

1933/1

With heaps of love from
us both to you both.
Your loving
Honors

Government Station,
Ocean Island,

Jan: 15th 1933

Dearest Lady Maude,

The "Naivu Chief" is arriving here a week earlier than we expected her & is coming in & out again on the same day, so I haven't much time for writing. We have been having westerly weather & as it is fairly calm now I think the idea is to get the passengers & what little cargo there is, ashore while they can & then she goes to Naivu to load. They can load there in a few hours & I suppose they hope to get her away before we get the next blow.

The plans about us have been altered & we have suddenly been told to pack up as we are to return to Bevu at the first opportunity that may be in two weeks time but may not be for several weeks as "Tumanua" is in trouble again, the propeller at the wrong angle & the engine not working properly so the engineer is howling to go to Suva. They are down in Funafuti at the moment, they have been storm bound there for some time & seem to be

Having a bad time, losing anchors etc. I'm
 praying that she'll go to Suva, it's had enough
 travelling in her in good condition & with good
 weather but imagine bad weather & no engines
 going, oh! she is a little brute. There is just a
 possibility that we may wait for the receiving ship
 in March. Harry is as pleased as Punch at
 going back to Bevu & so am I really, but I
 confess I'd rather wait here until the weather
 improves especially as everyone thought it was
 quite definite that we should be here for a good
 long time & I have taken a lot of trouble in
 getting the house nice. We've stained floors & painted
 the bathroom, all for nothing, I'm afraid I'm
 getting tired of making places nice & then packing
 up immediately it is looking habitable. It is
 all that silly old Swinbourne's fault, he arranged
 everything, told us definitely that we should be there
 till E.L.L. came back & then he got nerves & started
 sending telegrams to the H.C. The silly juggins,
 when wiring, quite unnecessarily, about E.L.'s leave
 put in the telegram that Armstrong was alone in
 the Group, quite irrelevant but still, that's what he does.
 Tiji, of course, sent back "Maudie urgently required
 in Group", the obvious answer but not what the

Major wanted & he can't see that he asked for it. He was merely pointing out how ill-used he is at always being left with a small staff & now of course, he is worse off than before because he has lost Harry who has experience in the office & E.L. is going just the same in another month's time!

Well, the new cadet arrives to-day, I wonder what he will be like; M^{rs} Sumbouene also returns to-day & the other daughter with her. I believe M^{rs} Bentley is coming back later so it will be just as well to get out of the way before the women start fighting again! The doctor is at Beu now, I'm longing to see if he has started the hospital. We shall be going on to Tabiteuea I think, just camping, it should be lovely there, we have wanted to stay there for a long time, it is a marvellous place for anthropology.

We have had some lovely rain, our tanks just about full again, & the cricket field was transformed, in 3 days, from a barren waste to a lovely green flat. Everything looks fresher & the roads, at last, are fairly nice to walk on. We haven't been doing anything in particular lately, I'm still struggling with string figures, it does take an age to prepare

them for publication. We have been to one of the native villages several times & have collected a lot a valuable information. I've been down to tea with Mrs Maynard, the Ass. Manager's wife, twice, I was invited down to bathe off the loading jetty in deep water, it is supposed to be marvellous, but the first time it was too rough & the same evening the first westerly broke; the second time we had another storm so I haven't been in there yet. On Friday Mrs Maynard asked me to go and bathe at her camp but as it was rough & rather showery I didn't go, however, she & another woman went & the natives were telling us yesterday that Mrs Maynard was nearly drowned. Fortunately two natives were fishing near by - when she got into difficulties with the undertow & the strong current that was running they pulled her out. I'm quite glad I didn't go, not that there would be any danger, as I never venture far out knowing I'm not a swimmer, but Mrs M. is a good swimmer.

This next week I must pack up & renew the stores, it is a good thing I brought them up after all as I have only to get a few more things & we shall have a 6 months supply again.

1933/2

Beau.

Feb. 18th 1933

Dearest Lady Maude,

We have at last reached Beau but Harry is still being chased around. It took us just over four days to get here from Ocean Island, dreadful days too, we had a head wind + a strong current against us + simply crawled, M^{rs} Blackie maintains that we went backwards part of the time! He + I were very sick + even Harry felt bad, we all succumbed about 5 minutes after leaving the anchorage + slept in our clothes the first night. It took me several days to recover as my inside was so stiff + sore but I don't think I felt quite as miserable as I used to + when everything inside is quite normal again I hope to get along fairly well. We arrived here on Thursday afternoon, the doctor had tea for us, the house swept + beds made, he is very nice. On the following Saturday early, Harry + D^r Steenson left on the "Macquarie" for a tour of the south, M^{rs} Heyen, the Captain's wife, + the baby came to stay with me + "Nimanoa" was told to wait here for further instructions. The "Macquarie" was away for a week, they returned late last night + tonight Harry has to sail on "Nimanoa" for Ocean Island. He is absolutely fed up especially as the Mayor was almost certain when we left that he would be

wanting Harry for an inquiry + if he had held us up for 24 hours Harry would not have had to return. He expects to be away about a fortnight, I hope it won't be longer, + I am going to stay here.

I enjoyed having Mrs Heyen + Gary here, the latter is about 18 months old + very sweet but, of course, always in mischief. I wish they could have stayed until Harry came back but the "Macquarie" has gone back north. I shall have heaps to do when Harry has gone, getting the house straight + particularly the garden, it is looking very weebegone + terribly dry, the pot plants need re-potting + I must try + get some tomatoes. The hanging plants Miss Pateman kept for me + they are flourishing.

Harry is wanting me to stop + talk to him as he has to go soon. I'll write a long letter while he is away. We are both very well + glad to be back here.

Much love from us both.

Your loving

Honor.

P.S. Harry is awfully pleased about his M.A., he will write as soon as he can. He has been accepted as a Research Student so he is now beginning his two years field work.

1933/3

Beer.

Central Pacific.

March 8th 1933

Dearest Lady Maude,

It is over three weeks since we got to Beer + Harry is still away; I have had a very nasty job this week too. We are to return to Ocean Island for about 6 weeks! Mr Bentley has developed pneumonia + I gather Mr Leombuggen had gone on leave before they heard the news, lucky for him but unfortunate for us as he was the obvious person to keep. Dr Steenson has a wireless set + I received a few messages from Harry through him. He says the H.C. has only agreed to our returning to Ocean Island on condition that our expenses there is short so I'm leaving the house as it is more or less + only taking absolute necessities. Major Swinbourne sent a message to say they would lend me anything I wanted so that I should not have to pack up very much which is very kind of him. It is rather bad luck having to return; if only I had stayed there! It is suggested that I return ^{here} on the Recruiting ship; Harry will follow soon after on "Nimaua"; it will be very nice for me if I can do that, the journey in "Nimaua" is all that I really mind. I haven't minded being alone this time, of course

I had plenty to do & having the doctor fairly near makes a difference but apart from that I think I am so much fitter & not nervous. Two girls sleep near me & so does Kouera.

I have been over to the Mission Station several times for tea, I spent one evening there with Miss Pateman & yesterday she came here for the evening. To-night the doctor & I go over there for the prize-giving at the school, he is giving away the prizes this year, they thought I would have gone to Ocean Island; he is quite welcome to the honour as far as I am concerned!

I have started a sort of "Women's work party," I have 20 women who are to come here once a week, they will make hats, fans, cushions, pockettes & several other things suitable for sale on Ocean Island. I advise them about sizes & shapes of the various articles & undertake to send them to Ocean Island, Mr^{rs} Cookson has promised to sell them. The women seem quite keen & have made a few hats etc. for me to take with me. All I am asking in return is that they talk Gilbertese to me when they come & do not allow me to speak incorrectly. It is a pity I have to leave them just as I have got them started but I hope it won't be for long. Would you have any use for small articles like pockettes for baggages? They are ^{becoming} getting very good at hats, I must try &

bring some home for summer wear.

Harry expects to be here next Sunday, for some reason or other he has stayed at Tarawa & is coming down on the "Macquarie." "Nimanua" has gone to Ocean Island with the Major and is coming straight here, she should be here to-day or tomorrow. I imagine that Harry will just come ashore & grab a few books & that we shall leave immediately for Ocean Island. The return trip should not be quite so bad as we shall have the wind sideways or slightly behind us. We heard that it took "Nimanua" four days to get from Ocean to Tarawa & that normally is under 36 hours! I was rather upset when I first heard we had to go back to Ocean so Uia comforted me by saying that it was because Harry was so clever they could not get on without him! Koua I am leaving with the doctor if Harry agrees as I'm sure he will; I still get an occasional lick off him & don't want to take him back, besides I think we shall go to an empty house at the wireless station & Mrs Moore has two chows about 100 yds away & they would be always fighting. Koua has been behaving just like a puppy, he must be so glad to ^{be} back on Beer. He carries away my shoes, plays hide & seek round the house & gives me occasional nips on my ankles! He is very faithful & loving & is never

very far away. He has been rather fond of our small brush lately & is always sneaking off with it for a quiet chew.

Harry has missed quite a lot of fresh food by not being here. I had a lovely water ~~melon~~ melon while Mr^s Blaikie & Mrs Heyen were here, now I have a lovely bunch of wee bananas from the father & Mrs Spivey has sent several lots of tomatoes

11th I don't seem to get on very fast with this letter but I am now ready to go. "Nimanoa" arrived yesterday & the Captain says he has been told to leave directly Harry arrives. I^s Steenson was telling me that there are a couple of men marooned in the Ellice & staying with Kennedy. Four men, I think, left Christchurch, N.Z. some time ago in a very small sailing vessel for a point in the South Seas; two of them came up to Ocean Island last time "Nimanoa" came from the Ellice, I think they were fed up with the life of their companions. Now, the other two have had an accident or rather a chapter of accidents. The mainmast broke right off when they were off Funafuti I think, they wouldn't fix it up so went ashore, presumably for help, they had a meal or so & then went to look for their boat & lo! Behold! she was not & has not been ^{seen} since! The John Williams

is due here on Tuesday + Kennedy wants "Nimanua" to wait a couple of days so that we can take these two men. Apparently they have no money or anything else, I suppose they lost everything. We have only heard bare details over the wireless. Last night the doctor had his receiving set going + we got a good programme through from Wellington, mostly music + quite good. We also heard "advice to motor car drivers" which ended up with "and always remember the man in the other car may be a fool too"! I sold 15/- worth of native articles to the Captain yesterday, quite a good beginning.

The garden is beginning to look a bit fresher, it had evidently been neglected because we have had no rain. I have loosened the soil + even dug up a number of things + removed the masses of foreign root from them. I have one sturdy bougainvillea + it is a mass of bloom just now, it is in a tin + therefore had more chance than the others. The grass is a minus quantity so I have had a layer of fresh soil put on + the doctor is going to give me some marvellous grass he brought from Taseau.

I am wondering if Harry has found time to write to you, he promised to do so. He has been accepted as a Research Student + they want him for the the 1934 - 35 year at Cambridge but we

shall not be home ~~until~~ ^{before} the middle of '36 so it will have to be the '35-'36 year. + that is if we can get the necessary leave.

Uncle Arthur tells me that Bobbitt has been quite ill, is she all right again? I haven't written to Muriel yet, it is most difficult to write when constantly packing or unpacking.

With very much love from

Your loving,

Honor.

Wireless Station.

Ocean Island.

March 20th

Dearest Lady Maude,

Harry arrived at 2 a.m. on Monday morning, I stayed up until 10.30 in case he wanted to leave the same night but decided we couldn't be expected to leave if he arrived at mid-night so I retired to bed. We left the shore at 8 a.m. on Monday but did not leave Beer until 2 p.m. as the Capt. wired the R.E. that Mac was very ill + wanted to know whether he should wait in case Dr Steenson had to go to his aid. I spent the morning on the "Macquarie" but it is not pleasant being on board when a ship is anchored off Beer, they roll horribly + I felt very sick. However, we both had a jolly good lunch but I lost mine about 3 seconds after my arrival on "Nimanoa". We had a wonderfully quick passage, everything in our favour but the wretched Captain would not use the sails, he is a silly ass because he'll get the sack eventually. Anyhow we got here in just under 2 days, I was sick the first night + then Harry kept me going on champagne! It's marvellous stuff, I wasn't sick any more but rather an expensive remedy. I actually had a few meals. We are up at the wireless station which is right

in the middle of the island, about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an hour's walk from the Post station & our only neighbours are the Moores; he is the wireless operator, they are both very cockney but a nice couple. Harry really needs a bicycle to go to the office, he gets back very late for lunch & has to rush back again almost immediately. He says they are inundated with telegrams, all in code, & some quite obviously wrongly coded. Armstrong sent one to-day: - "1819 so unable to proceed Mariana"! Goodness knows the real reason.

Harry himself sent a mad telegram a few weeks ago, when decoded it read: - "Owing my recent tour Southern Gilberts please return all empties"! Fortunately he discovered his mistake soon after despatching it.

This house is smaller than any of the others & I think rather nice & compact. There is precious little furniture & no mats but as we are only camping we do not mind; anyhow I prefer plain boards & can have scrubbed to dirty old mats. It is quite nice not having a large place to keep clean. I'm cook at present & rather like it, it's just as well to have some practice occasionally even with about 2 saucepans in which to experiment. M^{rs} Sumbourne has lent me a little extra crockery & M^{rs} Cookson a table & we are rather enjoying ourselves.

Harry did not write to you as he stayed

at Tarawa to write a Report on the Court of Inquiry & it took him all his time to get it done. He stayed with the Hemstrongs all the time except for a week-end when they all went up to the Blacksies. It would have been nice if I could have gone too but there wasn't time to get ready & as we had to come here it was perhaps just as well I stayed at Beer.

Do you remember hearing about Major Swinhorne when we first came out here? He was dreadfully suspicious & in a bad mental state; he is as bad or worse than ever now. Just before we came back he had some sort of stroke or something. Macdonald says he suddenly went green & then yellow & apparently felt very ill. The job is far too worrying for the poor man & most of his worries are over trifles which do not matter in the least & are probably only his own imagination. He spent a whole day once looking for pillows, Compton's house had 3 & should have had 4! We cannot believe he would ever be confirmed as R.C. & I certainly think he would become really mental if confirmed.

Since we returned the Leembruggen's dog, Caesar, does not seem to be able to make up his mind as to whom he should stay with, us or Macdonald, so he divides his time fairly evenly between us. He likes the walks we take him & I think but gets his meals from Macdonald.

I wish he would catch a few rats, they are very bad here; they come out in broad daylight & stare at us & they spend the nights scampering through the house & making a terrible racket.

