4pm. - 10pm. I had sold 6 pounds worth of oysters, then oranges, grapes, pears, apples, bananas, passion fruits & even pumpkin. I had great fun, you should have seen me. In the evening they had a wonderful fireworks display, You know, shooting big fire balls into the air that break into hundreds of stars of different colours and float to earth, it was beautiful.

It is half past ten (p.m.). And I will not get up in the morning if I don't have a bath and go to bed, so I will say Goodnight Ken Darling, every time I send you a letter lately I feel as if I go with it, Please write all you can Dear.

Best Wishes to all at Elland. All my fondest thoughts Ken dear.

Always Yours. Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

Letter No. 131 7th. March 1948.

My Dearest Margaret.

Sunday afternoon again Marg & it's a lovely day, the sun is shining through the window & feels lovely and warm, I am writing this on the chair arm & I see that the lines are going all on the slant already still I am comfortable.

On Saturday your letter No. 126 came, on the Friday when there was no letter I thought I would be unlucky that week, Auntie said Oh! there will be one tomorrow, but I didn't think so as it is a long time since one came on a Saturday, they usually come either Monday or Thursday.

I have just finished writing yet another letter to Australia House, I wonder if this one will do any good, talk about being impatient Marg, that is just a mild way of putting it. Here it is the seventh day of March and still I have heard nothing more, at Xmas I was sure that I should be at sea by March, still anything that is worth having is worth waiting for.

I would so much like to be out in time for the show starting on the 21st April, but if I am to be there things will have to get on the move mighty soon. It is only about six weeks to that date, and a month at sea only leaves two weeks, which looks to me to be just about an impossibility, as much as I regret to say or think it.

Still Marg Dear when I do eventually arrive, we must make up for all these things that we are having to miss now. Here I go daydreaming again still it is the thing I find most pleasure in, I never tire of it and will continue doing it until all these dreams become reality, very soon I hope.

Well it is almost tea time again and as usual I am hungry, so I will be saying Cheerio! until the next letter hoping I have some better news by then.

Love to All the Family & All my Fondest Love & Thoughts to You Marg Darling.

Always Loving You. Love Ken. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Letter No. 129. 7th March. 1948...

My Dearest Ken.

And yet another letter, although I have a vague feeling that it won't be long, so Mum & I have decided to put the party off until such times as that day falls due.

Do you know what they are playing on the wireless at the moment, "I'm Falling in Love with Someone", I think they must know my thoughts or something, but I'm afraid that that's what I find when I define my thoughts or should I say when they manage to stop and straighten themselves out, which is not very often. To tell you the truth Ken Darling, I have forbidden myself to think of you whilst at work, as I have not been working properly lately. In fact my work was piling up, and I only just got it finished at the end of last month and that is no good. So I know you will forgive me if I have to do that, but I would hate to get the sack, or something as bad as that. It won't be easy, as my mind, just refuses to stay put, and wanders off at tangents all day long.

Pete sings in her first concert on next Saturday night . Dad & I are going, Mum can't get down from the farm yet as the new boy can't milk the cows yet.

I will be glad when it is payday again, I have 5 ½ d to last me till then, another 4 days "Oh! Lor!!!" I wonder if I can do it without going to the bank, I hope so. Your

..... said that you and I are sort of unofficially engaged (to quote your own words,) this sounds funny, but wouldn't you like to make it Official on the night of the party. As you mentioned it first, it does not sound so bad, but in that way Dad I know would give us a bumper party, and it would it would be just as much yours as mine.

Well I think you see it as I do. And you can't imagine how I feel writing this, but being so far away I just can't ring up etc., and make arrangements any time, but if it goes well with your plans, Mum could make arrangements as soon as we hear the day you sail. Mum unofficially heard that 2000 are sailing on the 31st March, here's hoping, and it came over the air that 2000 -3000 are sailing in the next five weeks.

Please forgive me if this page seems a little funny to you Ken but I know you will understand. So till next time. Best Wishes to all over there. All my Love & thoughts to you Ken Darling.

Always Yours. Margaret.

...XX

Letter No. 130. 14th March. 1948.

My Dearest Ken

Once again, and hoping you are at it too. I have had the most varied weekend for months, I went to a Concert on Saturday to hear Pete sing, and all things to happen, the Man in front of me had a heart attack and died. It was horrible, but I felt sorry for his daughter who was singing on the stage at the time, she saw him and nearly fainted.

Today Dad & I went up to the farm, it was the first time I had been up there since Xmas. They held the big "Annual Bridge to Bridge" boat race today. Which runs from the Hawkesbury River Bridge, to Windsor Bridge. The trip is 68 miles we are about half way. Aunty May wants me to send her a photo of myself, so I'm sending a small copy of the big one I sent you. I hope she likes it.

Mum & I are having great fun planning the party for when you arrive. I hope it will be as nice as it sounds when we talk about it. Of course Dad thinks we are crazy.

