

The Lythe
Station Road
Baildon
Shipley
Yorks
21st Nov 1964

Dear Clive & Dorothy

This letter should have been written ages ago. We have been in this house since 13th Jan this year. It snowed all day the day we moved in; Eric, Alison's husband was with us while Alison was in hospital undergoing a small operation and she came out of hospital to a hastily furnished house that had no carpets down except in her room! We have a fantastic garden consisting of a hill rising steeply from six feet away from our back wall. We had to have two terracing walls built and steps leading to the terraces. The top of the garden is about level with the upstairs window sills! The total distance between the wall of the house and the furthest part of the triangular garden is not more than about 20-30 feet. However in spite of being overshadowed a good deal by Jan's (?) garden cherry trees ours has done wonderfully well and provided us with roses, Rhodendrons [sic], chrysaullis (?) Michaelmas daisy's etc. etc. Everything here has grown twice as well as it did at Hawksworth. We planted nasturtiums along the terrace retaining walls and they were a magnificent sight; some runners, full of flowers, hanging down the walls and extending over the lawn or path and being anything from four to ten feet long. We had to cut some to prevent their obstructing the pathway. We haven't completed all our planting yet.

As Norah had a very hair raising year last year and we had no holiday we decided to do something about it this year. After a short visit to Norah's old home in Somerset we joined some friends of ours from Hawksworth and went to Southern Portugal. We flew from here to London, where we had a short meeting with Alison at the Airport and then boarded a plane for Lisbon arriving there about four hours later. We stayed that night in Lisbon and next morning our hired car met us and we took it in turns to drive to the South coast to a place called Monte Gordo, in Portugal but only a few miles from the Spanish border. We were at a very new and very modern hotel, each couple having bedroom sitting room verandah and bathroom overlooking the sea. Monte-Gordo is only a small place but the Portuguese are developing it sanely. The Hotel had its own bathing pool about 100 yd from the sea in the middle of a courtyard in the hotel precincts. The sea bathing however was as good as I've had anywhere in the world except for surfing. The beach was magnificent, quite as good as Muizenberg (?) and extending as far as the

eye could see in either direction. 300 or 400 yards inland extensive pine forests. We found the Portuguese charming and altogether we had a wonderful holiday. On the drive South and back again to Lisbon we had our elevenses, tea and lunch under Olive trees or Cork trees. The country was somewhat like the Veldt except that instead of thorn trees or Melkbosch as far as the eye could see, there were Cork or Olive trees, and all trim and well kept. The ground underneath was used to grow tomatoes or other crops. The ground everywhere looked well tended and there was no untidiness about the farms such as one can see everywhere in this country. When we got back to Lisbon we were shown round by an English speaking driver. It is a wonderful city well worth a visit.

Back in this country we had a short visit to Alison before returning home. We did gardening and various household jobs until it was time to go North for the Hamewith Centenary celebrations at Alford. Norah and I drove to Edinburgh and stayed the night with Peg. Morris had come by train. The next day we all went to Alford and stayed the night at The Forbes Arms. We saw a TV Broadcast on Dad at my cousin Henry's farm. Next afternoon at 2:30 we had a ceremony at the Murray Park gates where a crowd of about 500 people had assembled. I planted a tree and handed over the deeds of 2 acres of the Park to the Headmaster of the Alford School to be used for instruction in Forestry. Then the assembled company ambled through the wood where at various points Dad's poems were recited and mimed or songs made from them were sung. It was a wonderful effort for a small one street village. We were treated rather like VIP's, people coming up and introducing themselves and everyone being very friendly & pleasant. The recitations and miming finished about 5:30 pm and then we repaired to a hotel for an excellent high tea. After that we went to the Alford School for a show by the children, again recitals and mimes, all very well done and enjoyed by a packed House. One of the high spots was that one of the Semples was there. The 'lad' wore a kilt and recited "Aye Fegs just look at my Legs." His wife was with him, but when Dad was alive Semple was a girl. He started life as a girl and changed sex when fully grown. He was fully masculine when we saw him!

I have just come back from Aberdeen where I've been taking part in a Television broadcast about Dad's life. It's the first time I've been on TV and probably the last! Everyone was so friendly that I quite enjoyed the experience, and got all expenses paid and a fee as well! We have also had a week in London helping Alison select Bathes Basin's (?) etc etc for the new flat they are moving to in Dec. Norah unfortunately now threatened with High Blood Pressure trouble.

Love from us both, Bill.