The "Nauru Chief" goes to the group very shortly I believe so it will be too early for me to return. We are hoping now that we shall go in the John Williams but we are afraid it will not be until the middle or end of May. "Nimanoa" is supposed to be going to the Ellice for 2 months for a vaccination campaign & as Mac is so ill & will presumably have to take leave, Dr Steenson will probably do the campaign. I don't know what has happened to poor little Kouera, whether the doctor took him to the Ellice or not. I'm wishing I had kept him with me. Dr Steenson went to the Ellice in the John Williams a couple of days after we left as the news of Mac was bad & the Mission offered the ship free of charge. It was very good of them though Mac has done a lot for some of their people. He saved the life of one man & nursed him for 6 weeks or so & has several times put up missionaries on their way through.

Thank you very much for sending on Mary & Matel's letters, we were very interested in them all. Mary will be leaving India very soon so I shall have to write to her at home. We got a tin of tea from her this last mail, it is very

nice indeed. I am in the horrible state of having no envelopes, mine were all packed & I couldn't face opening a packing case to get them. The store is about an hour's walk away so I haven't been there yet.

I brought £3 worth of native articles over with me & sold them all in two days! People tumble over themselves & beg me to get more & also give orders. I'm ever so ticked about it. I only hope the women remain keen.

Must dash off to say Good-bye to a woman who has always been very kind to me here, Mrs Clow, they leave tomorrow on the Tevona. You know it doesn't really matter in the least where you send things, everyone knows where everyone else is. The only thing is that if addressed here & we are here we get them, if addressed Tarawa, ^{or Beem} & we are here they won't open the bags for us. We should soon be in Beem for good, that is for a couple of years so I think perhaps if you address things there will be best. We'll write if we return he again.

With very much love from us both.

Your loving

Honor

1933/4

Wireless Station.

Ocean Island.

March 21st 1933

My dear Mary,

The tin of tea arrived last mail & has been travelling round the Group for some time but has at last landed here. Thank you very much indeed, I haven't had a letter yet but it may have gone to Tarawa.

Well, Harry & I are keeping up our reputation of being birds of passage, I shouldn't mind in the least if we were only told that we were to be at each place for a short time but always we expect to be settled & then we are rooted up in a month or two. I must say though, that the Powers that be don't do it intentionally we are merely unlucky in having a district that can be left. As a matter of fact the district is in a bad way & crying out for attention but those at Headquarters cannot see beyond the end of their own noses. As you will have heard we expected to be here for 6 months, then the High Commissioners awoke to the fact that Armstrong was alone in the Group & we were ordered back to Beem post haste. On arrival at Beem Harry toured his district in the "Macquarie", he was away for a week; he returned for just after under 24 hours

& sailed for Ocean & Tarawa to sit on a Court of Enquiry. He was away 3 weeks but before his return wired me that we were to return to Ocean for about 6 weeks as Mr Bentley was ill in Auckland & could not return which meant that Mr English could not be spared from the Treasury to help the new Cadet in the P.O.'s Office. Major Swinburne was tearing his hair & actually had some kind of seizure with worry & his one idea was to get Harry back as he can draft letters & no one else can! Harry having promised the various islands that he would return shortly & that we would stay at each place a month or so was thoroughly upset. The H.C. agreed to our returning but I think he will see that we are not kept too long. Mr Leembruggen had left about 2 days before they got the news of Mr Bentley, lucky man! So here we are and camping at the wireless station in a nice little house, by ourselves. I only brought the very minimum of stuff, I really couldn't pack up again, anyhow there wasn't time & it would have been foolish for so short a stay. I left Koura with Dr Steenson who is now at Beri, it was rather nice having him there when I was alone & he was very kind. He got messages through from Harry as he is an amateur wireless fiend, & Podmore was working the Tarawa end.

Dr Macpherson is very ill again, another liver abscess due to dysentery. Dr Steenson was rushed to his aid in the Tom Williams which arrived at Beem the day after we left. We hear that his condition has improved but I wish he would leave the colony before he kills himself.

I have not grown my hair yet! I didn't have it cut for 5 months but Harry cut it the other day most successfully. It is, of course, behaving much better now that it has got used to being short & it curls up quite nicely.

With love from us both.

Yours affectionately,

Honor.

1933/5

Ocean Island.

March 21st 1933

Dearest Lady Maude,

We got 4 letters from you & Sir Walter this morning so I hasten to let you know. The parcels I shall enquire about & add a postscript. The contents sound delightful & thank you very much. The page from The Morning Post also arrived, I'm sending one to the L.M.S. man who is here for a few months, he should be able to make good use of it. We are wondering if you are going to send us a Petition Sheet?

We were very sorry indeed to hear about Maudie, how unfortunate that she has chosen a married man; surely he could have got a divorce on account of the long separation before Maudie went to him. We were sorry too that you had had such a rotten time with 'flu, they have just had a bad go here, gastric ending up with catarrh, but as it is almost over we hope to escape.

You poor dears, I do hope we never let you down, you have such a nasty lot of shocks.

With lots of love from us both,

Your loving

Honor.

1933/6

Ocean Island.

April 11th 1933.

Dearest Lady Maude,

Harry is very busy finishing off official letters for the mail tomorrow so I have come down to the office with him. There does not seem to be anything I can do to help so I thought I would get your letter written, unfortunately I haven't brought my pen & feel most awkward with an ordinary nib.

The "Naueu Chief" went to the Group last week, much too early for me to return unfortunately. The "John Williams" is not coming here after all so we have to depend on the "Nimanoa". She left for the Ellice yesterday but we expect her back in about 6 weeks. There has been no news of Mr Gimble, whether he is returning or not we do not know. Most people think

he will come back, anyhow we are still waiting for news. Harry was not at all well last week, feverish, had a nasty place on one leg which we were afraid might be ringworm but it cleared up nicely with a Calomine & Carbolic Lotion. He seems more or less all right again but I don't think this office work is at all good for him. Major Swinburne is quite hopeless at writing despatches which means that Harry is writing them all & the old man just signing them. He gets home so late that we seldom have time for a walk, his great recreation is the guitar. We are really progressing now, can play a few duets, waltzes, together, I think they sound quite nice. Buying the guitars & music was a very good investment, we have had any amount of pleasure out of them.

Last night we had dinner with the Cooksons & then I went to the picture show with them, Harry came to the office. He was to return for me at 9.30 pm. but at 10 o'clock I was still waiting so decided to go & look for him. Of course, the Major had seen the light in the

office & immediately come over & hauled Harry up to the Residency & he couldn't get away although he told the Major he was expected at the Cooksons'. I felt dreadful, it seemed so rude, but I'm sure they will understand.

I have been getting on with the string figures again & have almost finished all I can do without Harry. I hope we shall be able to finish the article off next week-end.

We were sorry to hear you had had such a bad time with 'flu, it is a wretched thing you will be looking forward to summer again by the time you get this, I wonder if you will have all the Sayer family over. I haven't heard from either Mona or Joan for ages, the young villains, but we had a very nice letter from Aliak a short time ago. Have you heard that Mother is most probably going to S. Africa with Joan & Betty? It will be a lovely trip for her, I wish she would come a bit further! Could you find out if it is possible to

get any of Rudyard Kipling's books in a cheap edition? I badly want some but think they are rather expensive. I have just read *A Sentimental Journey* & *The Journal to Eliza*. I think Laurence Sterne is too morbid for anything & he is always weeping or holding some woman's hand. Still, I suppose it is only his English that matters but he reminds me of Mr. Kumble! Harry wants *Alice in Wonderland* & *Alice through the Looking Glass*, cheap editions please as I have a very nice copy at home but too large to send out. I'd love *Peter Pan* too & if you could get *Just So Stories* & *Puck of Pook's Hill* it would be ripping. Harry has never read them & is beginning to want them.

Mr. Macdonald has just come in & as they are talking hard I shall have to finish this to-morrow.

12th We are liking this house very much & it is so breezy that there are not mosquitoes & we are actually sleeping without nets.

Did I tell you that it has at last been decided that Headquarters are to remain on Ocean Island? We also hear that the H.C. does not approve at all of the plans Mr Compton made for the new houses. He says every room must have at least one wall ~~of each~~ on the outside & he says he does not like the large amount of apparently useless space "vaguely labelled 'verandah'". We are all thankful he doesn't like them because we don't either! I have been amusing myself making a plan which I enclose, what do you think of it? The shutters will all be revolving ones & reaching from near the ceiling to within 2 or 3 feet of the floor. You have seen a plan of the present houses with two middle rooms & verandah all round, quite hopeless as the inner rooms are too hot & dark & as the verandah rails are all open the verandahs are too public, in rainy weather too wet to be of much use. Also

6.

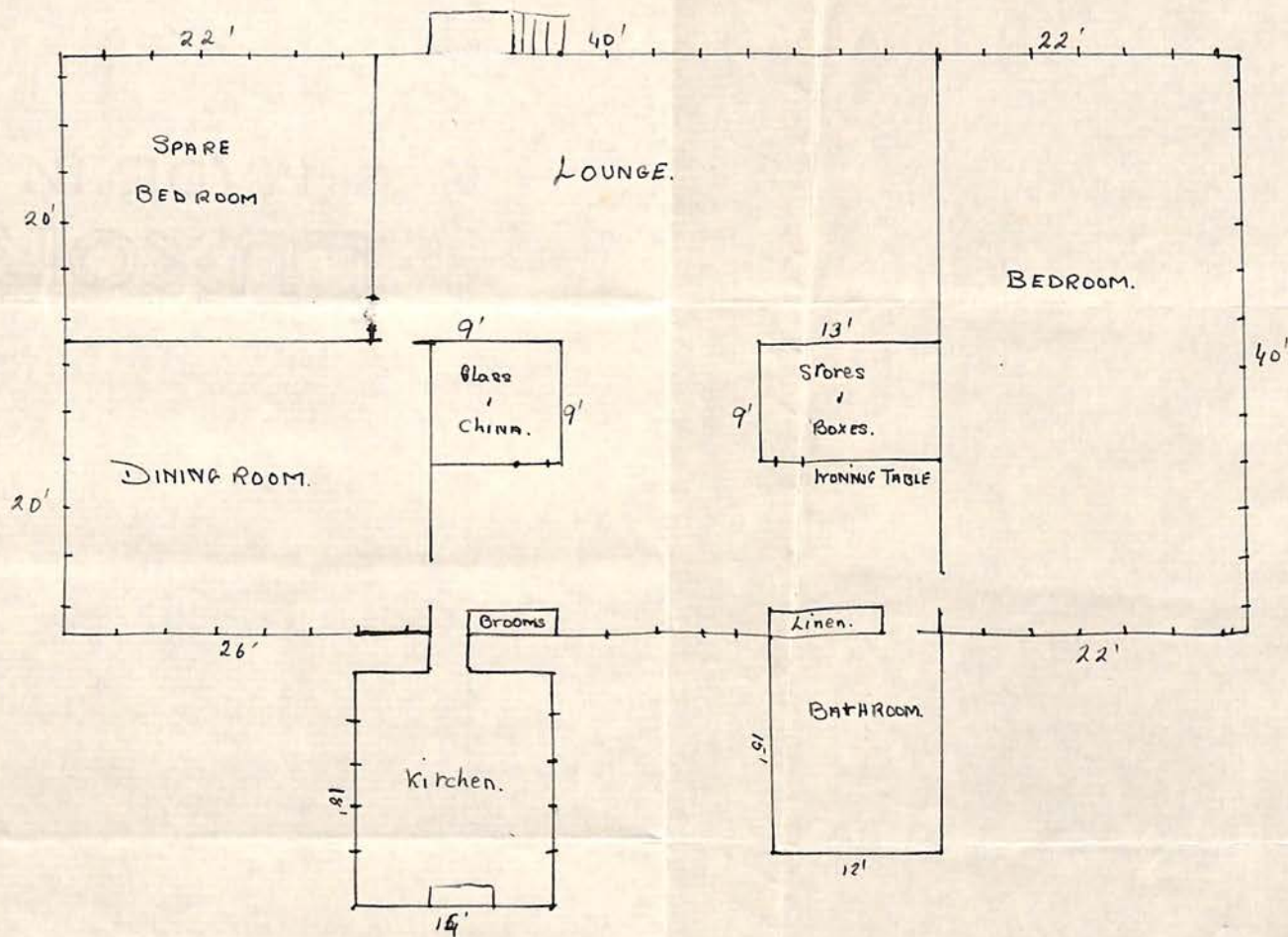
we have no cupboards or store or box rooms
& every house has to have one untidy corner
with boxes brooms etc piled up in it.

Harry says he is really going to write
by the next mail, in about 2 or 3 weeks.

With much love from us both

Your loving

Honor.



Shutters all round outer walls.

1933/7

Ocean Island,
Central Pacific.

April 20th 1933

Dear Sir Walter,

I hope you will both forgive a hurried letter, we have been working at the string figures till the last moment & have really got them finished now. We got 4 letters, from you & Lady Maude, a few days ago, for which many thanks. The latest date was March 8th, so they came out fairly quickly. We hope Lady Maude has quite recovered from her attack of neuritis, what a wretched nuisance.

We are never where you expect us to be are we? You will have heard some time ago of our return to Ocean Island, in "Nimanoa", who treated us very well. We do not know when we shall be able to return to the Group, "Nimanoa", we hear is in trouble again & frantically wiring for spare parts so I should think she will probably go to Fiji. Tomorrow we expect Capt. & M^{rs} Holland back from New Zealand & also M^{rs} & M^{rs} Bentley, there will be a fearful squash on the Government Station & Harry is going to try to persuade Major Swinbourne to have the "Macquarie" deviated so that she can pick up the Hollands & the ourselves & take us to Tarawa. Once in the Group we can easily find our way south. I'm afraid he won't do it, though goodness knows what Capt. Holland is going to do here for 6 weeks or more & Armstrong all

alone in the Group. It is too ridiculous. Harry says they sent, or rather have ready, 35 despatches of which Major Swinhorne wrote 1. Therefore I can see ourselves being kept here as the old man is in clover so far as Harry is concerned.

We have had Mrs Spwey, one of the L.M.S. missionaries wives, & her baby here for a week now. They came in from the Group last Monday, were supposed to sail on Wednesday, but each day until Saturday we were told, always at the last moment when everything was packed, that the ship was delayed. On Saturday a westerly was blowing & the ship had put out to sea so goodness knows when they will get away. The weather does not seem very bad but it is evidently bad enough to prevent loading. We are wondering if the ship from New Zealand will be able to land her passengers if she arrives tomorrow. She is to load at "Nauen" where they get the job done very quickly, & then she returns to N.Z. so we want to get our mail on her.

I had a long letter from Mrs Thickett this last mail; they seem to have bought a farm & to be quite enjoying life there. I'm sorry we did not see Joan when we were there but we couldn't manage it.