Once again Ken Darling I can't express myself. I hope this torture ends soon. You know if only I could hear you talk it would help. You know I feel it more now, than in all the other 20 months put together & that is a lot. Why must they keep you waiting, you know I can't tell you how much I miss you, and when they started to play "Don't Fence me in," I wondered if that was stating your feelings. I remember you used to drive Mum mad when you started to whistle it.

I was looking through my Autograph book the other day. Do you remember what you wrote in it. And at the end, "A half hearted Sailor" I hope you are not half hearted any longer Dear, you know I am really in a sentimental mood, and yet all you do is sit on the Lo-boy and wink one black eye at me. I never have liked that photo of you, I don't know why, but I will never forget the day you brought it home, and I said how horrible it made you look. Your face dropped 1ft, as if I meant the same about yourself, little did I know then that I would have to look at it for 2 whole years instead of yourself. Ken Dear , maybe it is just as well we don't know the future.

Well Darling, I will have to close or you will be thinking me a bit silly, but I can't remembering what I missed because I was you (.....) stand how I felt before you left. (

The silver fish have really enjoyed the last few lines on this page. And now a P.S.

Ken your Dad tells me your Mother had to wait four years for him, W.W.1. I think I understand what it must have been like. At the moment I don't feel like sleeping, and my heart feels like lead. M.L. (X) for you.

Letter No. 131. Missing.

Letter No. 132. 23rd. March. 1948.

My Dearest Ken.

Here I am again, and with a beastly cold, which does not make me at all happy. Two very welcome letters No's 132 & 133. Arrived today, and before I left for work, which is unusual as that is usually 8 o'clock but no news again. How I hate the Authorities, Ken I am afraid that you will just have to keep reminding them from over there as that is where the last say comes from.

A girl friend of mine, her friend arrived on the "Moreton Bay". He got fed up after waiting 14 months, so paid his own fare out. They berthed last Friday, how I wish it had been you, but it will come. I am afraid I will be shamefully nervous when the time does arrive, and you walk towards me, you had better not have any luggage, because if my knees give way I don't want to fall on the wharf.

I am glad you did not think me crazy when I mentioned about the Party. I have been dreaming for months whether that is how you would like things. I would so like to have all your family out for the wedding (ha! ha!) but it does sound funny. Here I am, just having my pigtails cut off a few years ago. But you have no idea how much I have thought about us in the past two years.

Yes! Ken Darling the hard years will have to be faced and we will do it the way Mum & Dad did and then when we are old or not quite so old, we will look back and laugh together over all the things that got in our way.

You see I have a pretty good memory, & I can remember when we were very tiny. The Depression was on, and Dad only just starting out, I think it was about -\$75 . compared with \$300 to \$1000. Or so that most of the young fellows had, and are doing today with the higher wages. (.....). that mounted up etc., WE did not have the things we have today, one thing, Dad does not waste his money, or drink (.....) which makes a big difference.

Anyway there will be more fun and happiness than anything else if I have a say in things, and troubles can look after themselves.

I am afraid you will have to pester the life out of the Authorities if you want to make our dreams come true soon Ken Dear, and by hokey they had better hurry up.

So till next time, Darling. All my Love to you Ken Dear.

Always Yours. Margaret. XX.

Letter No. 133 31st March. 1948.

My Dearest Ken.

The time is about 11 o'clock p.m. and I am ll but asleep, Pete is home tonight, and complaining like the devil, about the light. I have the most awful cold, and at work they have threatened to put me on a chain, I have been barking so much & so loudly.

I have not heard from you this week Ken, but there is always a tomorrow. Have you heard from "Australia House" yet, I hope they have given you some good news as to the great day.

You have no idea how worried about the day you are to arrive, you will have to forgive me if I do anything extraordinary such as, well Oh! Bother, there I go again, I know that I am likely to (Damn!!) that (Aint) lady like but I can't explain what I am thinking but for heavens sake if I do, just don't worry Darling I will get over it. The whole family, declare they are to be there to meet you, and that will be worse. I will be so keyed up with excited nervousness that I won't know what I am doing.

You know when you said that you would be sailing within 4 to 6 weeks ages ago. Mum asked me to get something, and I did not remember what she said when I got out of the room, in fact I was walking in a dream for days, and it took a lot to get me out of it.

Think I will finish this tomorrow as I have a(hell!) of a headache from the cold.

Thursday night. I have just come in from Lodge. And am glad to be home.

The Postman did not call again today, but I am hoping that when a letter does arrive it will have the Good News. We are always hearing about the ships leaving from England & Scotland but the don't seem to be letting you catch one of them Ken Dear.

Pete & I are going to a party over at Bellevue Hill on Saturday night & I have to go to rehearsal for the show on Sunday. I have to get a new pair of 'toe shoes' for the show, I hope the silly old man has them ready. (I am ashamed I wrote that last sentence, as Dear Old Mr. Block, made shoes for all famous dancers who ever entered or lived in Australia, & he lived to be a very old much loved man.)

So till next time, Best Wishes to Dad, Aunty & Cyril.

