

GOOD ADVENTURE

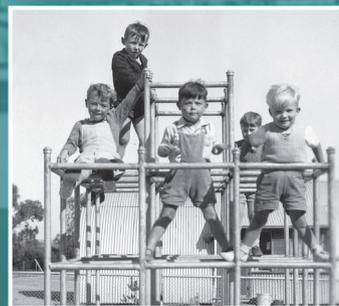
HOME THOUGHTS FROM AUSTRALIA

In the very middle of the twentieth century, a father, mother and their two sons emigrated to Australia on the 'Assisted Passage' scheme, leaving behind them post-war England, rationing, the poverty and hardship of suburban Manchester - and their grieving family. They began the 'Good Adventure' which was to last 3 years. They experienced a five week voyage through four seas and three oceans, calling at mysterious oriental ports in times before the opening up of the world to easy modern travel, and took up their new life in the land 'down under'.



Whilst life was very different from the depression of England in 1950, immigrant families were obliged to accept the harshness of hostel dwellings. Human spirit being what it is, adaptability and buoyancy were constantly in evidence; true British grit pulled most families through the difficulties and this story is one of the many tales of determination to survive and enjoy life to the full in the face of adversity. Like many families however, this family found that although prospects in Australia were better than in England, the sadness of leaving behind their families was too much to bear. They returned within three years of leaving.

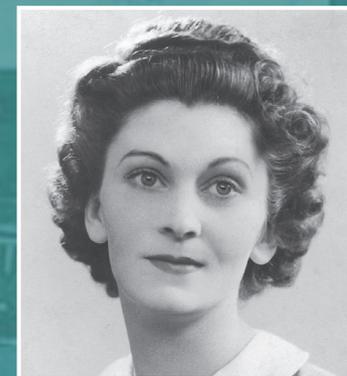
Forty years on, the two sons from that family made what was to them the most amazing discovery when an uncle produced from a chest of drawers in his Manchester flat a bundle of old air-mail letters. These were all the correspondence the mother had sent back to her family. She wrote every other day, then weekly, then periodically, but always she wrote as she spoke - plainly, honestly and vividly. Reading these letters brings back such memories, but of a different life, experienced by a family in a different age.



That family was mine. My mother sadly died, prematurely, in her late sixties, in early 1981. But among the legacies of love and memories, she has unwittingly left this graphic record of our early family life.



It is in her memory that my brother and I decided to put together these letters which are complemented by all the original photographs, postcards and paraphernalia sent along with the letters. Although I was too young to remember, my brother Nigel, five years my senior, has always possessed the most extraordinary memory as well as remarkable literary ability. His narrative has provided anecdote and continuity, but the letters literally speak for themselves.



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