Kouea is back with us again, it is nice to have him about & he seemed very pleased to get back to us. We have been enjoying some fresh fruit & vegetables this last week, it's certainly nice to get them occasionally. The apples at this time

of year are really crisp & juicy & so was the lettuce, & only managed to get one of the latter but it was better than none.

On Easter Monday we took M^r Macdonald for a long walk as he had not seen much of the island. We were walking from 3 p.m. to nearly 6.30 p.m. & seemed to have walked half round the island but when we looked at the map found we had only explored about one fifth! It is such rough going of course. We finished up at the big terrace & found the natives had made a large clearing all round it; there are now two large perches for frigate birds. This afternoon when we were out we saw between 50 or 60 of these birds all soaring together, they hardly ever flap their wings, & they looked just like aeroplanes. Eighteen months ago there were hardly any & the natives had not used the terraces for years.

With love to you both from both of

us.

Yours affectionately,

Honor.

P.S. This may arrive somewhere near your birthday so "many happy returns of the day".

1933/8

Ocean Island.

Central Pacific.

May 21st 1933

Dearest Lady Maude,

The day I wrote to you in Harry's office I quite forgot that I had started a letter here & in consequence I didn't tell you how pleased we were with the towels etc. My old towels were becoming decidedly "bald" & the new ones are lovely. Could you send me some of that very fine round elastic for the red bracelet please? I like it very much but haven't any elastic to re-thread it. Thank you too for the buckle, I'm always wanting those. Harry says will you please send him some extra Egyptian like 70-70 strings, I'm afraid I must have used the others on a parcel because he didn't tell me & I thought it was ordinary string.

I've been going through some old letters & see that you ask what has become of Armstrong. He is D.O. Tarawa at present and the only D.O. in the whole of the Gilberts. I surely told you of his trip to Fiji & how he married a girl from the High Commission Office? He is agitating for leave & talks of going to England if he has enough cash. However, I believe he hasn't much chance of getting away before August & I hear that his wife is going to have a baby so I don't know what their latest plans are. I expect she will want to go home, she is very young & seems to be very attached

to her mother. Armstrong's real district is the Northern
 Gilberts. Still no news of Mr. Gimble & he was due
 back last week, I don't know why Major Sumbourne doesn't
 wireless Fiji & find out what is happening.

"Nimamua" is still in the edifice, last week they
 sent in a howl, wanting to go to Fiji as the engines had
 completely broken down. However, they appear to be
 carrying on the vaccination campaign & the Major has
 told them they are to come here for us & sail. We
 are now waiting for news, unless they get in touch
 with Fiji & get the H.C. to allow them to go there they
 should be here fairly soon. The Captain is utterly
 ridiculous, he will not sail. When we came over from
 Beu this last time we had both wind & current behind
 us & he used the engine all the way, in spite of
 the fact that the propeller was groggy. He does not
 appear to know the meaning of a "lack" he sets his
 course direct to an island & if the wind isn't dead
 behind him he won't sail; he won't if it is either!
 If they do come they will take us & the Hollands to
 Tarawa & we shall proceed in one of the local ships.

I have been doing some embroidery lately, I
 have done a wee tray cloth you sent me some
 time ago & the two corners are ever so pretty, my
 next job is to finish another tray cloth I brought
 out myself & then finish the duchesse set you sent
 me. I've done one end of the long cloth so it won't
 take very long. Do you remember it, you sent blue

embroidery cotton with it? It is most effective. I'm so naughty, I always have about three pieces started instead of finishing off one first. I'll have to get on with the next lot of string figures too, I've been doing areas of sewing, ~~done~~

June 6th

Only one letter from you this mail & none from my family; there has been a direct ship from Sydney to Tarawa, so evidently our letters are there. We received 4 'Spheres', for which many thanks, they are rather good. Your letter was written by you with your left hand, I do hope the right arm is quite well again by now. We are still unable to say definitely when we shall be leaving Ocean Island, there has been no news from the yacht for some time & we are afraid their engines have broken down completely & probably the sails too rotten to be much use. We should really get away this week.

Loloma Sumbourne had a dance last week to which we went, I enjoyed it thoroughly, Harry sat & smoked & talked the whole evening & seemed to be quite happy. We also had dinner with the old doctor one evening last week, he is such a dear; he has procured the skull of an old Banaban which he is going to let us see, he also got hold of some old photographs of long dead Banabans to see if they would help us to find the true type of Banaban. He has promised me a bottle of champagne for the journey & I also have two small bottles of sparkling

hook, so even if we are delayed by lack of wind or anything else I should be all right!

Yesterday we went out canoeing, our first attempt off Ocean Island. Harry had a small canoe all to himself, Nakeri, our Banaban houseboy, & I went in a slightly larger affair. The sea was beautifully calm & the tide very low so we just stepped off the edge of the reef into the canoes without having to go over any breakers. We paddled quite a long way along the coast, they don't ^{not} have sails on Ocean Island, & thoroughly enjoyed our afternoon.

This last week we have had a number of Sour Sops, did you have such things in India? Harry says he does not remember them. They are fairly large, about the size of a small melon, green, rough, eaten when soft, the flesh is white & they taste like strawberries, awfully good.

Did I ask you if Harry had ever had any bad stomach trouble in India? Dr. Gould was wondering if he had & if possibly it had left some adhesions which cause him to have these violent attacks of pain when his stomach gets upset. He thinks it too high for appendix & anyhow he does not feel sick & gets over the attack very quickly. He had been eating a lot of cucumber which is generally considered indigestible is it not, & also apples, which the doctor says are apt to be "windy" things. Harry has had both attacks on Ocean Island so

it is probably from something we do not get in the Group. He is simply longing to get back to Bevu, I'm afraid he will be dreadfully upset if, by any chance, the yacht does not come up for us. I believe Macdonald is to come as far as Tarawa with us.

News just come, "Nimanoa" leaves Funafuti tomorrow, should arrive here about Sunday. Suppose we shall leave on Monday next. At last I can start getting ready. I want to wash the door curtains I have here as there is plenty of water here & none at Bevu probably!

Heaps of love to you both from both
of us.

Yours loving,
Honor

24 OCT 1933

1933/9

Beru,

Central Pacific.

June 25th. 1933.

We got away from Ocean Island on the 14th, "Nimanoa" came in on the 13th and was hurried away so that we could catch the Macquarie which was expected to leave Tarawa on the 18th. We wirelessly the ship and Kum Kee, the manager of Ong Chong to whom the ship belongs, answered that they would wait for us if we were late. Wasn't it awfully nice of them? As it happened we got into Tarawa a few hours before the "Macquarie" but as I had been awfully ill the Captain said they would not sail until the next day although they were quite ready to go that same day. "Nimanoa" was truly dreadful, I have never felt so ill and not even the champagne was any good. poor little Barbara Holland was sick all the way too, it took us two and a half days to do the trip, and the morning we arrived at Tarawa Barbara got up and was wandering around the deck when her mother suddenly saw her legs wobble and they just had time to catch her as she fainted. Of course she hadn't had any food all that time. The sea wasn't rough, not a quarter as bad as the last time we came to Beru, but her motion seems to get worse and worse. I don't think it was nerves on my part either as I did not worry about the trip at all beforehand and even Harry felt sick.

We had just twentyfour hours on Tarawa and stayed with the Armstrongs, they, poor dears, are dying to get away on leave, there

really is no reason why Capt. Holland should not take over the district at any rate temporarily and Mrs. Armstrong has to get home before the baby arrives, they do not want to cut things too fine! The doctor said a couple of days ago that he heard over the air that Armstrong had taken things into his own hands and had handed over to Capt. Holland and was proceeding to ^{Ocean Island} Tarawa on "Nimanoa". I wonder if he will get into an awful row. He knows of course that if they miss this opportunity they cannot get away until the end of August at the very earliest.

The great piece of news is that Mr. Grimble has at last got his transfer and has been given the position of Administrator of St. Vincent. The news arrived the day after we left Ocean, much to our disgust because it would have been such fun to see how the different people reacted to the news. Some were so certain that he would return and had more or less burned their boats as far as the Major was concerned and were just waiting for Mr. Grimble's return. We haven't heard whether Major Swinbourne is to be offered the job here or whether a new man is coming.

We brought the Leembruggens' dog with us, he behaved very well on the whole coming here and seems to be quite happy but Koura hates having him here. Beru is still terribly dry although Tarawa and the northern islands have had plenty of rain there has been hardly any here. I'm afraid a good many of my plants have died but there are enough left to make quite a good show when they have been watered properly for a week or two, at present the poor things are rather parched and brown. Dr. Steenson brought a lot of ferns from the Ellice and says I can have as many as I want. If only we

get good rain this season. There is actually a wee scrap of grass and I expect it would be quite all right again after a lot of rain.

The doctor had just installed an electric light plant in his house, it is such a neat little engine and will make a lot of difference to his house. Our house, unfortunately, is too far away to have any wires brought across. While we were away the two bedrooms have had their floors cemented, they have been done very well and are a great improvement, the old lime floors were very uneven, cracked and dirty. New mats have also been made, beautiful mats they are with patterns on them. Our bedroom had a ship, a turtle and a fish worked in it and the name of the village the women who made it came from. Now we are going to have a new mat for the lounge and one for the dining room, made by the same women. The posts of the lounge are being repainted and this time we are going to have them decorated in native fashion. One of my women has made two delightful mat covers for two of my tables. One is round and looks ripping and the other is square. I'm going to see if I can't get them to make round cushions now, I think they would be very popular. I got a lot of orders on Ocean Island and their total value is over £12. The women should be pleased.

The warship should be here on the 27th July, they will have only one day here but we are trying to arrange something for them. Not many can come ashore here as it is an outside anchorage, we are going to invite three or four of them to lunch and as many as can come to tea. I suppose they will ask us out to dinner but I don't know. The Flagship is also coming into the Colony but is only going to Ocean Island and Funafuti.

July 2nd

4.

I'm afraid I cannot type my letter this week as I have left it until the evening & Harry is talking to the old men in the same room. It has just started thundering & it feels as if we are in for a storm. We have had a lovely lot of rain this last week, it has rained hard nearly every night. I've done a lot of gardening & the place begins to look really nice again; I even had Harry working one afternoon! I've got seeds planted, tomato, celery, parsley & a peculiar kind of bean. We have been using all our fish bones, raw, as manure, digging them into one of the beds ready for the tomatoes. We are also making some beds ready in the banana pits in case of dry weather so we should be all right whatever kind of weather we have. We have great difficulty in getting eggs nowadays & we are told that the natives are not keen on keeping chickens. There are two laws here, one says that any native tying a chicken to a tree or post, even on a good long string, shall be fined 5/- . The other law says that if a chicken belonging to one native, strays, & damages food stuff put out to dry, belonging to someone else he shall be fined 10/- ! Pretty hopeless! I'm glad

to say our own chickens have started laying owing to better food, fish heads + scraps from the kitchen.

Dr Stenson has lent us a Refrigerating machine, it consists of two containers joined by a pipe. You heat one container over a primus for about an hour + then put it in a tub of water until the other container is frosted. It is a great luxury + makes a lot of difference to our comfort, especially for butter + drinks. When the Armstrongs go we are going to have theirs, I dare say it will come on the next ship.

The house is still upsidedown, the lounge floor has been cemented + now there are about a dozen women in there making a mat. There are another dozen women in the dining-room making a marvellous mat, we shall look very smart when we get straight again. The women in the dining-room have decided to work at night by lamp light, last night we thought they would never go, eventually we more or less chased them out at 11 p.m.! They are very nice + so proud of their mat. I found two of the girls wandering round the house the other day + very interested in the bathroom. I showed them the shower + they thought it marvellous but

they seemed to like the mirrors best, only a cheap one I got off the "Kalam" here!

We have had an amazing quantity of fresh food & fruit lately. Tomatoes & a cucumber from M^{rs} Levett, Chinese Cabbage & bananas from the Father, habai from the old men, bananas from our own pit (!) & mummy apples &, actually, a lovely rock melon I have bought from the natives. We have onions & potatoes & limes still which we brought from Ocean Island so we feel we are doing rather well.

I've been trying some of this coloured embroidery on a small curtain to hide the medicine bottles in the bathroom. It has a hem-stitched edge, then a border of flowers, 3 ladies in curvilinear & two clumps of Foxgloves, done in Orange, yellow & green to match a curtain & the bath mat already there.

I got the idea from some old numbers of "Good Needlework" which M^{rs} Armstrong gave me.

Harry has been getting some jolly good stuff from the old men, they are giving away things now which they would not have divulged some years ago. They are rather superstitious about it & were expecting something to happen to some-

one; last night one old man fainted away! However, it doesn't seem to have worried them much, this man has a bad heart & has fainted before. We had to have the doctor & he says the man's heart is very diekey & he is very old & he does not think he will live many more months. He was well enough to go to his own village to-day.

We got in a man to paint native designs on the black posts of the lounge & also on a large screen we have. He isn't very satisfactory, he gets tired after a few hours work but everytime I go round to see how things are going & find someone else adding their design! Teikarawa is rather good at it & the police have a hand at it too, the result is thoroughly native but very attractive. The "artist" seems to come one day, works until about 2 p.m. then says he is hungry, may he go & it takes the rest of that day & all the next day for him to appease his hunger!

I don't think there is any more news this week & as I must be up at 6 a.m. to start the ice box going I'd better go to bed.

July 9th

We continue to have good showers of rain, we have seedlings coming on & hope to have some vegetables in a few months. My tomato seed is all too old & hasn't come up but the doctor & Mr^s Levett are both giving me cuttings. The women are still working at the mats but they are very nearly finished now. This last week has been a bad week for them as their vaccination worried them a good deal, some of them had very angry looking swollen arms & felt rather ill. Last night I was teaching some of the girls to crochet, they seem to pick it up quite quickly but I found it was much better to let them start with wool & a bone crochet hook.