All my Love to you Ken Darling. Always Yours. Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

Looking back, I find it hard sometimes to reread what I wrote so long ago, then I remember that I was even years younger, & I now have four Grandchildren who are this age, and older. And one nearly so....

7th April. 1948

My Dearest Ken.

Hello! Once again, Bark! Bark! Yes I still have my cold, I can't seem to get rid of it despite all the mixtures, tonics, poisons, pills etc., that I have been taking.

By the way Darling, how is Dad now, does he still have to visit the Dr. I have been wondering whether to send you another cake for your birthday or a parcel incase you are on your way, if I send a parcel the family can make use of it.

One year and one week tomorrow, and I have completed another year of my life.

Sunday 11th.

I am sorry to say that my homework was interrupted. But here again going my hardest, Dad tells me that they had a letter from you last week, lucky things, but then I don't really deserve one, seeing I did not send you one but I went to 3 rehearsals last week, besides Sat. Sun. & tomorrow & so on.

Pete told me that you said for them to give me the party in any case. Ken I want you to understand that even if I waited 50 years, I would not have the party now, till you could come & share in the fun. You see it means more to me to have you than have 50 parties. Ken Dear I can't express the way I feel, but believe

me, I'm far too depressed at times. For example, last night I went to a dance to fill in the night. I was dancing with some boy that I have never seen before, and when the music stopped, he said to me are you feeling well & I said "I am well thank you" and he said "You have an awfully far away look in your eyes. What are you thinking about" & I said "England", he said "Hence the look" so if strangers notice it, it must be bad. But what's the use, we can't say anything about it, but we will one day. (Roll on that Day). If only you could get out here.

You know Darling, I often wonder just what it is that makes two people fall in Love, you know, from the first time I saw you, I felt funny inside, & I have never got over it. But I must confess that I did not realize what it really was till about 6 months ago, and since then it has got steadily worse so if you can't get here soon, I will be a cot case.

So till next time Darling, all my Love to you Ken Dear. Always Yours.

Margaret...xx

2nd May. 1948.

My Dearest Margaret...

Here I am again, actually writing on a Sunday morning which is very unusual for me, but I don't expect to write very much as any moment now I am expecting Auntie to call out, 'It's ready' 'Food' of course.

Please excuse all the ink that is splashed all over this page, Dad had the ink last and didn't put the cap on the bottle, I just grabbed the ink bottle and ink went each and every way, over carpet mostly

I am sat in the sitting room right next to the loud speaker connected to the radio in the other room, and once again it is Family Favorites program 12 to 1.15pm. A few minutes ago they played "One Love" sung by Frank Sinatra, yes I stopped writing and thought, that's about all I do, think!

I can't do anything else at the moment, but there will come a day my Darling when it won't be necessary to sit and 'imagine' we are together again. Making up for a lot of valuable time that has been lost, well no, I won't say lost, someday I hope we shall say it was worth every minute of the two years and how many months we do not know yet. All the letters we have written to each other, I must confess I shall breathe a sigh of relief when there are no more to write.

Three more days Marg and it will be two years since we last saw each other, it seems an age, it is an age, it's 730 days, it's 17,520 hours and it's a blooming long time as to which way you look at it. Honestly Marg if I had known how long it was going to be I don't think I should have come home. If you had been a year older & things had turned out as I had in mind I definitely would not have come back, still as you say Darling you have had time to set yourself out so it is perhaps for the best. I am going to close now Marg, and finish this letter tomorrow evening, then there is bound to be a letter from you but they say 13 is unlucky and it is the 13th day tomorrow since I last had a letter from you.

Monday Evening May 3rd. 1948.

I am real downhearted Darling, all day at work I have been wishing every minute away, then hurrying home to read your letter, & I just couldn't believe it when Dad said there wasn't one. I thought they must be hiding it somewhere to tease me. Or something, but no, it's true there is no Letter

workers perhaps, but no-one that is not classed in the essential industries, it will soon be six months since I had the medical, & after six months it is necessary to have another one.

Well Darling I will be closing, Dad is off work with a cold, & as usual is wanting a game of cards, there's no need to say how much I am longing for a letter tomorrow, they often come on Tuesdays anyway, so until next time All My Love to you I am always thinking of you & wishing we were together once again (Someday Darling) - Love to all the Family

All my Fondest Love & Thoughts to You Marg Darling
Loving You Always.
Yours. Ken.
 XX
 XX
 XX

Dad says jokingly Oh! you've had it, she's got fed up of waiting, Auntie says 'What have you been writing something that has offended her, the worst of it is I know perfectly well they are pulling my leg, yet my mind refuses to stop trying to work out why a letter hasn't come today, what do you think when my letters are late Marg? Please tell me if you feel anything like I feel tonight I will start straight away and double the amount of letters even if I have to stay up half the night to do it. Well you once said in a letter when one of my letters didn't arrive, 'well there's always a tomorrow,' so Darling tomorrow can't come quickly enough for me.

