

# A Surgeon in the Sudan

The letters of EWT Morris, FRCS, 1930-1943

address all letters etc to  
40 Post master  
Khartoum  
as I now have a private mail bag.

Source Yubu  
28.2.32.

dear Family

There's been a long gap since my last letter, but this is the 1<sup>st</sup> mail out since I arrived. We get mails once a fortnight if lucky, & even then, but for a chance car or lorry they ~~the~~ have to be brought the last 120 miles by corries. I got two letters from you which came down in the boat with me & haven't had a mail since, but there should be one tomorrow. I'll start off by trying to give you a rough idea of the new job & this place. Geographically - If you look on the map of the Sudan Almanac which I think I left you; you'll see a place called TAMBURA in Southern Bahr-el-Ghazal. Practically due S. of this Source YUBU (unmarked on the map) lies on the border of Sudan & French Equatorial Africa, this is about 30 miles up this border from the point where Sudan F.E.A. & Belgian Congo meet. The boundary is about 200 yds from my house. Thereabouts the boundary is marked by a ridge like hule-Eule divide & the heads of numerous

Compiled and edited by Nicholas Morris, 2019

- saw signallers at work. They really are clever and can send and receive messages in English by helio across 15 or so miles, although they know no English except for the alphabet. (17.2.31)
- a custom called duffering: a number of horsemen get some way from the crowd then gallop flat out at the crowd, reining their horses back on their haunches a few feet from the crowd. Someone hadn't got control of his pony and ran into the child. She has a fractured clavicle. (27.4.31)
- I had to buy stores and drink for a year. (21.1.32)
- The centre of an aerodrome is usually marked by a white circle and the local worthies, instead of painting a circle had made it of large white-washed rocks which Ritchie didn't notice until he was right on top of it. (26.1.32)
- He told me that he had left London only last Tuesday in a small monoplane. He's done in six days solo flying a journey that took me 31 days, and his machine had only cost him £400 new - less than you paid for your car. (12.11.33)
- a dozen assorted hardy rose trees ... left Nairobi on the morning of the 30<sup>th</sup> and reached here having come the last 140 miles by bicycle in 36 hours. The cost inclusive of packing, which was very well done, and freight by air from Nairobi to Juba - over 800 miles - was only 34/- the lot. (6.1.34)
- One would as soon think of drawing someone else's ant hill as one would of poaching his pheasants. On a night after rain one may see the bush alive with twinkling points of fire - the torches of the ant gatherers. (9.5.34)
- I was sitting on the bank with a small boy watching a croc in the pool when suddenly a fresh water turtle made quite a commotion in the shallows near the far bank. I asked the boy if he was being chased by the croc. "No," said the boy, "the croc is the turtle's younger brother and so he wouldn't chase him". (22.3.35)
- Just been given a young lion cub. (14.4.35)
- He has got together a herd of 13 cows and heifers in calf for me and also two Dinka herdsmen and I am going to try and start a small dairy here. (25.4.35)
- Had news that an old woman who lived in the settlement, named Umm Mustafa, had died. She had been captured as a slave when a child and was in Omdurman all through the Mahadia and saw her two sons killed when O fell on the reconquest of the Sudan. She must have been 80 or more and was a cheerful old woman. (19.5.35)
- Just outside old Mongalla we saw more elephant than I think I've ever seen before - during the course of Thursday morning we must have seen 400-500. (17.12.36)
- The tribesmen rode by in rows of ten tribe by tribe. About half rode camels and the other half horses. The tribal sheiks rode at the head of their tribe on horses with magnificently decorated bridles, breastplates and saddle cloths, elaborately worked in coloured and silver and gold threads. They were preceded by their ceremonial copper drums mounted on decorated camels. The whole thing was most colourful and impressive. It took about four hours to get through. (14.2.37)
- Found that the ponies had arrived from Wau. They look very fit considering they've walked over 1,000 miles in six weeks. (19.3.37)
- trying to dig small bits of bomb splinters out of a POW, an Eritrean (10.3.41)

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## Abbreviations

ADC	Assistant District Commissioner
AdC	Aide-de-camp
B el G	Bahr el Ghazal Province - Source Yubu was in this province, which was incorporated into Mongalla Province in 1935
CMS	Church Missionary Service
CSF	Cerebrospinal fluid
DC	District Commissioner
DH	Dispensary Hakim - Sudanese medical assistant
FEA	French Equatorial Africa
FRCS	Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons
GG	Governor-General
GWF	General Welfare Fund (wartime charity - Tom was treasurer in Wad Medani)
LAC	Leading aircraftman (Royal Air Force)
MI	Medical Inspector
MO	Medical Officer
NCO	Non-commissioner officer
OP	Outpatient
op	Operation
PM	Post-mortem
PO	Post office
POW	Prisoner of war
PT	Piastre - 1/100 of an Egyptian pound (the official currency of the Sudan at this time, worth slightly more than a UK pound)
PWD	Public Works Department
SDF	Sudan Defence Force
SGS	Sudan Government Service
SMI	Senior Medical Inspector
SMS	Sudan Medical Service
SPS	Sudan Political Service
SS	Sleeping sickness
SVS	Sudan Veterinary Service
TB	Tuberculosis
UNP	Upper Nile Province



## Outline of the life of EWT (Tom) Morris

1899	Born in Adelaide, South Australia
1918-19	Military service with Australian Imperial Force
1926	Qualified as a doctor at St Thomas' Hospital, London
1929-30	Medical Inspector, Port Sudan/Suakin, Kassala, Kadugli
1930-31	Medical Inspector, Kordofan
1932-36	Medical Inspector, Source Yubu
1935	Obtained FRCS while on leave in London
1936	Senior Medical Inspector, Wau
1937-40	Senior Medical Inspector, El Fasher
1938	Married Margaret (Peg) Orr-Paterson
1940-44	Senior Medical Inspector, Wad Medani
1944-49	Senior Surgeon and Lecturer in Anatomy, Khartoum
1949-65	Lecturer then Reader in Anatomy, St Thomas' Hospital
1965-67	Professor of Anatomy, University of Khartoum
1968-93	Lecturer in Anatomy and researcher, University of St Andrews
1995	Died in St Andrews (death precipitated by successfully push-starting the family car)

## Some of those mentioned in the letters

<b>Abu Shamma</b>	Sudanese MO who replaced Baz in Source Yubu
<b>Acland, Peter &amp; Bridget</b>	Peter (SPS) and Tom served in the same province on three occasions
<b>Arbuthnot, ED</b>	ADC Yambio for much of the time Tom was in Source Yubu
<b>Atkey, Oliver</b>	Director of the SMS from 1922-33
<b>Baz, Nasib</b>	Syrian Senior MO at Source Yubu, retired May 1934
<b>Beveridge, CEG</b>	Provincial Medical Inspector in Wad Medani from 1942-44. Peg travelled to Australia in 1940 with his wife
<b>Bollard, Eddie &amp; Grace</b>	Eddie was PWD District Engineer when Tom was in El Fasher
<b>Boustead, Hugh</b>	Second-in-command of the Camel Corps when Tom was in Kadugli in 1931 and DC Zalingei when Tom was in El Fasher
<b>Brock, RGC</b>	Governor in Wau when Tom was in Source Yubu
<b>Crouch, Charles &amp; Helen</b>	Charles was Assistant Director (Public Health), SMS
<b>Cruickshank, Alex</b>	Tom's predecessor in Source Yubu. Married Tom's sister in 1943

<b>Fitzwilliams, Gerald</b>	Surgeon and big game hunter, stayed with Tom in Source Yubu in July 1932
<b>Gore, Canon &amp; Mrs EC</b>	Based at the mission in Yambio, authorities on the Zande.
<b>Goss, F Hennessy</b>	Provincial Medical Inspector in Wad Medani until 1942
<b>Henderson, Bill</b>	Army officer, wounded in spring 1941, friend of Tom's
<b>Hillary, M &amp; E</b>	Michael and Edwina were family friends from Adelaide. He was Director of Accounts in the Finance Department and later Auditor-General
<b>Ingleson, Phil &amp; Gwen</b>	Phil succeeded Brock as Governor in Wau and was Governor in El Fasher while Tom was there
<b>Jabbour</b>	Syrian Senior MO at Source Yubu until October 1932, then at Rangu
<b>Kemal E Abou Soud</b>	'Pengue', Syrian MO at Rangu
<b>Larken, PM</b>	DC Yambio 1911-32
<b>Macphail, JGS</b>	ADC En Nahud when Tom was in Kordofan, DC Malakal 1933-39 then DC Atbara, travelling companion to Kenya in 1941
<b>Menzies, Tom</b>	Senior Veterinary Inspector, El Fasher
<b>Morris, Dora</b>	'Ginger' or 'G', Tom's sister, who visited him in the Sudan
<b>Nalder, LF</b>	Governor, Juba, 1930-36
<b>Nasr, Joseph E Tamous</b>	Syrian MO at Source Yubu
<b>Osman</b>	Tom's cook in El Fasher and Wad Medani
<b>Pillet, M</b>	French DC of FEA district adjoining Source Yubu
<b>Pridie, Eric</b>	Director of the SMS from 1933-45
<b>Poole, Jack</b>	ADC Tonj 1929-36. Invited Wyndham to visit the Sudan
<b>Salatian</b>	Syrian MO at Source Yubu
<b>Sullivan, RS</b>	Inspector of Agriculture in Meridi when Tom was in Source Yubu
<b>Sutherland, JH</b>	Big game hunter who died in Source Yubu in June 1932
<b>Thesiger, Wilfred</b>	ADC Kutum when Tom was in El Fasher
<b>Titherington, GW</b>	'Tithers', ADC Kadugli when Tom was there
<b>Tunncliffe, EC (Bill)</b>	SPS, married Alison Wyld, Tiger Wyld's sister
<b>Woodman, Hugh</b>	Medical Inspector at Rangu
<b>Wyld, Tiger &amp; Mika</b>	Tiger took over from Larken as DC Yambio
<b>Wyndham, Richard</b>	Author of <i>The Gentle Savage</i> , an account of his travels in southern Sudan in 1935

## Introduction

My father ("Tom" hereafter) worked for the Sudan Medical Service from 29 December 1929 to 1949. This is his account, as set out in his letters, of some of that experience. We – his family – have letters that he wrote to his parents in Adelaide, Australia, covering most of the period from early 1930 to May 1937, including several written while on leave in the UK. We have almost all the letters he wrote home between February 1932 and January 1936, when he was stationed in Source Yubu, a sleeping sickness settlement in the extreme south-west of the country, on the border with what was then French Equatorial Africa (now the Central African Republic) and some 30 miles north of where the borders of Sudan, FEA and the Belgian Congo (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo) met. In his first letter from Source Yubu (28 February 1932), Tom described his work, and wrote that the settlement is almost like a small republic, being largely self-supporting.

While on leave in 1938, Tom married Margaret Isobel née Orr-Paterson, ("Peg" hereafter), and they sailed for the Sudan two days after their wedding. In September 1940, Peg had to leave the Sudan because she was pregnant. I have included extracts from the letters she wrote to Tom while travelling through the Sudan and Egypt on her way to her in-laws in Adelaide, where I was born in March 1941. The war prevented Peg from travelling back to the Sudan with me until July 1943. During their 34-month separation, Peg and Tom wrote to each other almost daily; each resulting letter generally covered at least a week. They numbered their letters. We have nearly all the 180 letters that Peg wrote to Tom but, of his 150 letters to her, we have only the 24 that he wrote between 5 March and 13 August 1941, and two and an unfinished letter from 1943.

Tom usually began his letters to his parents by answering questions they had asked in their letters to him and by covering family business. He then gave an account of his daily doings, drawing on a diary that he kept (we do not have any of these diaries). I have transcribed this account and the answers to his parents that concern his life in the Sudan.

The larger places most frequently mentioned in the letters are shown on the maps herein. His letters from Source Yubu mention place names that I have not been able to locate, and his spelling of them was not always consistent. Some were unlikely to have been shown on even the largest-scale map. Sheet 77-K "Tambura" (March 1932) of the Sudan 1:250,000 maps in the Sudan Archive covers the area, and SAD-627-6-24\_25.pdf has diagrammatic sketches of the roads in the Tambura and Yambio sub-districts in the mid-1950s, also showing rest houses and courts.

Much of the content of his letters to Peg during their separation was of course personal, and how and when they could be reunited was a constant theme. He also gave an account of his daily doings. This account was written at the time or soon thereafter, rather than re-created from a diary. I have transcribed this account and those of his responses to Peg's letters that concern his life in the Sudan and the progress of the war.

There are many repetitions in his account of his life: "hospital as usual" or the equivalent occurs almost daily. Except where there is duplication, for example the same event described similarly in different parts of a letter, or occasionally in consecutive letters, I have left these. I have corrected obvious mistakes and errors. Otherwise editing has been light,

with the aim of clarifying things that would have been obvious to his parents or Peg at the time but are no longer self-evident.

My explanatory text is in italics; within the letters there are some brief clarifications inside square brackets.

### *References*

The Sudan Archive at Durham University has been an invaluable source of information. I have also drawn on the following:

*A History of Medical Services in Sudan* by Siddiq Ibrahim Khalil (printed in Great Britain by Amazon, 2018), for information about the Sudan Medical Service and those who served in it;

*Shadows on the Sand: The Memoirs of Sir Gawain Bell* (C Hurst and Company, London, 1983), for an account of life as a member of the Sudan Political Service. He took up his first assignment in Kassala Province under a year after Tom left the province, and followed him to Kordofan. The book has vivid character sketches of some of those who feature in Tom's letters;

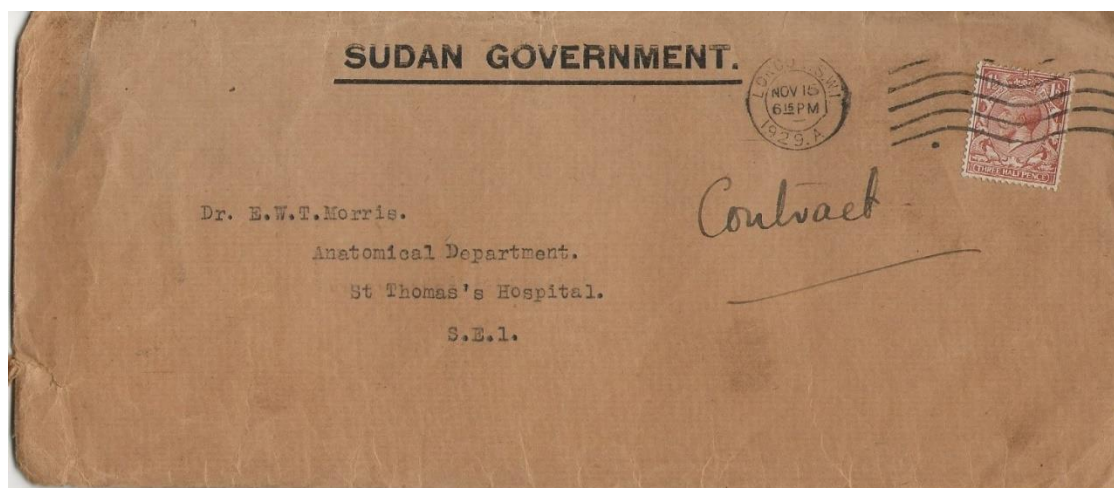
*The Kindling Fire: Medical Adventures in Southern Sudan* by Alexander Cruickshank (William Heinemann Ltd, London, 1963), for descriptions of a life similar to that of Tom;

*Itchy Feet – A Doctor's Tale* by Alexander Cruickshank (Arthur H Stockwell Ltd, Ilfracombe, 1991). This draws on the same sources as *The Kindling Fire* but includes an account of how he came to marry Tom's sister in 1943, from which I quote;

*The Gentle Savage: A Sudanese Journey in the Province of Bahr-el-Ghazal, commonly called "The Bog"* by Richard Wyndham (Cassell and Company, London, 1936). Chapter III of Part IV, "A Sleeping Sickness Settlement" (pp 200-207), describes his stay with Tom in Source Yubu in 1935. Some of those mentioned in Tom's letters feature in the book, but, like Tom, not under their true names. Tom's letters describe staying with Richard Wyndham while on leave in the UK in the autumn of 1935.

### *Acknowledgement*

I am most grateful to Francis Gotto, the Archivist responsible for the Sudan Archive at Durham University Library, for his assistance and advice in the preparation of this document.



## Adelaide to the Sudan

*Edward Walter Talwin Morris was born in Adelaide, South Australia, on 18 December 1899. He was known as, and signed himself, Tom. He enlisted as a private in the Australian Imperial Force on 21 January 1918. This required his parents' written authorization, and his army records contain a stamp "Minor, not to embark before 18.6.18". He embarked on HMAT Boonah on 22 October 1918 but did not see active service, being discharged on 23 January 1919. While on the troopship Boonah he caught Spanish 'flu, which it was feared he would not survive. An annotation dated 18 January 1919 on his medical records reads "Severe 'flu three weeks ago". After the war he resumed the medical studies that he had begun before enlisting. His parents had meanwhile moved to London, where from 1919 to 1926 his father was the Chief Medical Officer at Australia House, responsible for the medical clearance of those wishing to emigrate to Australia. Like his father, Tom was a keen horseman and frequent racegoer. Concerned at reports from Australia that Tom was putting his social and sporting life ahead of medicine, his father arranged for Tom to come to London and continue his medical studies at St Thomas', where he qualified in 1926.*

*Tom stayed in the UK after his parents returned to Adelaide. His plan had been to return to Australia after obtaining his fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons. He obtained his membership in June 1929. A consultant at St Thomas' drew his attention to an announcement seeking doctors for the Sudan Medical Service (SMS), and on 31 October 1929 Tom wrote to his father that he had*

at last made a definite move towards settling my future. A vacancy has just occurred in the Sudan Medical Service which they offered me and which I have accepted. They really wanted someone to go out at once but I said I certainly would not go before the Final [FRCS exam, which he failed] so they cabled Khartoum to know if towards the end of December would be soon enough and to this they have agreed.

Before doing this I had a talk with Thompson the Medical Secretary who has been in the Sudan and who said it was a good show, and with Dr Hodson<sup>1</sup> who has recently returned from the post of Director of the Sudan Medical Service, who thoroughly recommended it. I will now give you some idea of the conditions.

You start as a Medical Inspector of which there are 28 (all English). At first you are under one of the Senior MIs, who is in charge of a province. After a short time at this, you are given a province and have under you a number of native MOs. At the chief town of the province there is a hospital of which you have control and to which you act as consulting surgeon, physician and gynaecologist. You have to travel about the province supervising the work of your native MOs, irrigation and anti-malaria schemes etc. There is apparently quite good scope for surgery.

Later there are five senior posts to which one may rise: A. Director of Medical Service; B. Senior Surgeon, Khartoum Hospital; C. Senior Physician, Khartoum Hospital; D. Assistant Director; E. Medical Officer of Health.

You are taken on for a probationary period of two years after which you may be taken into the service proper.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr VS Hodson arrived in the Sudan in 1903 and played a major role in the establishment of what became the SMS. He retired as Director of the Khartoum and Omdurman Civil Hospitals in 1924.

## Pay

*He gives details of the start salary, £E 720 per annum, the increases and the salary range for the senior posts: A-C £E 1,500 – 2,000; D&E £E 1,200 – 1,750, and in a much later annotation wrote “I only got a max of £1,750 as Senior Surgeon”.*

Your increase in pay is subject to passing an exam on Arabic at the end of two years.

## Extra allowances

Travelling and sustenance when away from the chief town of province; garage; tropical allowance in certain parts of Southern Sudan; contribution to passage when going on leave; you are later called upon to give lectures in Khartoum Medical School at rate of 12/- per lecture. You may also be appointed Medical Registrar to the School at an extra allowance of £E 250 in addition to salary.

## Pension

At rate of 1/48 of your last year's salary for each year of service.

*On the basis of the lowest retiring salary after 20 years' service, he calculates his pension would be £E 500 p.a.*

You contribute 5% of annual income to pension.

## Retirement

At end of 7 years - with gratuity; at end of 12 years if for ill health - with pension; at end of 15 years - with pension; you may be compulsory retired at 50.

## Leave

First, at the end of 18 months when they may send you on 3 months leave on full pay and say they do not want you back or four months leave and return at end.

After that, 90 days leave for each year's service which as far as exigencies of service allow is given annually. There is also study leave.

Private practice is allowed in certain parts so long as it does not interfere with one's work.

The cost of living is cheap, servants are good and there are excellent opportunities for big game shooting, tennis, polo in certain parts, and fishing.

This I think will give you a fair idea of the conditions. I know several men in the Service already - Humphries<sup>2</sup>, Clifford Drew<sup>3</sup> and Elliot Smith. I shall be able to spend my leave equally well in either Australia or England. I think it will be a way of employing myself which should be interesting if not as remunerative as private practice and will relieve you of any financial responsibility. If I'm in a decent spot you may come and stay with me on your way home to England.

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<sup>2</sup> RM Humphreys. He joined the Service in 1921 and was appointed Senior Physician in 1930, a post he held until retirement in 1944.

<sup>3</sup> CB Drew (d. 1970). He joined the Service in 1929 and was Director of the Ministry of Health from 1951 until his retirement in 1953.

Tom's contract as Medical Inspector is dated 14 November 1929 and provides for a salary of Egyptian £720 per year, starting from the date of his arrival in Port Sudan. The contract was for a 24-month probationary period,

at the expiration of which the parties hereto contemplate that the official shall be permanently employed by the Government, subject to the Government being satisfied of his observance and performance of the conditions hereof and his ability and suitability for such employment.

The Sudan was officially the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium, but it was in many ways only Anglo from late 1924, when, after serious unrest, all Egyptian troops were withdrawn and the Sudan Defence Force (SDF) was formed with the British officers and the Sudanese troops of the previous Anglo-Egyptian Army. It was always understood that the Sudan would eventually become independent, and expatriates were not allowed to purchase land: almost all the expatriate community were either working for the government or servicing its needs.

The forerunner of the SMS was the Civil Medical Service, created in 1904. Before then all senior medical posts were filled by British officers of the Egyptian Army, seconded from the Royal Army Medical Corps. Junior posts were filled by Syrian doctors, who continued to play a key role in the SMS. From the 1930s they were gradually replaced by Sudanese doctors. In 1909 there were six British and 30 Syrian doctors in the medical service, but there was no expansion until after the First World War when numbers increased slowly. Seven British doctors joined from 1919-23, two of whom were replacements, and three in 1924, including Alexander Cruikshank, who was to marry Tom's sister in 1943. The Kitchener School of Medicine was founded in Khartoum in 1924 and the first seven students graduated in 1928 and joined what was now the SMS. From 1925-9 there were 25 new appointments of British doctors to the SMS, which was taking over areas previously covered by the military. However, over the same period the establishment only increased from 24 to 32: some of the British doctors did not stay long.

Tom reached the Sudan on the 29<sup>th</sup> December 1929. His first posting was to Port Sudan and the quarantine station for pilgrims to Mecca at Suakin, on the Red Sea coast some 60 km south of Port Sudan, where there was a small hospital. From Suakin he moved to Kassala, a town in eastern Sudan, close to the border with what was then Abyssinia. The first letters we have cover the period from 12 April to 27 October 1930, when he was still in Kassala. The next letter we have is from Kadugli, some 580 km SW of Khartoum, near the Nuba Mountains. The diary therein starts on 7 December 1929.

The envelopes were addressed to Tom's mother in Adelaide and the letters begin "Dear Family" to include his younger sister, Ginger (his younger brother, John, was living in the UK).





## SUDAN GOVERNMENT.

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2nd November, 1929.

Reference No. L.O. 3001.4/20

Subject Medical Inspector, S.M.S.

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 31st October and confirm your appointment as Medical Inspector in the Sudan Medical Service, at starting rate of pay of £2,720 per annum.

I understand from Dr. Hodson that you have been passed medically fit for service in the Sudan.

I enclose four copies of the contract which please sign, have witnessed, and return to me together with form 63 filled in where marked; the alteration in Clauses 8 and 9 of the contract must be initialled on the left hand side. When the Contracts have been countersigned by me, one copy will be forwarded to you for retention.

I enclose suggested list of Kit and other notes of information, together with a copy of the Sudan Almanac, 1929, which is issued on payment to all newly-appointed officials and I shall be glad to have your remittance for 1/3d to cover this. Special attention is directed to the health notes on pages 113 to 120.

Before proceeding to the Sudan it is necessary for you to be inoculated and vaccinated. Full instructions for this will be sent you in a day or two.

Will you please let me have a certified copy of your Birth Certificate, at your early convenience, as this is required for record purposes in the Sudan.

A first class passage will be arranged for you, by this office, about the middle of December; both particulars and definite date will be sent you in a separate communication.

Yours faithfully,

*H. Charlton*  
for Controller,  
Sudan Government London Office.

*Birth Cert: in Australia  
will be sent direct to Sudan*

Dr. E.W.T. Morris,  
Anatomical Department,  
St. Thomas's Hospital,  
LONDON. S. E. 1.

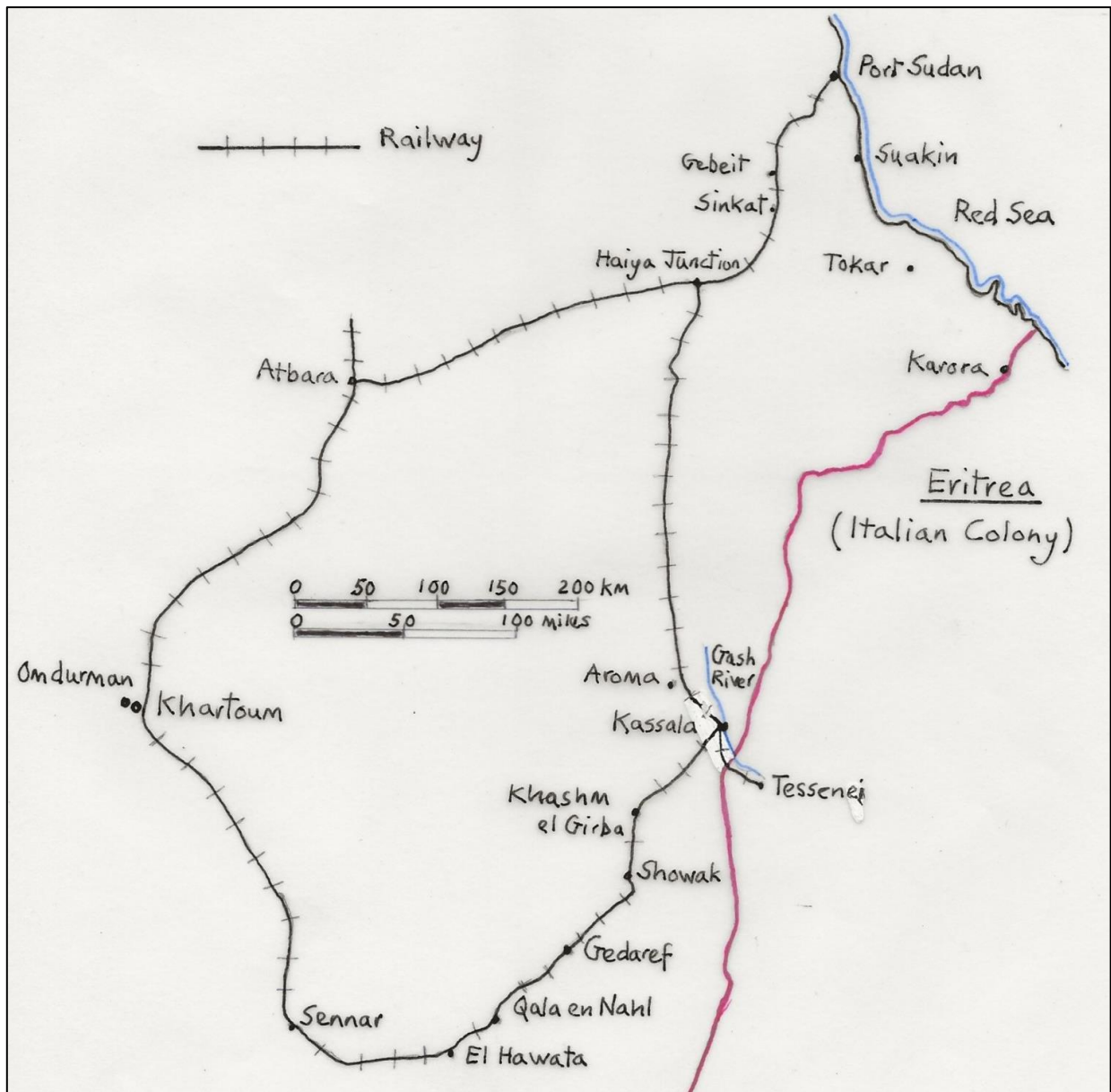
Letter of appointment





Map 1 - The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan

## 1930 - Port Sudan, Suakin, Kassala, Kadugli



Map 2 - Eastern Sudan

### Suakin, 9 May 1930

Over 50 years later, Tom annotated the top of the first page "This letter contains an account of a trek south of Suakin in the Red Sea foothills [Tokar] down to the Eritrean border [Karora] with "Babs" Wallis, the ADC Tokar."

It's been a while since I wrote to you but I will try to tell you something about the trek. Wallis,<sup>4</sup> the ADC, the hazir or ruler of the Beni Amer and two or three sheiks to attend him, a sergeant of police and four police, servants, camel men etc made up a party of about 24 men and 27 camels. W and I calculated that if we had had the Governor-General with us we would have needed 80 camels.

<sup>4</sup> EJN Wallis, joined SPS 1923.

We started off the hamla (i.e. the baggage party, a baggage camel is called a hamla camel) at 6 a.m. on the morning of the 12<sup>th</sup> [April] for a place about 20 miles from Tokar called Gundereneit Wells. W and I drove out after lunch in the lorry and got to the wells about 5 p.m. where we discovered the hazir and his party waiting for us and the hamla arrived soon after.

Note [on top of page] One usually does about 20 miles a day, 10-12 in the morning and 8-10 in the afternoon. A camel will do 2-5 mph according to the country.

The first night they were a bit strange to it and it took them longer than it should to put up tents etc. However, we eventually had our baths and dinner after which we sent for the hazir to come and drink coffee with us – we found this a most suitable arrangement as it enabled us to entertain him and at the same time discuss our plans for the next day. He practically regulated the itinerary as it was all his country through which we went.

Next morning, 13<sup>th</sup>, we got up at 4.45 a.m., had a cup of tea out of a thermos whilst we shaved and dressed and then had breakfast and then moved off at about 6 a.m. This we did as a routine every day. Our object was to go through the heart of the hills and eventually to arrive at Karora on the border of the Sudan and Eritrea. The camel paths in these hills usually follow the bottoms of the valleys, in most of which are stream beds filled with flood water in the rains but dry for the rest of the year. They are known as khors – the kh is pronounced like the end of Scottish loch. The wells are usually in the beds of the khors and so of course are flooded and usually fill up with muck every flood.

We went roughly south along a khor for 2 ½ hours – a single journey is called a shid and one usually does two shids a day, a morning and afternoon one. We arrived at a small village and decided to spend the rest of the day there. W and I and the hazir, one of his sheiks, a guide, the sergeant and a policeman usually formed the advance party and the rest followed with the hamla. We used to carry two deck chairs with us to sit on under the shade of a bush or tree until the hamla arrived, which they usually did after half-an-hour or so, according to the length of the shid. The Beni Amer are nomads, they do no cultivation and their subsistence is composed of flocks of goats, sheep, cattle (rather like Indian humped cattle with big dewlaps) and camels. They move from pasturage to pasturage taking their houses – composed of strips of matting stretched over poles – with them.

The khor we had been travelling up is Bashballa. We stopped at about 8.30 and waited for the hamla. On their arrival the tents were put up and we had a dish of tea. After lunch W and I climbed to the top of a neighbouring hill, partly for exercise and partly to try and take some bearings to establish our position on the map. On return I saw about ten sick. I travel with two petrol cases containing stock mixtures, pills, a few surgical instruments etc. Then we had baths and tea and sat and talked until dinner. The sunsets here are beautiful, sometimes splashes of crude and vivid colours behind the plum-coloured hills in the foreground and sometimes the most delicate pastel tints and small fleecy clouds. We had dinner in the open by moonlight.

The next morning – 14<sup>th</sup> – we got underway as usual at 6 a.m. and continuing down the khor. We stopped at some stone ruins: nine buildings in a line about 20 ft high, square at the base and suddenly tapering to a narrow neck, rather like a square bottle, built of flat stones and plastered with small holes in the centre. They look as though they might have been either ovens or tombs. Nobody seemed to know what they were or who built them. It

was suggested that they might have been Egyptian as Ptolemy the Great was known to have sent expeditions down here for his elephants, which inhabited these hills long ago.

We then crossed into another khor and after about a three-hour shid, stopped at some wells for the midday rest. W and I walked over and inspected the wells at which the men were watering their cattle which they do by drawing the water up in skin buckets and pouring it into little shallow ponds which they make by building up little walls of clay. The women were filling their water skins. We then walked back and I saw some sick, after which we had lunch and moved off again at 2 p.m. After a two-hour shid we arrived at another village where we spent the night.

On arrival you are usually greeted by the sheik of the village and his followers who come out to the camp and solemnly shake hands all round, wish blessing on you and enquire after your health, all of which you do in turn. Although they are for the most part very smelly, as they dress their hair with rancid mutton fat, they have a lot of natural dignity; they neither cringe nor are they familiar and they have quite a sense of humour. I don't think we stayed at a single village for the night where the sheik did not send us a present of a sheep for food.

I saw a few sick that evening after which W and I went for a walk. The next morning - 15<sup>th</sup> - we had intended to leave at 6 but so many sick turned up that we decided to stay until the afternoon. The majority of them had not seen a doctor for some time, if ever, so I used to get a lot of chronics as well as the newer cases, an awful lot of trachoma and conjunctivitis. These people don't speak Arabic but a lingo of their own called Bedawie, so I had to have an interpreter. A patriarchal old man would totter up and I would ask the interpreter what was the matter. This would be followed by a spate of Bedawie and then Idrees would usually turn to me and say "Gambak begool wajani fi sidou fit butnu min zayman." Your Excellency he says he has a pain in his chest and stomach for a very long time. This was so common that it became almost a war cry with W and me. The appropriate treatment was then administered - usually a whacking great dose of salts.

We packed up and moved off that afternoon at 2 p.m. and moved into another khor two hours away where we found Sheik Global, one of the hazir's officers, collecting taxes, a cheery fat little man full of fun. He came with the hazir to coffee after dinner. The next morning - 16<sup>th</sup> - I started seeing sick at 6, and so to breakfast after which I saw sick at intervals up till the time of leaving at 2 p.m. We continued down this khor for about 2 ½ hours when we came to a flat grassy plateau at the side of the khor with some native graves in one corner. W and I suggested camping here but the hazir wanted to push on, most probably because he didn't like the idea of our camping near the graves. So we went up a small side khor for two or three miles where we found a small village in the bed of the khor, from which the sides of the valley rose steeply.

We made camp on a small flat space on the hill side above the village. This was the prettiest place we'd been to so far, the little narrow green valley surrounded by hills and mountains looked quite like Exmoor, and it was very pleasant to sit in our camp in the cool of the evening and look at the view all round and the village at our feet, with the smoke rising from its fires and the noise of the returning herds of goats, cattle, donkeys and the cries of the shepherds as they drove them into the zaribas [enclosures made of thorn bushes] coming up on the still evening air.

We spent the next morning (17<sup>th</sup>) there seeing sick before and after breakfast and left at 2 p.m., going immediately over a pass into the next khor. Coming down the far side of the pass we arrived in a beautiful gully green with fern and grass and wooded with trees like mountain ash, which often met together over the path. If one had not been on a camel one could not have believed one was in Africa, it was so like an Exmoor coomb. We came out into the bed of a small broad khor and rounding a bend I had my first sight of baboons, a large tribe of them about 100 or more, playing in the grass. Great big grandfathers with enormous manes and tiny babies sitting on their mothers' backs. They made off up the hill side as we arrived, barking defiance at us. We stopped and watched for a bit.

The place we stopped at for the night was quite unlike the last, a huge basin ringed with rugged hills covered with stunted bushes, but equally attractive in its way. I forgot to tell you that the night before the sheik had come and asked for some poison for the hyenas, so we doctored some meat he brought with strychnine. The hyenas are bad in the hills, they take sheep and goats and will even rip the side out of a sleeping camel. Next morning there was great excitement as two hyenas had taken bait and one had been sick near a well. The problem was had he been sick into the well also, and if so, was there enough strychnine in his vomit to poison the well, and had he or the other one been sick into either of the other two wells? To be on the safe side W and I told them to bail out the three wells. This was not as serious as it sounds as they were only holes dug in the bed of the khor down to water level, and containing only a few gallons which was soon replaced, and they were more than glad to be rid of two hyenas.

18<sup>th</sup> - Up at dawn and started to see sick and had finished by breakfast after which we moved off again and did a silly little shid of about  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour, the hazir's idea, which peeved W and me - hardly worth packing up and unpacking for. We filled up with water from a well as we would not be near water again until the following night. I saw a few sick and we moved off again at 2 p.m. and after a longish shid arrived at a flat grassy plain in the midst of the hills where we spent the night.

19<sup>th</sup> - Saw a few sick this morning before getting under way at 6 a.m., got to the midday halt at about 9. No people to see here so we started off again at 2 p.m. and did the longest shid so far, about 3  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours and part of it rough going. The latter bit up a pretty valley with large trees shading small isolated pools in the bed of the khor, was in the prettiest spot we'd had so far, with the sides of the valley rising tall and steep. In the afternoon we passed a spot with graves which the people call "the battleground" and is the place where many years ago, before the Mahdist rising, a section on the Hadendoa, another fuzzy tribe, fell on a section of the Beni Amer in the night. Both sides were completely wiped out with only the women and children remaining.

20<sup>th</sup> - Easter Day. W and I decided to spend the day here. I got up before 6 and saw some sick before breakfast and again afterwards. In the afternoon W and I decided to climb to the top of the pass at the head of the valley above our camp, where we were told we would get a good view right to the Eritrean border. We set off accompanied by three of the villagers - one old man with a long white beard, who must have been at least 60. The path was only a goat track and one often had to climb from rock to rock. It took us three hours to get to the top and I was never so tired in my life. We calculated when we got back that it must have been a good five miles and about 2,000 ft above the camp. When we got to the top the old man was fresh as a daisy, and one of the young men, when we were about 200

yards from the top, just to show how fresh he was, ran to the top leaping from rock to rock. He covered in less than a minute what it took me about seven laborious and aching minutes to do.

However, it was worth it as the view was magnificent: miles of country laid out before us with towering mountains in the distance. During the latter part of the climb the mountain side was covered with blue wildflowers, bushes of jasmine, and bushes exactly like rhododendrons but not in flower. On our way down there was a cluster of native tents on a shoulder of the mountain where we were offered a bowl of clear spring water. I don't think I have ever tasted such water before. When we got back I really appreciated W's trek mixture – a noggin of whisky in the tea. To bed early that night, dog tired but feeling very fit.

21<sup>st</sup> – Spent the morning seeing sick and moved at 2 p.m., at first retracing our way down the valley and so into another khor where we spent the night.

22<sup>nd</sup> – Got away at 6 after seeing two or three sick. During the morning trek I shot a good buck gazelle, the only shot I fired on the trek. We crossed a long rough pass of about three miles over which we had to lead our camels as it was too rough to ride, and so to the midday halt where we had gazelle steak for lunch, and very nice too. The afternoon shid took us to Aiet Wells, an attractive spot, a large plain at the foothills with lots of shady trees about and alive with guinea fowl, the most we'd seen so far, and very good eating they are too. Saw a few people here that night and the next morning.

23<sup>rd</sup> – The morning shid took us to Karora, a native village on the boundary of Eritrea (the Italian colony) and the Sudan. We have a police post there built of stone and on top of it a rest house of two rooms with a verandah between them. Across the bed of the khor, which marks the boundary here, is an Italian post in the charge of a native mamur (a sort of inspector). We spent the rest of that day reading mail which had come out to us by lorry from Tokar, inspecting the police and their camels and receiving a visit from the Italian mamur, a jolly fat native dressed up in a white uniform with stars and crowns all over it. W and I nearly burst when we were greeted with a pukka fascist salute, it was so unexpected and incongruous. We invited him to take tea with us the next day.

24<sup>th</sup> – We sent the lorry back to Tokar yesterday afternoon with two of the servants to buy more stores, and the hamla went off this morning early to await us in the foothills above Akik (pronounced Ageek). We had a lazy day, not getting up until breakfast. I saw various patients afterwards until lunch and we had the mamur to tea. The hazir left for Akik in the lorry yesterday where we will pick him up later.

25<sup>th</sup> – Another similar day, late rising and patients in the morning and the Kantabi, the ruler of a small independent tribe, to tea. A most amusing old man with a keen sense of humour and a very droll way of telling a story, with a most humorous wink every now and then.

26<sup>th</sup> – The lorry having returned from Tokar late last night, we set off for Akik, a small fishing village between here and Tokar. It took us about three hours to get there along quite a good road for the most part. A most attractive place with native houses clustered about the shore situated in a large bay dotted with small islands. We stayed at the rest house, two rooms built on top of an old Turkish fort now used as a police post, a most



picturesque whitewashed building. It was very acceptable to have fresh fish again after trek food. The hazir joined us again – he has one of his several houses here.

27<sup>th</sup> – Left after lunch and drove about six miles to where the hamla were camped. We then got straight on our camels and did a short shid towards the hills again. Camped near a village and saw a few sick that night.

28<sup>th</sup> – Away by 6 and trekked inland into the hills again, arriving quite near to the place where we spent the night of the 13<sup>th</sup>. Saw sick that afternoon.

29<sup>th</sup> – Saw sick again this morning and started off by another route for the place we started off from. This shid took us back onto the plain again, and the next morning – 30<sup>th</sup> – our first shid took us back to the place near the road where we left the lorry on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Here we parted company with the hamla and the hazir and drove into Tokar. I put all my baggage into the car as I didn't want to wait for the hamla to get back to Tokar.

1<sup>st</sup> May – Set off at 6 a.m. for Port Sudan and had quite a good lorry this time but not such a good car as I had coming up. I had an old sheik in the car with me, we saw him on trek and he had cataract in both eyes and was nearly blind, so I said I would take him to Port Sudan and operate on him. I debated whether I should put him in the lorry or take him in the car – my well-known softness of heart prompted the latter much to my regret. He was car sick all the way. It was a filthy journey, blowing a hubbabbiah into our faces all the way. I stopped for half-an-hour in Suakin to drink coffee and hear the news from our MO and then on to P Sudan.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> was spent partly in the usual round of work and tennis etc and partly in making arrangements for coming here [Suakin]. It would have filled you with delight to have seen me in the grocers ordering a month's stores, I who had no idea whether a pound of dried apricots would last me a week or a day. However we now seem to have a vast quantity of stuff. You would shriek to see me inspecting my kitchen to see that it is clean and listening to my cook tell me how much he spent in the suk (market) this morning. I who have no idea what's a fair price for fish and meat and chickens etc.



*Suakin*

I left P Sudan on the 9<sup>th</sup> by train by train which is by far the most comfortable way of getting here. The train leaves at 9.30 and takes a little over two hours, just nice time for one's cook to cook breakfast and you to eat it. I shall be here until 1<sup>st</sup> August as far as I know at present. There is a rumour that I shall then go to Khartoum, but whether permanently or just for a short time I don't know. Well that's that, and it seems awfully long.

Now to answer some of your questions. You said in one of your letters, mother, something about hiring furniture. Unfortunately, you can't do that here so that if at any time I've got to take a house I will have to buy some. My flat here is furnished with the bare necessities so I'm thinking of getting some rugs and cushions to brighten it up. I quite agree with you, my hotel bill is a bit steep, especially as it is a government show. It comes under Sudan Railways and Steamers and they slug the unfortunate private traveller 120 PT per day (about 25/-) but there is nowhere else to go unless I took up a house and that would have meant buying furniture. Of course I should love to have Ginge [his sister] if she can't go to Calcutta. It won't be nearly as bright for her of course unless I happened to be in Khartoum, when she might get some amusement, and anyway it would be a change for her. Of course if I happen to be sent south after here I don't think it would be much good her coming out. Directly I'm settled I'll let you know and you can decide.

(I have just been trying to tell my cook that I don't want such enormous lunches. His idea of lunch is cold soup, fish or curried egg or something like that, then a couple of grilled chops and vegetables etc or some other form of meat, followed by a sweet or savoury and cheese and coffee. I could see by the look in his eye that he thought I was quite made when I said I only wanted one dish and sweet or cheese.)

Sorry for the interruption. You say, Dad, that you hope I will apply for leave to fit in with taking the FRCS. I'm afraid that is not possible, one has to take leave when this is offered one, and if you don't take it then, you may not get another chance for several months. However, it looks as though I may get suitable leave in '31. I try to do as much reading as possible, but it is awfully hard to read after dinner at night - one promptly falls asleep. And of course the preparation for the Arabic exam requires much more work than one would realise. No, I didn't see your hypodermic at 63 [a house in England?] so far as I remember. I have two of my own which I have received from Downs. They're rather good and both in long metal cases containing absolute alcohol so that they're always sterile. Also a long round spirit-tight metal container with a sort of cruet stand arrangement in it containing a scalpel, dissecting forceps, Spenser-Wells [forceps], scissors probe, skin needles and tube of catgut, all also in alcohol: awfully useful for trekking, and so they ought to be, they cost £ 7 odd, however they should last well.

P.S. It doesn't make any difference whether you post your letters by a boat which calls in P Sudan or not, I suppose because they don't make up a bag for Sudan alone. It takes your letters longer to get here [via Egypt] than to England.

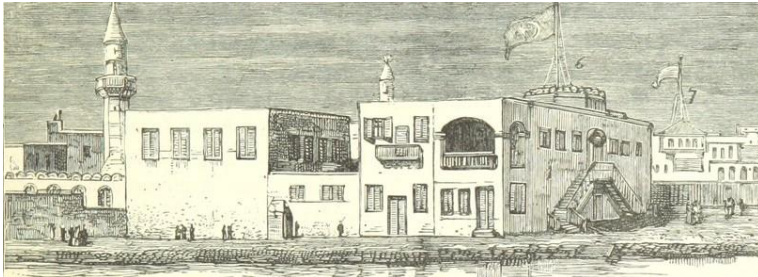
***Suakin, 22 May 1930***

Many thanks for your letters which arrive very regularly. The last one I had from you was one of father's which was posted on 24<sup>th</sup> April and reached here on 17<sup>th</sup>, quite the quickest passage a mail from you has had. We are nominally supposed to be supplied with instruments, but some of the hospitals have only the essentials and no frills or any of the



modern instruments. If you have some good bone forceps and shears, such as Lion or Horsley's forceps or parrot-file nibbling forceps (for removing bone piecemeal such as enlarging a trephine) or a Doyen's rib raspatory for empyema, I should like to buy them from you.

On Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> I got up leisurely, had breakfast and nosed round the place a bit,<sup>5</sup> read a bit, and wrote some letters. The usual horizontal interlude occurred for a while after lunch and



*The Old Governor's Palace*

then I sent for my launch (I did tell you I had a launch at my disposal for going between here and the quarantine didn't I?) and went to tea with the Bennetts<sup>6</sup> - he's Director of Customs - who were staying at the mohafasa, the old Governor's Palace, which I think I told you about in a previous letter.

Kitchener lived in it once for a time and it is now a political rest house. We had tea on its broad verandah which is directly over the water. I stayed and talked until dinner time. The return journey down the harbour was delightful as the moon had just risen and bathed the old town and the water in its pale light.

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> - Not much to do here at present as the camp is now more or less shipshape and I've got all the staff here working. This morning I went down to the town to see a man in the hospital who is dying of secondary carcinomatous deposits on the liver. I then went to the station to see Millward's pony and syce arrive and to see the former untrucked etc. I had got the overseer here to put up a temporary stable for him. In the afternoon the Bennetts came to tea and the Archibalds arrived shortly after. He is the Director of the Welcome Tropical Research Lab and had come down with his wife in his saloon [railway carriage], which is also a travelling laboratory.

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> - I put in an hour before breakfast schooling M's pony. He had a mouth like iron when I first took him over but is I think slowly improving. After spending the time stopping and starting him, flexing and reining back etc to try and improve his handiness, I brought him back to the sais, to whom this must have been something new, as he turned to me and solemnly said "If you want him to go to the right, you must pull the right rein and if to the left, the left rein."

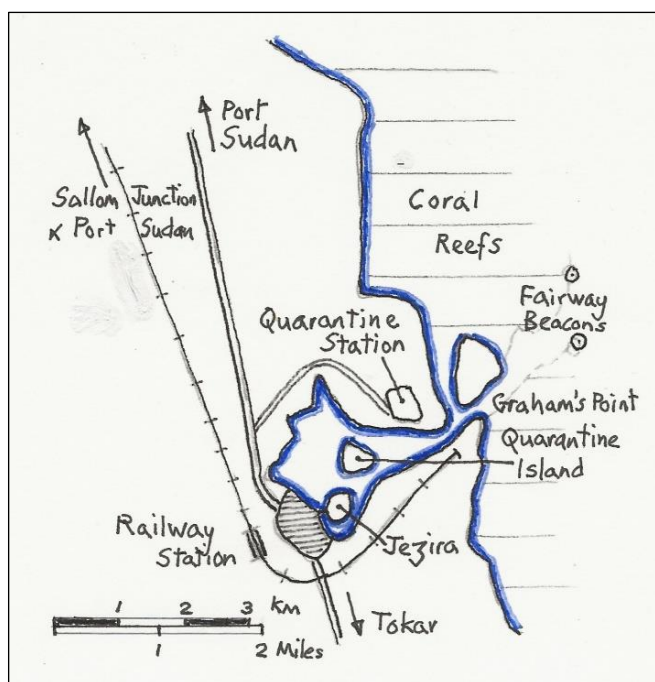
Wallis dropped in unexpectedly for breakfast on his way from PS to Tokar and went off again soon after. In the afternoon Brander of the Sudan Defence Force and McBain<sup>7</sup> of the Forestry Dept, who were on local leave at PS, came over to fish. They had tea and then we went out in the Quarantine felucca - they didn't have much luck, however. They stayed to dinner with me and then drove back to PS in the moonlight.

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<sup>5</sup> At this time the population of Suakin was some 5,000. Comprehensive information about Suakin and its history may be found in *Suakin and its Fishermen: a study of economic activities and ethnic groupings in a Sudanese port*, the PhD thesis of EG Kentley, February 1988 (University of Hull), available at <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/2731532.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> DM Bennett, OBE, joined SPS 1908.

<sup>7</sup> WJ McBain, joined SGS 1921.



*Plan of Suakin, 1930, adapted from map 46-A in the Sudan Archives*

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> – Home schooling for the pony before breakfast, to which meal I had Judge Cutter<sup>8</sup> from Medani who was brought over from PS by Smyth. After breakfast the three of us drove to the town to show Cutler around, for whom the place was new. They left before lunch and in the afternoon I knocked a polo ball about for half an hour and then had tea and a bath and filled in the time to dinner by reading.

15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> – Nothing much to tell, being occupied by the usual morning schooling and afternoon ride, inspection of the Quarantine, and reading. We had expected the first boat to arrive on Saturday but it didn't materialise.

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> – We were sure the boat would arrive today – Grylls<sup>9</sup> drove over to breakfast but as they always arrive early in

the morning if they are coming he went back about 10 a.m. after we had been to call out Thompson at the rest house, he having come down for the day also. Rest of the day spent in reading and writing and an afternoon ride.

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> – Did not take pony out this morning – as I was walking along the verandah to my bath I saw the boat in the distance and sent word to the MO and the overseer etc to get things going. By the time I had dressed and breakfasted the boat was coming up the harbour and Grylls had just arrived having been notified by the lookout at PS of the passing of the boat. Leaving him to have breakfast, the MO and I went off in the launch to the ship to look at their papers etc and start the disembarkation. You can imagine the crush with 611 pilgrims on a 1,500 ton boat with all their baggage etc. The pilgrims are transported from the boat to the quarantine jetty by sambooks carrying about 70 or so people. As they are propelled by two oars which look like enormous flat jam ladles, you can imagine their progress over the half mile from the anchorage to the quarantine is very slow and they usually supplement their oars by one of the men jumping overboard and up to his neck and pulling on a rope. As this is, like as not, attached to the stern or amidships, his energy is not as well directed as it might be.

Their baggage includes old tin trunks, rolls of bedding, cooking utensils, camel saddle bags, bottles of Zem Zem water (from the holy Zem Zem well) and rolls of rugs which they have bought, some of them looking suspiciously like Birmingham. They have to come through a gateway into the quarantine one by one. Their baggage is supposed to be dumped outside where it is collected by the q staff and placed on trolleys and brought in, and this is where the fun begins. A howling struggling mob about the gate all trying to get in at once. They

<sup>8</sup> RC Cutter, joined SPS 1919.

<sup>9</sup> EAH Grylls, who joined the SMS in 1922 and was Registrar to the Kitchener Medical School from 1926-7 before moving to Port Sudan.

won't part with their afsh (luggage) at the right place but carry it over to the gate and then they find that they can't put up a decent fight to get through with their hands full of afsh, so they drop it to get through the gate and then when they get inside they suddenly find that all their afsh is outside so then they fight to get out again.

The police let an old man through the gate and you ask for his passport. After a futile search, he decides it must be in his trunk so he has to be led away by the hand to the place where all the afsh is piled up in a great heap and there sorts his trunk out to get his passport. Then they notice that often a man gets through the gate and has his wife's passport with him and she has to be called for and is like as not at the back of the mob, and there are sure to be ten thousand Fatimas or Sharifas present, all of whom rush forward when you call. When they saw this they all tried giving their passports to one man and then they pushed him through the gate by main force. He would then collect himself, wave the passports in the air, and say they were all his brothers'. I was caught by the first one or two but after I had tumbled to it I said one man one passport. However, they were eventually let through and bathed and sterilised etc, and got into their compounds where they seemed quite happy. Grylls stayed to lunch and went off afterwards. I went down to see the last of the pilgrims through the disinfecting house and then in the evening rode around the compounds to make sure they were all comfortable.

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> – Rode around the compounds before breakfast to look for any sick etc. After breakfast went round the hospital where we had one or two sick. Then a certain amount of office work and the rest of the morning spent in routine examinations connected with the gathering of statistics about bilharzia which Atkey<sup>10</sup> (the Director SMS) wants done. I have a good lab man and a temergis [medical orderly] to help with this. A ride later in the afternoon following a round in the compounds, bath, tea and then a glance round the hospital then reading or writing till dinner.

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> – The usual ride around the place before breakfast after which the daily inspection of the hospital and then the rest of the morning at lab work. I didn't ride in the afternoon as I expected York<sup>11</sup> to tea but he did not arrive until the evening when he brought Stower with him. They stayed about an hour and had the usual post-prandial cocktails after which they went off to their saloon which is in the station across harbour from here.

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> – Had a wire last night from Harry Hawkins to say that he and Henry Strickland were going to try and get through from here to Erkoweit in the former's car, and they would like breakfast. They arrived about 7.30 just as I was finishing my morning ride round the place. They had breakfast and then pushed off at about 9.30. The rest of the day spent in the usual routine. At about 4 p.m. I went out for a ride with a ball and stick and was hitting the ball about on a flat bit just outside the quarantine when I heard a car behind me. It was Harry and Henry who had lost the road and spent all the day wandering about in khors and amongst rocks etc and had come back to stay the night and have another try the next day. We had tea and then they sat and talked whilst I went and did my evening

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<sup>10</sup> OFH Atkey, FRCS. He joined the Service in 1907 and was its Director from 1922-1933.

<sup>11</sup> JD York, joined Sudan Railways 1924, based in Gebeit.

round and then we had baths and talked till dinner. They went to bed early as they had had a strenuous day.

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> – H & H left at 6 a.m. today. I am getting ready for the discharge of pilgrims tomorrow.

### *Port Sudan, 13 June 1930*

I've forgotten when I last wrote to you but shall start from Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May. The second lot of pilgrims being all clear with no cases of infection, they were discharged. The customs effendis came at 6 a.m. and the last people were out of the enclosure by noon. After inspecting to see the place had been cleaned after them, and doing some office work, I had lunch and after a short rest I set off by car for Port Sudan as I had to do Grylls' work for him as he had gone out that morning on trek with Newbold,<sup>12</sup> the deputy governor of Kassala. I got into PS in 1 hr and 20 mins, not bad going considering the road, had a bath and some tea and then did a round in the hospital and looked among the stuff on the office table and did some writing. I then went to the Red Sea Club for a drink before dinner. Grylls very kindly lent me his house, servants and car whilst he was away. Dinner was followed by an early bed as I was tired.

Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> May – Out patients before breakfast and one or two visits after followed by routine hospital office work until lunch, after which a rest until 4.40 and so to tennis at the club, tea and then home to do a round, dinner and bed.



*An Azalea class sloop*

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> June – I usually celebrate the Sabbath by staying in bed until breakfast or, better still, sitting in an easy chair with nothing on reading and drinking tea, and also by having a beer at noon. I had to go to visit a boat – I earned my £3 this time as I saw nine men. So back to the hospital where I saw Henry Strickland, who is going to Egypt, and the padre. Did a round and usual work and then met H Hawkins and H Strickland for beer at the club and so home to lunch. Played squash with Phillips and home to tea, bath, and evening round. Then to club for rubber of bridge. The Royal Navy sloop *Clematis*<sup>13</sup>

and the boat HS was sailing on were in and there was a cheery crowd at the club so not home to dinner until late.

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> – Usual daily routine. They have just found a case of cholera in a pilgrim at Massawa in Eritrea so there is a tremendous haroosh here. I receive almost hourly telegrams from the director asking me if I've done this and that. As I've got to decide whether any ship in this port or Suakin shall have free pratique or not, I walk round with a copy of Quarantine Regs in my hand and every time I read them I make it something

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<sup>12</sup> Sir Douglas Newbold, KBE, (1894-1945), SPS 1920-1945, Civil Secretary 1939-45.

<sup>13</sup> One of 12 Azalea class minesweeping sloops, 1,250 tons, built in 1915.

different. Sent McKinnon, the lab man, to Suakin for the day to prepare lab and apparatus for examining cholera.

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> – One of the numerous holidays so no OP [outpatients] before breakfast. Routine work in the morning, tennis and tea at the club, back to the hospital to do evening round, and then to club again. They were having an impromptu Derby Sweep, selling rickets etc. To dinner with Rogers and bridge after. Has just got home when HH, who had passed me on the road, dashed in and insisted on my going home with him to drink a bottle of beer.

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> – OP and usual hospital routine, did two operations and office work. Loafed most of afternoon and round in evening and then to Harry Hastings (he's living with G Bramall<sup>14</sup>) for dinner. The Donalds were there and we played bridge afterwards.

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> – Had wire late last night that pilgrim ship was arriving so had to set off at 6 this morning by car to Suakin, taking McKinnon with me. Had breakfast when we got there and started admitting pilgrims. Found one man whose symptoms were suspicious so did not give the ship free pratique until McK had examined him bacteriologically, saw all pilgrims safe into their compounds, had lunch and so back to PS where I had the usual daily routine to do. Dinner and early bed.

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> – Usual routine, also did inspection of Central Prison which had to be done from time to time. Played golf with HH – quite a good game, beat him two up, back with him for tea. G Bramall back from Atbara, he still looks pretty washed out from his dysentery. Evening round and early bed.

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> – Usual routine, ordered stores from grocer for Suakin, took over new dispensary on east side. Grylls and Newbold returned at 1 p.m., both well and had had a good trek. They had bought a £ 200 bar of gold from Filey & Bishop at Oyo mine. We had lunch together and then Newbold went off by train to Sinkat. Grylls and I spent the afternoon in going through papers and so to tennis and tea at club. Evening round and then to pub to dinner with the Lords, the Donalds and York being present. Bridge after dinner and then a moonlit bathe followed by beer and sandwiches and so home.

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> – Grylls and I did round in morning and went to collect his new car, a Ford. I got a pair of suede shoes made by a Greek in the suk for 120 pt, about 24/- and quite good they are too. Went to grocer and bought china tea which I'd forgotten, had lunch, and went to Suakin by car. Atkey, the Director, arrives in PS by tonight's train.

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> – Up at 5.30 and rode round to see that all was in order for the Director's visit. Grylls and Atkey arrived at 7.30. Inspection of hospital and then they had breakfast with me after which the rest of the camp was looked at and they left at noon to return to PS. I finished off some office work and then had lunch followed by a snooze and a ride in the afternoon, then the usual round of the hospital and compounds in the evening. I've got MacKinnon staying with me as there is no other accommodation for him.

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<sup>14</sup> G Bramall, Acting Port Manager PS, joined SGS 1913.

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> – Up early and did final round of the pilgrims, as they were discharged that day, then spent ½ hour schooling pony by which time Grylls and Atkey had arrived. They had breakfast with me on their way to Erkoweit, the hill station near here where the Governor-General and his staff often come for a rest. After they had got off I spent the rest of the morning on office work and arranging for the sick pilgrims in hospital to be transferred. After lunch M and I went by car to PS as Grylls wanted me to do his work for him to leave him free to go about with Atkey. I did an evening round and then some reading until G & A returned from Erkoweit at 8, when we had dinner and an early bed.

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> – OP before breakfast and hospital routine in morning. Atkey went round hospital. Did two ops [operations], lunch and then as Grylls and I were talking, Corbett, the doctor of *HMS Clematis*, came in to ask about a case of his we have in hospital. He stayed to tea and then Atkey and G went off for a bathe and Corbett and I went down to the town to shop and dropped into the club after lunch. I came back and did an evening round, dined alone as A & G were out.

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> – OP then hospital, was operating in the middle of which three people, a Mrs Lobb and two others, came in of the *Chitral* with a letter from John [Tom's brother]. Did not have time then to do any more than chat for a moment between ops. Later I went onboard to try and buy a razor from the barbers' shop but it was shut. Had lunch and then Atkey went onboard as he is going on leave. I went off to tennis and tea at club. After dinner went up to the station to meet an officer from the military camp at Gebeit who was coming into hospital, saw him safely tucked up and then to bed.

Today [13<sup>th</sup>] nothing much to report. I took out a man's eye this morning for a tumour of the globe. I can't remember whether I told you in my last letter that I had bought a pony from Winder,<sup>15</sup> the DC in PS, a grey country bred. I hesitated whether I should buy him or send money to you but in the end my selfishness won and I am justly rewarded. He was trucked down to me at Suakin and arrived lame with a filled offside fore and a note of apology from Winder saying he had tripped over a stone two days before and that he hoped he'd be alright in a day or two. I told the sais to give him sea baths and walking exercises and since then until last Sunday when I went back to Suakin I've not had much time to look at him. I was disappointed to find that although his swelling had gone down he still had a hard thickening of his cannon just above the fetlock and was still lame. I thought then that he must have a torn suspensory ligament, a view which Atkey, who looked at him on Monday, confirmed. As Winder has in the meantime gone on leave, I'm afraid I've got a broken-down pony for which I'm £20 to the bad. However, I'm having him blistered – do you agree, Dad?

### ***Suakin, 19 June 1930***

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> - Before breakfast I packed my bag and then went down to the town and bought 25 yards of very thick creamy silk (I don't know the name) for £3-5-0 and my tailor is making it into seven shirts with two collars apiece for £1-14-0: is that cheap or expensive? After breakfast I drove back here picking up McKinnon on the way. It was a filthy drive as the wind, hot as a furnace mouth, was directly behind us so that the engine boiled

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<sup>15</sup> J Winder, joined SPS 1927.



frequently. However, we got here at noon and I spent the time until lunch going over the bills and my bank book etc. and writing letters. After lunch a sleep and then tea and more writing till dinner.

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> – Ride before breakfast and then some office work. The electric light plant is out of order so I had to ring up PS to ask them to send spare parts. Ride again before tea and then a walk and so to dinner and bed.

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> – Ride early, after breakfast mail in with letter from you and some official correspondence, with a letter from the senior vet telling me I can't land a dog. The captain of one of the pilgrim ships had promised me a saluki from Jeddah – they use them for coursing gazelle over there – but now I find out I am not allowed to land it under any circumstances. Bound some new rings onto my rod and made some new casts. Had an early tea and McK and I fished in the felucca. We each got one, mine a 10 lb bayardo, but no more bites. I'm after a 60 or 70 pounder such as I've seen the fisherman catch here. Home to bath and dinner.

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> – Up early to see McK off to PS by train, then ride and breakfast. Office work in morning and fishing in evening. After lunch my second sais let Hassan (my grey pony) go and he careered all over the compound on his bad leg. I cursed for about five minutes without repeating myself.

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> – Ride before breakfast and so into the shore office, had trouble with the sailors for the launch and felucca so had them all into the office and gave them a father of a talking to, and sent one man back to PS. Since then they have fairly been jumping through hoops. Fished again in the evening, one small cod only. The felucca men say that the sardines which I've been using are not the best bait for trolling and I will try the other next time.

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> – Loafed before breakfast then went to the shore office and wrote a few letters. Sent for the tinsmith to solder some hooks together to make triangles and so home to lunch. Rode before tea and then wrote letters and so to bed.

### ***Suakin, 27 June 1930***

I never seem to write anything to you except: got up, had breakfast, did routine hospital work, had lunch etc etc etc. It must be awfully dull for you, however here goes.

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> – Ride before breakfast, I believe that the pony is getting a bit better mouth as a result of his schooling but he's been knocked about for so long that there's little hope of getting him with a good mouth. Spent morning with official letters etc and rode in the afternoon. After bath a wire came to say the *Talodi* would be in the next day with pilgrims, also a message from the mamur to say he was ill with fever. The evening spent reading.

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> – *Talodi* arrived at 7 a.m. with 460 odd pilgrims – we caught one man, a Tabroonie, who had gone to pilgrimage from Massawa, the seaport of Eritrea. When he got over there he was given a Sudan pilgrim's passport by the Tabroonie sheik in Jeddah, who had most probably stolen it or got it from a dead Sudanese pilgrim. I sent him back to Jeddah by the same boat as we do not like Massawa pilgrims here because they neither vaccinate nor inoculate them against cholera whilst we do this to all ours, and more

especially as they've already had a case of cholera at Massawa and it and smallpox are endemic in the Hedjaz. McKinnon arrived from PS for breakfast and will stay until Tuesday morning. Ride in afternoon and read and talked to McK in evening.