Unfortunately I have only a broken bone hook but we managed all right. I shall ask Miss Pateman if she can lend me some, they usually have plenty for their school. I am now going to have one afternoon or perhaps a whole day, on which any woman who wants to learn sewing, embroidery or crochet can come to me. We are also thinking of starting a woman's club, members will have to be carefully selected as we only want

those who are clean & tidy. The idea is to get the women to take some interest in the cleanliness of themselves, their children & their homes, the Beu people are just about the dirtiest natives in the Culbert Group! There are rules now on the Government station that no child under the age of 12 years may wear more than a grass skirt or a lavalava, a piece of cloth tied round the waist & hanging to just above the knee. The children all look so nice now, happier as well as healthier & cleaner. Little girls & babies used to wear awful sacks of frocks, often nearly to their ankles & dreadfully dirty. These rules are, of course, only enforced on the Govt. station, & the hospital, & the natives, if they don't like their children going about with a minimum of clothing can jolly well stay in their villages. Our cook's little girl, about 4 months ago, developed tubercular glands, the doctor insisted on her wearing only a lavalava & of course gave her medicine; now we hardly recognize the laughing, plump little person who comes skipping around. I told Ueia at the beginning that the child would be far

healthier with less clothing, he was rather sceptical but now he is as pleased as Punch at the child's robust condition + I, of course, keep on saying how wonderful she looks! Rather a sad thing happened this week + we hope to get a man in gaol for it, a wee baby died of pure starvation. The doctor had it in hospital for a time, fed it up, showed the parents how to prepare the food, condensed milk as the mother had no milk, + told the father to rouse himself, to get some money + buy some more milk. Well he didn't + he didn't tell the doctor until the child was dying. He asked me for milk + I sent him to the doctor who ordered the child back to hospital, even then the man didn't hurry, waited another day + then it was too late, the baby died the following day. Really they make you wild, they can buy tobacco + any amount of clothing but milk for a helpless baby, no.

One evening, to cheer up our women workers, I started to show them a few tricks + eventually they taught me a most fascinating clapping game, I'm sure children would love it. I have also learnt how to

make a mat much to their amusement. I had to sit on the floor to do it & of course when I tried to straighten myself out I was as stiff as anything which caused much merriment.

Harry has had a swing put up for the children who love it, at first they were afraid to use it & ran whenever they saw us but at last they realise that it is for them & not for us! Harry wasn't very well in the middle of the week but I think it was due to lack of exercise, I gave him a good dose & he soon got all right. At present I get plenty of exercise walking round the house, it is so large & I am always going from one place to another to see how things are going on, so that I don't feel like a long walk after tea but Harry won't go without me. I also have the garden to get right & he isn't really interested in it. The warship will be here in just under three weeks now & I do want the place to look nice.

July 16th

The "Kalam" came in unexpectedly on Friday & the doctor has gone off to Nukunau to vaccinate there while the remainder of the vaccine is still good. Goodness knows when he will be able to get back, rumour reports that the Recruiting ship will call only once at each island so he would have to go to Tarawa & might get the "Macquarie" in September. I think we shall try & get the Recruit ship to take us to Tabiteuea so that we can have a few weeks there & return on the "Macquarie".

Of course, as soon as the doctor had gone Harry began to feel ill, a pain in his tummy, & the night after the doctor had gone he had a temperature of 101° . I think it was from drinking toddy too strong, Ueia suggested this & told me where the pains would be & when I asked Harry he said it hurt in the very places Ueia described to me. He is quite all right again to-day but I can see I shall have to watch him, I don't know why his tummy has started being such a nuisance.

The mats are finished & the women

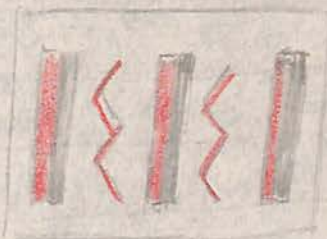
Have all gone home, it seems very quiet now. I'm making a second piece of matting, finer this time, & I am being left to finish it by myself! We had the first meeting of the women's club on Thursday & enrolled over 30 members. Tomorrow I am giving a lesson in cutting out & fitting a frock. They can do nothing elaborate, especially as the skirt must be very full to enable them to sit down comfortably. I'm going to have this frock, which several can help to make, smocked below the waist line, the material has a wee stripe which will help with the gathering. The material is pretty flowered stuff & will have white collar & cuffs, something like this.

The women who came to the meeting were wonderfully clean & tidy, even Ulla's wife, who is inclined to be slovenly, looked very nice.



I'm making a dumpty for the lounge with a design which, though original, is Gilbertese in its creative idea. I wanted it to match the designed posts & the screen &

also the new mat.



The background is dark blue, the plain As orange, it looks rather fine.

July 23rd

The house & the whole station is beginning to look really nice again, I was thankful when they stopped cementing, the dust in the house was so awful. The inside verandahs have all been cemented, about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch which is a great improvement & the outside verandahs have been lined. The dining-room floor has not been done yet but it will be cemented as soon as the warship has gone. I'm afraid the tide is going to be very bad for getting the officers ashore & back again on Thursday. It will be high tide about 9 a.m.; we had a wireless from the "Laburnum" yesterday asking about landing, they say they can't reach here before noon & must be away by dark! We may get them ashore in a boat but they will certainly have to return by canoes. We have been having a lot of stormy weather from the east the last few days, ever since we decided to sleep out on the jetty because ~~there~~ it was hot in the house! Last night the police tied coconut leaf mats all round the jetty house but it was so wet & stormy that Harry & I fetched in our sleeping mats, put the spring mattresses on the floor of the mosquito room & were very snug. The rain of course blows in everywhere

in an open house like this. We nearly dropped our bedding bringing it in, we thought we had chosen a moment when there was a lull, after having made one false start, but we had no sooner extricated ourselves from the screen of mats than we heard the rain coming. I had only two pillows & a torch, Harry a goodly roll of mats & sheets; I yelled run, Harry proceeded to trip over the sheets & we wasted all our breath in laughing! However, we didn't get very wet. On Friday night our wash house collapsed & also one of the houses in the compound of the male goat. They were both pretty rotten so it wasn't entirely the wind. Nevertheless they have to be replaced just when we are so busy.

I had a tremendous gathering of women last Monday, many more than I expected, the lounge was full, I'm sure there were over a hundred! I very nearly had heart failure when I saw the crowd but carried on with the flock & some started sewing. They all learnt how to make a French seam, a thing they had apparently never seen, all their frocks having seams about $\frac{1}{8}$ " wide & a saw edge, I wasn't surprised they are always splitting open! They also learnt how to cut binding on the cross & how to sew it on

but it was too much of a good thing with so many women. They suggested themselves that only two women from each village should come in future, that will make 10 excluding any members of the Club who may want to come. The women are all very keen & I have had two or three in every day this week! Rather tiring but it wouldn't do to discourage them at this early stage. One woman has made a jumper, from a pattern Maudie sent me, with pretty "cape" sleeves, & keep it for anyone to see & it seems to be very popular, everyone is asking either for a pattern or for me to cut one out for them. They like having the sleeve effect without having material under the arms. I chose one girl to fit the frock on & she is still busy making it, she did honeycombing ~~at~~ round the top of the skirt & it looks very pretty, the bodice we have altered to a V neck & the cape sleeve. At the Thursday meeting there were about 30 women, some learnt smocking, each having an odd scrap of material & they really did it very nicely. Some learnt crochet & the beginners did yards of chain before I could get round to show them another stitch but they seemed quite content. The remainder cut out paper patterns from my

pattern & I showed them how to make it larger.

We had two telegrams from the Major on Thursday, one of them very involved & we're not quite sure whether we all transferred to Tarawa or not & the other one informed Harry that he was to be Recruiting Agent for the whole group, that the Commissioners invited me to accompany him & that he was to meet the vessel at Tarawa early in August! There is absolutely no hope of a ship to get to Tarawa so I don't know what will happen. We are wondering if the Recruiting ship will come straight here instead of Tarawa, I don't want to go in the least.

I hope we get a good mail on Thursday, it is only about 7 weeks but it seems longer. We could have had our mail a couple of weeks earlier if the Ocean Island people had put it on the flag ship which went to Tarawa, I don't know why they didn't.

I enclose a snap Mrs Levett took, it is very good of Monica, my hair looks as though it had had a "perm" but it hasn't! I really must take a snap of Harry.

Much love from us both.

Your loving,

Honor.

1933/10

24. OCT 1933

Beau.

July 27th 1933

Dearest Lady Maude,

I meant to write you a little letter but, as usual, we have been very rushed at the last. Harry thinks we have done very well considering that we have only been back about 5 weeks. The place is certainly looking very nice. The washup is in sight, & I have been cooking since 6 a.m. & I'm now afraid that as it is rather late 12.30 p.m., they won't come ashore to lunch! However I told Harry before he went that I should wait for them. The Menu is -

Pau Pau.

Fish in Aspic &

Coconut Heart Salad.

Carcases of Chicken.

Green Peas.

Potatoes.

2 Native dishes.

Caramel Custard.

Fruit Flan

Coconut Cream.

Coffee.

I do hope we get a good mail & that we hear that you are quite well again, I wonder what sort of a summer you are having. We are getting very squally weather from the east which is most unusual were told, I hope it doesn't mean that we are in for a bad westerly season although we need the rain.

No further news of our going round on the Recruit ship, we can't get to Tarawa anyhow so that is that. I hope to goodness we are not going to be sent to Tarawa.

We should be very grateful for some nice fat writing blocks, I have just started on the last one I brought from N.Z.

With heaps & heaps of love from us both to both of you.

Your loving,
Honor.

1933/11

Beau

Central Pacific

August 6th 1933

I had not the heart to write last week. There was nothing to tell you anyway & the visit of the warship was such a disappointment. Saddest of all was the fact that they did not take away our mail so I'm afraid you will have had a long wait.

The warship did not arrive until about 1pm. At 1.30 there was still no sign of a boat coming ashore so I knew it was no use keeping lunch any longer. I proceeded to arrange cakes & make sandwiches for tea & at 2pm went to see if the boat was coming. When I got to the front verandah I couldn't see the warship at all so I rushed out & there she was calmly steaming away! I proceeded to the jetty house where the Magistrate & others were waiting & they said they didn't think she was going far! I suppose that is why they didn't come & tell me. However, I assured them she was leaving us for good, what worried me most was the fact that the mail had not gone. Harry came back soon after & said they had had to get away quickly but I do think they might

have warned us. They said they would have come ashore if they had arrived an hour earlier. As they were in touch with us at 80 m they might have had the sense to tell us they were in a hurry. However, I got a very nice leg of lamb from Auntie Connie & also a letter & a leg of mutton from the ship, the latter I divided between the two Missions. Having devoured Auntie's letter, which was brought by one of the officers, I demanded the English mail but there wasn't a skerrick! We felt very sorry for ourselves for a time, all our work, worry & energy for nothing & we didn't even get a mail or get one away!

We did get a letter from Mr Macdonald in which he was rather amusing. Apparently we got away from Ocean just in time as everyone is now at sixes and sevens. He also says that we are to be at Tarawa & he is to be Harry's assistant! Now, Harry has been told nothing, we haven't even been told to go to Tarawa to stay. The only official mail he got was some he prepared himself & a letter refunding my passage money but unfortunately, neither the letter nor the voucher were signed! Harry has had 3 telegrams from Major Lomborne, all delightfully vague we sent one to try & make him say we were

transferred to Tarawa but he won't & yet on reading through the telegrams we are convinced that we are meant to go & we have packed up. We had one telegram telling us that the Ralumi left Funafuti on the 2nd & implying that it would get us to Tarawa before the arrival of the Recruiting vessel but from what the Capt of the "Ralumi" told us & from a telegram from the Manager of Burns Philp she will not be here for some weeks, however we are ready if she does come. Another complication is that the Manager of the Phosphate Commissioners has sent us a tentative programme of the movements of the Recruit in which he says that after dropping labourers on Nonouti & Tabiteuea they will come to Beu so what is the use of our going to Tarawa? We are now waiting to see which turns up first the "Ralumi" or a telegram from the Major telling us to wait!

We have a tremendous amount of native stuff to send to Ocean Island & we are also sending some to Nauen to see if there is any sale for them there. I have a number of women waiting to have fivels cut out, as we have nearly finished packing & the Recruit ship won't be here for another 10 days I hope to have some time to help them. It is such a pity we have to go just as we had got things going again.

August 13th

The expected telegram arrived on Thursday, late in the afternoon and the 'Ralum' came in after dark the same day so it was only just in time! As it happens the 'Ralum' will be in Tarawa about a week before the Recruiting vessel arrives so we could have got there but I'm glad we didn't have to as it would have been a nuisance having to camp there for so short a time. We have had a further programme from the Manager of the B.P.C. & it looks as though the recruiting is going to be done in a great hurry. We are only to spend the night ashore on these islands & on several islands they are only allowing a few hours for repatriating & recruiting. They are doing nothing at Tarawa apparently except dropping us & they only allow 5 1/2 hours for their stay there. They are leaving Ocean Island later than they originally intended & expect to be here next Sunday. They say they are going to sleep ashore, I hope they don't expect me to put them up as all our stuff is packed up. Fortunately the doctor came back, quite unexpectedly, on the 'Ralum' so he can take some of them. He has seen all the telegrams Harry has had & he says he wouldn't have packed up if he had received them! Well I can say it that we know the Recruit will leave us at Tarawa, Harry has been told to

"investigate a case of embezzlement, metal
Macedonald & then arrange or supervise the
collecting of the Tax Copea" Well, that might
mean anything. A week or so ago the Mayor
said Macedonald was not to be in charge of Taxawa
so what does he mean, that he is to merely carry
on until Harry comes back from the Tax Copea
tour? Goodness knows so we have just got to
wait until the ship comes when we may be
enlightened. I don't know whether I shall go
round on the Copea tour or not, I'm not keen,
the smell of copea on shore nearly makes me sick &
if it is the old Maumo I think I'd stay
behind, somewhere.

I had Mr^s Levett & the two children to tea last
Tuesday, Miss Simmons on Thursday & Miss Pateman
yesterday. If the Leemburgers do not want their
dog sent back to Ocean Island we are thinking of
leaving him here with the Levetts, they say they
would like to have him & he is very good with
children. He would certainly be an awful nuisance
on the Reprint. Harry's idea is that we shall
be travelling for the next 2 or 3 months so I'm not
taking any plants with me. I rather hope we go to
Ocean Farming Island we should have a year here
at least.

I have had a girl in sewing for me for
the last five days & we have got through a

lovely lot of mending & alterations. I had another shot at making ice cream in my Ice Ball yesterday it was ~~very~~ nearly all right, I think it was my own fault it wasn't quite right as I filled the container right up & I seem to remember that it is more satisfactory when only $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ full.

August 26th
at Onua Island

I have not written for almost a fortnight, we do not seem to have had much spare time, at least none in which to get alone to write letters. The "Naumu Chief" turned up at Bevu on Sunday 20th & we left the following evening. D^r Gould is on board, M^r Comey in charge of recruiting, M^r Leane the accountant or clerk, M^r Gambling, in charge of the launches & his wife, M^r Macdonald & ourselves. D^r Steenson was awfully good at Bevu, we all had meals at his house but I supervised the cooking & provided most of the food. I was able to pack everything which was a great blessing. We put up three people & the doctor three but they brought ashore all their own bedding. Koua is with us but Caesar has gone to the Levett's at "Rongorongo"; the Leembuggers do not want him back at present & we thought he would be an awful nuisance on the ship.