There is still no news about a ship, honestly I shall go crackers if something doesn't happen soon, I have only one consolation about it all & that is that I very rarely hear of anyone else who has gone. Some building & woolen workers perhaps, but no one that is not classed in the essential industries, it will soon be six months since I had the medical, and after six months it is necessary to have another one.

Well Darling I will be closing, Dad is off work with a cold, & as usual is wanting a game of cards. There's no need to say how much I am longing for a letter tomorrow, they often come on Tuesdays anyway, so until next time. All My Love to You, I am always thinking of you & wishing we were together once again (Someday Darling).

Love to all the Family. All my Fondest Love & Thoughts to You Marg Darling
Love to You Always. Yours. Ken. XX.

Letter No. 139??? 17th May. 1948. Re Postmark.

My Dearest Ken (Pete says Drip!).

She is lying in bed beside me & calling me names etc.,

Do you know that it is ten days since you posted No. 138, it arrived today, that is 10 days to get here (disgusting) not to say the least. I wonder if you will be out here by your Birthday, I hope so (you Old man) 24 is it not, you will soon need a walking stick or crutches.

Please don't worry about the writing as I think my nib is broken, it feels like it. You ask if I miss your letters, to be honest Ken Darling you know perfectly well I do, but I miss you more, and that's saying a lot.

Ken, I am going to reprimand you again. You say 'If I had been older etc.,'. Do you realize that you mean a great deal to your Father & Brother, not to mention Aunts & Uncles, and there is going to be a day in the future when you will be glad you were able to see them all even, if it might be for the last time.

I know how sorry my Dad was when his parents passed away, that he had not gone to see them just before the War when he had the opportunity, I also realize only too well, what I mean to you, & I don't ever want that "Vision" that I have kept you away from Dad & Cyril especially, let alone the others so you see I don't want you reproaching yourself, for having gone home now. Don't go and get any silly ideas about how my feelings for you have been, and now are still are. I don't think I have to remind you, but for heavens sake just realize that 'God', or 'Fate' which ever you call it, meant you to go home, home you go! And let the future worry about itself.

Now that future looms near and I pray that God wills it the same as both you & I do Darling, so we will have to keep hoping & waiting, and when the day arrives. Oh well! I'll tell you then as neither of us know what is to happen, but for heaven's sake, Don't smother me or else!!.

Till next time Dear, best wishes to Dad, Aunty & Cyril. All my fondest thoughts to you Ken Dear. Always Yours. Margaret. XX.

Letter No. 140. 21st May. 1948.

My Dearest Ken.

Yes, once again I make an apology for not having written for a week, but I don't know where time has gone. We had a Gas strike, and trying to cook meals on the kerosene stoves made me an hour later every night and having to wait for water to heat washing up instead of turning a tap also wasted a lot of time in fact it has been a general pickle. I had my first hot bath since last week, and I just positively soaked in it.

You have no idea how ashamed I am when you say you have been waiting for a letter for so long Ken Darling, and I can tell you I have been feeling utterly sad & depressed as your last letter arrived a fortnight ago; it seems a decade or two. I felt sure there would be one when I got home from work today, but No, perhaps tomorrow.

The other day my dancing teacher asked me if I would do the B.B.O (British Ballet Organization) exam, Elementary standard early next year, and as this is the second highest exam you can do in Australia, and I have a good chance of passing, I said I would. I hope you won't mind, it will only mean only hard practice on my part, and a little patience on yours Ken dear, as I hope you will be well & truly in Aussie by then.

You see I only took up Ballet as a stopgap as Peggy Gott would say, and nobody guessed that I would do so well at it, I think it would break my teacher's heart if I refused

to do the exam. She looks on me as one of her star pupils.

You know Ken, I weep when I think of the fun we could be having together thousands of things crop up, to do & see, yet the Fates still deny us a little fun. It does not seem fair that some girls can toss their friends here & there & everywhere to suit themselves, & we can't even see each other or share our joys or sorrows together. I could really scream at times I get really mad.

Well once again the papers "Flup" and I don't suppose grumbling would get me anywhere so Best wishes to Dad, Aunty & Cyril.

All my Love to kisses to you Darling. Always yours Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.
P.S. At the moment I honestly have a heartache, it makes me want to cry, sometimes I do. M.L. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

Letter No. 141 25th May. 1948.

My Dearest Ken.

My homework book is out, and the pen ready and first of all Dear I am awfully sorry I caused you so much worry during the past month, I really did not mean too, so please forgive me.

Mum, Dad & I went to the local 'Empire Day' dance last Saturday night and all I can say was that there was an overflow of girls, all the people from the local boarding house turned up making about 1 doz. Extra young girls. I was lucky & had quite a few partners, but mostly they danced with each other. There was a shortage of Males because the Cricket Ball was on the night before, and the men were too tired to come.