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> – Rode round compounds before breakfast and afterwards inspected rest of camp on foot and went again to compounds to see the commencement of the inoculation against cholera, which we do inwards as well as outwards since the case at Massawa. Then office work until lunchtime. Fished in evening and got a big bite just near S check buoy, had played him for about five minutes when, in trying to check a sudden rush, the rod broke and he got away. It was an old rod and the wood was rather dry. From the feel, he must have been about 50 – 60 lbs. All quiet in the compounds, no complaints and no illness.

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> – Usual ride of inspection in morning followed by tour on foot after breakfast and then into the village where I went to the hospital and then to the office where there was some mail, and so to ring up Grylls and McCarthy. The latter promised to lend me a steel-lined split cane rod for a while – very decent of him. Was just coming back to quarantine when I saw Fleming-Sandes,<sup>16</sup> the district judge, arriving by car, went back to say what-ho and invite him to dinner, he's returning next morning. After tea McKinnon went fishing and I went for a walk along the shore and to home to bath and meet Sandy at the jetty, being brought by my launch. Then dinner which for an out-of-the-way place like this I thought was quite decent: iced clear soup; cold fish mayonnaise; roast chicken, chip potatoes and tinned green peas; caramel cream; and coffee. We sat talking for some time and then Sandy went home. He is one of the most charming men to meet and so retiring and apologetic that I am sure he must have blushed and apologised profusely when he got his V.C from the King, won in the last war. No sickness among the pilgrims.

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> – McK and Sandy left by train at 6.30. Rode round as usual and went in to village and to hospital after breakfast. Went for a walk before tea and after tea walked round the compounds with a large tin of boiled sweets for the kids. They're most fascinating, all pot-bellied and usually with only a string of beads, and their heads shaved in queer designs, leaving tufts of woolly hair sticking up here and there like a French poodle. Even the grownups come up and ask for sweets. I tasted a date from Mecca on my way round and jolly good it was too, but I shan't do it again as one may get dysentery that way. Had a wire from John Going,<sup>17</sup> the vet, to whom I wrote the other day, telling me he would be in PS from Friday till Sunday. I will truck Hassan in on Saturday for him to look at. Hassan's leg still has hard callus swelling down the back of his cannon.

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> – Usual ride in the morning and then village and hospital and office. In the afternoon Malhamé [the MO in Suakin] lent me his car to go and meet the train as the guard was bringing McCarthy's fishing rod. Fished for a short time, then reading before dinner and bed.

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> – Up and tried fishing from the launch before breakfast. The drawback to the launch is that by the time you have a decent sized fish for bait, enough lead to sink it and 60

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<sup>16</sup> Alfred J T Fleming-Sandes of the East Surrey Regiment was awarded the VC for action on 29 September 1915 on the Hohenzollern Redoubt in France, a strong point of the German 6<sup>th</sup> Army on the Western Front. He joined the SPS in 1919.

<sup>17</sup> Joined SVS in 1918, based in Kassala.



or 70 yds of line out, even the slowest pace at which the launch can run puts a tremendous strain on ones arms and legs. I think the felucca is better but will try from the launch with a spinning fish bait on top of the water. Final inspection of pilgrims after breakfast as they go out this morning, then to village and hospital, where I had arranged to inspect some school children but they didn't turn up. You can never be sure that anything will be done in this country unless you do it yourself or see it done. I set a broken ulna whilst I was there and so back to quarantine. Grylls rang me up to say that there was another boat coming tomorrow. I wish they'd run to time instead of arriving on any old day. I had wanted to go into PS on Saturday to see Going about my pony but can't do this now. In the afternoon I tried fishing in the harbour but didn't get a bite - all the fish are outside now.

### *Suakin, 7 July 1930*

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May - Another boat in - the *Taif* - with 270 odd pilgrims, mostly Tabroomies. They were soon got through the routine and into the compounds, not much of interest about them and they were all healthy. When I went to see the captain I found him sitting on floor in his cabin feeding a small puppy with a feeding bottle and milk. It was a saluki, given him by the Emir of Gash on the Arabian coast. They are bred over there for coursing gazelle and are highly prized by the Arabs. Mohammed, however, had said in the Koran that dogs are unclean, so they get over that by saying that they are not really dogs. They hunt the gazelle by a combination of coursing and hawking; the hawk flies in the face of the gazelle to distract it and make it turn and so enable the Saluki to pull it down. I rode M's pony in the afternoon and inspected the pilgrims after.

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> - Up early and inspected pilgrims. At 7.30 John Going the vet arrived. He looked at Hassan for me and said he thought a little riding would not hurt him and to try it, but that he would never be really sound again and that he ought to be blistered before I gave him any hard work. We had breakfast and then went by launch to the town, he to inspect the police camels and I some school children. With some office work, this took me till lunchtime. Ride in the afternoon and reading and writing after dinner.

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> - Rode Hassan in morning, he seemed to stand it well. I only walked him for about half-an-hour, quietly. Went to village and did some office work including making out a duty roster for the boatmen. This is the duty of the rais (boatswain) but he is so unintelligent that he couldn't do it, and has so little control over the men that they usually laugh at him. Fished in the evening and got one quite decent barracuda, but not like the Australian one, and a very good fighter.

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> - Usual routine before breakfast then to village as mail day which is always looked forward to. Sent some snaps to be developed. Drew a cheque for servants' wages and had a telephone ring from Millward who has returned from leave and wants his pony back. I am sending it by tomorrow's train. I am not sorry it's going in a way since it had a very hard mouth and was rather a tiring ride. Rode Hassan in the afternoon and afterwards inspected M's horse and all his kit to see that it was in order. Listened to Malhamé's gramophone for a while and so to dinner.

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> July - Have now been six months in Sudan and have quite enjoyed it and found the work interesting. I have been very lucky with the weather so far and have been in good health. Rode Hassan round compounds. He's rather fat and full of oats at the moment and inclined to shy at anything, but his leg is not getting any worse with exercise. To village

and hospital, heard from the Khedivial agent (the line that brings the pilgrims) that the next boat will not be until the 9<sup>th</sup>. Think I will go to PS for a few days when this lot go tomorrow. On going to my ice chest this afternoon, which I seldom do, I found in the top ice-containing part a fillet of fish, without any paper or anything, wrapped lovingly round a bottle of beer and nestling with a block of ice. So I sent for my cook and asked him if he had put it there. He said yes, but it was quite alright as he always washed the fish before cooking it, and no doubt he thinks I'm very fussy because I told him never to put anything on the ice except on a plate. Fished this evening.

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> – Rang Grylls up this afternoon and asked if I might come in for a few days. Shall go in by tomorrow's train. Final inspection of pilgrims before their release today. Usual office and hospital round and read in afternoon. York of the railways arrived by today's train in his saloon and came over to call. He stayed and had dinner with me, and asked me to breakfast in his saloon. All the pilgrims got away safe and sound. Have left Malhamé in charge.

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> – Up early, saw that my suitcase was packed and went across harbour to the station, got into train and had shave, then at next station went along to York's saloon for breakfast. The saloons are quite well fitted up, a sort of general living room containing folding bed, table, armchairs and a large pigeonhole writing desk across one end. Then a decent little bathroom with enamel bath and what not in corner, a kitchen, and a boys' room. York has this one practically the whole time as he does a lot of travelling, but Grylls and I get one when we want it. On arrival in PS drove to Grylls house and so to hospital. After lunch Grylls and I talked shop and then to tennis at the club followed by tea and bridge and so home to dinner, more talk, and bed.

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> – To OP in morning and then after breakfast to town where I collected the silk shirts I had ordered. They are a good buy I think and wash well. Some woollen taffeta shirts I had brought out with me and for which I paid 18/- a piece have so shrunk owing to the ministrations of my boy that they won't meet round my neck by about an inch and so can only be used for tennis. Back to hospital and then to lunch. In the afternoon I played golf with Hawkins and Donald, playing their best ball - they beat me - then back to Hawkins and Bramall's house for tea and bridge afterwards, home to dinner rather late. I had a letter from Khartoum this morning telling me to report to Khtm on the 16<sup>th</sup> to relieve Humphreys<sup>18</sup> who is going on leave. So I shall probably be there for three months and my address will be care of the Civil Hospital, Khartoum.

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> – Grylls wants me to go to Sinkat, about 100 km up the line, to examine school children. To OP on the morning and after breakfast to the station to meet my cook whom I had left in Suakin and who was bringing my camp kit in to go to Sinkat. Then back to hospital and so to lunch after which Grylls drove me to the station and I caught the 3 p.m. mail to Sinkat, had tea and dinner on board and arrived at 9.40 p.m. Saw Roper<sup>19</sup> of the Customs in the station. I had intended going to the rest house but Roper very kindly asked me to stay with him. I went to his house and we talked for a while and so to bed. Sinkat is in the hills and the nights are beautifully cool – I had a blanket on.

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<sup>18</sup> RM Humphreys, SMS 1921-1948, Senior Physician 1930-1944.

<sup>19</sup> Either EM Roper, Controller, joined SGS 1923, or HL Roper, Assistant Controller-General, joined SGS 1922, both of whom were stationed in Sinkat at this time.

Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> – Up early and to the hospital post in the village. We have a native in charge, he is called a mus'aid hakim and is a wardsman who has served a certain time in the wards and attended a course of lectures on elementary medicine and surgery. He does dressings, dispenses cough mixtures, and so on and knows the procedure in case of an outbreak of infectious disease etc. I saw some cases there and inspected his stock and kit etc and so home to breakfast. Then to the school where I examined 105 school children. By the time you've examined the mouth and eyes and eyesight, chest and abdomen, general health and urine of 105 children, you've just about had enough. I then went to the merkaz to examine a sick policeman and arrange for his transport to PS, and so home to a late lunch. In the evening I had three sets of tennis with Roper and just had time to change and bath before the train came in. Found Graham, Director of Surveys, and Smith of Gellatly Hankey & Co on board and dined with them, reaching PS at 10 p.m. Grylls met me in his car and told me that a pilgrim ship had come in that morning so I had to dash back to Suakin next morning.

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> – Up early and Grylls drove me to the station. Mohammed my suffragi tells me that he has just had a wire to say his wife had died in Dongola. I'm not sure it was not the office boy and grandmother's funeral trick, however I gave him a few days off. Dawood, my cook, gave me breakfast going down in the train and Malhamé met me at Suakin and I went by launch to the quarantine, looked round the camp to see that all was in order, then spent rest of morning drafting my report in view of my departure from here on the 14<sup>th</sup>. In the afternoon took Hassan out and ventured a little trotting. He seems much better with no sign of lameness although his suspensory ligament is still thickened in one place. I have just finished a most interesting book lent me by Roper, which you should read if you can get it: *The Lost Oases* by Hassanein Bey, an Egyptian. It relates his trek from Sollum on the Mediterranean coast of Egypt through western Egypt, the Libyan desert, NW Sudan, French Equatorial Africa, Sudan again and so to El Obeid in Darfur., the whole distance some 2,900 km during which he discovered two lost oases.<sup>20</sup>

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> – Up and walked round the camps as I want to keep Hassan for riding in the afternoon. I notice that most of the Tabroonies write sideways on, so supposing this letter was in Arabic it would be written from right to left, so they would have the centre left of the page nearest them and write all the words on their sides, writing with chips of wood and ink made out of octopus squirt, like squid ink. After breakfast, round the camps again and then to the village to see hospital and office. One Ali Faha, the sub-governor of Jeddah, who is visiting here came to the office to call, a most gorgeous individual whose clothes and headdress were copiously bound with gold thread. Back to lunch and a ride in the afternoon. Reading in the evening and so to bed. I find that I can take Hassan to Khartoum with me on the mail train.

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> – The usual inspection of pilgrims in the morning, breakfast and then to the hospital and office where I spent the morning on the rough copy of my report. Back to lunch and sleep in afternoon, woke up and went across to Graham's Point station in the launch to meet the padre, one Dallas-Smith, from Port Sudan who is staying with me for a few days to do some water colours in the village. We had tea when we got back and talked until dinner. He is attached to the Missions to Seamen and in that capacity has travelled a

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<sup>20</sup> Long out of print, it was reprinted in 2006 by the American University in Cairo Press with a forward by Michael Haag.

good deal. He also, many years ago, sailed out to Australia as an apprentice on a sailing ship, and has lived some time in Tasmania.

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> – We got up early and the padre came round the pilgrims with me. We then had breakfast and so to the town where I went to the hospital and then to the office to get on with my report and he pottered about making sketches. After lunch the padre had a sleep and I wrote this letter. We then had tea and I went for a ride and the padre went off in the felucca to find a place in the harbour from which he could sketch the town or the island. I am now just waiting for him to finish his bath. The next time you hear from me will be in Khartoum, inshallah, as I am to go there by Tuesday's mail train from PS.

### *Kassala, 28 July*

(Please excuse the writing – I'm trying to write in my saloon and this bit of line seems rather rough.)

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> – Up early to see the padre off and then for a ride. Afterwards I finished up office work in quarantine and then went to the island to continue my report. Back to lunch and spent the afternoon typing fair copy of my reports, went and had tea with MO and then back to typing which went on until bedtime.

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> – Went to office in morning to say goodbye to mamur and people and then came back to pack which kept me until about 3. Then went and had last look round the place and said goodbye and so by car to PS. I left my servants there to bring my afsh by train on Tuesday, and arrived at PS about 6 and went to Grylls' house where I was to stay. Found him in and had a much-needed drink and he told me that plans had been altered and I was to go to Kassala to look after the province for Macleod<sup>21</sup> who had been granted emergency leave owing to the death of his mother. I'm really too junior to do the job only they'd no one else available. I don't mind a bit as I'm not keen to go to Khartoum and the next three months in Kassala are delightful.

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> – Up late, had breakfast and then went to hospital to look around and assist Grylls with operations, did some writing in the office and so to lunch. Did nothing in the afternoon – Grylls played squash – we then went to club for a drink and bridge and so home to dinner and chat.

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> – Did OPs before breakfast as Grylls wanted to meet someone on a boat. Spent morning in hospital. In afternoon I played golf with Harry Hawkins and Donald, playing their best ball. We had a good match finishing all square. We then went back to Harry's house for tea and bridge. I left early as I had promised to dine with Sandy to meet a man who was going to Kassala on the same train as me, one Capt. White who was returning from leave to the Eastern Arab Camel Corps stationed at Kassala. Sandy gave us a pleasant dinner in his usual apologetic way and we sat and talked for a while afterwards and so home. Grylls was out dining with Thomson.<sup>22</sup>

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> – To OP before breakfast and then did a round of shopping, bank etc and some farewells, to Thomson etc, and so back to hospital. In the afternoon I played golf with Harry after which we went to his house to pick Bramall up and so to the club where we met

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<sup>21</sup> N Macleod, joined SMS 1926.

<sup>22</sup> Major DSB Thomson, Commissioner, Port Sudan, SPS 1909-1932.

Grylls and had a rubber before dinner. Back to the house and dinner and then a talk with Grylls.

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> – Up early and finished packing, over to OP to say goodbye to various people and then Grylls drove me to the train where I found White had already arrived. Soon after Geoffrey Bramall and Harry arrived to see us off and we sat talking in the carriage until the train left. Harry is leaving in a week's time for good as he is retiring. He looked fed up and I don't think he wants to leave the country a bit despite the fact that he's been out here for 23 Years. When we got underway I had breakfast. As we have a whole coach to ourselves we took two compartments as sleepers, another as a dining room and sat in another, so we were quite comfortable. When we got to Sinkat I got off the train to see an old man at the request of Roper of Customs. We got to Haiya, the junction, at 7.30 where we picked up some coaches and trucks from Khartoum and found Young<sup>23</sup> of the Agriculture Dept on his way to Aroma, the centre of the cotton growing area near Kassala, to relieve a man going on leave. We had cocktails and dinner and then yarned till bedtime.

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> – Arrived at Kassala at 7.30 and found Macleod waiting for me. He is an awfully decent Scot and he went out of his way to make me comfortable and show me round before he left. On going to see my pony untrucked I was furious to find that during the night some blasted effendi station man had pushed a hand cart into his cattle truck and he had cut his near side gaskin on it. However, it is only a skin wound. The railway station here is on the far side of the town to a broad stream bed which is dry in the winter but runs in torrent when the summer rains start.<sup>24</sup> It's about 400 yds broad and now you get across it carried on an angareeb or native bed on the shoulders of four Hausa porters. They are of marvellous physique and wonderful at the job. Quite often, for a few seconds when they step into a deep hole one or more of them completely disappears from view except for his arm held above his head and yet that keeps the angareeb level and rarely spills one despite the fact that the flood is running a banker – they're laughing and shouting the whole time except when submerged. We went straight to Macleod's house and I had a bath and breakfast. This is a delightful town built on a plain in the shadow of an enormous gebal which rises to a height of 3,000 ft. All the plain is green with grass at the moment and the town is shaded with many trees between the town and the gebal. Extending along the shore of the Gash is a forest of tall doum palms. Macleod's house, which I have taken over from him furnished, is set in a large garden with a drive lined by alternate acacia and poinsettia bushes in flower and there are large flower beds and lawns and a vegetable garden growing melons, bananas etc, and a lucerne plot for the ponies. In one corner under the shade of a big tree is a well with one of those great creaking wooden water wheels driven by a couple of bulls, the design of which must have existed unchanged for thousands of years. The house is a bungalow with a broad verandah of red tiles with a sleeping out place of mosquito-proof wire at one corner. The rooms are large with polished red tile floors and white walls, and furnished with rugs and a sufficiency of large easy chairs etc. There are Snaffles hunting and polo prints on the walls. The kitchen and servants' quarters are separate from the house.

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<sup>23</sup> WC Young, MBE, MC, MM, joined SGS 1919.

<sup>24</sup> The Gash or Mareb River, which flows out of central Eritrea.

After breakfast we went to pay my respects to Ingleson,<sup>25</sup> the acting Governor of the province, and then to call on Wylly,<sup>26</sup> the Commandant of Police, and inspect the prison and so to the hospital. A very good one with the wards all separate and the administrative block including offices, laboratory, OP dept etc under a separate roof, and the grounds with nice trees about. There is one Syrian and one Sudanese MO here, both decent fellows. After taking over from Macleod and going round we went home to lunch. In the afternoon we rode up to polo, quite a decent earth ground and one can always get two full sides as some of the native officers of the EAC play as well as White, McCarthy and Wingate,<sup>27</sup> the English ones. After polo to tea with Wylly the policeman, then home to a bath and change and then I went along to pick up Ingleson and go to McCarthy's house, Macleod not coming as he is in mourning for his mother. There is no club here so everyone takes it in turn to have the others in: he provides drinks and such sundries as salted peanuts (a local delicacy), chip potatoes, and sandwiches, and we play bridge. The three soldiers, Ingleson, Wylly, Murray<sup>28</sup> of the Cotton Board, and Furney,<sup>29</sup> the vet, made up the party. Home to dinner and early bed.

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> - Drove round town before breakfast to see incinerators and slaughter house, butchers' shop etc and then to hospital where I went into more office work with Macleod and did a couple of ops, one a hand which had been badly sliced up in a sword fight and the other a large TB abscess on leg. Lunch and in the afternoon I took Hassan up to the polo ground and knocked a ball about, and so home to tea and then bridge at Newbold's, the Deputy Governor. Dinner, reading and bed.

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> - Macleod and I went for a ride before breakfast in the palm forest, a beautiful place for an early morning canter. The weather is beautiful here and I was quite glad of a jacket in the early morning. After bath and breakfast we went to the hospital and then for a drive out past the gebel. Tennis in the afternoon and to Wylly for drinks and bridge.

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> - To the hospital, I usually look at all the dressings before breakfast and some office work. After breakfast the usual round of the wards looking at new cases etc and office work till lunch. I have another hospital at Gedaref, about 140 miles south of here, and 14 dispensaries dotted about the province, some of which I can't get at just now as it is the rainy season. In the afternoon I played two chukkas of polo, one on Hassan whose leg seems well now, and one on a spare pony of Wylly's. Home for tea and bath and then to Newbold's. He, Wylly, Wingate (one of the soldiers) and Macleod went off at 7.30 on leave. They crossed the Gash that evening as their train left early the next morning. I went down to see them off and they disappeared in the darkness each on an angareeb carrying a lantern and their Hausa porters singing and calling to each other.

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> - Up late as Mohd didn't call me. Breakfast and then to hospital - as I was leaving El Sheik, my sais, presented me with a camel stick ornamented with leather work - a most ornate affair. I expect he will ask for a rise on the strength of it. Dawood, my cook, has a septic arm so I took him into hospital and Bashir, my second suffragi, cooks for me: he

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<sup>25</sup> P Ingleson, MBE, MC, joined SPS 1919. He was the governor of Darfur while Tom was the SMI there from 1937-1940.

<sup>26</sup> A Wylly, joined SGS 1908.

<sup>27</sup> Orde C Wingate, DSO\*\* (1903-1944), SDF 1928-1933.

<sup>28</sup> AD Murray, joined SGS 1927.

<sup>29</sup> JE Furney, joined SVS 1929.

does quite well. I went round to see Ingleson to arrange about having the saloon, which he and I share, to go to Gedaref of Friday. Ride in afternoon and so to tea and usual evening round of hospital, writing till dinner and after.

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> – Usual routine before and after breakfast. Polo in the afternoon, I had two chukkas on Hassan. After tea and round, I went to White's for bridge, home to dinner and writing and bed.

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> – Up early and got across the Gash with servants and luggage to find that train was late and would not leave until 4.30 p.m. instead of 8.30 a.m. So I drove on to the saloon which was in a siding, left my afsh and servants there and came back to the hospital and did some work. Went over again and had lunch in the saloon and wrote until we got underway. Arrived at Gedaref at 2 a.m.

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> – Early this morning Seriven, the MO to the EAC, who also keeps an eye on the civil hospital for us, rode down and asked me to stay up at the mess. A most cheerful place situated on the top of a small hill overlooking the town. I went up to breakfast and was introduced to the members of the mess: Mossogh-Bernard, whom I knew before, Ker, who came out on the boat with me, and Airey and Bowers whom I'd not met before. They insisted on my bring a guest and gave me an awfully good time. After breakfast I went off with Seriven and saw his hospital and was shown round the camp and then we went down to the civil hospital which I inspected and did some work in the office. We then went to see Tom Livingstone-Learmonth,<sup>30</sup> the DC. You will remember he was a very good hurdler when he was at Cambridge. We then went to see Philip Egerton,<sup>31</sup> the District Traffic Supt. of the Railways and so back to lunch. In the afternoon I was lent a pony and Seriven and I went for a ride. Back to tea and bath and then bridge afterwards for which Philip Egerton came up, he, I, Ker and Mossogh-B making a four.

Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> – Up early and had a ride with Seriven till breakfast and then to civil hospital and on to a leper colony about eight miles out where we have 11 lepers living. We took them a pound of sugar and two boxes of matches apiece as a treat, at which they were very pleased. After lunch I slept until tea and then wrote some business letters. In the evening Mossogh-B, Ker and I went to Philip Egerton's for bridge and so back to dinner.

### ***Kassala, 10<sup>th</sup> August 1930***

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> – I was again lent a pony in the morning and rode round with Mossogh on his weekly camp inspection. Most interesting – he runs a very good show. After breakfast I said goodbye to the chaps and after a final visit to the hospital I went to the station and left at 10.30., arriving at Kassala at 6.30, just in time to get across the Gash before dark. Went along to the hospital where I found a large mail which I took home and read till dinner time.

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> – Baily,<sup>32</sup> the Governor, returned from leave last night with Acland, the DC Khashm El Girba. Up early and to hospital to see dressings done. After breakfast I did my usual round and then had a session with Bernhardt,<sup>33</sup> the Sanitary Inspector, about anti-

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<sup>30</sup> TC Livingstone-Learmonth, joined SPS 1928.

<sup>31</sup> PR Egerton, joined SGS 1910.

<sup>32</sup> REH Baily, CBE, (1885-1973, SPS 1909-1933.

<sup>33</sup> CJW Bernhardt, joined SMS 1919.

malarial work and sanitation of province in general. Spent rest of morning on office work and so home to lunch. Had ride in the afternoon and writing in the evening.

Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> – Rode round town with Bernhardt inspecting sanitation and butchers' shops, slaughterhouse etc. The morning spent in the usual hospital routine. Polo in the afternoon to give Ingleson, the Deputy Governor, a final game before going on leave that evening. Quite a good turnout: ten British and four native officers of the EAC. We played four chukkas. Went and did a round of the hospital and so home to tea and reading and dinner.

Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> – Usual daily routine till lunch time. Played squash in afternoon with the governor, McCarthy, the soldiers and Acland,<sup>34</sup> home to tea and then to Mac's for bridge, the governor, Acland and I, and so home to dinner.

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> August – Usual routine of dressing in the morning, office and hospital work after breakfast etc. Went for a ride in the afternoon to do a little stickwork with the pony. He is very inclined to run off the ball when you are just about to hit it, and he always tries to run over a near side shot. However, he is improving slowly. In the evening went for bridge and drinks to Murray of the Gash Cotton Board, so home to dinner and some reading.

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> – Went up before breakfast to see Murray who wasn't fit last night. He seemed better, it was only a touch of influenza. The usual round of work in the hospital and a ride in the afternoon. The people came to me that evening for bridge and drinks – the governor, Hankin,<sup>35</sup> the DC, Furney, the vet, Murray and Cooper<sup>36</sup> of the Gash Board and self were all that were in Kassala at the time.

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> – Furney and I went for a ride before breakfast and we met the governor who had invited us to beer at 11, which is an institution here on Sundays, but he could not have us as he had to cross the Gash, so we went to Furney's instead. Just as I got to F's, Hankin came to say the governor was ill, so I had to go off and see him. He had a slight fever and a headache (whether from my whiskey or what I don't know). However, I went to see him later on in the evening and he had quite recovered. Murray had also recovered. In the afternoon Furney, Hankin and I played singles at tennis and then they came back to tea with me and we then all went to Hankin for drinks and bridge.

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> – Went in to see the governor on my way to hospital. He was much better and is off to Khashm el Girba, about 90 miles south of here, to try a case tomorrow. Furney and I were going to do a tour of the Gash the next day, so I went round to his office to make plans about what afsh we each should take so as not to double bank, as we were only taking one lorry. I then had to cross the Gash to see a junior official's baby who was off colour, not badly, however. I rode in the afternoon and after tea went round to have a drink and talk to Furney.

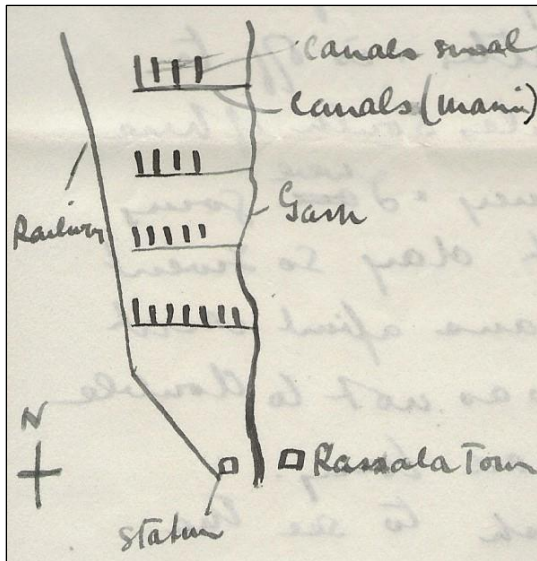
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<sup>34</sup> Brigadier PBE Acland, OBE, MC, TD, (1902-1993), SPS 1925-1946. While never a regular soldier, he served in the SDF from 1940, then with the Eighth Army, then as Chief Administrator, Dodecanese from 1943-5, and Chief Administrator, Cyrenaica from 1945-6. His wife, Bridget, was mentioned in dispatches for her work with military intelligence in wartime Cairo. They and Tom and Peg became close friends.

<sup>35</sup> AM Hankin, CMG, (1905-1971), SPS 1928-1954.

<sup>36</sup> S Cooper, joined SGS 1927.





Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> – Furney and I left at 6.30, got across the Gash and set off in a lorry, one servant apiece and the driver, who sat on top of the luggage at the back with Furney and me in front. The Gash is a name applied variously (1) to a river or khor fed by the River Atbara, and dry except during the kharif or rainy season and (2) to an area lying to the west of the River Gash, i.e. on the far side from Kassala, and which is used for the cultivation of cotton, watered by a series of canals which lead water off from the Gash itself.<sup>37</sup> It was for (2) that F and I were making as I have six dispensaries there. We made off along the railway line for about 40 km, finally leaving it and making across towards the Gash for Mekali, where there is a dispensary. We

had breakfast on the road just before Mekali. When we got there I spent some time looking over the dispensary. and seeing the mosquito men and the sanitation of the town etc and so on to Aroma, the HQ of the Gash Cotton Board which runs the cotton growing area. There we had lunch with Jock Young, the senior man in the GCB, and I looked over the dispensary. The man in charge, a dispensary hakim, is a very decent lad and he had a small ward with a few beds. After lunch we went on to Metateb where after inspecting the dispensary we went and called on Knowles<sup>38</sup> who lives there, and we had a game of tennis, Cooper coming up from Hadalia for it. We then had tea and drove over to Hadalia where we were staying the night, had baths and then bridge. Both Cooper and Knowles, who live about 20 miles apart, are very glad of a game. We then had dinner and bridge again until midnight.

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> – Up and to the dispensary to inspect it and the town, back to breakfast and soon after we left, going back to Metateb and then on to Tendalai and Kegain, at both of which places we have a dispensary. We then got into Aroma for a late lunch with Williams, the engineer of the GCB, who was putting us up for the night. There was a rainstorm after lunch so we slept. Going over to tea with Jock Young and a rubber of bridge and so back to W to dinner after which we had to go down to the village. It was the last day of the festival of Mawlid el Nabi (birthday of the Prophet) and we had to go down and be received by all the notables and be given sweet lemonade tea, iced cakes, coffee, etc, all of which must be eaten, which is a bit hard on top of dinner. We then went back to bridge and so to bed.

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> – Up late and did nothing before breakfast and after Furney had done some work we pushed off home. I had a telephone message just before leaving that the governor had come back from Khashm el Girba with fever. We got in to Kassala about lunch time having driven the whole way – 90 km – through a haboob. I had a bath and change and

<sup>37</sup> Commercial cotton cultivation began in 1924, when the railway reached Kassala. “In spite of unreliable floods and unsatisfactory farmers [the Hadendoa, who had “little aptitude or inclination for farming”], the Gash continued for some reason to produce the finest long-staple-cotton in the world and to provide the seed for the Gezeira Scheme down to the nineteen-sixties.” KDD Henderson, *Sudan Republic* (London: Ernest Benn Ltd, 1965), page 69.

<sup>38</sup> E Knowles, joined SGS 1928.

then went to see the governor who has malaria. Must be a recurrence as I hardly think he can have been re-infected. Went along to call on White to see if there was polo and stayed to lunch with him. He was off the next day to sit on a court martial of a native officer at Gedaref. I rode in the afternoon and went to see the governor after tea. He was slightly better.

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> – Along to see the governor on way to hospital. He is improved and wants to get up but I'm keeping him in bed. Usual routine at hospital and ride in afternoon. Went to Hankin for bridge in evening after having seen governor who is much improved. Have put him on a course of quinine and plasmochin.

### *Kassala, 17 August 1930*

I expect there will be a large gap between the last letter and this one as there has been a wash out on the line about three miles long near Haiya, about 100 miles from here, and we don't know when the line will open again. I'm glad to see in your last letter that you've had some rain, I hope it continued and that you didn't lose your garden. At the moment it is coming down in sheets outside. The amount of entertaining that one did at Suakin was essential as it is the rule of the country to give any passer by a meal and a bed. This is not as expensive as it sounds really as one's servants nearly always bring you enough for two every day. My cook spends about £ 4 -5-0 each month on an average and for that he buys all except grocer's stores, i.e. meat, milk, bread, eggs, vegetables, potatoes, fruit, chicken, pigeons, salad. My grocer's bill varies according to the amount of entertaining, as lots of people in for bridge in the evening means a big drink bill. However, it is usually about £10-12 per month. I think my servants are fairly honest, especially my cook, who, although he has his usual percentage out of the suk bill every day, I'm sure wouldn't let anyone else do me down. Enough of dull domestic details.

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> – Went to see governor on way to hospital, he was much better and sitting up. Usual hospital routine after breakfast and some office work, and so to lunch. Went for a ride in the afternoon and did a bit of schooling and knocking a ball about. Home to tea and evening round and then some reading until dinner.

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> – Went for a ride before breakfast out to the doum palm forest and back. Usual round of wards after breakfast and then did some writing for the rest of the morning. Slept after lunch and then took some balls up to the squash court and hit them about for an hour for some exercise, home to tea and writing till dinner. Governor much better.

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> – Usual daily routine of mixed clinical and office work and two operations to enliven the proceedings. Polo in the afternoon, I had two quite good chukkas. Hassan is improving but he still has an irritating habit of refusing to gallop into the ball if he can see anyone else coming towards him. I wish I could get another pony as two chukkas only whets one's appetite. However, that will wait. After polo I went and had a drink with McCarthy and then on to tea with the governor, home to bath and do a round and then the governor, McCarthy, Hankin, Furney and Murray came for drinks and bridge.

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> – Usual routine at hospital and did supra pubic lithotomy – took me about 1 ½ hours as neck of stone was encysted in prostatic urethra (that's for Father). Schooled Hassan in afternoon and then tea and hospital, after which I went to governor's for bridge. It came on to rain so we (Hankin, McCarthy and I) stayed to dinner.

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> – Quiet day, routine in morning, schooling pony in afternoon and reading and writing till dinner and after. One can't do much work after dinner in this country as one usually falls asleep.

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> – Hospital in morning and polo in afternoon, two good chukkas. Governor played and is fit now. Went to tea with Furney and so home. After hospital round read till dinner.

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> – Usual hospital in morning, the place is very empty just now as the rains are so light that there is not the usual amount of malaria which fills us up at this time every year. Played squash with McCarthy in afternoon, he beat me up. Quiet evening reading and writing. I find Arabic very difficult – one has to learn two lots, one the colloquial spoken by the people and the other the classical for reading and writing. If you speak classical none bar the effendis – translators, school masters etc – can understand it and you can't write the slang usually spoken.

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> – Another day with little to tell of – rode in afternoon and worked in evening.

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> – Set out for usual pre-prandial Sunday ride and met Baily. He told me there was polo that afternoon as he and Furney were both going to Gedaref the next day, so I went home after a short ride. Went and did round after breakfast and then drove out to look at the slaughter place, incinerators etc. Home, had Sunday morning hops and spent rest of morning going over bills and bank chits etc and wrote a few letters. It started to rain like blazes about 2 so there was no polo. It continued to rain all afternoon so I wrote and slept. After tea I did round in hospital and then went to McCarthy's for bridge. The governor, Hankin, Furney, Baily of PWD and self. On our way home Furney and I found a hedgehog. I didn't know they existed here.

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> – Usual routine, went and had a talk with the governor about medical affairs of province. He and Furney left for Gedaref in afternoon. Polo in afternoon, I had two chukkas, so home to tea and work till dinner.

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> – Hospital routine in morning then ride and schooling Hassan after which I went and had tea with Murray of the Gash Board as I wanted to talk to Young, the manager of the GB, who is staying with him. In evening I went to bridge and drinks with Hankin, McCarthy, Baily (PWD), Murray and Young being of the party. When I got home I discovered that Sandy, one of Macleod's dogs which he left in my charge was a bit peculiar. He has been off colour for a few days and has got very thin. I sent him over to Furney who said he was alright. But last night when I got home he was walking restlessly round in circles, staggering about and bumping into things, so I had him locked up as I thought he might be getting rabies or something. However, he seems a little better this morning. This letter is being taken by car to Atbara so I don't know whether it will reach you or not.

### ***Gedaref, 12 September 1930***

I haven't written to you for some time, but there's been another washout and the railway is only just open again. I'm writing this in the rest house at Gedaref in the calm of the Islamic Sabbath. The rest house sitting on a slight rise gives me a view of a pleasant undulating country with bunches of trees here and there and in amongst them the conical straw roofs on the native huts. Everything is pleasant and green, from the lush grasses to the tall broad-leafed crops of dura or millet which stand in some parts 7 or 8 ft high.



*An E African Blue Flycatcher?*

There is a smallish bird with a long straight beak and bright blue wings and tail sitting on a tree just outside the verandah and every now and then he flies in at a great rate, stops almost dead, takes a fly or insect off the fly wire of the door and is off again in a flash of blue feathers.

I can't remember when I last wrote to you so I'm starting off on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup>. Went round the Gash area again with Bernhardt the sanitary inspector arranging about the draining of pools back into the Gash, the pumping out of others, and inspecting generally to see that the mosquito men were doing their work. We have been lucky so far as the mosquitoes are fairly well under control both here and in Kassala, but the most trying time will come when the Gash begins to fall altogether and leaves enormous pools all over the place. After breakfast the usual routine of hospital till lunch time. The line will be open on Monday they say. Read in the afternoon for a while and then for a ride to knock a polo ball about. Hassan seems quite fit now. Home to tea and then a round at the hospital. From there I went on to bridge with Hankin and so home to dinner.

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> – Rode round the scene of yesterday's activities on the Gash to see the effect of the drainage etc. After breakfast to hospital to look round and glance in at the office and so home. Had just sat down to read a novel when governor sent for me to go and drink a beer with him and Sandars<sup>39</sup> who is staying with him. I rode for a while in the afternoon and then went to tea with the governor – he had some effendis coming to tea as a farewell party for his sub-mamur and had asked me to help entertain them. There was the sub-mamur, school master, my Sudanese MO, a translator and a clerk from the mudaria. We had tea and then taught them to play ping pong, which they called bing bong as there is no p in Arabic. Paul, the ADC Gedaref, came in later and we both stayed to dinner.

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September – Usual routine in the morning. Played two chukkas of polo in the afternoon – quite good fun. I put a pair of spurs on Hassan and it shook him up a lot and he went into the ball much better. Back to tea and then an Arabic lesson from the translator, Abdul-Tawab Eff. After that an evening round followed by reading and dinner.

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> – Dressing before breakfast and in the morning did a Symes amputation for Madura foot. Then had a visit from Sandars who is trekking to Musmar as the railway is shut and he wanted to borrow a tent. Went for a bit of practice on my own up to the squash court. Met Furney the vet on my way home and he came in for a dish of tea. My usual evening round and writing till dinner.

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> – Went out before breakfast to see how Bernhardt was getting on with mosquito work and ran into Sandars who was starting off late as his riding camel had got away in the night and they had only just caught it. Took B back to breakfast. Usual routine in morning. My MO goes on leave tomorrow. Rode in afternoon and then after tea, and round to bridge with Baily. A rainstorm came up so he made us stop to dinner after which we yarned for a while.

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<sup>39</sup> GER Sandars (1901-1985), SPS 1924-1951.

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> – Did all the important dressing before breakfast as the new MO doesn't arrive until tonight or tomorrow. After breakfast usual round of office work till lunch. Polo in the afternoon, two good chukkas, back home to tea and then to McCarthy for bridge and drinks and so home to dinner. I have decided to go out on Monday by saloon as far as Khashm el Girba, hitch the saloon onto an engineering train on Wed or Thurs as far as Showak and then from Showak to Gedaref, returning Monday week.

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> – Dressing before breakfast, usual routine after. Went out to see B working and so to lunch. Played squash with the governor who is very good and has taken me in hand to give me some lessons. Tea and then I should have had an Arabic lesson but Eff didn't turn up, sent a message later to say he had been busy at office. So did another hospital round and then got mail, the first for two weeks. Two letters from you. I find there is no train to take my saloon from Kh el G to Showak so I will camel it from one to the other and leave my saloon to come on Friday.

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> – Found my new MO, a Copt who seems a decent fellow. Did the dressings for his benefit and did 7 ops, just odds and ends, scraping sinuses etc. Squash in the afternoon with Baily and Hankin, home to tea and Arabic lesson, round, and then to governor's for bridge. Find there are no camels at Kh el G so will have to send them on from here. The governor had an attack of tonsillitis in Gedaref and is worried about his throat so I promised to look at it in the morning.

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> – Rode round town looking for mosquito pools. After breakfast met the governor at the hospital and examined him. He has an old standing pharyngitis and expects to get well in a day. He's a difficult patient as he worries about himself and at the same time tries to do too much and is difficult to control. Finished round at hospital and so home. The governor, Furney and Paul came in to beer and bridge, which is a recognized Sunday relaxation. Squash in the afternoon, work and dinner.

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> – Did dressing round before breakfast. Sandy Macleod's dog has just died after a long illness. It is a good thing as he would never have been much good again but I'm afraid M will be cut up. Two ops and usual round in morning, now hear the train will not leave until tomorrow morning, had already cancelled my polo in anticipation of going off this afternoon. Spent the afternoon writing and then rode up to polo, back to tea and a round and then to Furney for bridge and so home to bed.

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> – Up early and packed to cross the Gash and catch train. Was just setting out when I had a message that the train was not leaving till noon. However Paul, who was coming with me, and I decided to cross and have breakfast in the saloon and wait for the train. We did this but at 11 we were told that the train wouldn't be in till 5 p.m. so we went back to Kassala and tool lunch off Hankin. It was fortunate we did as I saw Acland, the DC at Khashm el Girba, who had just come to Kassala and he told me that it would take two days to trek from K el G to Showak now, and that wouldn't give me sufficient time, so I had to send after the camels and recall them. We went back to the station at about 4 and had tea and we then heard the train would be in at 8. After talking with the traffic manager, I decided to go straight to Gedaref and trust to getting suitable trains back. Had dinner and then went and had a drink with Vicary, the OC Eastern Arab Corps, who was returning from leave. We finally got away at 10 p.m.

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> – We had breakfast on the train and arrived at Gedaref at 10.30. Kennedy-Cooke,<sup>40</sup> the senior DC, and Mossogh-Bernard were in the station and we talked to them. Then I went up to the camp to see Scriven and returned to K-C's house for drink and then did some work until lunch. I'm staying in the rest house, quite a decent spot. In the afternoon Paul lent me a pony and we went for a ride and then tea with him. I just had time to go back and bath and dress and then went to K-C's for drinks and dinner. K-C and I sat and talked till quite late and so to bed.

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> – Down to civil hospital in the morning and had a look round and then did some work with Scriven and then went up to his hospital to look round. Back to K-C's office where I had some things to talk about and so to lunch. Rode Paul's pony in the afternoon and then tea and up to the mess for drinks and dinner. Played bridge with Vicary, Ker, and McCarthy before and after dinner.

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> – Loafed before breakfast and then to hospital for a while and then spent some time writing and so to K-C's for a drink at noon. I have been had into playing cricket this afternoon, seven-a-side, the EAC v. Civilians. It was rather good fun. I ran about furiously but made a duck. We went up to the mess to tea afterwards and stayed talking till dinner time.

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> – As I couldn't fit trains in to see the two dispensaries between here and Kassala I am taking my saloon the other way to see two other dispensaries, one at Hawata, about 40 miles from here, and another at Qala en Nahal (the place of honey) between here and Hawata. As I passed Q en N I left a note asking for a car to meet the train on return as the dispensary is some way from the station. Arrived at Hawata and inspected the dispensary and then walked down to the river – much further than I thought. I wanted to see a crocodile but there was none on view although a man told me that they were taking cattle. On my way back I met the hazir of the district and the sheik of the village and was taken to the sheik's house and given lemonade, tea, and coffee in quick succession. Then they brought in a large bowl of meat and another of a sort of thick gravy and sheets of the thin local bread. I didn't much like the look of it and held off when suddenly I realized that they were all waiting for me. So I fished out a bit of meat with my fingers and to my horror found it was an unadulterated piece of gristle which I could do nothing with, neither chew it or swallow it, so I had to await an opportunity to put it in my pocket. They provided a donkey for me to ride back to the saloon. When we got back to Q en N, the station master held the train up for half an hour whilst I went to inspect the dispensary. I got back in the evening just in time for dinner.

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> – I rode over to the new dispensary on the outskirts of Gedaref before breakfast. I was very pleased with it as the idea and the carrying out of it were the work of my Sudanese MO here and the Nazir who lives in the village. The latter built the hut and furnished it himself for the benefit of his people. A jolly good effort – I must try and do something for him. After breakfast Scriven and I looked over a new factory which is in the course of erection here, including a flour mill and sim-sim oil mill, and ice plant and an electric light plant. A most progressive bit of work on the part of a local Greek.

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<sup>40</sup> B Kennedy-Cooke, MC (1894-1963), SPS 1920-1943.

### *Kassala, 11 October 1930*

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> – Went down to the civil hospital for a final look round and so to the station. Hearne, the Judge Advocate, and Bowers, who were both from the army in Khartoum and had been in Gedaref for a court martial of a native officer were returning on the train and K-C was coming to Kassala to be acting governor whilst Baily was on trek, Scriven and McCarthy were also onboard. They all came and had lunch in my saloon except George Bowers who had been so badly stung by a blister beetle that he couldn't sit down with any comfort. We played bridge afterwards and then had tea by which time we had reached Khashm el Girba where we all got out to see the governor who had come up by the other train and was going out from there on trek into the Butana [the large grazing area between the Blue Nile and Atbara River].

We got into Kassala by 6.15 and said goodbye to the people who were going on and so over the Gash, a very poor shadow of its former self as the rains are now easing. I went to the hospital to have a look round and get my mail and so home to bath and dinner.

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> – Up and to the hospital before breakfast and the usual routine of rounds and accumulated office work till 2 and then home to lunch. In the afternoon K-C and I played squash and he came back to tea with me. We then went and played bridge at Hankin's until fairly late and then home to dinner.

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> – Again the usual routine before breakfast and after I did a tour round the town in the box car to see likely places for mosquito etc. In the afternoon K-C and I again played squash after which I had tea with him – he was living in the governor's house – and we sat yarning until quite late and so to dinner.

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> – I did not play polo as Hassan had rubbed his side under the girth against his stall, so K-C and I again played squash and I had tea with him. So home to dinner and a little Arabic.

Friday 19<sup>th</sup> – Usual routine in the morning and in the afternoon we played tennis and I had an Arabic lesson before dinner.

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> – We also played tennis. A new man for the political service arrived yesterday evening, one Evans.<sup>41</sup> He is staying with Hankin at the moment. Furney came and had a dish of tea afterwards and then I did some reading.

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> – I loafed before breakfast as I didn't want to ride Hassan. After my usual Sunday round of the hospital I spent the rest of the morning writing and reading. We played tennis again in the afternoon. Evans is pretty poor with a racket and seems to have no eye.

Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> – Not much to report as far as the hospital goes. There is not much malaria as the kharif has been light and the wards are fairly empty. K-C and I indulged in the good old game of squash and he came and had tea with me and we sat and talked till dinner time.

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> – Bernhardt arrived from Gedaref and we began a thorough inspection of the neighbourhood as soon the Gash will be troublesome as it is drying up into a lot of pools.

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<sup>41</sup> DMH Evans.



We also went over to the station, the first time that I have crossed the Gash except on an angareeb as it now has only a few pools a few inches deep where the crossing is. Played tennis in the afternoon and so home for an Arabic lesson and then to McCarthy's birthday party, quite a cheery show.

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> – Up at 4.45 to central prison to see a man hanged – a most unpleasant job especially at that hour. I'd have sent one of my MOs if I could have. The usual hospital routine and further inspections with B filled the morning. In the afternoon K-C, Hankin and I played squash. Tea and wrote before dinner.

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> – On getting to the hospital after a talk with K-C in the morning I found Mossogh-Bernard waiting for me. He had come in from Gedaref last Monday. He is very subject to asthma and had an attack induced by getting wet when he and White were out on trek the night before. I gave him an injection and sent him home to White's house where he is staying, and so on with the work of the day. Played squash with K-C and then went round to see how Mossogh was in the evening and stayed and had a drink and a rubber. Home to dinner and to pack as I went out into the Gash the next day.

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> – Routine inspection of the Gash dispensaries. I took B with me and we started off at 6 and drove over the Gash and then along the railway line. Stopped on the way and had breakfast and then reached Aroma at 9.30. We went straight on to Tendelai, about a 1½ hour drive, where I inspected the dispensary and had a chat with some people whilst B talked to the mosquito man. We then went and had a chat with Andrews, the Gash Board Inspector, and then on to Metateb where a similar process was gone through and so on to Hadalia where we inspected the works and then had lunch with Knowles, the inspector there. After a slight rest we went to Wagga, a village about 6 km away, as lots of mosquitos were reported there, and so back to Metateb and then on to Aroma, where we stayed the night with Young, the manager of the Gash Board.

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> – Inspected the Aroma dispensary before breakfast and then off to Dejeni where there is another dispensary and so to Mekale where we had a yarn with Murray who is stationed there, and then looked at the dispensary and so back to Kassala which was reached in time for a late lunch. In the afternoon I went and watched the tennis and then to Furney for bridge later.

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> – Rode before breakfast and wrote letters after the usual hospital round. The governor returned from trek today. Played tennis and then went to visit McCarthy who has a cold. Had a drink with him and so home to dinner.

### ***Kassala, 12 October 1930***

Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September – Up and to hospital for the usual pre-breakfast round and a spot of office work and back again afterwards to the usual routine and a couple of minor operations. After lunch I read for a time and then went for a ride and hit a ball about till teatime. I met Furney while out and rode home and had tea with him and sat yarning afterwards till dinner.

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> October – Went round the town with Bernhardt and the usual hospital filled up the morning. In the afternoon played tennis – K-C, Governor, Hankin, Furney and Evans also there. Home to Arabic till dinner, except for a round of the hospital.



Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> – Spent the morning at the usual work and the first part of the afternoon reading. Went out for a little schooling on Hassan and stopped for a while on the way home to watch the tennis and so home to tea. Received a wire from Gedaref to say there was a case of smallpox. I sent of instructions about quarantine etc. After and evening round did Arabic till dinner.

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> – Decided to go to Gedaref to see about the smallpox. Usual routine in the morning, came home and had a quick lunch, packed and to the station. The train left at 3 p.m. Furney and McCarthy were also on the train, and Patterson, and Ross,<sup>42</sup> an agricultural man returning from leave with his wife. Played bridge from tea till dinner and arrived at Gedaref at midnight. Furney and I went to the rest house where there also was Major Cheesman,<sup>43</sup> one of the consuls in Abyssinia. He was on his way to the coronation of Ras Tafari [Haile Selassie] and in order to get the 300 odd miles from his station to Addis Ababa had to trek into the Sudan and thence by rail to Port Sudan, boat to Djibouti, and so to a port in Abyssinia and thence by rail to Addis, a journey of about 2,500 miles in all just to get the 300 miles as the crow flies which was impassable.

Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> – Up early, had a few words with Cheesman and so to the hospital. From there to see the case of smallpox, which was isolated outside the town, and then to inspect the quarantine of contacts. We dealt with the infected hut by burning it and then I went to see the sheik of the village to impress on him the importance of rigid quarantine and to make arrangements for the feeding of the quarantined contacts, and so back to breakfast. I then went with Paul, the DC, by car to Qala en Nahal, about a two-hour drive south. There I saw the merkaz accountant who had black water fever and inspected the dispensary. I then had a word with Captain Johnson who is getting living quarters etc ready for workman and officials of the Nile Congo Divide Company who are going to start operations there for cobalt and platinum. Had lunch with Paul and then came back by train, arriving Gedaref at dinner time.

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> – Went down and did some routine inspection work at the hospital and then to inspect the contacts. After that I went up the hill to call on Vicary and see how Mossogh was after his asthma and so home to lunch. Loafed in the afternoon and went up to the hill for bridge and dinner in the evening – all in the mess fit and merry.

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> – To the hospital before breakfast to finish off the work I had there, back to breakfast and then along to talk some things over with Paul and so to the train which left at 10.30. Furney and McCarthy and a Post and Telegraph man also aboard. We played bridge and yarned most of the time and arrived here at 6 p.m. Home to bath and then to the hospital, dinner and bed.

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> – Up early to hospital and did usual round. After breakfast I got a message from the Deputy Hakim at Aroma to say there was a case of cerebrospinal meningitis there which he was sending us. As they had a very severe outbreak of it here and at Gedaref last year I thought I'd better go out and see about it. So after the usual morning I had a quick lunch and set off in one of the merkaz Fords, getting to Aroma in 1 hour and 20 mins, not bad going for over 50 km over only a dirt track. On arrival I went and saw the contacts and took swabs from them. They were of course furious at being kept in bounds, as they

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<sup>42</sup> W Ross, joined SGS 1924.

<sup>43</sup> Major RE Cheesman, OBE, Consul in Dangila, some 225 miles SSE of Gedaref, from 1925-1934.

always are, not understanding the why and the wherefore. However, I talked to them for a bit and managed to calm them a little. I then sent for the village sheik and put the breeze up him about the disease spreading etc, and asked him to arrange for provision of food for the contacts, and then went and had tea with Jock Young. I set off home after tea and arrived at 6.30, went straight to the hospital and did a round and so home to bath and dinner.

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> – Up at 4.30 to attend another hanging and then took the governor to the hospital to see about a new storeroom. Then drove out with Furney to the rifle range for a meeting of the rifle club. Didn't shoot too badly and so home to breakfast. Usual hospital all morning and so home to lunch. Played tennis in afternoon with Furney, Evans, Ross and Mrs Ross. Furney came on to me for a cup of tea and then I went to McCarthy for drinks and bridge.

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> – Usual routine in the morning, wrote a few letters in the afternoon and then to polo. Had two quite good chukkas, Hassan played better than I've known him and stayed near enough to the ball to allow me to hit a goal on occasions. Home to tea and then a round of the wards, the rest of the time till dinner being spent at Arabic.

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> – Usual routine at hospital plus a couple of minor operations and so home to lunch. Loafed till about 4.15 and then took one of Macleod's ponies up to the military school. I'm going to ride it a bit from now in order to have it quiet for Mrs Macleod. So home to tea and then I called on the Rosses and took a drink or two off them.

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> – After the usual morning played tennis in the afternoon, Rosses, Furney, Hankin and self, and so home to tea. Spent rest of time till dinner except for a visit to the hospital at Arabic.

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> – Rode before breakfast, first to look at the few remaining pools for mosquitos and then on to the doum palm forest and so home to bath, change and breakfast. My garden is now providing me with bananas and melons and the governor sends me occasional custard apples and oranges, so I'm doing well in the fruit line. Went and did a round afterwards and then home to spend the morning writing letters and monthly accounts etc. Lunch and a slight sleep and then I was just going out to tennis when I got a chit to say that as nearly everyone had gone out there would be none. So I sat down to write this letter when I got a chit from the governor asking me to go and see him. Found he had a boil on his elbow, which in his usual way he had aggravated by playing squash. So I prescribed treatment for him and then had tea with him. Thence to hospital to do evening round and get some dressing for the governor. Back home for a bath and then to governor's again for bridge, Hankin and Evans making up a four. Dinner and a slight addition to this letter and bed.

### ***Kassala, 27<sup>th</sup> October 1930***

I expect to be leaving here as soon as Macleod returns on the 4<sup>th</sup> with his wife, though where I shall be going next I'm not sure as they haven't told me so far. To get back to the dull diary of daily doings

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> – Usual routine in morning, tennis in afternoon and home to rapid tea and change, hospital round and so home to receive people for bridge. Governor, McCarthy, White, Hankin, and John Going, the vet, who has just returned from leave. Dinner and bed.

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> – Usual morning's work and a ride on Macleod's pony in the afternoon. Home to tea and then Arabic.

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> – Usual routine and an operation on a girl who had been brought in by her family from a village. She had an old osteomyelitis of the lower end of her tibia. Her brother said (in the delightful way they have) that he had brought her in for me to treat and if he saw that I did her any good then he would go home and bring in some more and if I didn't do any good, no more cases. I did a sequestrum of more than half the shaft of the tibia. It of course left an enormous hole but she is doing quite well. Tennis in afternoon, Ross and wife, Evans, Going and Hankin also playing.

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> – To the hospital in the morning, read and slept in the afternoon, had tea and did a round and so to the governor's for bridge – White, Going and self making the four. We had quite good bridge, and so home to a latish dinner.

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> – Yesterday the governor changed the weekly holiday to Friday instead of Sunday. Friday is the usual holiday in the Sudan as it is the Mohd. day of prayer. Sunday had been observed here before as the mail used to arrive on Friday morning, but it now arrives on Saturday. Went for a long ride before breakfast and called in at the hospital on my way home, and also did a round after breakfast, then spent the rest of the morning writing. Going, the Rosses and I made up a four for tennis in the afternoon and we had tea with the Rosses after, with Arabic to follow.

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> – Usual work at hospital in morning, tennis in afternoon, tea and a round.

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> – Rode over to railway station with governor to inspect the sanitation as I had written an adverse report on it. Hospital after breakfast and a ride in the afternoon. After tea and a round went to Hankin for bridge, the governor, Whitfield<sup>44</sup> (an entomologist who has come to deal with locusts) and I being the four. Then to dinner with the governor, Whitfield, Black,<sup>45</sup> the PWD man, and a visiting Post and Telegraph man making up the party – quite a jolly chatty dinner.

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> – The daily toil followed by a ride and hitting a ball about. Round followed by bridge at the governor's with McCarthy and Whitfield. At the end of bridge the governor asked us to stay to dinner – a good party, we were all in a frivolous mood and after dinner we put on false noses which the governor solemnly produced and sang choruses out of a sort of students' song book. We each had to choose a song in turn and then sing the verse and all joined in the chorus. We finished up after midnight by singing "We'll go gathering nuts in May" around a tree in the garden.

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> – Not much to tell, went for a ride in the afternoon and did Arabic till dinner.

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> – Went over to the station to see the Colemans' baby (he's a junior official in the railways). My driver got stuck in the sand and it took six men to get us out. Tennis in the afternoon, tea and a round, and then to Goings for a drink, chat and a listen to the gramophone.

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> – Went for a ride round the slaughterhouse etc before breakfast and then to hospital for usual day. Governor and Hankin have gone out to the Gash so I thought there

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<sup>44</sup> FGS Whitfield, joined SGS 1925. He was based in Kordofan where Tom met him again the following year.

<sup>45</sup> CW Black, joined SGS 1921.

would be no polo. However, Vicary was in from Gedaref so we managed to get some. I quite enjoyed it as Hassan went very well for him and I had two good chukkas. Back for nap and tea, bath and a round and so to White's for bridge, Vicary, McCarthy also there, had some good bridge. Stopped at McC's house on the way home for a final drink, and so to dinner.

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> – Usual round in morning. Dr Ali, my Sudanese MO, who has been on leave, returned with a sore throat and has been on the sick list. Dr Daud, the man who was relieving him, leaves by tonight's train, so I shall be without an MO till Ali gets better. Tennis in afternoon followed by bridge at McCarthy's in the evening. Vicary, White and Going also there but V went off early to dinner with the governor.

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> – Ali still ill so I did all my dressing before breakfast and relieved the routine by an operation afterwards. Tennis in the afternoon, Rosses, Going, Evans, Griffiths and [W.] Gray, the latter a newly arrived vet to take place of Furney who has been moved to Shendi. Went along and had tea with Going. McCarthy arrived later on and we stayed and talked until Going and Gray had to push off to dinner with the governor. Then McC came to me for a drink and so to dinner and bed.

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> – Spent the whole day sewing people up. A quarrel between two brothers and another man about some cattle; the latter killed one and severely wounded the other, despite the fact that when I came to examine him, in addition to numerous cuts and stab wounds, he had both his arms broken. Paid a visit to Ross who has a stiff neck. Tennis in the afternoon, Mrs Ross, Griffiths, Evans and self. Evans came and had a dish of tea with me. I then did a round and followed it with Arabic till dinner time.

Monday 27<sup>th</sup> – Dr Ali returned to duty today. Paid Ross a visit after breakfast, he seems much better. Did one operation after breakfast and round and office work for rest of day. Polo in the afternoon, had two fair chukkas but not as good as Thursday. Tea and a round followed by letter writing until dinner. So that's you up to date.

### ***Kadugli, Kordofan, 20 December 1930***

*At least one letter is missing. Tom must have left Kassala soon after 4 November and would have spent some time in Khartoum before moving to Kadugli. Many years later he annotated this letter with information about some of the people mentioned therein; these annotations are reproduced within quotation marks in the footnotes.*

I think I finished my last letter to you on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> so here goes from then.

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> – Went for a walk before breakfast. Then John Simons,<sup>46</sup> Wallace<sup>47</sup> and self went to see March,<sup>48</sup> the senior agriculture inspector and Pennington,<sup>49</sup> the chief engineer of the agricultural department, who had come in from Taloodi and so to hospital for the morning.

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<sup>46</sup> JA Simons (1900-1971), SMS 1925-1932. "SMI of Kordofan Province, lived in El Obeid, a pleasant and amusing companion but touched with Walter Mittyism – he wore 1914-18 war medals to which he was not entitled and related fictitious war service events. Had to resign when found out. He finished as an ENT specialist in Tunbridge Wells. People liked and were amused by him and everyone felt sorry for his wife."

<sup>47</sup> JW "Waldo" Wallace, joined SMS 1927. "A charming Irishman. Soon after this while returning from leave in a Bibby boat, and having just got engaged, he committed suicide by cutting veins in a bath." In fact he died in 1936 and Tom replaced him as SMI Darfur.

<sup>48</sup> GF March, MC, joined SGS 1921. "Marco March, a large bucolic fellow well suited to the Agriculture Dept."

<sup>49</sup> GE Pennington, joined SGS 1906.

Everything is at 6s and 7s at the moment as we haven't yet got our full equipment but it should be quite nice when all is in order. Lunched early and then JS and wife left for Dilling en route for El Obeid. W and I slept in the afternoon and then went for a walk. Pennington, March and the locals in for drinks and so to dinner and bed.

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> – Did Arabic before breakfast. Spent morning at hospital trying to get some order amongst arriving stores etc. My new pony arrived this morning. Williams,<sup>50</sup> the vet, had bought him for me at the Messaria horse show. A nice big-boned iron grey, very young, and wanting in condition but should turn out well. Walk after tea, took Wallace to see pony and so to drinks and dinner at James'.<sup>51</sup>

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> – Spent morning at hospital. W at home packing up. Reg Chator, the Officer Commanding Western Arab Corp, arrived in middle of morning to say goodbye as his term of service is up. Went up later before lunch to George's<sup>52</sup> house to drink a gin in farewell to Chator. I think Chator rather regrets going. W and I went for walk in evening and met Pease,<sup>53</sup> the Assistant Civil Secretary for Police, who is on tour – took him up to George's for a drink and then brought him back to dinner.

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> – Hospital in morning, mainly sorting out papers and files. I have a lot of office work to do and no clerk at the moment. Went down before tea to fit saddle on the pony and then W and I climbed a hill nearby. Lots of abandoned Nuba huts at the top. Went to Nealons for drinks and G for dinner.

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> – Routine in morning. Rode new pony in evening. He doesn't know anything at the moment but it will be rather fun schooling him. W and I to Titheringtons<sup>54</sup> for dinner.

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> – Holiday, loafed before breakfast. Visit to hospital and then W and I went through house together and arranged about my taking over various odds and ends of furniture. Together, what with the car and one thing and another, I've had to hand Wallace £150, rather a blow to the exchequer.<sup>55</sup> Intended to ride in the afternoon but found the pony was lame in near shoulder – think he probably twisted it in getting down as he has never been in a stable before. Miss Wolff,<sup>56</sup> who runs the school for midwives in Khartoum, arrived on her annual tour picking out new women for training. She came to dinner.

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> – Wrote before breakfast. Hospital and then early lunch and W left on his way to his new sphere in Dongola. Went down to see pony who was still slightly lame but nothing serious. George and James to dinner.

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<sup>50</sup> HB Williams, OBE, joined SVS 1920.

<sup>51</sup> LE ("Jimmy") James, Agriculture Inspector in Kadugli, joined SGS 1924.

<sup>52</sup> "A Bimbashi in the Camel Corps and in command of the detachment in Kadugli."

<sup>53</sup> Major HE Pease, DSO, joined SGS 1925. "A character and member of the well-known Yorkshire family. He lived in Khartoum opposite the British barracks in Khartoum North. Like most people, he and his wife slept on their roof in the hot weather and when the band played 'God save the King' at the end of a party in the officers' mess he was said to leap out of bed, stand to attention, and insist on his wife doing the same."

<sup>54</sup> GW Titherington (1893-1951), SPS 1919-1942. At this time he was ADC Kadugli.

<sup>55</sup> "My salary was then £60 a month, [added later] I think in fact it was less, and everyone had a cut."

<sup>56</sup> "One of two famous sisters [Mabel E Wolff, SMS 1920-1937, and Gertrude L Wolf, SMS 1925-1937] who started, ran, and developed the Midwives Training School in Omdurman – for all my time the only source of trained midwives."

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> – Rode round town before breakfast, hospital in morning and an Arabic lesson from merkaz translator in evening. Miss Wolff to dinner.

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> – Arabic before breakfast and hospital and two ops in morning. Just as I was leaving at 2.15 had a wire from Whitfield, the entomologist at Taloodi, 60 miles away, to say that his assistant Wood was ill and would I come over urgently. Had a bite of lunch and set off in car at 3.30 arriving at 6.15. Met W who put me up and went to see Wood. The unfortunate fellow has only been here four weeks and has already had fever once. I found him in a fairly severe relapse of fever complicated by an ischiorectal abscess. Went later and had a drink with March, who lives here.

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> – Spent day in tending Ward and visiting hospital which is in charge of an assistant MO. Wired JS that I thought Wood should be shifted as being unsuitable for this place. I don't want him here in the rains if he's going to go down with fever at the best time of the year. Besides, I think that the abscess probably has a TB basis, so propose to shift him to Khartoum as soon as he is fit to travel. Whitfield had people in for drinks and I went for a ride beforehand with Hussey de Burgh,<sup>57</sup> the army man here.

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> – Opened Ward's abscess in the morning which relieved him as good deal, fever now quite recovered. Did one or two odd jobs in the morning and went for a walk in the evening before drinking with H de B.

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> – Spent morning doing a few final things and then after early lunch brought Ward as far as here in my car, put him to bed and gave him some dinner and fixed him up for the night. We were delayed on the way here as the driver of the lorry which was carrying his luggage, having no brakes to speak of, was unable to take the bend onto the bridge over a khor and so shot over a steep bank into the water. I had to scour the neighbourhood to get about 50 Nubas to manhandle it out again.