I hardly know where to begin as there is so much to tell you. First of all, the news has come through that M^r Bailey, from the Solomons, is to be Resident Commissioner & is expected here in October, so we should be back in Bevu, with luck, in November. We haven't heard any more about Fanning Island but still think

that we are the only ones likely to be sent unless someone goes from Fiji which is unlikely as the D.O. from Fanning is coming on the Recruit ship & his relief is supposed to return on it. At present Harry is in charge of the central & southern Gilberts & Macdonald is in charge of the northern islands but both are to live at Tarawa & Macdonald is to do the Administrative work on Tarawa. Harry wonders what he is to do there! Also, if a ship is going south Harry is to tour round on it & if one goes north Mac goes on it, but there must always be one of them at Tarawa. It doesn't sound a very satisfactory arrangement to us but the Major would like all D.O.s to live on Tarawa, under his supervision, so that he could send them out on short tours when he thinks fit. Presumably he is going to point out to the new R.C. how well it is working! Actually it is a mad idea because it is quite impossible to do the administrative & treasury work on an island in a few hours, which is all that is possible on these local ships. D^r Steenson knows M^r Bailey well & says he is topping & very popular in the Solomons, also that he is a good administrator.

We had a few exciting but very worrying

Aug. 30¹⁹

days before leaving Beru. We heard rumours that Father Choblet was on the rampage and telling his adherents all kinds of stupid things so Harry sent him a letter, just saying that there were one or two things he would like to discuss with him and would he come over. The Father replied that he was sorry that he could not accept Harry's invitation as he wished things to go up to their superiors. Well, that showed that there was something in the wind but we had not the vaguest idea what could be the matter except that some of the Catholics had come to Harry a few days previously because the Court had bound them over for not attending a meeting, or at least for not telling the Magistrate that they particularly wanted to fish on that day as the next day was some feast day. Harry had no sooner started to tell them that he thought it would have been only polite to inform the Govt. that they did not intend coming to the meeting when one of the Catholics began telling Harry what he should have done! Harry told him to remove himself from the office so they all went looking very angry and no doubt had a fine tale to tell the Father. In all probability he told them what to say to Harry. However, after sending telegrams to the Major and worrying the Father for some days he was persuaded to put in writing the charges he had against Harry. They have proved to be absolutely futile and we all wonder if the poor old Father has gone off his head. One charge is that Harry has neglected the children of the island and that they are all starving. We hear that the Bishop is not going to take any notice of the Father so we hope it will all blow over but we also hope that he will be removed because he makes things very difficult.

From Beru we went to Nikunau and spent the day shore while the recruiting was in progress. The next day we were at Onakoa. Harry

Macdonald and I sailed ashore and it took us an hour and a half. I had some washing done by the women prisoners and took Mr. and Mrs. Gambling for a walk. From Onotoa we went to Arorae, an awfully nice little reef island. There was no surf but going ashore was quite fun. They have built a tremendous cement church there, it looks very fine to. The next island was Tamana, another reef island but not nearly so attractive as Arorae. We had quite a bit of excitement getting back on board. The ship was a long way out when we started but came in when they saw us and we came alongside and got on while she was moving. The next day we were back at Onotoa, we only repatriated the first time and from there we went to Nonouti. Nonouti is a large island with a tremendous lagoon. We had to go ^{to} the Catholic station first to deliver cement and from there we went to the Govt. station, it took us from 9.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. to get there and we were all burnt to a frazzle. Unfortunately one boat got stuck at the Catholic station as they could not get it unloaded before the tide went down so the launch had to go back for it and did not return until about 8 p.m. you can imagine how tired the poor men were! We spent the night ashore and it was great fun. There were eight of us and Mrs. Gambling and I with Uria and another boy had to get the supper. The men decided that they wanted Bacon and Eggs, we had one small frying pan and a primus stove and got a lot of fun out of the cooking. The next morning Mr. and Mrs. Gambling and I got three bicycles and went for a long ride. I've never ridden on such a hard saddle but otherwise the ride was lovely. Coming back to the ship took just two hours but we didn't leave the shore until 4.30 p.m. so it was not very hot. Yesterday we were at Tabiteuea but I did not go ashore as I have been

there before , it is an awful drag ashore nearly as bad as Nonouti, and I was very sunburnt I stayed on board and made out my next store order and with luck it will be just in time to catch the loading ship in October. This morning we are at sea, we should be at Maiana about 2.30 p.m. but as it is miles and miles and miles across the lagoon and there are only a few people to go ashore we are not going in at all but the natives will go over the reef near the ship's anchorage. There are only two more islands to call at and then we go to Tarawa, we shall be there on Saturday.

I have enjoyed the trip very much, Harry has been working hard all the time of course but I have had a nice holiday. There was great excitement on board last night, a native went mad, he threw himself overboard and fought like a demon when they tried to get him on board again. I believe he is fairly quiet today.

With much love to you all from us both,

Your loving,

Honor,

1933/12

S.S. "Nauru Chief"

August 30th 1933

Dearest Lady Maude,

We had a perfectly lovely lot of letters from you & Sir Walter this mail. We were very glad to hear that your arm was really getting on, it has been a long business & I suppose it will be some time yet before it is really comfortable. We have been so rushed that I haven't been able to read my mail properly yet, I've just skimmed through the letters & Harry hasn't been able even to do that. I see there is a school magazine which I shall digest presently. Heaps of magazines too but I haven't opened them. The last month has been a very busy one & this trip just one rush. I've enjoyed it very much & I think Harry has too although he has been, & still is, up to his eyes in work. We have just had another little excitement on board; a Marakii boy was carrying on with the wife of an Abaiang man, all the Marakii folk got on one side of the ship & the Abaiang people on the other side & they were all anticipating a nice scap. However, Kaobanang, the Interpreter reported the matter & they have been sorted out & quietened down but it was quite exciting. My poor old sunshade has given out at last & I have had to recover it myself. I had to

cut up a pair of those peach pyjamas you sent me as I had nothing else, & it looks very nice but I don't think it is very strong. I am enclosing a piece of the old cover, raffia, & I wondered if Muriel or Mabel could get me a new one if they are in London at any time? I can't remember the name of the shop & can't get at the bill but it was near Lawrence & May's in Oxford St. I also enclose a letter ^{Harry} had from one of the Deesses, it might amuse you.

Thank you very much for sending on Mary & Mabel's letters, I do hope Mabel is better & has been able to finish her course.

The ships are collecting the tax copra now so Harry won't have to go round on that tour. The latest idea is that we shall visit every village on Tarawa. It is a very large island but very chopped up, we should spend a night in each village, I think it sounds rather attractive & the people in the northern villages hardly ever see a white man!

Our Tenikoi ring has broken, we managed to bind it up with adhesive tape & a little wire to strengthen it but please could you send us one or two new ones? The natives are very keen on the game too, could send a few rope rings as well? Another thing I have nearly run out of is needles. I'd like some fine long eyed embroidery needles

and some "Betweens" the wee short ones, sizes 8 + 9. It is difficult to stop them from going rusty even in a bottle of oil, the points all seem to go blunt.

Harry is again in need of long stockings, he loves those woollen khaki ones but they do shrink so however careful I am, he seldom really wears a pair out because they get too small. I suggested that he might have some mixture instead of pure wool but he is not at all keen! Could you please send $\frac{1}{2}$ doz. pairs, plain khaki ribbed stockings for him?

Harry asks me to tell you that he is so busy that he doesn't know which way to turn. Major Swinbourne told Macdonald to tell Harry to send him by this ship, all the figures for the annual report for 1932-33. He had the nerve to tell Macdonald that if Harry didn't send them he would have to consider recommending that he be sacked! Stupid old idiot. I don't quite know where he thought the figures were coming from, Harry spent about 3 weeks of that year in the southern Gilberts, we have been ashore on one of the central Gilberts & not at all in the Northern & the ship isn't staying at Tarawa so figures cannot be collected there! Actually Harry is sending in the Southern Gilbert figures, we spent most of yesterday doing percentages & to-day he is writing the necessary letters. The Major is always trying to make out that he is the only one who sends in his Returns etc. properly, actually his district is

more behindhand than any! If you ever see the
 1931-32 Annual Report you might note that all ^{or many of} the figures
 for the Group are cooked by the Major, he is quite unscrupulous.

We are both very well & more or less resigned
 to going to Tarawa! There seems some chance of getting
 away again fairly soon now that a new R.C. is coming.

With heaps of love from us both

Yours loving,

Honor

Hospital Honol
Feb 23rd 1931.

Dear Sir

I was very grateful indeed for your kindness so I rejoice also that you have done a Cash-book for me and also for your letter to me. Many thanks.

I hope to see you again in any time if you come to here. We are all quite well. Give our greetings to Mrs Maude.

Your Servant

Lebuako Dresser

Honol Island.

1933/13

Betho.

Tarawa.

Sept 3rd 1933

When I finished my letters on the 'Nauvu Chief' I thought we had also finished with excitement but there was worse to come. First thing on Friday morning we arrived at the island of Marakei, discharged cargo & repatriates & left again for Abiang about 10:30 a.m. About 2 p.m. we were just off Abiang but had not anchored, I was lying down when I was awakened by natives talking excitedly outside my cabin, I heard them say that someone had a knife & immediately jumped to the conclusion that there had been a fight. I was rather alarmed because there had been trouble the day before between a married Abiang man & a single Marakei boy who was carrying on with the former's wife. The woman was put in charge of Terkarawa & his wife & the men promised to keep away from one another as there were only a few hours left before the Marakei lad would leave the ship. However, just as we were about to leave Marakei it was discovered that the wily lad had hurried ashore, got a permit from the Magistrate to proceed to Abiang & was back on board as a passenger. Harry wrote across the permit that he did not agree to the man going & told him to go back to the shore. Our friend then dilly dallied until it was too late.

+ then made a half hearted attempt to get away. The consequence was, of course, that he was still on board. I was afraid it was he + the Hwaiang man who had fought + that Harry would get into trouble for not having had him locked up. However it proved to be yet another couple, one man was dead + the other had a knife sticking out of his forehead at an angle of 45° + about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches of blade in his head but he was walking round the ship as if nothing had happened. Well, it was decided to go to Tarawa immediately as they couldn't get the knife out + as both men ~~were~~ ^{belonged} to Tarawa. I just missed seeing the man with the knife in his head, he came along to the saloon to find the doctor, the knife, by the way, was removed yesterday, it proved to be blunt + rusty + had a $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. blade but as long as the wound does not go septic the ^{man} will apparently be none the worse. I haven't heard how they removed the knife, it was in there all the way + goodness only knows how the dead man managed to shove it in, he certainly took the man unawares as he was sitting down but even then it was a marvellous thrust. Unfortunately for him he couldn't remove the knife +, having attacked the other man, was left defenceless. The wounded man was naturally enraged, he had bought, the day before, a most murderous stiletto like knife from one of the Phillipino crew + as he had been packing his box the knife was just beside

him, he picked it up + had killed the other man before he could be stopped. Poor Harry heard the natives talking, rushed along to the hatch where it occurred + arrived just as the man with the knife in his head had left to get the doctor, the other man was just alive but died immediately his jugular vein had been severed so Harry found the dreadful knife + waited for doctor + then helped to wrap up the corpse. Everyone says the dead man was a bit mad + that the man whom he attacked had done nothing. We were left here + the ship returned to Abouang + then Ocean Island.

We hear now that the loading ship is leaving Sydney on the 18th of this month so I'm afraid my stores will not get on board. However there is a chance that Ong Chong's may have a ship a few weeks later. We also hear that the collecting of the Tax Copra is not finished, in fact the Mauno is leaving on Wed next for the Central Islands, Tabiteuea also, Honouli, Kuria, Aranuka + Marana, they will be away about 10 days + Harry is going + I think I shall too. I may as well try life on a really old trading schooner with an old time Captain, a half caste super cargo + a native crew + I expect a lot of cockroaches. I might even write a book afterwards! I shall certainly have to go about with a yashmak because I don't want my mouth all blistered + beastly a second time, it is nearly

letter now but it has been very painful & uncomfortable
 we seem to have got here with all our goods
 & chattels except a 50lb Bag of white flour which
 Mr Greene evidently overlooked. I only hope I can
 get some at the store here as I haven't any at all
 Koua says he quite approves of Betio & certainly
 this little corner of it is quite pleasant. Many will
 know the house as we all camped here but now
 there are two nice sleep outs & at present we use
 one + Macdonald the other. We have to share the
 house as there isn't any furniture in the other one
 & there is only one stove! We cannot help contrasting
 Betio with Beu, not only the island & the natives but
 also the white people. I told you how supping. Dr
 Steenson was in helping me with the people off the ship.
 We arrived here, landed at 7 am having had no breakfast.
 Capt Holland & Mr Blackie in the same state, do you
 know, no one offered us any meal or even any help?
 Dr Young is the only Govt person here but we haven't
 set eyes on him yet! Mr Blackie left on the Chief
 & Mr Holland was at Bairiki which, you may
 remember, is an awful place to get at. We set to
 however, first we had morning tea & biscuits, then
 Mr Blackie's boy produced some bread, I had bacon +
 Teakarawa baked up some eggs, we got marmalade from
 the store & soon had a fine breakfast. Then we
 hurriedly boiled a small portion of a ham I had
 handy, killed a tin of tongue, found some potatoes

+ some oranges + apples Macdonald had brought, so we had fruit salad + coconut cream + then cheese + biscuits. The boys + I were quite proud of ourselves + Capt Holland seemed to appreciate the meals + said he didn't know how we had done it! Uria has arrived with bad eyes which refuse to get better so he is going off for a day or two. Fortunately Macdonald is having the Armstrong's cook as his boy so he is cooking for us while Uria rests. I find I have to pay a stick of tobacco for 2 eggs here, at Beem it is a stick for 6! Rose, a Fijian clerk we have here, had very thoughtfully bought a dozen chickens for me at 3 sticks each, very reasonable. Now the old men have come to see Harry about their Trading Company which is in a hopeless muddle, + they have brought a present of chickens + tabai. I daresay we shall do our trip up the island when we return from the cruise on the Mauno. We certainly can't say we are ever bored. Harry is looking very tired, of course he had a pretty hard time on the Reccent + the murder case was rather upsetting, he is an absolute tonic for murders, we've had every one since we arrived in the colony, 5 or 6 now.

I expect we shall be on the Mauno when I add to this, I only hope I shan't be sea sick.