There has been nothing exciting happening out here lately, so I can't think of anything to write about. **Monday...** 'Stop press' Well here I am again, this time, up at the farm last Wednesday I got a call from the farm to come up & look after Mum, she has a touch of bad influenza, so I had to leave work, and catch the first train up, so I have been feeding fowls, milking two cows, feeding humans, washing etc., and I am tired but at least I am learning to be a good Farmers Wife and it is not easy, waiting for hot water etc., on a fuel stove instead of turning on the taps. You know Darling I have lots of things I must tell you, and yet I can't think. Oh! By the way my dancing teacher's husband is in Charge of Land & Settlement in Australia, and I got Dad to ring him up and ask if he knew the people in authority in the Immigration Dept. and he did last Thursday night, they talked for an hour and Mr McLaren said he would do all he could to help, as he saw, sees Calwell and the others every time he is at parliament, so here's hoping.

I do hope it won't be long, as I miss you ever so much. So till next time best wishes to Dad, Aunty & Cyril,

All my Love to you Ken Darling, & hoping to hear from you soon.

Always yours Dear. Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

P.S. Write to the farm please till further notice. Love M.L. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

Letter No. 141. 6th June. 1948. Should be Letter, No. 142.

My Dearest Ken.

At last I have time to write. Amidst a lot of nagging. You see Ken a friend of Mums from Adelaide sent me a little gift and on the card it had something to do with my engagement.

Well! I certainly was taken back, as I have not breathed a word about it to a soul outside the family. What is more I had not even heard of the person, it appears that Mum let the cat out of the bag, and so quite a few people know now, but they all live in Adelaide so we still can keep it to ourselves till the last moment.

It will make it more fun. Anyway to get back to the point. I have not written & thanked the woman as the show was on and then I had to come up here & so all my correspondence slipped, well anyway Mum has been having a session and I told her that I don't want people to know till you get out here. (I feel better now) Mum gets these fits. It's all over now. **Tuesday 8th.**

The weather is foul, it is raining cats & dogs and when I think of getting up to milk the cows in the morning I shudder, Mum has just written to Australia House, and complained about the delay. The next boatload sails about the end of June. All I can say I "Please God let Ken be on it" I have not heard from Mr McLaren as to how he got on, with his investigations as to your departure.

Like all country houses we have rats, and Mum made some baits today, so all night long we have been hearing squeals then bang and another redskin, ratskin bites the dust.

The citrus crops are ready to come off in a couple of weeks, more work but thank heavens it is nice & easy compared with the stone fruit at Xmas time.

Once again I have come to the end so, please give my best wishes to the family Darling. All my Love to you Ken Dear. Always yours. Margaret.
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

Letter No. 142 Missing. ---No. 143. 14th June 1948.

My Dearest Ken.

Isn't it wonderful, I can hardly contain myself. In fact Dear, I can't find anything to say. I will tell you how I got the news, I was invited to a party over the phone, and was expecting a formal invitation and when the postman arrived this morning he handed Dad a telegram for me, I thought it was the invitation.

Just imagine what I felt. It was a great shock in fact I read it three or four times before I realized what it read, and I screamed 'he's coming,' and they all thought I was mad, really Darling, I still can't realize that in about 2½ months you will be here in Aussie. You know the show starts on 19th August, then it is on 20th, 24th, 26th, so you will probably be out here for it, also you will have your birthday on the water just as you wished.

Please give my Love to Dad & Aunty, and tell them I will try to be a good daughter for them, also tell Aunt Annie that I think of her quite often, and that I would like to meet her one of these days.

Remember? I told you about the 'Old Man' who prunes our plum trees, well of all things to happen at once, we have been waiting for him to arrive for weeks. We heard a noise at the gate, and there was 'Santa' as he is called, driving his sulky through the gate

So tonight he suggested that Mum, he & I, get a 'Lottery' ticket on the strength of it. We are going to call it "Santa Glasgow" and hope for the best.

It is raining cats & dogs outside & I rowed four people 3 miles up the river against the tide yesterday and I made my back tired, I was the only person who could row, so I can hardly keep awake.

Yes Dear! Only a couple more letters. They are playing "Night & Day" on the wireless, it is my favourite. No! Yes!

I am just waiting for a letter from you explaining details, so till next time.

All my Love to you Ken Darling. Always yours. Margaret.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Letter No. 144. 21st June. 1948. "Staines"

My Dearest Ken.

I have just been doing a bit of homework & I find you will be sailing in another 22 days, I have been wondering what you would be doing all the time it is so cold here and so I can hardly write, the frost is white on the ground & yet it is 9 o'clock, in the morning, and 'All is not well, I'm freezing' but Happy!. The arrangements have been made for the party, it is to be held at 'Dulwich Hall

'On September 4th, you might remember that you took me to my first Ball in evening frock, and tried to tell me you could not dance all night and you were not in a good mood,

You drank, but it will be a different matter next time. Please let me know some of the dances such as quicksteps that you like doing best, you probably know more about it than me as we don't do many modern dances out here, there will be about 150 guests.

As you are having your Birthday on the water, Mum & Dad are giving us a combined 'Birthday -Engagement' party, it will make it all the more fun.