Friday 19<sup>th</sup> – didn't realise it was my birthday yesterday. Found a good mail from you awaiting me. Got Wood fixed up and saw him off in his lorry after breakfast and wired ahead for his reception. He seems much better – I think the idea of getting to Khartoum did him a lot of good.

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> – Routine hospital in morning, wrote letters after lunch and then rode before tea. Drinks with Nicholls and so home to dinner and finish this letter.



<sup>57</sup> "An Irish Bimbashi in the Camel Corp and a relative of Madge Anstruther" [of Balcaskie House, Fife, a friend of Tom and Peg's].

## 1931 - Kadugli, El Obeid, Port Sudan

### *Kadugli, 23 January 1931*

*(Reached Adelaide 28 February)*

Here I am about three weeks late again, I don't seem to have had the opportunity to settle down since leaving Kassala.

This country in common with the rest of the world is feeling the pinch. Cotton and gum are our only sources of income: at the present prices they are incapable of balancing the expenditure. As is usual, they have gone on blindly spending money on development, irrigation, building plans etc until now a crisis has arisen all at once which might have been considerably lightened by a little foresight 18 months or a year ago. Now we suddenly (and the Finance Dept would have you believe, inexplicably) find ourselves in very deep water. This had led to the setting up of an economy committee who are preparing a report and it seems likely that people will be got rid of right and left. One hears that half the agricultural department are going and many people from the PWD and railways, and the army is being drastically reduced. Already climate allowances have been abolished which is pretty hard on us in the south. There used to be two rates of travel allowance, one at a rate of PT 55 per diem whilst one was outside one's province and the second at a rate of PT 35 per diem whilst on tour within one's province. They now have both been reduced to PT17½ per diem. Fortunately, I believe that the SMS is not being reduced but everyone is grumbling, and chaps don't know at what moment they will be axed. I only get an allowance for one pony now instead of two as the last man had, and mileage allowance for one's car is to be halved. However, I suppose it will all come right in the long run.

*The SMS budget in 1933 was some 20% less than that for 1931. It increased thereafter and by 1939 was some 9% higher, though less in real terms as the budget now covered work previously undertaken by the SDF's medical corps.<sup>58</sup>*

Since I last wrote you I have been very busy on the annual report for my district and as I have no clerk here it meant a lot of tedious work at figures, and took rather a time as I was new to the place.

Christmas and New Year were quite cheery festivities here and I enjoyed both. On January 4<sup>th</sup> Andrew Smith, one of the agricultural people, and I set off for Khartoum for the exam.<sup>59</sup> As my lorry was broken down, we set off in my little car: he and self and two servants and my car boy and all our kit - not a bad load. We stayed the night in Dilling and dined with Keys, the Bimbashi [the officer-in-charge of the local SDF unit, seconded from the British Army], the rest of the station also being present, quite a cheery party. We arrived in El Obeid next day at 1 pm. I dropped Andrew who was staying with Boileau and went to the hospital where I talked over some things about work with John Simmons<sup>60</sup> and so to lunch with him. I did Arabic in the afternoon and then Hugh Boustead,<sup>61</sup> the second-in-

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<sup>58</sup> The 1931 budget was £E 263,566. The figures are from *A History of Medical Services in Sudan*, Siddiq I Khalil (Amazon UK, 2018), quoting M W Daly, *Imperial Sudan: the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium 1934-56* (CUP, 1991).

<sup>59</sup> Proficiency in Arabic was a condition for a permanent contract after the two-year probationary period.

There was a financial incentive to pass a more advanced Arabic exam, and for proficiency in a local language.

<sup>60</sup> J A Simmons (1900-1970), SMS 1925-1931, Senior Medical Inspector Kordofan.

<sup>61</sup> Colonel Sir John Edmond Hugh Boustead, KBE, CMG, DSO, MC & Bar, (1895-1980).



command of the Camel Corps came to dinner. The train left for Khartoum early next morning and we – Aldridge (another doctor),<sup>62</sup> Andrew Buchanan, a district commissioner and I - had breakfast on board.

We arrived early next morning in Khartoum where I was met by Michael Hillary<sup>63</sup> as they were kindly having me to stay. They have a jolly little house with a fine garden and I had a big bedroom and bathroom to myself with a separate entrance and instructions to come and go as I pleased. That morning, Wednesday, I spent in calling on Atkey and then had a swim in the club baths, a great treat. Home to lunch and Arabic. In the evening I dined with the Grantham Hills,<sup>64</sup> he is senior surgeon to the Khartoum hospital. There I met one Cruickshank, a Canadian who is Professor of surgery at the University of Beirut. He was in Khartoum examining in surgery for the Kitchener Medical School. Thursday, I did Arabic all morning and went to see the semi-finals of the McKenzie cup with Clifford Drew. It was good polo and I enjoyed it. After dinner Cliff and I went to a club dance, quite a good show, an open-air floor on the lawn with supper tables arranged around it and the band of the Warwicks, who are stationed there.

Friday [9<sup>th</sup>], Arabic in the morning followed by a swim, some more Arabic after lunch and then squash followed by bridge at the Hillarys. Saturday was the first paper, Arabic into English and very hard I thought, followed by a swim and more Arabic after lunch. I then went with Cliff to the final of the polo, a very good match between two teams from Shendi – the headquarters of the cavalry – consisting of two British officers and two native officers on each side. The NOs were v. good, for although their teamwork is not quite as good as might be, their stickwork and horsemanship is very fine. From there I went home and did some work as the Hs were out to bridge. After dinner, Cliff and I looked in at a dance at the hotel to have a drink with Tyndall-Briscoe, the captain of the winning team, and so home.

On Sunday we had an English into Arabic paper which was a bit better than the first. I had a swim after this, did some work in the afternoon, and in the evening some people came in to bridge. I then went off to dine with the Pease family. They have a Miss Satchwell staying with them and the Jack Gibsons were there. The latter is a contractor, having built the Makwar dam and done much other big work here recently.

On Monday we had the last paper, hand-written Arabic - which is much more difficult than printed – into English. I didn't care much for that either. I had a swim afterwards. In the afternoon I played or tried to play badminton at the Hs. As I had never even seen it before, you can imagine it was pretty ludicrous. The badminton party stayed to tea and bridge and we had dinner pretty late.

On Tuesday I had my viva which I rather enjoyed. Again tried badminton in the afternoon, this party also staying to tea and bridge. Wednesday I went round the town to the hospital to call on Graham Hill and Humphreys, to the medical school to have a chat with

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<sup>62</sup> JS Aldridge, joined SMS 1929, Dean of the Kitchener School of Medicine from 1938-45.

<sup>63</sup> Michael Hillary, DSO, OBE, was an Australian civil servant who joined the Sudanese government in 1925 and was Director of Accounts in the Finance Department at this time, and later Auditor-General. Michael and Edwina were the parents of Richard Hillary, author of *The Last Enemy*. They were family friends from Australia.

<sup>64</sup> C Grantham Hill, FRCS. He joined the Service in 1920, and was Senior Surgeon from 1928, and Director of the Khartoum Hospital from 1930, until his retirement in 1933.

Anderson<sup>65</sup> and so on. Did some shopping, both for myself and for people here [Kadugli] and so to the baths for a swim. In the afternoon the Hs and I drove over to Omdurman to a display of native arts and crafts and very fine it was too. They do some good silver work in the shape of beaten silver, bowls, rose bowls etc, and some good ivory ware. Their leather work is good in parts, but the thing that impressed me most was the furniture, made for the most part out of very good grain mahogany, beautifully made and quite reasonable: dining room chairs with leather seats for PT 135, i.e. about £1-7-0, easy chairs of mahogany without cushions for PT 160 and small round occasional tables for drinks etc PT 120. After tea we went and had tea with the Misses Wolff, two very charming women who run a training school for native midwives and nurses for the Govt. So back to Khartoum, the Hs going out to bridge and I to club to play bridge with Cliff, Jamieson and Tracey.<sup>66</sup>

On Thursday O'Shaughnessy<sup>67</sup> sent his car over and I went to assist him do a list of operations. He is a very brilliant fellow and is leaving in June to take up a research fellowship at the Royal College of Surgeons. I got back just in time for lunch. In the afternoon I went to polo with Cliff. He has three very fine Arab ponies which I coveted a bit. However, I'd rather be here and have no Arabs than be in Khartoum with them - too much poodle faking and petty jealousy there for me. After tea and a drink, Cliff drove me down to the station, and Michael also came to see me off - we had a farewell drink on the train and so to El Obeid, which we reached last Friday evening. Simmons met us and took me off to his house for tea and drinks. He and Mrs S then had to go off and dine with the Gov. to meet one Spender, a journalist who is out here, so Aldridge, Macphail,<sup>68</sup> Boileau and I had dinner in the S's house.

Saturday [17<sup>th</sup>] was the anniversary of George Vth's visit to the Sudan, known locally as King's Day. I took Mrs S and Mrs Waugh in my car to a sort of show in the maidan, consisting of pony races, camel and donkey races etc. It was quite entertaining. I went on from there to the hospital to talk over some things with John and so home to lunch. In the afternoon we all went to the schoolboys' sports, and an excellent show it was to. All the events contested in a keen and sportsmanlike way, no hitch at all in the proceedings, each event following the other like clockwork, and all a very considerable credit to Hassan Effendi, the headmaster whose sole effort it was. Aldridge and I dined with the Simmons, quite a cheery party. We also breakfasted with them next day. After breakfast they set off on a tour of inspection and I spent the morning doing odd jobs concerned with this hospital etc. In the afternoon, A and I went for a ride and so home to drinks and dinner with A, Boileau and Gillespie<sup>69</sup> making up the party, which I thoroughly enjoyed.

Next morning I did some personal buying etc in the town and after an early lunch set off at 1.30 for Dilling. I had arranged to have dinner and breakfast on my way through with Andrew, who was buying cotton there, but when I arrived at D I found he had gone on to Gulfan to hold a market there so I went on to Gulfan, about 30 miles, and found A at the rest house. I left early the next day, Tuesday, and got in here for lunch, which James very kindly gave me. We played polo in the afternoon and I dined with the Titheringtons. I

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<sup>65</sup> FE Anderson, who was Registrar (Dean) of the Medical School.

<sup>66</sup> CB Tracey (1898-1984), SPS 1923-1948.

<sup>67</sup> L O'Shaughnessy, FRCS, SMS 1924-1931.

<sup>68</sup> JGS Macphail (1900-1984), SPS 1923-1947. At this time he was the ADC En Nahud/El Obeid.

<sup>69</sup> JA Gillespie, joined SVS 1930.

don't know if I told you I bought a second pony, a beautifully put together blood bay. He is a wee bit on the small side but is as keen as mustard and has the heart of a lion. He changes his feet beautifully and will in time make a good polo pony.

Wednesday was spent catching up on arrears of correspondence in the office and going round the hospital. In the evening I did an emergency op on an old woman with an acute obstruction. She had a loop strangulated by an omental band. The loop was gangrenous and all matted together, so that I had to resect it. I had no bowel clamps and had to do it on a bed as my new operating table has not yet arrived. Unfortunately she did not stand the somewhat lengthy op very well and died the next day.

On Thursday I rode before breakfast followed by a rather boring morning of office work and the afternoon was spent schooling my new bay. Friday morning I went to the hospital early and again for a short time after breakfast, the rest of the morning being spent in writing. We played polo in the afternoon after which I went and had drinks with James.

Today, Sat 24<sup>th</sup>, I rode before breakfast, making a tour of the slaughter place, butcher's shop and various sanitary arrangements. The morning was spent going through and checking the year's supply of stores, some of which have just arrived. This afternoon I played tennis on our new court which we have just put up. That brings me up to date.

### ***Shatt Safia rest house, 5 February 1931***

As you can see, I am out on trek and sending this in by carrier.

*When out on trek, he travelled with servants and bearers, generally by car with a lorry carrying the medical equipment, hospital tent, and supplies for the journey.*

25<sup>th</sup> January - Up and rode round sanitary area, find they are not digging the pits correctly and might just as well not do it at all. After breakfast went and told Tithers it was no good and he and the mamur [the Sudanese official next below the expatriate ADC] are meeting me tomorrow to arrange a plan. Rest of morning in office. Visit to mamur's wife who is ill, followed by tennis on our new court, rather a good effort made out of gum and red ant heap stuff. It only cost us £15 to put up, net, fence and all. This followed by us all going to tea at Andrew's and staying for drinks. Byland, the DC from El Obeid, and his wife were there.

26<sup>th</sup> - Went out with Tithers as arranged and showed them how to lay out plan for trenches, pegged it out and so on, and then inspected the rest of the town with Tithers, and so breakfast. All morning at hospital with blasted office work, however I should get more-or-less ahead of it in a week or two. Played polo in the afternoon, three quite good chukkas. We've moved to a new ground which is less dusty than the old but still no billiard table. It is in addition across the main road, so we have to put a police guard on it to keep the locals off.

27<sup>th</sup> - Wire from JS yesterday to say that he and Pridie<sup>70</sup> were coming on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, so I decided to go to Talodi and El Liri today and tomorrow as I wanted after that to go out on trek with Tithers who is going out to buy grain and list the locals. Before breakfast I went out to see how they were shaping up at yesterday's task, and then picked Andrew up at his

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<sup>70</sup> Later Sir Eric Pridie, KCMG, DSO, (1896-1978), SMS from 1924-1945 and Director from 1933-45. At this time he was Senior Medical Inspector Khartoum.

office as he was to give me breakfast. After this I set off for Talodi, arriving at 1 pm. Visited Arbuthnot<sup>71</sup> in his office and then to the hospital to visit Said Effendi and do routine exam of hospital and go through some papers and tests with him. Back to lunch with A and at 4 I set out for El Liri. Arrived in time for tea. Sheik Sherif<sup>72</sup> came to greet me and later he and Mahdi Effendi, the Deputy Hakim there, called on me and we sat and talked for about two hours. Very interesting, they were telling me all about the early days of this province.

28<sup>th</sup> - Visited OP dept with Mahdi Efendi and also went through returns and papers etc with him. Then went round his new hospital, consisting of mud huts with grass roofs and quite the finest built I've seen for a long time and a great credit to the makers. A arrived in time for breakfast and we did a tour together afterwards. He'd come down to try some cases. I left him and returned to Talodi where I had more work to do at the hospital and then did some boards. Had lunch with the Richards and discovered quite by accident that Mrs R, who is a doctor, was a relative, I believe a niece, of Edgar Browne's and had been in Adelaide many years ago as an infant. Set off home at 3.30, stopped at two rest houses to put up notice boards which Dreamy Arbuthnot had asked me to do. At the second, Korarak, I found a gathering of Nubas about 400 strong who were having a wrestling competition, for which the Nubas go in quite a lot. It is a pretty strenuous game at which they occasionally kill each other. The young men of the tribe do it and they cover themselves in grey wood ash so as to give each other a good grip as they are normally greasy. I stayed for a while and watched them, getting in to Kadugli in the evening. As I passed the tennis court, Smith and the Nealons were having tea so I stopped and had it with them, afterwards walking over to the Tithers to deliver some letters from A and had a drink, and so to dinner at the Nealons. I really must give some dinner parties soon.

29<sup>th</sup> - Office work before and after breakfast and routine rounds etc. Late lunch. We decided to play polo and as it was impromptu we didn't have the guard on the road, with the result that an old lady on a heavily-loaded donkey got into the middle of the game making shrill cries as she began to drive her donkey round in circles. We had to stop the game to allow her to get off the field. Dined with Andrew Smith, James and Nealons there. We stayed up too late.

30<sup>th</sup> - Office most of the morning clearing up before going out to join Tithers and wife at Shatt Demam. Sent lorry off in morning with a temergi<sup>73</sup> and a hospital tent and medicine. Set out after lunch and reached rest house in time for tea, after which T and I went about 2 km up the road where T was buying grain and I got the hospital going and saw some sick. Like all natives, they are slow starters and don't realise you're there until after a day or so. Back to dinner.

31<sup>st</sup> - Went up to the hospital at 6:30 but no people about as they loathe getting up while it is still cold, so I spent the time trying to learn some medical words in dialect from an old

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<sup>71</sup> E D Arbuthnot (1905-1984), SPS 1927-1953. At this time he was ADC Talodi.

<sup>72</sup> Sherif Osman, a retired warrant officer in the police. "He was a fine horseman, wise and charming as a companion, a man of great loyalty ... He was an easy talker, and he had many stories of the events of 1924 when the Egyptian Army detachment in Talodi supported their fellow mutineers in Khartoum, and of the part he had played in keeping the Sudan police steady. For this he had been awarded the British Empire Medal." (*Shadows on the Sand*, page 60.)

<sup>73</sup> A medical orderly.

sheik. One of the difficulties of working in the Nuba Mountains is that each group of hills has its own dialect, the majority of which have no words in common. After breakfast went back and saw quite a lot of sick: the usual stuff, large ulcers, spirochaetal disease etc. After tea went up and saw more sick. On our way back there was a crowd on the road which on investigation proved to be fathers and elder brothers teaching the small boys to wrestle – it was great to see them, some tiny tots of 4 or 5 as serious as could be. Walked up to a pool with T to see if we could get some bush grouse but we were a bit late.

1<sup>st</sup> February - T and I walked up to a nearby village and got a guide to take us to the top of the hill to view the surrounding country. It is hard work as the hills are covered with enormous boulders which are difficult climbing. These are so large that they form huge caves between them in which the Nubas hide in time of trouble, and they have grain and water stores in them. So back to a well-earned breakfast. After breakfast T moved on about 4 km to buy more grain and after seeing some sick in the original place I shifted the hospital up to T and spent the rest of the morning seeing sick. Went up again in the evening for a while and then back to the rest house to pick up my things and so back to Kadugli. Nealon came over to say his wife had been ill whilst I'd been away. I went down to see her, I imagine she had had sand fly fever but was much better. Stayed and had a drink and so home to dinner.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Rode round town to see how things were going. Usual hospital routine and polo after lunch. John S and Eric Pridie arrived at 6 in their lorry, John's car having bust the differential about 40 miles out. Tea and talk about SMS affairs. P tells me I shall not go on leave till the beginning of July. John has been told he is going to Darfur in the west. This province up till now has been run by SDF doctors and as they are going John is taking the province over. I shall have to go into Obeid in June to hold the fort whilst John goes up to have a look at the lie of the land in Darfur. We went up to drinks with James and so home to dinner. Nealon came in to talk to John about getting his car repaired.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Drove J and P round the town and to look over the ginning factory. Inspection of hospital after breakfast. P wants to know if when John left for Darfur I would take over Dilling into my area. I said as this area was only just being opened up, and there were so many hills that had never even seen a doctor, for the moment I would more than have my hands full here, but that when I had this area running a bit on its own I could take on Dilling and be more able to do the enlarged area justice. He agreed and suggested that I should take over Dilling at the end of the year. J and P left for Talodi at noon. I've sent out a lorry to tow John's car in and N is going to repair it in the evening when the spares arrive. After tea I went out again to join the Ts. Unfortunately, my lorry chose this moment to shake its battery to bits, so my poor wee car was rather over-loaded and I had to go very slowly as the last part of the road was very rough. Found the Ts at El Ehaima and arrived in time for tub and dinner.

4<sup>th</sup> - Saw some sick before breakfast. Afterwards we moved off back to the place where we had left the hospital. Luckily we found one of Mohd. Rebal's lorries there which we hired to take the hospital out to here [Shatt Safia] where we are now. Road rather rough over black cotton soil. This is a queer little ring of mounds of huge boulders, hardly worthy of the name of hills, with houses perched into the boulders at all angles. All the women and children turned out to greet us. We didn't do any work as all the men were away to

celebrate a death in a neighbouring hill. Went for a walk in the evening to see some of the houses and climbed some of the rocks. Well, that's up to date.

### ***Kadugli, 20 February 1931***

*(envelope annotated "Answered 2 April")*

I seem to have been out and about on trek almost continuously since I last wrote to you, from Shatt Sofia, so to carry on from there.

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February - Went out for a walk with T looking for well sites for the natives. They are often badly off for water, but can never be enthused sufficiently to dig themselves decent wells. They are content to scrape small holes just down to the water which hold about a hat full at most. Saw sick during the morning - this hill seems fairly healthy, although they all keep their sick in the houses for a time until they see if you are worth visiting or not. Spent the afternoon in much the same way whilst T bought grain. After tea we heard a noise at the far end of the village and on going to investigate found a large gathering of the elders again teaching the young to wrestle, the latter being all dressed up in monkey tails, bells etc as replicas of their brothers and fathers when they wrestle. As I explained before, wrestling is the great pastime and ceremonial of most of these hills. Some of them, however, go in for stick fighting. We stayed and watched for a while until it got too dusty with the stamping about etc.

6<sup>th</sup> - Again toured with T seeking well sites. Spent the forenoon alternately seeing sick and watching T buying grain. The latter is a good way of catching people with ulcers etc as they come up to be paid. After lunch saw more sick and finally went to see pukka wrestling by the men. They are the young men of the tribe and most if not all of them wrestle. Whatever else their decorations, they are all smothered from head to foot in grey wood ash to give each other a good grip. This is renewed from time to time by their supporters, usually out of a gourd pierced like a large pepper pot. On top of this, they all have a belt made of grass and mud, round in cross section, having a large knot on it at the back. They usually have several monkey tails hanging down behind and round their ankles strips of fur and anklets made of dried palm leaves, twisted and folded into a series of boxes. In each one is a small pebble so that they rattle when they walk. At the back of their necks, kept in place by a string round the neck, is a whole shell of a small tortoise, such as one common in the pools and streams here. This forms a natural box in which is a small brass rattle. As they approach one another they stamp and wiggle their shoulders to produce a noise from both these rattles. The other essentials are any number of supporters, some of whom have things like enormous fly-swatters, the flap of which is of giraffe hide. They slap the ground with these, making lots of noise and raising clouds of dust.

A large sort of ring is made by the supporters and onlookers with 20 or 30 wrestlers in the centre. There seems to be no rule or ritual procedure, they just walk round and challenge one another, either by dancing in front of him or by tapping him on the shoulder. However, there appears to be no obligation to accept a challenge, which is often ignored. Strangely, it is usually the pride of the hill who refuses most. There are frequently 5 or 6 contests going on in the ring at a time and they bump and interfere with one another. When one man throws another his entire supporters rush into the ring regardless of the other contestants and they then run the victor out of the ring, up the road a bit and back, yelling and shouting and banging the ground. Add to this an excited enthusiast letting off

a rifle every now and then and you can imagine the dust and noise. The actual wrestling is quite scientific and they have recognized locks, throws, counters etc. A man is defeated if any part of his body other than his feet touch the ground. If two contestants get angry and look like killing each other their friends rush in and separate them before any damage is done.

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> - I saw sick before breakfast, after which we drove about 3 km to a place called Farma where T wanted to buy grain. However, we found that as usual the grain wasn't ready, but we found a convoy of Arabs who had no business there, so we make them sell us the grain they had. We then took some sick back to Shatt. We found on arrival that another festival, 'ciba' they call it, was in progress. We were told that it was the annual merissa (native beer) ciba, and would last two days. As far as the eye could see in every direction women were streaming in with a large gourd of merissa on their heads. It looked like developing into a first-class drunk so we decided to move on, and did so that afternoon, about 10 km to Tais, a very good rest house in a pretty spot. We had tea and then T and I shot guinea fowl for the larder, so to drinks and dinner.

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> - T and I got a guide and climbed to the top of a hill where we had an uninterrupted view in all directions. The morning was clear and it was delightful: absolutely flat cotton soil plains and every now and then a mountain sticking out. After breakfast we took the hospital and went back to Farma for the day. I saw lots of sick, both before and after lunch, which we took with us. We were just setting out for home when Arbuthnot arrived so he came back to tea after which he went back to Buram, where we arranged to meet him on the evening of the 10<sup>th</sup>. I went out with a gun but saw nothing, so dinner and bed.

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> - T and I went for a walk and climbed another hill but couldn't see anything as the air was too dust-laden. T bought grain and I saw sick all day. We all went for a walk in the evening, dinner, gramophone and bed.

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> - T, Mrs T and I went for a walk through a delightful wooded valley between two tall hills. After breakfast T went back to Farma to finish off there and I stayed and saw sick. After lunch we packed up and drove 20 km over the most awful road to Buram where we met A. After tea he and I with two natives climbed a hill after guinea fowl, a most strenuous performance climbing about boulders on the hillside, trying to follow a native who appears to be able to walk up the side of a house. I got back absolutely dripping sweat.

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> - We all went for a walk before breakfast and went up a hill to call on the only female sheikh in these parts. We then left Mrs T and went on to do a little mountaineering up to the highest point nearby. All the morning I saw sick and T and A sat under a tree and discussed local affairs with the meks and people. After lunch we packed up and set off for another group of hills called the Masakeen. Stopped for a short time to talk to the local mek at the near end and then drove on to the rest house at the far end. Found all the local notables gathered to meet us and after a round of handshaking etc we had tea during which we were the object of interest to the local women. They are a fine lot physically and cheery. The local sport of this group is stick fighting not wrestling. Went for a walk after tea to a well. Had a wire by runner today from John saying he wants me to



be in Kadugli on the 15<sup>th</sup> to accompany the OC Camel Corps on a trek for five days, so will go in early on the day after tomorrow.

28.2.31 - I had set aside this afternoon and evening for copying out my dairy up to date for you, but I received a wire this morning which necessitated my doing some office work which has taken every moment until now when the mail is just closing, so I will bring it up to date next week.

### ***Kadugli, 15 March 1931***

*This letter is 16 pages long, and the envelope has an Australian one penny "Postage due" stamp on it.*

I'm afraid I've rather let my diary get behind hand, however here goes as from:

12<sup>th</sup> February - I loafed before breakfast, saw sick during morning, read and wrote after lunch till tea, after which I drove them along the road a bit and we shot a few rock fowl for the pot. So home to dinner and bed.

13<sup>th</sup> - The army are having a round up of poachers on the Rajaba, using Baird's company of the Camel Corps, and if you please I'm to take a field hospital out and go with them. Went for a walk before breakfast with T and Mrs T after which I packed up and went off to Kadugli via Abu Hashim. Got in at 11 and collected mail, had a look round and then went home. Found my grey pony not at all well, fever, off food and anaemic. Had him off grain and gave 2 oz salts night and morning. Rode Mascot in afternoon, tea and drinks with Jimmy.

14<sup>th</sup> - Road round town before breakfast. At hospital all morning and preparing to go out with the army. Hear I am not for leave until mid-August now. Home at 1.30 to give Ts lunch as they had just arrived from trek. Tennis in afternoon, drinks with Ns and then they and James and Lister of PWO came to dinner with me. Late night. Have been instructed to meet Chidlaw-Roberts, Commander of the Camel Corps, here and proceed with him to Rajaba.

15<sup>th</sup> - Rode early. Grey pony a bit better. Have now given him a little arsenic each day. C-R and Hugh Boustead (2 i/c Camel Corps) arrived at 11:30. They want me to be at J Kurondi, the other side of El Liri, tomorrow sometime, so I left at 3.30 with hired lorry and my car, as my lorry is in Obeid still. Met C and B on road, arrived Talodi at tea time, had tea with Whitfield, then went and saw Henry Blunt<sup>74</sup> (Forests Dept., a great nephew of General Gordon). Found him fit and went on to Richards for drinks, so returned to W's for dinner and bed.

16<sup>th</sup> - Loafed before breakfast, set off for El Liri at 9, met Noel George there. He is establishing a helio signal base to keep in touch with Baird. Had a drink with him and then pushed on to Kuroudi where I found Chidlaw, Boustead, Baird, Boileau and Arbuthnot. They all had their namlas [local escort?] and were going off this afternoon to scour the country whilst I, having no namla, was forced to stay at Kuroudi. Baird, Boileau and Arbuthnot set off at 3 pm. I gave Chidlaw and Boustead tea and then they went off to join the first lot. I went for a walk and then bath, dinner and bed. Not a very prepossessing place to stay in.

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<sup>74</sup> HS Blunt (b. 1889), Forests Dept 1920-1931, Deputy Conservator of Forests, Talodi, at this time.

17<sup>th</sup> - Walked up to top of gebal before breakfast and saw signallers at work. They really are clever and can send and receive messages in English by helio across 15 or so miles, although they know no English except for the alphabet. Blew like hell all morning, and bees are bad here. Had message from JS relayed from El Liri saying he wants to see me in Kadugli on 21<sup>st</sup>. Saw some sick in afternoon but there are very few people here. Tea and a walk after gidad but saw none.

18<sup>th</sup> - Went for walk down the wadi before breakfast and shot gidad for pot. Wrote and read all morning, slept in afternoon and walk in evening.

19<sup>th</sup> - Climbed hill, breakfast, read for a while, cleaned car, sent lorry to El Liri for some mail for the army. Went for walk in evening and saw some night-flying grouse at water pool. Mohamed has fever, hope he isn't going to be ill again.

20<sup>th</sup> - Went for a walk and met a messenger from Chidlaw with a letter. They have discovered a most delightful place, good water for bathing, crowds of duck, gazelle and lion. Just my luck to be stuck here with all that going. C says they will be back here tomorrow so I leave this afternoon so as to meet John tomorrow. Left at 3.30 and stopped at El Liri to see Mahdi, had tea and then came on to Talodi. Ran into March who invited me to stay in his rest house. Had bath and then drinks. H Blunt and Mrs to dinner, gramophone afterwards.

21<sup>st</sup> - Tried to leave at 6 but found a flat tyre so didn't leave till 6:30. Had to stop on road for petrol block and got into Kadugli late for breakfast. Went to hospital and collected mail and read it till lunch time. Polo in afternoon - two quite good chukkas. John and Mrs arrived just as we finished. They put up in the rest house and I went up to see them and hear news.

J has come about T. He is a fine DC but like lots of people with brains and a quick temper, is rather intolerant of mistakes by his superiors and doesn't hesitate to tell them so. This tactlessness has got him in the bad books of the Civil Secretary. So in view of the hard times and reduction of staff, he has been shifted to Kodok, a bad malarial station on the W Nile. They have given him the option of a medical board but practically told him point blank that if the board finds him unfit for service in the south (which we certainly would do), he will be thrown out. A bit hard, as he has done nine years south already. It makes one ashamed to belong to the same show, this underhand effort to get rid of him and trying to put the blame on us. J and Mrs came to dinner and talked for a while. They are off to Abayea tomorrow.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Rode early and then met John in the office. We talked things over and then he left for Mughed. Had note from Mrs T asking me to go and see a female Dr Whidbourne who is staying with her. Found in the course of conversation that she has a brother, Captain W, who lives near Wycombe and whose son I attended while I was there. I saw a lot of them afterwards and went to parties in town with them. When I got back to the hospital I found a note from the mek of Liri Borra saying he had some infectious disease on one of his hills. So I had an early lunch and drove out to his place, about 15 miles, and found it was an outbreak of measles among the children and, as often happens, it had killed some. Got back in time for tea and drinks with the Nealons.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Grey pony quite recovered and fit enough to walk around the town with me. Usual routine. Mrs T and Miss W came down to look over hospital. Rode in afternoon and had some people in to drinks.

24<sup>th</sup> - Rode grey early. Usual routine in morning. Opened a sty in Miss W's eye. Polo in afternoon, very enjoyable. Andrew kindly lent me a pony for two chukkas. Tomorrow is the day of the gathering here. King, the director of entomology<sup>75</sup> and Whitfield<sup>76</sup> are staying with me. As polo finished, the Governor and family, Skeet, DC Dilling, and Buchanan, Gov's AdC, arrived. Had tea and a drink with Noel G and then home to meet King and W. When they arrived I gave them tea, drinks and a bath and then pushed them off to dinner with Noel, whilst I went to dinner with J. Quite a cheery party.

25<sup>th</sup> - Up to ride grey around town. People were already gathering on maidan, and the grandstand and poles were decorated with flags. We hold one gathering a year to which all the neighbouring sheikhs, nazirs, meks and people come with their followers. Had an early breakfast and had to climb into full rig, top boots and all. We drove down to grandstand and waited for the Governor. All the natives, about 8,000, were drawn up in long columns facing the grandstand, each column representing a nazir or mek. Noel provided a guard of honour from his company who were very smart and whom the Governor inspected on arrival. He then presented robes of honour to two local worthies. Six of us then had to ride round the columns with him. When we got back we had to stand in the sun whilst they all marched past, a most wearing performance for him. He then made an address to all the local worthies and this concluded the morning's programme. King, W and I then went and drank beer at the Ns and so home to an early lunch.

At 3.30 we sallied forth again for more festivities. Beginning with horse races for the locals, we then moved back to the stand, the crowd being ushered by police to leave an area in front of the stand. First we saw a display of games by school children. Then the Fallata gave an exhibition of bow and arrow work at a target. Some small boys from Shatt then gave a display of wrestling which was most entertaining. The men then wrestled. This was followed by a competition of spear throwing. Two people stand opposite each other about 30 yards apart, each armed with a small round rhino hide shield and several spears. They take it in turns to throw at each other as hard as they can, the other man catching the point of the spear always on his shield. Tea was followed by an inspection of native wickerwork and pottery. I bought some pottery and also a young mongoose from a girl in the crowd. The latter makes quite an amusing pet. Tea at N's followed, home to bath and then we all went back to Ns for drinks and dinner. King was in very good form and we had quite an amusing time after dinner. King is a most interesting fellow and I had a long talk this afternoon with him about working terriers and badger digging on which he is an expert and has written books about them.

26<sup>th</sup> - Lazy morning till breakfast after which K and W left and I went down to the hospital. The Governor paid a surprise visit and I showed him round. Luckily, the place was in order. Polo in afternoon, A again lent me a pony for two chukkas. Thoroughly enjoyed it.

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<sup>75</sup> At the Stack laboratories. HH King was the first entomologist, appointed to the laboratories in 1906.

<sup>76</sup> FGS Whitfield, at that time lecturer in biology at the Kitchener School of Medicine. He was seconded to the SMS in 1935.

Noel and I dropped in to Ns for tea and drinks and then I went up and had dinner with him.

27<sup>th</sup> - Friday, easy day – went for ride till breakfast, then the usual visit to hospital. As I walked home I met Jimmy and we went and said goodbye to the Rylands and then picked up the Ns and went to his house for a glass of beer. Tennis in afternoon and Ns, G and J to drinks.

28<sup>th</sup> - Rode before breakfast, hospital afterwards. In mid-morning had wire from Obeid asking for equipment board by today's post. Found HB [his MO] had not done it so had to start it and by working till 6 pm managed to get it finished. Had row with HB about it. I'm glad to say I'm getting a new one soon. Up to J's for tea and drinks.

1<sup>st</sup> March - While riding met Baird and Boileau with their company, they had just got in on their way back from Kurondi. Asked them to drinks. Usual routine in morning, rode in afternoon and then Baird, Boileau, Tithers and Mrs T, Nealons, J and Andrew S all to drinks. We played bridge and silly games and they didn't leave till 10 to 10. Boileau and Jimmy stayed to dinner.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Rode then hospital, did some operating. Polo in afternoon, good fun but I nearly had a piece bitten out of my bottom by the sub-mamur's pony. Luckily he got the back of my saddle instead. Tea with Ns and then home for bath and dress and then back to them for drinks and dinner. Played bridge and listened to gramophone.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Rode in morning followed by hospital routine and schooling ponies in afternoon, quiet evening.

4<sup>th</sup> - Rode and hospital in morning. Schooling ponies in afternoon with J and S and brought them back for drinks.

5<sup>th</sup> - J and S went out on trek. I'm going out to join Andrew tomorrow at Toxwana. Not enough for polo so T and I schooled our ponies and practiced shots at goal. Drinks with Nealons.

6<sup>th</sup> - Office before and after breakfast finishing up odds and ends. Keyes, who had just arrived from Dilling, came and had a beer and then I went up to Ts who were kindly giving me lunch. They have heard nothing yet about their move. Back to pack up and so about 20 km out to Toxwana. Arrived at rest house to find A was out on inspection so took mongoose, who had come – greatly protesting – in the car, for a walk. When A arrived we had tea and so on, talked and so to bed. Not a great place and not many sick.

7<sup>th</sup> - Saw some sick, wrote and read all morning. In evening A and I took guns and a local man with us to look for partridge or guinea fowl for the pot. Whilst climbing down a small rocky hill we ran into a small baby dik-dik, with a body no bigger than a good hare. We caught it and took it back with us; we put a strap round its neck and left it in the charge of A's head syce for the night. Drinks and dinner, no water for baths, damn it!

8<sup>th</sup> - I found the dik in its struggles to get away had chafed its legs with the rope so I had it by me. After about an hour it would lie quite still on my lap. We fed it every few hours with a goat in milk. A and I went for a ride in the evening and on return I took the dik for a walk. It was so tame that I took it to bed with me, and it lay down under my net alongside me and went to sleep. However, after a while it got restless and I couldn't sleep, so I tied it

to the leg of my bed. It made such a row that I finally got up and put it in my hut and blocked the door with a table.

9<sup>th</sup> - Dik gone this morning, and good luck to it, it was a damn good jump over the table. A moved off with his namla at dawn and I left after breakfast. We met at Abu Safifi, about 17 km further on, a bad road but a delightful spot. A wide sandy-bottomed khor, dry of course at this time of the year. Groves of enormous tall doleib palms and several huge gamaisa trees under one of which we had our camp. Just having tea at 4.30 when a lorry arrived with a code wire requiring answer today. Had to leave at once in order to get in before PO shut so didn't have time to pack anything. Took bath and clean clothes and drink and dinner off James and bed and breakfast off Ns.

10<sup>th</sup> - Went to hospital before breakfast after which went and saw T and then after finishing up at hospital and having a look in at the stables, I drove back to Abu Safifi, arriving in time for lunch. In the evening we had a pigeon shoot. They are quite difficult as they fly very fast. We stood in the bed of the khor, the bank of which made quite a good natural butt. We got 14 between us.

11<sup>th</sup> - Sick for me and tour for A till breakfast after which odd sick all morning. At 3 we set off on ponies with a local man to see if we could get a gazelle for the pot. Although we saw several there was no opportunity of getting near them as the cover was bad. Home to much needed drinks, dinner and bed.

12<sup>th</sup> - Saw sick at the tent which I carry with me as a sort of field hospital, also walked to the nearby village to see a girl bed-ridden with post-encephalitis Parkinsonism. After breakfast we set off for Umm Shehaita. A had sent his namla on ahead and rode in car with me. On arrival we found no water at Shehaita itself so we camped about two miles away on the same khor as the last place, also very pretty but not quite so attractive. Sent lorry in for more drugs etc and also to take some sick into hospital. Rode in afternoon and got back to find lorry returned with our mail, not very interesting, however.

13<sup>th</sup> - Saw sick on and off all morning, in intervals spent time shooting at target in an endeavour to adjust the sights of A's rifle. Had pigeon shoot in evening.

14<sup>th</sup> - Usual sick parade from 6:30 until about 9:30 or 10. Breakfast and then sick on and off all the morning. In the evening we had a big pigeon shoot as we decided to give the retainers a treat.

15<sup>th</sup> - Sick parade and so on through morning and in afternoon we went for a ride. In evening we again shot as I wanted to take some in with me.

16<sup>th</sup> - Saw the last sick and then packed up and away, I to return to Kadugli and A to continue to Sedebba. As usual the people turned up in full strength just as I was leaving and wanted medicine. Arrived and went to hospital. Wire to say my new MO was arriving the next day so went round seeing T and G to make quite sure his accommodation was in order. Polo in the afternoon which was good fun. Had drinks and tea with G and then to dinner with the Ts.

17<sup>th</sup> - Usual routine followed by a ride in afternoon. All the people came in for drinks - Ts, Ns, G and J. MO arrived late in afternoon, will see him tomorrow.

18<sup>th</sup> - Met new MO who seems a decent fellow, one Ahmed Abdel Khalim, anyhow, he couldn't be worse than the last. Spent morning going round with the two of them. A wire from J saying he was unable to go to the Dilling gathering and would I go in his place. Wired off to let DC Dilling know and had to scramble about a bit. However, I got under way at 2.30 and arrived at Dilling at 6.30 and went to Desmond Hawksworth's house and had a drink. The show was very well run – on arrival one was given a letter telling you where you were staying, whom you were dining with etc. On my way to dress I met Skeet,<sup>77</sup> the DC, who told me he had had a wire from J to say that he and Ritchie were flying down after all and would I meet them. Quite a cheery dinner at Hawksworth's, Vickars-Miles<sup>78</sup> and his sister, Jimmy Ingram<sup>79</sup> of PWD and I.

19<sup>th</sup> - Up and went to look over hospital. They have a new MO there, one Dawood Iskander, a nice fellow whom I had for a while in Kassala. Went off to aerodrome at 8 and met J and R and brought them back to rest house for breakfast. We then went to show – much the same procedure as Kadugli – after which took J to hospital. We then went to Skeet's for drinks where we found the Gov. Drove J and R back to aerodrome and saw them off at 12. Drove back and had drink with Keyes and Baird who was staying with him. So back to lunch and a sleep in preparation for the afternoon show, which constituted the usual games etc. Back to tea with Skeet and so home to dress after which Skeet had everyone (17) to dinner, a jolly good party, everyone in great form.

20<sup>th</sup> - As my lorry was not running well I sent it into Obeid and came back with Jimmy. We left early and had breakfast on the way at Gulfarn. Got in and went to see Ts and gave them a letter from Mrs Gillam. They have heard they are going to Kodok, a bad place on the river where there are mosquitos all the year round as it is in the middle of a swamp. Saw Nicholls who has just come in from the Bahr trek looking very well. Had lunch with him. Left at 5 to pay a flying visit to A at Abu Hashim, about 35 km out. Had tea and told him all the news, dinner and talked till late.

21<sup>st</sup> - Up at 5.30 and drove back getting in at 7. Shot three partridge for pot on the way. Had bath and shave and then went to office to see end of taking over between the two MOs and arrange transport of the retiring one. Rode in afternoon and Lestor of PWD and Ingram arrived from Dilling – I'm putting them up. Nealons, George and Ts to drinks.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Rode before breakfast and did routine hospital work after. Had wire from Arbuthnot at Talodi to say that one of the Greek merchants had blackwater. As I had intended to go in any case in the next day or so, I decided to go today so packed up after lunch and went off. On arrival I saw the man who was pretty bad, then on to the hospital and saw some cases on which I will operate tomorrow. Home to tea and bath and then to A's for drinks and dinner. A is leaving on transfer and his area is being taken over by G Hawksworth, a brother of the one at Dilling.

23<sup>rd</sup> - To hospital before breakfast and also to see Greek. In morning I did several ops and also went up to military area where there is a small hospital which I am closing and incorporating with the civilian one. After lunch slept till tea and then went to El Liri. The

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<sup>77</sup> CHL Skeet, joined SPS 1920.

<sup>78</sup> ALW Vickars-Miles (1897-1965), SPS 1922-45, DC En Nahud at this time.

<sup>79</sup> JH Ingram, PWD 1924-1946.

DH's house and OP dept there was burnt out the other day and he is now living in the rest house. Early dinner and bed.

24<sup>th</sup> - After talk and look round with DH went off to Talodi again, did several things in hospital and held a board on a soldier. Lunch with the DCs and tea. A and I went for a walk and then to Blunts for bridge and drinks and so home to dinner.

25<sup>th</sup> - Got a party of 6 soldiers and turned out the old military medical store, an absolute shambles, drugs dating from 1913 etc. After breakfast I divided it into two lots and burned the unusable stuff in a huge bonfire, had the store cleaned out and the useful stuff replaced. This took until lunchtime after which I came back here. Met March and the Tithers on the road, the latter with all their worldly goods and chattels on their way to Kodak. Stopped at Kutu and had tea with Andrew. The Ns kindly gave me dinner.

26<sup>th</sup> - Holiday today so only went to office for short time. Polo in afternoon and tea and drinks with Noel G and dinner with Nicholls.

27<sup>th</sup> - Office before breakfast and for short time after. Spent afternoon writing. Noel G came and had a dish of tea and drink. To bed early as I've a bit of a cold.

28<sup>th</sup> - Usual routine day. It is probable if I can get boats to fit, that I may come to you for my leave, the only thing is I don't want very much to go and spend my leave in another hot country, and I expect it will be hot with you by the time my leave arrives.

### ***Kadugli, 11 April 1931***

I don't quite know what to do about my leave. I can't have it when I like and I don't expect to get it before mid-August at the earliest and it will probably be end of August before I get away after nearly two years out here. I certainly won't feel up to sitting down and swatting for the final fellowship [of the Royal College of Surgeons] even supposing I was home at the right time. On the other hand, I might sit for the MBBS if I came to Australia, that would be useful and of course less strenuous than the final fellowship. However, it's all a long way ahead. Now such news as there is.

29<sup>th</sup> March - Woke up not feeling too fit, with right submaxillary gland swollen. Went down to the hospital and did what I had to do and came home early. Loafed all that afternoon and went to bed early with a slight temp.

30<sup>th</sup> - Woke up with a temperature and pain behind the jaws. Had a look at myself in the mirror and realized I had mumps, of all childish things. As I was running a bit of a temperature and feeling rather cheap, I stayed in bed until 4<sup>th</sup> April, when my temperature being down and the swelling having gone, I got up and went to the office for a short time after breakfast as there was some important correspondence I wanted to finish. Rested in the afternoon and went to bed early.

5<sup>th</sup> - Loafed before breakfast and to office afterwards. Loafed in afternoon and early bed.

6<sup>th</sup> - Another morning in bed till breakfast, office in morning and then a short ride in afternoon. Went to dinner with Noel George and early bed.

7<sup>th</sup> - Brig. Butler, General Officer Commanding Troops Sudan, arrived on a tour of inspection. Came to look over the hospital. Rode in afternoon and early to bed.



8<sup>th</sup> - Rode early and then to hospital after breakfast for the usual morning routine. Went for a ride in afternoon and in the evening to the Ns for drinks. March was there on his way through to Khartoum where he is to be stationed in future. Jock Young is coming here in his place. Early bed.

9<sup>th</sup> - Feeling much better, quite back to normal. Rode before breakfast, usual routine at hospital all morning, played tennis in the afternoon, went to Noel's for tea and then back there for dinner. The Nealons are leaving on Sunday, he is going as far as El Obeid to see Mrs off home.

10<sup>th</sup> - Friday and a day of rest. Rode before breakfast. Hospital just for a round afterwards and then to Ns to ask them to dinner. Then up to Noel to ask him, had a beer with him and then we walked along to Jimmy's as I wanted to ask him to dinner too. We stayed playing the gramophone till lunch time. Took the grey pony out for the first time with stick and ball. I think he will come to it gradually. The whole station, which now only consists of the Ns, Noel George, Jimmy and self, came to drinks and dinner. Andrew and Nicholls went off on leave while I was laid up.

11<sup>th</sup> - Wrote letters before breakfast. Usual hospital routine. As grain in the suk is now 45 PT an ordebe (360 lbs), I bought 10 ordebs today which should be ample to last until I come back from leave. Went for a ride this afternoon.

### ***Kadugli, 17 April 1931***

If I do come to Australia for my leave, as far as I can make out, P&O from Port Sudan is the only way, as the only place I can get an alternative line is from Port Said and to go up there means wasting two weeks of my leave, or even 16 days, which is rather a lot. I have written to the agents to find out how much a return fare would cost. Now for such news as there is.

11<sup>th</sup> April - After finishing my letter to you (which by the way I'm afraid was under stamped owing to the foolishness of one of my servants who took my letters to the post [unlike the previous one, it appears from the envelope that his parents were not charged the one penny excess]) I went up to Jimmy's for drinks and then to Noel's for dinner, a farewell party to Mrs Nealon who goes home tomorrow.

12<sup>th</sup> - Rode round before breakfast, usual hospital routine after this till lunch time. Tomorrow is a holiday and I have lent the hospital lorry to the MO for the day to go to Kailak, a lake about 50 miles from here, on condition that he paid for the petrol and oil. In afternoon started Charles, the grey pony, with stick and ball. He was very difficult about it but will I think come to it in time. Noel and Jimmy came in for tea and drinks and so to dinner and bed.

13<sup>th</sup> - Rode before breakfast, also to hospital to do round and see that everything was in order. Spent morning tidying my desk etc until J and N arrived for beer and talk. Whitfield arrived just before lunch on his way back from Khartoum. I gave him lunch. In afternoon we had goal posts put up and J, N and I took a dozen balls down and gave ourselves and our ponies some schooling in hitting goals, riding off etc. Tea and bath and then to J for drinks, W returning with me to dinner and so to bed. Car battery flat, I think there must be a short.

14<sup>th</sup> - On returning to dinner last night discovered a letter from the MO who had just got back from Kailak. It's rather good so I'll give it to you in full.

Sir,

Good evening. I visited Kailak and found it to be a nice place. I have killed some ducks from which I send you 4 (one is alive), two alive fishes, and one crested crane and although it is dead, its head will be used as a decoration. I hope that these will suit you and be kind enough to share me in this game and thanks.

Yours

Ahmed Abdel Khalim

Medical Officer

Rode before breakfast and then usual routine in morning. Polo in afternoon, not quite so good as it might have been as Mascot had a day of wanting to bite everyone and this made riding off a bit difficult. Noel's for drinks.

15<sup>th</sup> - Rode early, hospital all morning. Expected John to return from Khartoum yesterday and had intended going to Talodi tomorrow, but had a wire saying he wasn't returning till 17<sup>th</sup> so will not go now till Saturday. Schooled Charles again this afternoon - he is improved. N and J came to tea and drinks.

16<sup>th</sup> - Usual early morning ride followed by hospital. Polo in afternoon. Mascot decided he liked the game today and I had some good polo. N's for drinks and bridge. Desmond Hawksworth, the DC Dilling, who is over for a few days, making the fourth with Jimmy.

17<sup>th</sup> - Walked to hospital before breakfast as there was polo yesterday and Charles is a trifle footsore. Did round and a little office work. Walked to stable to see ponies and so home to breakfast. N, J and H are coming down to beer in a moment. That brings me up to date. I expect to go to Talodi tomorrow and shall be going to El Obeid on 26<sup>th</sup> and as far as I can see will remain there until I go on leave.

### *El Obeid, 4 May 1931*

Another lapse, but I have been rather busy.

18<sup>th</sup> April - Rode before breakfast and left at 9 for Talodi in the lorry as I wanted to bring back some furniture I'd bought from Whitfield.

19<sup>th</sup> - Inspected hospital, OP etc and had a talk with Mahdi then met Sherif and had a talk with him. Mahdi has a mare which he just bought, full of Arab blood and would make a fine brood mare except that she's a bit light of bone. Breakfast and back to Talodi, went round hospital and then up to Whitfield's house where I superintended the packing on the lorry of the furniture I'd bought from him. Then to Blunt's for lunch. Left at 3 and drove home slowly, arriving at 7.

20<sup>th</sup> - Bought a likely looking young pony from an Arab. He was as thin as a rake and had worms (not the Arab) so I beat him down to £6. Routine all morning and polo in afternoon, 3 quite good chukkas, tea with Noel and bridge and Nealon for dinner.

21<sup>st</sup> - Rode early, office and hospital routine in morning. Desmond told me his brother and Gillespie were coming so I put G up. Rode in afternoon. G arrived about 5, operated on N's pony, inspected all the police ponies and looked at my ponies. After tea I had a wire from John to say I was to come to El Obeid as soon as possible as I had to go to Port Sudan at the end of May as Grylls' daughter was v ill and he wanted to take her home himself.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Rode in the morning and in office after breakfast fixing up things before I leave tomorrow. I shall be away for the best part of 8 months and there is a lot to fix up: arrangements to have the house looked after and kept clear of white ants; arrangements about fodder and care of ponies etc. Polo in the afternoon, best I've had here, and the rest of the afternoon and evening packing, piling up furniture etc.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Up early and finished packing, had look at car to make sure all was well and found self-starter out of order so had to take it all off and put it back with Nealon's help. Noel gave me breakfast and I got away at 8:30. Arrived Dilling at 12 and found J there. He and I went to hospital and then on to Keyes' house where we found three airmen who had just arrived: Sholto Douglas,<sup>80</sup> Steele and Jones. Had a chat and then to Desmond Hawkesworth for lunch. J and I left at 2 and did the 107 miles to El Obeid in three hours. Arrived in time for a game of tennis, tea and drinks. Got all the latest news from J and so to bed.

24<sup>th</sup> - J and I drove round town to show me various things. Hospital all morning. Tennis in afternoon and to Baird for tea and drinks.

25<sup>th</sup> - J went off to Bara at 6 - I to hospital. Went to see train off at 8.15 - Williams the vet and wife, Richards and wife and Clarke of Western Arab Corps all off on leave. Hospital after breakfast. J returned from Bora at 11:30. Spent rest of morning going over things with J. J and I played singles in afternoon, tea and then I went to Lestors for a drink. J picked me up and we went to dinner with Governor. A Major Cocksedge of the Somaliland Veterinary Service making up a four, a very interesting fellow.

26<sup>th</sup> - Hospital before breakfast. Saw J off to Darfur at 11 and then removed a large rock from an old man's bladder. Usual routine till lunch, tennis and tea with Baird and then dinner with Wardlaw, 2<sup>nd</sup> i/c Camel Corps.

27<sup>th</sup> - First day of the Eid or long holiday, which lasts until 1<sup>st</sup> May. Hospital before breakfast and for a short time after. Was just leaving when they brought in a small girl who had been run over by a horse. They have a custom called duffering: a number of horsemen get some way from the crowd then gallop flat out at the crowd, reining their horses back on their haunches a few feet from the crowd. Someone hadn't got control of his pony and ran into the child. She has a fractured clavicle and a large depressed fracture in the parietal region about the same area as a coffee cup. After much hesitation as to whether to operate or not I left her for the moment. Tennis in afternoon and visit to hospital in evening - child shows no signs of compression.

28<sup>th</sup> - Ride round town and then to station to see train off. Met the Howard-Williams who had just come in from inspecting aerodromes and were on their way back. Also my senior MO went off for a week's local leave. Called in to see Mrs Waugh who is ill, hospital and then to Chidlaw-Roberts' house to give him a note from J. Home to write and then back to C-R's at 12.30 where I found Hamilton,<sup>81</sup> DC Bara, Jumbo Leicester and Wardlaw. Had a little gin to celebrate the Eid and so home to lunch. Drove Wardlaw out to polo and brought him and Chidlaw back, had tea and drinks with C. Visit to hospital, child

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<sup>80</sup> Later Marshal of the Royal Airforce William Sholto Douglas, 1st Baron Douglas of Kirtleside, GCB, MC, DFC.

<sup>81</sup> JAdeC Hamilton (1898-1973), SPS 1920-46.

improving. Took Baird home for dinner. Wire from Michael Hillary to say arriving tomorrow by air, could I put him up.

29<sup>th</sup> - Hospital to do round etc, home early and read all morning except for a levee at 9. Baird and I played singles in afternoon and afterwards I played a few games of squash with Oakley. Had wire from M to say staying night at Bora and arriving with Ritchie, who is flying him, for lunch tomorrow.

30<sup>th</sup> - Rode before breakfast. Hospital to do round and dress one or two cases, and then to see Jumbo whom I had sent to bed with a septic leg. He had been kicked at polo and neglected it. Got back just in time to hear a plane arriving so drove out to the aerodrome and brought R and M in. We were just having a shot before lunch when Wardlaw came in. All to lunch after which we sat and talked. R is a most interesting fellow, he is very well read and has a good memory and has been all over the place. At 4 drove them to Chidlaw's to pick up Robert Scott and so to the aerodrome. R and S set off back to Bara, M and I had tea and then I played squash. We then went to Oakleys' for bridge and dinner, Governor and Pomphret completing the party.

1<sup>st</sup> May - Showed Michael round the town. Breakfast and then I dropped him at the Gov's office and went to hospital, then to see Jumbo and so home. At 4 M and I drove to Chidlaw's and he, Ritchie, Wardlaw and we two went off to shoot guinea fowl. Got about 20 miles out when discovered nearly out of petrol. C drove back to get some and we amused ourselves by having a sweepstake over shooting with a .22 at a Dead Sea apple. C returned and we went on and shot a few birds. We drove across country a bit and then it got dark and we found our way home by an incredibly rough track. Drink with Jumbo then bath and Chidlaw's for dinner.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Drove M to aerodrome, they left at 7 for Khartoum. To hospital to write a note to Grylls about Port Sudan and Valerie etc. To station to put it on the train then hospital all morning. Played squash with Galley, he back to tea and then to club where played bridge with Oakley and Mrs O and Gov. Drove Baird home and gave him dinner.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Rode before breakfast. Visit to Jumbo whose leg is improving. Tennis in afternoon followed by tea at Baird's, the O'Mearas there also. They are a delightful Irish couple - he being province judge. Went and took a drink off Jumbo and so to dinner and bed.

4<sup>th</sup> - Took the rails of the sanitary service all round town to inspect various works etc - smelly. Hospital all morning except visit to Jumbo. Played squash with Baird and in evening drove Jumbo and Baird over to listen to Hulbert's new gramophone. I've never heard anything to touch it. Made by a small firm who make only to order, all instruments are handmade. I imagine it is as near perfect reproduction as one could get. Dinner with Baird and bed.

*We have an empty envelope marked 11 May 1931 (his mother noted the date of the letter on each envelope).*

### ***El Obeid, 26 May 1931***

Again in great hurry. I'm sorry not to write my usual diary but I have been so busy lately. A new MI, Brown by name, arrived here the other day. John gets back from Darfur by air tomorrow morning. I shall then catch a train on 30<sup>th</sup> and have two days in Khartoum and then on to Port Sudan where I shall be until I go on leave. When that will be exactly I don't

know and can't find out until I get to Khartoum. If I can't get the July boat I shall have to wait until the end of August. It's all very awkward. Getting a fair amount of surgery here and hope to get more in Port Sudan.

I'm putting my car up here when I leave - the Mechanical Transport are going to look after it for me. Am fit and well.

### ***Port Sudan, 23 June 1931***

What a cad I am but I've really been incredibly busy lately. I arrived in Port Sudan to find Bryant ill in bed with infective jaundice, so I had him to look after as well as the work. I also found a very sick British soldier in the ward who was a source of anxiety until he was operated on and as soon as he was out of danger I got another British official with an acute appendix which I had to do in the middle of the night. He had had several previous attacks and when I came to do it it was a very nasty one, all gummed up and adhesions. However, he has lived for over three days and seems fairly fit now, so I hope he will be alright, but it has been rather a trying time.

As far as I can make out, Grylls will be back about first week in August. There is a P&O on 21<sup>st</sup> August which if I can get a suitable boat in return I shall catch. Well, I'm frantically busy and the mail is just on the point of departure.

### ***Port Sudan, 13 July 1931***

*The first part is taken up with arrangements in Adelaide for his leave.*

As far as I can find out, Tony [Grylls] will be back about the second week of August. I propose leaving here by the Mongola on the 21<sup>st</sup> August. She is what they are pleased to call tourist class, but which actually means 3<sup>rd</sup> class food at any rate, I expect, and will involve such atrocities as high tea etc. However, this is the only one I can get at that time.

I have been very fit but shall be very glad to get a spot of leave. The weather has been remarkably good here for this time of year, but yesterday and today have been very hot and humid with sand storms, so I expect we are about to have a little more seasonable weather. I'm still fairly busy here. Turner, the appendix man, has gone off home on leave and the soldier has left. I've just had Pridie, the acting director, staying with me for a day or two. Michael Hillary came through on his way on leave the other day, but as he was only here for an hour and I was busy with Pridie, I missed him. Elliot, in our service, returned yesterday with a bride and I met him and saw him off in the train. Rather a bad time to bring a woman out to this country. I should have thought she should have waited until October or November. Aldridge, another SMS man, also arrives with a new bride in a few days.

Not much news at the moment, just the odd spot of riding, squash etc. Last weekend Geoffrey Bramall and I went to Suakin to stay with Ellis at the quarantine station. It was quite a change. The sloop [HMS] Dahlia was in and we went and had lunch on Sunday with the new captain, one Farquhar, a decent sort of chap. I've not heard any recent news of the Grylls kid but she is evidently in a fairly bad way. I hope she gets better. She is an only child and they are both wrapped up in her. Even Cameron, the children's man to whom they took her at home, didn't seem to quite know what was the matter with her. Well I must go now and look at the people who were operated on this morning.

### ***Port Sudan, 4 August 1931***

Grylls returned from leave this morning so that DVWP [God willing, weather permitting] I shall be away by the Mongola on 21<sup>st</sup> of this month. I don't quite know when she arrives in Adelaide, but you can look it up. We call at Colombo only on the way and I hope I shall have time to go up to Kandy. There is not much news from here. The weather has been pretty beastly at times. I thought that today was quite reasonable but Grylls is moaning and saying it is terrible. Yesterday I though was rather unpleasant, it was 107 and the relative humidity was 74. There has still been plenty of work in the hospital. The spare time seems to pass along with tennis, squash etc. Four of us have just started playing contract bridge, we meet at each other's houses as often as we can fit it in.

### ***Port Sudan, 8 August 1931***

Just a short note. Things are much the same here and I'm just waiting for the 21<sup>st</sup>. I expect to arrive in Adelaide somewhere about the 12<sup>th</sup> September. I don't think I shall come overland from Perth at this time of the year.

Grylls' child is by no means out of the woods yet and she will probably not come out here again, and Mrs G will not be out this winter and probably not the next. I think he would probably chuck his hand in if he could find a good partnership at home.

Not much news for you.

*This is the last letter of 1931 that we have, though we have an empty envelope marked 17 August 1931. We know he arrived from the Adelaide Advertiser and Register of 14 September, which carried the following report, headed **Medical work among the tribes of Sudan:***

#### ***Dr EWT Morris returns on holiday***

After several years' work in the Sudan Medical Service, Dr E.W.T. Morris, eldest son of Dr E.W. Morris of Toorak, has returned by the Mongolia on his first long leave.

He was stationed at Kadugli and his work was exclusively among the native population and British Government officials. One of the greatest difficulties in treating the natives, he said on Saturday [12 Sept], was to overcome their fear of modern medical practice. The doctors had the greatest difficulty in enticing them to go into hospital or undertaking any treatment they did not understand or coming before a doctor to receive medical advice. In the more settled districts, however, where the natives were accustomed to hospitals, the doctors were doing good work, and they were gradually winning the confidence of the natives. To get that confidence it was necessary to learn Arabic. The number of dialects was another stumbling block, but there was usually an interpreter to help.

The natives, Dr Morris added, were subject to many epidemics, the most serious of which were sleeping sickness and relapsing fever, which came into the Sudan from the equatorial regions.

After spending four months in Australia Dr Morris will return to the Sudan.

## 1932 - Source Yubu

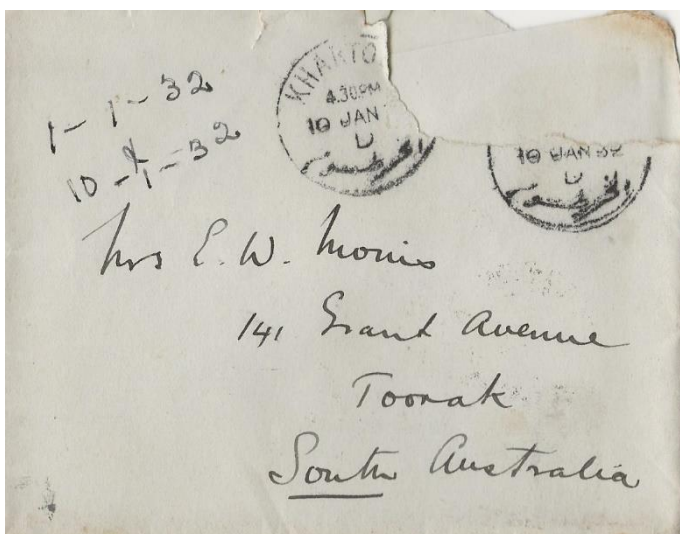
### *Khartoum, 1 January 1932*

Well here we are in the capital again. Events have been the order of the day. When we arrived in Port Sudan early on Christmas morning it was blowing so hard that we couldn't go in, so those disembarking suffered the indignity of being tossed about for the last three miles on a dirty little tug.

Ellis met me at the wharf and having got my stuff through customs we went and had breakfast at the pub. I was told that Atkey, the director, was arriving in P.S. that afternoon and that I was not going back to Kadugli and that there was a 7½ % cut in our pay. However, we went to Gellatleys [a department store chain] who gave a party on Xmas morning and tried to acquire the Xmas spirit. I hear I'm to go south to Tambura in the Bahr El Ghazal, just near the place where Sudan, Belgian Congo and French Equatorial Africa meet. I'm told there is quite a good house there with running hot and cold water in the bathroom, that one makes one's own ice and soda, and that Cruickshank,<sup>82</sup> the man I am taking over from, is just installing electric light. There is a beautiful garden and one can grow strawberries and all sorts of vegetables, and the shooting is excellent. As against that, I shall have to sell my ponies as it is a bad fly area and I shan't get leave again until mid-33 as I shall have to take charge of the province this year when C goes on leave. I'm staying in Khartoum until after the Arabic which ends on 20<sup>th</sup>. I shall go to Kadugli to square things up and from there drive to Tonga where I'll pick up a boat for Wau, and from there motor again to Tambura. I shan't know until I get down whether it's a fit place for Ginger [his sister] to come to, but will let you know later.

I had dinner on Xmas Day with Thompson and on Saturday [Boxing Day] I worked in the morning and played squash in the afternoon and Edwin Palmer and I dined with Farquhar, the captain of the sloop Dahlia. I travelled up here on Tuesday with Atkey and his wife. Apparently my move was the result of two people leaving the service while I was on leave so there had to be a general shift round. I went to polo on Thursday with Charles Crouch<sup>83</sup> and then back to tea with Humphreys. I have got an effendi to give me daily lessons in Arabic and I work all morning in a spare office at headquarters. I shall stay just long enough after the exam to buy stores and things, of which I shall have to take a year's supply with me. I shall have them put on the boat which I shall pick up at Tonga.

Things are very quiet here at present compared with the usual winter, and there are very few tourists about. Everyone is groaning about the pay cut and saying how hard up they are. I'm dining with the Atkeys tomorrow night. I went to call on the Hillarys the evening



<sup>82</sup> Alexander Cruickshank, OBE (1900-1991), SMS 1924-1948, Senior Physician 1944-1948.