Sept. 7th

We have had so many changes of plans this week that we hardly know where we are. First of all we were told that the Mauno would sail at 8 am on Tuesday, no, Wednesday, but late on Tuesday the doctor said that the captain was not fit to go & so now we expect to leave on Saturday, 9th. Burn's Philp's little steamer, "Kalam", was to have gone north + Macdonald with her, but they have broken something rather vital round about the propeller shaft + they are to leave here on Sunday for Ocean Island where they hope to effect repairs. So, here is a good chance of getting another mail away + also perhaps of receiving one when they return. When we heard that the Mauno was not leaving on Wed we all decided to go over to the Native Govt headquarters for a night. It is right across the lagoon, a lovely spot. I went there once with Capt Holland when I was staying at Bairiki. However, we were told that the Kalam would be leaving for Ocean Island to-day so Harry + Macdonald decided they must stay here + get mail ready. Then, about 3 pm we sighted a sailing ship, great excitement of course, + it turned out to be the "Quebec Plamagin" (?) a very small schooner which was at Ocean Island a couple of weeks ago + has since been at Oa Butaitare. The captain of the "Macquarie" was on board + they

had come down for stores, they say they have run out of nearly everything & the 'Macquarie' has no coal, they have to wait for their loading ship & there is no news yet of one having been chartered! The owner & master of the small vessel is the son of a millionaire & seems to come from Halifax. He is about 40 I should think, Wilson is his name, & he has been travelling round for 14 months, he is going to Fanning Island from here, then Howland & home. He is a journalist but his father gave him the yacht & told him to go & see the world a bit! I had to hastily prepare some sort of a dinner last night, we had nothing of course as we had meant to be camping across the lagoon. However we ~~at~~ had quite a nice meal & they consumed plenty of beer having been short of it for some time. To night they are coming to dinner again. Last night they talked a lot about ghosts & haunted houses & having discussed the ghost which used to haunt this house before the upper story was removed they all went away & left me here, all alone, for about half an hour! I thought it was a bit thick, however I didn't see or hear anything unusual.

We hope to get away on Saturday & should be back before the loading ship arrives, hope to get a mail away on her.

Heaps of love from us both.

Your loving
Honor

1933/14

O.S. "Mauno", off Maiana,

9th September, 1933

Dearest Mother and Father,

I was beginning to think that there would never come a time when I would be able to write to you again. However, Homer has been most regular and I expect has told you how busy he's been with all this continual chopping and changing.

When I last wrote I believe we were just going back to Bem. I had just one day there - went round my District on the "Maquane" and was recalled to sit on a Commission of Inquiry into the conduct of the Senior Medical Officer, Dr Young. I then rushed back to Bem again from Tarawa, where the inquiry was held, once more on the "Maquane", picked up Homer and sailed for Ocean on the "Mauroa" to act as Secretary to the Government.

Well we had a hectic month or two on Ocean - 3 months Homer tells me - You simply couldn't imagine the situation. Major Swinbourne, the Acting Resident Commissioner, was quite hopeless and couldn't write a single letter so I had to do the whole lot and on top of that, lodge him into passing and signing them. It was some job, but I think he was grateful in the end and very reluctant to let us go. I hear that since then the work has once again fallen into hopeless anarchy.

I loved the work, although I hated Ocean Island, and it enabled me to get many of my pet ideas into the

official policy of the Government. Swinbourne was quite out of his depth and didn't mind what was written so long as it meant another despatch to the High Commissioner. He had the good sense to admit to me that the job was beyond his capacities but told me that if I would do ~~the~~ my best to pull him through he'd make it worth my while - of course, as you know, he's absolutely unscrupulous - so I wrote and wrote night and day and by the time I left had finished off some 9 months of arrears and got the work up to date.

Amusingly enough I find no difficulty whatever in writing any number of official letters on any subject whatever and the knack has certainly proved useful.

Anyway in return Swinbourne allowed me to advertise as much as I liked and a great many letters went on to the H.C. under my signature with only a covering despatch, also written by me, signed by Swinbourne. All this should prove useful should I ever want a job in some secretariat. I enclose a letter Swinbourne sent to the H.C. when I left. I have just had a letter from Armstrong in which he says that the High Commission are very pleased with the amount of work which came from the Colony while I was Secretary & the H.C. is well aware that out of 200 despatches to him I wrote some 190.

I pressed hard, however, to get away from Ocean as I was anxious to get back to our natives and the wonderful life in the Islands. So we went back to Tarawa on the "Munua".

a dreadful trip and then down to Bem on the "Macquarie".
 After we'd been at Bem a few weeks Swinbourne sent me a wire
 appointing me Administrative Officer in charge of all 3 Districts in
 the Gilberts so once again we had to pack up and go to
 Tarawa on the recruiting ship "Koruru Chief". We had an
 absolutely lightning recruit - only about 10 days in the
 Gilberts - and it meant work all the time with never a
 moment off. I was quite exhausted by the end
 especially as on the last day two Tarawans took it
 into their heads to go for each other with knives so I
 had to sit up all night getting the evidence written down
 as well as get all our baggage ashore.

Mackdonald came over on the "Koruru Chief" and has
 been a great help. He was my assistant when I was
 Government Secretary and is now A.O., Northern Gilberts but
 is stationed at Tarawa as my assistant there. He's really
 an excellent system for me as he takes all the routine work off
 my hands and enables me to travel round my District whenever
 possible.

The Central Gilberts District is in absolute
 chaos, having been so long under Swinbourne and it
 makes my blood boil to see how the natives are
 neglected. Even Swinbourne's native government officials have
 received no clothes or salaries for 2 years! and yet they carry
 on working. Of course they haven't the vaguest conception of
 the laws they are supposed to administer as Swinbourne
 would never explain them and all his islands appear to

be seething with discontent. a new Resident Commissioner has been appointed, Mr J. Barley, the Senior District Officer of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate, of whom everyone has high hopes. He's due at ocean in October so Swinbourne should be taking over his district then. In view of this I'm working hard to get as many of the natives grievances settled before he comes.

Tanawa Island,
3rd October, 1933.

Well, our trip round the Central Gilberts gave me no leisure though I had hoped that it would prove a rest cure. In several cases I had to work all day and well into the night (3 and 4 a.m.) to catch up with the years of arrears, so when I did have a spare day in or between islands I felt like nothing but sleep. The islands hadn't been touched as far as their finances were concerned since 1931 and no salaries had been paid the government officials in some cases for 2 years. I can only think highly of them when they go on working just the same. Now, for the first time, every island has been given all the money they need for their salaries and miscellaneous expenses up to the end of June, 1934. I had to borrow over £2,000 to do it as we already exhausted all the government surplus in paying the natives money which should have been paid to them long ago.

on one island I found that, in spite of repeated letters to their administrative officer, they had run out of all stamps about a year ago. They ran out of 1/2 and 1d. stamps long ago but had some 3d and 2d. left. So they charged 2d. on all letters, instead of the correct 1d, until they ran out - then 3d and so on. The marvel of it is that the people never complain but just pay up.

We had a hard job catching up with the arrears in divorce. On Tabiteuea I had to confirm 15 in a day - a record for me. Nearly all for adultery.

When we got back we only had a day or so here and then up to Abaokoro - the headquarters of the Tarawa Island Government. We spent about 3 days there - it's a lovely place on a quiet backwater leading out of the lagoon and then back to Betio. I haven't nearly caught up with the work caused by our last 2 tours but it's no use as tomorrow at 9 a.m. I'm off to Abemama on the "Mauro" - I expect to be a couple of days there and should be back here on Saturday.

From all accounts there's an appalling amount of work there - all the chief members of the government wish to resign and the scube is doing 2 years for running off with the contents of the government safe. The King of Abemama, Kunia and Anauka is, as you know, married to Mr. Murdoch's daughter Agnes. The

King, who is the grandson of the famous Binko, with whom R.L. Stevenson stayed when on Abenara (there's an interesting and full account of the visit in R.L.S. "Through the South Seas" - Mr. Murdoch is also mentioned there as "a rat-faced recluse of a Scotoman" - a most unfair description of him), is a pretty fair rotter, from all accounts and the island is notorious for its immorality.

Just had a telegram to say the "Golden Eagle" will arrive here at 6.30 p.m. on her way to Butaritari, where she will load on cargo for the U.S.A. I hope to get this letter on board her to be dropped at Honolulu on her way to San Francisco, or I must hurry or it will be too late. It would have been ready had we not had to censor a whole lot of films the last few nights. I do not like the type of film that is being shown to the natives so we are insisting on censoring the lot first. We have them in the house after dinner at night - all I want to really see is the first and last reel of each film but by the time we've got to the end of the first reel Hana and Donald and any odd native present are all thrilled and clamouring to see the rest or I have to sit through the whole thing to the great waste of my time. Ho' mostly western cow-boy stuff. As long as the law comes out on top and there's no indecency I don't mind. Nee address means nothing to our people as they are not yet civilized

enough to ~~it~~ realize how utterly foul everything below the neck is. It will come in time, but not through me.

The "Golden Eagle" has just been sighted so I shall have to close. However there's another mail leaving for Honolulu and the U.S.A. in about 2 or 3 weeks so I should be able to get another letter off in it. I do hope you're keeping Hono's letters filed from the start. They always seem interesting to me when I read them through and I should be very grateful if you would preserve them carefully - we are anxious to use them as the foundation of a book.

With lots of love
from your affectionate son,
Harry.

1933/15

Aranuka Island.

Central Pacific.

11th September 1933.

We left Tarawa at 6 a.m. on Saturday, 9th, we thought at first that we would sleep on board so as not to have to get up too early but eventually decided to sleep on shore. We were up before 5 a.m. & it was really lovely sailing out of Tarawa lagoon as the sun was rising. We went first to Mauana which is fairly close to Tarawa, it usually takes the old "Mauno" about 6 hours to do the trip but there was a very strong current against us & it took us 9 hours. We did not go ashore, the passengers were dropped on a point of the island & we were under way again after about 1½ hours. I had only been on board the "Mauno" once before & then only to the trade room so I had not really seen her. Honestly she is just like the pictures one sees of old pirate ships; to begin with she has a sort of balustrade round her upper deck & old Captain Handley parades up & down in the most piratical looking shoes I've ever seen, I can't imagine where he got them. They come up to a point over his instep, have elastic sides & then come right up again at the back of his heel into another point. On the top deck he has a place where he sleeps, it is exactly like a large dog kennel,

I wouldn't believe Harry when he described it to me & added that there were always a few odd plates & saucers of food outside it but it is quite true! The captain has given us his cabin, a really nice roomy one, with a large bunk, a good settee, two small portholes & a large skylight. The dining saloon is the quaintest place, you enter it by descending a small wooden ladder, four steps only, straight ahead is a passage leading to the captain's cabin & on the right of it the bathroom & two cabins. On the left is the table which has only 3 sides clear one end being flush with the wall of the engine room shaft, at the other end of the table, beyond a small passage way, is a tremendously high bunk with cupboards underneath it, & on the far side of the table another passage way with the pantry & more cabins opening off it. The table is flanked by the most extraordinary round stools & the table itself is divided into 3, lengthways, I suppose instead of fiddles.

When the sails are up she is nice & steady but we had a bit of a lossing to-day coming across, only a 4 hour journey but wind & current against us.

We left Maiana at 6 p.m. on Saturday & after sailing & steaming all night were still in sight of it next morning instead of being at Kuria! However we reached Kuria by 5 p.m. & deemed ourselves fortunate. I expect you remember hearing

about Mr Murdoch & his half-caste family, Mary & Arthur went there with us. We went to them for our evening meal & then went to the Government station to sleep. Apparently no Govt. officer has slept at Kuria since they built the house, the bathroom had got rotten & ^{has} never ^{been} replaced & there was no lavatory. However we managed somehow & quite enjoyed ourselves. We had breakfast & an early lunch with the Murdochs & went on board at 11.30 p.m. I had a most amusing morning, mostly talking to a small grandchild, Eileen, who insisted upon investigating the contents of my bag & finding out the uses of the various articles. Harry only had about 2 hours sleep as he was up all night putting the Cash Book straight & issuing the imprest. At all the central islands they are hopelessly in arrears, some of them haven't had any money for over 2 years. Armstrong came round but all he did was to count the money & put O.K. in the book, I suppose he funked the job of balancing the books, it's a fearful job when left for so long. We arrived here, Aranuka, about 5.30 p.m. I think & got ashore just as it got dark. It is a long way in & the worst passage in the group, it isn't a passage at all, there are rocks everywhere & we had to zig-zag for what seemed miles before we got into the lagoon. It is what I imagine the American owner of the "Plamigan" would call an "no'ful" place. There is a very strong wind

off the land & a good swell outside, it was quite a job getting from the ship to the launch. We were nearly rolled out of our bunks coming over from Kuria but I wasn't sick, didn't even feel much like it. So I'm not such a bad sailor after all. There was a Sister on board from Tarawa to Kuria, I didn't see her as she shut herself in her cabin before we got on board & apparently was very ill. She didn't go ashore with us at Kuria but went in the launch this morning to see the father there & at 11.30 p.m. when we left she couldn't be found! She was supposed to be going to Tabiteuea & left all her luggage on board. They say she went into the bush & may have fainted, anyhow we couldn't wait so she is stranded at Kuria with no luggage. From what we have seen of this place by torch light it looks pretty tumble down & neglected. I seem to be the first white woman they have seen since the year 1 & no commissioner has ever slept here. They couldn't produce any beds so we are sleeping in a native house; there are no prisoners either male or female, the gaol walls are half down & the whole place is overgrown & unkept.

Sept. 14th Nonouti Island.

Manuka by daylight proved to be just as dilapidated as it appeared to be by torch light. However, we found that Major & M^{rs} Swinburne spent a night

ashore there about a year ago. The Major told the people how ashamed he was to bring his wife to such a station but it does not seem to have had much effect. We left the shore about 1:30 p.m. it was very rough in the lagoon but the wind was behind us, it was only half tide & the rocks on the reef were innumerable, it was quite impossible not to hit a few & the boats hit a good many! It only took just over an hour to go out, we went in the launch which towed two loaded boats, it was quite good going really. We sailed as soon as the boats were unloaded & made for Honouliuli. Fortunately the wind died down & the sea became quite moderate & we got here in 24 hours, the "Mauno" anchored about 6 p.m. sunset, miles & miles from land, we couldn't even see our destination though there were some islets visible to the north. However, just before 7 p.m., almost dark, we set off in the launch towing only one boat. We had hardly gone more than 2 or 3 hundred yards when we were bumping on coral rocks! Mr. Schultzy, the half-caste supercargo, said he was sure the Captain didn't realise how near the reef he was so back we went to warn him. By this time I wasn't at all keen on going, I suggested that I should stay on the ship till morning when she would be entering the lagoon. We knew it would take us at least

3 hours to get in & I was distinctly scared. However Harry wouldn't hear of my going back & assured me we should soon be over the rocks, so I sat & shook with fright & felt an absolute idiot for minding & we bumped our way to where they thought the passage was. I really never saw anything so marvellous, we went fairly slowly for a time & then full speed ahead & didn't bump again the whole way in though we had one scare. I thought we should never get near the land, in parts it was very rough, Schultz was sitting on top of the engine house, I thought he'd go overboard, he looked as though he was riding a bucking bronco. After 4 hours, at 11 p.m. we went into a little bay & we stretched our cramped limbs but, to our dismay, it was the wrong place & we had another 2 hours ahead of us. Harry & I managed to curl ourselves up on the narrow wooden seat, wrapped in a blanket & actually managed to sleep & eventually, at 1 a.m. we arrived at the Port. Station. We awakened the police & prisoners & having inspected the area repaired to the house where Harry & I got ourselves a meal while the boys brought over the bedding & made the beds. We had not had anything to eat for over 24 hours, we felt too sick on board although we weren't actually ill.

