

1  
6, Endsleigh Street,  
London, W.C.1.

18th May 1953.

My dear Vally,

Today, I was going to write to you, and today your postcard came!

I am so sorry you must have been wondering what has been happening. I thought Robert would be writing to you while he was away. He and Lue and the baby are at Whiteway. They have been there now for nearly two weeks, and are returning probably on Tuesday or Wednesday. They had not intended staying so long, but Lue's uncle has been very ill again, and she felt she should stay. He is a fine man, and they are very much attached.

Before that, I had a week away. First of all, going to see my father, who is old and on his own and not well; then going to North Devon to see a place, which turned out to be on the edge of a wretched aerodrome with those hideous, screaming jet aeroplanes.

Robert returned letters 38 and 39 and the Preface on Saturday. I typed them yesterday, and here they are! So very sorry for the delay!

I have heard of a place up in the hills of the Lake District, and Robert and I hope to go up there at the end of this week to see it.

You mustn't worry about us!! It is the tempo of having so many things to do! So many times, I say, "We must write to Vally today." Then the clock creeps round - and then it is too late - and I say, but Vally knows and understands. This week-end, for example, I was working solidly from early Saturday morning until late Sunday evening; I then went out for a breath of air, and found myself perambulating about gazing at these coronation things they are putting up all over the place, so I quickly returned. It is disquieting, to say the least, to witness the pathetic craving for a little colour. This city is a blot of unrelieved greyness; for me it is made worse by these dabs of artificial colouring which come out periodically like a rash - for the birth or death or marriage or crowning of someone or other. In this mass age, men's minds have been closed to beauty, which is nature; when they are opened again, greyness will be wiped away!

Love to you from us all.

Joe

3  
6, Endsleigh Street, W.C.1.

Tuesday.

Dear Vally,

Here are letters Nos. 22 and 23.

Could you send me some flimsy paper  
some time, as my stock is running out.

There is such a basic soundness and  
goodness in these manuscripts which I now find  
myself looking forward to typing - in fact, when  
Robert is behind with them, I badger him to get a  
move on!! I have not said anything before, but  
there are passages like the one on blood relationship  
and spiritual affinity which put so clearly what  
one has always felt.

We all send you our love.

Joe

4

Stanegarh,  
Bampton,  
Penrith,  
Cumberland.

Dearest Vally,

The silence is broken!

/ Here is letter No. 3, with our best wishes, and I hope that now we have started again, we shall be able to keep up with you. /

Robert has probably told you something about Stanegarh and its environs. It is indeed a charming place, but an immense amount of hard work is needed, particularly on the gardens and kitchen garden.

I will write you a long letter all about it when we are not quite so busy, and also bring you up to date with Anne, who is now quite grown up!

In the meantime, we send you our love,

Joe.

P.S. Very many thanks for the chocolates and lollipops for Anne, which Robert sent on to us.

5  
6, Endsleigh Street, W.C.1.

Monday.

Dear Vally,

In the rush of getting the letters sent off to you, I didn't thank you for the money which you sent. This was very remiss of me, and I hasten to rectify it. Thank you very much! Also for the butter, which makes such a difference to our meals. It is very kind of you, but you mustn't bother about bacon if it means that you have to get a permit.

Robert has written a note, and has asked me to say how lovely it would be if we could manage to get over to Ireland for our next holiday.

Kindest regards,

P.S. Each time, I will return your manuscripts, the top copies on air-mail paper and your copies.

Joe

68 Croydon Road,  
Coney Hall,  
West Wickham, Kent.

Tuesday.

Dearest Vally,

So many thanks for your card.

Please forgive us. There have been so many stresses and strains through having to leave Stanegarth. I am having to work in an office and am staying at my brother's. Robert and Lue and Anne are staying with Lue's aunt at Whiteway. (The address is c/o Miss Pope, D.O.P., Whiteway, Stroud, Glos.). I have not had a minute to spare or the facilities to do the letters, but I hope tonight to be able to resume. I shall do those I have as quickly as I can and send them to you. Will you send manuscripts direct to Robert, and he will send them on to me. We all feel so unhappy.

Much love,

Joe.

Stanegarth.

Sunday.