<sup>83</sup> Dr H A ("Charles") Crouch, OBE, MC (? - 1947), Assistant Director of Public Health, SMS 1923-1944.

I arrived and they asked after you all and wish to be remembered to you. I'm sending this letter to P Sudan in the hope that it will catch a P&O and so arrive quicker.

### *Khartoum, 10 January 1932*

Khartoum is fairly dull this year compared to last. Most of my mornings from before breakfast until 2 pm are taken up with Arabic and I usually manage to do an hour in the evening. I'm now definitely leaving on the 20<sup>th</sup> for El Obeid where I shall be picking my car up - I'm taking that with me - direct to Kadugli and square things up there, selling my ponies and furniture if I can, and then drive to Tonga where I catch the boat on the 29<sup>th</sup>. I'm busy at the moment buying a year's supply of stores, liquor etc to take with me. I've also bought a D.B 400-450 Wilkes for elephant and buffalo, a beautiful rifle and an absolute bargain. I've been round to the Hillarys once or twice and Mrs has very kindly said that she would love to have you, Ginger, for next winter, i.e. November to March, for as long as you liked. I'll let you know as soon as possible whether it will be feasible for you to come down south for a while.

Last Wednesday [6<sup>th</sup>] I went to see the first rounds of the country-bred polo cup and saw some good polo. Thursday was King's Day, with a celebratory garden party at the palace - an enormous crowd but quite spectacular in parts. Friday saw the Morris at the races, it was quite amusing and I enjoyed it. There was some keen racing and one or two Britishers rode very well-judged finishes, but on the whole I thought some of the native riders were more amusing. Yesterday I went to the final of the MacIntyre Cup and saw the best fought and most interesting polo I've seen here I think. The issue was in doubt until a matter of 10 or 15 seconds before the final bell when Cavenagh hit the deciding goal for the winners. One of the native officers playing for the winners had his arm broken in the first round. John Smith, a fellow in the Forests Dept, who played the final in his place, insisted that the NO should take his cup - very decent of him I thought. At 7 I went to the fort to see a game of polo on bicycles with hockey sticks - a six-a-side game between the Ulsters, who are stationed here at the moment, and a mixed side. It was played by searchlight and produced some very amusing incidents. Second bicycles were in demand very early on, and the mortality rate was very high. I've got hold of a dog of sorts - mixed all-sorts - from a man here, but if you're on your own a dog is company.

### *On the train to El Obeid, 21 January 1932*

Well here we are having left the gay metropolis behind and not expecting to see it for about 15 months. The last few weeks have been pretty busy what with buying stores and this and that and the Arabic exam. However, all is comparative quiet now. I think I have a reasonable chance of defeating the examiners in which case my consequent rise in pay of £60 p.a. should just about balance our cut in pay of 7½ %.

I had to buy stores and drink for a year and you've no idea the trouble it is to make out lists and order the right quantities. Anyhow, I ought to have enough as the bill will be about £180 - £190. However, I should be able to save money down there. I believe there is a nice garden in which you can grow a variety of English vegetables. The great curse is that there is no milk as it is in the middle of a fly area and no cattle can live there.

However, there is plenty of meat to be shot and I now have quite an armoury: a .22, a .318 Vickers Express, and a 400/450 double-barrelled Wilkes rifle for elephant, lion and buffalo.



We arrive in El Obeid this evening – I suddenly remember that I left a Sudan Almanac, a small cardboard-covered book, in the house and there is a map on the back from which you can trace all these places. I've left one boy in Khartoum with the majority of my baggage, stores etc, and my dog Betty, which Guy Tanner gave me, to catch the boat on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, and I have only light luggage with me.

I shall pick up my car and drive to Kadugli where I shall endeavour to sort out my kit and try to sell my saddlery, furniture and ponies, although I don't expect it will be too easy in these hard times. I shall go on from there to Talodi and then via El Liri to Tonga on the White Nile where I shall catch the steamer on the 29<sup>th</sup> and put my car on board. From there we go to Terakeka and then drive about 300 miles to Source Yubu.

I saw quite a lot of the Hillarys and dined with them once. I went to a dance at the Grand [Hotel] last Saturday which was rather fun. Last Sunday Jim Maitland and I gave a picnic which was rather fun – we had some quite cheery people and we went to rather a lot of trouble to arrange it. We held it in the Sunt Forest and we had large logs of wood taken out to a clearing (it's quite cold at night in Khartoum now) and we set out at about 7:30 – Mary and Eric Wenham, Spike and Edna Evans, both very cheery couples, the two Fass girls (their father is a Treasury official who had come out to put our house in order), and Charles Crouch, the Medical Officer of Health, Khartoum. We had cocktails, olives and pate on biscuits, asparagus, cold chicken, salad and mayonnaise and strawberries with cream out of a tin. We then played the gramophone then games of sardines and murders and so on. Everyone said it was a good party and I've since been questioned by everyone in Khartoum about our goings on. On Tuesday I dined with the Spike Evans – they are looking after Betty for me until the boat goes on Saturday.

We left Khartoum last night and a whole crowd of people came to the club to a drinks party and then down to the station to see me off: the Evans, the Wenhams, Sholto Douglas, Pridie, Maitland and others.

Pardon me writing, Moddam, but the blasted train will woggle.

### ***On board S.S. Fateh, in Sudd, 30 January 1932***

I was unable to sell my grey arab in El Obeid so I have sent it up to Khartoum to Atkey to sell for me. I left Obeid on Saturday last [23 January] having got my car in order, which involved buying a new battery. Reached Dilling without incident where I spent the night with Noel George, the Bimbashi. Drove from Dilling to Kadugli and arrived in the evening of Sunday. I met Corkill (my successor) and his wife out riding and stopped to chat for a moment and then went up to Nicholls' (the D.C) house with whom I stayed. On Monday I spent the morning going over my furniture and sorting it out. I am selling most of it. I think I told you that a second pony had died, however I got compensation for that one. Nobody wants to buy any furniture these days so I have arranged for it to be auctioned in the suk. Went to collect my compensation money for the pony and then to the hospital.

In the afternoon I played my first and last game of polo for some time – two chukkas on Mascot, who is very fit but pulling like a train after eight months light work, and two on a pony Nicholls lent me. My word was I blown at the end. N and I went to dinner with the Corkills. Tuesday morning went in further arrangements and a ride in the afternoon. Ritchie arrived by air carting round his NOI, Squadron Leader Greene, the senior

intelligence officer RAF Middle East. They are doing a tour of the country and set off for Tadoli after lunch. I left for Tadoli on Wednesday afternoon and stayed the night with Andrew Smith. When driving down to the suk to get some petrol I ran into Ritchie and Greene. They had had some oil trouble just after leaving Tadoli and on landing at El Liri Ritchie had considerably bent the tail of his machine. The centre of an aerodrome is usually marked by a white circle and the local worthies, instead of painting a circle had made it of large white-washed rocks which Ritchie didn't notice until he was right on top of it. His language can be well imagined.

Set out early on Thursday and breakfasted at El Liri where I drove out and saw the mechanic dismantling the tail of R's machine, and so on to Tonga on the river, where I spent the night in the rest house. The steamer arrived at dawn the next morning [29 January] and I got my car and luggage onboard without mishap except that they made me empty my petrol tank, an unforeseen and somewhat irritating incident. However, all my stores, Betty my dog, and my suffrage whom I had left in Khartoum to travel south with my stuff were all present and correct. There is no one else onboard except an American youth who is going round the world on the cheap and travelling 2<sup>nd</sup> class.

We are now travelling through the Sudd, a vast swamp area 600 miles in length pierced by a narrow winding channel bounded by tall papyrus which stretches back as far as the eye can see on either side. At places there are small solid areas a few square yards in extent, connected to the land at the back, sometimes 15-20 miles away, by a narrow causeway. These are calling stations for the boat, usually inhabited by a solitary native trader. For the rest, it is just one vast sea of papyrus anything up to 20 ft in height in any part of which you sink up to your middle in rotting ooze and slime, the whole being about 35,000 square miles in area. There is quite a lot of interesting bird life in it however.

Last night we called at one of these stations, or meshras, where we picked up Archdeacon Shaw of the C.M.S. who is travelling as far as the mission at Malek. We are calling in at Shambe tomorrow morning where this letter will catch a north-bound boat in a few hours. From now on my letters will probably be fairly irregular what with the irregularity of Morris and the fact that there is no regular postal service to Yubu. It gets as far as Tambura when there happens to be a lorry going in that direction and has to come the remainder by runner.

### **Source Yubu, 28 February 1932**

*The first letter from Source Yubu has instructions on the top to address all letters c/o Postmaster Khartoum "as I now have a private mail bag" (see page 1).*

There's been a long gap since my last letter, but this is the first mail out since I arrived. We get mails once a fortnight if lucky, and even then but for a chance car or lorry they have to be brought the last 120 miles by courier. I'll start off by trying to give you a rough idea of the new job and this place and the job. If you look on the map in the Sudan Almanac you'll see a place called Tambura in southern Bahr-El-Ghazal. Practially due south of there, Source Yubu (unmarked on the map) lies on the border of Sudan and French Equatorial Africa. It is about 30 miles up this border from the point where Sudan, FEA and Belgian Congo meet. The boundary is about 200 yards from my house. Hereabouts the boundary is marked by a ridge, the Nile - Eule divide and the heads of numerous streams rise from

either side of it and run into either country as ribs from a backbone. One river, the Yubu, rises in the settlement and gives the place its name.



Map 3 - Source Yubu and Bahr-el-Ghazal

The country is well wooded with a sprinkling of big trees and lots of bush and in the rains tall grass. The edges of the rivers are more closely wooded, the trees strung with great loops of lianas and there the undergrowth is very thick. From a height their courses show up like sinuous great weals (I'm sorry for the journalese). The people, Zandes, are simple and very friendly, they wave and smile as you drive along, and anything makes them laugh. They are small in stature but of fine physique and all file their upper central teeth to a point. A relic, I believe, of cannibalism; this suggestion, however, they indignantly deny.

This settlement is a control area for cases of sleeping sickness and leprosy, and under certain circumstances for their relatives. We are almost like a small republic, being almost self-supporting. It is about 60 square miles in area and has about 70 miles of roads. The headquarters consist of administrative offices, stores, civil hospital, SS treatment huts, carpenters' shops, blacksmiths' shops, basket chair making shops, brickmaking yard, prison and staff houses. About half a mile away is a segregated camp for mutilated lepers and about six miles away, at Barabandi [or Barriabande], the leper treatment centre.

At the source of the Yubu, just below my house, we have a fine vegetable garden which produces prize cabbages, tomatoes, cucumbers, lettuces, spring onions, beetroot, yams, marrows etc, and for fruit we have bananas, paw paws, pineapples and mangoes. The roads near HQs are lined with mango and kapok trees. The staff consists of self, three Syrian MOs and about 41 natives of whom some are medical orderlies, others in charge of

working gangs and artisans, carpenters, blacksmiths, bricklayers etc. We do all our own building and road and bridge making.

When a patient is admitted he has his history and condition charted and filed and is given a disc, with a serial number and varying in shape according to his disease, to wear around his neck. The settlement is divided up into a number of sections, each in the charge of a petty chief or headman. The patient is then asked under which headman he would like to live and is allotted a piece of ground bordering a road (they all live along the roads).

He or she is allowed to bring in a few family or relations and with their help the patient builds a house and a grain store, and starts a small patch of cultivation. They are all encouraged to be as far as possible self-supporting. Once a week they are marshalled at the treatment centre by their headman, who is responsible for their appearance. He stands by as the roll is called and has to explain any absentees, different sections coming up on different days for treatment. In addition to their treatment, each patient receives a ration of salt: salt is more prized, even by the children, than sweets. In addition, every able-bodied person on the settlement – men, women, or older children – gives one day's work a week for the common good. Here again the headmen are responsible, and each morning certain of the sections parade in front of the office and each is detailed for the day and then placed in charge of the gang orderlies, who see that they work and direct their labours. These gentlemen are called *terabais*. The work consists of road and bridge making, khor clearing, grass carrying, work in the communal cultivations of manioc and maize etc, wood carrying, brickmaking and building – in fact all the thousand and one jobs of upkeep etc. Failure to turn up for work results in loss of your salt issue or extra work. All the patients are reviewed at intervals and their progress or otherwise noted. Domestic squabbles are tried and settled by the native chiefs' court in the settlement and we refuse to have anything to do with them. Disciplinary cases are dealt with daily by the senior medical officer, a very decent Syrian, El Bimbashi Nasib Eff. Baz OBE. He is a second-class magistrate and has power of summary sentence up to one month. Any more serious case I try in the full glory of my first class magistrateship, with its power of summary sentence up to three months or two years as a major court.

The rest of the work outside in the area for which I'm responsible consists of routine inspections. All the people have been brought in from the bush and line along the roads, which alone makes our work possible. At five or six-mile intervals along the roads are rest houses and inspection centres. Warning is sent out to the chief that a certain length of road is to be inspected. One then sets out, usually doing one rest house a day. The chief and his headman muster all the people who centre it is and they sit down in three rows: men; women; and children. They are then counted and their necks examined for swollen glands – one of the first clinical signs of sleeping sickness. Those found are put to one side. The roll is then called and each man walks past with his womenfolk and children for whose attendance he is responsible. Then one does gland punctures and microscopic examination of the suspected cases. To count and examine 1000 or 1200 black necks and then do six or seven gland punctures, each one of which takes about 20 or 30 minutes, is quite a decent day's work.

Two medical officers and I spend about half of each month on inspections. After each place is inspected, one goes and looks at all the watering points that those people use to see that they are properly cleared of bush and undergrowth and that they are not using non-cleared

places. The tsetse fly which carries sleeping sickness lives in shady streams and won't fly more than a hundred yards or so into the open. So if the particular watering place on a stream is cleared for an area of 300 yards round it, then people won't get bitten and so infected as they go to water.

Our chief difficulty is that no native will go to a cleared place if there is an uncleared one 10 yards nearer despite the fact that he knows that tsetse fly causes sleeping sickness. The French make practically no effort against sleeping sickness and so near the border the difficulty is to prevent our people going to the heads of the French streams, which are often nearer but uncleared and consequently thick with fly. Then again, the people further away will go into the French territory to hunt: it's almost hopeless to get natives to recognise geographical boundaries when they don't correspond with tribal ones. If we catch any of our people returning from France or any of the French Zandes over here, we give them a month in jug and then six months quarantine.

Well I hope that gives you some idea of the place and work. I like it and think I shall be very happy here. I've already drawn up plans and started gathering materials for a new house as this one is rather old. It's going to be great fun building your own house. I can almost hear you, mother, saying "do you think it's safe for him, Walter?" My dear, it's as safe as Khartoum. As Walter will tell you, leprosy is a disease with a very low grade of contagion: we can't catch it except by actually rubbing up against an infectious leper for months and months and months, which I don't propose to do. As for sleeping sickness, cases under treatment are non-infectious and unless one sleeps at midday in an uncleared stream one doesn't get bitten by fly, so you can set your mind completely at rest.

I'm going off in a few days' time with Cruikshank, the man I'm taking over from and who is very sick at leaving here, to do an inspection and to shoot hippo on the Sue (pronounced like chop suey): we dry the meat and bring it back with carriers as food for the lepers.

### *Source Yubu, 24 April 1932*

We have had no rain in Yubu itself since the 6<sup>th</sup>, when, encouraged by the apparently early start of the rains, we planted our communal crop of groundnuts for the inhabitants and also a maize cop crop. Now it looks as if we are going to lose both which is rather trying. I think I finished my last letter to you on the 6<sup>th</sup> so will go on from there.

7<sup>th</sup> - Visited segregated lepers before breakfast. We have just given them a new hoe apiece and are in the process of clearing a new cultivation area for them. It is a great difficulty to keep them in the segregation area and to keep their relatives out, and one is constantly trying to make the place more attractive for them. I was in the office when Cruikshank and Larken<sup>84</sup> and the Roman Catholic Bishop of Wau and two fat fathers arrived all in a heap.

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<sup>84</sup> Major P M Larken, OBE, DC Yambio 1911-1932. In *The Kindling Fire*, Cruickshank writes (p 29), "Major Larken, District Commissioner at Yambio, had reigned there for twenty-two years, a charming, shy, hospitable man who loved his adopted people perhaps more than his own. Though he did not welcome time-wasting visits from fussy administrators from the north, he warmly welcomed the idea of medical assistance for his people. In the old days he had erected, at five-mile intervals along the main route, a series of native signalling drums to warn him of the approach of travellers. When a drum boomed out the message that a white man was approaching, gossip had it that Larken suddenly discovered that duty called him in the opposite direction! It was even whispered that he had been known to pull down a bridge or two behind him to discourage pursuit. ... One of the original drums was later acquired for the leper settlement and did duty for years, summoning the workers in the mornings and dismissing them at sundown."

We got rid of the three latter and then Larkin, Baz and self-formed a board to examine Cruikshank and one of the medical officers, Nasser by name, in the Zande language. We passed them both for which they get a bonus of £25 each. Larkin then went off to hear appeals at Tambura and Cruikshank and I to read our mail, which had just arrived. Cruikshank going off tomorrow to try and shoot a Bongo (a rare type of antelope) near Zumo's rest house on the Belgian frontier about 60 miles from here. I have decided to go with him.

8<sup>th</sup> - We set off after an early breakfast and stopped on the way to inspect a place where Cruikshank had found people drinking at an uncleared stream. After arranging for them to clear it we went on to Zumo. We found the rest house in a bad state so sent for the headman and after blowing him up we made him repair the roof and build a new kitchen hut. Arranged the guides for the morning and had lunch. In the evening I shot a few guinea fowl.

9<sup>th</sup> - Had a bit of breakfast and set out at about 6:30. We went straight to a pool where the Bongos drink about 2 miles away. Found it thick with bush buck, we had to disturb them to look for tracks and they immediately set up a most infernal barking as they usually do. We found fresh tracks on the far side and followed them up. The Bongo inhabits a most difficult country - thick forest formed of big trees set in the midst of a dense tangle of bushes, lianas etc, very hot and steamy with rotting vegetation underfoot. They force their way through this leaving small tunnels behind through which one has to crawl in a stooping position and often on hands and knees. The visibility is limited to a few yards. You have to be very quiet as they may be just round the next corner and one often hears them feeding before one can see them. We had arranged that Cruikshank was to have first shot. We got very near them once and Cruikshank went forward, but although they couldn't have been more than 40 yards away he couldn't see them and then they were off. We followed on and after a while came to one of the infrequent clearings in the forest. I was at the time a little to the left of Cruikshank and his tracker and saw one, quite a good head, standing in the middle of the clearing about 80 yards away like a statue. I was very tempted to have a pot but could see Cruikshank working his way to a tree which stood between him and the Bongo. I wish I had shot now as just as Cruikshank got to the tree they upped and away. That was the last we saw of them. We got home about 2:30 and had lunch and then sleep. We decided to start out earlier the next day and arranged to be called at 4 am

10<sup>th</sup> - We were up and away and reached the pool just as it was getting light. Again we found fresh tracks which we followed for about two hours. After working our way through tiny tunnels for about two miles often on hands and knees and always in a dripping muck sweat, I said to Cruikshank "I know why there are so few Bongo shot". "Why?" says Cruikshank. "Because there aren't many people who are damn fools enough to do what we are doing now" said I, and I felt it that moment. We got back about 10:30 without having seen them. Had bath and breakfast then drove over to Ndoromo [Doruma], about 11 miles away in the Belgian Congo, to call on de Wilde, a young Belgian DC, and his wife. Quite a cheery couple, they have a small babe about four months old born in the country. So home to lunch. I went out in the afternoon to look for a water buck; never saw one but came on lots of partridge, as luck would have it didn't have my gun.

11<sup>th</sup> - Cruikshank again went off in the dark to the Bongo haunt and I a little later to another place to look for water buck. We neither of us saw what we were looking for, but Cruikshank shot three bush buck: "that'll learn 'em to bark and scare the Bongo" said he. I pushed off after lunch back to Bakinda rest house to start an inspection of Hapwa's and Bazia's country, leaving Cruikshank to follow. Reached Bakinda at teatime.

12<sup>th</sup> - Did Bozeru inspection before breakfast and Bakinda after. 2,000 odd people in the two places so didn't finish till lunch, after which I engaged some carriers, as I cannot carry all the paraphernalia in my small car without the lorry, which Cruikshank had with him. Moved on to Bamberaze.

13<sup>th</sup> - Did Bamberaze and then on to Habagu rest house where I found Cruikshank, and also all chief Ngutwa's people ready, so did them as well. Didn't get lunch until 3:30 - a busy day, 2,400 people in all. After tea, Cruikshank and I went for a walk followed by the usual attendant crowd of grown up children without which it is impossible to move on foot in these parts, so we organised races for the men, women and children for our amusement. Home to bath, dinner and bed.

14<sup>th</sup> - Went down the road to do an inspection and then back to breakfast after which Cruikshank went back to Yubu and then to Wau to meet Atkey on the 20<sup>th</sup>. I went to Kadiawe and from there I walked about three miles down to the place where a cairn of stones marks the place where FEA, the Belgian Congo and the Sudan meet at the head of the Mbornu. In the evening I went out with two men to shoot some meat for the carriers. Shot a dik dik, a water buck and a hartebeest, and also saw oribi and fresh tracks of buffalo and roan, so there is quite a lot of game there. Didn't get back till after dark.

15<sup>th</sup> - Did Kadiawe and then moved on. This finished Hapwa's people and tomorrow Bazia's start.

16<sup>th</sup> - Long way from Kadiawe rest house to the first one in Bazia. Did inspection, had breakfast, and then moved on to Bazia's rest house where I found Bazia himself, a poor chief and blustering ingratiating fool. Did inspection there and then moved on after lunch to Bitimo for the night. I was going out to shoot but it came on to rain, so I had tea and went for a walk in the evening instead. Found a dirty watering place so sent for the local head and blew him up.

17<sup>th</sup> - Did three inspections today as they were all small: Bitimo, Zenu and Siko. The latter hadn't his people ready so while I waited I bought a small green monkey from a man for a piastre - it looked so miserable. I'm sure I'll regret it later - I do, it's already bitten me twice and wet the tablecloth - damn humanity. Pushed on to Namenze and went out to try and shoot - saw nothing but quite a lot of fresh tracks including giant eland. Long days for the carriers - about 23 miles.

18<sup>th</sup> - Again three inspections: Bugwa, Namenze and Rawande and so to Gbudwe for the night. Out shooting with two local men as guides; they were useless - noisy and blind - I saw everything before they did, and once they set off a group of hartebeest before I could stop them. Got an oribi however for meat.

19<sup>th</sup> - Did inspection at Gbudwe and then moved on to Bafuka where another crowd was waiting and after lunch moved on to Tivwa. There are reputed to be a lot of white-eared cob here so I took two men and set out, and after a long walk came to a broad grassy dry

river bed such as they frequently inhabit. After a lot of searching, found a mob of about seven including two males. After a long stalk got to within about 90 yards of them and had one good male side on. Shot and missed, a very easy shot too. So home to bath and dinner.

20<sup>th</sup> - Up at five and out to the same place just at sunrise. The khor bed was still filled with mist and as it lifted I saw a solitary male, a really good head about 700 yards away. I got up to a mound about 90 yards away again and then - I don't know why - I missed again. Searched around a bit longer but found nothing and so home to bath and to do this, the last inspection. Set off for the 45-mile drive home at about 12 and then ran out of petrol about 8 miles from Yubu. I sent a runner in and had to sit on the side of the road for about three hours. Eventually one of the medical officers arrived on his motorbike closely followed by a temergi on a push bike with four whiskey bottles full of petrol in a sack on his back. The car was standing at the foot of the hill and much to our surprise instead of stopping his shot through the crowd collected by the car, scattering them in all directions, with an agonized shout of "no brakes Sare, no brakes". He finished up in a heap about 200 yards down the road, fortunately with the bottles on top. Got home at dusk and had drinks and dinner with Baz.

21<sup>st</sup> - Early morning spent in tour of hospital, out-patients etc. Spent the rest of morning answering letters and making out report of inspections and so on until lunch. Walk in the evening.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Went off to see segregated lepers and so back to office where I found mail bag so back to breakfast and mail. Did some routine work in office and then off to start a tour of roads and watering places within the settlement and continued at this for the morning. Walk in the evening and writing.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Tour of sleeping sickness in-patients early and after breakfast spent rest of the morning as yesterday. Back to office at 2 and part heard case of theft: remanded the man for further witnesses. Read and did Zande in evening.

24<sup>th</sup> - Sunday so loaf in bed till 7:30, up and breakfast and to hospital for operation in the midst of which Cruikshank arrived back from Wau on his way to Juba and leave. He left Atkey at Wau and he will arrive here about 28 April when I shall have him and his awkward questions and arguments for three or four days. Then I shall take him on to Rangu. I shall then have Brock.<sup>85</sup> the Governor, and his wife descending on me for a few days and after that Gerald Fitzwilliams, who is shooting elephant in FEA and who is going home as he says all the big bulls are gone and he hasn't seen a 60 lb tusk for a year. Cruikshank goes off early tomorrow and will take my mail.

### ***Source Yubu, Sunday 8 May 1932***

25<sup>th</sup> April - Saw C off after breakfast, his car was very full but his heart was light. Spent morning in the office trying to marshal some facts and the points I wanted to discuss with Atkey. Read and worked in the evening. Betty has gone off into the bush again.

26<sup>th</sup> - Inspected daily labour parade and then to hospital, after which Baz cut my hair. First part of morning among the segregated lepers and then to office. The Brocks arrived after lunch, having been held up by wheel trouble. They are a jolly couple, she much younger

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<sup>85</sup> Major RGC Brock, OBE, joined SPS 1913.



than he. He is a very good governor and a good man to work for so all the DCs say. Until quite recently the south was always staffed by contract DCs and governors i.e. ex-army men, and although I wouldn't say so in Khartoum, I think they are much better than what Mrs Wyld, the DC's wife, calls "the educated DCs". However, the army people are gradually being got rid of and replaced, especially now that there is the excuse of the "financial crisis". Brock's time is up in '34 when we will probably get a non-army bloke as governor. We had tea and then went for a walk and then sat and talked. I discovered that Mrs B and I had actually met before, though neither of us remembered it until we discovered mutual friends.

27<sup>th</sup> - Walked round the place with Brock before breakfast and they left soon after. Spent morning inspecting khors and watering places in settlement - there are 34 in SS part of settlement alone. Betty brought back having been discovered 3 or 4 miles away.

28<sup>th</sup> - Inspected OPs and SS cases, breakfast and then after a short office, out to see more watering places. Got back at about 12:15 to discover that Atkey had arrived - didn't expect him till 29<sup>th</sup> or 30<sup>th</sup>. Had lunch and then a rest. After tea we went for a walk around the place and talked shop. He, like all heads of dept. on tour, asked lots of unexpected and stupid questions. However, I discovered that an answer was what he wanted at all costs. So if I didn't know the correct one I made one up and gave it out with what I hope was a telling air of authority. He's an interesting man with a marked individual personality and has many interests outside his job. For instance, we talked about, among other things, the Egyptian question, the rights or wrongs of death duties, the Vikings' cruises, and the historical novel.

29<sup>th</sup> - A gets up normally at an incredibly early hour and expects you to answer questions rationally at 5:30 or so, which I found a great strain. We went out to Barabandi before breakfast and did the segregated lepers after. I then drove A home to read whilst I went to the office. After lunch we set off for the rest house on the jebal. As I think I told you before, it is a delightful spot with a magnificent view. Its little garden was a blaze of poincianas and golden mohr. Atkey was charmed with it and we had tea on arrival and then a walk round to the top and then drinks and talk. It's a great pleasure to have A as a visitor, it's so stimulating mentally.

30<sup>th</sup> - After breakfast we came back to Yubu and did a house-to-house inspection of some of the lepers till lunch. Then I wrote letters whilst A slept. Tea and then we drove to Bambuti and back. He has no objection to Ginger coming down here and has asked her to stay with him and Mrs A while she is in Khartoum. It's possible he may forget, but if he doesn't you'll have to go to them for a while, Ginger, and I think you will like it. I tackled him about going on pension [i.e. a permanent contract], as things are so upset now and several people haven't been taken on lately and I wasn't at all sure about myself, but he assured me that I should be taken on.

1<sup>st</sup> May - (How time flies.) Had a very early breakfast and we were off to Rangu by 8:15. We stopped at various places along the road to show A things, and finally met Mrs Brock returning to Yubu, having been sent on ahead and driving slowly as they had had more trouble with the wheel, the wooden spokes of which were loose. A little further on we met Brock and RK Winter (Secretary for Health and Education), the latter touring the south.

They had been to call on Woodman.<sup>86</sup> We arrived Rangu to find W out to lunch with Larken, so had lunch on our own. He returned at tea-time so we had tea and then played badminton, after which bath, drinks etc.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Pouring with rain which didn't stop till breakfast, after which we went off to see hospital etc, and I sat back and listened to someone else trying to answer questions. And so to lunch, badminton again in the evening and the usual to follow.

3<sup>rd</sup> - After seeing the lepers' treatment, I got my car ready and left for Yambio after breakfast. Saw Larken and had a yarn with him, and also collected £200 for the settlement. Set off back to Yubu at 11:00, also got our mail at Yambio. Arrived back at Yubu at 4:00, having been stopped by heavy tropical rain. Had tea and read mail. Early to bed as I had driven 160 miles since leaving Rangu.

4<sup>th</sup> - Hospital in early morning and then to office where I saw mail and then made out plan of inspections for rest of year. Ever since SS was first attacked in this area it has overridden everything else and was the only thing considered. This was necessary at the start nine or ten years ago as it was then a severely epidemic disease and rightly treated as of paramount importance. This attitude, however, has continued in spite of the decrease in incidence resulting from the measures taken against it. So that until a year ago, when C came here, no general medical work was done at all, and although only 20-30 new cases of SS were occurring per year in a population of about 70,000, it was still the God to whom all bowed. I wanted A to let me reduce the number of SS inspections per year and so have more time for each inspection, i.e. to spend two days at a rest house instead of half a day, and thus be enabled to treat some of the medical and surgical cases crying out for treatment, and risk a small increase in the annual incidence of SS. What would be a few more cases of SS compared with the hundreds who now die each year of dysentery alone? However, A would not agree, but I've managed to make out a roster which will allow two long inspections in each area per year which is something. We are also hoping to place small dispensaries over the area to further the medical treatment, and eventually to leave the SS cases outside to be treated and kept under observation at the dispensaries instead of bringing them in to the settlement. With that in view, we are training some of the temergis in English and simple medicine. It is up hill work as they are very raw material and have no natural aptitude for reasoning or correlation and try to learn everything like parrots if you don't check them. I take the English class every afternoon from 4-5 when I'm in, and I could sometimes cheerfully kick them all. However, we progress slowly.

5<sup>th</sup> - Saw OPs and hospital. After breakfast did hernia and amputation of finger and then office work. In afternoon had exam to try and pick out five or six of the best for intensive training with a view to starting that number of dispensaries at the end of the year. Very trying! This sort of thing continually: "What is dysentery?" answer, "Ngana" (its Zande name); "Yes, I know that, but what is it like?" - result usually a blank look - "Well, have you ever had it?" answer, "Yes" - "Well, what was it like?" - result often quite a decent description of dysentery.

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<sup>86</sup> Dr Hugh M Woodman, Medical Inspector at Li Rangu where Cruickshank established the leper colony. His article *Some results of treatment of leprosy in the Southern Sudan* was published in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*, Volume 30, Issue 6, 19 April 1937.

6<sup>th</sup> - Round basket and chair works etc. Spent most of morning in office and hospital. Have selected five people as remotely possible for work at end of year.

7<sup>th</sup> - Rain before breakfast - spent most of morning doing periodic reclassification of SS patients. The merchant shot a leopard in his turkey house last night. It would happen to him when I have been trying for ages to get one. It was the cause of great rejoicing however, and an excuse for an impromptu dance in front of his shop.

8<sup>th</sup> - Sunday, loafed before breakfast then to hospital and then spent morning writing and superintending cleaning of my leather suitcases, saddlery, boots etc. Loafed and read and then a walk in the evening.

9<sup>th</sup> - Usual tour before breakfast and the whole morning on SS inspections of relatives in the settlement, and sorting out and re-charting the lepers among them. Just as I was finishing my class in the evening, Hickson, the Education Inspector, arrived, so we had tea and a walk.

10<sup>th</sup> - Went to hospital while H fiddled with his lorry. He left after breakfast and I again spent morning on SS and charting lepers.

11<sup>th</sup> - Went over surgical cases, saw dressings etc before breakfast and same procedure for SS relatives as previous days. After lesson in afternoon, took Betty for a walk and as we were coming home she again did a break into the bush.

12<sup>th</sup> - Did a couple of small ops before breakfast and then went over No 4 section SS relatives as on previous days. Then heard a couple of cases including one of my MOs and one of my servants each accusing the other of cursing him. Rather ticklish, but as neither had witnesses I dismissed it, much to the disgust of the MO. However, I think they were both probably involved. I'm sending this with a runner to Yambio tomorrow.

### *Source Yubu, 3 June 1932*

It's rather fun: I've just finished an inspection and am sitting in the rest house looking out to a group of people under some trees. It is Kpitio, the small local chief, hearing cases. He is seated on a rough chair with various elders on the ground in a circle and the litigants standing in the circle. One, a born orator, A is addressing the meeting; he has all the tricks of the trade, gestures and inflections of voice, etc and every now and then stops at the end of a telling remark to take a drink from a gourd. He states his case and stands aside and his opponent B comes forward to have his say. All the while that B is talking A is looking into the distance with a bored air, now laughing behind his hand at B, now looking with pitying scorn at B when he makes some statement. If A doesn't win it will not be for want of putting his case well.

13<sup>th</sup> May - Operating before and after breakfast then did inspection of settlement staff, servants etc which took till 2:30, so to lunch, usual afternoon and evening.

14<sup>th</sup> - Did dressings of yesterday's ops. Rained all morning so I did office work and repaired the centrifuge till lunch. Hospital in evening and lesson as usual.

15<sup>th</sup> - Sunday - lazy morning, to hospital after breakfast then spent morning writing and reading and went for a walk in the evening.

16<sup>th</sup> - Dressings at hospital, spent morning charting lepers. Did an operation after tea. Bought a male Zande pup this morning – the quaintest little chap and simply full of fleas. He woke me up several times during the night with his howling.

17<sup>th</sup> - Hospital and dressings before breakfast, to segregated lepers after and then office work. Gave Bill (the new pup) a bath – simply hundreds of fleas left the sinking ship. He came for a walk this evening with Betty and me and looked ridiculous as he tried to follow Betty – the latter's nose rather out of joint as a result of the new arrival.

18<sup>th</sup> - Hospital and shops before breakfast and then to Barabandi to inspect lepers' relatives. Rest of morning in office and doing some lab work.

19<sup>th</sup> - To Barabandi again today and had just got home to lunch when I heard a car arriving, had a lookout and saw what at first glance I took to be a woman but it resolved itself into a Scotsman in a kilt. He introduced himself as McGregor, a retired member of the Natal police, who is travelling from Durban to Lagos. He professes to be walking but like most of those people, he does not refuse a lift and as far as I can see has come all the way from Juba in cars. Everyone says here's a man who has walked alone from one end of Africa to the other, how wonderful, but they don't realise that 70% of his nights were spent under someone's roof and that a greater percentage than that of his meals were free. He was very pleasant, with that nice Scots simplicity. He had a retentive memory going back for a short while but after that the further back it went more distorted it became, with the result that he was full of the most ludicrous bits of misinformation – the result of past reading or hearing. He solemnly told me that the Arabian Nights were Egyptian folk stories. But I found at the end of four days that he had laboriously copied down in a penny notebook practically everything that I had told or shown him during his stay, a feat of memory that I certainly would not have been capable of.

30<sup>th</sup> - Hospital, shops etc then to Barabandi and so back to the office and an operation. Usual afternoon then walk with McGregor in the evening.

21<sup>st</sup> - Gave McGregor an early breakfast and then drove him over to Bambouti, the first rest house in FEA (he proposes to walk across FEA to Kano and thence to Lagos). There we found Pillet, the DC equivalent. I introduced McGregor to him and hoped he would allow him to pass through. He not unnaturally wanted to know what he was doing, and my poor endeavour to explain in French without tears that he was walking from South Africa to Lagos for pleasure, and that to a Frenchman who never walks a foot and travels even the shortest distance in the chair, only seemed to make him suspicious. So I asked him to lunch and got Baz, who speaks excellent French, to come along. As a result of a little alcohol and a more adequate explanation, Pillet gave his permission for McGregor to go as far as Obo, where his chief Tobe lives, but warned him that he might be turned back from there. Each traveller in FEA has to make a deposit of £50 to ensure their not becoming destitute, which they get back on leaving the country. As McGregor hadn't £50 or anything like it with him I had to guarantee him for that amount. However, I think it's perfectly safe. He travelled as far as Obo with Pillet himself on whom he probably lived.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Sunday - lazy indulged in the childish habit of being woken with tea at six in order that I might go to sleep again till breakfast: the hallmark of Sunday. Round hospital after breakfast and then writing and tidying up my desk etc till lunch. Walk in the evening and usual till bed.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Touring shops etc then breakfast. Examined some SS cases. Had letter from Pillet asking me to go to Obo for 14 July celebrations, and also sending me his cook from whose shoulder I removed a large lipoma. Didn't get to lunch till 3, gave Bill a bath and then usual evening.

24<sup>th</sup> - Dressings and hospital and then office work all morning, writing a report on the incidence of leprosy in families in the settlement for Oliver [Atkey]. Office again in the evening then a walk.

25<sup>th</sup> - Office and hospital, breakfast, and then an operation. The rest of the morning spent on the report. Office again for a while in the afternoon before tea.

26<sup>th</sup> - Saw all dressings in hospital, breakfast, then office work till lunch. In evening put finishing touches to plan of house. To save as much expense as possible, it has to be built as near as possible on the old foundations.

27<sup>th</sup> - Hospital and outpatients, breakfast, and then office and hospital all the morning. Shifted over this morning to the rest house where I shall live for the four or five months it will take to build the new house.

28<sup>th</sup> - Hospital before breakfast. The water tower is now complete so went down to the stream to start the ram, got this going at last but subsequently discovered that the fool of a blacksmith had not put the pipeline together properly. So I have made him take it all to pieces and put it together again. Office for the rest of the morning. Poured with rain all afternoon and I wrote letters. Took dogs for walk in evening. Played gramophone for first time since Bill's arrival - he listened to it for about 10 seconds and then fled out to the kitchen.

29<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day, usual round of hospital after breakfast and then spent rest of day fiddling about the house.

30<sup>th</sup> - Hospital then office all morning finishing off reports etc as I'm going out on trek this afternoon. I'm leaving Fadl (cook) here as he is not very fit and am taking a temporary one out with me. Had lunch then packed up and went off to Mabenge, which is just outside the settlement. Got there and had tea and then went for a walk. Bill is having the time of his life with other dogs and dozens of people. He spends most of his time in the kitchen trying to pinch things off the fire and then growling like blazes because he burns himself.

31<sup>st</sup> - Did inspection and gland punctures before breakfast, saw lepers afterwards and then spent most of the morning doing odd jobs and seeing sick. Had lunch and then moved on to Ikoro. After tea went out and shot some guineafowl with .22.

1<sup>st</sup> June - Spent all morning till lunch doing inspection, charting lepers etc. Went and inspected some watering places in afternoon, then had tea and went out for some guineafowl till dark. On walking through the tall grass I stepped on a trail of driver ants who were all over me in less than no time. Fortunately I was quite near the rest house and they didn't have time to do much biting before I had my clothes off.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Saw some sick this morning and worked and wrote. Not many people come for treatment, which is only to be expected the first time, but I'm sure it will catch on directly they realise what's happening. Had lunch and then moved on to Kpitio. The rest house is

usually named after the local chief, who in this case is a semi-mad very cheerful old ex-cannibal. Had some tea and then set out to get something for the pot but with no luck.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Inspection of this rest house and then seeing sick and charting lepers to lunch after which I moved on. I will send this into Yubu by a carrier tomorrow. Bill is having a grand time chasing the small children who invariably gather round the rest house when anybody is in it. It is a very attractive sitting here as the rest house looks out on to the head of the stream, which has been cleared and planted with couch grass so that it looks almost like a golf fairway in the distance.

### *Source Yubu, 30 June 1932*

I'm afraid it's a long time since I last sent a mail out to you. [Jack] Poole<sup>87</sup> came along 5 days ago and took a bag out for me but I had no time to write to you and he just took such letters as I happened to have finished.

I've had rather a trying time lately. You'll remember my writing of one Sutherland<sup>88</sup> who was hunting in FEA – poor fellow, he has just died here and we buried him a few days ago. I'll tell you more of that as I write out my diary. About the question of Ginge coming down here. First of all, Wyld<sup>89</sup> has both his wife and sister at Yambio now and Mrs Brock frequently comes and stays here with her husband. G will be no more likely to get any of the common tropical ailments such as dysentery and malaria here than in Khartoum, that is to say the chances are remote if due care is taken. As far as the diseases peculiar to this part are concerned, namely leprosy and SS, I can assure you that she will neither handle or come into contact with the former and as for the latter, when you realise that we have only found 14 cases of sleeping sickness so far this year in a population of over 60,000, and that in a people whom it is impossible to prevent going to fly-infected streams to hunt and fish, not to mention those who go over the borders, I think you will realise the very remote possibility of her being infected. I need hardly add that the cases in the settlement are in no way a source of danger as they are stabilised by their first injection of tryparsamide and remain so throughout the course of their treatment.

You ask about the climate. Well, I don't mind telling you it's a jolly sight better than Khartoum, although I wouldn't say that to Khartoum, as one must get some credit for living in the south, and we hope some day to get our climate allowance back, although rather more as a compensation for the extra cost of stores etc and it's out-of-the-wayness than as a real compensation for the climate, which I would much rather have than the north. But I must admit that this place is reckoned to be one of the best in the south, and I

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<sup>87</sup> Major JS (Jack) Poole, DSO, OBE, MC, was ADC in Tonj from 1929-1936, when he retired. He joined the army aged 19, saw service at Ypres, was captured but escaped, joined the Royal Flying Corps but, after a crash, ended the war with a small British force fighting alongside the White Russians in Siberia. Re-joining for WWII, he was captured before Dunkirk, escaped, was recaptured and spent the rest of the war as a German POW. *The Gentle Savage* gives a colourful account of his life at Tonj and he was the subject of an article in *The Guardian* in 2001, *An Englishman's legacy in the Sudan*, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/oct/21/jamesastill.theobserver>

<sup>88</sup> JH (Jim) Sutherland, born 1872. "Sutherland is thought by many to be one of the most famous elephant hunters of his time, and his book, *The Adventures of an Elephant Hunter*, published in 1912 by Macmillan & Co. Ltd., London, has come to be regarded as one of the best elephant hunting titles ever, which reads today as an almost impossibly glamorous tale of adventure". (<https://huntinglife.com/rifles-owned-by-three-legendary-african-hunters-to-be-sold-by-bonhams/>)

<sup>89</sup> Major JWG "Tiger" Wyld, DSO, MC, (1896-1968), SPS 1926-1950. See diary for 6 July 1932.

should hate to live in either Wau or Juba: the climate of both of which is bloody, saving your presence. I have rarely heard more than the occasional mosquito here.

4<sup>th</sup> June - Did inspection of the Mutukurunga and finished off my mail and then decided to take it in myself, so went off after an early lunch, staying in Yubu just long enough to do one or two things and collect a most welcome mail bag which had just arrived. Then drove back to M, picked up my kit and moved on to Tambura, to the rest house which used to be the DC's house, that post having now been suppressed. Had tea and read my mail.

5<sup>th</sup> - Tambura inspection, which took all the morning. Found two cases, both old women who had almost certainly been infected whilst fishing in the bush, which they all do in the dry weather - the men hunt and the women fish. In the afternoon had a great difference of opinion with Bill as to whether he would come for a walk after tea or not. Lazy little devil.

6<sup>th</sup> - Inspection of Mbanga, the home of Renzi, the biggest of the Zande chiefs - he has 60 wives. Inspected the Tambura dispensary in the afternoon.

7<sup>th</sup> - Worked on car before breakfast and found a bolt broken in the back spring so will have to go easy. Spent morning seeing sick and writing. Moved on to Budwe in afternoon and had a puncture just as I got to the rest house, which I mended.

8<sup>th</sup> - Had breakfast at 7 and then drove off to quarantine to inspect there: found four cases damn it, again all old women and probably from same cause. Looked at all their houses and watering places but found no cause for infection there, so back to late lunch. Proposed going to look for some meat for my carriers but it rained.

9<sup>th</sup> - Up early and out to look for meat - after a long walk in the wet grass got a good-sized hartebeest so home to bath and breakfast, after which came inspection of Budwe. Inspected watering points in the afternoon.

10<sup>th</sup> - Early breakfast, packed up and moved on to Abdulla where inspection awaited. Moved on again in the afternoon to Giara. Rain came on so I read and wrote.

11<sup>th</sup> - Inspection here took all morning. Went out in evening to look for guinea fowl for pot and quite by chance came on a lot of houses along an old abandoned road in the bush, a place where they didn't oughter.

12<sup>th</sup> - Spent the Lord's morning burning down the houses I found yesterday, about 40 of them - very hot work and deserving of beer on return. In afternoon I was going to move on but it came on to rain so decided to move early in the morning. Just before dinner received note from Baz to say that the Brocks were expected in Yubu the next day, so must go in tomorrow.

13<sup>th</sup> - Had early breakfast, drove to Nangi and did inspection then back to Giara to pick up some kit and so into Yubu. Left the bulk of my staff and carriers to await me at Giara. Had lunch with Baz and then spent afternoon working on car, took back part of body off and then the spring out - this took till dark. Hear from Baz that Sutherland is ill again.

14<sup>th</sup> - Worked on car before breakfast. Made new bolt in blacksmith's shop. Morning in office had note at 12 from Brock to say that they were at Tambura and would be in at 4. Had lunch and worked on car till Bs arrived. They brought Poole, DC Tonj, with them, a very decent fellow, covered with decorations and a member of the escaping club. Turned

Nasr out of his house which Poole and I occupied, leaving my house to Brocks. We had quite a cheery dinner and their company was most welcome.

15<sup>th</sup> - Took Poole round the place. He and Bs left after breakfast. Have arranged to meet P at Bandere on 22<sup>nd</sup> if possible, as he wants to get a bongo. Finished off car and had lunch and so out to Giara and then on to Selimi.

16<sup>th</sup> - Out at dawn and after cold wet walk through grass and wading through a stream came to an open marshy place where there had been cob just a while before. In walking round a clump of tall grass, came on top of one lying down but he was up and away before I got a shot, so back to bath and breakfast then inspection of Selimi. In afternoon went back to the same place and saw five or six cob on far side. By time I had made a detour and got round, they had moved into the thick scrub and I could only get a poor shot and of course missed. Cob seem to have a hoodoo on me. On return to rest house fired three rounds at a target and find they are going all over the place. Whether it is old ammunition or not I don't know.

17<sup>th</sup> - Went out again and saw nothing. Breakfast and then to Sambili for inspection. This was last one. Lorry came out to pick up my carriers' loads and I paid them off, so home and found a mail waiting for me. Had tea and read some of mail. Baz for drinks when I hear that Sutherland is being carried in here.

18<sup>th</sup> - Sutherland arrived early this morning looking shocking. He has been ill for 10 days and has been travelling practically day and night for the last three days carried on his camp bed. He has extensive cellulitis all round his left thigh and was so ill I thought he might die on the table. However, we risked it and he came through well. He slept all rest of day and a good deal of night.

19<sup>th</sup> - S seems better this morning although still very weak. Spent most of the day with him. He is not an easy patient to nurse. Slept in the hospital with him as he was frightened of being alone.

20<sup>th</sup> - S little better today, he slept at intervals and has taken a little food but to get him to do that is a matter of greatest difficulty. Spent most of day with him interspersed with office work.

21<sup>st</sup> - S has patchy night, will not lie long in one position and we haven't got the facilities for nursing him in the way of good beds and pillows and air cushions etc. He took a little food and I spent most of day and evening with him

22<sup>nd</sup> - S again had a patchy night, nothing keeps him quiet all night but he sleeps a good deal at intervals during the day. His leg is not clearing up as well as I should like to see, but expect that is partly because it is still paraetic from his stroke.

23<sup>rd</sup> - S a little better today and demanded sausages and eggs for breakfast. Office work in morning good deal of day and evening with S.

24<sup>th</sup> - S had bad night but slept for five hours from 5 am till 10. Was just doing hernia when Brock arrived. They only stayed a few moments as they wanted to get on the road. Poole arrived in the afternoon; he'd had quite a good time but got no bongo. I thought he would be lucky to get one as the grass is now very high, 9 or 10 feet in places. We spent great part of evening with S and then to bed.



25<sup>th</sup> - Poole and I went to see S and I left P to talk to him whilst I finished a letter. I find that P can get mail out via Meshra for me so I put what letters were finished into a bag. S much better this morning chatting and laughing with P. P left after breakfast and S slept till noon when he woke with a rigour and temperature of 104.6, the first time his temperature had been up more than a degree since he came in. Could find nothing in his chest or abdomen and no extension of his infection so gave him quinine. Temperature down to 102 at 4. At 7 he was drowsy but rational when roused, fed him with nasal tube. At 9:30 his temperature was up again, so I gave him injection of quinine. He gradually became more drowsy and finally died at about 2:30, quite quietly without regaining consciousness. So dies as far as I know the last of the true white hunters of Africa, and the first white man I've had die in my hands in Africa.

26<sup>th</sup> - Got up at daybreak and washed and dressed Sutherland in new clothes. Then, leaving Baz to make arrangements, I set off post-haste to Yambio to try and get Canon Gore to come and bury him. Arrived at Yambio and found Larken in, and whilst I had a bite of lunch he went off to ask Gore, who very kindly consented to come. Left again as soon as he was ready and arrived home at 8:45. Dinner and very tired to bed - 280 miles over African roads in one day is a tummy full.

27<sup>th</sup> - We buried Sutherland in the settlement at 6:30 am. Baz had made a good job of the coffin, which had been covered with some cloth from the merchants tacked on so that it looked quite presentable. We covered it with a union jack which I borrowed from Larken. He was carried alternately by his own porters and terabais in uniform. Baz had wreaths made and a temporary wooden cross which was carried by a protege of the Roman Catholic mission. I wonder what Gore would have said if he'd known, as there is a feud between them. Gore went off again in his car after breakfast and I to the office. Found the address of one of Sutherland's sisters to whom I sent a cable and also to his friend Anderson in Nairobi. Have locked his things up pending the settlement of the estate, which I shall have to do with M Pillet. Was just having a well-earned rest after lunch when a lorry arrived containing a Dr Tucker who is studying the various means of message sending by drums used by the tribes in this province. After tea I took him down and got two of our good drummers to perform on our big drum for him. Was just finishing that when a man was brought in with a spear wound in his back. By the time I had sewn that up and cleaned it, it was almost time for dinner.

28<sup>th</sup> - Tucker worked at drums again before breakfast and left for Yambio at about 10:30. Spent morning in office and also wrote to Anderson and Sutherland's sister. We are covering the grave with ironstone blocks and a plain cross cut from a solid piece of ironstone laid flat on top of it. Read in afternoon.

29<sup>th</sup> - To hospital before breakfast and office all morning. Spent afternoon with some labourers laying out some flowerbeds. If I'm to live in the rest house for six months while building my new home I may as well have a few flowers and some lawn.

30<sup>th</sup> - Hospital all morning and office and garden in afternoon and spent evening writing.

## *Source Yubu, 24 July 1932*

Baz is off on leave the day after tomorrow and will take this with him.

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> July - Lazy morning, went up after breakfast to see issue of new uniforms to terabais and trunangis, then to hospital for a round where I drew 600cc of defibrinated blood from the chest of a man whom I had sewn up a day or two before as the result of a friend's attentions with a spear in the back.

Just after lunch had a note from Fitzwilliams to say he had arrived in Bambouti, so went out in car to fetch him. He seems a very charming fellow, tall and good looking although rather thin and sick looking on arrival. He comes of well to do family I gather - their Lincolnshire home has 365 bedrooms - and also an old one. He has had a most interesting life and can talk well about it. He was in practice in Hong Kong for ten years before the war and during that time made enough to retire on. During the war he served in France and then went to Romania with O'Leary, who used to be in Adelaide. He has some very interesting stories of this gentleman, but *de mortuis* ... F and his elder brother, the senior surgeon at Marys, ran a hospital for the Queen of Romania. During an interval in this, he was in Bolshevik Russia, and at the capture of Kiev, where his younger brother was killed. He was then sent to the Italian front and was at Piavi when the war finished. Immediately after this he went on a semi-political mission to Petrograd and met Lenin and Chicherin and other Bolshevik notables. He spent the first 18 months after the armistice in central Europe on political jobs in Vienna, Prague and other places, and then was lent the late Emperor Franz Joseph's chamois shoot which he had for four years. Then his brother, who had large rubber interests, wanted to put down an oil bore in one of his rubber estates in Java. So F went for him to Poland and America to study oil boring methods. He came out here in 1925 on a three-month shooting trip and has been here ever since.

He was rapidly getting the Sutherland complex and, but for the circumstances of the loss of his very considerable income, most of which came from rubber, and the fact that elephant hunting in these parts can no longer be made to pay, I'm sure he would have left his bones here. He has, however, been levered out of it by the necessity of going home to find a job. I am at a loss to understand how anyone of his social and mental accomplishments (he is a FRCS and MD) could be content to live the life of a solitariness that he did for seven years. He hardly ever read anything except the Weekly Times, and occupied most of his time when not hunting in turning ivory on a lathe, a task at which he had considerable proficiency.

Well after this long essay on F, to our muttens. I waited while F paid off his carriers, trackers and headman, a melancholy proceeding for all, as he had had some of them for six years. I think it is just as well he is leaving as he is crippled in one hip with osteoarthritis. As Nasr is out on inspection, I put F in his house. This one being too small to be comfortable for long occupation by two people. Baz to drinks.

4<sup>th</sup> - Trouble with the water system so down to the ram before breakfast after which I did inspection of No 1 SS and some office work. F spent the morning fiddling with ivory - he brought about 17 tusks with him including some quite decent ones for these days; amongst them a pretty pair of 80 pounders. Anything between 80 and 100 lbs per tusk is good these days. Spent afternoon taking ram to pieces and it was running well when I finished. Letter from Woodman to say he is leaving for Malakal on 11<sup>th</sup>, so I shall go over on Wednesday

and take F for the trip. I suppose that means I shall have to look after both Rangu and here whilst he's away. Dinner and drinks with Baz, quite a good evening. I have a note in my diary "F seems to talk a good deal of tripe", but I think that's a bit hard - he's surprisingly normal considering he has lived on his own for seven years.

5<sup>th</sup> - Morning in office and afternoon on car cleaning carburettor, distributor etc. Early bed.

6<sup>th</sup> - F and I had early breakfast with Baz - quite a holiday feeling. Left Yubu at 8:30 and had comfortable journey to Rangu where we arrived at 1:30 and had lunch. Woodman's garden looking a picture: masses of single and double hibiscus, oleanders, frangipani, and roses, and beds full of cannas, both reds and yellows, cosmos and zinnias. The Wylds are back in Yambio - he, his wife and his sister - and they came for tea and to stay the night. Wyld seems a very decent and most capable fellow, quite young and chest full of decorations: DSO, MC and bar, Croix-de-Guerre avec palme and Russian and Italian ribbons as well. Mrs W is Russian and vivacious and his sister is pleasant, but with a rather abrupt manner, probably from nerves. Mrs W has taken a great fancy to Bill and insists on nursing him - he has already bitten her twice and I'll bet given her any God's quantity of fleas. After tea played tennis on Woodman's new grass court. Drinks then quite a cheery dinner and so to bed. F pretended to be paralysed with fear at meeting white women for the first time in four years, but really doing very well.

7<sup>th</sup> - Walked to aerodrome and back before breakfast. Wyld left after breakfast for Tambura. Woodman and I to hospital to discuss leprosy and other matters and left F to entertain women. Played badminton after tea, another cheery dinner and so to bed. F very interesting on post-war Austria and Bolshevik Russia.

8<sup>th</sup> - Loafed before breakfast after which women and F went off to Yambio in my car and Woodman and I to hospital to do more work. We drove over to Yambio for lunch with Mrs Wyld. They have a new and most charming house furnished in delightful style, and she gave us a good lunch. Played badminton in afternoon. We were sitting on the veranda having drinks when there was a great commotion in the servants' quarters. Woodman went to see what it was and as it continued, I went out and found the kitchen roof on fire. Fortunately, it started slowly and there was time to remove everything out of it and even some of the grass from the far end of it. We took the top off a small shelter between the kitchen and the house and posted policemen at various points round the house armed with branches to deal with any sparks. That is always the trouble with grass roofs. However, there was no wind and the police worked well and nothing was lost except the kitchen roof. It was just as well we were there as it would have been an unenviable experience for two women alone. F had brought his Congo servant, a Zande, with him and like all natives on that side who come into contact with white people, he speaks French. I passed him at the height of the excitement when he was doing yeoman work swearing softly to himself in French. After the fire was more or less burned out, the cook sat down unconcernedly in a corner of the compound and produced quite a presentable dinner only about half an hour late. Woodman slept there in case anything further should happen and F and I drove home after dinner, and it was so cold that I was very glad of overcoat, muffler and gloves.

9<sup>th</sup> - Lazy morning, Woodman arrived back at breakfast after which he and I went to office. Rested in afternoon and then played three sets of tennis after tea.

10<sup>th</sup> - Left after early breakfast. I had two punctures and ruined one cover whilst at Rangu so had no spare. About six miles out of Rangu had blow-out with large rent in cover. Mended the tube and had to do this again before we limped back to Rangu where I had to borrow two covers from W. Had lunch and set off home, had one other puncture and got caught in storm and had to stop, so not home till 8.

11<sup>th</sup> - Raining in morning so wrote in house till breakfast, then to hospital and office. At 11 Wyld arrived from Tambura and we discussed SS and things relating to it. I can see I am going to get some help now that W is back. Larken is the dearest fellow but not much use at helping us. W went back to Tambura and on my way back to the house I went to call F to lunch and found he had cut and worked ivory to the extent of two petrol cases full, laid out on tables and chairs. He gave me a shoe horn as he had noticed mine was broken. I have become keen on gardening since coming down here and I spent the afternoon making and boxing rose cuttings from a bush in front of my house which will, I fear, be destroyed by the builders and is, I think, too old and big to move. On going to call F to tea he said "For God's sake do me a kindness and take some of this rubbish away" and proceeded to load me with two other shoe horns, four bangles (as I told him that you were coming, Ginger), two small turned powder boxes, and umbrella handle and a paper knife cut off a tusk tip about 14 ins long and 2 ins wide. I should think there was 2 to 3 guineas' worth of ivory in it alone.



12<sup>th</sup> - All morning in office and spent afternoon in garden. F arrived to tea carrying a huge lioness' skin which he gave me. There's no stopping the man.

13<sup>th</sup> - Wyld and Larken arrived at 1 and we had lunch soon after as L wanted to get on. He retired on the first of this month after 23 or 24 years' service and is building a house between here and Yambio. He proposes to go home each year for the fishing and spend the rest of the year here. L pushed off after lunch and W went to chief's court to hear appeals and I cleaned my rifles. Spent interesting evening, both W and F had good stories to tell. W had been in Iraq after the war and had good tales of that and F told a good story of Sutherland. Before the war S was poaching in Portuguese East Africa. They sent a patrol out to nab him and coming upon him, the leader told S he would have to accompany him. S said alright, there's no hurry though, come in and have a drink in my tent. He took the fellow into his tent, gave him a drink, and then covered him with a revolver and told him he'd be shot if he didn't order his men to pile arms outside. This was done and then S, marching the leader in front of him, used his disarmed men to carry his kit and ivory across the border, safely over which he thanked the man and let him go.

14<sup>th</sup> - Took W to get some rose and oleander cuttings for his wife. He set off after breakfast loaded with large quantities of ivory by F and then F and I operated. Had some grass planted in front of the house in afternoon. Baz came to drinks. He had shot an elephant in his early days out here when they were worth shooting. He made a profit of £300 on the ivory from one elephant. Now the price is so poor that it is not worth shooting in the Sudan unless you come across a regular big 'un. You've to pay £15 for killing him and then if the ivory is under 40 lbs per tusk they confiscate him. You have to wait a long time before you see one that you can be certain is over that. Last night I discovered quite by

chance that Wyld is the nephew about whom old Procter spoke to me: his mother was Procter's niece.

15<sup>th</sup> - Have just started to get a laboratory going and do some routine general examinations, only microscope so far but I hope to start some cultures etc later. Was working in the garden when Gore and Archdeacon Shaw arrived, they were staying at Madi rest house and came in for some petrol. They stayed to tea and I had great pleasure in selling Shaw some baskets and a chair from the workshops.

16<sup>th</sup> - Treatment parade of SS patients before office. After tea, F and I shot at a target with my .22 and he gave me some good tips. I'm trying to learn to shoot with both eyes open as I believe it is quicker, but at first it's hopeless trying to keep the R eye looking along the sights with the L open. F lent me a most interesting periodical, the magazine of the Institute of International Affairs, which has in it reports of discussion papers read and so on.

17<sup>th</sup> - Lazy Sabbath morning, round hospital and then F and I sat on veranda and read and talked and beer drank all morning.

18<sup>th</sup> - To garden before breakfast - nice lot of vegetables coming on. F and I operated in the morning: it's pleasant to have someone to talk over cases etc with. Pappoulis, a Greek merchant from Wau, passed through today on his way to Ndoromo and says he will take F to Wau on his way back. F and I shot at targets in evening.

19<sup>th</sup> - Have been finding lots of cases of bilharzia (mansoni) in dysentery cases so have sent out to collect snails from various watering places. Carpentry shop in afternoon.

20<sup>th</sup> - Pappoulis returned and will leave tomorrow. Carpentry making a rifle rack in the afternoon. Drinks with Baz in evening. F down in the mouth at leaving.

21<sup>st</sup> - F had early breakfast and left about 8:30, sorry to go. Carpentry in afternoon.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Down to house, they are getting on well with foundations. Spent part of the morning dissecting snails with no result.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Carpentry after lunch and in evening walk down to old garden to see how a teak nursery we've just started was progressing.

24<sup>th</sup> - Lazy morning. In office found that some of my snails had produced cicoria. Cleaned guns and drank beer and then in afternoon wrote letters.

25<sup>th</sup> - Office squaring things up with Baz who leaves tomorrow.

### ***Mabu rest house, 12 August 1932***

*(Reached Adelaide 15 October)*

26<sup>th</sup> July - Had Baz to early breakfast and he left for Wau soon afterwards. I spent morning in office and afternoon partly in the carpentry shop and partly in the garden. I already have about 25 rose cuttings taken, some hibiscus and oleanders, and two boxes of zinnia seedlings. Walk with Betty after tea.

27<sup>th</sup> - About "the estate" before breakfast. Salatian, who is out inspecting Renzi central, sent me six new cases from quarantine rest house to my horror. This makes ten in two

months so I shall have to go out and see about it. Arranged new plan of training for temergis this morning.

28<sup>th</sup> - To vegetable garden and cattle enclosure then breakfast and a hospital round with the termegis' class. Then interviewed and talked with the six new cases. They are awfully difficult to deal with as they lie like troopers, partly from fear and partly from habit. Either they have never seen a fly, don't know what one looks like, and haven't been outside their garden gate for the last ten years or else there are flies everywhere, in their houses, on the road and wherever they go they get bitten. However, I did get some useful information out of them at last. Worked on car, then office and then garden in afternoon.

29<sup>th</sup> - Am building a roof over our brick kiln yard so that we may burn bricks for the new house even in the rains. I went down to have a look see and of course they had built it so that the high open ends faced in the direction commonest for rain at this time of year.

*Having received letters from his parents, the diary breaks off to respond to these.*

My dear mother, I've come to the conclusion as the result of reading your letter that mine must be simply organs of misinformation. Yes, Cruickshank is a doctor and is the man from whom I took over at Yubu. As regards the de Wyldes, they live in the Belgian Congo at Ndoromo, which is 11 miles from Bungangai, the rest house that C and I were staying at when we called on them, and that is 50 miles from Yubu. However, there are four white women in Yambio, five hours by car, and several lovely Italian sisters in the mission five miles from my house. As far as trekking is concerned, Ginger can certainly come with me. Wyld is at the moment in the course of a tour with his wife and sister, including to any place that I'm likely to take Ginger. As far as travelling down here is concerned, she would travel alone in the river steamer from Khartoum to Juba where I would meet her. As for travelling kit, she'll not need sheets, blankets etc at all until she reaches Juba. From then in she'll want a valise containing mattress, blankets, pillows and sheets, a bath and a table and chair, but I'll arrange to get these for her in Khartoum. She won't need to get a "boy" till she gets to Khartoum where M can get her one.

Off for Tambura, dumped my kit in the rest house and then drove to Turuza (quarantine). The area concerned is 17 km of road belonging to one small chief and crossed in four places by streams. I measured distances, counted houses etc and found flies on two of the bridges and gave orders for all the bridge areas to be further cleared and looked at houses till dusk. Got caught in rain on way back to Tambura.

30<sup>th</sup> - Off to Turuza again. Inspected all the houses and their surrounds where cases had occurred and drove again over the whole road. I think I shall have to shift all the people off that road as the flies in nearby streams must be infected and we must let it die down. One doesn't want to shift them at the moment however as they are in the midst of cultivating and it would mean having to feed them etc. Back to T to pick up kit and so home to Yubu.

31<sup>st</sup> - Sunday so lazy morning, office for a while and then beer and rifle cleaning.