I used to think a string bed with only a mat on it rather hard but I was very thankful for it last night after the hard wooden seat in the launch. Hasey has just sent me a note from Schultzy to say that he does not think we shall be leaving before Saturday night, to-day is Thursday, he is going to send the launch for us at 8 p.m. so we shall have another journey in the dark.

The L.M.S. Pastor arrived just as we were beginning lunch, with about 26 children; each child had a chicken & after singing some songs for us they gave us the chickens, a sipping present. They sang, amongst other songs, "Show me the way to go Home", "Goodnight Ladies" & "Way down upon the Swanee River", their English was remarkably clear, but they will make the girls sing too high.

Sept. 18th Tabiteuea Island.

We arrived here yesterday after an over-night trip from Nonouti, it only took us an hour to get in in the launch but the tide was out & we couldn't get near the Government Station. We had to land about a mile lower down, walk across the sand & then up the road. We did not leave Nonouti by dark after all but went out during the afternoon while the tide was high which made the journey very much shorter. The day before we left we got two bicycles, intending

to cycle to the south of the island. We started off, with sandwiches & ginger ale, about 9.30 a.m. & went first to the Catholic station, about an hours cycling, to tell the Bishop when the ship was leaving. When we got to the Fathers' house we were told that the Bishop was with the sisters^r so we had to go over to their house. They gave us tea & cake & we stayed there talking for ages, we couldn't get away & anyhow they were most amusing & very nice. Eventually we got away but had to return to the Fathers' house for our bicycles, there we were caught & asked in to listen to their band. This proved to be a fine show, about 20 instruments & they played quite well. We had some nice wine, which went to my head immediately, as it always does, & at last escaped, about 2 p.m. Having got outside the fence we discovered that Harry's back tyre was flat & the valve was rotten so we repaired to Gee Long's store which was close at hand & where Harry had promised to go before we returned to the Post. station. Here more drinks were produced, beer this time & it was some time before we could get away. However, when we did at last leave it was too late to attempt going farther south so we returned home & ate our sandwiches for tea! We expect to be here until Wednesday, to-day is Monday, & I suppose it will take at least two days to get up to Maiana, it depends on the wind.

Tarawa. Oct. 1st

We got away from ^{Tabiteuea fairly early the third morning} ~~Honouliuli during the afternoon~~, ^{through} on the high ~~the tide was low~~ tide but were over 2 days getting to Maiana. The day after we left Honouliuli we were off Abemama so we stayed to drop passengers on one of the points; the next day we reached Kuria & the launch & a boat went in to fetch the lost sister, they were an awful age & kept the ship about 3 hours. However we got away about 2 p.m. & reached Maiana at 2 a.m., where the captain anchored. He is a marvel to creep up to an island like Maiana in the dark, that is where "Timanua" went up on the reef when we were all on board. We got up soon after & left the ship about 4 a.m. arriving ashore at 6 a.m. after a really nice trip across the lagoon. We were here for two days & nights & left early the third morning. We saw an awfully good "Ruvia" dance, the best we have seen, they haven't gone in for the new "Bataes" at all so that their dancing is the real old stuff. We came from Maiana to Tarawa in 4 hours, we simply shot along & got ashore in time for tea & a gorgeous hot bath which M^r Macdonald had most thoughtfully prepared for. I was allowed two days peace here on Betio & then we sailed across the lagoon to the Native Government Station & camped there for a couple of days, we got back yesterday & it seems probable that Halsey & I shall be here for at least 2 weeks but M^r Mac. is off

north on the "Mauno" on Thursday. The "Ralum" did not make her proposed trip north but has gone to the Ellice Islands instead. On Chung's loading ship will be here on the 3rd + Buan's Philip's on the 22nd, so we shall be getting more mail + stores we hope. The "Macquarie" will be going south as soon as she has got coal + trade stuff on board + we shall go too. Mr^s Bailey we hear is coming up on "Numanoa", I hope the poor man is a good sailor, at any rate he will realise what we suffer! He is not expected here until November so we haven't a hope of getting back to Bevu till December. I suppose we shall hear who is to go to Fanning Island when the R.C. arrives.

Harry's birthday to-day + I have made him a cake, it looks quite good + the icing actually quite hard.

With love from us both
 Your loving
 Honor

1933/16

Beth,

Tarawa.

Oct. 1st 1933.

Dearest Lady Maude,

We had four letters from you + Sir Walter when the "Kalam" returned from Ocean Island. We were awfully sorry to hear about poor Mabel + hope the warm weather improved matters; sciatica must be a beastly thing. I hope too that the domestic arrangements were satisfactory. You made my mouth water describing your fruit, I hope there is heaps when we come + lettuce too, lovely + crisp, + cabbages + sprouts + every other vegetable. I think I shall be a vegetarian while on leave, to make up for lost time. I hope Muriel was quite fit again before they left you, is she doing chiropody? I thought Barbara had more sense than to make a fuss about having a tooth out, I should think it would be preferable to having a septic mouth anyway. You all said Bill Hitchcock was so nice that it is a pity Barbara couldn't stick to him but she always said she would never be content to be married to the same man all her life, though I don't suppose she told her husband so. I'm afraid I have stupidly left your Christmas present at Beu, it is a Chinese applique tea cloth, rather effective, + 6 little napkins. We are sending £1 for the children, 5/- each for Dick, Mona + Joan + 2/6 each for Bobbitt + Ann please, will you send them

P.O.s? I do hope you keep well this winter, I am wondering if you have managed to let the house & have gone away. Grandpa wrote that he might be in N.Z. this Autumn, I suggested he might come here if he could get a direct ship but I'm afraid it is too much of a back water, it is fairly easy to get here but another thing to get away again. I didn't hear from Mother at all this last mail so I suppose mails from South Africa to Australia are not very frequent. I have only had one letter from her from S.A. & I expect she is at home again by now. Harry has several books on music now & is thoroughly happy. He has "A History of Music", Benn's Sixpenny series, "Music" by W. J. Turner & "Music & its Appreciation" & he has got out his guitar once more. He has begun a letter to you but I don't know whether he will get it finished for this mail; it's quite useless to worry him about it, I've found that it has the opposite effect to making him hurry, he simply gets fussed, & any desire he may have had for letter writing completely disappears!

D^r Steenson sent me a message through D^r Young, saying that he was enjoying my cabbages & radishes & that the zinnias, balsams & coleus were looking lovely. Sent it a shame I can't see them & eat them?

With heaps of love & good wishes for Christmas & the New Year from us both to you all.
Yours lovingly,

Honor

1933/17

Betio.

Oct: 15th / 1933

Dearest Lady Maude,

Harry went off to Ahemama on the 4th & returned at about 3 a.m. on the 8th. I spent three days at Baiiki with M^{rs} Holland, she was also alone as Capt. Holland has gone to the Ellice on the "Ralum", he should be back in a few days now. M^{rs} Macdonald went up to Butaritari on the loading ship & is returning in a few days. We heard some time ago that the "Ralum" was leaking badly & had to have the pumps working continually, she put back to Funafuti once & is I think coming up here as quickly as possible. "Nimaua" has now to wait for a new mast which cannot arrive until the middle of November so I suppose we shall not see her until the end of that month & shall not get away from here until well into December. A nuisance as the weather will probably break before that. The "Macquarie" is coming here on the 21st & then going to all islands in the central & southern Gilberts, we expect to go on her & shall be away about 3 weeks so we shall not be here when the next loading ship arrives. M^{rs} Macdonald went up to Butaritari on the last loading ship & is returning on the "Macquarie".

We have had our first real domestic

rupture & Uria has departed so I am doing the cooking & incidentally endeavouring to make the bread! The first lot wasn't much good but I didn't make it properly; M^{es} Holland has now given me full instructions so I hope for better results. We haven't decided where to get a new cook from, we want someone really good this time, I don't mind so much whether he can cook, I can teach him that, but he must be alive & not have to be told umpteen times before he'll scrub the table & cupboards. That was Uria's great fault, I had to almost stand over him before he'd wash anything properly. I'm managing the icy ball now & we have ice cream every day, lovely cold water too which is a boon on this hot & airless station. This house is like an oven most of the time, we sleep in a native built "sleep-out" & sit in another wee native house.

We need rain very badly, I don't think there has been any since we left Beer, & Betio is very, very dry. It has tried to rain to-day, it has been very hot & close all day but now the wind has sprung up & it sounds quite stormy. Unfortunately our side of the island gets hardly any breeze, where the doctor lives, on the other side, he is always cool.

Before I forget, could you please send us a new blade for our "Gem" size 000, hair clippers?

Harry got them from the Army & Navy Stores. They are rather blunt now, as well as having one tooth missing, would you ask someone if the new blade would be sufficient, (the tooth is missing from the blade) perhaps Mabel would know.

Harry has been having the Chief Kaubure in every evening this last week, he is an expert on the building of the maneaba. Harry has written it all down. I've managed to get some string figures written up this week, I want to get the second installment ready for printing.

With love from us both,

Yours loving

Honor

1933/18

Betio. Tarawa.

Oct. 20th / 1933

On Wednesday we suddenly decided to cycle round the island to Abaokoro, the Native Government Station. At least we decided on Tuesday evening & started off at 8.20 a.m. Wednesday morning. Bose, who is a Fijian clerk here, got us two very nice bicycles, he accompanied us & so did ~~Kasa~~ Kaobunang, Harry's Interpreter. Tekeawa & Koura sailed across the lagoon with the bedding & the food. I hope the map will give you some idea of what we were undertaking, I have put a X on Betio, our starting point, & another at Abaokoro. We started at dead low tide, with prisoners to carry the bicycles, across the first passage, to Bairiki. It was pretty good going, a lovely breeze & not many streams, it took us 45 mins. to get across. I went in to see Mr²⁸ Holland & to get a drink, Harry went to Capt. Holland's office, somehow or other we wasted about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour there. From Bairiki to the next stretch of land are two islets & three passages, this took us 35 mins. & here the prisoners left us. We had a lovely stretch for cycling & not a bad road & felt we had really started, by this time it was ten minutes to eleven. At the next passage, which we reached at 11.35, having inspected two villages, we were met by some volunteers who carried our bicycles; this passage was short & easy. From there we had another long stretch where we

could cycle. I can't remember the next passage, I think it was very short & easy but the road on that last stretch was simply awful. Stony & bumpy to a degree & the next bit up to the village, near the corner was just as bad; we reached this village, Bike-ni-Bee, minus Kaobunang, his front tyre went flat on a particularly bad bump so we had to wait about half an hour for him. Fortunately we were able to get another bicycle in the village. From here we sailed across to Bonriki, the land being not so solid as it looks on the map. Bonriki we thought the nicest village on Tarawa, it is really a lovely spot. The same canoe took us to the next village, across the passage, the tide being nearly high & by the time we had got across & seen the village it was 2.30 p.m. so we decided to rest for half an hour & have lunch. From here on there are many, many, many more passages than are marked, in fact nothing but passages & here our troubles began. At 5.15 p.m. we had reached Tabiang, the idea had been to sail from there to Biken Toka & from Biken Toka to the end of the island on which Marenanuka is. Between these places there is no long stretch of land as shown on the map but innumerable passages which are almost all dry at low tide & navigable at high tide, unfortunately we arrived some time before low tide; we managed to sail to Biken Toka but from there we had to

walk & be carried. It was getting dark, there was no moon & we wanted to reach our destination so we pushed on. We managed to persuade some villagers to help carry us & our bicycles & let them off bagging & loading tax copea the following day. We also borrowed a lantern & by cycling in close formation, once we had reached the mainland, we got along fine & eventually arrived, weary but victorious, at 7.30 p.m. — eleven solid hours! My arms & neck were very sunburnt but we were not nearly as tired as we expected to be. Nevertheless we shouldn't try to do it again in one day, two would be just nice. The following day Harry went to the Court where he was kept busy until 2 p.m. then we had lunch & sailed leisurely home soon after. That night we were very tired indeed & went to bed very early. Sailing back took us just about 2 hours with a light wind. I'm trying to persuade Harry to take a snap of the "Brittania", the sailing boat.

The "Macquarie" is a bit late so we shan't be leaving for a few days but as the loading ship is also late we shall miss her.

Much love from us both.

Your loving,

Honor.

1933/19

Betio,

Tarawa Island.

Oct. 22nd 1933.

Dear Uncle Arthur,

I am hoping this will reach you somewhere round about Christmas time to bring you our very best wishes for Christmas & the New Year. We are sending you, by this mail, a copy of the article on Ocean Island; I hope it will interest you. I shall be able to send you a copy of the first lot of string figures we have had published soon; we should get the booklets by this next mail but we shall be away when the ship arrives.

At the moment I am waiting for one of the local trading steamers to be sighted & then I must go &

change as we are going on board to find out when & where she is going from here as we hope to go to the central & southern islands on her. A few weeks ago we went for a trip round the islands on an old trading schooner, we were away for just over two weeks & I quite enjoyed it except for some of the long trips ashore. I expect we shall be away about 3 weeks this time as we are going to more islands

Since I last wrote to you we have spent about 12 weeks on Ocean Island, nearly 9 weeks on Beru, 10 days going round on the Recruiting vessel, which left us here, 1 week here, 17 days on the schooner touring the central Gilberts, 2 days here then two days camping at the ^{Native} Government Station away across the lagoon, just over two weeks

here, resting, (incidentally got rid of
 the cook so I've been cooking) then
 we decided to cycle to the Native Govt.
 station, Harry had to go there to coast,
 it is about 20 miles but unfortunately
 it's not just a case of cycling
~~fast~~ round, there are about 20
 passages between the islets, some
 we walked, some we sailed &
 some we had to be carried,
 anyhow it took from 8.20 a.m. to
 7.30 p.m. to accomplish the journey!
 Since then we've been feeling
 distinctly lazy, that was a
 few days ago & we did not
 cycle back again, we sailed
 straight across the lagoon which
 took under 2 hours. I sent a
 description of the trip & a rough
 map to Lady Maudslayi.

