

21. Gilda Crescent.

Eccles.

Sept. 29. 1937.

Dear Ann,

Now that I am beginning to settle down I can find time to write a letter of respectable length. I have now been here for exactly a month and have been fortunate enough to secure some really decent digs. They are not too central in regard to my scattered area but what I lose one way I make up in another. This area, in which I am in, is very typically South Lancashire, comprising a series of towns all linked together, very dirty and sooty and in which the unfortunate inhabitants must earn a living by coal-mining or working in what cotton mills survived the slump. I have to superintend Leigh, Eccles, Patricroft, Swinton & Pendlebury. Altogether I have about 45 schools and something like 200 odd teachers pretty well all unacquainted with the new syllabus! The work, being under 3 separate authorities, must therefore be triplicated in all its forms; ideas, reforms, reports, purchases, teachers' classes, office work, everything. I have worn one pair of shoes right through and the woman org. has outworn 2 pairs! The conditions are terrible in most of the schools. In Leigh where there are 18 schools there are only 3 council schools, all the remaining 15 being R.C., B of E., or Methodist, and the prevailing condition of the playgrounds is dust in summer and mud in winter. What does one do under these conditions? In Swinton the conditions are somewhat better but Eccles is little better. The Directors are 3 of the most different kinds of men imaginable, one is old and amenable, another is middle aged and slow, and the last is tall & sinister and very particular in every detail. Digs know that he wants us to fit our visits in to the schools so that we arrive just as the P.T. is being taken! Can you imagine us rushing about all over the district from school to school trying to

reach a class before it finishes & having no time to speak to a teacher afterwards to give him tips! Both of the other two two directors were of similar notion but we have managed to persuade them of the impossibility of his principle.

This summer, as you are aware, I went over to Denmark to attend the Svend Holtze College of P.E. and I had as a companion ~~a~~ friend Holmes. He came up to Newcastle and we sailed over in a tiny butter-"tub". Fortunately we had the company of 4 other fellows going on the same course and a ex-Carnegian who went to Ollerup. The course at Frendensborg is one of the best possible ways to spend a holiday, we had an amazing time full of fun and lager. The work itself is not hard - except for the gym each day - and the folk-dancing is grand fun. The girls from the village come up 3 times a week and they speak perfect English withal. After dancing one usually takes one's partner down to the Lakeside Pavilion where one can dance all evening for the price of a lager or a coffee; and twice a week they have a real lively hotcha carnival! We usually wandered into the college somewhere between 2 am. and 5 a.m.! The capital of Denmark, Copenhagen, is simply marvellous and I am certain that Paris cannot possibly beat it for fun, lager, women or brightness with cheapness. You can have a wonderful steak, chips and all the accessories of a mixed grill plus music, ~~a~~ cabaret shows (first-class) and dancing all for about 2/3.!

Our particular gang, which consisted of those from the N/C boat, gradually accumulated a crowd of further satellites and our room became like a glorified common room. I could seldom find a comfortable seat on my own bed! One fellow joined us who was a Norwegian and who joined the course as he happened to be taking a holiday in the district. He looked about 18 and was actually 31 and apparently he had sunk every penny he possessed and could borrow in starting an academy for Physical Training conducted by himself on his

own lines. A system of P.T. more or less based on the modern German but very much his own. He was very supple indeed & could do a flick flack after one try. He had never seen that agility before, nor had he done a Hand or Head or Fly-Spring. His place was a failure the first year but following a commission to train the Oslo Football team his fame grew & grew and now he works - or worked - from 8 a.m. till 11 p.m. with about 400 pupils a day, mostly women by day & men at night. He was very generous in taking us car rides and buying expensive wines at the Lake Pavilion and he gave us a good night in the low quarters of bops: on our last night there. I also made a friend of the Minister of Phys. Ed. for Drag. who turned up at Frederesborg for two days. I put him in touch with Wilson in London and Major in Leeds for his visit to England.

I have joined the Swinton Park Golf Club here, at which Tom Collings is professional and up to now I have been treated very well. I am playing some amazing golf recently and managed to get around in 3 over bogey last Sat. My driving is colossal! I've never hit the ball so far in my life and at some of the bogey & holes I've been up near the green with my drive. At the long hole I've repeatedly reached the green in two, at a hole measuring full 504 yards. I got a three at our last hole which is somewhere about 470 yards. I was over the green in two at a 492 yd hole. How's that? Blame your driver! Two of the Heads play on the course and being long handip men they think my golf is marvellous which is all to the good. Also I have been very lucky in meeting a director of the firm for whom I used to work in M/cr. (Sir. G. Armitage & Sons Ltd.) and he and his wife have "adopted" me and I've already been twice to dinner at their house. They are rather lonely now that their two sons have gone to South Africa. Apparently he has been spreading my alleged prowess among his cronies at the mill as it has come back to me indirectly.

I nearly killed one of the Directors of Ed. (for Eccles) with an extra long drive last Sat. morning so I will have to cultivate this means of approach!

I had quite a nice letter from Major yesterday. By the way, allow me to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your successes with M.I.H. and Carnegie. What the hell were you worrying about? I am amazed at some of the failures! Reid, Adler (yes!), Thomas, Keen (!)

What did you think of Ralph's impressive array of Stinkers? What about my anatomy distinction?

Well I must finish this off now in order to catch the post-tram, but first let me send my kindest regards to Mary and hope that the two of you are safely married very soon. I will keep you on the straight & narrow. Now's the 1/2 litre M.G. materialising. I'm getting a Morris 8. two seater tourer.

Cheerio.

Jack;

Please write long & soon.