1<sup>st</sup> August - Dreamy Arbuthnot, an assistant DC whom I knew in Talodi, arrived from Wau on his way to Yambio where he is going to assist Wyld. He hadn't much news except that a further pay cut was likely in the New Year. He had lunch and then off again. Spent afternoon fiddling with ram which has given a lot of trouble and then worked on new

canvas cover for the back of my car. Tea and a walk - ram has now pumped water up to tank.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Jabbour, Baz's relief, arrived from Wau at noon, so I shall now be off to Rangu tomorrow. Set our driver to working on my car and spent afternoon in garden.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Collected some papers and money from office and then after early breakfast off to Rangu at 8. Stopped several times on the road to see sick people and also to go down to Diawo, just off the main road, where Larken lives. He now lives as what he calls "a private gent". Has built himself quite a nice house, but rather low down and shut in by trees and bush but he was in the process of having some avenues cut in various directions when I was there. Arrived at Rangu and went to office to see Pengue, the MO. His real name is Kemal Effendi but he's called Pengue ('egg' in Zande) by the Zande because he is bald. He'd not much office work for me but had saved up about eight operations. I looked at these. Drove 18 miles into Yambio and had a very cheery dinner with the Wylds, Arbuthnot also there. They had rather a tragedy with Bill whilst they were on trek: he was bitten by a mad dog and they thought it better to shoot him. We played shove halfpenny after dinner and so back to Rangu.

4<sup>th</sup> - Operated before breakfast, which I had with Pengue. His English is not good so we converse in a mixture of English and Arabic. He was in the Turkish army as a doctor and fought against us at Gallipoli. Operated again and moved to Yambio after lunch. Had tea with the Ws and then played badminton until the Gores arrived for drinks. Back to Rangu after dinner, getting wet along the way.

5<sup>th</sup> - More operations and then to Yambio for tea with Wynds. Had fully intended going home today but Mrs W persuaded me as the Browns from Amadi were coming to stay for a day or two. Night at Rangu.

6<sup>th</sup> - Operated after breakfast and then to Yambio for lunch. W, Brown and I walked in the afternoon and then drove down to the mission for tea. The Gores came back for dinner so we sat down ten to a cheery party, a record for Yambio I imagine. The Gs left early and we danced and did stupid things till late.

7<sup>th</sup> - After breakfast I dashed back to Rangu and operated. They all came to Rangu for tea and I went back to Yambio for dinner with the Ws before returning to Rangu.

8<sup>th</sup> - To hospital for last look at my cases and then set off home for Yubu. Stopped and had lunch with Larken and so home at dusk.

9<sup>th</sup> - Starting out today to do inspection of Renzi N and W. Round the estate before breakfast. They are getting on slowly with the house and have dug the foundations and are filling them with ironstone blocks. Came out to the first rest house (Koyambio) for tea and went for a walk and shot a guinea fowl for the pot. I very much fear I have lost Betty in the long grass.

10<sup>th</sup> - Early inspection and charting lepers etc, which took all morning. Search parties unable to find Betty. I went to the same ground again this evening but with no result, so I fear she's gone.

11<sup>th</sup> - Saw some sick before breakfast after which inspected watering places. They will drink out of a common pool into which everyone dips their gourds and not have water

running over a sill – as they are all springs they could do it easily and avoid fouling the water. They listen to you and say “By God you are right” and then never do anything about it. Got caught in rain on way back and sheltered in a Zande hut, the owner of which offered me his only chair and entertained me with talk until the rain stopped after which I moved on here to Mabu – only just got here in time before a very heavy rain storm. Went for a stroll when it was over and met a man on the road who, when he saw me coming, yelled out to his son in the house, “Boy, bring me my hat, I want to greet the white man”. By dint of repeated instructions and imprecations, he received it just in time to don it before taking it off to me. All the older men wear straw boaters with square crowns, locally made of course.

12<sup>th</sup> - Found there is a storm in a teacup here. The old chief Mabu, owing to a difference of opinion with Renzi, the paramount chief, has been superseded by a relative of Renzi's. They came at me on my arrival and both started talking at once. So I started in on them, and whenever I said anything that Mabu approved of he saluted and said “Yes sir” (which is just permeating the district, that and “Good morning Father” which I do object to). When I said anything that met with Sendé's approval he did the same. So I kicked them both out and said I'd have nothing to do with either. Did inspection which took all morning.

13<sup>th</sup> - Saw some sick before breakfast and then spent most of the morning on office work I'd brought with me. Walked to some watering places and shifted here (Mboek) after lunch. After tea went out for some guinea fowl for the pot, as much for the exercise it entails as anything. It was just dusk and I was sitting smoking and having my “sundowner” when a terabai arrived from Yubu. He'd walked the 20 miles since noon with my mail and a basket full of vegetables. I sorted my mail and then put off the pleasure of reading it till after I'd bathed. A good mail is very reminiscent of the Christmas pillow case of one's youth. It arrives fat and bulging and you cut the string and dip into it – what's this box? Ah! the fortnightly supply of butter from Cairo. And now this? That must be cigars from the Red Sea Club that I ordered so long ago as to have forgotten, so they are almost like a present. The parcels extracted, one turns the bag upside down and out comes a cascade of letters of all shapes and sizes. One sorts them out, putting the good ones to one side and tackling the others first. Finally, in all too short a time, one's read all the letters and so one reads them all over again.

### ***Wau, 9 September 1932***

*((Reached Adelaide 5 November))*

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> August - Did an inspection in the morning and then wrote letters till after lunch. Sent a terabai back to Yubu with my mail bag to be sent off and then moved on to the next rest house, Motumbu, quite a pleasant spot. I went for a short walk and then read papers etc that arrived in yesterday's mail.

15<sup>th</sup> - Did inspection and then saw some sick which took until lunchtime after which we moved on to the next rest house, Zungawa. Rather a dilapidated rest house built in a hollow. Got stuck for a time in the road which is bad: surface crust all right but soft underneath.



16<sup>th</sup> - Up and did inspection - small numbers so soon over. Spent morning writing and doing a quiet shiver - a dull grey day and raining and simply freezing. I sat in the rest house with a woolly and an overcoat. Moved on after lunch to Mbiri and found the rest house had recently been burnt down and the new one not finished yet. They proposed that I should sleep in a rather inadequate bird's cage, rather distressingly public, and as I didn't feel inclined to give my rendering of a bedroom scene to the Zande audience I sent some men off to cut grass and cover it temporarily with more grass. Shot a guinea fowl for the pot and then sat shivering over a fire till bed.

17<sup>th</sup> - Inspection and this over I sat in the sun for about an hour to get warm. Moved on after lunch to Mbitimo - much warmer now. As I was sitting before dinner a full moon started to rise in front of me and threw into relief a dead tree. This made such an attractive picture that I tried to photograph it.

18<sup>th</sup> - Did inspection and found a case much to my disgust, this part of the country having been free for some time. Had a long walk to look at the house where the case came from and so back to lunch.

19<sup>th</sup> - Spent morning writing and seeing sick and after lunch moved on to Tio and went for a walk in the evening.

20<sup>th</sup> - Did inspection of Tio, saw some sick, and after lunch moved on to Kurasi. Went for a walk in evening down to nearest watering place. Saw the largest cultivation clearing I've seen outside of Yubu. A terabai arrived with some vegetables and some letters from Wau.

21<sup>st</sup> - Did inspection of K and so on to Bakiri, the last lap.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Inspection of Bakiri, the largest number so far and it took until lunch. It rained in the afternoon after which I went for a walk, had tea and paid off my carriers. The lorry arrived from Yubu and has, I find, a large crack in the flywheel housing.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Set off for Yubu soon after breakfast. Stopped at Giara to look at the wells we dug there. They were satisfactorily full of clear water. Just near Tambura I saw a small boy standing on the side of the road with a puppy, so I stopped and called to him to bring it to me but he upped and disappeared into the bush as fast as his little legs could carry him. Arrived at Yubu at noon. It was rather fun to get home after three weeks out - the house somehow looked more palatial and Mbitio had put two or three bowls of roses about. There were two beds of cosmea in full bloom and the lawn was quite grown. I walked round and looked at things in the afternoon. The outside foundations of the house were finished and they had already built up one layer of ironstone blocks.

24<sup>th</sup> - Round hospital, early breakfast and so to Barabandi to commence charting the lepers. Lunch and house supervision in afternoon and then some office work after tea. Medical officers to drinks in evening. A man brought Betty back this morning in the most pitiable state, covered with sores and just skin and bone.

25<sup>th</sup> - Barabandi all morning and read in house all afternoon: cold and raining. Went to office after tea and started to sort out Sutherland's private papers. Put new windscreen on car.

26<sup>th</sup> - Got one of the brothers from the mission who is a mechanic to come and look at the lorry. He says he can patch it up sufficiently for me to get it up to Wau, where I must go soon.

27<sup>th</sup> - Hospital then sleeping sickness weekly parade of patients and so to office. At the new house in afternoon and then tried to draw new plans for a garden in front of new house, am making a tennis court. Drinks with Jabbour.

28<sup>th</sup> - Usual lazy Sunday. Rounds in hospital and then beer and gun cleaning. Mail arrived just before lunch. Spent afternoon reading it.

29<sup>th</sup> - Again to Barabandi and so to office. House after lunch and then office in evening.

30<sup>th</sup> - Hospital and Barabandi, this time to finish them - have re-charted over 600 lepers in five days. I think I shall be able to discharge quite a lot at Christmas.

31<sup>st</sup> - Operation after breakfast and then office work. Came home to lunch to find Betty ill. I'd noticed she wasn't too bright last night and now she has pneumonia; despite copious brandy egg beaten up etc she died this evening. The house progressing now, the outside walls up two blocks all round.

1<sup>st</sup> September - Did the men lepers in the segregation camp. Rather depressing, they being the worst cases. To new house and some gardening. Lorry now in working condition.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Finished women of segregation and so to office and hospital. Gardening in afternoon.

3<sup>rd</sup> - The usual sleeping sickness patients parade and then office work and so down to the house. Having drawn out a plan for the new house I gave it to Baz and he had marked it out whilst I was at Yambio. I find on measuring today that one of the main inside foundations is all cockeyed and so it will have to be dug and laid again.

4<sup>th</sup> - Usual lazy day, wrote letters all the afternoon.

5<sup>th</sup> - Decided to go to Wau on Wednesday. Spent the morning working in the budget for next year. It costs about £4000 all told to run my area. Lorry arrived on its way back to Wau so I wrote and told Brock I would be in Wau on Thursday. Did a caesarean in the afternoon and so home to tea, pouring with rain. I now have some fine cuttings of roses, hibiscus and oleanders, all of which have taken.

6<sup>th</sup> - Office work all morning and house in afternoon.

7<sup>th</sup> - Left in my car with lorry for Wau after an early breakfast. Got to Mabu rest house behind which there is a pool where I had a swim and some sandwiches, and so on the road again as far as number two rest house the other side of the river Bo where I spent the night. It becomes hotter and more sticky as one approaches Wau, which by the way is the capital of this province.

8<sup>th</sup> - Set off again after breakfast, arrived at the river Busseri and had to wait some time for the punt. Arrived in Wau about 12 and went straight to the Muderia to see Brock, he's the governor, stayed and chatted with him for a bit and then went to see Hall, the doctor. Went with him to his house for beer and so back and put my things in Brock's rest house, then to lunch with him. Wrote letters in the afternoon, to tea with Brock with whom I'm staying, and then went for a walk to the province garage to see mechanics about our lorry. Decided to put new spare engine in and send the old one to Khartoum. We then walked to the

Roman Catholic mission workshops. A most interesting and enterprising place, all done by the fathers and lay brothers who teach the natives. They have a carpentry, blacksmith and machine shops. There is a huge engine and there are wheels and machines buzzing around in all directions. Back to the house and presently Morrison<sup>90</sup> and Cumming,<sup>91</sup> deputy governor and district commissioner, arrived for bridge.

9<sup>th</sup> - Walked down to garage to see them start on the lorry. To hospital after breakfast to be shown round by Hall and then back to the rest house to spend rest of the morning writing. Lunch and more writing till tea. A walk with Brock around the town. It's quite an attractive place. The river Jur runs along the foot of the town, the majority of British houses are built on an eminence overlooking the river and all have pleasant gardens, and there are a lot of lawns about the town. Brock's house is nearer to the river and his garden runs right down to the banks. It's a much hotter place than Yubu but not as unpleasant as I'd always heard. The post boat is leaving this morning for the North and will take this.

### ***Source Yubu, 29 September 1932***

*(Reached Adelaide 25 November)*

When you get this I imagine Ginger will be nearly in Port Sudan. I'm writing to Tony Grylls to ask him to meet her and put her on the train. It's a pity that she didn't know it before, but Mrs Morrison, the wife of Tim Morrison the deputy governor of this province, is coming on the boat before Ginger and they could have travelled together as far as Khartoum.

10<sup>th</sup> September - Up and wrote letters, after breakfast called to see Hall, the doctor, who I had heard was in bed with fever. He didn't look very fit and has had rather a lot of fever lately. Then finished off my letters and sealed the bag, which Mohammed took down to the post boat. I then paid some calls until lunch. Played tennis after tea with Morrison, Cumming, and a new Bimbashi in the Equots called Spicer. Had a drink after with Morrison and so to dinner with Brock. He was interesting about witchcraft and poisoning among the Zande.

11<sup>th</sup> - Went to look at Hall after breakfast and then to rest house to read. Cumming called in for me and took me out to see the dairy run by the markaz and which is his special pride. All the sheds etc spotlessly clean and the cows are groomed twice a day before milking. They have a half-breed English bull and some good calves by him. All the cows' names are kept in a book and their daily output measured and if any don't give up to a certain standard they are got rid of. They are milked into clean buckets and then the milk is filtered. The dairy is spotless and the floor and benches are tiled. There is a daily delivery and one can get butter, cream and milk, and they run it at a profit. So back to C's house for a beer and then to lunch. Tennis and then tea with Morrison.

12<sup>th</sup> - To garage to see how they were getting on with my lorry. Find they'd finished putting in the new engine which was still rather stiff. Round of visits in the morning including Hall, who is better, and garrulous Joe, the PWD foreman, to discuss the new

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<sup>90</sup> GNI Morrison, joined SPS 1919.

<sup>91</sup> JF (Jack) Cumming, SPS 1927-1935 and 1942-1954. "One of the last of the 'Bog Barons': stocky, tough, full of personality and a man of complete professional integrity" (Public Relations Branch Bulletin 547, 28 March 1954).

house. Tennis in the afternoon and then bridge. The agriculture and forest steamer arrived: C is going in it for a few days up the Sue towards Rafile.

13<sup>th</sup> - Packed, breakfast and said goodbye and so took the road. Took nearly two hours to get my car and lorry over Bussari by pontoon. Drove very slowly because of new engine and slept the night at number two rest house.

14<sup>th</sup> - Off after an early breakfast and reached Tambura where I found Salatian. He tells me he has found eight further cases at Turuza. This determines me to shift the people at once instead of waiting until the dry weather. Saw Larken and he came on to Yubu with me to get some petrol. Found mail waiting for me which occupied me for the rest of the day.

15<sup>th</sup> - Monguru, the senior terabai, brought me two small pups which I had earmarked from the litter of a bitch belonging to a sleeping sickness patient. Rather amusing little fellows, very uncertain on their legs but with no doubts about their appetite. To garden and then all morning in office. House in the afternoon: find on going over that it is not quite level, however it doesn't matter as we are still building in ironstone, so it only needs trimming and dressing. Such is amateur building. Pups woke me up frequent intervals during the night.

16<sup>th</sup> - Hospital and office all the morning and the house and garden most of the afternoon. Just finished reading *50 Years of Parliament* by Asquith. Quite interesting but very partisan in its tone. He was too much in the thick of it to take an impartial view and entirely lacking in reference to European politics of interest to England. The Franco-Prussian War, the Russo-Turkish war, the constants stirs in the Balkans, the birth of the German nation, all of which took place during the early period covered by the book, find no mention.

17<sup>th</sup> - Sleeping sickness inspection - on walking round I found many people openly selling hashish in the market. Although I don't particularly object to their smoking it in moderation as they do, and anyhow it so universal that one could not hope to stop it, yet I do bar them selling it in my market. One would look such a fool if one came suddenly on it whilst showing some big bug from Khartoum around - they take it rather seriously there. Rest of morning in office, bathed the pups in afternoon and then to work on the new house.

18<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day, to hospital and then took pups for a walk and read a novel. Jabbour to drinks in the evening.

19<sup>th</sup> - Garden in the morning, vegetables doing well especially the cabbages and tomatoes. Operated after breakfast and then rest of the morning in the office. House and gardening till tea, then to hospital and back with pups.

20<sup>th</sup> - Office all morning, new house and garden after lunch. Cutting back the flowering bushes etc and making layers of some oleander bushes. Jabbour's house for drinks. Discussed the possibility of improving our cattle by importing some from Wau; there is of course always the difficulty of the fly here.

21<sup>st</sup> - Hospital and office all morning. Was wakened at 5:30 by a note from Larken asking for some oil. He arrived at about noon and stayed to lunch and shot off again immediately afterwards. He tells me that Turuza's people (where we've been having the outbreak of sleeping sickness) think that the outbreak is due to the fact that they took over the old houses and cultivation of the quarantine people, and that their former owners are bewitching them. He said it he thought it was a good idea to encourage this view as it

would make them more willing and keen to shift. Said I thought that was mistaken policy, as the only way can we eventually get their help and willing cooperation was by their realisation of cause and effect. One cannot expect a Zande to sweat at clearing khors etc so long as he believes the disease is due to "Mongu" (witchcraft), but he would be more willing if he realised and believed that dirty khors mean fly and fly means sleeping sickness. Afternoon in new house and gardening.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Found Fadl, my cook, with fever - probably collected it in Wau where I found he has not been taking his quinine regularly. Office all morning and then gardening and overseeing new house. Morrison, Hall and Spicer arrive from Wau at teatime. Took them for a walk down to the source of the Yubu and into France. Bridge before and after dinner, Morrison in good form and very amusing. Suggested that the pups should be called Lervo and Knox.

23<sup>rd</sup> - M left for Yambio after early breakfast. Showed Spicer all over the settlement buildings. He and Hall left for Yambio after lunch. At house till tea, rest of the day reading mail which had just arrived.

24<sup>th</sup> - Garden, sleeping sickness parade, office and hospital all morning. Usual supervision of house and some gardening. Took pups for a walk.

25<sup>th</sup> - Hospital, then stained and looked at some slides and so to see prisoners cutting the grass where I'm going to make tennis court. Rest of morning cleaning guns and rifles. Pups given a bath after lunch and then gardened till tea.

26<sup>th</sup> - House before breakfast, office all morning except for trip to look at aerodrome. Spent afternoon with spirit level and pegs to guide people in putting down earth to level tennis court.

27<sup>th</sup> - Garden, hospital and office all morning. Heard from Greek merchant that Spicer and Hall were on their way back from Yambio. Afternoon at new house. S and H arrived at 6 pm having had trouble on the road. They tell me that Yunes, the senior Syrian medical officer at Rangu, has just lost his brother in America and proposes to resign as a result of this in order to take over the family affairs. He will be a great loss to Woodman.

28<sup>th</sup> - Rained before breakfast. To hospital with S and H where we treated the former who had earache. They went off to house to read and amuse themselves and I worked till lunch. Came on to rain at lunchtime and continued steadily all the afternoon. So I slept, a thing I rarely do down here. Jabbour came to drinks. He is by way of being a student of early Arab history about which he is quite interesting.

29<sup>th</sup> - Hall and Spicer pushed off again after breakfast and I to the office. Morrison arrived from Yambio at noon and I showed him around a bit. After lunch I went down to see the new house till tea. M and I went for a walk. Poor Knox got himself bitten by a stray dog and was very sorry for himself when we returned but no damage done I hope. Jabbour again to drinks and dinner. He is also keen and very knowledgeable about near Eastern history and present politics. I do wish these people wouldn't come just at the end of the month and waste our time when we're getting the official mail ready. I'm sending my mailbag off today to catch the boat at Wau on the 7<sup>th</sup>.

30<sup>th</sup> - Just time for one more day. Walked round the place with Morrison and then to office. He left about 11 to go to Tambura, where he was going to have lunch with Wyld, who is

there hearing appeals. Spent part of afternoon at house and part writing letters. Rained like the devil last night.

### **Source Yubu, 17 October 1932**

*((Reached Adelaide 24 December))*

1<sup>st</sup> October - Vegetable garden and cow yard to inspect, and then office and sleeping sickness inspection all morning. Nasr has just come back from Wandu and Rikita inspections: found no cases – a bright spot. Hear from him Wynd isn't in Tambura yet. Afternoon at new house where I watched men planting and covering the new tennis lawn and also pegged out another bit of the garden. It's a gentle irregular slope so I'm going to terrace it in shallow terraces of lawn with flower beds and flowering shrubs.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Usual lazy day, round of hospital after breakfast. Was just coming away when a small boy was brought in with a cut Achilles tendon so spent the rest of the morning sewing it up and putting it in plaster.

3<sup>rd</sup> - New house in early morning, office all morning, lunch and then set off for Mutukurungu rest house about 4. I'd just had a bath and settled down to a drink when a runner came from Tambura with note from Tiger Wyld saying they were in T and had heard I was at M, and would I come over for a drink and stay to dinner. I went over to drinks but came back to dinner and so to bed.

4<sup>th</sup> - Breakfast at six. Got some carriers and set off for Mande where we did an inspection and so after lunch to Tikimo rest house. Took the pups for quite a long walk.

5<sup>th</sup> - Small inspection here. Found here a female sub chief, the first I've seen among the Zande. She is a sister of the present big chief in this area, Renzi, and a daughter of Tambura who used to rule the country with a rod of iron in pre-government days. She's quite a superior and intelligent woman. Shifted on to Mayangi rest house in the afternoon.

6<sup>th</sup> - Did inspection and saw some sick which took till nearly lunchtime. Then went down to the source of a small stream from which the rest house draws its water and took some photos as it seemed to me rather attractive. So on to the hospital. As I was having tea, two martins were sitting on the rail of the rest house fence, looking ridiculous with their short necks, aldermanic looks and ridiculously long coattails. Caused one to reflect that action may render attractive animals, and for that matter humans, who in repose are insignificant or even ridiculous.

7<sup>th</sup> - Big crowd at inspection which I finished about 11. Did some writing and then drove into Tambura to lunch with the Wynds. Talked shop with W after lunch and then went up to the Chief's court with him and so back and had a drink. Arrived back at the rest house in time for dinner.

8<sup>th</sup> - Had a lazy day, saw some sick in the morning and then after lunch moved on to Mopoi rest house. Mail arrived just as I was leaving and I spent rest of day reading it - letters from you all.

9<sup>th</sup> - Another large inspection which took most of the morning. Spent rest of day reading and writing. Knox the pup rather off-colour with his food and in a very bad temper so that I had to separate the two of them.

10<sup>th</sup> - About 10 days ago whilst I was out walking in the afternoon, a dog came to my house - a most unusual occurrence and bit poor Knox - just a small puncture wound in his neck which I iodined. He had a little local swelling for two days but then quite recovered. This morning however he was definitely mad, salivating and barking and growling at nothing at all, but quite friendly with Mohammed and me which is most peculiar. He got rapidly worse so I had to shoot him after breakfast. He was the better of the two of course. Went off and did an inspection at the local mission and then had a walk round. Contrast between the church, which is huge, with its gilded and vividly coloured virgins, Christs and so on and garish alters etc and the secondary school room with its boys in white shorts and blue checked shirts and modern school desks, charts, maps and educational pictures was most striking (what an awful sentence). When I came in they were having an English lesson aided by speaking gramophone record. They seem to educate a certain number but when you want a good boy to train as a clerk or a temergi you can't get one from them. Back to Mopoi and then in the afternoon moved on to the rest house on the Jebel. I found it an awful sweat getting up and had to rest about three times but my carriers, having walked the 22 km from Mopoi to the Jebel, came up the mountainside with loads on their heads and singing! Heard a lion as I was having dinner, the first I've heard in these parts.

11<sup>th</sup> - Early breakfast and then down the Jebel to do an inspection at Zungumbia. This finished, up to the top again, this time not quite so laboriously. Very cold in the evening and I was quite glad of a fire.

12<sup>th</sup> - Down to Zungumbia to see sick. Z wants to build a new road to the west of his present one. He says that the cultivations are worn out as he's been there for six years, but they always make their main cultivations in the bush and I've no doubt that the binzas [witch doctors] have said that there is bad magic and it's time they shifted their houses. I talked to him for some time about it and told him if he was really keen he'd better cut a trace of his proposed road and let me know when it was finished and I would walk along it and in the meantime I'd speak to Wyld about it. So back to lunch - this time I walked up without a stop. It's remarkable how quickly one gets used to a particular form of activity.

13<sup>th</sup> - Down to do inspection at Lindo, up again to have lunch after which down again and off to Lindo's rest house.

14<sup>th</sup> - Lindo's inspection and seeing a few sick took all morning. In afternoon moved to Makta rest house. I thoroughly enjoyed the two days up the Jebel.

15<sup>th</sup> - Did an inspection and then back to Yubu. Found everything in order: the platform of the house is finished and ready to start on the walls. The tennis lawn coming through well and one garden terrace finished. The hospital is full and five cases waiting for operation.

16<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day, hospital and then to new house to mark out new walls. Just in the midst of this when two Roman Catholic brothers arrived, one with something wrong with his eye. By the time I'd fixed him up, Anderson, the elephant hunter from across the way, arrived unexpectedly. Sat and talked to him till lunch. I'd just had this and was settling down to read when the three Wylds arrived. W and I went to look at the new house and so to office for a while.

17<sup>th</sup> - Walk before breakfast. W and I spent some time in office and then they were off to the Bo River. Rest of morning in office and new house all afternoon.

18<sup>th</sup> - House and garden, operation and office all morning. Anderson set out for a few days to see if he could get an elephant and so give us some meat. New house all afternoon – these people want constant supervision or else they don't lay the bricks level, use too much cement in order to cover their mistakes, don't bond their bricks properly etc.

19<sup>th</sup> - Operation and office in morning, house in afternoon.

20<sup>th</sup> - Anderson arrived back after lunch in bad temper. He is now the only English hunter left there and all the others are French, Italian etc. Each employs several native hunters whom they arm. The majority of them know nothing about the science of shooting and firmly believe that all the bullet does is to make a hole in the elephant's exterior through which either the flame of the rifle or an evil spirit can gain entrance and so kill the animal. The result is of course that they hit them or try to hit them just anywhere and wound many, so making them savage and very shy. A is furious because he is constantly going to places where he knows there is a good chance of elephant only to find that a native hunter has been there a few days before, wounding and scaring everything for miles. Wylds arrived at teatime.

21<sup>st</sup> - Hospital then took the Ws to look round the garden. After breakfast I went to operate and Wyld to hear appeals at the native court while Mrs and Miss W read and questioned my cook as to how he makes his cakes, which I must say are very good. Wylds left for Yambio just as I had finished operating. House in afternoon. Arbuthnot arrived unexpectedly from Yambio at teatime. Had Jabbour and Nasr to drinks. Late to bed as Anderson and Arbuthnot kept me up talking: we became involved in a lively argument as to what constituted a great poet (yes, mother, I know I loves an argument).

22<sup>nd</sup> - Arbuthnot and I to garden and cow yard to see new calf, and took him round the sleeping sickness patients and weekly market in the morning where I tried to catch them selling hashish, which rendered rather futile by reason of numerous small boys who well knew our purpose and preceded us yelling at the tops of their voices "Bang! Bang!" (hashish). A then went off to Tambura. Spent all afternoon on car and find that the new king bolt I put in the back spring has sheared again, so had to dismantle it. Anderson and I spent evening talking.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Anderson left for bush again after breakfast. Lazy day.

24<sup>th</sup> - Operation and office and car in morning. Arbuthnot came over from Tambura for 30 gallons of petrol and then off again. Spent all afternoon on the car and, as I couldn't finish it in time, I had tea and then took lorry with me leaving driver to finish my car and bring it out to me tomorrow. So set off to Ukwo rest house where I arrived after dark.

25<sup>th</sup> - Up at dawn and did inspection here. Many absentees and I find that the terabai I had sent out to warn them had made a mistake with the day. Then off and did another inspection at Ikoro. Kamsul, the driver, brought my car here and took the lorry back. Moved on again to Kpitio where I went for a walk after tea to inspect watering places accompanied by Kpitio, the local sub-chief: ex-cannibal, slightly mad but amusing and a good disciplinarian.

26<sup>th</sup> - Inspection of Kpitio and then on to another at Mutu Kuringa. I see the mother of the lorry driver whom I operated on some time ago and she seems fit, strange to relate. Then shifted again after lunch to Tambura where I found Arbuthnot. Drove him out after tea to



see how the people were progressing in their shift from Turuza's Road – this is where we have just had an outbreak of sleeping sickness. They're getting on well and most of them already have their new grain stores built on their new sites (round mud-walled, grass roofed and standing on four legs).

27<sup>th</sup> - Did Tambura inspection and then on to Renzi's Mbanga, where Renzi, the biggest chief in this district, lives. I go into his compound to inspect his harem and I saw 73 of his wives and children, which isn't by any means all. Just as I was finishing this Cruikshank arrived from Wau; he has just come back from leave and looks very well. We drove back to Tambura where we had lunch with Arbuthnot. They then went off to Yubu and I on to Budwe's rest house. C tells me that Yunes, the senior Syrian medical officer at Rangu has chucked his hand in. His brother, who was a millionaire, has just died in America and Yunes has to go over and deal with his estate. This means that Jabbour, my senior medical officer, will have to go to Rangu at 48 hours notice, leaving me short of my best man at a time when we are very busy with routine things not to mention the annual report which is hanging over my head. It seems that I should have had notification of this before but the letter never arrived. I fume and rage, but what's the use. Baz won't be back for 2 ½ months – it's most infuriating. On going for a walk after tea I find some wild honeysuckle in the bush – a man tells me that the roots of it are very good medicine for a cold or a cough.

28<sup>th</sup> - Budwe inspection and then on to Abdulla where inspection also including Turuza's people who now attend here and are gathered for inspection for the first time since they moved from their infected piece of road. Consequently this is a big inspection. Found one case. Brock arrived just as I was finishing and I followed him to Yubu about an hour later. Discovered M. Pillet, the adjoining French DC, here and had them all to lunch. P says that their senior doctor wants to visit here in January and also that a flight of French military machines wish to visit here in April. If they come that means that some of the RAF will also come to meet them and my poor accommodation will be stretched to bursting point. I shall have to improve my French. Brock and Cruikshank came to see over new house and we went for a walk after tea and P then goes back to Bambouti.

29<sup>th</sup> - Brock left on his way to Yambio after breakfast and C and I spent some time in the office discussing various things and then I spent rest of morning making arrangements with Jabbour who is to go off on Monday [31<sup>st</sup>]. All the afternoon at the new house and the brickworks. I can see I shall have to start a squad making handmade bricks as well as otherwise we will be held up by shortage of bricks. Spent rest of evening talking with Cruikshank. Jabbour and Salatian came to drinks.

30<sup>th</sup> - Lazy morning. C left for Rangu. Spent a good deal of time in office making arrangements and taking over things from Jabbour. Round of hospital and then spent rest of the day writing letters for J to take with him this morning.

### **Source Yubu, 23 November 1932**

*(annotated "Answered 25 January") At the start of the 25-page letter, Tom takes his mother gently to task after she wrote that she reads his letters to a friend.*

Much as I love you, I hope you are not developing into the doting mother who bores any listener she may buttonhole with her son's dreary screeds. There's supreme selfishness for you, for I don't mind so much that you should bore people as that they should say "Damn

that fellow Tom Morris, why should he write those dull interminable letters with which his mother sees fit to bore me”.

I've just had a letter from Mike [Hillary] in which he doesn't approve of Ginger travelling on her own and so suggests that as Edwina [Mrs H] has never seen the south, she and G should come down together to stay with me, and that he will try and persuade one of the Air Force to fly him down for the weekend whilst they are here. Oh! magnificent Government economy and corruption in the Air Force - I've written and said I think it a grand idea.

31<sup>st</sup> October - Jabbour to breakfast and he off immediately afterwards. Operation then office. House as usual in afternoon. Discuss with Nasr about starting making hand-made bricks. I don't think the brick machine can keep pace with the builders and we shall be held up for want of bricks.

1<sup>st</sup> November - Garden, breakfast, operation and office. House in afternoon then brick works where I discover to my horror that a large number of the 50,000 bricks ready for firing are thicker at one end than the other owing to a defect in the machine that has gradually been getting worse. It was Jabbour's job to watch this. I said to the man in charge, "Haven't you noticed this?" Oh yes, he'd noticed it alright. Well, why the hell hadn't he come and told me, instead of just going on making them? Well, that was a point that just hadn't occurred to him. And then people wonder why all men go a little gaga in the tropics! This will put back the completion of the house about a month.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Usual then out to look at second Yubu bridge to find that the side had fallen in so set people to get materials and repair it. Lorry not back yet so will have to put off the completion of Renzi central until after Brock returns.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Lorry returns with mail and a totally unexpected Dispensary Hakim, a northerner. He should be quite useful in the hospital especially as Jabbour has gone, but I wish they'd let me know as there was no accommodation for him and I could have got something ready. I've put him temporarily in to share Salatian's house until I can build or repair something for him. I was surprised that either was content to live even temporarily with the other.

4<sup>th</sup> - Hospital to show new DH around then office and lab most of the morning. I'm trying out a new sp. Pallida stain which I got from a German firm. House in afternoon and later took temergis' class.

5<sup>th</sup> - Cruickshank arrived back from Yambio and says Brock not coming back through Yubu but is going via Tambura as he is short of petrol. House after lunch - the usual thing, pulling down bad work that's been done in the morning when I'm too busy to watch it. C and I talked all evening. He tells me that Pridie doesn't want Atkey to retire until '34 when Pridie will take over [as director of the SMS]. Atkey is a remarkable man, 54, been in the country since 1907, thin as a rake and yet still runs to the baths and back every morning, regularly dives off the roof of the baths (about 30 ft), and plays polo hard.

6<sup>th</sup> - C wakes up with a temperature, or rather has been awake most of the night and says he feels "bloody". Should think it's probably 'flu as there is a lot about in Yambio I hear. Took slides of his blood but they were negative for malaria. He has high temp still and feels very cheap.

7<sup>th</sup> - C had a bad night and still high temp. Little bronchitis but nothing else to be found. We have repaired the brick-making machine and it is now making good bricks. I've borrowed a hand brick expert from Rangu and set him to work in the old basket shop. C still feeling sorry for himself in the evening,

8<sup>th</sup> - C had slightly better night - has small patches of bronco-pneumonia - and slept all morning. He still has high temp in evening. Hope his chest isn't going to get worse.

9<sup>th</sup> - C still has temp of 102 this morning but his chest is resolving and he feels better. Find new hand-made brick expert is doing well and making about 800 a day. C better and more comfortable in evening.

10<sup>th</sup> - C had better night and much brighter. Hospital where I assisted Salatian to do his first hernia, not badly but pretty ham-fisted. House in afternoon. Doesn't seem to be going very fast but so much work needs to be unpicked. C much better in the evening and I think he is well on the way to recovery. I was a bit worried about him for a day or two. White patients seem to assume such an enormous importance out here. Not so much, I'm sure, because of their contrast to the black man whom one more frequently deals with as to the fact that they are always friends or acquaintances.

11<sup>th</sup> - C much better and had a good night. So much so that I think I'll go out and finish the Renzi Central inspection which Brock and C's arrival interrupted. Off to Giara rest house in the afternoon.

12<sup>th</sup> - Inspected Giara, a large crowd, and also wasted some time seeing about 200 absentees from other rest houses who'd gathered there to await my arrival. So we go on to Nangi, a smaller inspection, and from there on after lunch to Buta rest house. I like this rest house, it is perched on a slight eminence and when sitting outside it there is a grand view of rolling country towards the west and for some obscure reason there is always a good sunset when I'm here. This evening was no exception and I sat and smoked my pipe and enjoyed it.

13<sup>th</sup> - Did this inspection and so on to Simbiri, the last one. On way back to Yubu for lunch I stop to look at all the khor crossings between Simbiri and Giara as many people have built houses recently which are too close to the water. They are such fools: they all know perfectly well that it's forbidden yet they'll take the risk of your noticing it in order to be a little closer to the water and so not have to carry it so far. They're really awful cads in some ways these people; as I was pacing out the distances from the khor edges, those whose houses were just outside the forbidden area were jeering at those who hadn't been so lucky. Find C much better; we have a long talk about medical education.

14<sup>th</sup> - C although by no means fit insists on leaving for Wau. We are very short of petrol and we have to squeeze out every drop in the place to get him and his lorry to Wau. Most of morning with C in office, an early lunch, and he off to Wau and so I to the house and brick making. C has promised to try and find a good northern builder in Wau who can constantly supervise the work. Even if I have to pay him a big wage it will be worth it in the time saved in unpicking bad work.

15<sup>th</sup> - To cattle yard to see bull who is sick. Did operation on a large hernia which I was sorry I hadn't left alone before I'd finished it.

16<sup>th</sup> - Letter from Hugh Woodman asking to borrow some cement and rubberoid and peanuts. Arranged to send them off by carrier but discovered later that the local merchant is going there tomorrow, so arrange for him to take it.

17<sup>th</sup> - Lorry from Rangu on its way to Wau brings a mail for us. Letters from John [Tom's brother] and you all. Decide that if the DH and Salatian share the same house permanently they'll have a row sooner or later so decide to repair and enlarge an old rest house in which we have been storing timber for the new house roof - we can take it out now as the rains have almost stopped.

18<sup>th</sup> - Lorry from Wau brings down a northern builder for the house and 200 gallons of petrol. I hear that Tunncliffe,<sup>92</sup> a DC in the Upper Nile Province who is a friend of the Wylds and has just been visiting them on local leave, has just become engaged to Miss Wyld. Letter from Anderson who is back at his camp thanking me for his visit: says he has got six months of accumulated nonsense off his mind and is feeling much better. He also tells me that he had hopes of conducting a tourist on a shooting trip from here to the Cameroon next Jan or Feb. I hope it comes off as it will put some money in his pocket and he's pretty hard up at the moment with ivory worth nothing.

Here's a typical native case for you: A, living in Rangu, gets Woodman to write to me to send his wife, Z, who is living in Yubu with her father, who is one of my terabais. On investigation I find that the terabai is not her father but has married her divorced mother. A married Z as a small girl some years ago when he paid three spears as a deposit and then left and hasn't been heard of till now. In the meantime, Z's real father marries her to B for eight spears. I consult with the chief sitting on our local native court and we find the girl wishes to go to A. Ruling: Z to A and mate in three moves, A pays a further seven spears and father returns B his eight spears. Result: all happy except girl's mother who thinks ten spears too cheap and holds out for a higher price. Stop press two days later: real father arrives in agitation and a lather of sweat from the other end of the district, where he lives, and throws a spanner in the works by saying he objects to Z going to A. Morris is still considering.

19<sup>th</sup> - One's always learning at this job I find. I had moulds for hand-made brick made to match the brick machine mould and now find that the hand-made bricks shrink more in drying (which takes some days) than the machine bricks. So now we have to find by trial and error the size of a mould needed so that when dry the bricks from it will be the same size as those from the machine.

One of the favourite methods of cure practised by the local witch doctors is to suck the affected part and on removing his lips produce from his mouth a piece of bone (previously secreted under his tongue for the purpose). He then says "you'll be alright now, I've removed the piece of bone that was causing the trouble". I was operating on a ch. Osteomyelitis of femur this morning, and after fossicking around for a bit, I put a pair of forceps in and pulled out a sequestrum. There was a murmur of admiration from the dressers. All my surgical efforts heretofore had left them apparently stolidly indifferent. So I said, "bit of a binza (witch doctor) aren't I?" and they all said looking at me almost

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<sup>92</sup> Captain EC (Bill) Tunncliffe, joined SPS 1925.

with admiration, "by Jove, you're a great witch doctor". My competing with a binza on his own ground had impressed them more than anything I'd done before.

20<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. To hospital after breakfast and then spent rest of the morning testing my rifles against a target I had made and painted yesterday. Found that my .375 is accurate at 100 yards - put three shots within an inch of each other (shooting from rest and in a sling). My .318 is shooting about 4 inches to the right at 100 yards and my double 400/450 is also shooting to the right. I'll have to true them up later. One of the lay brothers at the mission sent me a small round mahogany table he's made as a present for treating his eye - very decent of him.

21<sup>st</sup> - Garden and office all morning. Nasr went out on trek after lunch. House and about the works all afternoon and then, as Nasr is away, after tea released the prisoners who were due for it.

22<sup>nd</sup> - To see distribution of patient labour and about the works. Had just started to operate when Arbutnot arrived. He came and watched me and so to office and then lunch. A to nearby chief's court and I to house and brick yard. We have just started making a kiln for firing. A back about 7 - talk, dinner and bed.

23<sup>rd</sup> - A left for Yambio after breakfast. All morning in office then house, brick kiln etc.

24<sup>th</sup> - Assisted Salatian to do hernia and then office. Found they have fired the brick kiln without telling me and without first seeing they had enough wood to last through the burning so will have to put all labour tomorrow on to collecting wood. Father Cisco came from the mission to ask if he might start a school at the leper treatment centre in Barabandi. I had no objection provided it didn't clash with the treatment times.

25<sup>th</sup> - Usual and then to hand brick works where I find that we have now hit off the correct size of mould to give the right dimensions when dry. Walked down to the Bozeru head where I saw the first flock of white ibis since the rains, and also the merchant's cattle grazing - they look much fitter and fatter than ours. After tea went to the hospital where I found a small boy who had just come in with a spear wound. He had been running through some long grass when a man hearing something moving in the grass had loosed off a spear in the hopes of killing some meat and without waiting to see what it was. This is the second case I've had of this kind.

26<sup>th</sup> - To sleeping sickness patients' inspection to pick out a few likely cases as we must now start sorting out the people fit to be discharged at the end of the year. Was going towards the market when I was met by the big chimp who did her usual trick of standing upright, catching me by the hand and leading me to the beer sellers for her weekly issue of native beer. She usually gets a little tiddly on Saturdays and has a frightful head and is most sorry for herself on Sundays. Afternoon as usual and so back to the house at dusk when I sink gratefully into a comfortable chair and Mohammed brings my mosquito boots and pours me out a whisky and soda. I light my pipe and reflect that I agree with Gerald MacCarthy who used to say that the best time in the Sudan was from 5:30 in the evening until 6 the next morning. With the extra work necessitated by the loss of Jabbour, I find from 6:30 in the morning until 6 in the evening pleasantly tiring and I am in no mood for much except light reading. It is now dark and a clear night and the sky seems lit with a million stars (despite Julian Huxley's assertion that you can only see two thousand). I see a gentle glow

in the region of No 2 sleeping sickness section and my peace is shattered – some fool is burning the grass despite my order that no grass was to be burned until sufficient had been collected for reroofing. Nasr comes back from inspection and has found no new cases, “alhamdulillah”.

27<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day again. Hospital and office, where I learn that the night guards deserted the kiln last night and let it get cold, whereby probably ruining the bricks. I give them all a fortnight’s jug and feel no better! Planted out some rose and other cuttings in the garden of the new house.

28<sup>th</sup> - Operated, office and then made a start with examining the SS cases with a view to discharge. House and then to repair water ram.

29<sup>th</sup> - Examining SS cases all morning and afternoon doing spinal punctures and examining fluids in lab.

30<sup>th</sup> - Repeat of yesterday. The house is at a standstill for the moment for want of bricks so have put masons on to work in hospital.

1<sup>st</sup> December - Another similar day – I shall be doing little else this month other than examining SS and leper cases and writing the annual report.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Same sort of day. I sent Salatian off to examine the Sue inspection cases yesterday. Woodman arrived from Rangu. He looks fit, but hasn’t much interesting news. He confirms and gives further details of the Tunncliffe – Wyld engagement.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Took W to see my temergis class. I have now narrowed it down to six whom I am giving a revision class to and from whom I shall select four to take charge of the four dispensaries I hope to open in the district in the New Year. I have written to Wyld about getting them built. We went to see SS patients as I wanted to pick further cases for more detailed examination next week. So to market, on the way there we had some fun with W’s fox terrier and the chimps. S came back and has found two new cases, blast it! Afternoon doing spinal punctures.

4<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. Hickson, the education inspector, arrived and had a dish of tea and then dashed off again.

5<sup>th</sup> - The Wylds and Tunncliffe are apparently coming to see me tomorrow. Got some young teak trees from the garden for W who left for Yambio after breakfast. Lorry from Wau brought a wire from Ginger from Port Sudan to say she had arrived safely on the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

6<sup>th</sup> - Examining SS cases and writing bits of the annual report all morning.

7<sup>th</sup> - Was down at the house where we have started building again as the kiln is now finished. Had not been there long when the Wylds and Tunncliffe arrived. The latter seems a very decent fellow. He is now off again as his local leave has finished. He is taking a mail bag along with this letter in it. I have as usual forgotten to write to you in time for Christmas so will send you a cable [this envelope had an 18 December Khartoum postmark].

## *Source Yubu, 15 January 1933*

*(a 20-page letter)*

Yes, you've got it more-or-less right. The de Wildes used to live at Ndoromo in the Belgian Congo, about 61 miles from here, but they have since moved. The Wylds (they don't spell their name with an 'e') live at Yambio.

I've just had a letter from Ginger. As you may imagine, it was written about 5 minutes before the post closed and contained no news of whom she had met or what she had done, but she did say that on the score of cost she thought she would not come down here. Well there it is, I'm sure it's very practical and common sense. Even in our present relative positions, it takes 45 days from the time I write to the time I get and answer so that makes any arrangements or discussion rather difficult. However, we shall come to some arrangement eventually.

I think it is extremely unlikely that I shall be in a position to have a go at the Fellowship [of the Royal College of Surgeons, during his leave] this year. Practically all the reading that I did last year was directed to learning something about sleeping sickness and leprosy, about which I knew nothing on arrival, and there seems to be a deal to learn about them both. To mention nothing about trying to keep abreast of the recent work in tropical diseases. And now for my diary. I think I finished my last letter to you on 8<sup>th</sup> December, so here goes.

9<sup>th</sup> - Usual and then examining SS cases until lunch. Then set off for Bakindo where I arrived in time for tea and a walk to the watering place.

10<sup>th</sup> - Up at dawn and back down the road a bit to Bozeru inspection centre. Found the people weren't ready so drove on to the new loop road and walked down it as far as the first bridge which they had just finished. By the time I got back, the people were all gathered. Didn't get back to breakfast until 11. As I wanted to shoot some meat for the patients and there was no game near Bakindo, I decided to move on to Bamboraze and come back to Bakindo and do its inspection in the morning. Went out at 3 and walked hard until 6 but saw practically nothing - the grass is not sufficiently burned off and it is very difficult to get a clear sight.

11<sup>th</sup> - Up early and went off as someone came and said they had seen waterbuck nearby. After about 1 ½ hours found one very small female so let her go. Back to Bakindo for inspection. Decided it was no good going out again at Bamboraze so moved on after lunch to Nabagu as people said the grass was better burned there. Again went out from 3 till dusk but with no better luck.

12<sup>th</sup> - Back to Bamboraze and did inspection and so returned to Nabagu for breakfast. Went out again in afternoon and drew blank again - got pleasantly tired and filthy but no more.

13<sup>th</sup> - Nabagu inspection and then on and did one at Yambio and so arrived at Nadiawe rest house for lunch. Went out again at 3 but found the grass less burned off here than in other places. As we were coming home the man in front, not looking where he was going, put up a fine water buck. I had a glimpse of his head above the grass as he made off - the finest head I've seen so far. Cursed the man to relieve my feeling and so home to bath and dinner.

14<sup>th</sup> - Up at 4 and out to try my luck again. This time ran into three small herds of water buck but each time in half burned grass so very difficult to get sufficiently near to see clearly without disturbing them – never had a chance to fire a shot. Coming home we struck the road about half a mile from the rest house. Just as I got about 100 yards from it, about which people were gathering waiting for the inspection, a good bush buck broke cover and crossed the road between me and them at a split gallop. Did the inspection and back to Yubu after lunch.

15<sup>th</sup> - To Barabandi to start re-charting the lepers. Did 90 of them and then back to examine some of the SS cases before lunch.

16<sup>th</sup> - Barabandi and lepers all morning. Sent Nasr to inspect Renzi N and W.

17<sup>th</sup> - SS cases all morning. As I think I told you, I went through all the SS cases and picked out those I thought likely ones for discharge, 175 of them. We then proceeded to do a detailed clinical examination and a blood and cerebral spinal fluid exam on each one. I arranged with the RC mission who have a lay brother who is a motor mechanic to decarbonize and overhaul my car and they came and took it away.

18<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day – woke up and realized it was my [33<sup>rd</sup>] birthday. Round hospital and started to tidy up my papers when the mail arrived. Most opportune as it contained letters from you all.

19<sup>th</sup> - Barabandi with lepers all morning

20<sup>th</sup> - Saw some of the segregated lepers and then writing bits of the annual report.

21<sup>st</sup> - To Barabandi to re-chart more lepers then office. The lay brother brought my car back, of which he seems to have made a good job. That is one good thing about the RCs – they have lay brothers who are expert artisans and they teach the people trades.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Nasr returned having found no cases. Off to Rangu tomorrow.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Up early and feel like a schoolboy going home for the holidays. Arrived at Diawo where Larken had built his house and had lunch and a chat with him and so on to Rangu. Wild horses wouldn't drag L to the Christmas party. Arrived at Rangu at 5. Brown and his wife, the DC Amadi, and Mynors,<sup>93</sup> also from Amadi playing tennis.

24<sup>th</sup> - Walked over in my pyjamas to look at Hugh Woodman's pony which he has brought back with him from Malakal: a strawberry roan, fair quarters and barrel but a coarse head and neck. I asked the syce – hoping to find out where he was bred – what gints is he? Gints is a useful word and may mean sort, kind, breed or tribe. The syce, evidently thinking that like the local people I had never seen one before, said "it's a horse". I would never bring a pony down here. You cannot hope to keep them alive for any great time and it just seems hardly fair to bring one to a place where he is almost certain to die in three or four years. Tennis after lunch in the midst of which the Wylds arrived with mail bags for all. We played some more tennis and then drinks, chat, dinner and very hilarious whiskey poker. Then the Wylds and Browns went back to Yambio and we to bed.

25<sup>th</sup> - I have a leopard cub called "poor bloody Mary" because she was very small and blind when we first got her and she used to bump into things. For the last minute she has

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<sup>93</sup> THB Mynors (1907-?), SPS 1930-1955.



been using my bare knees as a claw sharpener but she is now sitting calmly on my lap so I can resume. A holiday is always spoilt in a measure for me by having to get up early and Christmas Day was such a day. We - Hugh and Mynors and I - had to rise and drive down to Yubio (20 miles) in time for early communion at 7:30 (yes! Of course we were late). We took with us Jabbour, Hugh's Syrian medical officer who used to be with me as he has expressed a desire to go to communion. After this half of us went to breakfast with the Wynds and half with Arbuthnot. The Ws turned on a grand breakfast and distributed Xmas presents to all. As I think I told you, they have a very jolly house and most excellently decorated. Both Tiger and Mika have excellent taste and they are wonderful hosts. We hurried off after breakfast to church again, a bit of a strain for Horace [how Tom occasionally refers to himself]. This time the service was in Zande. The church was packed and everyone came with an offering - some manioc or groundnuts or a bunch of bananas or a basket of sweet potatoes, and soon the church was like the souk on a busy day. And the smell - well even a Zande's best friend couldn't deny that he has an aroma about him that is distinct and penetrating. I luckily set next to Alison who had some eau de cologne. After church we sat and drank beer and talked to lunch which we all had with the Wynds. I then went to sleep as I think did most of the others. We played badminton after tea for our livers' sake and then had drinks with Arbuthnot and so on to dinner with the Ws. A grand meal, everyone in good form: even Abu Soud, one of Hugh's medical officers and usually the most shy and retiring little man, felt so elevated that he got up and sang an Arabic song. After dinner we did anything stupid that came into our heads. Everyone sparkled including Alison Wynd who is usually pretty quiet.

26<sup>th</sup> - Up and drew £150 from the Merkaz chest for the Yubu safe. Went for a walk and so to breakfast with the Ws after which I set off home calling in at Rangu and then on to Diawo where I again had lunch with Larken and so home.

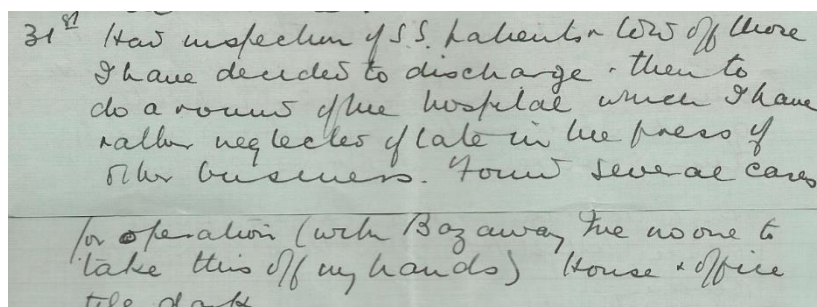
27<sup>th</sup> - To segregated lepers and finished them off and so to office and more annual report. House and office in afternoon, feel I'm getting a cold.

28<sup>th</sup> - To Barabandi to continue the lepers and so back to the office. House and office till tea.

29<sup>th</sup> - Barabandi and office in morning, house and office in afternoon. Now getting the annual report into some shape.

30<sup>th</sup> - Barabandi and finished off the lepers (did 600 odd all told). Office and house all day. Have a good cold, which is epidemic here at the moment.

31<sup>st</sup> - Had inspection of sleeping sickness patients and told off those I have decided to discharge, and then to do a round of the hospital which I have rather neglected of late in the press of other business - found several cases for operation (with Baz away I've no one to take this off my hands). House and office till dark.



31<sup>st</sup> Had inspection of S.S. patients & told off those I have decided to discharge. Then to do a round of the hospital which I have rather neglected of late in the press of other business. Found several cases for operation (with Baz away I've no one to take this off my hands). House & office till dark.

## 1933 - Source Yubu

### Source Yubu, 15 January 1933 (continued)

1<sup>st</sup> January - Lazy day, office for a while then hospital and spent rest of morning tidying my desk and papers at home.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Round the workshops - found the basket makers are getting very slack in their standard of work. Did two operations and then rest of morning in office on the annual report. Have got all the facts and figures and tables done and now it only needs typing.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Salatian returned from inspecting Renzi Central and has found seven cases, blast it. That makes 49 cases in 1932 all told, 12 less than in 1931. Did operation and spent rest of morning typing the annual report. I shall be glad when Oliver sends me the promised clerk. Was just having a drink at about 6:30 when in rolled the Wylds and Hugh Woodman - we chatted and had dinner and an early bed

4<sup>th</sup> - The others set off after breakfast, Tiger to go and see the people on the Bo Road and Hugh to Wau for his Arabic exam.

5<sup>th</sup> - Most of day in office.

6<sup>th</sup> - Baz returned from leave looking very fit. He came to lunch. I'm glad he's back as although I like old Nasr very much he's not half as efficient as Baz.

7<sup>th</sup> - Set Baz and Salatian on to some work and spent most of morning typing. Medical officers to drinks in the evening. Baz had been to visit relatives in the Argentine for this leave. Says things are in a disgraceful state there due to corruption in the government.

8<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day.

9<sup>th</sup> - Early breakfast and off to Tambura where I had arranged to meet Tiger as he was having a meeting of all the Tambura chiefs and sub-chiefs which I wanted to attend. Went to the rest house and dropped my kit and said cheerio to Alison and so on to the courthouse where I discovered Tiger. An interesting morning as he went through the new Chiefs' Court Ordinance which has just been brought in, and then we discussed amendments and additions to the tribal law which rules the process of minor court affairs here - mostly domestic. At dinner Tiger and Mika very interesting about their South African experiences - they had tried farming there before coming to the Sudan.

10<sup>th</sup> - Saw and treated some people before breakfast and then again to the meeting. We discussed the suppression of secret societies of the bad type, of which are several, and then Horace gave a short and incoherent address on the causes of sleeping sickness and the reasons for our adopting the measures we have in force. Then we discussed various points, among them the establishment of the dispensaries, four of which I hope to establish in the



district as a starter at the end of the month. So to lunch and then walk to look at the graves of two Britishers who died at Tambura in the early days, one a district commissioner and the other a doctor. So back to drinks and dinner. Tiger again very interesting about his Iraqi experiences: he commanded a regiment of levies there just after the war.

11<sup>th</sup> - Did some work with Tiger and then breakfast and so back to Yubu. Pillet came to tea.

12<sup>th</sup> - Office then breakfast and so down to the carpentry shop where they are trimming beams for the ceilings.

13<sup>th</sup> - Hospital then office all day to finish the report which I did by 7:30 in the evening. Including a report on the general medical work and special reports on leprosy and sleeping sickness and tables, it's 33 foolscap pages, and damn glad I was to see the last of it.

14<sup>th</sup> - Hospital and about the place all morning. Mail arrives and rain at noon - it seems that there are very few months in the year when you may not expect rain.

15<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day, hospital and then Nasr cut my hair. I had just arranged some books in the new bookcase I've had made when the Wynds arrived with a Major Kerr who was passing through. They had lunch and tea and then back to Tambura again - very civil of them to drive 23 miles just to have lunch with me.

16<sup>th</sup> - House and garden and office all morning arranging the programme of various things for the year with Baz. Spent all the afternoon at the house. It is not going nearly as fast as I would like but I shall hope to have the roof on before the rains. I expect that what will happen is that I shall just get it finished and shift into it before I go on leave, and then when I come back from leave I'll be transferred elsewhere. That's what happened to Cruickshank when he built his house at Rangu.

17<sup>th</sup> - Basket shop and brick shop, office and hospital all morning, house for most of the afternoon and wrote letters in the evening. The fools have allowed our machine brick shed to be burnt by a grass fire - they really are hopeless.

18<sup>th</sup> - To see the cows and goats. I had hoped to buy some good half-breed cows in calf to an imported bull from Wau next month and try and start a decent dairy here so as to supply milk and cream both for ourselves and for the hospital. However, they unfortunately have an outbreak of rinderpest in Wau and half the cattle there died, including some of the government dairy stock. So we shall have to put that off for a while.

19<sup>th</sup> - Up and around the garden then most of morning in office or hospital. House in the afternoon and here in the evening, which brings me up-to-date.

### **Source Yubu, 9 February 1933**

*((Reached Adelaide 1 April))*

*Tom had received several letters from his parents since he last wrote, and starts this letter by answering questions therein.*

I have no arrangement for a regular supply of books, I just write to the Times Book Club who send me second-hand copies of anything I want. It's a great help, especially with expensive books such as those that cost 30/- or more new, for you can usually get them from the TBC for 6 or 7/-. Strange as it may sound, I find that I have not a great deal of time for reading. Many thanks for the garden bulletins you sent me. Ginger has just sent

me some seeds. Yes, you're quite right about the flies and the cattle. But flies only live in thick bush and as this part of the settlement is cleared we are pretty free from them around the houses, office etc. I'm thankful that we are as they are most voracious brutes and sting like hell and lap up gallons of blood at a sitting. However, the difficulty is to get the cattle from Wau to here through the bush without being bitten. Ginger has definitely decided not to come down but I have not heard what she proposes to do when she leaves Khartoum. I shall not get leave until June but whether the beginning or end I'm not sure. Now for the daily dullness.

20<sup>th</sup> January - Cruikshank's lorry arrived from Wau to await him here as he is trekking down on foot from Tonj to the Iba with Hugh Woodman. The Wylds arrived at tea time and so a walk, chat, drinks and bed.

21<sup>st</sup> - We are again getting short of bricks for the house - the makers can't keep pace with the masons. Tiger to Chief's Court to hear appeals. I sent my lorry to Wau for petrol and was doing some work in the office when Cruikshank arrived from Yambio. He and Hugh had had a dull trek and saw very little game. Took the women to the market to watch the chimps have their beer. Baz's house for drinks and so dinner and bed.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Lazy day. Tiger to Chief's Court to finish off his appeals after which they left. C left for Wau after lunch. I sent Ginger a wire by C to say that the SDF steamer was leaving Khartoum in February and I thought I could arrange a passage on it if she cared. Now that so many people have left the settlement as a result of discharging some SS patients, we will have to reorganize it and hope to be able to close some of the roads.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Shot with my .318 which I now seem to have got correctly sighted: four shots covered by a 3" circle at 100 yds.

24<sup>th</sup> - Garden and then saw some new SS cases. A Major Gawen arrived from Wau. He is a small arms and machine gun expert who travels round the various units of the SDF. Showed him around a bit and then lunch. He was just about to leave when I discovered that both his servants had fever, so I made him stop the night. Walk in afternoon to see the new brick kiln. Baz and Salatian to drinks. Nasr sent out to do Renzi Central.

25<sup>th</sup> - Gawen left early. Office all morning and then set out to go to Madi to start an inspection of Iriwo but just as I got past Barabandi the most acute thunderstorm broke and the roads were soon running with water and I was soaked. I've never seen such a heavy downpour except in the middle of the rains. It was so wet and unpleasant that I stopped at Kadiawe for the night. Titch, who usually goes off to sleep at once by my bed positively refuses to sleep in Kadiawe rest house. Directly the light is out he whimpers and then trots off to the servants in the kitchen hut. If brought back, he waits a bit and then off he sneaks again. If left alone he goes off to sleep by their beds at once. He doesn't do this at any other rest house: Mohamed says he must see an evil spirit.

26<sup>th</sup> - Up at dawn and drove to Mambugu to do inspection and then back to K for breakfast. Then retraced my steps to Habagu to mark out the site for the dispensary to be built with tax labour. Lunch and so on to Madi. A man came in to say he'd seen a buffalo, so up and off to see if we could find it. After walking some distance, came on it quite suddenly about 50 yds away on rounding the corner of a large ant hill. Cracked him one with the 400/450 and he fell over - never moved a step, quite extraordinary as he was hit in the lungs and

you usually expect them to move when so hit. It'll give you some idea of their bulk when you realise that a 400 grain bullet driven by 60 gm of cordite fails to come out the other side when fired from 50 yds, and that a solid-nosed bullet.

27<sup>th</sup> - Inspection of Madi, a large and noisy one. Moved on to Zuno looking at watering places on the way.

28<sup>th</sup> - Perishingly cold last night. Did inspection and saw one of the people with a little black, white and tan pup which I couldn't resist. So now the family has grown to four: three dogs and "poor bloody Mary" the leopard cub. Moved on to Li Nzewe and did another inspection and then on again to Buda where I spent the night. The new pup is about the size of my two fists and had the temerity to steal a piece of buffalo rib about the same size as herself from Titch. By the time she got outside all the meat on it, she was about as broad as she was long.

29<sup>th</sup> - Inspection at Buda and then on to Bendere. Here found that one small sub-chief and his people had failed to turn up at all so sent for him and gave him a month in jug. This is the place which is supposed to be good for bongo. I walked out in the evening to see if there were any tracks but I don't think they can have come over from the Belgian Congo side yet as the pool where one usually picks up their track was dry and there were no recent tracks about at all. Had just had bath when mail bag arrived.

30<sup>th</sup> - Holiday. Went out v early to look for something to shoot. Saw nothing but on the way home Mbaro, my tracker, pointed out the place where a leopard had stalked and caught a bushbuck the night before. It was most interesting: once you had it all pointed out to you, you could see the whole story written on the ground: the pad of the leopard, the spoor of the bushbuck and the tearing up of the ground once the leopard actually nabbed the buck, a few tufts of hair on the ground and then the marks of the body being dragged away. Sure enough, on looking in a neighbouring clump of thick undergrowth we found the remains of a fully-grown male bushbuck with his nose bashed in and his neck all clawed. Evidently the leopard had sprung on him from the front as he had been feeding and hit him on the nose. Moved on in the afternoon to Bimoma. I find it very difficult to resist buying the young of anything which is brought to me: small leopard cubs or mongooses or wild cats etc, and this evening I found myself nearly buying a small jackal cub but fortunately I resisted just in time.

31<sup>st</sup> - Inspection and so on to Beogidi rest house where another inspection. Walk in the evening. I have often noticed, especially when driving along in the evening when the cooking fires are lit, an aromatic smell but have never been able to trace the wood which gives rise to it. This evening I did finally trace it to one fire and got a piece of the wood, but now I am none the wiser as it was a piece of bunga and I'm sure not all bunga smells like that when burned. This piece was old, having lain on the ground for some time, so the smell may be a virtue of its age, or else some fungus that grows in it. However, it's very pleasant whatever it is.

1<sup>st</sup> February - Up early and drive on to Iriwo's native court where we did a large inspection. Iriwo greeted me in a very gaudy striped loin cloth and striped vest and a very old and battered Bombay bowler! After inspection I went and saw a dispensary which he had just built and got him to alter it a bit so as to conform to the general plan I had made

for the buildings. Saw some sick as usual and then moved on to Buma which is quite near. Went out for two hours in the evening but saw nothing.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Inspection here which took till lunch as it was a large one. The chief here is particularly bad at knowing his people, which is the worst failing he can have. Moved on to Wowoi.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Inspection of Wowoi. Sent a message to Larken to say I was coming to lunch but as I moved off after the inspection I met my messenger coming back with the news that L was away at the Sue fishing, so I stopped at Debio.

4<sup>th</sup> - Drove to Negasi and did inspection and so back to do the one at Debio itself where I unfortunately found a case. It is a part of the district which we had hoped was clear. On to Ngaga rest house.

5<sup>th</sup> - Did inspection here and then on the Bajbandara where we did another one, and I stayed the day there. A very pleasant rest house surrounded by thick bush full of birds and their song in the morning is delightful. Look here, I must stop now as Nasr, who is taking this to the post as he is going off on leave, is panting to get away. So more anon.

### **Source Yubu, 23 March 1933**

*((Reached Adelaide 6 May))*

There are some aeroplanes coming here on the 27<sup>th</sup> and I will get them to take this letter to Khartoum. I hear from Ginger that she proposes leaving P Sudan at the end of this month. Now for the dull diary.

6<sup>th</sup> February - Up early and to Bafuka for inspection. B himself is a large fat fellow in a pair of dirty white trousers, a striped shirt worn outside and a little box hat like the carpenter's in Alice in W, made of plaited grass and worn on one side. He looks rather a comedian but is popular with his people and knows them all. Lunch and then on to Baragu. There is a good rest house here as it was originally built as a DC's house. Had tea and read my mail which had arrived that morning.

7<sup>th</sup> - Back down the road a bit to do inspection at Nabute. Found a little girl with a broken femur. She had been sent out with an axe to gather firewood and had actually sat on a branch and cut it off between her and the trunk! Her people didn't want her to go into hospital and swore it wasn't broken despite the fact that the lower part of her leg was almost waving in the breeze. However, I insisted and took her back in my car to Beragu where I did another inspection and after lunch went back to Yubu. Drinks and dinner with Baz.