We expect to have a few
 weeks more here on our return

from this next tour & then we shall either return to Bevu or, possibly, be transferred to Fanning Island.

A new Resident Commissioner has been appointed & is coming up in the colony yacht from Fiji some time towards the end of next month. I hope he allows us to stay in one district for at least a year, I'm a bit tired of moving all my household goods around.

Harry is very fit & thoroughly enjoying all this travelling. We have a new Cadet, Macdonald by name & he comes from your part of the country, I believe his people have a farm but they are Amap people. He is stationed here, under Harry but can be left in charge while we travel round. He is actually in charge of Tarawa &

the Northern Gilberts, Harry is in charge of the Central & Southern Gilberts. Macdonald has just been up north & will be back on this ship, which, by the way, is very late, I can't see her yet.

Is that school at Wadhurst still going, I've forgotten its name but it was run by Miss Hiscos?

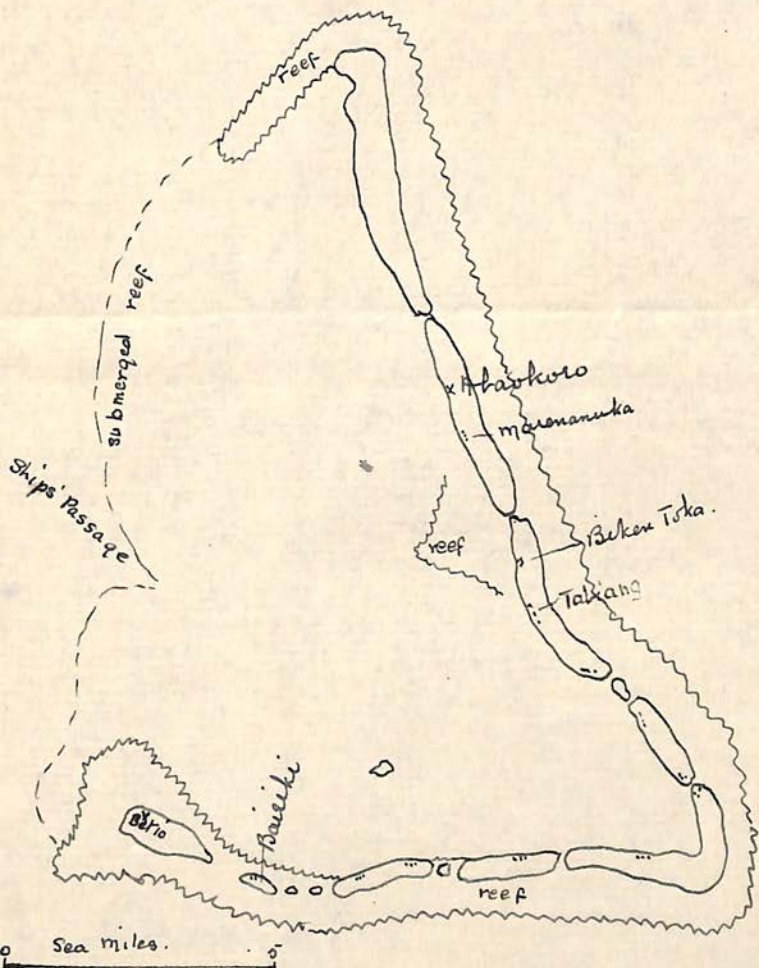
With love from us both.

Yours affectionately,

Honor Maude.

XOR BOND
 MADE IN CANADA

Rough Sketch Map of
Tarawa Island.



1.
1933/20

Tarawa.

Nov: 28th 1933.

It is just over two weeks since we returned from a three weeks trip on the "Macquarie". I have been busy getting the house ready for Mr Barley, the new Resident Commissioner's visit. After several false alarms, "Himanoa" is due to leave Suva tomorrow morning. Last week we were told that Mr Barley was bringing his wife & that an Auditor was also coming. Now the Auditor is ill so they are coming without him. We expect them to be at least two weeks getting here as they are to call at several islands on the way up if the weather keeps fine. I ordered a few extras for entertaining & find that a few are in every single box so I shall have to open every one which is a nuisance as they will have to be packed up again as soon as the P.C. goes.

The trip on the "Macquarie" was very nice, we had good weather all the time so no bad landings. We visited every island south of Tarawa, 11 islands, & called at Tabiteuea & Abemama twice. Tabiteuea is the longest island in the Group, the first time we called at the north & the second time landed at the south. Our second visit to Abemama was very amusing. The island was very dirty & the dwellings very tumbledown & dirty; Harry spoke to the Native Government about the bad state of the island on two occasions without much effect, the Abemamans

are notoriously lazy. Our last visit was quite unexpected & Capt. Heyen agreed to drop us at the south of the island, which meant going over the reef, where there was no village, the islanders would not have seen the ship & by the time she got round to the entrance we should be well up the island. Fortunately the tide was low & the sea calm so we had no difficulty in landing. We took with us a couple of native mats, ^{a large mosquito net} two sheets & two bath towels, small ones, in one bundle, & a zip-fastened holdall containing pyjamas, shaving & toilet things, sandwiches, two bottles of beer, instead of a thermos of coffee which the wretched steward didn't get ready in time, & a small cushion for me. Teikarawa, Kaobunang & Tabia, a new policeman, came with us & they brought a huge tin of sation biscuits. The roads on these islands all run from north to south on the west side of the island, as we landed on the east we had to cross over to find the road. This we did by going along a passage between two islets, about 10 mins. walk. Having reached the road Harry & I proceeded to change our shoes, we had been wearing rope soles for the reef. As we were sitting by the side of the road who should come along but the Chief of Police & another man. We immediately enquired them & proceeded on a long walk to the Government station. As we went along we wrote down the names of owners of dirty land. Anyone owning land through which

a road runner has to keep his land cleaned ~~or~~ fathoms back from the road & also the road itself. Well, the road on Athemama was strewn with coconut leaves, trees which had fallen across it, in places it was a foot deep in dry grass & it was not in a fit state for anyone to cycle on. It took us from 12.20 to 5.30 p.m. to walk to the Government station & almost every piece of land was dirty. In the villages the houses were in a very bad condition. On our arrival at the Govt. station we had some sandwiches, a bottle of beer & a bath & then set off in two canoes for an islet away across the lagoon where there was a village which had ^{not} been visited for about 36 years. We were on a lovely canoe with a racing sail & as there was just a nice breeze we skimmed along most pleasantly. It took two hours to get across, the natives were, of course, most surprised to see us but managed to find a fairly clean house for us to sleep in. However, the second canoe, with our bedding & the wherewithal to make tea, which the magistrate had lent us, did not arrive for ages. I was very tired so after a time I spread out my cretonne coat & used my pyjamas as a pillow. Eventually Teikarawa arrived with the mosquito net etc. & we were able to go to bed. The following morning we inspected the small island. I think the natives had been up at the first streak of dawn, there

4.

were huge bonfires everywhere & the land somewhat cleared though by no means clean! From here we sailed to the north point of the mainland where bicycles, of a kind, were awaiting us, & we proceeded south towards the Govt. Station. At mid-day we had reached On Chong's trading station, the "Macquarie" was anchored fairly close so I decided to return to the ship as I was tired. Harry finished his tour of the island & came out about 5 o'clock. He collected the names of well over 300 people who were to be fined. We did not sleep ashore at many islands as we usually arrived first thing in the morning & left in the evening.

The last few days have been very still & consequently very hot. In the evenings we sit in an open sort of summer house & there isn't enough breeze to upset the lamp's light. We brought back a new boy, a saw one this time, & I am trying to teach him to cook, he seems to be quite promising. I'm afraid I shall have rather a job when Mr & Mrs Barley are here although Macdonald's boy was the Armstrongs' & cook & certainly a help. However I have found that he doesn't know enough to be left to finish any thing off. Having a woman to entertain makes it so much more difficult. I shall have to get up about 5 a.m. & do the cooking before breakfast. I have found that the only time to make pastry is early in the

morning, at any other time the butter or fat is quite unmanageable.

Dec: 3rd

"Nimanwa" is actually on her way now, we hear that she arrived at Funafuti (in the Ellice) yesterday. We expect her to stay there several days, then possibly go to several other Ellice islands before coming to the Gilberts, I don't think we shall see her for at least 10 days more. At the moment we have the London Missionary Society's ship, "John Williams", in port & we had the Captain & his wife to dinner two days ago. They are both very Welsh & rather nice. She ^(the ship) is going to visit several islands south of Tarawa & then calling here for mail before going to Ocean Island. Mr & Mrs Levett & their two children are on board en route for Ocean Island, Australia & home after 11 years in this part of the world.

The weather is simply wonderful, quite wrong for this time of year, & there isn't a sign of rain, we shall be most uncomfortable if the "westerlies" miss us again this year. Water is very low already. The mosquitoes, although everything is as dry as a bone, have suddenly increased & are absolute whooppers & horribly insidious.

With love to you all from us both.

Your loving,

Honor.

1933/21

Betio.

Tarawa.

Dec: 13th 1933

Dear Sir Walter,

I am sending you herewith Harry's rough draft of his Travelling Diary for our last two trips round the islands. As he never seems to have time to write letters I thought these might interest you. I have put in one or two notes as well. I've sent you a Gilbertese panama hat too, it fits Harry so I hope you can get it on & that it will be of some use. We have them given to us every now & then but usually they are an impossible shape.

The mission ship comes in for our mail tomorrow & I am scurrying through the last of my letters so please forgive such a scrawl.

With love from us both

Yours affectionately,

Honor

1933/22

Tarawa.

Dec: 19th

1933

Dearest Lady Maude,

I have sent off your tea-cloth & hope you will like it. I have also sent some hats to Muriel & a hat to ~~Sis~~ Walter, if you don't particularly want the stamps would you please send them all to M^{rs} Taylor?

It seems that we are almost certain to have M^{rs} + M^{rs} Barley here for Christmas & I haven't any puddings, mincemeat or anything because Hook & Kirby failed to send me the wherewithal to make them. I may be able to get something from Ocean Island in time, I hope I can.

We are just recovering from sunburn & all horrible sights. Harry developed swollen legs & had to tie up for a couple of days but is all right now. D^r Steenson, talking to D^r Young on the wireless, said he had no sympathy for us, we should have known better than to lie in the sea! Did you know that the sun's rays are magnified two fold after passing through several inches of water but if the water is a mere 1/2 inch or so they are magnified three fold? I don't wonder we suffered.

Harry & Macdonald have to go to Abarang after M^{rs} Barley has gone, to take a murder trial. They are going to sail over in an open boat, it is only about 30 miles, & they will stay about 2 weeks. They want me to go ~~too~~ too & I expect I shall if the weather doesn't break. M^{rs} Armstrong went once

and was dreadfully sick so I'm not very keen on going.

When we visited Beem on the "Macquarie" I found that the zinnias had grown into wonderful plants & had really lovely blooms. Tomatoes were coming on & I picked four ripe ones, & the cabbages had been very good but were then going to seed. I shan't do any more gardening until I find out what Harry's next job is & whether we are likely to be in one place for any length of time.

I'm afraid I am late for the mail so must hurry.

With heaps of love from us both
Your loving
Honor.

1933/23

Betio,
Tarawa.

Dec. 17th 1933

One more week to Christmas & no definite news yet as to whether Mr & Mrs Bailey will be here or not. We hear that "Tumanoa" is getting very short of water & we can't spare any so they may go direct to Ocean Island & come back here later.

The other day we decided, during lunch, that we would take a picnic supper & sleep on Bikeman, the little islet in the middle of the lagoon. It was rather rough & like idiots, we took the boys' word that the wind was in the right direction but we soon found that it was going to take us a very long time to reach Bikeman. We left the boat harbour about 4:30 p.m. & at 6 p.m. on our second tack we were only just past the point of Betio. Bairiki was fairly close & straight ahead of us, & I was feeling rather sick & tired of hanging on with hands & teeth, so I suggested going to Bairiki, having a picnic on the beach, visiting Mr Blackie & the Hollands & then sailing home again. Eventually we got ashore at Bairiki, had our supper & were persuaded by Mr Blackie to spend the night at his house. It was rather fun & a nice change.

19/12/33

I have made a Christmas pudding, with butter as I couldn't get suet, & it is a great success. The cake is ready too but I believe the Barleys won't be here after all. Mr Spivey (L.M.S. missionary) has sent me a box containing mincemeat, muscatels, lemon curd & raisins, jelly nice of him. Fortunately the Native Government boat went over to Abaiang so I have been awfully lucky. I stole preserved ginger, & some mincemeat from Mr Blairie so we shall not fare so badly after all!

"Nimewa" was expecting to reach Beu this evening but we haven't heard how long they mean to stay there.

24/12/33

Here we all are on tent-hooks, it is now 11.30 a.m. & "Nimewa" was due first thing this morning. This hanging around waiting is rather tiring but I'm glad they didn't arrive very early because I had quite a lot to do. Mr & Mrs Barley stayed only two days at Beu but the former seems to have rushed around. He visited "Rongrong" & also our old friend (!) Father Choblet & according to Dr Steenson, thinks the father is a bit cracked thank goodness. We have had all the Beu news through Dr Steenson & Dr Young.

We have been able to make enquiries as to the R.C.'s habits, dress, drinks etc: & feel fairly competent to make him comfortable. One awful blow is that it is pretty certain that M^{rs} Barley is a Roman Catholic. The Administration & Education, almost to a man, are fighting the Catholics at the moment & were hoping for the R.C.'s help. I don't think we'd mind them so much if they weren't all foreigners & so utterly un-British.

Dec: 29th

M^{rs} Barley is not an R.C. much to our relief! Both M^r & M^{rs} are awfully nice, the former seems to want everything Harry & Macdonald want so they are very happy. The Resident Commissioner is extraordinarily like M^r Gemble in features & I feel a bit scared of him but he seems to be the exact opposite of M^r Gemble. He is all out for the natives & says he means to cut down the office work so that a D.O. can get out & about more often. I think we are likely to stay put in whichever district we go to, he doesn't believe in continually shifting a man. Unless Major Swinburne decides to go on leave we shall be returning to Beem in about a month's time.

It is rather wearing entertaining the

Barleys, they are the most unpunctual people, meals are always about an hour late! They stay up until midnight or later & I have to get up at 6 a.m. & don't often get an afternoon rest.

It is suggested that we all go up to Būtāritāri, leaving here probably to-morrow, then we are to be dropped at Abaiang & to return about a week later on the "Macquarie." I haven't quite decided whether to go, it will be such a job packing & getting away & I am rather tired.

"Nimaua" will be making another trip before very long so I'll be able to write a longer letter next time. We've just had a glorious mail but have not had time to digest it properly.

Very much love to you all
 Yours lovingly,
 Honor.
