

Symon letter 13

Private Mail Bag, Wynbring Siding, 5/6/43

Dear Kilmeny

Margin note: Am enclosing my "visitor who wasn't's" letter. Send it back. It is American Canadian, isn't it? The "Miss" is his stenographer's mistake. Thanks so much for the "Times" - it is most welcome.

I am afraid I am behindhand in replying to your lovely long letter of March 26th! But I have had rather a thin time and my eyes have not been behaving! Really, the fault with them is lots and lots of stones and sand and gravel which have been entering my eyes during my camp life! And these 'mites' or motes keep wandering round the eyeball. However they've had a good innings to date, and I hope the final 'granite' boulder will come out as the first one came out in 1906!!

I am sorry I didn't see the account of your successful Scottish Exhibition but I congratulate you greatly on its success. You know £50 is an enormous sum in such an undertaking, because it doesn't appeal to the 'mob'.

Your next venture – the Americas – will I hope be a still more successful venture and now the Brazilian and other S. American republics have joined with their Northern "Great [illeg.] [illeg.]" and there should be many interesting things to show and information '[illeg.]' and otherwise to interest Adelaide. I should have loved to have seen the Scottish one as I love Scotland greatly. If or when I come to Adelaide again – and Kilmeny I am past the half milestone to 84 – I must go and see the half castes – tho' I have never had any at my camps. I am glad the girls know how to work. The trouble would be, I think, to get them to like work! I have consciously left it out of my studies among the blacks.

No rain here, and my wheat paddock (about 2 ½ yards) needs some, but it is looking "green and all nicey" as Toddie said in Helen's Babies. The seed I grew last year – the first wheat grown in the Wynbring area - If I am alive when it ripens I'll send it holus bolus to the prime Minister!!

I cannot "Coupon" and so must 'do without' but I do so gladly rather than vex myself with such things.

I'm wearing my old laced riding boots (104 eyelet holes) daily. I bought them in Perth in 1905! I rode side saddle of course and the boots were of soft kid as I did much walking in them when on a long riding trip.

I expect "Austerity" 'Curtins' you all in the matter of fruit etc. The 'Curtin' is also between me and the fruits and things. However I have never cared much for food and love my tea and toast and thrive on it. I was to have had "a distinguished visitor", a Canadian who wrote from Canberra to ask me if he could come and see me. Of course I said yes, and immediately bombarded Martins as I've never had a man as my camp guest (Ernestine Hill dropped down upon me in 1934. I was returning from camp on Empire day with my empty go cart, which had taken E-W food and clothing and lollies – but a man! And the natives ideas about white men and women! However Martins sent me three cases and there my cases lay and the visitor never came and the cool months passed and he never

came and then suddenly (he was the H.C. for Canada) I saw he had "gone somewhere" and this mail brought me a letter from India and China! To say he was coming and received a cable and had to pack up [?] And hurry off in two days!

Meantime the unopened cases worried me and I gave all the contents to the highly paid well fed railway young men at Wynbring Siding (they take delivery of my weekly store supplies off the train.) I can't eat tinned foods and even if I could the tins were all too big.

My visitor who didn't materialize wants to come still to my camp! He had read my book and wanted to see and hear and learn.

A long letter, Kilmeny but as I write your quiet lovely personality comes right down to my pen, hence my long talk. God bless you my dear young friend. Affly Daisy M. Bates