8<sup>th</sup> - Around the place to see what had been going on in my absence. Baz take no interest in my new house with the result that the kiln which was well on the way when I went out 15 days ago has only just been finished and consequently nothing has moved in my house at all. However, as I think I told you, we have a number of native huts as an annex to the hospital and I have started replacing these by five metre square brick huts capable of holding six beds each, which will be a great improvement. We are building them of the old bricks which came out of my original house and they finished one while I was away and it looks very well.

9<sup>th</sup> - Nasr and co to drinks in the evening - he goes off on leave tomorrow.

10<sup>th</sup> - Finished off letters and gave the bag to Nasr who left after breakfast. Got a witch doctor to perform the ceremony of sucking out a small ball of hair from the abdomen of a sick man as a means of cure. They commonly remove either a piece of bone or a ball of hair which they "palm" under their tongue. I got several photos of it. Planted some rose cuttings in the afternoon.

11<sup>th</sup> - Looked at cows and goats and hospital building, then office and SS patients all morning. To kiln in afternoon, it has finished burning and is just opened so we shall have bricks in three or four days. There are about 65,000 bricks in the kiln. The house has been idle for two weeks for want of them.

12<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day, round hospital and then read papers all morning and in the afternoon made boxes and planted the seeds that Ginger sent me.

13<sup>th</sup> - Round of workshops and spent morning examining SS patients. In the afternoon, drove around those roads we are going to close as a result of the discharges. This will save us a lot in the budget for the khor cleaning. Tea with Baz.

14<sup>th</sup> - Note from Tiger to say they were at Tambura and on their way to a border meeting between Southern (our) and Central (Wau) districts to discuss mutual affairs and to establish a border chief's court to sit periodically and try cases between people of the two districts. A few days ago I heard that in Turoza's country, where we have been having all the cases of SS, a family was living in the grass who never attended inspections. So I sent off a terabai to catch them. He came in with them this morning: a man, wife and four children. He is an advanced case of SS and may be the cause of all the trouble. I shall have master Turoza juggled for that. Left after tea for the meeting which is to be held on the road between here and Wau. Slept at Mangi Mangi rest house.

15<sup>th</sup> - Arrived at Mabu after breakfast and found Macintosh, Cumming and his wife, and Cruickshank from Wau. C and I spent the first part of the morning discussing SS problems while Tiger and the others discussed theirs. We then finished the morning with a joint meeting about mutual affairs. After tea Tiger and C and I organized a rag sports meeting among the people, with races for the children and pulling the weight, high and long jump for the men. The Wau contingent then went off to shoot pigeon. We all had drinks together with Tiger followed by a very cheery dinner party with Macintosh. The Wynds are going on to Wau and I am rapidly being persuaded to do the same.

16<sup>th</sup> - The DCs set to work to get their native border court going and C and the women and I went to watch Mrs Cumming, who is a watercolour artist, at work painting a Zande girl. We also looked at some fine work she had done previously. In the middle of the morning three people arrived in two cars, and elderly man, his wife and a youngish man. They are white settlers from Kenya and have a coffee plantation at or near Mt Eldoret I believe. They have been on a motor tour of the Sudan and are returning via Juba. I decided to go to Wau, a bit of a ramp really but I do want to discuss further with Tiger, C and the Governor what we are going to do about Turoza's people. C and I left after tea and slept on the road.

17<sup>th</sup> - Up and away, stopped at the Bo river to have a cast of the net for some fish but without luck. Arrived at 1 and met Sam Burrows who is a Bimbashi with the SDF - he was at Thomas's with me but I had not seen him before in this country. Played tennis in the afternoon. I am very keen to try and get a lion and I hear there is a chance of one at Gogrial



and Sam has promised to come up with me tomorrow as he knows the place and can speak the local language.

18<sup>th</sup> - Hospital to look round and then to call on Brock and so to do some shopping in the town. Packed up and left after lunch for Gogrial about 62 miles away. It is on the Jur river which also runs past Wau and eventually joins the Nile. Shot a white-eared cob on the way for meat. This part of the country is quite different to Tambura: flat, not a hill in sight, no forest, grass and thin scrub and doleib palms and all a swamp in the rains. The rest house is quite a pleasant spot but no definite news of lion, blast it!

19<sup>th</sup> - Walked around the market before breakfast and then down to the river, about a mile away. It's very low now and exposing many sand banks of clean white sand, a contrast to the muddy bottoms of our streams here. We spent some time finding a canoe that my behind would fit into – they are made out of palm trunks, scooped out with the opening in the top rather narrow. All right for classic tall narrow-hipped Dinkas but not nearly wide enough for my bourgeois behind. We found one at last and went up and down a bit until we found a grand pool for bathing where we spent the rest of the morning in and out of the water. After tea we went for a walk to a nearby village to see if we could get any news of lion but the last time they had seen one was four days ago. As soon as it was dusk we drove down the road for about ten miles in the hope that we might see one that way, as a Greek merchant had shot one near that spot several days ago, but no luck.

20<sup>th</sup> - To river again after breakfast and spent all morning swimming and casting the hand net which I am just learning to do. The river is full of fish of all sizes jumping right and left and I wish I had brought a heavy rod. However, I got 12 lb bulti in one cast of the net and very good eating they are. The river is very attractive here and the bird life is wonderful. I spent a great part of the morning when not in the water looking at them through Sam's glasses. Fish eagles, three sorts of ibis, many small waders, grey herons, golden crested crane, comb geese, duck and the ubiquitous kite in great numbers and very cheeky. We gave some fish we had netted to some small Dinka boys who were with us and a kite stooped and took a fish out of the hand of a small boy who was standing next to me. Sam tells me that at the hospital in Wau, when the patients are walking across the compound from the kitchen with their meals on a plate, it is not uncommon for a kite to stoop and knock the plate out of a man's hand and gobble up some of the food off the ground before he realises what has happened. Left after lunch and arrived in Wau at dusk. Stopped at the rest house to see the Wylds and found Richards from Tonj there also. Drinks at Brocks and then a large dinner party at Cruicksank's, whose birthday it was, a very cheery show.

21<sup>st</sup> - The Richards came to breakfast, C and I to hospital and then I drove round the town to do some things and finally left at noon. Caught up with the Ws who had left earlier and arrived at Mabu just in time to avoid a really good thunderstorm. The Ws, however, got soaked.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Tiger and I saw some of the local chiefs about the proposed methods for dealing with the Turoza outbreak – we are going to make a new road and try and keep the people out of the infected country with police patrols. On to Tambura, lunch and then Tiger and I saw the chiefs here about the same thing. Then back to Yubu and drinks and dinner with Baz. He tells me that the three Kenya tourists stayed here the night and that the elder man, Perkins, is a Mohammedan – he discovered this by offering him bacon for breakfast!



23<sup>rd</sup> - Usual in morning and house in afternoon. It is not going badly – the new batch of bricks, especially the hand-made ones, are good. Mail in this morning so spent evening reading it.

24<sup>th</sup> - Hospital then most of the morning taking depositions in a murder case. House in early afternoon and then left for Wkivo to start Renzi Central inspection.

25<sup>th</sup> - Inspection of Wkivo and Ikoro and then on to Kpitio to sleep. Shot guinea fowl. Rain – it looks as if the rains are going to start early in which case I shall be dished for getting the roof on my house before the heavy rains start.

26<sup>th</sup> - Inspection of Kpitio and then Mutukurunga and so on to the new rest house that Tiger has built in Tambura, a great improvement on the old one. Tried to write in the evening but stopped by the number of insects near the light.

27<sup>th</sup> - Inspection of Tambura and then Renzi's Ngbanga. At the latter a free fight developed in the middle so I gave the two originators a beating and said they would all have to attend another inspection on my way home. Moved to Budwe for the night.

28<sup>th</sup> - Inspection at Budwe and then on to do Abdulla and Turoza, the latter being the sub-chief who has been having all the cases of SS. Found four new cases among his people. Saw a car from Wau which brought me a letter from C in which he tells me we have got £100 approved to spend in connection with the Turoza outbreak. So on to Giara, went out in afternoon for three hours but saw nothing.

1<sup>st</sup> March - Did Giara and moved on to Nangi where I found all his people gathered. Hadn't intended to do them until tomorrow but as they were all ready I did them, and so on to Buta. Out again in the afternoon but with no luck. I always like Buta as it has a grand view from the back of the rest house, though Mohammed will usually insist on putting my chair and table in such a position that the view is half blocked by the WC.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Inspection here, on to Stingbari and back here again.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Lorry didn't come for me so I set out with carriers but met the lorry about a mile down the road. On to Gbaria's rest house on the Sue road. Heavy rain in the evening.

4<sup>th</sup> - Back to Ungbafi rest house to inspect and then returned to Gbaria, breakfast and inspection there and then on to Urutu for inspection and so straight on to the "shooting lodge" on the Sue. Went to have a look at the lower end of the pool and heard some hippo higher up the pool. Went up to the pool again in the evening and found a group of five or six. Had a crack at them and think I got one, but not sure. Using old ammunition and had one hang fire.

5<sup>th</sup> - No hippo either dead or alive this morning in the pool. Went back down the road and did inspection at Mbiri. Hear there are some hippo at Kito pool, six miles away, so set off at 2 and walked there. Had several shots at them but not sure if I got any. I find hippo in the water very difficult to hit in the brain. So home at dusk.

6<sup>th</sup> - Off at sunrise over the other side of the river. Saw a certain amount of small game and then a small herd of roan antelope on the other side of a small stream. Followed them and after a painful stalk for bare hands and knees, was just going to have a shot when the wind backed and they got my scent and were off like a shot. Saw tracks of giant eland and also saw a female giraffe and a calf galloping off in the most ridiculous manner. Hear there are

two dead hippo in the Kito so sent people out to cut up and bring them in. Went down to the pool again in the evening but although there were one or two about I couldn't get in a shot.

7<sup>th</sup> - Up and to the other side at dawn. The guide I had put up one or two things before he saw them, much to my disgust. Saw and stalked a small mob of water buck – got right up to them and watched them for some time but saw they were all females so got away again without disturbing them. Home at noon and sent out after lunch to take some photos and then drove back to Tambura in the evening.

8<sup>th</sup> - Looked at dispensary and then did inspection at Ngbanga and so back to Yubu to lunch. House doing better now and spent afternoon walking round the place.

9<sup>th</sup> - Garden, office etc all day. Letter from Tiger to say that he and Arbuthnot and Hugh Woodman had just been examined by Larken in Zande and had all passed.

10<sup>th</sup> - Usual day, house, hospital etc.

11<sup>th</sup> - Mail in morning.

12<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. Round hospital and then opened a haematoma in PB Mary's ear – she got it playing with the dogs. In afternoon planted out some zinnia seeds that Ginger sent me. Baz and Salatian to drinks.

13<sup>th</sup> - Hospital and operations. Lorry back from Wau with letter from C. He says it is doubtful if Hugh can go with him now (they proposed starting motoring on leave via French EA to the west coast). He wants me to go with him as far as Zemio where he hopes to pick up a lorry. Out to Beka in afternoon to start inspection of Wandu and Rikila. These airmen have just arrived so will give them this and continue later.

### ***Source Yubu, 20 April 1933***

*(Reached Adelaide 24 June)*

You [his mother] hope that after leave they will transfer me. Thank you my sweet, but I much prefer the South to the North and having spent nearly a year in building myself a new and, if I may say so, a very comfortable house, I should be damned annoyed if they transferred me before I got a chance to live in it. There are several other reasons as well. I have just acquired a modest nodding acquaintance with the local language and am just beginning to know the people, so it would be bad policy on their part to transfer me – although I don't doubt that they may do it. Also, as I think I have told you, there was little general medical work done here previously and having made a start to establish dispensaries over the district and work up the general medical side of the business, I should like to be left in peace until I've got things established, if I am capable of doing so. This I judge will take another two years, so I should like to remain at least that much longer. And now to the diary.

14<sup>th</sup> March This morning did the first inspection at Beka then sent lorry off to Wau to collect my new sanitary hakim (the superior grade of hospital dresser), breakfast and then on to Morso and another inspection. On after lunch to Biki. Curse the local headman for not re-thatching the rest house properly and for having a dirty watering place. Took battery out of car and cleaned it. Tea and then went to see a man who had been gored in

the tummy by a buffalo some days before. The chief's dresser had done a good job of work and he was healing up well – a lucky man.

15<sup>th</sup> - Inspection at Biki and so to another at Mokakene and so on to Baimbe. There is a tribe in the Belgian Congo – the Mambito – who bind the heads of their children so as to produce an extraordinary elongation of the occiput: something like this. They do it by wrapping the child's head with a piece of bark cloth and then binding it with plaited string over the top of the cloth. The final result in the adult being something like the illustration. You wonder why I should suddenly chuck in this bit of ethnological information like this. Well just as I was leaving Mokakene I saw a baby with its head bound up in this fashion and found on investigation that its mother came from the Belgian Congo. I made them take it off and told the father that if he let them to do it again I'd give him a month in prison.



*This head was among Tom's possessions*

16<sup>th</sup> - Inspection at Baimbe and then on to Duku. Tried to write in the evening but the crowd of flying beasties round the light after yesterday's rain made it impossible.

17<sup>th</sup> - Inspection here at Duku. About 10 o'clock, a man whom I'd sent out at dawn to look for game came back to say he'd seen some buffalo. Where they near? Oh yes! Quite close. So off I went and after walking for about three hours – his idea of close – we came up to the man who had been left to watch them. Were they still near? Yes, they'd settle down for the heat of the day in a bamboo break just near. Taking my heavy rifle, I went on alone with one man. He darting in front of me with quiet and effortlessly ease, I stumbling along behind trying to make as little noise as possible. Now he can see them and we must get around to the other side for the wind. At last I catch up with the guide and he points to something in the deep shade of a clump of bamboo. There they are! Can't the white chief see them? No, I'm damned if he can. Finally, after long staring and

ill-concealed impatience on the part of the guide, I can see a patch of black hide but whether the rump or shoulder or what I can't tell. Leaving the man, I move forward using a small clump of bamboo as cover. Now I've lost sight of it and it is not until I make the clump and peer around the edge of it that I see him standing about three quarters on to me on an anthill in the deep shade. I can't see anything of the others at all but this one is a bull with quite a fair head so I sit down and take careful aim at a point just in front of his shoulder and fire. Pandemonium ensues - it must be quite a big herd. Mine lets out a bellow and goes off with the rest across my front but I've no chance to put in a second barrel. They go crashing through the scrub, mine bellowing. Is he hard hit or not? I feel pretty sure I've hit him where I intended to. In the meantime, the rest of the party arrives and reloading we go carefully forward. At last there he is, down and kicking. Just as I put another shot into him to make quite sure, four of his friends come back to see what's befallen the boyfriend. They pass across our front and on into a clearing before making off. Had a couple of snap shots at them as they pass, both clean misses. So back to look at the gent on the ground and see he was hit where intended. We go off to a nearby stream for a

drink and then back again. I pace it out - 35 paces from where I fired to where he was standing and 95 paces from there to where he dropped. We sit down under a tree for a rest and then when some more people arrive they start to cut him up. I stay to see what damage was done - the bullet, a 400 grain solid driven by 60 grains of cordite, went through lungs, heart and into liver and yet he ran 95 paces. So back to the rest house where I discovered Larken and Arbuthnot who were passing. Mohammed had given them tea and they were just about to go on having given up waiting for me. A stopped and talked to me while I had some tea and then followed Larken. By the time I had cleaned my rifles it was dark. The carriers came in with the meat after dinner.

18<sup>th</sup> - Moved on early to Kiringbi and did an inspection. This is a very large one (1,600) and so usually noisy and also takes a long time. Titch made a good meal off the tablecloth this morning - why he should choose to do that when full of good buffalo meat I cannot imagine. Discuss the possibility of dividing this up into two smaller inspections and so after lunch on to Dingba.

19<sup>th</sup> - Here another large inspection which I should like to divide. Lorry arrived after lunch, rain in the afternoon and a walk in the evening.

20<sup>th</sup> - On to the last rest house, Mbiri, did inspection here and then back to Dingba to collect the lorry etc and so back down the road towards Yubu. Stopped at the Chief's court at Mabenge to pay people who had been collecting bamboos for the roof of my house. They were good and thick as my forearm at the butt, straight and 20 feet long. However, the terabai who had been sent out to supervise their collection had got far too many. Baz gave me the book with the people's names and the numbers they had brought and what he said was enough money to pay them. I didn't check his additions in the book but soon found that I'd not enough money and that his totals were wrong. They had brought £13 worth not £5 as he had said. Will have to send someone out to pay the remainder later. Stopped at Morso for lunch and so on to the Jebel where I had arranged to meet Arbuthnot. He arrived while I was clearing a fallen tree at the end of the road so we walked up together. It was his first visit here so we enjoyed the superb view until sunset.

21<sup>st</sup> - Up at dawn and as I walked out to view the day there was a whole family of baboons on the rock just beside the rest house. Titch gave chase and I was afraid they might turn on him, however they made off. Had breakfast at six and so down the hill to meet the local headman and walk along the trace of a new road which he has cut to see if it was suitable from a sleeping sickness point of view. Found one stream running parallel to the trace and only 500 to 700 yards away for about 3 miles. This is no use at all as the people on that piece would each have their private drinking place none of which would be cleared. I got to the end of the trace at about 1 o'clock, sat down in the shade, ate my sandwiches and waited for the driver to bring my car to me, which he did at about 2:30. Drove back and up the Jebel, spent rest of the light in front of the rest house drawing a map from a bird's eye view. Think I must have walked about 17 miles and I fairly steamed up to the top of the Jebel at the end.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Up early and into Yubu for breakfast. Spent time walking round to see what had been going on in my absence.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Usual day.

24<sup>th</sup> - Arbuthnot and I are walking along the trace of a new road joining Zomoi to the Sue road tomorrow, so after lunch I set out for Zomoi rest house where I found A had arrived. Some difficulty in arranging about cars as he has no driver for his lorry and I have none for my car.

25<sup>th</sup> - After breakfast set out to walk the trace. We're not quite sure how far it is or if we shall be able to get over it in one day or not. We pushed on until about 12:30 then had the tent fly put up in the shade and had some food and so set off again at 2 arriving at Ungbafi rest house at about 5. Think we must have done a good 20 miles today. A good trace for the road from the surface and contour point of view but only four watering places in its length. I told the lorry driver, whose assistant can drive a little, to go to Zomoi and pick up my car and take it to Tambura and leave it there and then come back to Ungbafi for us.

26<sup>th</sup> - My lorry arrived early. We went as far as the Sue at the place where our shooting lodge is, as A hadn't seen it before. Then back to Tambura in the lorry where I picked up my car and drove A to Zomoi to get his lorry, and so I home to Yubu while A back to T (this sounds rather like a game of chess).

27<sup>th</sup> - Expecting to RAF machines and Cruikshank as a passenger today. They arrived after breakfast, Dick Searle and Payne as pilots, C and three LACs. Having had a sup of beer and filled up with petrol and oil, they went off again to Rangu leaving one LAC behind as Payne said he was very heavily loaded. And so he was too, he only just got off the edge of the ground.

28<sup>th</sup> - Hospital until 11 when the planes returned. They checked our store of petrol and oil and so to lunch. I to the house until tea after which Sam Burrows arrived from Wau and we all went for a walk. Payne is very anxious to shoot a buffalo so I arranged to take him to Bamberaze tomorrow on the off chance of his seeing one.

29<sup>th</sup> - P and I off at dawn taking breakfast with us. On arrival sent people out in different directions to look for buffalo while we had breakfast at the rest house. We walked until 10:30 and then, as Payne wanted to leave at 12 and we had heard no news, we returned. I was sorry for Payne's sake, but it would have been very lucky had we run across one in such a short time. The planes and Sam B left for Wau and C and I to office and so to lunch. I worked on car in the afternoon, preparing to go to Zemio with C on his way on leave.

30<sup>th</sup> - Spent nearly all day on car, took out front spring and cleaned it and repaired leaking radiator. Hugh arrived at lunchtime. The reason that he can't go with C is that he has two people coming to visit him on their way home from China. They are coming up through Kenya and Uganda. He had come over to try and persuade Cruikshank take his car with him and sell it on the Atlantic side but C refused as he felt it was too much of a good thing. Hugh has some idea of following Cruikshank when his friends have gone.

31<sup>st</sup> - Again most of the day on the car preparatory to starting tomorrow. Having finished the car in the afternoon, I found the engine was not idling well but couldn't find the reason.

1<sup>st</sup> April - Sent the car up with the lorry driver to the mission, but they couldn't find anything wrong so we loaded up and set off at noon. Arranged to have some petrol sent to Obo by carriers to pick up on my return. The road between here and Obo, 70 miles away, has just been made so was pretty rough going. We arrived at 5:30 and went to Pillet's house as he, although away, had very kindly written to us and asked us to use his house.

This was built on the top of a little rocky hill which commanded a view of the surrounding country which was most attractive. While we were having drinks, a local hunter and merchant, a Swiss named Cristangeur, came up to call and offer us dinner. He spoke quite good English and told us he was going to Zemio the next day.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Up and away early. About 25 miles out of Obo we stopped to call on an Italian named Stagni and his wife. He is an elephant hunter and has a house just near the road. Hereabouts the boundary between the French and Belgian Congo is marked by the river Mbomu and his house is in a most attractive situation on a bluff overlooking the river which winds past its foot. He looks out over the river into the Belgian Congo. This handy situation of his house is not without intent as I'm sure he poaches over the border. Moving on, we had lunch by the roadside. As the car was only doing about half the mpg that she should, I took the carburettor to pieces and found a small part missing. Between us - the lorry driver and I - we must have left it out or dropped it when cleaning her before starting. However, I made shift to replace it with something and so on to Zemio where we arrived at 5 or so, just in time to avoid a heavy storm. We found Jobez, Pillet and one Gardan and sat and talked until the rain stopped. We were both hungry but they went on drinking the most enormous whiskeys and talking and we didn't start dinner until 10. Of the three, only Jobez speaks a very little English and you know the standard of my French so you can imagine the conversation wasn't brisk. Jobez is a very decent chap indeed.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Both C and I hoped to get off today, I back to Yubu and he to hire a conveyance and so on his road. However, as far as C was concerned, the only possible conveyance was Cristangeur who was still behind us on the road, but expected to arrive any minute, and as for me, owing to the low mpg, I'd not enough petrol to get me back to Obo. By the time I had found that only Jobez had petrol and had borrowed some from him it was too late to set out. Cristangeur arrived just before lunch and after some talk he and C came to an agreement about transport and they are setting off in the morning for Bangui, about 1,200 km from here. Up to Jobez for drinks and dinner. Zemio is also on the border and his house overlooks the river; the view from his veranda is very attractive.

4<sup>th</sup> - Up and packed up and had some food. Said goodbye to Jobez and saw C start and then I set off home having decided to go through in one day. Stopped for a few moments at the Stagnis who were disappointed that I wouldn't stay to lunch. Arrived at Obo to find the carriers hadn't arrived with my spare petrol but I set off down the road hoping to meet them which I did. About half way between Obo and Yubu ran into a bad storm. Arrived at Y at 5:30 to find Arbuthnot here. We chatted and Salatian came to drinks.

5<sup>th</sup> - Discussed some things with Arbuthnot who left before lunch. I hear that the Brocks and the Winters, the director of health and education, were coming sometime between the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup>.

6<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> - In Yubu all the time doing the usual round of office, hospital etc. Spent a great deal of time on the house. All the brickwork and woodwork of the roof were finished on the 16<sup>th</sup> and the next two days saw the bamboo on. As I was sitting on the ridge of the roof on the morning of the 18<sup>th</sup> showing them how to lay and tie the bamboo on the gable the Winters arrived. From them I had the news that the Brocks had gone home the short way as they were late. The Ws didn't stay more than an hour.

19<sup>th</sup> - Spent nearly all day at the house watching and directing the thatching. Baz to drinks in the evening.

20<sup>th</sup> - House and office all morning. Larken arrived about noon and proceeded to examine me in Zande. He passed me which was very civil of him as it is worth £50. We, he and Baz who was also a member of the board and I, had a bottle of fizz to celebrate and then he went off after lunch. House all the afternoon. They are doing the thatching quite well but it wouldn't be nearly so good if we weren't there the whole time.

21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> - The usual.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Roof finished all except trimming so now it may rain as it pleases. The masons are doing the pointing of the brick very well and it doesn't look half bad with the roof on.

24<sup>th</sup> - Letter from Brock saying they were coming to stay on their way through to the wedding on the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> of June. Also a wire from Oliver [Atkey] saying his tour of the south was cancelled for which I'm sorry as I was looking forward to seeing him. Arbuthnot arrived from Yambio again and stayed to lunch after which he off up the Bo road and I out to do Bazia inspection. Arrived at Bakiri rest house just before dark.

25<sup>th</sup> - Inspection here and then on to Bazia's rest house where another inspection and so to sleep at Sanango. Very heavy rain in the evening, a good thing as since the abnormally early rains in February we have had none to speak of.

26<sup>th</sup> - Inspection here and then on to Zeru where we did another and then on again to Sikko where yet another one and so finally on to Namanza for the night.

27<sup>th</sup> - Bugwa, Namanza and Lawanda inspections today after which on to Gbudwe. Went out in the evening to look for some meat but only got an orabi. However, that better than nothing.

28<sup>th</sup> - Did inspection here and then on to Gbafuka where another and so on again to Tivwa. Went out to try and get a cob. Saw some but after a bit of a stalk saw they were all females and so on again and this time saw a small herd with one quite good male. I had a shot from too far off as they were in the open in some grass and I found I had to take a standing shot. We followed them and I got another long shot at the male but only wounded him. Followed him for about an hour and a half, a strong blood trail and we kept getting glimpses of him every now and then but we finally had to give up as it was dark. Didn't get in till 7:30. I loathe having to leave anything like that and have only had to do so once before. Bought a baby mongoose today, I don't know why.

29<sup>th</sup> - Up at dawn and away, leaving the temergis to start the inspection. Picked up the trail where we left it last night and soon put him up again. Suddenly saw him standing in an open patch and had a snap shot at him and he again made off. After following this for a bit, I suddenly realized that it was not the same one, so sent two people back to pick up the trail of the original one. Continued to follow the second one myself and after about a mile and a half I got him, and returned to find the first one which we finished off - he had quite a good head. So home to bath and breakfast and finished the inspection. Distributed one cob among the people and took the other one in as it was for the hospital. Got home just escaping rain. Drinks with Baz.

30<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. Arbuthnot arrived at lunch time. He had trouble with his car while on the Bo road and had to go into Wau. He's not much news but told me that Loggin, the PWO director, was coming down on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. A left after lunch.

1<sup>st</sup> May - Hospital and office all morning. I brought back a boy of 11 or 12 with me from Bazia. As the result of infantile paralysis, he can only crawl about on hands and knees. I am going to try and do something to improve his lot, and if it succeeds, I shall do others as there are quite a number about. I forgot to tell you that last week we opened the new dispensaries at Tambura and Iriwo, putting our best dressers in charge. I hope they do well and keep out of mischief but I shall not be very surprised if they don't. Just as Baz and I were doing some work together, Turner, a forestry man in charge of the saw mills just the other side of Wau, arrived and said that he'd come to meet Cameron, the director of agriculture, and John Smith, the chief conservator of forests, here today. I had heard they might be coming.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Turner went to do some botanising in the bush. Loggin, the PWO director, arrived just after we'd finished lunch.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Loggin away after breakfast and I off to operate. Cameron and Smith arrived at about noon, the latter with fever, so I put him straight to bed in my bed as his lorry was a long way behind. It arrived eventually and with it Sullivan,<sup>94</sup> the agricultural inspector from Meridi whom I hadn't seen since Port Sudan and Suakin days. Baz and Salatian to drinks. John feeling a bit better. Cameron was full of Maynard's new place 3 or 400 miles east and a bit south of here. M was an army DC at Yei and on retiring took a concession nearby, a place with a good altitude, about 3,500 ft, and he has started to grow coffee. He now has 100 acres under coffee and hopes to have 300 in three years. Cameron was impressed with the healthy look of his plants and also the amazing amount of work he had got done. It would be a good thing for the south if he succeeds. 50 acres is regarded as quite a fair sized coffee shamba in Kenya, so he is going for it on a large scale. Maynard is Irish and very amusing. When Smith and Cameron arrived he was anxiously looking for rain so as to plant some young coffee and he had one of those rain indicators - a Venetian scene with a bright blue Mediterranean in the foreground. This was supposed to turn pink when rain was near. M was constantly studying this and asking them if they didn't think it had a pinkish tinge. Finally, it did begin to spot with rain and C pointed out that the Mediterranean was still blue. "By God so it is" says M, and picking it up he hurls it through the window saying "go outside and see for yerself then".

4<sup>th</sup> - John S much better this morning. Sullivan and Turner away after breakfast. Office and operations all morning.

5<sup>th</sup> - John had a bad night and has temp again and so will not be able to travel today. Cameron decided to go off alone as far as the Bo where he wanted to go off the road to look at the Sue with a view to seeing if they could float timber down it to the saw mill. He is sending the lorry back again for JS who will go straight to Wau. Did strangulated hernia - a man who was working on the roof of the carpentry shed this morning. Cameron away during the morning. JS feeling better in the evening. Had a wire last week from Oliver to say his tour south was cancelled and then Loggin tells me he has already left on his final leave. I'm sorry he's gone. So now if all goes well I shall go to Yambio for the wedding on

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<sup>94</sup> RS Sullivan, joined Agriculture Department in 1928.



the 5<sup>th</sup> June and from there on to catch the post boat for leave on the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup>. This should land me home about the beginning of July. I think I shall go through Egypt and have a day or two in Cairo.

### ***Juba, 10 June 1933***

*(reached Adelaide on 17 July)*

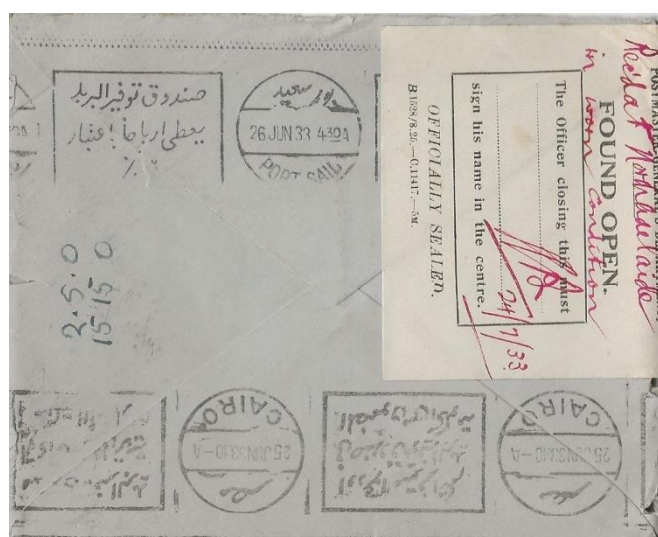
Just a short note to say I'm off on leave.

I left Yubu and stayed in Yambio for the wedding of Bill Tunnicliffe and Alison Wyld and then came straight on to Juba. The steamer sails tomorrow at 8 am. We arrive in Khartoum on the 18<sup>th</sup> and I shall catch a train north to Cairo on the 21<sup>st</sup> and arrive in Cairo on the 25<sup>th</sup>. Probably stay a couple of days there and then to Port Said to catch a boat, arriving home some time about the 7<sup>th</sup> July. I think I shall try and rent a service flat in London, especially if Ginger stays on when I arrive.

I'm very fit but shall not be sorry for a spot of leave. Will write more fully on the boat and post in Khartoum. Post to St Thomas's, Albert Embankment, as that will always find me.

### ***On the river, 16 June 1933***

You ask about the house in one of your letters, Dad. It belongs to the government and although I've had all the trouble of designing and supervising its building etc, not only does it not belong to me but I shall have to pay rent as soon as I begin to live in it!



Now for the diary - as usual I can't for the life of me think when it was I finished my last letter. However, it must have been about the 8<sup>th</sup> May so I will start from there.

8<sup>th</sup> - Smith much better this morning so up and away to Wau after breakfast.

9<sup>th</sup> - To Barabandi and round part of leper settlement. Marked out foundations of new kitchen and boys' quarters in afternoon.

10<sup>th</sup> - Usual routine. Baz back from inspection and found two cases.

11<sup>th</sup> - The Wylds arrived at teatime, just in time to avoid a heavy storm - rained all evening.

12<sup>th</sup> - Walk round early then Tiger and I to the Chiefs' court where we dealt with the clerk who had been using prisoners to till his private cultivation. Tiger spent rest of the morning seeing refugees. They are recruiting labour for the gold mines just across the border in the Belgian Congo with the result that the Belgian natives are streaming across to us. Chiefs' court again in the evening.

13<sup>th</sup> - Walk early and we were just at breakfast when Pirrie, the new Bimbashi in charge of the company of Equots at Aweil arrived. He has a number of Zandes in his company and was doing a tour to see the country they were recruited from and to discuss several problems relating to recruiting and leave with Tiger and me. Tiger off to the Chiefs' court

again. Pirrie and Mika and Andy came to office and we all walked round the sleeping sickness parade and so to the market to give the chimps their weekly beer.

14<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. The Wylds and Pirrie left after breakfast and were going up to the sanatorium for the day and night. Did operation after they left and then wrote a little. Set out after tea to commence inspection of Renzi N and W. Arrived at the first rest house, Koyambio, had tea and a walk. This is the place where I lost Betty last year.

15<sup>th</sup> - Up and did inspection and then moved on to Mabu. Went out and shot in the evening, one francolin only.

16<sup>th</sup> - Just finishing inspection when Arbuthnot arrived. We moved on together to Boeki.

17<sup>th</sup> - Inspection. A went on ahead I moved on to Motumba later. Went out for two hours in the evening but saw nothing though there were fresh tracks of hartebeest and roan antelope.

18<sup>th</sup> - Two inspections today, Moitumba and Zungwa and so on to Mberi. Went for a walk down to the water. Have never heard so many cock francolin calling before. I walked slowly up to within 15 feet of one in a tree and stood and watched him for about five minutes before he made off.

19<sup>th</sup> - Again two inspections, Mberi and Mbitimo and then eventually on to Tio. The people about here are lazy – they have practically no cultivations of manioc and sweet potatoes (which the locusts do not touch) so if they have bad locusts and lose their grain crop, they'll be pretty hungry and then they'll get famine relief. It would be a good thing to let them starve if it were only the young bucks and women who suffered, but they of course get first go at any food there is, so it is always the old people and children who go short if there isn't enough for all.

20<sup>th</sup> - Inspections, Tio and Kerasi, and then on to Bakiri. Tea and walk and then saw Bakiri himself – talked to him about getting a dispensary built here. As they are rather short of water in the dry season, I promised to send out a terabai and some tools to dig a well. Lorry arrived with a mailbag with letters from you both.

21<sup>st</sup> - Did Bakiri then away to Tambura, looked at hospital, which the new dresser seems to be running very well, then to Chiefs' court to see Tiger. Saw Arbuthnot who was going back to Yambio. He came to Yubu with me and had lunch and then on his way.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Routine morning, house in the afternoon - started to put in cement floors. Kitchen building well on.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Usual routine. Trying to design kitchen range and chimney which will minimise risk of fire from grass roof.

24<sup>th</sup> - Gardened in afternoon. It is annoying to be going on leave just when the house is finished and the rains are starting, as it's the best time for gardening.

25<sup>th</sup> - Did operation then office. Planted out some oleander layers. Have some men sowing the terraces with grass as the rains have started.

26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> - Usual days.

28<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> - Office fixing up odds and ends and drawing up next year's budget and getting out a scheme to be carried out while I'm away. Gardening and packing things up in the afternoon.

1<sup>st</sup> June - Baz back from trek. Spent most of morning discussing things with him. Bought a baby Colobus monkey today as I thought they might like it in the Khartoum zoo. They are quite attractive – black and white with long bushy tails

2<sup>nd</sup> - Mail with letters from you both and Ginger. Packing etc when Brocks arrived after lunch. I think I've told you that Brock has to marry Bill Tunnicliffe and Andy [Alison] as that nasty little worm Arthur Upper Nile refused to allow them to be married in his church as Bill is a divorcee. Brock tells me that Maffey, the Governor-General, may be going to Cairo to replace Lorraine. That will do no harm as he's been pretty well time serving here for the last few years. No news of who the new man may be. Also hear that Jack Gibson has contract for the £2.5 million Jebel Aulia dam about 30 miles south of Khartoum on the White Nile. The money is of course put up by Egypt.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Brocks left after breakfast and I finished off packing and made final arrangements. Lunch with Baz and away about 3:30 on LEAVE!. Very heavy rain ahead so I stopped at Nagbagi instead of getting on to Burna as I had wanted.

4<sup>th</sup> - Away by 6:45 and went the long loop road down to Iriwo's as I wanted to see how the dresser was getting on in the new dispensary. Saw him and Iriwo, the chief, and then on to Rangu where I called in and had lunch with the Jabbours. His wife, whom I hadn't met before, is quite jolly and very intelligent and speaks good English. Went with J to look at the most palatial swimming bath they are making. So on to Yambio. Found all the family, Bill, the Brocks and Arbuthnot at tea on the lawn. After a while Piercy, the PWD man from Juba, rolled up. The Brocks went back to their rest house, the first outside Yambio, and the rest of us went for a walk. All to dinner with the Wylds – a good party. Shared the rest house with Piercy.

5<sup>th</sup> - After breakfast went over and helped Tiger carve ham and turkey. Went and helped Bill T to dress and then drove him to office; went back and drove Andy and Mika to the office where Brock did the civil service. Old Gore, the Canon, had decided to say a few words by way of a blessing in the house afterwards. While the civil ceremony was going on I went back to the house to entertain any new arrivals. On the completion of the civil part, Andy came back and changed into her wedding dress – very charming she looked to – and Gore read a part of the marriage service. We then took some photographs and Andy cut the cake with Bill's sword, and then fizz and healths etc followed by a sort of buffet lunch which after which Bill and Andy changed and set off for Li Rangu where they are going to stay until they go down to Terakeka for the boat on the 11<sup>th</sup>. A quiet interval and then tea at the mission for all followed by dinner party at the Wylds.

6<sup>th</sup> - Breakfast and then Piercy and I off to Rangu as he wanted to look at some work there. We saw the bride and groom and then off for Maridi, lunch on the road and arrived for tea with Sullivan. Mynors also in Maridi and we all had dinner with Sullivan, the agriculture man. I knew him in Port Sudan.

7<sup>th</sup> - A walkaround before breakfast with Sullivan and then a look round the hospital after which P and I on to Amadi where we discovered Joe Bryant, who is on his way to Li Rangu

to hold the Fort while Hugh W is on leave (he having left about a month ago). We were just in time to stop him from rushing on and arriving in the midst of the honeymoon, so I told him to stay at Amadi for a few days until the coast was clear.

8<sup>th</sup> - Early breakfast and away. I've decided to go with Piercy to Yei as it is only 60 or 70 miles out of my road and I've plenty of time for the boat. We stopped to see the Frasers at Lui. He is a CMS doctor who runs a grand show. Lunch on the road and arrived at Yei at teatime. An attractive place, high up and overlooking rolling green down land with the hills dividing the Sudan, Uganda, and the Belgian Congo standing up in the background. We strolled up to look at the Logan Greys' (the DC)<sup>95</sup> new house which P is building, and whilst we were at it they arrived. Went to them for drinks and dinner. A jolly couple, she very charming and clever. She's Dutch but speaks absolutely perfect English as well as about five other languages

9<sup>th</sup> - Piercy drove me out to the garden at Kagalu, about 5 miles away, run by an effendi in the agricultural department. It is a fine show: all sorts of fruit and vegetables, coffee and grand plantations trees, teak, cedar etc. They supply seedlings and young trees all over the province. After breakfast I left P and pushed on to Juba, a most perfect road, as good as an A class road in England. It is the main thoroughfare into the Belgian Congo at Aba. Arrived Juba and found Aldridge the doctor out, so went and called on Richardson, the deputy governor. Sent off some wires and did odd jobs and put my kit in the hotel and then to lunch with Richardson.

10<sup>th</sup> - Up and to Imperial Airways to make some enquiries. Juba is on the Cape to Cairo route and a place where they spend the night. Then down to the mechanical transport to arrange about an overhaul for my car while I'm away, and then to look round the hospital. Took kit down and dumped it on the boat. After lunch, played tennis - Logan Gray, Richardson, Cook (DC), Piercy and self. The L Gs have come in for the weekend. Went down to the boat and changed and so to Aldridge's (who had just come in) for drinks. Then on to Richardson's for dinner. The L Gs, Cook and Varian and Cabral made up the party. Varian is an engineer who has been in Africa for about 35 years and is also a well-known big game shot and naturalist. Cabral is a very pleasant Portuguese, the general manager of the Lobito railway. They have motored up together from Portuguese East Africa through Kenya and Uganda, and are going up on my boat. They propose motoring from Shellal to Cairo and then Beirut, boat to Athens, and then motor through the continent to Lisbon.

11<sup>th</sup> - Sailed at 8 am. Most of Juba came down to see us off. The passengers include Varian, Cabral, Professor and Mrs Ward and daughter (Americans) and Day of Gellatley Hankey. Arrived at Terakeka at teatime where Bill and Andy came on, the former with a bad go of fever - rather bad luck on one's honeymoon.

12<sup>th</sup> - Usual day through Sudd, saw some elephant. Bill still with fever.

13<sup>th</sup> - Again bumping round corners in the Sudd. Warren, the steamer's engineer, gave a very good engineering display after dinner.

14<sup>th</sup> - Bill much better today. We had his cinema in the evening including a film he took of the chimps at Yubu when he was there which was very good. Bill and Andy are getting off

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<sup>95</sup> Major D Logan Gray, MC, joined SPS in 1928.

the boat at Malakal, the headquarters of Upper Nile province, tomorrow morning. They then get onto his own steamer and go up the Sobat to Akobo on the Abyssinian frontier where he is stationed.

15<sup>th</sup> - Malakal early, went for a walk and then to hospital. Saw and had yarn with Goss<sup>96</sup> and Stevenson, the two medical inspectors here.

16<sup>th</sup> - Usual day on river – lots of game on the banks in the afternoon. We arrive at Kosti tomorrow where one takes the train for Khartoum. From there I shall go on to Cairo arriving on the 25<sup>th</sup> and after that I have no set plans.

### **9, Porchester Place, 18 July 1933**

Got to Kosti and took train in the afternoon arriving Khartoum at 7:30 on Sunday morning, 18<sup>th</sup> June. Met by Michael [Hillary] who took me to his house where I have a room and feed with him at the club. Borrowed M's car and went about doing various things. Squash in the afternoon and drinks with Mayne,<sup>97</sup> the new Senior Surgeon, in the evening.

19<sup>th</sup> - Borrowed M's car again and went to see the Legal Section about Sutherland's estate which is still hanging on. Met the steamer this morning which had the balance of my luggage, which I didn't bring on the train from Kosti. Took the baby colobus to the zoo and gave it to Pongo Barker.<sup>98</sup> Went to Omdurman and bought some stuff for Varian in the afternoon. Drinks with Charles Crouch.

20<sup>th</sup> - M and I rode John Smith's ponies before breakfast. Attended meeting of the Central Sanitary Board on SS regulations. Drinks with Spike Evans and dined with Charles C.

21<sup>st</sup> - Up early and caught the 8 am train to Halfa – hot and sticky journey. Rode part of way in the laboratory saloon in which Horgan was going to Halfa to investigate a few cases of possible plague.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Arrived Halfa at 10:30, went straight on board steamer and had a swim. Found Mohammed, who left me at Halfa, had gone off with my keys. Arrived at Abu Simbal at 5 and tied up to allow the passengers to go off and see the temple, a fine piece of work cut out of the solid rock in a hill side by Ramases II to commemorate a victory in battle. The bas relief carvings on the inner walls are very vivid and full of the most amazing action. Tied up for night at 8:30.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Down river all day, very hot on board, usual river scenery.

24<sup>th</sup> - Arrived Shellal after lunch. Train left about 5:30, dinner and slept on train.

25<sup>th</sup> - Arrived Cairo at 7:30 am. Picked up Varian and Cabral at Luxor – they had given up motoring to Cairo there. Went straight to hotel for bath, shave and breakfast. Spent day pottering about and doing odd jobs. In evening V, C and I took car and drove to Mena House for a drink.

26<sup>th</sup> - Called on MacCarthy, a wild Irishman who used to manage the bank at Port Sudan. Went to lunch at his house. Went to the Gazeira Club and an open-air cabaret and dancing show: late night.

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<sup>96</sup> F Hennessy Goss, MC, SMS 1926-1943 when he resigned to take up a commission as a Lt Col in the RAMC.

<sup>97</sup> FS Mayne, who continued as Senior Surgeon until 1944, when ill health forced his retirement.

<sup>98</sup> Major WR Barker, OBE, government Game Warden.

27<sup>th</sup> - Have booked on the *Worcestershire* tomorrow. Went to the Turf Club and played golf and had a swim.

28<sup>th</sup> - Up and caught train at 8 am. Found there was no restaurant car. Arrived Port Said and after getting through customs etc got on board very hot and hungry at 1 pm. Sailed at once. Find several Sudan people onboard.

29<sup>th</sup> - Usual shipboard day: deck tennis, bathing and dance in the evening.

30<sup>th</sup> - 2<sup>nd</sup> July - As above.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Arrived Marseilles and caught train at 11:30. Stoddart, Flyscher, Colvin and self had compartment to ourselves most of the way. Arrived Paris at 10:30 pm, went across to Hotel Terminus at Gare du Nord, left our luggage, went for a bit of a walk and a lager and so bath and bed.

4<sup>th</sup> - Left 8 am and had breakfast on the train. Country looking very charming. Quiet and pleasant crossing from Boulogne, lunch on the train and arrived Victoria at 3:30 where I was met by Ginger in her famous "lemon". Went to a pub where she had booked rooms. Thought she was looking very fit.

From here on, Ginger says she had told you all we have done except that she sold the lemon and I have bought a car, a practically new 1933 Wolseley Hornet Saloon with a sunshine roof.

### ***Huntly Arms Hotel, Aboyne, 30 August 1933***

*Tom stayed in Aboyne with his sister, Ginger, as guests of Kenneth and Kate Harper. They had left London on 21<sup>st</sup> August and driven up via nights at Doncaster, Carlisle and Perth. With two other people from Burma, Ken had rented a 5,000 acre shoot and fishing. Tom didn't shoot but 'flanked' and he and Ken fished and played golf. Tom and Ginger left Aboyne on Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> September and arrived in London two days later. Ginger left from Tilbury on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> to return to Australia by sea.*

### ***Huntly Arms Hotel, Aboyne, 19 September 1933***

*Tom describes a busy social life in and around London. This included a visit to Sunningdale as a result of an invitation from Major and Mrs Anderson. They live in Nairobi where he has a coffee shamba. He was a great friend of the late Jimmy Sutherland, and I wrote to him after S's death. They have just come home and asked me to dine and stay the night. They have just driven from Nairobi home via the Sahara and he showed me some cinema film they had taken on route, including some of the elephant farm in the Belgian Congo which were very good.*

*In Harrods, he ran into "Pilot Payne", who must be the pilot who nearly didn't get off the Yubu strip on 27<sup>th</sup> March. At a lunch two days later he shared a table with "a Mrs Bentley, who with her husband made a flight in a puss moth from London to Cape Town and back in 1928. Quite an interesting girl." On 14<sup>th</sup> September he took the 11 pm sleeper to Aberdeen where he arrived a 11:40 the next day, catching a local train to Aboyne after lunch and meeting up again with Ken and Kate and the shooting party. He spent the next ten days flanking the shoot, fishing and playing golf.*

### *P & O S N Co., S S Strathnaver, 19 October 1933*

Here we are nearly at Port Sudan and leave nearly over. There are quite a number of Sudan people on board and I hope we shall get a special train to Khartoum tomorrow.



The trip so far has been very pleasant except that the ship is very crowded, and it has been marvellously cool even here in the Red Sea. Kenneth and I motored down from Aboyne, spending nights at Bridge of Allen and Grantham. Arrived at lunch time when I met John [Tom's brother] who was at the digs, he seemed very fit to me. Went that evening to theatre and then to supper and dance at Quaglino's. My host was Colonel Wellbourne, the Inspector General of Police of Burma, whom I met on the boat coming home and found was a friend of Kenneth and Kate's. The rest of the time until the 12<sup>th</sup> October was spent saying goodbye to and calling on people, buying odds and ends for the house and selling the car. I went on the Friday before I sailed to call on Prof and Mrs Wyld who live at Alvescot, some little way from Oxford, in order to see Tiger and Mika's daughter Henrietta<sup>99</sup> so that I might give them recent news of her. They are a charming family.

Travelled overland to Marseille whence we sailed last Friday, 13<sup>th</sup>.

### *Sudan Club Khartoum, 28 October 1933*

I'm off today on my way to Yubu. We had quite a good journey until a day out from Port Sudan when it became very hot and sticky. We had a special train from Port Sudan which landed us in Khartoum last Saturday. I have been staying with Eric Pridie, the Director of the SMS, until Thursday when he went out and I shifted to here. I've spent my time here ordering stores, doing some work in the labs, round the hospital, visiting people, and cadging new equipment and staff for Yubu, and had several talks with Pridie. All Khartoum is aquiver at the moment waiting to see who the new Governor-Geeral will be. I had breakfast yesterday with Ray Humphreys, the Senior Physician, and saw his ponies including a foal from his mare Sunray (Arab-Australian) by a horse called Roberto, a son of Lemberg. It is the best foal I've seen here and should make up well. Roberto is a good sire and puts his stamp on all his progeny. Roy's wife has just presented him with a son and heir and I'm not sure which he is more pleased with - the foal or the son. Must go and do a little last-minute shopping now.

### *On River, 3 November 1933*

Not much to tell you since I last wrote. Travel on a Nile boat is not very news making. The main item of local news is that a fellow named Symes has been appointed as Governor-Geeral - he is at present Governor of Tanganyika and beyond that I know nothing about him.

The journey has not so far been unpleasantly hot, the water is still high for this time of year and the grass being still rather long there is no game to be seen. We should reach Juba on the 10<sup>th</sup> and I shall get to Yubu on the 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup>.

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<sup>99</sup> The Sudan Archive has a copy of a letter of condolence dated 16 April 1968 (SAD.779/7/24-26) from Sir James Robertson (the last Civil Secretary of the SPS) to Mrs. H. Hick on the death of her father.

### *Juba, 18 November 1933*

I hope this may reach you somewhere about Christmas time, so I wish you all the best for the season and health and happiness in the new year. We arrived here in Juba last Saturday [11<sup>th</sup>] after an uneventful journey from Malakal. I just missed the Tunnicliffes there, where I'd been hoping to see them. Reynolds of Imperial Airways came on board at Bor. He had been looking at a temporary landing ground there. I saw old Baron de Pezzei in Mongalla, I believe the poor old man is very hard up these days. Was met here by Stephenson, the second medial inspector here, and Joe Bryant, also of our service. The latter was on his way on leave by the boat I came down on. Had breakfast with S and then back to the boat to see about off-loading my kit and stores and then to pick up my car from the MT garage. S is kindly putting me up. Played tennis in the afternoon.

12<sup>th</sup> November - Went down to the boat to see Bryant off and then with Arbuthnot to look for some of our cases which had gone astray. These found, to breakfast and then down to the aerodrome to see the north-bound mail plane. I'd not seen one of this type before, and S has to inspect the passengers. So, being Sunday, to beer at the pub. As we were leaving, S said he didn't feel too fit. So I took him to the hospital, found he had a temp and found MT [malaria] in a blood slide, so I put him to bed and wired Pridie that I was staying in Juba until he was fit again. I would rather have got away to Yubu this afternoon, especially as the annual report is unpleasantly near. I shifted down to the pub as I believe if there is one time one is entitled to the privacy of one's home it's when one has fever. Was sitting having tea when a chap arrived and we got talking. He told me that he had left London only last Tuesday in a small monoplane. He's done in six days solo flying a journey that took me 31 days, and his machine had only cost him £400 new - less than you paid for your car. He's off tomorrow morning for Kampala. S rather sorry for himself tonight.

13<sup>th</sup> - S better this morning. Called on Nalder,<sup>100</sup> the Governor of this province (Mongalla) whom I had not met before. He has a great reputation in the country for his ability, and is the only man in the administrative service of senior rank with any outside experience, having been lent to both Iraq and Mesopotamia at various times. He was also a member of the Turkish-Iraq boundary commission in 1924 [the status of Mosul], where he did some very good work. Went up later in the morning to see Mrs Nalder who had sprained her foot. Did a round and some work in the hospital. It is a good hospital but with little of interest in it, being full of the usual tropical ulcers, yaws and guinea worm. The Nalders have very kindly asked me to stay with them. After lunch played tennis and then shifted up to the Nalders. In to see Stephenson before dinner who is rather sorry for himself again this evening. The Ns are a charming couple and he fully lives up to his reputation for brains and is, I should judge, a delight to work for.

14<sup>th</sup> - S better this morning but have got a new patient also with MT fever in one Mrs Babbidge, the wife of the road foreman - they refer to each other as Mr and Mrs B. spent morning at hospital, tennis in afternoon.

15<sup>th</sup> - Round various places with the native sanitary overseer. Usual ward round and some office work then tennis. Mrs N tells me that Tiger and Mika are probably coming in here for Xmas and going on for a few days in the Imatong mountains afterwards - 8,000 ft and perishingly cold, forests and streams, bracken and wild strawberries! It should make a

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<sup>100</sup> L F Nalder, CMG, CIE, CBE, (1888-1958), SPS 1912-1936.



good change for them. Hugh Woodman has just come back from leave engaged to a Swedish girl who I hear is very nice; they are to be married early next year.

16<sup>th</sup> - S better but find he has one or two bad teeth which ought to be seen to. New patient today - wife of Gibson, the CMS missionary here.

17<sup>th</sup> - S much better. Think he needs a change after his fever as he has five months to go before his leave. There is a good dentist in Kampala and so I wired Pridie that I thought it would be a good idea if S flew down to Kampala on next Monday's Imperial Airways machine, have four days change and get his teeth seen to, and come back tomorrow week. It's only six hours flying from here. If P agrees I shall probably be here until the 26<sup>th</sup> which I don't relish much as I want to be back at Yubu.

18<sup>th</sup> - Sir Stewart Symes, the new GG, comes through on tonight's northbound plane, on his way to London preparatory to coming out to Khartoum. Pridie said I could have leave next year and in 1935 as well, but that Hugh W and I cannot be away together, and as HW wants early leave to get married I shall probably not get away until the end of August.

### ***Source Yubu, 12 December 1933***

Here I am home at last. Stephenson arrived back in Juba on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> having had an enjoyable trip and had his teeth seen to.

26<sup>th</sup> November - Went down to Shun's shop before breakfast and bought a Kenya ham, 12 lbs at 2/- a pound - they are as good as English hams, also a 4 lb tin of boned cooked ham for 11/-. They also get cheddar cheeses from Kenya at 1/7 per pound and very good they are too. Called for Sullivan (agriculture at Maridi) after breakfast and we set off for Amadi. Had lunch on the way. Stopped at Lui, about 15 miles from Amadi, to see the Frasers but found they were out. As I think I've told you, he is a doctor in the CMS who runs a magnificent show. Both he and his wife have private means which they have spent freely there. From nothing, he has built up a good hospital and instituted eight dispensaries in the district in addition to training the necessary staff single handed. He is a sick man with a ch. heart and if he dies there is no one at the moment to carry on. He is a very good doctor and they are both charming people. We left Lui in the dark and half way to Amadi came on a huge tree fallen right across the road, quite beyond our compass to move. So we had to make a detour through some cultivations, but fortunately none of our vehicles stuck in the somewhat soft going. Arrived at A to find Tom Mynors, the DC, in and had dinner with him.

27<sup>th</sup> - Had breakfast at 6 and set off for Maridi, arrived there at 11:30 and after an early lunch set off again for Yambio and arrived there at 4 having done 180 miles, and 366 miles in two days. Found Arbuthnot in bed with fever, and so to the Wylds where I received a very pleasant welcome. The Morrisons were there. I thought that both Tiger and Mika were looking a bit washed out. Stayed the night at Yambio and left early on the 28<sup>th</sup> for Li Rangu, arrived for breakfast accompanied by the Morrisons and found Cruickshank and Larken there as well. C was having some trouble with his car so I re-timed it for him and got it going. C left for Barayu where the Gores are, Mrs G having a bad go of fever. I stayed the day with Hugh Woodman - the Swedish girl he's engaged to looks charming from her photos. Played tennis in the afternoon and bathed afterwards in the swimming bath which H has made, a very good effort.

29<sup>th</sup> - Off early, stopped at Larken's and just after I arrived the Gores turned up on their way back to Yambio. She looks terribly ill and I'm glad I'm not responsible for her. Arrived at Yubu to find C here. Drinks with Nasr - Baz is out doing and SS inspection.

30<sup>th</sup> - Spent the day in office with C and unpacking. Baz arrived and he and Nasr came to drinks. Find the house nearly finished, all the doors in and the windows glazed, floors finished etc but not all the ceilings finished.

1<sup>st</sup> December - C left after breakfast for Wau. To office to look over records etc and find out what's been going on while I was away. The Turoza outbreak of SS has died down following the shifting of the people on to the new road.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Sent the lorry to Wau for petrol. I find the training of dressers has not been going as well as I would have liked. I think that Baz is a bit too set in his ways and not very receptive to new ideas. I shall have to get rid of the northern translator who has been making a nuisance of himself since I went on leave. However, I have arranged to get a southerner in January, a Zande from the training school of the CMS at Loka.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Sunday, round at hospital and then wrote some letters and potted about.

4<sup>th</sup> - Shifted into the new house. It looks a bit bare at the moment but I think it will look quite well when I get some curtains up etc. I have decided to dig a trench round the house and brick line it in an endeavour to keep the white ants out. Did an operation and then office work, started in on preparing my annual report. Afternoon in house.

5<sup>th</sup> - Operation and office work all morning, lab work in afternoon. There is a pretty heavy filarial infestation of the population, mostly Perstans and Loa Loa I think. One finds the micro filarial in the routine blood exams for SS and I have been trying to make some good stained specimens of them.

6<sup>th</sup> - Operation and office work. I was going to Barabandi to start re-charting the lepers but found my battery was flat so shall have to wait until our lorry comes back. Lab work again in afternoon doing cell counts and globulin estimations on the CSF of SS cases.

7<sup>th</sup> - Office all morning and house all afternoon. I am building a sort of projection out from the front porch which will serve to drive the car under in the rains and the roof of which will also serve as a sitting out place in the evening. Have also been putting up some curtain poles and having the cushions recovered.

8<sup>th</sup> - Office all morning and lab work in afternoon. Have now got some stained specimens of micro filarial by short staining - one minute - with Leishman. Have found two sorts which I take to be Perstans and Loa. Joe Bryant, who was here for a time while I was on leave, found some onchocireal tumours which I must look out for.

9<sup>th</sup> - Spent the morning doing a review of some of the old SS cases for discharge. Lab work in the afternoon. I find teaching the dressers rather a dreary job: they seem to have no powers of reasoning or comparison and learning parrot fashion is the one thing one wants to avoid. I forgot to tell you that I was much distressed on my return to find both the chimps, Tungwa and Pora, gone. Pora had died apparently of a snake bite and Tungwa, the big one, had become so unruly that Baz had very reluctantly had her shot. The culminating point came when she bit a man's finger off. She was perfectly amenable with

Baz and me, and her savageness with the people was simply due to the fact that they ill-treated her when our backs were turned. Dalow, the baby, however is fit and flourishing.

10<sup>th</sup> - Sunday - loafed before breakfast and did a round of the hospital after and then wrote letters all morning. Arbuthnot arrived at 4 from Yambio having spent some days hearing appeals at Negasi on the road. He left after tea for Tambura hoping to meet the Wylds there. Tiger and Mika arrived here at about 7 having been delayed on the road.

11<sup>th</sup> - Tiger and M left after breakfast and I did an operation and then office all morning. Had a letter from C to say that my lorry will not be back for three weeks as it is badly in need of a complete overhaul. It's a damn nuisance. Divided the afternoon between lab work and the house.

I have started taking the daily *Times* again - I feel that one must make an effort to keep *au fait* with current events and yet I really haven't time to read them all thoroughly. It is amazing how the Japanese are penetrating even this remote part of the world: the east African dependencies, the Belgian and French Congo and even to a lesser extent here. In the Greek merchant's here I can buy quite a presentable pair of rubber gym shoes for 5 pt (1/-). How little they can have cost per pair to produce in Japan can well be imagined when they can be sold for that absurd sum in the centre of Africa. You may buy Japanese bicycles in the BC for the equivalent of £2 each! And they were only just prevented from importing a clockwork motor car which when wound up would run for 25 km at a price of £60 - this is quite true, I'm not joking. But the most amazing commercial anomalies seem to exist now. You can buy Australian flour in Egypt cheaper than it can be produced locally despite the disparity in wages between the fellahin and the Australian farm labourer. Despite a 100% import duty, Japanese silk can be bought cheaper in Syria than the local product, and Syria has been a producer of good quality silk for ages. To crown it all, I read in my latest copy of the *Field* that Danish farmers are taking up land in England in order to enjoy the protective tariffs instituted to help the British farmer against foreign farm produce.

Tiger and Mika have just been for a short trip into the Belgian Congo including a visit to the elephant training farm which they found most interesting. It is only about 80 miles from here and I must try and get down to see it some time.

12<sup>th</sup> - Operation and then office work all the morning and writing stuff for the annual report in the afternoon as well. I managed to get my car started with the help of the battery from a passing merchant's car.

13<sup>th</sup> - To Bakongo to re-chart the segregated lepers. Pottered about in the afternoon at the carpenters' shop, basket making etc, finishing up with the usual evening visit to the hospital. I see in the *Times* the official notification of the committee to discuss the Burmese position in relation to the India White Paper. Kenneth [Harper] is the only European - I imagine he will have a sticky time upholding European interests with the Burmese members. I think he would probably have liked the moral support of another British member.

14<sup>th</sup> - To Barabandi to commence re-charting the lepers there. Back at noon and did an operation. Spent most of the afternoon doing cell counts and globulin estimations on CSF from SS cases. I was just going off to tea when the mail arrived [with letters from each of

his parents]. Yes, I cannot imagine why the fools at the PO suddenly started sending my mail to Australia. I'm afraid Ginger was a bit astray about the question of study leave. It would be no good my applying for it yet as one is not entitled until one has seven years' service to one's credit. As far as anything is certain in this country, I have been told by Pridie that I shall be here until the end of 1935. I have then put in for the job of Registrar to the Kitchener School of Medicine. How much chance I've got of landing that I don't know, but if I can it will be an ideal job in which to work for the fellowship. I shall have to wait to try your cocktail recipe as I have no curacao at the moment, but it sounds good.

15<sup>th</sup> - To Barabandi again this morning and then after lunch I drove to Tambura to have tea and dinner with the Wylds and Arbuthnot. Brought back two cases from the dispensary there to the hospital.

16<sup>th</sup> - Spent the morning looking over SS cases for discharge. I am having a built-in wall cupboard in the dining room with a glass front for my Woolworth glasses. (*We still have three of these wine glasses.*)

17<sup>th</sup> - Sunday again. Went round to the hospital after breakfast and tapped an ascitic abdomen, and here I am now drinking my Sunday beer and writing to you. The Wylds are taking this to post in Juba by airmail. As it will be so long before I see you all again if I do not come to Australia on my leave next year, I shall try to come although I shall only have three months. The difficulty will be to fit in boats as no P&Os call in at Port Sudan from July until the end of October. However, there are three alternatives (1) a Bibby from P Sudan to Colombo and tranship there, (2) go to Port Said and catch a P&O, (3) take the air mail from Juba to Nairobi, train to Mombasa and then a BI boat to Bombay and tranship there.

### ***Source Yubu, 2 January 1934***

*(franked in Cairo 3 February)*

19<sup>th</sup> December - Arbuthnot left after breakfast carrying my mail with him which I hope Tiger posted by air mail in Juba. I went to Barabandi to continue charting the lepers which lasted until lunch time. Belsky, the Medical Officer at Wau, arrived on a visit. He is a very able fellow.

20<sup>th</sup> - Belsky came to Barabandi as he wanted to do some tuberculin reactions in lepers, he did over 100 while I was re-charting. Garden in the afternoon. Belsky, Baz and Nasr to dinner.

21<sup>st</sup> - Finished the lepers at Barabandi.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Operation then office and some reviewing of SS cases. Annual report all afternoon so that the translator can get on with the typing while I am in Wau. Went to Baz for drinks and he produced two bottles of fizz just as I was thinking of going off to dinner. The result was went home to dinner very late and rather elevated, or rather late and very elevated, I don't remember which. I forgot to tell you that yesterday we cooked the 12 lb Kenya ham I bought in Juba. The difficulty was to find anything large enough to cook it in. Finally we solved the problem by hammering a petrol tin in here and out there until it just about fitted the ham. I had some for breakfast this morning and it was very good - it should be, it was cooked in half beer and half water.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Breakfast with Baz and then set off for Wau. Stopped at Tambura to inspect the dispensary and so on to Mabu where I stopped for lunch, and then to the Bo river. I went down with my native casting net so see if I could get any fish but with not much success. My lorry driver, who had come down with me, turned to a woman who had just come to draw water and asked if there were any fish, whereupon she replied "Am I God that I should know whether there are any fish there or not". It is strange that a people with so little or, I should more correctly say, with no religion of any sort however primitive should have a word in their language for an invisible and extra-territorial being who lives in the sky, and that once existing, the thing it stands for should play so small a part in their lives. They only use the word (mboeri) on such an occasion as I have described above, usually to pour scorn on the head of a person who has asked what they consider to be a foolish question. The only other time I have heard it used with any frequency is in connection with having children. If you ask a married woman why she has no children, her almost invariable reply is "That's God's affair". Normally their whole life is ruled by omens and witchcraft. If you fall ill, it's witchcraft and if you have misfortune, it's witchcraft. You never take any step of whatever magnitude, from going out to work in the morning to building a new house, without consulting the oracles, either yourself or by engaging a witch doctor to do it for you.