Dearest Vally,

I hope you got my postcard which I hastily scribbled and that No. 1 is on its way now. I have asked Robert to bring with him when he comes next Wednesday all the copy letters he has in London, so that I can sort them out and send them on to you, together with an extra No. 19 (America).

Vally dear, Lue says you are our Fairy Godmother!!! Yesterday, we received the parcel with the ham etc. in, and also the cake. How lovely it all is. I shall follow your instructions about the ham. Yes, although I say it, I am a good cook!! As you say, it is an art, which I inherited or acquired from my mother. We are so grateful to you for sending all these things. You have sent so many parcels, I do not know whether I have acknowledged them all! The one with my socks etc. in arrived safely. We are all enchanted with the dress ~~of~~ for Anne. It fits her perfectly, and she is wearing it for Christmas.

How sweet of you to write in that vein to E.I. You did quite right. Her approval is more than sufficient reward. X

This, once more, is in haste, in order to catch the post. In a lovely old house like this, there always seems to be so much to do, especially now! Much love to you from us all,

*Handwritten note on the left margin:*  
Lue says you are our Fairy Godmother!!!  
Vally dear  
Lue says you are our Fairy Godmother!!!  
Vally dear

*Handwritten scribbles at the bottom right of the page.*

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Stanegarth.

Sunday.

Dearest Vally,

Your sweet and urgent letter was delayed, most unfortunately by the Christmas post. It did not arrive until Christmas (Friday) morning!! So I am hastening to get this in the post today in the hope that you will get it tomorrow.

1. The No. 1 letter is enclosed. On going through the papers, I find a copy, but your new translation is much better, so I have typed it afresh and here it is.

2. I have re-typed page 2 of letter 34 (Europe II). It is now 2, 2a and 2b. I have inserted these in your copy, and enclose the flimsy top copy.

3. Robert has brought the whole of the papers. I shall sort them out today, and send you a complete set of carbon copies. I have a fear, though, that one, or two, may be missing.

It is difficult to know what to say about the enclosed letter, and the cheque. Both of us, and Robert, of course, more strongly than I, feel that cash should not enter into it. But I have so many unpaid bills up here ! ! ! . . . . In any case, dear Vally, you have been so wonderfully kind to us that . . . . And yet I know exactly how you feel . . . . I am just beginning to have a glimmering of the remarkable personality E.I.

So make the cheque out to me, Vally, and not Robert. I will see to it. Accept my humble and grateful thanks, and then you must forget it.

We must think of the next job of work. I shall be able to apply more skill and knowledge next time.

In great haste,

Much love from us all.



9  
Stanegarth.

Monday.

Dearest Vally,

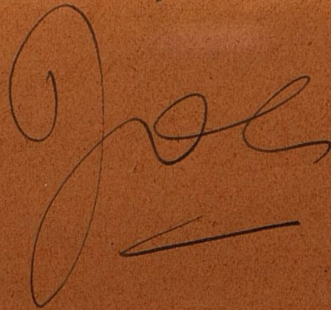
Thank you very much for your letter, and for the money enclosed. I do hope that by now you have received all the letters except No. 23, which I now send you. I rang Robert on Saturday night, and got him to send it Express. (If, by any awful mischance, you haven't received any of the letters sent last week, let me know immediately and I will send you them from Robert's carbon copies.)

I am indeed very happy to have been of help in this work Vally. I started out by, as I thought, helping Robert with a job that was probably too onerous for him on his own, and finished up by forgetting that and doing it because of the worthwhileness of the job. I now understand, or rather just beginning to understand much that was formerly beyond me, and in true English fashion, sceptically rejected!

The baby is with Lue and Robert at Whiteway. I hope to see them back again towards the end of the week.

Let me know straight away if you have now received all the letters.

Much love,



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Stanegarth.

Dearest Vally,

Thank you very much for your letter received this morning. I have just posted off No. 15, and now enclose No. 16.

I have Nos. 17 and 25 by me, which I hope to do tonight.

I will keep the sheet by me, which you sent back.

There is a similar thing in No. 16; on page 5 of your manuscript, Robert has crossed out a sentence. He has some reason for crossing it out, but as I cannot discuss it with him over 300 miles, I have included it in the typed copy, and it can be crossed out if not wanted!!!

It is real Cumberland rain today. I have to go down to the village for bread and paraffin.

Much love,

