

6 pm - A course meals, & fresh
 nights for kiddies. The ship in
 the ship is a night for some days -
 you can't ask for the wrong thing,
 & there is a cinema & swimming pool
 just like a luxury hotel. There are
 long, speakers everywhere & messages kept
 coming through. One came through for
 Mrs. E. A. Grouther to collect a parcel
 from the post office bureau - it was
 my mother's outfit. Also there was
 a greetings telegram from Mum & Dad
 Joyce etc, & one from Bill & Ben.
 Don't worry at all about us & I
 shall only concentrate on my family
 & I will write to tell you everything
 about - I'll get Tony & will show you
 lot of of things & take, now & shall
 be quite happy to come home again
 after this good adventure. All our
 love
 Mum & Dad
 x x x x

So much more could be said as the future opened up but it is preferable to return to where this collection of letters ends, - back in 1954. Never will we forget those colourful days chronicled in our mother's many letters sent home. Their unexpected discovery when elderly Uncle Bill handed them over to me one day brings back those memories with an almost painful and poignant clarity.

If, in the unknown future, Tony and I should ever find our feet standing again on Australian soil, we shall remember with gratitude that we were privileged at that time of postwar depression, to escape from it all and experience a very different life in a distant land of opportunity.

That was, in the words of Mum's very first letter to her family back home, our "Good Adventure."

I shall
 be quite happy to come home again
 after this good adventure.



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POSTSCRIPT





POSTSCRIPT

Who can ever know what life may bring to pass? My brother and I have sometimes wondered when or whether we might ever set foot in Australia again. We left there nearly fifty-eight years ago (as I write this) and our parents and we two boys, seeing our ship pull away from Melbourne docks, might well have been seeing the Great Southland slip away forever. That was indeed what we imagined back then.

Now 2012 has dawned and after many years of enjoyable journeys to other continents, I now find I am all booked up to revisit Australia again in a few days' time! The idea is above all, to revisit the Melbourne area, fully aware that many places that we knew, (such as the migrants' hostels) will not be there now. What place does not change over half a century? Furthermore although I have friends whom I hope to visit in three Australian cities, they are not connected with our past stay there. What they do have in common with us is that they also emigrated from the UK, but not during the assisted passage era that we knew. So while in or near Melbourne I hope to discover that beautiful city more fully than I could have done as a six to nine year-old; I want to revisit Willamstown and Nunawading,

talk to historical societies which exist there and discover what I can about the era of migration. It will be a delight to travel around the Mornington Peninsula to see again the lovely towns and beaches and the other wonders such as the Dandenong Mountains. Had circumstances been different, our bedroom windows might have given us an idyllic view of those hills!

The overall trip will start out west in Perth before a long-desired trip on the Indian Pacific Railway, crossing the Nullarbor Plain on the world's longest stretch of straight track over two days. I hope to see the Great Ocean Road between Adelaide and Melbourne, including that resort of Lorne, on Victoria's coast, where we had a family holiday. After the Melbourne stay it will be all about going up to Sydney to see friends, checking out how wonderful that city is, as its reputation goes. Who knows though? – Will I pass through Bonegilla en route? Will I also manage to see Canberra? Is Ayers Rock (Uluru) right out of the question, being so far away up in the Northern Territory? As I say in my anticipation, - who knows what life may bring to pass?

In memory of Mum and Dad I will go and find out.