24<sup>th</sup> - Left the Bo after breakfast and arrived in Wau at 1 pm. We had to ferry across the Busseri as it was still too high to ford. The rains have been extraordinarily late this year all round. I went to Cruikshank's house - he was out but was back by the time I had lowered a beer. He'd been to the mission to see a sister who has blackwater fever. She is one of the two who are trained nurses and who work in the hospital. It is a new departure and has proved most successful. The mission people get an undue amount of blackwater, largely due to carelessness and their failure to treat attacks of malaria properly. In the afternoon we went up for tennis where we found Tim Morrison, the deputy governor. I think I've told you about him, he is an Australian and his father is a doctor in Melbourne somewhere, I think.

25<sup>th</sup> - Poor Cruikshank was hauled out of bed in the night to go to the sister who is pretty ill. Cochrane,<sup>101</sup> the new medical inspector, turned up for breakfast. He has come to replace Sam Burrows and seems a very decent sort of chap. Everyone in Wau (14) came to us for beer at 11. C had to go off before lunch to the mission. He came back of the opinion that the sister was likely to die. Five came to us for lunch and at 4.30 pm I went for a ride with Kathleen Morrison who very kindly mounted me on one of her ponies. It was jolly to ride again after so long a break. For drinks the whole station went to Spice and Campbell, the bimbashis, after which we all dined with the Morrises. It was a jolly good show. They gave us an excellent dinner and Tim had made up an excellent piece of topical poetry about each of us, the appropriate verse being printed on your menu card. As desert, we each got up and read our verse. To finish with, Cruickshank read a verse which he had made on the spur of the moment about the Morrises. After dinner we played games and danced. Kathleen and Bunty Richards worked overtime as they were the only women. We didn't get to bed until 3 and some of them didn't finish even then.

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<sup>101</sup> GC Cochrane, joined SMS 1933.

26<sup>th</sup> - After breakfast C and I went to hospital where I looked at some cases of blindness that C is investigating. All the evidence so far points to conchocice volvulus as being the cause. In the afternoon we went to the mission - the sister was better and may possibly recover.

27<sup>th</sup> - Kathleen and I rode before breakfast then I spent the morning in the hospital looking at cases. Tennis and bridge later.

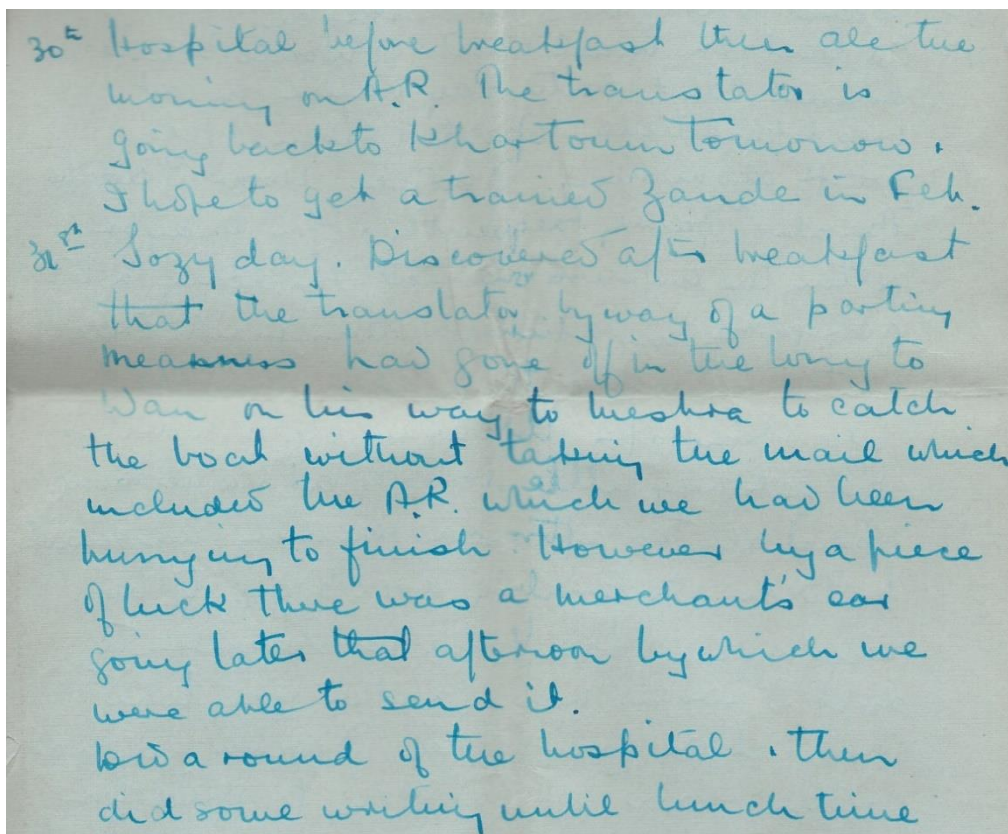
28<sup>th</sup> - Two ponies arrived yesterday from Darfur for Hugh Woodman. Not a bad pair for £9 apiece but they both have the coarse head and neck of the average country bred. There's no point in paying a lot for ponies to take to a place like Rangu where I shall be surprised if they live more than a year. C and I walked up to look at them before breakfast, they are temporarily in the army lines. I left at 10, had lunch at Bo and slept at Mabu. Decided on the spur of the moment to give up smoking for a month. I wonder how long I'll stick to that.

29<sup>th</sup> - Early breakfast and arrived at Yubu at 10:30. Spent rest of morning and afternoon on the annual report.

30<sup>th</sup> - Hospital before breakfast then all the morning on annual report. The translator is going back to Khartoum tomorrow and I hope to get a trained Zande in February.

31<sup>st</sup> - Lazy day. Discovered after breakfast that the translator by way of a parting meanness had gone off in the lorry to Wau on his way to Meshra to catch the boat without taking the mail which included the annual report which we had been hurrying to finish. However, by a piece of luck there was a merchant's car going later that afternoon by which we were able to send it.

Did a round of the hospital and then did some writing until lunch time.



30<sup>th</sup> Hospital before breakfast then all the morning on A.R. The translator is going back to Khartoum tomorrow. I hope to get a trained Zande in Feb.

31<sup>st</sup> Lazy day. Discovered after breakfast that the translator by way of a parting meanness had gone off in the lorry to Wau on his way to Meshra to catch the boat without taking the mail which included the A.R. which we had been hurrying to finish. However by a piece of luck there was a merchant's car going later that afternoon by which we were able to send it.

Did a round of the hospital. then did some writing until lunch time.



## 1934 - Source Yubu

### *Source Yubu, 2 January 1934 (continued)*

New Year's day - Forgot it was this and worked hard all day including two operations. Baz and Nasr to drinks in the evening and we had a bottle of fizz to celebrate.

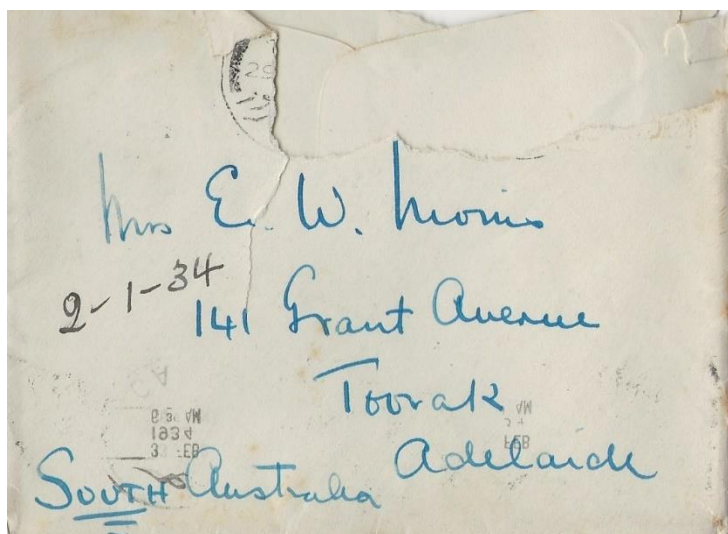
2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> - Round of shops, operated, office work in morning and some lab work in the afternoon.

4<sup>th</sup> - At last our mail, which should have arrived last Saturday [30 Dec], came in at breakfast time. Operated then office work all morning. You may be getting the impression that I am doing a lot of surgery. Unfortunately, this is not true as they're most of them either minor things like skin grafts, lipomas etc or hernias, and one gets little variety at the moment. Spent all the afternoon reading my mail.

5<sup>th</sup> - Hospital and office in the morning. Our lorry back from Wau. I hear from Brock, who has just arrived back, that his wife has not come out owing to her mother's illness, and from C that the Wau sister was much better but that another one had blackwater. Spent most of the afternoon painting the Crittall windows in the house, a long and tedious job - it takes me 1½ hours to paint one side of one window. I'm doing them green on the outside and white on the inside.

6<sup>th</sup> - Round the workshop and then looked at the fundi of some SS patients who have defective or lost vision. I believe that TB quite frequently occurs among these people. I have three cases in hospital at the moment with it, two pulmonary and one a classical case of Potts with spastic paraplegia. Painted windows in the afternoon. In the evening a bicycle messenger arrived from Tiger with some roses for me. I had asked him when he was in Juba to write to a nursery in Nairobi and order a dozen assorted hardy rose trees to be sent to him by air mail. He did this and sent them on to me directly he arrived home. They left Nairobi on the morning of the 30<sup>th</sup> and reached here having come the last 140 miles by bicycle in 36 hours. The cost inclusive of packing, which was very well done, and freight by air from Nairobi to Juba - over 800 miles - was only 34/- the lot. Thirteen different sorts, they'd chucked in one extra for luck, and all with the most high-sounding names. If only half live it will be rather fun as I've only got three different sorts at the present.

7<sup>th</sup> - I got ten men to dig holes in the garden and bring up some good soil from the vegetable garden which we mixed with some manure and filled up the holes, then planted the roses and built grass shelters over them to protect them for the first few days. Wrote letters to Tiger and Hugh and sent the policeman back on his bicycle. Hugh proposes going on leave by either the mid-March or early April boat from Juba which means that I shall get away either mid-August or early September. Pottered in the garden after tea which mostly



consisted of admiring the green sticks which are the roses from all angles until driven indoors by a heavy thunderstorm, a most unusual occurrence for this time of the year.

8<sup>th</sup> - Hospital to look at some dressings and then office all morning. Painted windows in the afternoon.

9<sup>th</sup> - The usual. Was just about to start painting when I had a message from Baz to say a child had arrived with a compound fracture of tib and fib. By the time we had got things ready and cleaned that up and set it, it was evening.

10<sup>th</sup> - Nasr went out last evening to start the inspection of Renzi's central. Painted windows in the afternoon. Had drinks in the evening with Baz. He has made up his mind to retire and is going this year. I shall be sorry to lose him and his going will mean extra work in the administrative line for me as Nasr, who will succeed him, although a nice old man, has not got Baz's ability. It will be a retrograde step as far as I am concerned as, particularly now, I want all the time I can spare to devote to general medical work.

11<sup>th</sup> - I came out this afternoon to start Bakindo inspection and the merchant who is going to Yambio tomorrow will pick up my post bag with this as he passes here. The ham lasted a fortnight and was a great success.

#### ***Source Yubu, 26 January 1934***

12<sup>th</sup> January - Up at a very cold dawn when one was glad of a hot cup of tea after a cold night - I had two blankets and was as usual under a mosquito net which I think is nearly worth a blanket. Went off to Bozeru but as I found the people were not all arrived I drove on to look at some watering places. Did not get back to breakfast until about 11 after which I drove back into Yubu to get some things I'd left behind. Found that a compound fracture of the tibia that I had cleaned and set on Wednesday had gone bad and I had to open it up again. Back to rest house to lunch, went for a walk in the evening.

13<sup>th</sup> - Did inspection of Bakindo and then moved on to Bambaraze. Walked quite a long way looking at watering places on the way. Went out in the afternoon to look for meat but saw nothing. Heard a leopard quite close on my way home, it's not often you hear them speak especially before dark.

14<sup>th</sup> - Did Bambaraze and then onto Nagbagi. I got a mailbag at Bambaraze and I was sitting reading my mail just before lunch when one of my men came to say there were some hartebeest on the side of the hill opposite the rest house and sure enough you could see them about 500 yards away from the door of the rest house. I went out and had to make a long detour round behind the hill on account of the wind. When we got to where they had been they had moved off and I wanted my lunch more than meat for the lepers. Went out again in the afternoon and got a wild pig. Just as I got back near the rest house I saw a hartebeest, a fine bull, standing on the crest of the hill outlined against the setting sun. They are stupid looking beasts as a rule, they have such ridiculous long faces, but this one looked almost majestic.

15<sup>th</sup> - Did inspection of Nagbagi and then moved on and did one at Ngario and so finally to Kadiawe. Went for a long walk in the afternoon but saw little except one dik dik which I shot with my .22. It had quite a good hair pair of horns which the fools broke off in skinning it despite the fact that I told them to be careful.



16<sup>th</sup> - Did Kadiawe inspection and then back looking at watering points on the way as far as Nagbagi where I had lunch. I decided to stop the night there and see if I could get any meat to take home for the lepers. Went out in the afternoon and walked on top of 15 or 20 pig. I had a hasty snap at one and they all made off. I thought I had missed and was sure when I walked to where they had been standing and could find no blood. However, the two men I had with me fossicked about and picked out one track from the many and said this one is wounded. Rot said I, there's no blood you can't possibly tell. They stuck to it that he was, and after following it for a few yards they found a few bristles on a bush which they said had been cut by the bullet and brushed off as he passed. I still said rot. They insisted on following the trail and sure enough we hadn't gone more than 70 yards when one of them found a drop of blood on a piece of dry grass. They proceeded to follow that trail through dry burnt grass, dead leaves and young fresh grass at a brisk walk. The only thing that I could see was a little blood every now and then - when they pointed it out to me - and some fresh dung which I saw unaided and for which I take no credit. We followed the track for a long time, the blood getting heavier all the time until I regret to say we had to leave it as it was getting dark.

17<sup>th</sup> - Sent some men out at crack of dawn to look for last night's pig and I went after some hartebeest which were again on the hillside, that seems to be a favourite resort for them. I managed to get one of them this time and so to breakfast. The people I sent out came back to say that they'd found the pig and were just going to finish him when off he ran again, but I've little doubt that they got him alright and that he was being kept just round the corner until I was away. Back to Yubu where I did some office work till lunch and potted in the garden after. All 13 roses that I got from Kenya have sprouted except three and they don't look quite dead. Read papers in evening.

18<sup>th</sup> - To hospital and examined three TB cases we have. I believe that as we do more general medical work we shall find that there is a certain amount of this about. Baz went out to do Renzi N and W. Potted round after lunch sorting out native grass mats which we have bought to put under the planks to form ceilings for the dining room. Found an old iron tank which will make an excellent oven in the kitchen.

19<sup>th</sup> - Usual day.

20<sup>th</sup> - Hospital before breakfast and then some office work and so to examining some sleeping sicknesses cases with ophthalmoscope which refuse to work at first so I had to spend a long time playing about with it. Things like that seem to delight in going bung when you are a long way from repairs. Lab work in the afternoon. Got a mail most unexpectedly this evening owing to a lorry coming from Terakeka. I'm not so sure that I like getting mails before they are due as it means one has to wait three weeks for the next.

21<sup>st</sup> - Lazy day, spent all morning tidying my desk of an accumulation of letters and papers and writing answers.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Up, removed a 3 lb lipoma under local anaesthesia. It just shows what you can do with it if you try. Kennington arrived from Wau where he is one of the PWD touring mechanical transport mechanics and has been doing the province lorries at Wau. After lunch I did some painting and then we both walked to the aerodrome as I wanted to see what state it was in. Nasr to drinks.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Wrote letters to people in Yambio for K to take with him - he left after early breakfast. Hospital and dressers' class filled the morning and went round watching various work in the afternoon.

24<sup>th</sup> - To hospital where I found a man who had been stabbed in the arm by his wife and one who had been mauled by leopard, not a bad assortment. The latter had, in company with several others, been burning off the grass which hid a leopard family- mother, father and two half-grown cubs. They were driven out by the fire past the man and the mother went for him. Spent most of afternoon superintending the fixing of part of the ceiling in the dining room.

25<sup>th</sup> - Baz came in from trek and Nasr out to Bo Road. Office work when Arbuthnot arrived. After tea we went for a walk to the vegetable garden which is looking fine now. Producing good vegetables - cabbage, lettuce, endive, onions, French beans, sweet potatoes, peppers (those that you stuff with mince), artichoke, beetroot, broad beans, and egg fruit. Baz to drinks - he's leaving in May to retire and I shall miss him, there is practically no one left now of his calibre to replace him.

26<sup>th</sup> - Arbuthnot left after breakfast. Operated and then office work. Afternoon in garden and wrote letters in the evening.

27<sup>th</sup> - Ward round, office and then dressed yesterday's case. Spent rest of afternoon working on dining room ceiling.

28<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day again, have just done round of hospital and am now drinking Sunday beer and writing. Since Hugh W came back from leave engaged to his Swedish girl he has been wearing one of those shirts in the evening which do up in a broad band around the neck and down the front of which is coloured embroidery, sort of Swedish touch. Mika has sent me a silk shirt embroidered in a similar manner. She calls it a Russian shirt and says she has made one for Tiger, Arbuthnot and self as a counter blast to Hugh. I've written 14 letters already for this mail!

### ***Source Yubu, 21 February 1934***

*(franked Port Said 1 April)*

29<sup>th</sup> - Hospital and then office all morning finishing off office mail in the hope that lorry will pass going to Wau tomorrow in time to catch the boat there. Kennington arrived after lunch. I did some lab work and after tea took K to see the vegetable garden which is doing well and full of good green food now.

30<sup>th</sup> - Unfortunately K will not arrive in time to catch the boat so your mail won't go after all. Operated after breakfast, office and lab work all morning, painted windows in afternoon.

31<sup>st</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> February - Usual days: hospital, office, lab.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Same as yesterday. I am reading Baker's account of his discovery of the Albert Nyanza in 1863. He was accompanied by his wife in a journey which from its description must have been sufficiently arduous to try the most stout-hearted man of exceptional physique, let alone a woman. He must have been a heroic figure altogether; he had an elephant rifle which he called "Baby" which fired a ½ pound (yes, I know, I said pound)

shell propelled by 10 drachims of powder. He remarks that the recoil frequently knocked him over.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Usual Saturday morning with SS patients. House painting in the afternoon.

4<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day – round of hospital and then made one of my frequent and futile efforts to post my snaps into an album. Went out in the afternoon to Nagbagi

5<sup>th</sup> - Early breakfast then drove down Wika's new road stopping to inspect watering places. Must have walked about ten miles, I even tired Titch out as he sat in the car and refused to accompany me on the last three or four. Imagine being a Zande woman and having to walk in some cases a mile to draw water twice a day and carry it back. Back to Yubu for lunch and painting in the afternoon. Tiger and Mika arrived and brought my mail.

6<sup>th</sup> - Walk with Tiger before breakfast. T and M took off to Tambura after breakfast. All morning in office and went on to Tambura in afternoon to join them.

7<sup>th</sup> - T and I up early and went down to the Yubu to look for a pool where Arbuthnot said one could have a good bathe. We liked the look of it so little that we came home. T said he would as soon bathe in the Manchester Ship Canal! T and I spent all the morning at the annual Chiefs' meeting. We got through all the work and had some good discussions. In the afternoon we went to the dispensary. My dresser is doing a lot of work and is acquitting himself well – I am very pleased.

8<sup>th</sup> - T and I up to Renzi's compound. He is the biggest chief in this area and commands a lot of respect from his people, although he is a useless old fool from an administrative point of view. He wishes to build himself a brick house so T and I marked out the foundations for him. After breakfast I helped T with some office work and then to the Chief's court to finish off the meetings. We returned to Yubu in the afternoon and went to Baz for drinks.

9<sup>th</sup> - T and M were just going off after breakfast to inspect Bakiri road and so on to the Bo to meet Brick when Owen, the Officer Commanding the Equots, arrived from Wau. He is a keen butterfly collector and spent the morning looking for them in the Sue. He brings little news from Wau except that Ingleson will probably follow Brock, who retires at the end of this year, as governor. He left after lunch on his way back to Juba so I gave him my mail to post by air there, so you will get your letter as quickly as if it had gone by the Wau boat on the 1<sup>st</sup>.

10<sup>th</sup> - Operation and then looked at some eyes with ophthalm, office and lab until lunch. Then out to Nkwo to start Renzi Central inspection. Cook came to me in evening to say he was ill and I had to take him back to Yubu. Had some dinner with Baz and then back to Nkwo with Mohammed instead.

11<sup>th</sup> - Did Nkwo and then Ikoro and so on to Mutukurunga. After tea I went to see the bricks that Renzi had made for his house, a good kiln holding about 50-60,000 I should think. Renzi came to see me just before dinner to cadge for a clock.

12<sup>th</sup> - Back to Pitio to do a quick inspection. Old P, although he is a bit mad and was a cannibal in his palmy days, is a very good sub-chief. Back to Mutukurunga, did an inspection and so on to Tambura for lunch. Went down after tea to the Yubu to try my luck with a cast net but got nothing, the bottom being too muddy and snaggy. It needs a clear sandy bottom to work well.

13<sup>th</sup> - Did Tambura inspection and then back to Renzi compound to do another and found a woman with SS who had been absent for several inspections. On to Budwe, went out after tea and shot a couple of guinea fowl for the pot.

14<sup>th</sup> - Budwe inspected and on to Abdulla, finished that and on to Giara.

15<sup>th</sup> - Did Giara and then moved to Nangi, finished that and on to Buta. Titch and I went for a long walk in the afternoon.

16<sup>th</sup> - Did Buta and on to Sumbiri and back to Buta to find that the lorry had not arrived so I sent my stuff off by carriers and drove home, stopping at Tambura to look at the dispensary. Met the lorry coming out just as I got home. Tea with Baz. Nasr back having found no cases at Dika.

17<sup>th</sup> - Hospital, office and then examining SS cases all morning. Tiger and Mika arrived just as I was having tea. T tells me that I'm to have a visit at the end of March from Gillan,<sup>102</sup> the new Civil Secretary, and wife and another female who is staying with them. I knew him when he was governor of Kordofan. We are also to be visited by the Governor-General and retinue in May.

18<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. T and M left after breakfast. Wrote and gardened in the afternoon.

19<sup>th</sup> - Brown bitch had litter of four of the queerest looking pups you ever saw, of which she is nevertheless very proud. Painting in afternoon.

20<sup>th</sup> - Workshops in early morning, operated after breakfast, office and painted after lunch.

21<sup>st</sup> - Did hernia, femoral this time for a change. More painting and letters.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Usual morning, painted in afternoon and then walked to look at aerodrome to make sure it was in order for the machines tomorrow.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Cunningham and co arrived at 10 am. He is Air Staff Officer. Saw them settled in and then did three operations including the cleaning up of one fellow who had been ripped up the whole length of his thigh, practically down to the bone. by a wounded buffalo. It's amazing how these people will go after buffalo with an antiquated muzzle loader. Lunch and talked to C until tea and then a walk. Baz to drinks and then he took the three other ranks to dinner.

24<sup>th</sup> - Hospital to look at SS cases and then showed C around the place. All to lunch. Showed C the gardens and then to Baz for drinks and all to dinner with me.

25<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. Planes left for Rangu after breakfast. Gardened in afternoon.

26<sup>th</sup> - Did three operations and out to Mngbafi.

27<sup>th</sup> - Inspected Mngbafi, Turoza, Gbazia and Urutu and so to shooting lodge on the Sue. There were a few hippo in the pool. Went down in evening and shot one hippo and fired at another that I think I missed. As they only show their head you've got to hit them in the brain to kill them. As they sink at the shot whether you've got them or not, and if they're dead their bodies don't float for several hours, you never quite know whether you've got them or not.

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<sup>102</sup> JA Gillan (1885-1981), SPS 1909-1939.

28<sup>th</sup> - Only one corpse this morning so I must have missed the other one. Went out before breakfast for 2 ½ hours, saw some cob and waterbuck but nothing worth shooting. Rest of the hippo have left the pool as they invariably do if one has been killed. Did inspection of Mbiri after breakfast. After lunch walked to another pool about six miles away where there were hippo. Fired two shots but not sure whether I killed one. Arrived back after dark.

1<sup>st</sup> March - Went out a daylight on the far side of the river but saw no game - was out for three hours. Just as I was having breakfast, the man whom I had sent up to last night's pool came back to say there were two dead. Five shots, two into the same beast, and three hippo is not bad shooting and far above my average. It affords me no amusement but we must have some meat. The lorry arrived with a note from Cruikshank to say that he was arriving in Yubu with Tom Hewer, the bacteriologist from the Welcome Labs, this afternoon. I left after lunch, leaving a terabai and my tracker to dry the meat. Found C and H in Yubu on my arrival. Hewer is quite one of the most able people we have in the medical line in the country and has come down in connection with a yellow fever survey.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Hewer spent the morning collecting bloods to send to New York, the only place at the moment where they can be tested. C and I looked at cases. H spent the afternoon bottling his sera. C and I went for a walk. Baz and Nasr to drinks.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Hospital to do dressings then spent morning looking at SS cases. Walk after lunch with H and C.

4<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. Spent morning with Tom Hewer looking at some blood slides I had collected and getting him to teach me. Lunch with Baz and then we set off and slept at Nagbagi.

5<sup>th</sup> - H and C out before breakfast to look for hartebeest as H wanted to shoot one, but no luck. We went on after breakfast and got caught in a heavy thunderstorm on the road. Lunched with Larken at Diawo and then went off the road about 18 miles along a rough track to the Sue river. Six giraffe crossed the track in front of C's car - he was in front - so close that he nearly ran the last one over. Just before we got to the river we saw some cob feeding in the bed of a khor. H walked down and had a shot at one and hit it but it ran off and after following it for some time we had to leave it as it was getting dark. We arrived at the river, a delightful spot: a large pool with a waterfall below it. There are a few grass huts to serve as shelters and we sat in the evening around a large log fire as it was quite chilly, and went to sleep with the sound of the waterfall in our ears.

6<sup>th</sup> - Up at daybreak and huddled over a fire to drink a cup of tea. H and C went off in one direction where there were reputed to be a lot of water buck and I took off to look for the cob that H hit yesterday as I thought there might be a chance of a lion on it. Saw a large herd of cob on my way - about 40 including women and children. I lay on the side of an ant hill and watched them for a bit and shot one old fellow, who was chivvying all the young bucks about, for meat. We then followed up last night's one and found him not many yards away from where we stopped last night - he had dropped in his tracks. It's amazing how far they will run even when hit through the heart. No tracks of lion about unfortunately so I went back to camp and Said, C's boy, and I tried to get some fish for breakfast with a casting net. No luck, the pool was full of fish rising and jumping but not at places where you could get them. Every now and then I heard shots whilst fishing but when H and C turned up later they had got nothing, although H had blazed off a lot. We

spent nearly the whole morning sitting in our shorts sunbathing, reading and talking. In the afternoon I went up the river a little and H and C went about 4 miles back down the track in the car and started from there. I came on a herd of waterbuck – the sexes have just joined up – and spent a profane hour and a half crawling around them looking for a good head, but wherever I went I seemed to be gazing at the stern ends of females, and as there didn't seem to be a really good head I finally left them. On my way home I saw a thing which I had heard about but never witnessed before. A pack of about 15 couple of mongeese hunting together. H and C arrived home just after I did. The former had had quite an exciting afternoon. He had seen several waterbuck but had not been able to get a shot at them. As he was walking along he put up a herd of buffalo from the tallgrass not 20 yards away from him. Knowing the noise and clatter with which frightened buffalo get up and make off, I can well imagine it shook him to the core. A little later he was just at the edge of a khor when he heard a movement in the grass. He crouched down behind an anthill thinking that whatever it was would come out and he would get a shot at it. However, nothing happened for about half a minute and then glancing at the other side of the khor, about 250 yards away he saw a fine male lion walking slowly along. Had he only stood on the top of the anthill and looked instead of hiding behind it he might have got a shot at it.

7<sup>th</sup> - Up again at dawn and we all went off in different directions. I saw fresh tracks of buffalo, giraffe, cob and hartebeest, and saw a small herd of the latter but didn't fire. Hower had better luck this morning and got two quite fair waterbuck. We set off after breakfast for Rangu. It was a cold dull morning and in addition we had been rained on on the road. I arrived first and much to my disgust found that not only was Hugh out but he was in the process of re-thatching his house and so the roof was off, and so was the roaring fire which we had been sitting in front of in anticipation all the way there. Our lorry was a way behind as it had stopped for the rain so we ransacked the larder and lunched off black beer, bloater paste and biscuits, and preserved ginger. We then got settled in the rest house and the Jabbours had us to tea and dinner in between which we played bridge.

8<sup>th</sup> - Read till breakfast after which Hower collected bloods whilst C and I looked around the hospital. Lunch with the Jabbours after which Tom went off to bottle his sera and C and I went for a walk. To the Js for bridge and dinner. I am going off tomorrow as one Elkington is arriving at Yubu. I've enjoyed the last few days tremendously. I've learnt a lot, had an opportunity to discuss several points of medicine in which we were all interested and have had a jolly holiday into the bargain.

9<sup>th</sup> - Spent the time until breakfast stealing cuttings of lantana, bougainvillea, and sacred thorn etc from Hugh's garden, then went up to the hospital to look at a couple of cases again that we had seen yesterday, and then off for Yubu. Much to my horror I met Elkington on the road – I had misread his itinerary and he was due to leave and not arrive on the ninth, and the poor fellow had been sitting there two days waiting for me. We had some beer on the road and chatted for about an hour and then I drove on to Larken's. We were just sitting down to lunch when one of the boys rushed in saying Mbara! Mbara! We rush to the door and there sure enough, going through the bush just at the edge of the garden, was a young male elephant. By running like a stag I managed to cut off a bit of a corner and got within 20 yards of him but although he only appeared to be walking slowly he was moving faster than I could run. Unfortunately, my camera is out of order so I

couldn't get a photo. Went on after lunch and arrived home at dusk. Baz out on inspection.

10<sup>th</sup> - Around hospital, spent morning in office and looking at SS patients. Gardening in the afternoon.

11<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. Round of hospital and then spent morning writing letters. Well, this brings me up to date.

### ***On trek, 26 March 1934***

*(dispatched 16 April, franked Cairo 8 May)*

12<sup>th</sup> March - Finished off mail before breakfast and then sent it off with our lorry which was going to Rangu for stores. Operated practically all morning, then round works in afternoon and finally gardened. Now is the time to be up and doing in that line as the rains will be here soon.

13<sup>th</sup> - Hospital then office all morning and lab work and garden in afternoon.

14<sup>th</sup> - Have started to reroof the hospital and am taking the opportunity to try and improve the lighting in the theatre.

Home again so now we have some ink. *(The first pages of the letter, largely answering his parents, were in pencil.)*

15<sup>th</sup> - To see work in hospital. Am putting two more windows high up in the end wall to try and get some top lighting. Did dressings then office till lunch. Went off to start Iriwo inspection, slept at Akapia rest house.

16<sup>th</sup> - Did Akapia and then on to Madi - huge crowd and did not finish until 4 pm, then on to Zuno.

17<sup>th</sup> - Did Zuno and then on to Li Nzeme. Just leaving there after lunch when I met two men from Oxford. One was collecting soil samples and the other was a botanist. They went on to Yubu where Baz entertained them for two days. Went for a walk in the evening and slept at Buda.

18<sup>th</sup> - Buda done and so to Bendere. I had intended taking a day off here to try and shoot a Bongo as this is the only place in the district that you may find them, but I find that ground is still pretty dry here so it is hardly worthwhile and I go on to Zimoma to sleep.

19<sup>th</sup> - Did inspection here and so on to Bagidi, then to Buma. Saw Iriwo, the chief, a decent sort of fellow and about the best chief in the district. Went to look at the dispensary, this was clean and well kept and he seems to be doing a lot of work, mostly ulcers and sores etc it is true but still good medical propaganda.

20<sup>th</sup> - Started the inspection and then to look at patients in the dispensary. Then discussed with Iriwo the building of some additional huts to accommodate people who come from a distance and also the starting of a communal cultivation as soon as the rains begin, to be worked by the patients and the produce to be used for feeding those people who come for treatment from some way away. I had sent some people out to see if they could find some buffalo to shoot one for meat for the dispensary, but no luck. Finished inspection and so on to old Buma. Small shower in the afternoon.

21<sup>st</sup> - Inspection here and so on to Wowoi. Rain after lunch. Man came to say that he had seen some white-eared cob. So I set off but all I did was to fall into a muddy bog up to my middle and get rained on. However, it was exercise that I needed.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Started inspection here but it rained on and off all the morning so I didn't finish until 5 pm. Moved on to Debio and shot some guinea fowl for the pot on the way.

23<sup>rd</sup> - To Negasi to inspect and so back to Debio. I was just finishing this when Tiger arrived with George and Bunty Richards - he is the DC at Tonj. They are a jolly couple - they were returning from a visit to Yambio. They drank some beer with me and then pushed on. I finished off and then had lunch. Hugh arrived about 4 pm and we went on to Ngaga. Had tea and then went out and shot some guinea fowl. H looks far from fit to me. He's off on leave the day after tomorrow to be married, but he seems to look rather worried and harassed for a prospective bridegroom.

24<sup>th</sup> - I did inspection and then we had breakfast and H went back to Rangu and I to Bagbandara to inspect, which finished I moved to Budwe.

25<sup>th</sup> - Did Budwe and then on to Kumbangindo. Got a mail bag there, finished this and so on to Baragu. Went out to shoot a guinea fowl for the pot. They've evidently had some rain here as the grass is quite high. Saw some trees near a small stream covered with the most attractive white blossoms and buds.

26<sup>th</sup> - Did Baragu inspection which didn't finish until 1.30 pm. Lunch and so to Yubu. Found Tiger having tea with Baz so joined them. We went for a walk and then Baz came for drinks.

27<sup>th</sup> - The new roof on the surgical block and theatre is nearly finished and I think the lighting in the latter has been much improved. Gardened all afternoon. Mohammed is in bed with fever.

28<sup>th</sup> - Operations and took some blood to send to Khartoum for Kahn tests. Lab in afternoon then gardening. Saw a pitched battle this morning between some red and white ants - the former had raided the latter's nest and having won the day, the vanquished whites were evacuating all their goods and belongings by a back entrance several feet away.

29<sup>th</sup> - Operated then all morning in the office. Gardened all afternoon getting ready for the rains.

30<sup>th</sup> - Usual day.

31<sup>st</sup> - Operated before breakfast. Spent morning looking at SS cases. Building a place in the preparation room to take the sterilizers and also putting in a basin with hot and cold tap and a water heater in the theatre. Then on to workshops and garden.

1<sup>st</sup> April - Lazy day, read paper then breakfast and round of hospital, did some dressings and then showed new dresser how to mend gloves. Beer and reading papers till lunch. Tidied desk after tea and worked in garden.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Usual day - operated after breakfast.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Scraped an ulcer and did some dressings. Lab and garden in afternoon. Mail arrived from Yambio in evening by lorry. When it comes by carrier it usually doesn't get here until



Friday or Saturday. I had an amusing letter from Cruikshank who is on his way on leave. As I have written to you, he has been investigating a form of blindness lately and believes it to be connected with onchocerca volvulus. This is a filaria causing among other things lumps under the skin. After he left me, he and Tom Hewer went to Tarlec where he shot a cob for meat and to his surprise and excitement he found some lumps under its skin which seemed exactly like OV. He then told the local people to examine their cattle and if they found any with lumps to bring them to him. The next morning they turned up with one cow which he duly shot and cut out the lumps which he was interested in, and then had the meat prepared for distribution among the poor. Whilst this latter was in progress, a dog nipped in and scooped the nodules – such are the difficulties of medical research in Africa.

4<sup>th</sup> - Round hospital then took some bloods to send to Khartoum for Kahn tests, did some dressings and then office till lunch. Lab work in afternoon and garden till dark.

5<sup>th</sup> - Lorry from Yambio with letter from Tiger to say they will be here this evening. Wire from Pridie who wants me to meet him in Wau on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Lab in afternoon and then workshops. T and M and Arbuthnot arrived at tea time. Baz and Nasr to drinks. Dinner and played gramophone until late.

6<sup>th</sup> - T, M and A left after breakfast and I to office to sign monthly returns and accounts etc, after which I followed them. Stopped at Tambura to inspect the dispensary and so on, catching them up at new Duma bridge. We all went on to Mabou where we had lunch. Then on for the Bo. Met Macintosh and his wife half way. Owing to a misunderstanding, he had thought the meeting was to be at Mabou and Tiger had thought it was at the Bo. Decided to have meeting at Bo and as it was then too late to get to Bo and we were too big a party to fit into one rest house, the Ms stopped at Pangwa and we went on to Rame. Tiger was very interesting about the Assyrians: he commanded the mounted Iraq levies who were all Assyrians. There seems little doubt that they have had a very bad spin and our treatment of them redounds very little to our credit. T was also very interesting about a meeting he had with a Kurdish bandit named Simko, who was something of a prince among bandits since he had at his call 12,000 well-armed followers with machine guns and field guns. T said he was tall and exceptionally good looking with charming manners. Over his Kurdish dress he wore a beautifully cut Russian military overcoat lined with sable. He would order wholesale executions with as little compunction as he would order breakfast.

7<sup>th</sup> - We had just sat down to breakfast when Pongo Barker, the game warden, arrived. He is on his way to Iriwo's country to try and get a blue duiker. We went on to Bo and as all the people had not arrived we decided to fish. Then lunch over we sat talking until nearly 4 pm. Then out to fish again with not much luck. We had an interesting discussion as to whether one was morally justified in restricting native hunting in order to preserve some rare species of game from extinction.

8<sup>th</sup> - Away at 7 am, had breakfast at Pangwa and arrived at Yubu at 1 pm. Had lunch with Baz.

9<sup>th</sup> - Usual then haircut by Baz. Spent some time showing a man how to burn paint off with a blow lamp as we are repainting the theatre furniture. After lunch planted some seeds and bubs T gave me, did some work in house and then out to do Renzi S and E. Stopped at Mutukurunga to leave some vegetables for Tiger and Mika, and so on to Mando.

10<sup>th</sup> - Did Mando, a small inspection and people arrived early. Started at 5.45 am and was finished by 7 am. On to Nazigbo, finished that and on to Mayani, and with that over, on to Kusikpio. Found rest house in bad condition despite the fact that they had been told to repair it a long time ago.

11<sup>th</sup> - Was just near end of inspection when T and M arrived. They stayed long enough to drink a glass of ale and then burnt the old rest house down so as to make them build a new one. T and M went on to Mbiri and I to Zomoi. Went for a long walk in the evening after guinea fowl.

12<sup>th</sup> - To the mission to inspect the people there. I dislike going there as one is always having trouble with the mission and I wouldn't trust any of them as far as one could throw an elephant. Back to Zomoi and to finish there and then on to a late lunch at Zungumbia. Went up to the sanatorium to find they hadn't reroofed the house which made me mad as I always look forward to spending a couple of nights up there. So back to Z and dinner and bed.

13<sup>th</sup> - Did Z inspection and then up the hill again to hurry on the work of reroofing - got the kitchen shed and one hut finished and back to Z for lunch. T and M and A arrived just after and we decided that as it was fine we'd risk sleeping up there. No sooner had we climbed up there than the sky became overcast and it came on to rain, so we scrambled into the kitchen. Rain over, we sat outside and had drinks and dinner round a roaring fire. We all slept in the kitchen which was just large enough to contain four beds and no more. Our servants doubtless thought we were all mad to forsake a good and comfortable rest house down below and climb a very steep hill at great personal discomfort to sleep on the top of a hill crowded together in a small hut.

14<sup>th</sup> - Up at dawn and down the hill to do Mulingindo's inspection. Finished and back to breakfast at 11 am. In the meantime T had gone off to meet Zungumbia's people and A had gone off to Tambura. I had a sun bath and enjoyed the view and then down again and so on to Lindo rest house where I caught up with T and M. We had lunch and then they went off to Yubu and I went out to shoot guinea fowl.

15<sup>th</sup> - Did Lindo inspection and then Dinia's and then lunch and on to Yubu. Found T, M, A and Baz just finishing lunch in my house. T had just had a letter from Macintosh to say that there had been a bad air crash at Rumbek and that Ted Searle, the pilot, was killed and Lorimer, the DC Rumbek who has a wife and new baby, was seriously injured and not likely to live, and the aircraftsman also probable to die. It quite upset me as Ted S I knew and liked very much. I feel so sorry for his poor wife. You will I know, Ginger, be very sorry to hear of it. I don't know anything about Ted's financial position and whether his wife will get a pension or not, but should Lorimer die his wife will get nothing as he has only been in the country for two or three years. Well I must finish now as the lorry is off to Wau tomorrow.

## *Source Yubu, 6 May 1934*

*(franked Khartoum 4 June and Cairo 10 June)*

You ask about Archy's discovery and the Heglig tree. This tree is indigenous to the Sudan and as common as gums in Australia. A has discovered that a concoction of the fruit will kill cercariae and bullinus in quite low concentration. Ergo, plant heglig around your water, let the fruit drop in and away with Bill Harris [bilharzia]. Between you and me, I think Archy has allowed his enthusiasm to run away with him. He's getting old and Tom Hewer, who works with him, tells me that he is not nearly so sound as he used to be, although at one time he was undoubtedly one of the leaders of tropical medical research. For instance, it's not much good hoping to get any appreciable concentration of the active principle from fruit shed into running water, and irrigation canals and small streams are responsible for a large amount of the bilharzia. I think that his reputation has given the discovery an undue importance as is so often the case. Time and further investigation will, I think, reveal that undue enthusiasm has been aroused over it.

And who, you ask my dear mother, are Baz and Nasr? I am, I may say, a little aggrieved, not by you I hasten to add, but by myself. My powers of description must be lower than even that modest standard which I had hoped to attain. El Bimbashi (major) Nesib Baz OBE and El Eusbashi (captain) Joseph Effendi Tamous Nasr are respectively my senior and second medical officers, both Syrians. They are two of a number of officers of the SDF Medical Corps who were seconded to the Civil Service when that service took over both the medical care of the SDF and the running of the southern provinces, both of which had been done before by the SDF Medical Corps. Baz is, I regret to say, leaving on pension at the end of this month. He has been associated with the settlement since its inception in 1918 and is known among the population as Abdurahai, "The father of the place". He has served altogether 24 years in the Sudan. I shall be very sorry to lose him. Well, I must get on with my diary.

16<sup>th</sup> April - I had Dr Thibault to breakfast. Tiger, Mika and Arbuthnot all left after breakfast for Yambio and the wretched Frenchman stayed all day. How gladly could I have violated the entente and strangled him, as I was busy in the office and Mohammed was still ill.

17<sup>th</sup> - Round hospital, operated and office till lunch, garden and painting in afternoon.

18<sup>th</sup> - Was doing a dressing when the Brocks arrived and so to lunch and talk. They have no news as to who will be the next governor. Rain at tea time and as it slackened later we went for a walk.

19<sup>th</sup> - I was about to set off to meet Pridie in Wau on the 20<sup>th</sup> when I discovered that the main leaf of my front spring was broken, so I set to work with the blacksmith and put a spare one under it and bound it up with wire and cord. Brocks left after breakfast for Yambio and I got away eventually at 11.30 am and slept at the Bo rest house.

20<sup>th</sup> - Up early and got to within 20 miles of Wau when I met Pridie, Rugman and Cochrane coming down the road, ahead of their programme by two days. So I had that wretched drive up the road for nothing. Turned round and back to the Bo for lunch, where Cochrane left us to go back to Wau. We on to Mabu where we spent the night, cold and wet. They told me that the aircraftsman in Ted Searle's crash has since died but that Lorimer is now believed to be out of danger.

21<sup>st</sup> - On to Tambura where I showed them the dispensary and the chiefs' court, and so on to Mopoi to the mission which they looked around. Thence by Zumbumbia's road to the sanatorium, to the top of which we climbed to show them the view. Arrived at Yubu to find no tea ready, although I had sent Pridie's lorry on ahead to warn them. Showed them round the hospital in the evening. Mohammed distinguished himself by being so tight at dinner that I had to send him to his room. Not a frightfully good day.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Took P and R to see the Soui, a French stream near the boundary. We spent the morning driving round the settlement and seeing the leper treatment centre and the mission. Walk to the garden and hospital after tea. Baz and Nasr to drinks. Mohammed still incapacitated by his jag on the top of his illness.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Early breakfast and away for Rangu. We went around Iiriwo's loop road to see the Buma dispensary. Found that there was an epidemic there of something which was either diphtheria or a strep sore throat. The dresser in charge had sent a letter to tell me which arrived at Yubu just as we were leaving. He had, off his own bat, started to quarantine the cases and since he didn't know what else to do, had been treating all cases and contacts with antiseptic gargles. This naturally pleased Pridie and is quite a feather in the man's cap. We had lunch and then P went on in his tourer while R and I stayed behind and I made further arrangements for a proper quarantine and collecting the cases etc. We didn't start until 4.30 pm, or rather it was then when we tried to start and I found that the battery had developed a short and was flat. By dint of much pushing, we got started but had neither lights nor horn and if one put on the footbrake the engine stopped. We got on until dark and then crawled along until we got to the river Lingasi where she finally died on us. We got some people to help and pushed her on to a nearby rest house by which time it was 7 pm. Fortunately, I had a chop box and one faithful slave so we had some tea and finally the Rangu lorry came to look for us and we got in at 10 pm. This was the first occasion my car has ever let me down, of course it would do it then! The only saving grace was that it was not raining.

24<sup>th</sup> - Looked at hospital and Hugh's garden which is looking very fine just now. After breakfast we drove round the settlement and I sent the Rangu lorry out to collect my car. After lunch we drove round the district to look at some dispensaries, finishing up at Yambio for tea with the Wyls. There we found Gillan, the Civil Secretary, his wife and a woman friend who is touring with them. Then back to Rangu.

25<sup>th</sup> - A further look round the hospital then breakfast, after which P and R left for Maridi. I waited at Rangu until Gillan and party arrived with Tiger. They had a look round Rangu and then went on to Yubu. I was sorry not to be there to entertain them but I had left the house ready for them and servants to look after them. It always seems the way here - nothing happens for weeks and then things crowd in on one. I drove back to Yambio with Tiger as I had several things to see him about. This done, I had lunch with them. As I wanted to go to Buma again on my way back and I hadn't got the necessary kit to spend a night on the road, and it was too late to get back to Yubu that night, I decided to stay with the Wyls. We went for a walk in the afternoon and saw the new house that is being built

for Arbuthnot. A missionary named Riley and his wife<sup>103</sup> came to dinner. A rather grim party so when they had gone we relieved our feelings with beer and singing.

26<sup>th</sup> - Away after breakfast and stopped at Buma to see how things were going. They had done good work and built a quarantine of 12 huts and collected all the cases in it. Got back to Yubu at 6 pm. Pirie seemed pleased with the work both here and at Rangu and Rugman was gratified by the cheapness of our buildings.

27<sup>th</sup> - The new medical officer, Ahmed Abu Shamma, a Sudanese, has arrived to replace Baz. He seems quite a decent lad. Find that I have broken the back cross-member of the frame of my car, which is a nuisance. Office all morning and gardened in the afternoon.

28<sup>th</sup> - In the last mail I received a small cine camera that I had ordered so took some pictures of the weekly parade of SS patients and the Saturday market etc. Two natives of Nigeria turned up today from the French side. They wish to go to Wau to earn some money to get back to Nigeria with. One of them speaks quite good English and rejoices in the name of Charlie, his friend's name is Joseph. I've written to Brock to ask permission for them to go on to Wau.

29<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day, visit to hospital and morning writing. After lunch planted some balsam seedlings and some hibiscus cuttings.

30<sup>th</sup> - Have discovered that Charlie and Joe are motor mechanics so I've set them onto my car. As it will take some time to get a new cross member, I have decided to overhaul it and paint it, so their advent is very useful. After breakfast Baz and I went off in the lorry to inspect the Bakeri dispensary which we found doing quite well. We had lunch there and didn't get back until 7 pm.

Well my dears, I'll finish there as it is late for me and there is a lorry going off with the mail first thing in the morning. I'm off at dawn for three days' holiday on foot. I am taking my tent and carriers and am going down south to the river Mbomu and then walk up it to its head near Kachawe rest house where the lorry will meet me. With a bit of luck I hope to get some cine photos of elephant. (*The Mbomu rises near where the three frontiers meet.*)

### **Source Yubu, 20 May 1934**

*(franked Khartoum 4 June and Cairo 10 June)*

I finished my last letter to you on the 7<sup>th</sup> of this month (*rather, 30 April, as above*).

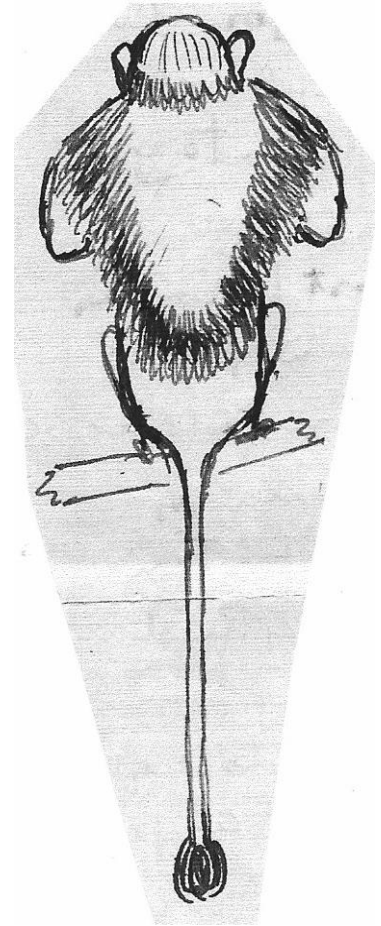
8<sup>th</sup> May - Early breakfast and away at 7 am, first having inspected all the carriers and their loads. Skirted around the head of the Bakongo and then practically due south (*through FEA*). Did 5 ½ hours walking and finally made camp at 4 pm on the edge of an open patch near some water. Saw two or three bush buck early in day but practically no tracks of game.

9<sup>th</sup> - Cup of tea, struck camp and away. Owing to height of grass, which is much higher than I had expected and over one's head already in places, and the dew one was soaked from the waist down in the first 100 yards. As we went on the country in parts became more open and park like, with open grassy spaces and big trees dotted about. After about

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<sup>103</sup> Arthur (1901-1967) and Grace, CMS missionaries in southern Sudan 1926-1960. Responsible for the girls' boarding school in Yambio established in 1926.

1½ hours we came on a bush buck which I shot for meat. Stopped for a bit while the carriers prepared the meat and had some food – fried buck liver and bacon, and very good too. So on for 2½ hours to the Mandoru, where we rested for an hour. There were Colobus monkeys playing in the trees over our heads. They are very beautiful: the general colour is black and they have on their shoulders and down their back what looks like a long-haired cape edged with white. They have fringes of white whiskers and a long black tail with a white pom-pom at the end. They look something like this. They look especially attractive when taking flying leaps from branch to branch. A further hour brought us to the crossing of the Baio, quite a sizeable stream. The place where we crossed was evidently a recognised crossing place and there was a well-like hole which the carriers told me had been made by some prospectors looking for gold. Just before crossing the Baio, we came on a well-marked path which they said was a game trail made by buffalo. There were indeed buffalo tracks on it but if they had made it they must have used it fairly constantly as it was almost as smooth as a village path. A further ¾ of an hour brought us to the Mbomu, the river which eventually runs into the Congo and for its whole length, about 600 to 800 miles, forms part of the boundary between French Equatorial Africa and the Belgian Congo (you'll see it marked on the map in the Sudan almanac if you still have it).



Made camp near the river and then went and had a bath in the river – it was too shallow to swim in but it was beautifully cool. Rain in the evening and at night. Since midday we passed many tracks of buffalo and on several occasions those of giant eland and one solitary three-day-old trail of elephant, but we actually saw no game. Ever since I left Yubu the bush has been traversed with frequently used paths all made by our people, as the French natives do not come up here much. Each anthill showed signs of having been prepared. I suppose you will wonder what that means. These people relish certain types of white ants as food, the large fat juicy ones. When roast and ground up they smell rather like bloater paste. The ants (the winged section of the community, the breeders) flight after rain. They fly about a little, then pair off and shed their wings. So the native prepares a hill by clearing around it and digging a hole near it with steep sides. After it has rained, he goes out at night with a grass torch. Having inspected the hill to see that they are rising well, he squats and holds the torch over the whole. The ants swarm around attracted by the light and fall into or alight in the hole, shed their wings, and then can't get out. And there you are, money for jam. There is a distinct proprietorship about this and nearly every hill is the recognised property of someone. One would as soon think of drawing someone else's ant hill as one would of poaching his pheasants. On a night after rain one may see the bush alive with twinkling points of fire – the torches of the ant gatherers.

10<sup>th</sup> - After tea, away at 6 am with two trackers, leaving the carriers to break camp and proceed along the Mbomu to the confluence of the Nambara whilst we made a detour. We

eventually struck the Nambara a mile or so from the Mbomu and followed it down to meet the carriers, who had already arrived. We saw no game but spent some time watching the antics of a large troop of baboons in the trees. Finally curiosity was far too much for them and they all came down to the ground to have a good look at us. My carriers had met a French native who was shooting meat for the French sergeant at Obo. Later I heard him fire, so he was evidently having better luck at seeing game than I was. I stopped to have some breakfast and my cook came to say he was ill. I found what I took to be a small patch of broncho-pneumonia, so I decided to make for the nearest place on the road, Bamberaze, where I hoped to intercept the lorry, which had been told to go to Kadiawe and wait for me that afternoon. After a time we got to a ridge from which we could see the Mbomu on one hand and the houses near Bamberaze on the other, so that cannot be much more than nine miles apart here, much closer than I had thought. Saw a giraffe about five or six yards away and set off to try and photograph it, but found when we came up with his tracks that he had started to gallop. We followed the trail for about ½ hour in the hope that he might stop, but he was still galloping so we left it and went on, arrived at Bamberaze, had some tea, and the lorry arrived about 4 pm. I paid my carriers off and so home.

11<sup>th</sup> - Usual morning, heavy rain at lunch time. Painted car all afternoon.

12<sup>th</sup> - Last night the cultivations and bush near my house were studded with the torches of the ant gashers. On the way from hospital to office saw a chameleon on the road, the first I've seen in these parts. Office and SS cases all morning, painted car in afternoon.

13<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. Hospital and then set to work on car painting. Was in the middle of this when some French people arrived with some mats to sell for the hospital, and also a baby chimp, about the size of a nine or ten months old baby. It was lying on its back in a wicker basket playing with its foot. When it saw me, it held up its arms and I picked it up whereupon it clasped me round the neck. It has the face of about 102 and looks about as wise. If it sees me now it runs towards me crying and when it gets near, sits down and holds up its arms and if I don't pick it up, it shrieks with rage. If it is pleased it makes the most ludicrous grunts of appreciation. Painted all afternoon and wrote in evening.

14<sup>th</sup> - Stagui from Kajima sent us some sweet manioc sticks for planting. It is fairly common in Iriwo's country, being introduced there from the Belgian Congo where it was brought by the RC mission. It is known locally as "mopai" which is, I imagine, a Zande adaptation of "mon pere". I was just thinking about doing some painting after lunch when a lorry arrived from France and out of it got a man who turned out to be one Bissett-Thomas, a mining engineer who is doing mining surveys for a French company in Oubangui-Chari. He had come to buy some provisions at the merchants and to see a fellow countryman and he stayed the night. He seemed quite a decent fellow, had travelled about a lot, and was interesting conversationalist. He tells me that Thibault has got his leprarium at Zemio well under way.

15<sup>th</sup> - BT left just before lunch as he eats nothing in the middle of the day. Painted all afternoon.

16<sup>th</sup> - Mail from Yambio, by merchant's lorry for a change. Painted all afternoon.

17<sup>th</sup> - Heavy rain during night and also in morning until 10. Painted in afternoon, just knocking off when Sullivan arrived from Meridi to tell me that Habib, the Syrian MO, was

ill with blackwater and that Jabbour wanted my help. They had got in a panic and sent for Mrs MacDonald, the mission doctor who is doing Fraser's work at Sui, as well. Baz and Nasr to drinks.

18<sup>th</sup> - Early breakfast and after saying goodbye to Baz, who leaves tomorrow for good, we set off at 8. Lunch at Rangu and so on to Meridi where we arrived at about 5 to find patient much better, although rather frightened of himself. Dr MacDonald had arrived yesterday afternoon which was very decent of her.

19<sup>th</sup> - Saw Mrs MacDonald as she passed from the mission to thank her for coming over and seeing H. H much better today but still frightened. Went and sat with him in the morning to give Jabbour a rest. Sat with him again after tea. He's much better this evening.

20<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. Visited H after breakfast, he's much better. Sullivan and I went for a walk in the afternoon to look at the vegetable garden and also at his experimental plots of various sorts of coffee, pineapples etc. He is starting re-forestation near here with red gums which seem to be doing very well and are quick growers: he has thousands of seedlings ready to plant out. In to look at H who continues to improve. I think I'll get off home tomorrow, and send this in the mail bag then.

*He enclosed with the letter a cutting from The Daily Mirror of the wedding in London of a family friend. Found this by chance in Sullivan's house and thought you might be interested.*

#### **Source Yubu, 21 June 1934**

*(finished 29<sup>th</sup>, franked Cairo 21 July)*

There is a convenient boat, the *Mongolia*, leaving Port Sudan on the 22<sup>nd</sup> August, but I've not been able to find out whether there is any connection that fits in for my return. As I shall only have six weeks with you at the best, I must make sure about a return boat before I finally decide. Did I tell you that Sullivan's brother in the Burma Rifles is a friend of Kate's?

21<sup>st</sup> May - Was shown how to prune coffee trees by Sullivan. Visited H who seems much better. Have arranged for him to go to Khartoum by 10<sup>th</sup> June boat. Early lunch and then off to Yambio, stayed with Arbuthnot, went for a walk to see his new house which is in the process of being built, and also the Wylds' garden which is looking perfect just now. The big trees and the large expanse of lawn, the red gravel drive and huge circular beds of roses - I counted 40 bushes in one bed - all in massive bloom, various coloured dahlias, chrysanthemums, salvias, cannas etc all combine to make a perfect setting for the attractive white house with its thatched roof and verandas. Tiger has done marvels with Yambio since his arrival. Everything is in keeping and as Jim Stubbs said the other day, to drive into it for the first time makes one feel one is trespassing on a private and model estate. I bought a sack of rice at one penny a pound and one of coffee at tuppence a pound from Sullivan, all grown on the experimental farm.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Got some seedlings that Mika had promised me from their garden, breakfast, some office work with A and then on to Rangu. Did some work there and then went to have a look at Hugh's ponies. Found one already dead and the remaining two in a disgraceful condition. It is impossible to keep ponies down here unless you are something of a horse master and are prepared to devote time to their care, and even then I think they must



inevitably get “fly” sooner or later. Lunch with the MO and so on to Larken at Diawo. Stayed the night, A arrived just before dinner.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Off for home. Stopped at Buma to see the dispensary where I found they were still having a few sporadic cases of sore throat but only one more death. Arrived home to find that Abu Shamma, the new Sudanese MO to replace Baz, down with fever. I hope he is not going to have chronic fever. It is strange that northerners stand the southern climate less well than we do.

24<sup>th</sup> - Have arranged to try and speak nothing but French with Nasr in order to learn it. He studied medicine at the French university in Beirut so speaks it well.

25<sup>th</sup> - Hospital and office all morning, garden and car in afternoon. A arrived after tea and spent the night.

26<sup>th</sup> - A off after breakfast to see that the road is in order and to meet the Governor-Geeral at Mabu. I have a three-foot-deep trench round the house which is supposed to keep the white ants out. The other afternoon it was filled by a heavy storm with the result that that night it attracted a plague of frogs who made such a din that they kept waking me up – no mean feat! So today I had 50 people digging a trench to drain it. Gardened and superintended work in afternoon. Car arrived from Wau with a letter to say that as the GG’s steamer had got stuck in the mud of the Meshra cut he would be a day late here.

27<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. Was just finishing breakfast when a man came in to say that his wife, while going to draw water at the Popagu near the aerodrome, and not  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile from the office, had been chased by a buffalo! I thought it was probably one of the merchant’s cows but got hold of one of my trackers and went off to see. Sure enough, there were his tracks and big ones too. We followed them for about two hours and finally were defeated by the fact that he had crossed his own trail several times. I was not sorry that I could leave him to it with honour unstained – mine I mean – as I was really very frightened because my tracker said at the outset “he’s probably been wounded at some time and may charge on sight.” It is a country of contrasts: at one moment I was creeping through bush, every sense alert and sweating with fright and excitement, expecting to come on him at any moment, and within a quarter of an hour I was lounging in an easy chair in my house drinking ice cold beer.

28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> - Hospital and office all morning, supervising work and gardening all afternoon.

30<sup>th</sup> - Letter arrived from A to say GG arriving at noon, only staying one night (thank God) and wishes to visit mission at 4 pm. Cleared out of house and went to Baz’s after breakfast. Servants cleaned the house and filled it with flowers and bowls of roses. He refuses to be fed anywhere and is travelling with railway servants and catering. Transport mamur arrived with five lorries, I showed him the house and they got settled in. The Shah arrived at noon with Brock, Sandars, his private secretary, and Springfield, his comptroller, both of whom I know. I introduced the GG to Nasr and Abu Shamma and he had a walk round office and hospital and the workshops. Brock and I share Baz’s house. I was asked to lunch, filthy food off tin plates – I could have done him much better myself. B and I went back to our digs and talked. B, who likes his food and keeps an excellent table, was complaining bitterly about the food and said that if he had known it was going to be as bad as this he’d have brought a tin of biscuits with him, that he hadn’t had enough to eat sine

Wau, and that all day long in the car he rumbled audibly from hunger. His attitude wasn't one of unqualified approval for the GG, whose attitude is that as the South isn't paying for itself, it may be necessary to cut down on administration and other expenditure. At 4 pm we picked up the GG and I rode in his car and piloted him for a drive round the settlement and a visit to the mission. He talked hard the whole time so I had little opportunity to get anything out of him. His idea for this district seemed to be that the DCs and medical staff would be removed and that administration would be confined to occasional tours of a non-resident DC, just sufficient "to stop the chiefs roasting their subjects alive" as he put it. He doesn't seem to have realized that if:

- (1) we stop anti-SS work the population will probably be decimated in 5 or 6 years, as witness the unfortunate inhabitants of the French side;
- (2) we walk out the Belgians will almost certainly step in;
- (3) we stop SS and leprosy work there would almost certainly be questions asked at home;
- (4) at any subsequent date it became economically desirable to re-occupy the area, it would probably take 10 years to regain the standard of roads and communications and contact with the people that exists at present.

Dined with the party. I must say he seems a curious mixture of intelligence and vague platitudes.

31<sup>st</sup> - Said goodbye to the GG and party who left at 7 am to breakfast at Nagbagi's rest house on the road to Yambio. Mrs Brock and Stubbs arrived to lunch. The GG won't have women with the party so Mrs B is having to trail round a day behind the Royal entourage. Stubbs, the DC Aweil, is going on leave and taking the opportunity to have a look round the southern district. Took S for a walk around to see the place. We asked the locals who and what they thought the GG was. They replied that he was obviously Larken's elder brother and had come on a visit to see him, and that he must be a bit of a chap as he had six cars.

1<sup>st</sup> June - Mrs B and S away after breakfast. Office all morning, garden and car painting all afternoon.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Potttered about with SS patients in morning, painted car in afternoon - a longer and much more tedious job that I had foreseen.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Lazy day. Found chimp had dysentery. They're very delicate when young and I've not time to always feed it myself. Gave it Gray powder and fed it several times with water and a little brandy. Poor little devil, just like a child, lies on its tummy in its bed and when you try to give it water it burrows its head into the bedding and when pulled out screws its mouth up tight and tries to nudge the spoon away with its elbows while holding its tummy with both hands.

4<sup>th</sup> - Admitted chimp to hospital, gave it an injection of Emeline and also salmeo and glucose. Whenever it sees me it hold up its arms to be picked up and nursed. Nasr off to do Renzi Central inspection and took AS with him to show him the ropes. Chimp weak this evening and I am afraid it is sure to die.

5<sup>th</sup> - Gave chimp more salines subcutaneously and intraperitoneally.

6<sup>th</sup> - Chimp died in the night. I shall miss it, it was such an amusing and friendly little thing. Had a visit from Father Cisco of the local mission to borrow some petrol and to tell me that the bishop would like to come and visit the settlement tomorrow.

7<sup>th</sup> - The new RC bishop, an Austrian named Rudolf Orlor, seems a decent little man. He speaks some English and I should think has his wits about him. Showed him round and he was just going off when Cochrane arrived (he's MI at Wau and Cruickshank's no 2). Gardened in afternoon and then a walk around the place with C. I'm glad he's come down for a few days as one enjoys the opportunity to talk and discuss shop occasionally.

8<sup>th</sup> - To Barabandi to show C some lepers. Painted in afternoon and then C and I for a walk.

9<sup>th</sup> - Showed C some SS cases and then saw to the issuing of seed grain to all the SS cases as their crop was destroyed by locusts last year. Lab work in afternoon.

10<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. Painted car in the morning and again for a short time after lunch. We had just set out to drive to Nagbagi to show C the view when we met the Brocks on the road. We didn't turn round but I asked them to call for tea and make themselves comfortable. Got back and found the Bs had had tea. We had ours and heard all the latest chat about the GG. He doesn't seem to have improved on further acquaintance so far as B was concerned. Ingleson is to be Brock's successor as governor of this province. I knew him in Kassala, he's a very nice fellow and will make a good governor. Martin Parr is to be governor of Upper Nile in Pawson's stead, why I can't conceive, he'll probably be battered to death by a posse of infuriated DCs. Brock says he wishes he was staying on for another year if only to see what happens to Martin.

11<sup>th</sup> - Nasr and AS returned last night, no cases found. This is the best beginning of a year that I believe we have ever had, only thing that I'm at all apprehensive about is that while I was on leave Baz gave two doses of Atoxyl to all the people of Turoza (where we had the outbreak at the beginning of last year). I'm keeping a close watch on them as it is possible that by so doing he has "masked" some cases. The Bs away after breakfast. Spent all morning with C at hospital and in the lab. Put some rose cuttings in a box for C to take to Wau.

