

In re "Flying Star"

7th July, 1947

Dear Mrs Bryant,

I certainly do owe you something pretty
handsome in the way of an apology this time. I've not
been written before to thank you for everything that you
did for me at Tanna. Indeed, when I think of all
your unacknowledged kindnesses my temperature rises several
degrees.

m — In extenuation, for I have ^{really} no reasonable excuse
to offer, I would plead the weather; which ever since I left
Tanna has been vile - and getting viler every day. As a
consequence we have all been laid up in hospital (or at
least in bed) sensation. I got my first bout of colds and
influ in Fiji and had to spend a week in hospital there:
and since reaching New Zealand Alan has been down and
down almost continuously with colds, flu, asthma and bronchitis.
Indeed, Alan is still in bed on the ship but I have hopes

that once we get into the business, we shall find it easier
to see that the, for no intense cold of the winter has
really ^{hardly} got down too far to be long and only real warmth will
shake it off. However, ^{it will} ~~the~~ have been too thick to my
advise in future and ~~take~~ ^{take} an interest in the business, where
we belong.

Despite nursing duties, I managed to slip across
to Australia last month and interview Messrs Burns and
Mitchell ^{re} ~~as~~ to the possible purchase of ^{and Washington} ~~the~~ ~~islands~~ as
a result they have agreed not to increase ^{their} ~~the~~ ~~price~~ ^{price}
for the two islands, despite the fact that the ^{recent} ~~increase~~
in the price of copra has made them very much more
remunerative from their point of view. It had been estimated
in Suva that they would ask for an increased price of
anywhere between 50 and 100% so, on the whole, I am
quite pleased. Of course, whether we can persuade the
Colonial Office to sanction the purchase is another matter. I
hope to have a shot at them when I get home, much as

involve the prospect of spending my leave growing the trees with
such gusto.

Our departure from Wellington was hindered by
a great storm (with a wind velocity of to 97 miles an hour).
We got on board the vessel, with some difficulty owing to the
wells, but couldn't make head or stern for another three
days. When we finally got away on the 1st July, the
sea was smooth but the wind still fresh - its still had
though we were now not far south of Pitcairn.

But we must count our blessings and we have
a nice, comfortable cabin with a very comforting electric heater
(which I spend most of the day sitting on) and a luxurious
private bathroom attached. And Alanie has the next cabin
with two other children a little older than himself.

we hope to leave England ^{only} again in December,
before it gets too cold, and spend three summer months in
New Zealand, before returning to the colony about the end
of February. Alanie does not go to his boarding school in

indebted before the beginning of the year, and I would like at
least the means to feel him down, as I am doing, and
praying that the High Commission will, at all costs, keep their
hands off me until then. Everything, I suppose, will depend
on the new High Commission, whose he may be going to be,
and very likely will get a strike - I feel it is my
lover's use due for me. But you will probably know who
he is by the time you ~~see~~ this letter reaches you.

Enough of gossip in the seven steps. I started
this letter to thank you and ~~to~~ go sailing on - but
was arrested ~~was~~ drawn near. You and your husband will
buckle to me throughout the month I lived on your richness.
What a strain it must have been to you good people,
arriving sane and fresh from leave, I am only beginning to
realize as I gradually thaw into normality. As I think I
told you, we never know how lucky one is (and nearly
everyone is mad in the islands) until one has spent several weeks
in everyday, civilized life: a fortunate circumstance on the whole,

so it isn't. I have some more soap now, but as she
was, and so, pretty badly herself, I didn't let her have it.

Eccentric though it must have been, I did even
enjoy that last month with you all and I shall ever be
indebted to your kindness and ready hospitality. Usually, I
enjoy late stays with people and I was certainly not looking
forward to vacating the house and living with strangers. But you
didn't seem strange for long and I was quite desolate at
leaving.

I do not hope with you and your husband are still
living the Gullies and that the walk is proving no trial to
him. It was such a relief to find that you didn't run down
the wretched place from the minute you arrived that I have
still not ^{quite} recovered from the wonder of it. Even the Colonel
officially seem to have accepted the position that everyone set to
the colony will hit the roof on reaching there: I feel sure
they'll feel quite disappointed if they don't receive an official
letter of complaint from yourselves.

once again, a blessed thank for all you did

for me and I do like my ship. The
to a small extent
requirements, before we fully leave by ship.

understand that we are likely to have a new regulation over-
hanging for a short retirement after 20 years service (or after
after 40) or it may not be long now.

With the very best to both of you be

Have and myself,

Yours very sincerely,

The beer on this ship is excellent, and we shall drink
an extra glass before ^{land} to wish you both happy days.