A few weeks ago, you asked me to look up my favourite jewelers, but as I am not in the habit of perusing that of type of firm. A jeweler friend of ours would possible make us what we want ready for the night, the awkward thought now arises, I do not know what your ideas on the matter exactly are. However I think we will be able to sort that out.?

Problem. The last paragraph has taken ages to type, the middle of the original letter, as are the following last two that have survived the years etc., are all but consumed by either silver fish, or mice. I just hope I catch the spirit of those moments, when I wrote so many years ago. The air letters, are now the quality of tissue paper.-----

All the decorations are to be with green & golden roses, it should be quite pretty, they have a permanent photographer at the hall, so we will be able to send both families a record of our 'Follies'.

This seems a blood thirsty letter Darling, but as I once heard you say, "I can't stand Gold Diggers," neither can I but being so far away makes these things a little awkward.

Except for the cable, I have not heard from you Dear. Oh! Yes, I did. It was written before you heard the great news, it seemed so depressing. I should get one today

-----I will write again before you sail, hoping you get it.

Best wishes to Dad, Aunty & Cyril. And all my Fondest Love & thoughts to you Darling. Ken. Always Yours, Margaret.

XX

Letter No. 145. No date. 1948. Yet very badly moth eaten...

My Dearest Ken..

At last your much longed for Letter arrived. Boy, am I sure glad to get it. We've had a chapter of incidents out here today, for a start. All say I m lucky I have a leg, at least not a broken leg. I was saddling Staffords horse or I was holding the saddle while he put the bridle on & all of a sudden it (must have turned round - -----up it's back-----) and caught me right on the knee.

Darling I screamed & screamed (-----) finally cried on Mum's shoulder for a quarter of an hour. The shock was great. The things that went round in my head at that time were amazing. Between thoughts of dying, and every thing else, my Dreams were dashed to pieces, (-----) I have a black football instead of a pink coloured knee, but I don't think there any bones broken although Pete said it (my kneecap) could be chipped - Anyway Dear, I am still alive.

Strange things happen to me. Now remembering back to about the early 60's when Auntie May came to visit, I had also injured my right leg having fallen off the verandah roof trying to pass Ken a hammer when requested, no demanded. & leaning forward I fell nine feet to a cement floor. It hurt.

Mum was pulling mandarin's (tangerines) this afternoon, and a wasp stung her on the thumb. Dad was bringing the horses through the orchard when the reins came undone, he hopped off the slide to fix it, the horses thought he was taking too long & off they went, knocking him down & dragging him behind, but he rolled clear. Pete bruised herself on one of the trees. Old Santa (Blundell) said he had never seen so many minor accidents in one day in the whole 72 years he has lived on the river.

Dad thinks it would be a good idea if you bring your Driving License & such like, as it would save time out here having to not wait for a permit & then another month for the license. If you have the other papers they would probably put through straight away.

Tell Les that you both calculated the arrival of the Cable correctly, it came through at 10am, on the Monday. Also Darling I only said to Mum on Thursday night that I would write to Aunty Annie, Dad, Aunty Nell, and Aunty May and Cyril again so it will be before Monday.

Stafford received a Distinction in his Music Exam results, and got 89%, not bad considering he has a rotten teacher. He has changed to a man teacher now & is doing even better.

You say that you feel confident that Dad will meet me, so tell him "Roll on the Day" quoting you yourself. I only hope I can one day in the future. It would be wonderful if they could come out here for our wedding.

Won't I be glad when you can help me make plans, instead of dreaming castles by myself.

I have just this moment realized that this is the last letter that you will receive from me so I will be making it a long one. Many Happy Returns on the 21st, but you will hear more about that when you arrive, pity the others cannot join in the fun we will have to write & tell them and send some of the cake by mail. (-----) and Stafford is very put out, he wants to know if you have to can come even

if you don't marry, he also thinks he will not marry as it costs too much. Could he be an Uncle even if he is only a boy. He is getting frightfully inquisitive, so be prepared for a battery of questions from him Darling. He said he would like to go on board the ship when it arrives, but that remains to be seen.

I am frightfully inquisitive to know the date you are to arrive myself, so I can stop worrying, you would not believe this but Mum pulled quite a few white not gray hairs out of my wooden head the other day. So began feeding me on orange juices & glucose (-----) thinking I must be run down, and I must have been or I would not have cried like I did this morning, I have not done that since I was quite small.

I will be sending out the invitations for the Party (-----) weeks time, and if you have any friends you would like to come, just say the word. Also any people you may meet on the ship out, or people you know coming (-----) you let Mum know when you get home, so she can let the caterers know.

Pete is up at the farm (-----) and it is about the first time in ages that she has been home together since she started nursing at R.P.A. Hospital. There is a terrific painting of "Jahore", our cousin Peter is over there. (-----) He is a Corporal now.

Mum, Dad, and Pete picked 60 cases of mandarines, they will be graded & packed tomorrow. There are about 600 cases more to come off, plus all the oranges.

Dad says he (-----) of the "Empire Brent" it has been out here he thinks, or else it is being fitted up for migrants. You'll probably get lost when you come out to Kingsgrove, there are so many new houses built so many new faces about.

It was so cold this morning that the ground was white with frost, and a neighbour's hose pipe that had been left out all night was full of ice. I am sitting on the ramp in the sun, it is wonderful after the cold weather, & rain we have been having, the smell of violets, roses & honeysuckle floating all around, except for a couple of women gossiping it is awfully quiet, in fact it is as quiet as if I were walking around the gardens or the Zoo.

I took Stafford into Town for some new shoes & socks and lumber jacket, he talked about (----) & train smashes, etc., I could have (----) his sweet neck.

They are playing "Apple Blossom Wedding" on the wireless, I feel like being sentimental. I had better say, Till we meet again. So till I see you. All my Love to you Darling. Always yours. Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXX. P.S. It's a case of Woo-loo-Moo-Loo. Here I come for the last time, I have often walked down there during my lunch time.... Love Marg. XXXXXXXXXXXX.

Letter No. 146 Dateless.

My dearest Ken.

I am rather glad you sent an address for me, as I guessed you might be wanting to hear from me, but could not do anything about it.

We have rather a big programme ahead of us for a fortnight after you arrive.

18th Wed. "You arrive." Show **First Night**.

19 Thurs Show **Second night**.

20 Friday Go up to farm.

21 Sat

22 Sun Back to Sydney from farm. Now with hindsight I feel it right to add my memories.

This is the night for the show, as always is er was performed at "Concord Repatriation Hospital"

For all the "Boys" & Nursing Staff, capable of enjoying whether in bed, wheelchairs and or blind even deaf if they could also see and or hear enough to enjoy. It was the Company Group way for letting the Lads know that we still cared. & do they enjoy it each season. & we have great fun with them afterwards.

P.S. . Not in original letter... But at "Curtain Call" When whole crew standing waiting for usual

Recognition from both cast & Medical staff, the talented comedian & most gifted prankster in theatre at that time, tipped toed on stage in full Costume Top Hat & Tails. and Marching up and down rows of cast (in correct Military Manner of course) suddenly moved in behind me myself who in full Can Can regalia , skirt as other Ballet girls up in the saucy manner to show our frilly nickers as is done and expected in the fun, surprised all the audience, who clapped and yelled with the greatest of glee...Well not all straight away as I could see by the look (on both my parents & Ken's face) for only a moment and then they were joining as wildly as everyone else, for 'Jackie Russel' performer of the moment, lent over my shoulder & held an enormous printed placard with the word "TAKen" splattered right across it. & when I had to lean over the top to look and read what was creating the fun, there I was with Black stockinged legs, garters, knickers, below and bare shoulders feathers above and evidently the most provocative stance and look on my face which nearly brought the ceiling down. Suddenly The nursing staff were on alert, and beds were moving out, wheelchairs were rolling, crutches and walking sticks being handed around, and those capable were assisting their Blind & other unfortunate mates back to bed.

This Welcome to Ken from my friends was never forgotten by either of us while we could remember.

To Continue ...

- 23 Mon. Show 3rd Night.
- 24 Tues
- 25 Wed Show Last night.
- 26 Thurs Get over it. Relax
- 27 Fri. Dance at local Club.
- 28 Sat. Musical Society Supper dance.
- 29 Sun.
- 30 Mon.
- 31 Tues.
- 1 Wed.
- 2 Thur
- 3 Fri Birthday Party for Friend
- 4 Sat. Our Party.
- 5 Sun Relax.
- 6 Mon
- 7 Tues

8 Wed Girl Friends 21st. Party.....

Everything happens at once, but that makes it more fun.

The official notice arrived yesterday, and you arrive at Wharf 20. Pyrmont. Motor Buses take you to the reception centre at Kensington, we can travel on them with you, but Mum & Dad said that they would follow in the car so as we can go home in it. I hope they don't keep us waiting all day out there. Poor old Pete is on duty and can't come to the ship, Stafford is having the day off.

I hope you are not smoking to the extent that you start getting those horrible sores on your fingers again, or you will be getting trouble again, it's not worth it Ken Dear. Anyway cigarettes are still hard to get out here, Dad is always complaining about it

I am practically tongue tied again, except for the fact that you should know that a woman's patience should not be tried too far and I intend giving you a good ear wiggling on the matter when I get you by myself. In other words I am dying of curiosity as Aunt Annie's gift. I hope that satisfies your 'manlyness', if you call it that. I call it 'mousyness'. You ought to realize that two years waiting has not made me any happier; without another weeks curiosity on top, you are in for it in other words I have the rolling pin ready.

I will tease you now. I have a brand new frock coat & shoes for the party, & you are not going to see or be told what they are like till I wear them. No use asking Mum, as she won't tell, besides a lot of other things I have to tell & show you I intend paying you out my friend.

I have been waiting 2½ years to have a good time, and I think we will be able to look back in years to come and remember what fun we had in 1948.

It is awfully late, so I will close now Darling.

All my fondest thoughts & Love to you Ken Dear.

Always yours Margaret. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

P.S. I ALSO HAD A CARD & LETTER FROM Aden. Thanks Awfully.



It is now, er! 64 long years later, & I find it hard to remember exactly what happened the day the Ship docked at Wharf 20/ in Sydney Harbour (There are grand Units (Homes) now standing on the old Wharves. Mainly occupied by very wealthy persons. BUT! - - - -

My memory does take me back to excitement, fear, yes fear, apprehension, and every thing in between. Of course the ship was late coming down the Harbour, under the bridge and the anxiety was really in the atmosphere of our family, and also other people waiting for loved ones to finally show. Yet the relief was not in every heart that morning, as like me time had created its own worries. My parents were anxious on my behalf. Young Stafford was jumping up & down 'like small boys do, which it didn't do a great deal for me trying to create a maturity of appearance to all & sundry gathering eventually and making quite a large group of upturned faces waiting, waiting, sighing, more waiting till finally the ropes were thrown out & over the Bollards. And Yes! With much screeching and banging Smoke rising Whistles blowing Shouting & Waving going both on the Ship & up from the Wharf. Relief on the faces of all present, tears too. Happiness even shock that it was all over... But was it.

*In my case, as soon as the gangplanks were let down and or up. - Mum & Dad galloped up the walk, so fast I did not notice them move away from me /they found a spot as they pushed the arrivals out of their way, leaned over the rail and not waving ---They watched my face for the slightest expression of trouble or sadness or anything that might not appear to be happiness or pleasure, and if there was even the slightest negative twitch I feel poor Kenneth Lewis Tye would have been taken below & stowed back in his cabin for the return journey to wherever the ship could possibly sail away from me. **Some Memory.** When they were satisfied that all was well, (Just as well I was a good actor 'known as actress in those days' I had cottoned onto their little plan and the smiles & shouting must have reached England. I made so much noise as I had, we, that is Ken & I had caught sight of each other - relief was on my face & shock & pleasure shone out of his face till I thought it would burst, after nearly three years I had changed in height and appearance and of course clothing style so any over acting was quite unnecessary on either of our behalves so eventually I also was able to bound up the gangway or was it Ken flew down & all I did was stand still and with arms pinned to my sides so be hugged till I could not breath. I don't even remember if he kissed me, I too was in shock by now and I can say in all honesty as I am the only living member of my family that was present that morning. I didn't know how to kiss back anyway. I do remember when he tried later, much later, that day after Dad & Mum taking Stafford, had gone home as after all Dad had his engineering Factory to run, Stafford school and Mum tell the neighbours & friends that Margaret's big Day had arrived & Ken, in her words, was HOME at last.*

*Over the loud speakers all & sundry were informed that their luggage would be down on the wharf to be collected and as anyone who has a surname starting with one of the latter letters in the alphabet knows that they wait, & wait, & wait till it comes up, which **T for TYE** eventually did hours later as all work was done by hand way back then - no lifts or runners for sorting. Then as advised we had to catch busses to the 'Kensington Reception Center' clock in gather papers, you name it, we all, that is passengers had to do this to say I have arrived, & won't be your responsibility anymore. Good Bye...**BUT ... as usual** . When taken back to Central Railway we happily hopped on a train to Kingsgrove ready for our journey into life & when it passed through to a station down the line... Train Stopped...*

Another loud speaker!. We were all informed that there was trouble on the line. Or another strike or whatever, so Ken & I being an intrepid pair decided that we would walk back to "Tempe" Station find a phone box, and explain to the folks that we would be a trifle late for dinner that night "Well!" The World really has not changed even now. Yes you guessed it, the phone box we found was vandalized. So we trooped back to station before, only to find that others had done likewise

and some being more nimble than us, after all we had more on our minds than politely hurrying that evening even though we had not eaten since breakfast. So we had to wait in line once again wait our turn, and after the deed was done. Ken finally grabbed me & Yes 'Kissed' me I was flabbergasted, being kissed by a man in view of the public 'Golly Gosh' I began looking shyly around, to be greeted by a chorus of delighted shouts from the spectators all waiting their turn, - for the phone of course.

And so that was the beginning of the way our lives began to come together & carried on in that vein for many years some Happy times, some I am glad I can't remember, some I wished with more clarity I still did. Yet we were sure through both thick & thin, it was meant to be.

I now Dedicate these Memories and original copies of those long ago times to My Daughters : - Jennifer Janeway, & Rosemary Beth & their Children & Grandchildren & of course those still to come and

**** With All our Love I hope they enjoy & come to Cherish the beginning of How it all came to be that even Wars are such terrible times for millions of people, God seems to feel that some Good must occur occasionally...*

*'Grandy Ma' ... Alias...
Margaret Janeway Tye ...*