12<sup>th</sup> - C off to Wau after breakfast. Noticed that two of my dressers whose hands were clean and nails well pared except for the ring fingers of their left hands, the nails of which were like a mandarin's. On enquiring the reason for this, I received the delightful reply that they were like that to scratch themselves with! Lab work in afternoon. Found in evening that my car engine refused to function. It would of course when I want to use it tomorrow.

13<sup>th</sup> - Couldn't get the car going so had to take the lorry, a nuisance as it leaves no transport in the station. Set off for Rangu and Meridi. I go over periodically when Hugh is away. Arrived Rangu and saw Pengue (his Zande name, meaning bald, his proper name is much grander, Kamal Effendi Abu Soud). He's a tiny apologetic little man with a very rudimentary knowledge of English. I went round the hospital with him and found several cases that needed operation (he's far too frightened to touch a scalpel, but he thinks "SS work is delicious"! ). Went for a walk and then dinner with P. Rather fragmentary conversation carried on as far as I was concerned in bad Arabic and French with an occasional word in English. He showed me a photo of his wife, an enormous and

determined looking female – no wonder he doesn't want to leave the south, she refuses to come here.

14<sup>th</sup> - Did an operation before breakfast and two after, then some office work, a quick lunch and off to Meridi. Had a letter from Talia, Habib's successor in Meridi – he has fever and is obviously very frightened. Arrived at Meridi at dusk, wet and cold as we had been rained on. Was just passing the mission when Brown, the DC Amadi, and his wife drove out. Apparently Talia was so breezy that he'd forsaken his house (ex-Habib's) and was abed in the mission. The mission padre and his wife, Riley by name, were very kind to take him in. Had a look at Talia who was as much frightened as ill with fever. On to the rest house where the Browns were, to find a very welcome fire. Arbuthnot is at the moment having a border meeting with the Belgian DC, Carlier. Had arranged to foregather with them tomorrow evening with a view to A and I paying a visit to the BC to stay with Carlier but I've not heard whether it's on or not.

15<sup>th</sup> - Hospital to look round. Brown off after breakfast for Bengenzi to see Carlier about a man of his who had been captured and tortured by some Belgian natives. So I sent a note by him to enquire of A about the trip. Off to see the MO, found him a little more cheerful. Back to hospital to examine blood for malaria but found the oil immersion lens completely ruined by leaving oil on it. Brown arrived back, not a bad effort, he had got there (65 miles) for lunch including being stuck in the mud for 1½ hours, seen Carlier and was back here at 5.30 pm. Typical answer from A: the Cs would be pleased to have us to stay but three days of entente cordiale and laboured French had been too much for him and he's seized on Brown's arrival to pretend he'd had news that prevented us from going. I'm rather sorry as I wanted to see a bit of the BC and also try and find out what their medicos were doing. However, it's not all that bad as I've plenty of work to do.

16<sup>th</sup> - Hospital and then a walk with Brown. Called at mission to see MO who wishes me to certify him as unfit for service south! On road to Yambio met Bethell, DC Raga, and had chat. He's off to Juba to catch the Imperial Airways on leave. Arrived Y at 4 pm to discover A had only just got home. As we'd neither of us had lunch, we sat down and had sausages and chips and cheese and tea. A has a very poor opinion of the GG, on whom he expatiated with some heat. We went for a walk and I sent a message to Rangu to say that I would come and operate tomorrow. Remembered after dinner that tomorrow was a lazy day.

17<sup>th</sup> - Was just off to Rangu when a chap came in to say that his sister was dead – he was accusing her husband of hitting her in the tummy. Decided I had better do a post mortem. Off to Rangu, did one operation and collected some instruments and did pm at the dispensary. Belly full of fluid blood but absolutely failed to find the source of it. Not so good.

18<sup>th</sup> - Early breakfast and away to Rangu and operated again. Some office work, lunch and then home to Yubu, didn't arrive until dark.

19<sup>th</sup> - On returning to hospital after breakfast found strangulated hernia. Let Abu Shamma have a go at this, I assisted.

20<sup>th</sup> - Hospital for dressings. After breakfast found AS with temperature and rigors. Found BT in his blood, probably relapse from last month's attack. Spent morning in hospital and examining SS cases.

21<sup>st</sup> - AS better today. Car in afternoon - got it going.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Operated to remove sequester consisting of most of shaft of tibia - found it wasn't quite separated. Shows how dependent one is on X-rays for that sort of information. Lab and garden in afternoon. Met Nasr in vegetable garden and took him to tea. I think he probably misses Baz. No Syrian has ever been alone here before.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Usual day, saw some SS cases.

24<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. Found case of strangulated hernia in hospital, just come in. Took me a good part of the morning. It's strange how they come in pairs.

25<sup>th</sup> - Was in lab after breakfast when they brought in an old man practically moribund with a most enormous subcutaneous abscess due to a strangulated femoral hernia of about eight days standing. How he didn't die days before I don't know. They have the most amazing resistance to sepsis. Despite the fact that I gave orders months ago that all hospital refuse was to be burned in the incinerator, whilst going round the hospital this afternoon I saw a fellow making off with some dirty dressings. I followed him and found a shallow hole full of two or three months' accumulation of soiled dressings, covered with flies and stinking. I fairly bit somebody's ear for that.

26<sup>th</sup> - Told the lorry driver to get my car ready and also sent my trek stuff out with carriers as I intended to go out this afternoon to do Bakindo inspection. He came at lunchtime to tell me that the gasket was leaking. I had the cylinder head off and in putting it back again I cracked the outlet water pipe casting, so now both my car and the lorry are incapacitated. Sent after the carriers to recall them. Started the masons lining the ant ditch round the house with brick.

27<sup>th</sup> - Spent most of the morning working out the budget for 1935. All in, the medical work in this district costs about £E 3,700. Lab work most of afternoon.

28<sup>th</sup> - Usual day.

29<sup>th</sup> - Fellow who came in moribund on Monday still alive for some strange reason. We've had three strangulated hernias in the last week all of whom should be dead by normal standards. If all goes well, I shall only write one more letter at the most to you.

*This is the last letter we have before his leave visiting his parents in Australia. From the Adelaide press social pages, we know he disembarked from the Mongolia on 15 September 1934 and left on the Moldova on 8 November.*

### **At sea, 11 November 1934**

*(franked Perth 12 November)*

*Much of this letter is about his leave and financial arrangements, as his parents were to pay a number of bills on his behalf.*

This boat seems very slow and I don't like her so well as the *Mongolia*. She seems somehow to be like a once good hotel that's come down in the world and really doesn't mind about it, quite unlike the other boat. Most of the officers look as though they were here because

there wasn't any other job for them. It's just started to blow up again so who knows what time we shall get in tomorrow, as we seem to be 7 or 8 hours late already. It was very sensible of you to leave when you did on Thursday. The others left soon after you and we didn't finally get away until after 6 pm owing to the wind holding us against the wharf. I'll write to you from Colombo.

***At sea, 20 November 1934***

*(franked Colombo 21 November)*

Thank you both very much for the wire to Perth. We didn't get in until 2 pm due to the rough weather and head winds in the Bight. I went up to Perth and posted some letters, walked around a bit and then went down to the Esplanade Hotel and had some tea. I had an early dinner and so back to the boat which sailed at 8 pm. The company hasn't improved much since Perth. I've not spoken to many people and spent most of my days reading and writing and the occasional game of deck tennis. It is now getting quite hot and one is glad to be in shorts and a thin shirt. I am managing this trip to do something I've never done before and that is to read a lot of books. We do not expect to get to Colombo until just before lunch tomorrow and will I suppose sail in the early evening. There's not much to report on this trip. So far the weather has been quite fair but it's now getting rather humid and we have occasional torrential rain. We passed the *Orania* yesterday afternoon. I don't think I care very much for their new hull colour - it was the first time I had seen it. There was a picture show last night, it is strange how very inadequate the silent films are after the talkies.

There is a very nice but quiet doctor from Perth on board, a man named Troop. I've had several interesting chats with him. He is a physician to the Perth hospital and is, I should judge, very able. By the way, did I leave some medical snaps behind in my room? I wanted to show them to Troop the other day and then couldn't find them in my luggage. They are mostly enlargements to quarter plate. Has the water in the garage done any damage to your luggage stored there? Fortunately, there is a spare cabin next to mine and I was able to spread the wet books out in there to dry which they have done nicely. Just arriving, no further news.

***At sea, 27 November 1934***

*(franked Aden 27 November)*

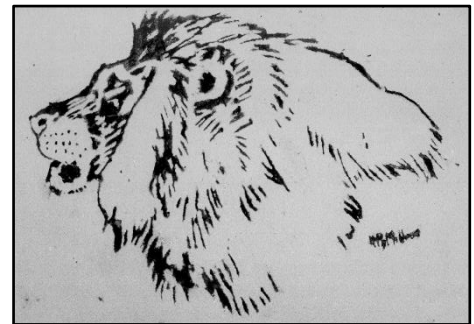
Here we are just nearing Aden. I thought I would post a line from here in case it would reach you sooner than from Port Sudan. I've not much to tell you. We arrived in Colombo just before noon. I didn't go ashore until after tea - I was just about to set out when the ship's surgeon asked me to look at a case, an unfortunate woman with an appendix who had to be put ashore. Poor soul, it was very bad luck for her but we heard before we sailed that she had been successfully operated upon. I wandered about the streets for a while and then went to the Galle Face where I had a drink with Dr Troop and his wife and some other people off the boat. I then went to have dinner with a man named Meakin whom I had met before. His flat is a pleasant one at the top of Whittall and Co near the clock tower. As dinner wasn't put on until 8 pm and the boat sailed at 10, I only just got on board in time having bought nothing in Colombo, a record for me. We have had very pleasant weather since then. I have done little all day except read, write and play some deck tennis. I have

had the occasional game of bridge in the doctor's cabin with Pollet, the Second Officer, quite a nice fellow, and the assistant purser, rather an interesting lad, he's a ballet dancer by trade and having lived a lot on the continent speaks French and German perfectly. We get into Aden today (Tuesday) and Port Sudan on Thursday. I shall not be sorry - I'm getting a little bored with this voyage.

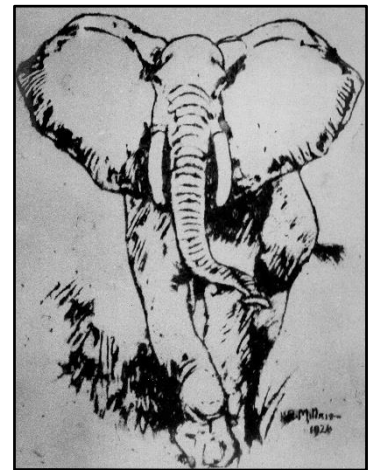
***On the Nile, 20<sup>th</sup> December 1934***

*(franked Juba airmail 21 December and Adelaide 6 January)*

I posted my last letter to you at Malakal where we arrived Thursday 13<sup>th</sup>. [We do not have that letter, but his mother noted on the envelope "Khartoum 2-12-34" and it is franked White Nile TPO 13 Dec 34.] Bill and Andy Tunnicliffe met me on arrival at 6 pm. I had sent a wire to Bill asking him to get me a medicine ball in the souk in Malakal. He got the following wire "Can you get medicine bale in souk arriving Thursday Tow", but luckily he managed to decipher it and had one for me. It is very difficult to get exercise on these boats as there is little space to walk and no deck tennis or anything. It was Bill's birthday so I went to their house for a drink. Macintosh, who is on the boat going to Juba as deputy governor, came in later and also Frank Goss, the doctor, and they came back with us for a final drink before we sailed. There is little to tell between Friday and Monday, one day is much like another in the Sudd. We arrived at Shambe, the place where the drawings are on the wall of the rest house,<sup>104</sup> early on Monday morning, well ahead of time, as we were not supposed to sail until 6 pm. I and MacVie went for a walk before breakfast. The *Keneri*, Captain Romilly,<sup>105</sup> the DC's boat, was also in Shambe. He is DC Nuer district and spends his whole time travelling up and down the river in the steamer, which is his home and office. He came to breakfast. In the afternoon, Macintosh, he and I went snipe shooting. There were a few birds about but the going was terrible, over one's knees the whole time in mud and tall grass. I only knocked one over and lost it in the tall grass. The others got a Nile goose and rufous whistler and two couple of snipe between them. We were all very exhausted at the end. Macintosh and I do medicine ball every morning. On Tuesday we saw some game for the first time



*Millais etchings, Shambe*



<sup>104</sup> Tom wrote on the back of his photographs: "Done by Millais father and son. They had been shooting in UNP and were waiting at the rest house for the post boat." The etchings were in fact solely the work of Raoul Millais, John Guille Millais' son. The Sudan Archive has a copy of a letter from him describing the circumstances under which they were made (SAD.717/17/1-9).

<sup>105</sup> Captain HA Romilly, MBE, (1896-1968), SPS 1925-1946, Assistant District Commissioner, Upper Nile Province (Nuer & Dinka Southern Area) 1929-1946.

starting off with two bull buffalo before breakfast, a herd of elephant quite close to the boat at lunch time, and about a dozen hippo in the evening.

On Wednesday we got to Bor where the Prince and Princess got off [the missing letter must explain who they were]. Not much happened, no game to speak of. Today we arrived early at Terakeka where I got a letter from Tiger and Mika. They want me to meet them at the Iba road rest house just beyond Meridi on the evening of the 22<sup>nd</sup>. As it is about 310 miles from Juba, I shall have to leave tomorrow after lunch, which means doing all my stuff in Juba in the forenoon. No further news at present. I'll post this when we get in tomorrow and it should go off by airmail on Sunday.

### ***Meridi, New Year's Day 1935***

*(arrived Adelaide 28 January)*

I left Juba on the same day I arrived, the 21<sup>st</sup>. It took me some time to get away as they were slow unloading my stores. Slept at a rest house on the road that night with a fellow I discovered there, one Royland Hunt,<sup>106</sup> a new medical inspector who is stationed at Juba as number 2. He seems a decent fellow.

22<sup>nd</sup> December - Breakfast at 6 and away by 6:45. Reached Lui at 10. Lui is the place where the grand missionary doctor Fraser is, who has unfortunately been very ill. I found one Summerhayes, a CMS doctor from Kampala who had flown up from Uganda to look after him. He asked me to have a look at him and I was shocked at his state. No very evident diagnosis presented itself but I am inclined to think that he has a carcinoma of the large bowel. I spent 2½ hours there discussing him with S. So on to Amadi where I only stayed 15 minutes to say cheerio to Brown, the DC, and Lomax his assistant. So on to Meridi where I had a dish of tea with Sullivan and then on to the Iba rest house. I met the Wynds and Arbuthnot on the road coming to meet me. As they met me close to Meridi, T and A went on to Meridi as they wanted to discuss something with Sullivan and Mika came back with me. It was very pleasant to meet them again. A I think a little thin and in need of leave - he is going off in February. As I had done over 200 miles that day I was glad of bed.

### ***Source Yubu, 12 January 1935***

*(finished 15 January, franked Juba 24 January, reached Adelaide 11 February)*

I haven't heard from you for ages. While in Khartoum I had the bright idea that since the boat took 13 days to reach Juba and the mail plane only one, I might get my letters quicker if I had them sent airmail to Juba. So I went to the postmaster and instructed him to send all private letters by air to Juba. Alas, the connection between Juba and here must be even worse than I thought since an ordinary mail from Khartoum came in two days ago and I've not yet received a letter by airmail. So it is now two months since I last heard of you.

23<sup>rd</sup> December - Up early, breakfast and so on the road. Stopped at noon for a glass of beer. Reached Kirima's rest house and had a late lunch. T and I then went on about three miles down the road in my car to see a river crossing. The bridge being unsafe, T had sent word to the chief to make a ramp on either bank to enable us to ford the river. We found they had done this and it looked passable so we went back for the lorries. Found Mika had a temp of 102. I advised T to unload his lorry before the attempt but he decided not and got

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<sup>106</sup> A Royland Hunt, joined SMS 1933, succeeded Tom at Source Yubu in 1936.



caught. He just couldn't get up the far bank and had to run back into the river bed. He was then in difficulty as he could now get no run. However, we all got over eventually and then a drive of 3-4 km through fairly open bush brought us to the bank of the river Iba at a delightful spot. We left the cars and waded the river and found a delightful site for the camp. I drove M off to bed. As we didn't get in till late there was no opportunity to make shelters. T and I put up rods after dinner.

24<sup>th</sup> - T off to look at some road work and the rest of us, M (who was better), A and I, to fish. They were rising and the fun began at once. We had 13 fish by lunch, the best being a 32 pounder by M. I had five fish including 30, 18, and 15 pounders. We fished again in the evening and killed 17 fish in the day. I got seven of a total weight of 112 lbs. A had fever that evening.

25<sup>th</sup> - T and I took trout rods with flies up and tried the swift water for small tiger fish. We each had bites but didn't get any. We fished morning and evening, but this was a poor day and we only got four smallish fish between us. I had a blank but enjoyable day. T and I went for a very pleasant swim before lunch.

26<sup>th</sup> - We walked about 1½ miles up to another pool and there we got some excellent fish. T was the hero of the day and had I think 8 fish including one of 59 lbs and 50 and 44. I got a 24 lb mud fish, a revolting looking creature with long fleshy whiskers but he fought like a good 'un. We had a very pleasant picnic lunch sitting on a rock under a tree. Got home at dusk.

27<sup>th</sup> - T and I bathed before breakfast and then we all walked to a fresh pool just beyond the one we'd been to the day before. No one got a fish here. We had a picnic lunch again and before this T, A and I had a swim. We cast in a bait at odd spots on the way home and each of us got smaller fish. Our four days fishing produced over 700 lbs of fish, mostly Nile perch and a few tiger fish.

28<sup>th</sup> - I started off after breakfast and drove 16 miles along a new track through the bush and then forded the Iba at Tay's rest house and so got on to another and shorter road to Yambio. All went well at first but later I had a chapter of accidents which resulted in my sleeping in the road by the side of my car. Luckily M had given me some cake and a bottle of beer so I didn't starve. I had a puncture and found I had neither tyre solution to mend the puncture nor the spanner to change my wheel. I stuffed the outer cover with grass and got some way on that, but finally gave up and had to spend the night with a perfectly good spare wheel which I couldn't use. They had taken the spanner out at the workshop in Juba and had not returned it.

29<sup>th</sup> - Rescued by Hugh's lorry and got in to Rangu and had a good breakfast as I'd had nothing bar a slice of cake since early breakfast the morning before. Spent the day at Rangu and played tennis with Hugh while Gunoor [Hugh's wife] went riding. Decided to go back with H to see Fraser.

30<sup>th</sup> - Went to Yambio to see T who I heard had a bad go of fever. Found him better so set off for Meridi intending to try and get to Amadi. Had a puncture just near Meridi and by the time I had fixed it I decided it was too late to go on and so spent the night in Meridi with Sullivan.

31<sup>st</sup> - Did 84 miles to Amadi and arrived in time for breakfast which I had with the Browns and where I discovered Hugh and Gunoor. Heard from H, who had seen him that morning, that Fraser was improved. Went to see him and found him temporarily improved but I still think he has cancer. Back to lunch with Bs and tennis in the afternoon.

29<sup>th</sup> Rescued by ~~Hugh~~ Hugh's lorry + got into Kangu + had a good breakfast as I'd had nothing but a slice of cake since early breakfast the morning before. Spent the day at R. played tennis with H. in afternoon while Gunoor went riding. Decided to go back with H. + see Fraser.

30 Set off + went to Yambou to see T. who I heard had a bad go of fever. found he was better + so set off for Meridi intending to try get to Amadi, had a puncture just near Meridi however + by the time I'd fixed it up I decided it was too late

to go on + so spent the night in Meridi with Sullivan.

31 Up + away, did 84 miles to Amadi + arrived in time for breakfast which I had with the Browns where I discovered Hugh + Gunoor Heard from H. who had seen him that morning that H. was improved. Went to see him + found him temporarily improved, but I still think he has cancer. Back to lunch with the Bs. + tennis in the afternoon.

## 1935 - Source Yubu

### Source Yubu, 12 January 1935 (continued)

1<sup>st</sup> January - Away after breakfast. Lunch at Meridi with Sullivan and so on to Yambio where I discovered Tiger, Mika and Arbuthnot had gone to Rangu. Paid a visit to the mission to tell Gore about Fraser and back. Others finally arrived at 9 pm having run out of petrol.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Walked to A's new house, very nice indeed. To office with T where we did some work. In afternoon I played myself in as captain of the Yambio Golf Club! They

have made a few very rough holes around the station but it's rather fun.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Away after breakfast and so arrived home and very glad to be here at last. Had tea with Nasr and Dr Abu Shamma. Garden looking well considering it's the dry season.

4<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> - Catching up, getting things straight in the house and starting on the annual report.

8<sup>th</sup> - Had slight fever last two nights and woke up this morning with full-blown fever so spent most of day in bed.

9<sup>th</sup> - Up after breakfast to do emergency op. A little office work.

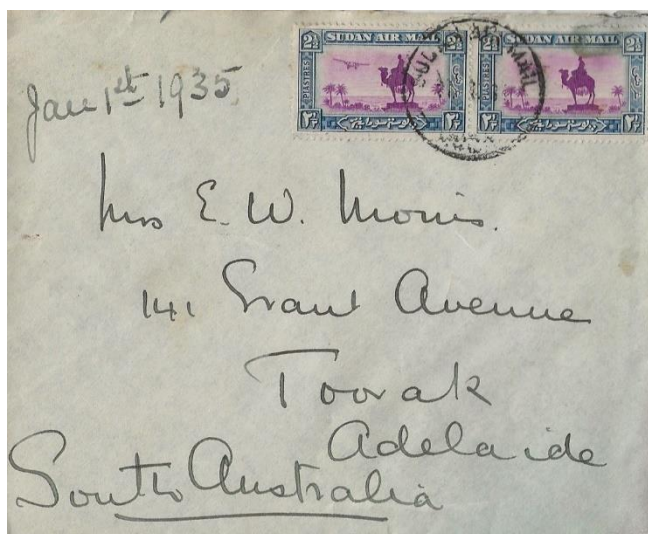
10<sup>th</sup> - Loafed before breakfast then operated and office work.

11<sup>th</sup> - To chair makers before breakfast, operated and then rest of morning in office. A merchant's car brought me some things from Wau that I had bought from Brock - three rugs, a mirror, cupboard etc.

12<sup>th</sup> - Saw some SS patients then more office until lunch time. Gardened a bit in afternoon and wrote in evening.

13<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. In afternoon Jabbours arrived on their way to Wau. He's SMO at Li Rangu. Just as they were going to see Nasr, Tiger, Mika and Nalder<sup>107</sup> arrived. The latter is the governor of Mongalla province. We have been chipped off from Bahr el Ghazal and tacked onto Mongalla, so now we are Zande district, Mongalla province. It is one of the new GG's ideas and so far as I can see has nothing to recommend it save that it brings all the SS areas under one governor. They brought the melancholy news that Fraser had got worse and died on the 6<sup>th</sup>. He was a very fine man and will be a great loss.

14<sup>th</sup> - T, N and I had tea together and talked about SS, dressed and went for a walk. After breakfast went with T and N to visit the mission, a look round the hospital, discussion in the office and so to lunch. Arbuthnot turned up before lunch after which we all left for Tambura. I have got some money to build two brick dispensaries this year so I took some brick makers with me and arranged for them to get to work to make some bricks on the



<sup>107</sup> LF Nalder, CMG, CIE, CBE, (1888-1958), SPS 1912-1936.

spot - I'm putting one dispensary at Tambura to replace the mud one. By the time T and I had walked to look at a suitable place for operations and then to look at some iron stone block for the foundations we had had a long walk.

15<sup>th</sup> - Home to breakfast. Spent morning in office and afternoon walking round the place. So here I am, up to this very minute as I write and have my tea. Yes, my dear mother, the fever has all gone.

**Source Yubu, 25 January 1935**

*(franked Sudan Air Mail Malakal 2 February, reached Adelaide 16 February)*

Well at last I got some mail from you all. It arrived last Sunday (20<sup>th</sup>) having, I believe, been for a ride to Wau on a merchant's lorry.

16<sup>th</sup> January - I sent Nasr off in the morning with the lorry to Buma. He took some men with him who will start to make bricks there as that is where I want to build the second dispensary. Also sent the mail off, including the annual report which I am glad to get off my chest. Spent morning in office and operating. Dozens of hernias and hydroceles have recently been turning up from Chief Bazia's country. He was recently ticked off for interfering with the work of the dresser in his place and threatened with Tiger's wrath. The last time T's wrath descended on him he had a part of his country taken away from him, a repetition of which he is most anxious to avoid. So I expect this stream of patients are rather unwilling lambs on the altar of Bazia's good will with the government.

17<sup>th</sup> - Nasr came back in the evening with a lorry load of grain (millet). We used to be able to buy all the grain we required at our door but the last two years has seen the advent of the cultivation of the small variety of chillies. A market exists for them in Egypt and last year we exported several hundred tons - the stomachs of the Egyptians must be absolutely raw! The result is that since they now get money from their chillies, they keep their grain to brew beer from, and rightly so. So we now have to tout for grain where it came tumbling in before.

18<sup>th</sup> - Office and operations all morning and the afternoon spent marking out the foundations for a two-roomed building to serve as a PM room and laboratory, which will be of great assistance.

19<sup>th</sup> - Saturday and the usual parade of SS patients.

20<sup>th</sup> - Went through some papers after breakfast after a visit to the hospital and loafed in the afternoon. Your letters came just at tea time.

21<sup>st</sup> - Operations and office all morning, a walk around and then more office work in the afternoon.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Operations and office in morning - we're going to have a record month for operations thanks to Bazia. Nasr went off in the afternoon to start inspection of Renzi N and W.

23<sup>rd</sup> - As before. We've practically got the foundations of the new lab finished (the holes dug, I mean). I'm succeeding very slowly in making friends with the parrot Nasr gave me.

24<sup>th</sup> - Walk around the shops before breakfast. The basket makers want constant supervision. I had just started Abu Shamma off to do a hernia and settled down to some

office work when the MacDonalds arrived unexpectedly. He is a missionary and she is a doctor, and a very able one too. They live in Akot in the NE of Bahr el Ghazal. I showed them round and then gave them lunch after which they set off on the road for Yambio.

25<sup>th</sup> - Usual day.

26<sup>th</sup> - The usual round of SS patients. There is a lorry going to Wau tomorrow I hope which will take this to post.

### **Source Yubu, 22 February 1935**

*(franked Cairo 14 March, reached Adelaide 30 March)*

*This letter got wet and parts are illegible.*

28<sup>th</sup> January - Late yesterday afternoon (I like the way I wrote that about a month afterwards) the Director of Posts and Telegraphs and Mrs P & T arrived (Col and Mrs Tomlin). They didn't even bring a mail with them which I thought rather poor. They were quite pleasant people but full of questions. They left about 11 am today and I was quite exhausted by answering questions. Operated after they'd gone and didn't finish until 2.30 pm.

29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> - Usual days, office, operating and work about the station in the afternoon.

31<sup>st</sup> - Nasr back from Bakir inspection in slightly damaged condition as a result of having fallen off his motor bike, *à cause de deux chiens* as he said. I went to Tambura in the afternoon to see how the brick makers were getting on and pay them. Then home to dinner.

1<sup>st</sup> February - Lorry arrived from Rangu with some medical stores and letters from you.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Operated before breakfast. Sent Hugh's lorry back with some chairs. Spent morning going over accounts in preparation for arrival of auditors.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Lazy day. Douglas the auditor arrived at 10:30 am with a mail bag. We went for a walk after lunch and on our return found A [illegible - probably Andrew Anderson] had arrived from FEA. He is a young Scot who shoots elephant for a living. He is now starting to plant coffee in his concession. He tells me that the French are paying growers a bounty of 1 Fr 50 a kilo and that there is a preferential tariff with France of 3 Fr a kilo for coffee grown in FEA. This is wild bush coffee too. How they can do that when Brazil is burning similar grade coffee I don't understand.

4<sup>th</sup> - All morning in office with Douglas. Three of us for a walk in the afternoon. Poor A, it's quite a treat for him to come in here - he hasn't seen another white man for 15 months.

5<sup>th</sup> - As 4<sup>th</sup>.

6<sup>th</sup> - Douglas finished off his work in the office and then left for Wau. A and I had lunch and then set off for Buma. We were looking at the dispensary there when we heard that Tiger and Mika, whom I had arranged to meet, were at Little Buma, about two miles away. We went over and found them settled in the rest house there so we went back and shifted out kit over too. I found a grand site for the new brick dispensary. T and M have just got back from a DCs meeting in Juba which I gather was hectic socially. T was very amusing about the business part of it, which was hardly worth motoring 700 miles to attend.

7<sup>th</sup> - Inspected brick makers and then the dispensary. Loaded the lorry up with grain which the dispenser had bought, so all back to Yubu after breakfast. All for walk in afternoon.

8<sup>th</sup> - T and M left for Tambura after breakfast. I spent morning in office and left for Tambura after tea. A stayed behind as he proposes leaving for his camp tomorrow. I think the change has done him good.

9<sup>th</sup> - Walked to look at the dispensary and T and I to chiefs' meeting after breakfast. We got through all the business in the morning, nothing out of the ordinary came up. T and I walked in the afternoon to see the bricks. Found that they had wasted a lot of time building an enormous drying shed without any orders. Something of that sort always happens if you leave these people on their own.

10<sup>th</sup> - Back to Yubu after breakfast. T stayed in Tambura to hear appeals etc.

11<sup>th</sup> - Operating and office all morning. Set out to do SS inspection in afternoon and slept at Bakindo. I like doing this inspection, the views are so pleasant from most of the rest houses.

12<sup>th</sup> - Did inspection and then back to Yubu to operate. Back to Bakindo after lunch.

13<sup>th</sup> - Did inspection and then moved on to Bambraze. Heard that people had seen some giant eland nearby the day before, so went out to look. Found fresh tracks but never saw them. Shot hartebeest for meat. Was out four hours and didn't get home till 6.30 pm rather tired.

14<sup>th</sup> - As I was drinking my tea the people who were collecting near the rest house for inspection were driven away by a swarm of wild bees which had a hive in a tree near the rest house. They had evidently been disturbed by the noise of the people. Finally had to send them some distance away down the road and do the inspection there. Moved on to Nagbagi where there is a good rest house on the top of a hill with a view in all directions.

Will stop here as Col. Owen who is taking this letter to post has just arrived and is anxious to get on again.

### ***Meridi, 6 March 1935***

*(reached Adelaide 25 March)*

15<sup>th</sup> February - Did Nagbagi inspection and then on to next inspection centre to do another. Then down the loop road to the first rest house where I spent the night. In the afternoon I managed to shoot some guinea fowl and in the evening there was quite heavy rain. A man whose house was quite near came to tell me that a leopard had been trying to raid his fowl house regularly. I had hopes of getting him as it was a bright moonlight night but he didn't pay his usual visit.

16<sup>th</sup> - Back down the road to inspect the people at Kadiawe then to the place where I stayed the night to do an inspection there and on to the next rest house. I went out in the afternoon hoping I might see a buffalo. I saw a cob but didn't intend to shoot it. However, the appealing look of the three people I had with me, plus the fact that one of them said "Well of course God put that meat there for us and if you don't shoot it he may be very angry and never show us any more", so influenced me that I had a crack at it and

unfortunately didn't hit it properly and it went off as if in no way dis-accommodated. I followed it for about two hours until it was dark and I had to go home. I loathe doing that.

17<sup>th</sup> - I had to do SS inspection so I sent my tracker off with my rifle to look for it again. He didn't come back for five hours having had to follow it for a long distance. I got to Yubu at 1 pm to find Tiger and Mika already there. We had lunch and a loaf and then a walk in the evening.

18<sup>th</sup> - Find that although Nasr knew the RAF were coming tomorrow he has done nothing about clearing the aerodrome, so I had to take all the people I could find off various jobs and set them to work. T spent the morning hearing appeals etc. and M in the house reading and writing.

19<sup>th</sup> - Two machines arrived at 8.30 am: Squadron Leader Gibbs and Flying Officer Sabine and three other ranks. The former not very impressive, the second quite a nice lad and the NCOs the best lot we've had. They had breakfast and then T and I were off to our various jobs and left M to entertain them. Lunch and a chat and then took them for a drive round the settlement. Had a letter from Gun saying she was rather worried about Hugh who has a nasty lot of boils on his neck, so I arranged with Gibbs to fly me over to Rangu. Had them all to drinks before dinner and then Nasr took the NCOs off to dine with him.

20<sup>th</sup> - T, who was going back to Yambio, very kindly drove my small car over and his driver drove his lorry. We left at 8 am and were in Rangu in an hour. I enjoyed it and it gave me a chance to see roads and watering places from the air. We saw much less game than I had expected, only a few buffalo. T and M arrived at 2 pm and went on into Yambio. Gun and I drove some of the RAF down to Yambio and I stayed there for dinner, going back to Rangu to sleep. H has a nasty neck and looks very run down. I think he should go on leave.

21<sup>st</sup> - Saw the aeroplanes off to Wau and then back to Yubu after breakfast.

22<sup>nd</sup> - In Yubu doing odds and ends.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Set out in evening to do SS inspection of Renzi S and E.

24<sup>st</sup> - Usual round of inspections. Had the very unpleasant combination of a boil on my nose and a cold in my head. This is the inspection where the rest house on the top of a hill comes in and I managed to spend two nights up there which I enjoyed very much. I got back at lunchtime on the 1<sup>st</sup> to discover that Crouch and Cruickshank had already arrived. As usual with visitors from Khartoum, Charles hadn't stuck to his programme and was two days ahead of his time. It was great fun to see them both, although Charles hadn't much startling news from Khartoum. I heard all about Cruickshank's leave, part of which he spent in America.

2<sup>nd</sup> March - The three of us worked in the morning and in the afternoon we took Charles out to the rest house on the hill. On the way up from the cars a carrier dropped what Fadl, my cook, is pleased to call the loonche basket, i.e. a wooden box containing all the crockery as well as drinks. It went bouncing gaily down the hill much to the detriment of its contents. The carrier gave as an excuse for dropping it that he had a pain in his stomach!



3<sup>rd</sup> - We came down after breakfast and Cruickshank went straight back to Wau and Charles and I to Yubu where we had an early lunch and then on to Rangu where we arrived at dusk. Found Hugh looking slightly better.

4<sup>th</sup> - After breakfast drove Charles down to Yambio to see Tiger's Chiefs' meeting, then back to lunch with the Jabbours, Hugh's senior Syrian MO. We were going to play tennis in the afternoon but it poured with rain. Tiger and Mika came up to dinner which was a very cheery party.

5<sup>th</sup> - Worked all morning and then Charles and I down to Yambio for lunch. Charles, Tiger and Mika are old friends as they were in Upper Nile Province together. We had a cheery lunch. The Ws came down in the afternoon and we played golf. Mika gave us a grand dinner in the evening, a cheery party helped no doubt by a tot of vodka before dinner.

**Source Yubu, 24 March 1935**

*(franked Juba 29 March, Cairo 1 April, reached Adelaide 13 April)*

*Parts of this letter are water-damaged and illegible.*

8<sup>th</sup> March - A walk with Tiger before breakfast after which I set off to Rangu where I interviewed two prospective trainee dispensers, had a drink with the Jabbours and so home to Yubu. Found Titch had disappeared. I am sorry though not quite as I might have been. He has a great local reputation as a hunting dog despite his quaint shape and consequently many people entice him away by feeding him in the hope of taking him hunting. The result is that he is no longer really my dog - one can't keep up an interest in a dog which no longer owns one.

9<sup>th</sup> - Usual day at office and hospital.

10<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day, read and wrote.

11<sup>th</sup> - Usual business day, rain in afternoon.

12<sup>th</sup> - Tour of settlement with Nasr in afternoon, rain again in evening. If this is the start of the rains they're very early.

13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> - Usual business days, rain both evenings.

15<sup>th</sup> - Office, hospital and lab work in morning. Tiger and Mika arrived before lunch. More office work and lab in afternoon. Tea and a walk and chat. I do enjoy being with T and M. Heavy rain in evening.

16<sup>th</sup> - Tiger and Mika left after breakfast. Dr A S back from trek and I left with lorry at 10:30. Stopped in Tambura to see brick making for the dispensary and then caught T and M up at Mabou for lunch. All on to Parakondo for the night. Find that local chief hasn't got all the carriers together.

17<sup>th</sup> - Drove about 9 miles up the road and then off loaded and sent the lorries back to bring on the carriers. On their arrival we left the road and walked in to the Sue river at the junction of the Bo, about 7-8 miles. Made camp and spent the rest of the day pottering. Saw quite a lot of common game. I forgot to tell you that the plan is to walk down the Sue with a view to seeing if it is or can be made suitable for navigation. My presence in the party is more or less a ramp.



18<sup>th</sup> - Up at dawn and away. Did about 12 miles and then made camp. I shot a water buck for meat as we have 50 carriers and servants. Passed a pool with 45 hippos, young and old, in it, all bunched together. Felt rather tired when we stopped and in afternoon found I had a slight go of fever.

19<sup>th</sup> - Cup of tea and away at dawn and did about 11 miles. Passed a barrage of rocks which will take some getting over. Otherwise the river is open with steep banks and a sandy bottom. No fever today. Rain in evening.

20<sup>th</sup> - Found Mika had fever now. Went slow with frequent rests so only did about 10 miles today. Tiger got three nice perch in the afternoon. Rain again.

21<sup>st</sup> - Up and away at dawn as usual. Mika a little better today. Saw lots of common game and shot some meat. We temporarily separated during the walk and when we re-joined I was mortified to hear that they had seen a lioness and a large three-quarter-grown cub. Heavy rain in the evening and poor M fever again.

22<sup>nd</sup> - T insisted on M being carried in a chair much to her disgust. I have now got my walking legs and covered 12 miles today and arrived quite fresh. T had some good fishing today and got three very nice tiger fish, two of 10 lbs and one of 11 lbs. I was sitting on the bank with a small boy and we had been watching a croc in the pool when suddenly a fresh water turtle made quite a commotion in the shallows near the far bank. I asked the boy if he was being chased by the croc. "No," said the boy, "the croc is the turtle's younger brother and so he wouldn't chase him". No rain for a change.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Walked to the road and found my lorry waiting. Yubu for lunch and spent the afternoon taking over things from Nasr who goes on leave tomorrow.

This brings me up to last night so I'll stop here. Yes, I've quite recovered from the fever, mother, and am feeling very well as a result of the walk.

### ***Source Yubu, 10 April 1935***

*(finished 17 April, reached Adelaide 11 May)*

24<sup>th</sup> March - Gave Nasr breakfast early and saw him off. Went round hospital and paid off some labourers. Cochrane, the second medical inspector at Wau, and Campbell, a Bimbashi in the Equots, arrived at 11.30 am. They brought no news. Walk in afternoon. Abu Shamma ill all day with colic.

25<sup>th</sup> - C and C off after breakfast to Rangu and eventually Juba. A S still in bed so I had a busy day. At 6 pm two cars rolled up containing a Mr and Mrs Robinson, a mining engineer and his wife. They set off from Cairo two years ago to drive to the Cape. They went down through the Sudan and on arriving in Kenya he found a job, so they broke their journey for 18 months and then went on to the Cape. They are now on their way back to Cairo. They have two cars, she drives one and he the other, and they have one servant. They seem a very pleasant couple.

26<sup>th</sup> - Up at dawn to assist R to repair the broken back spring of his wife's car. While we were doing this, Mohammed came and said there had been a fire in my store room. I was too busy to pay much attention to it. The Rs left at 11 am and I was very busy all day as A S still in bed and so single-handed. Find, when I have a moment to spare in the evening, that the fire occurred in the corner of the store room where the drinks were kept - in their boxes

- and 2 ½ cases of whisky, 1 ½ gin, 1 case sherry, half a case of champagne and six dozen beer all gone. Could find no evidence of how fire started.

27<sup>th</sup> - Busy day as A S still in bed and now has fever. Mohammed also in bed. When I went to have a drink in the evening I find that what purported to be the last half bottle of whiskey was in fact a mixture of sherry and water and that the last half decanter of sherry is gone. Can find no satisfactory explanation. It really is irritating, when one had a lot of work to do, for things to go wrong in one's house.

28<sup>th</sup> - Up at dawn and out to do inspection at Ukwo. On my return at 11 am find Canon Gore has come in from Baragu, where he was visiting, to get some petrol. A S up and about today. Gave G lunch and he off back to Baragu. Having the opportunity to sit down and think for the first time for the last few days, I realized that there must have been over 100 bottles involved, so demanded to see the wreckage. Although we found the ashes of boxes in a rubbish heap, not a single fragment of bottle could be found. M says he gave it all to the Zande servants to throw away. They say that there were no bottles. I can't make it out - it looks as though either (1) M had drunk the store and staged the fire, or (2) someone else has a key to the store. There it is at the moment and there it will probably stay. If I were in a town, I'd sack every servant, but here it would just be cutting off one's nose - a big one at that!

29<sup>th</sup> - Out to do the Ikoro inspection. We've had several cases from Ukwo and Ikoro lately and I just found three more. Despite careful search, I cannot find where the infection is coming from. Back to office and hospital until evening. Intended to leave in the afternoon for inspection of Mbiri but find the driver has taken front spring to pieces and has now lost one of the bolts, so decided not to go on trek!

30<sup>th</sup> - Office until noon and then to Mbiri - down to river to try and shoot hippo for the lepers. No luck - only two in pool and couldn't get near those.

31<sup>st</sup> - Did three inspections and then back to river. Again no luck. This is the first time I have failed to get a hippo, not only did I fail but I never even fired a shot.

1<sup>st</sup> April - Did two inspections and then back to Yubu. I decided I must try and do something about meat - they so look forward to their annual treat. So I went out in the evening and slept at Ngbono hoping to get a buffalo or two.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Away before dawn. This resulted in an absolute meat blot. I'd shot three hartebeest within an hour. I went on to try and get buffalo but although I was out for another four hours, I didn't find any. So back to rest house for bath and breakfast and into Yubu with nearly a lorry load of meat. Hospital and office work till 2.30 pm. Just as I was about to start back at 4.30 pm it came on to rain. I waited for it to clear but it was still raining at 6 pm so I set off back to Ngbono and got wet in the process.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Again away before dawn. Spent three hours out but no luck although saw tracks of the night before. So back to Yubu. Sent A S out to do Iriwo inspection.

4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> - Usual days in office and hospital. It's a fairly full day when one is on one's own.

6<sup>th</sup> - A mail in this morning with a letter from you all. Usual day.

7<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. Hugh and Gun arrived with some things for me including a welcome supply of whiskey and gin. They left for home after an early lunch.

8<sup>th</sup> - Up at dawn and off to inspection of Dinia and so home to late breakfast. Just started to do some work when a letter arrived from Soubignon, the new administrator at Obo, to say he had arrived and was about to come to Yubu. We met up – he seems a quite a decent sort and better than the average one meets in the French colonial service, although that's not high praise. He told me that just after the war, when he told a friend of the family that he was going to the French Congo, her reply was "who have you killed to have to do that?". I think I told you Andrew Anderson's story of how, when he was first going to the French Congo, he wrote to relatives in Paris to ask if they could give him a letter of introduction to anyone in the French Congo. They wrote back in indignation to say "do you think we're the sort of people who know members of the colonial administrative service?". Soubignon had lunch with me and then went back to his camp whilst I did some work. I called for him in my car and brought him back to dinner.

9<sup>th</sup> - Did Rindo inspection and back to breakfast. Found two cases. Drove over to Bambo and had lunch with S and brought him back here to do some shopping and go to the mission. I spent the afternoon and evening making up the time that S had wasted.

10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> - Usual days. On the afternoon of the 11<sup>th</sup> we had the heaviest storm we've had this year. Started about 4 pm and after a torrential downpour settled into steady rain.

12<sup>th</sup> - Usual busy single-handed day – operated from lunch until 4 pm.

13<sup>th</sup> - SS parade, hospital and office all day.

14<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. One can do something in the garden now the rains have started and I've begun by pruning the roses. I am putting a lot of cuttings in by the river where they can be easily watered. Just been given a young lion cub but as he only arrived as it was dusk, I haven't had a good look at him yet. Dr A S back from inspection this afternoon.

15<sup>th</sup> - Rather a lazy day now that A S is back. Spent morning going over some things with him and handing him over the safe and money, the dealing with which I loathe. William, the lion cub, is a healthy lad of about two months. I took him for a walk after breakfast and again after lunch. He had shown a liking to a box by a cabinet and he lay down in it, sighed and went to sleep as if at last at home!

16<sup>th</sup> - Office and hospital all morning and more rose pruning in the afternoon until too dark to see. William very friendly this evening and went to sleep on my lap while I had tea.

17<sup>th</sup> - Was just finishing breakfast when Owen, of whom you've heard me speak, and a general visiting the Equots arrived. He is the new commander of the Sudan Defence Force. They'd had breakfast so watched me finish mine. Took them for a walk around and then back to the house for some beer – yes, I've just got a supply from Wau. I pruned roses again this afternoon – I've put in about 120 cuttings – and then went to the office. I'm off to Wau in the morning and shall give this to Franklin to post in Khartoum.

## *Source Yubu, 27 April 1935*

### *Another water-damaged letter*

18<sup>th</sup> April - I set out for Wau early and drove as far as the Bo where I sat under the shade of a tree and ate my sandwiches. Soon after passing Piele I came on some dismounted air force so to speak. They were in a lorry and had come out from Wau to look for something to shoot. Anything from birds to buffalo seemed to be their moto. At the Busseri rest house I passed Owen and the General - they were sleeping off their lunch. I arrived in Wau at 3.30 pm and went to Cruickshank's house. We went for a walk after tea and in the evening we went to the Inglesons for dinner. He is the governor of Bahr el Ghazal and they are a jolly couple. We were a large party, the general and Owen, three air force (Gibbs, Sabine and Bathhurst), Cave, the Bimbashi in Wau, and C and self.

19<sup>th</sup> - Helped C to operate in the morning. In the afternoon we drove out as far as Kajok where we spent the night. There is an R C mission near by and two of the Austrian fathers came for a drink, quite decent fellows. This is Dinka country, they are a cattle-owning tribe of magnificent physique. It was pleasant to sit and listen to the lowing of cows and the sound of cow bells, and to have any quantity of fresh milk.

20<sup>th</sup> - Away after breakfast, passing through Gogrial and arrived at Fau rest house. On the way I managed to shoot a very good cob and also a tiang with a good representative head. The Dinka country is very flat but the Fau rest house is perched on a light rise and from it one can see rolling grassland unbroken in every direction. The Dinkas built their houses, which they only live in during the rains, on any spot of raised ground as the rest is flooded in the rains.

21<sup>st</sup> - I have come on this trip primarily to try and get a "Mrs Grey" or Nile lechwe, a rare antelope which is found nowhere else in the world except here and on the other side of the Nile in a limited area. We started out just before dawn and had not gone very far before we saw a herd in the far distance and on glassing them we saw that it contained one shootable male. After a most strenuous stalk in which I seemed to crawl literally miles on my hands and knees I got to within 60 yards of him, but he had lain down and I couldn't be sure of him. So with my heart in my mouth I made a noise covering him all the time and he stood and that was the end. It was quite a good representative head but had about 1 ½ inches knocked off the left antler. That evening we went on to another rest house at the edge of a swampy lagoon with a feeder river running into it. Most attractive surroundings. That evening we had a duck and goose shoot and a most welcome bathe.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Up and had another go at the duck. There were a lot about but we really wanted more guns and I shot badly as usual. After a late breakfast we turned for home and arrived at Gogrial, where we had thought to spend the night, to find the rest house fully occupied by Stubbs and his wife (DC northern district) and Drelebar, a Bimbashi in the Equots. They were just off on a two-week mapping expedition. C and I decided that we'd start off and drive right through to Wau, but after we'd been going some little time I didn't feel very fit so we stopped at Kajok, where we spent the first night, and I found that I had fever.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Drove into Wau in the cool before breakfast. I spent the day loafing about.

24<sup>th</sup> - Another lazy day in which I loafed and read. Some people to drinks in the evening.

25<sup>th</sup> - To the hospital and did some work as C was resting a knee which had become infected after scratching it out shooting. Had lunch with Jack Cumming, the DC Wau. He has got together a herd of 13 cows and heifers in calf for me and also two Dinka herdsmen and I am going to try and start a small dairy here. Williams, the Director of Vets and C were also at lunch. In the evening we went to the Inglesons again for drinks.

26<sup>th</sup> - Up early and came through in one day, got home about 5 pm.

27<sup>th</sup> - Around the place. I'm arranging to build a proper shed for the cattle. They are being brought down by merchant's lorry as I think they will be less likely to fly that way. Williams the vet arrived at lunch time. We went for a walk in the evening to show him round. He looked at the one or two cattle we have and said that judging from them the Wau herd should do quite well down here. A S came to tea and we went round the garden. Williams is off today and will take this letter with him to post in Juba.

### **Source Yubu, 27 May 1935**

*(franked Cairo 3 June, reached Adelaide 22 June)*

28<sup>th</sup> April - Williams went off after breakfast and I had a lazy day. Gardened a little in the afternoon.

29<sup>th</sup> - Had a letter from Tiger saying that Andy, his sister, was probably coming to Yambio and could I come over and see them. I decided to spend the night there, rather foolish to drive 280 miles for dinner, but there you are. Cave, the Bimbashi from Wau, who had been down at Bendere came to lunch. It was pleasant to see him but it put off my departure until 1.30 pm. He has been collecting birds, partly for his own amusement and partly for the British Museum. He showed me some he had got at Bendere and they had beautiful plumage. Arrived at Yambio at 7 pm rather wet, as I had been rained on for the last 40 miles. Found that Andy hadn't arrived but none the less had a very jolly dinner, Williams being there as well.

30<sup>th</sup> - Walked round the garden with Mika - it looks grand now. Did some work in the office with Tiger and Jabbour, who had come in from Rangu. Then back to the house for some beer and a slice of cake and then home.

1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> May - Usual days, office, hospital and so on, some gardening in the afternoon, including some rose grafting, the initial effort. A S went out on the evening of the 3<sup>rd</sup> to do inspection.

4<sup>th</sup> - Williams, this time a sanitary inspector, and Malhamé, the Syrian MO from Rumbek, arrived and spent a short time then off again.

5<sup>th</sup> - Loafing day baring usual hospital round morning and evening.

6<sup>th</sup> - Usual routine, busy as usual when one is on one's own.

7<sup>th</sup> - Malhamé came back from Rangu. He's quite an amusing little man and one of the better Syrians. He's the MO I used to have in Suakin.

8<sup>th</sup> - M left after breakfast.

9<sup>th</sup> - Tiger arrived alone at tea time as Mika was still ill with dysentery poor soul. I know how she would loath to be left alone too. No news from T.

10<sup>th</sup> - T to Tambura after breakfast, I had usual day.

11<sup>th</sup> - SS day. A S back from trek having found ten cases – the most we've had in a single inspection since I've been here.

12<sup>th</sup> - Dr Bakhari, the new Sudanese MO for Li Rangu arrived here for two weeks training in SS work. He seems quite a decent lad.

13<sup>th</sup> - Usual day and in afternoon went to Tambura to spend the night with Tiger. We talked a lot about his uncle Jack. T had just had a letter from Mika to say that she was a little better.

14<sup>th</sup> - A walk and then while T did some appeals I went to dispensary to work and then on to look at the bricks for the new dispensary. Spent rest of morning listening to T holding a magistrate's inquiry on a murder. They are such imperial liars these people, and they often seem to lie purely for the pleasure of it, that taking evidence is a laborious business. Lunch and then more inquiry. Left for Yubu about 5 pm and arrived after dark. Fadl had caught one of the Zande boys leaving the house with three tins of milk. On searching his house we found more milk and paraffin and some ammunition. T gave him six months, but I'm not sure that we haven't caught the sprat and let the whale go!

15<sup>th</sup> - T heard appeals at the local court and I did the usual work. Five of or cows arrived from Wau by lorry last Friday (10<sup>th</sup>) and seem to be doing quite well (got some more milk now). T and I for a walk in the evening and so to the hospital where I found a strangulated hernia had just come in. I did this and T came and watched which seemed to amuse him.

16<sup>th</sup> - T off to Yambio and I the usual day.

17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> - Usual days. Had a wire from Aldridge to say he was coming on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

19<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. Sent A S and Bakhari out to do an inspection to teach B the routine etc. Had news in the morning that an old woman who lived in the settlement, named Umm Mustafa, had died. She had been captured as a slave when a child and was in Omdurman all through the Mahadia and saw her two sons killed when O fell on the reconquest of the Sudan. She must have been 80 or more and was a cheerful old woman.

20<sup>th</sup> - The Aldridges arrived today instead of tomorrow. We all went for a walk in the afternoon after I had done some lab work. A hadn't much news. There is to be a meeting of the southern governors with the GG in Malakal next week and its suspected that there will be some changes in the arrangements of the provinces in the south. I had a letter from Jack Cumming in Wau in which he says they were able to hear the King's jubilee speech over the wireless quite plainly.

21<sup>st</sup> - A and I had some things to talk over in the morning and then I got on with the usual work. Walk again in the evening.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Aldridges off after breakfast – they are a cheerful and pleasant couple. I hear that Mika is much better and that Arbuthnot is back from leave having motored the 360 miles from Juba to Yambio in 16 hours. That's typical of him. I am expecting a fellow named Wyndham,<sup>108</sup> an artist who has been staying with Jack Poole at Tonj, to visit me tomorrow. I'm anxious to see him as I believe we've met before.

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<sup>108</sup> GRW (Dick) Wyndham, MC, (1896-1948).

23<sup>rd</sup> - One of the new cows is ill, from what I don't know. Wyndham arrived just before lunch and proved to be the same man. Walk in afternoon, went to see the sick cow and the new cow shed. We're having Dinka herdsmen as these people, being agriculturalists, know nothing about livestock since they've never had any themselves.

24<sup>th</sup> - Took W for a walk before breakfast on the French side as he wanted to see some river forest. Usual work in morning. The two MOs back from inspection in the afternoon, when W and I walked down to the head of the Bakango. On walking downstream a little way we were fortunate enough to see a troop of colobus monkeys in the trees just overhead. W seems quite a pleasant fellow and knows some interesting people such as Augustus John, Hillaire Belloc and Chesterton. He spends most of his time on a trip like this making notes in the form of rough drawings. He has a mill cottage somewhere in Sussex and he does most of his serious painting there in the winter time, mostly from memory and with the aid of the notes he has made. I got from him the only concrete statement as to the *raison d'être* for modern impressionism and post-impressionism that I have ever been able to elicit from anyone. It's rather too long to write down here, however. The sick cow died this morning and I had it burned as I wasn't sure if it had an infectious disease or not.

25<sup>th</sup> - W left this morning intending to spend a day at Bendere on his way to Yambio. I did some work and then left at 12.30 pm for Yambio. Stopped and had tea with Jabbour at Li Rangu and then on to Yambio. Found poor Mika in bed with fever - she really does have rotten luck. A is looking much better for his leave and has put on weight. M looks very thin after her dysentery. We left M in bed and went and had a bucks' dinner in A's house.

26<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day, a cool cloudy morning. We played golf, then came back and had beer and played the gramophone in M's room. She's much better. Played golf again in the afternoon. Larken came in for an hour or two and then the Gores came to tea. He looks a bit worn, partly because he worries about his wife who is ill at home (he has his sister with him here). M was up for dinner.

27<sup>th</sup> - Went to Rangu after breakfast where I spent the morning working in office and looking at some cases. Wyndham arrived during the morning and went on to Yambio. Had lunch with Jabbour and so back to Y. Played a few holes of golf with A and W. Tiger went out at lunch time for a few days. I went down to the mission for tea with the Gores. It might be an English vicarage, as one sits in the garden full of roses and flowers with the bulk of the church over-shadowing it in the evening quiet. I wrote before dinner which we had with Mika.

28<sup>th</sup> - Walked down to the mission with W to show him round and so back to breakfast. Poor M now has a cold, life's just one damn thing ... for her at the moment. I decided after breakfast that I'd have another day's holiday. Played golf with W and then back to drink beer with M and found that she'd produced caviar as well. W set off for Meridi and I spent rest of morning reading. Wrote after lunch and then A and I played golf and M came and sat and watched. The three of us had dinner in A's house.

*Richard Wyndham gives an account of his visit in The Gentle Savage, which was published a year later. Before reaching Source Yubu, he spent three days at the rest house in Mabu, where Tom stayed regularly.*

As we approached Mabu, the vegetation became more and more luxuriant, and the road crossed numerous streams. At the crossings the forest had been cleared, and the

water dammed into pools for washing; but if one looked down their course, these rivers disappeared into dark tunnels of green. Within a few miles of Mabu, smooth, flat, granite hills appeared, some of them several hundred feet high. Feathery green trees had forced their way between the narrow fissures in the rock, their white trunks flattened and twisted, like the growth of a tape-worm. Ferns and aloes grew on every ledge of soil. Between the hills was high lush grass.

The road descended sharply, with a series of bends, into an open valley, and I could see the rest-house standing in an amphitheatre of rocks. Beyond was undulating country, covered in thick forest. The sun was setting and only touched the highest trees; below, where the village lay, everything was cool, damp, and green. I could hear the rush of a small river. It was difficult to believe this was Africa; it would have seemed natural to have heard sheep bells, and whistling of a plough-boy on his way home, to have smelt the acrid scent of shag, seen lamps being lit in stone cottages, and to have slept the night in a village inn; for this green landscape, set with weathered granite, the cool murmur of the stream, reminded me of a sheltered valley in the Yorkshire dales.

There were only a dozen huts in the village, and they stood apart from each other in gardens of cassava, maize, and sesame. The walls were decorated with geometrical designs and figures executed in white, black, and burnt sienna. ...

I left Mabu after breakfast so as to reach my next destination - Source Yubu - in time for lunch. Aginejok had sent me a letter of introduction to a Doctor Wallace,<sup>109</sup> who was in charge of the sleeping-sickness settlement. The road ran through gently undulating country; and from every hilltop I could see ridge after ridge of low, dense forest stretching blue to the horizon. The forest ended within a hundred yards of the road, the intervening ground being a luxurious vegetable garden of manioc, sweet potatoes, banana palms, sesame, and maize. There were no villages; but now and again I would catch a glimpse of two or three huts standing together in a circular clearing. ... Motoring along this grass track, between these high banks of green, was like travelling along a derelict canal. ...

We passed over a last, almost imperceptible slope on to a narrow plateau which was the Nile-Congo divide. Suspended across the road, silhouetted against the sky, hung letters cut out of tin:

#### S. S. SETTLEMENT

Huts and gardens now ceased, and the edge of the forest came right up to the track. ... We came to a clearing in the forest; on one side were neat lines of small, whitewashed huts - about a hundred in all. It was here that the sleeping-sickness cases were segregated. On the other side stood three large, thatched buildings - the hospital, office, and surgery. Beyond these again was a smaller settlement of lepers. Having asked the way, we turned down a long avenue of magnolias which led to the doctor's house. I was expecting the usual red-brick bungalow, but this house was built on lines that suggested "Colonial architecture": white-washed walls, and a high-pitched thatch roof sloping over an open veranda. The garden had been laid out with the magnificence of the seventeenth century; there were wide avenues bordered by magnolias and limes,

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<sup>109</sup> From the Introduction to *The Gentle Savage*: "Realizing the Government officials' dislike of publicity, I have not mentioned them under their own names". Aginejok was the Dinka name for Jack Poole, the author's host for two months, and Dr Wallace is Tom.





*"House designed and built by EWTM of ironstone blocks. Ironstone when first exposed to air is quite soft and can be trimmed with an axe." (Tom on back)*

and each led up to a statue,<sup>110</sup> which was silhouetted against a vista of many miles. Between the avenues were lawns, set with beds of roses and lilies. Twenty Zande gardeners were at work.

A servant, white-robed and turbaned, stood bowing at the door; and having first carried in my luggage and brought me a glass of Tio Pepe, he explained (through Fred [Wyndham's driver]) that the doctor was operating, and would not be back until three.

*While waiting, the author amuses himself by trying to picture Tom from the books, records, glasses and other contents of the house. His account of this ends:*

I put my head round the bedroom door: golf-clubs lying in a corner; only one photograph; a rain chart; and a lion cub asleep on the bed. Puzzling, most puzzling! I went back into the living-room and sat down to work it out: a seventeenth-century garden, Tio Pepe and Van Gogh, Gibbon, Coward, Mozart and Gracie Fields; '65 brandy, golf-clubs, and a lion; I gave up.

*The last sentence is foot-noted: "The doctor, who is now (I hope) my lifelong friend, complains that some of the books and records were not his own." The next chapter, "A Sleeping-sickness Settlement", describes his stay, with some poetic licence – Source Yubu is 30 miles from the place where the three frontiers meet.*

Doctor Wallace's house had an advantage over most country houses in England, in that there is a variety of amusing things for a guest to do. Instead of the usual round of visiting the stables, admiring a prize herd of Frisian cattle, or staring at a goldfish in a

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<sup>110</sup> Wyndham has earlier described the wooden statues in the settlement: "it would seem that they have been carved at the requests of successive white men – first a missionary, now an English doctor – who have lived here in solitude, fighting the most horrible of all tropical diseases. ... Some are probably intended to be portraits of doctors who are 'practicing' peacefully in England today. At least one of the artists is still living, and, had I been able to transport it, I could have acquired a masterpiece eighteen feet high for a packet of salt, or a few torn up bills."

pond, here, at Source Yubu, it is possible to pass an afternoon in a most original manner, without ever leaving the garden. A visitor can stand, for instance, with one foot in the Belgian Congo, the other in French Equatorial Africa, while the point of his walking-stick still rests on Anglo-Egyptian soil.<sup>111</sup> Or he can explore the tributaries of the Congo River on one side of the lawn and, on the other, tributaries of the Nile – trickles of crystal water falling from maidenhair ferns.

### ***Source Yubu, 13 June 1935***

*(franked Juba 17 June, Cairo 20 June, reached Adelaide 6 July)*

If by the way you ever want to write to me by airmail, then address the letter c/o Postmaster Juba, Mongalla Province, Sudan. Juba is on the Cape to Cairo route and letters from Australia would change on to it at Cairo. I had a letter from Loo who said that the Jubilee celebrations were unbelievable – crowds of 80,000 and more outside Buckingham Palace day and night singing the national anthem and “For he’s a jolly good fellow”. Humphrey Butler, who is the Duke of Kent’s equerry, told them that H M was very touched buy it all and looked very happy and ten years younger.

The local news of note is that the outcome of the meeting of the governors of southern provinces and the GG at Malakal is that Bahr el Ghazal Province is no more. The old southern district of B el G was handed over to Mongalla at the beginning of this year and now the rest of it has been incorporated in Mongalla P as well. B el G was a province that had a tradition of good governors and DCs in the past, and in any case I’m antipathetic to innovations. Moreover, this amalgamation seems to serve no useful purpose.

29<sup>th</sup> May - Mika, A and I had breakfast together and then I set off. Stopped at Rangu for a little while and then on going the long way round by Buma to look at the dispensary, I got to within 30 miles of Yubu and then had a puncture and from then on I had endless trouble – both the original wheel and my spare developed valve trouble and I was finally picked up by a passing lorry about ten miles from Yubu and didn’t get in until after 9 pm.

30<sup>th</sup> - Usual routine. The cows continue to do well and no more have died. It will be an interesting experiment to see if they can do well here, and the whole thing has only cost about £28 – no, not my money.

31<sup>st</sup> - Set out to do Renzi N and W inspection. I took the lorry as there are several things that need doing to my car and which I haven’t had time for. I found two cases on the first day, both of which I think were infected at the place I know of on the main road quite near. This was the usual SS inspection of which I am quite tired. They are boring and it is the worst feature of this job as I’ve said before. I finished on the 6<sup>th</sup> and got home in time for a late lunch. Nothing exciting had happened in my absence except that A S had had fever. He gets far too much nibbling on and off fever – I think northerners stand the climate worse than we do – they’ve never been used to the damp and humidity of the rains. I heard from Soubigon, who is coming on the 20<sup>th</sup> to meet Tiger, that “*mon cher camarade*” M le Docteur Thibault is also coming – a nasty little man. As A S has had this fever I am going to do an inspection for him which is rather a nuisance.

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<sup>111</sup> The three borders actually meet some 50 km south of Source Yubu.

8<sup>th</sup> - Just as I was setting out a lorry came from Wau with the rest of the cows – we now have 16 cows in calf and two Dinka herdsmen. Also a letter from Jack Cumming to say that he and Mrs Ingleson, the wife of the governor Wau, would be in Yubu on the 14<sup>th</sup>. He is escorting her as far as Yubu from where she is going on to Juba to meet her husband who has just flown up to see Darfur Province which he is going to take over at the end of the year. This is a nuisance as I have arranged to go on to Rangu at the end of this inspection as I shall already be more than half way along the road.

9<sup>th</sup>–14<sup>th</sup> - SS inspection which finished early on the morning of the 14<sup>th</sup>, so on to Rangu where I saw Jabbour and then arranged to come up tomorrow for work. On to Yambio where I discovered them all in great form, but Mika not looking very well I thought. They are expecting Nalder at any moment. As we were playing golf he arrived. We had previously promised to go to the mission for tea, but when N arrived I went off as a “burnt offering” and had tea and chatted at the mission. Gore and his sister came to dinner. The pleasure of companionship must have made me very talkative for at one stage of the evening I found myself expressing my views on the “nationalism” or otherwise of 17<sup>th</sup> century English music!! On second thoughts, it was probably beer!

15<sup>th</sup> - Spent the morning at Rangu and had lunch with Jabbour then back to Yambio in time for golf. Mrs Ingleson arrived after tea having left Yambio the same day. She is a very cheery soul and we had a chatty and noisy dinner party. The mail van came in this evening and brought me four letters from you.

### **Source Yubu, 6 July 1935**

*(franked Juba 15 July, Cairo 18 July)*

In case I should forget it later, I am going on leave in August – leaving Khartoum via Egypt on the 27<sup>th</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup> and so should be in London about the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> September. I'll stay at the United Sports Club for a week or two and then look about for a flat. Today I had a bunch of letters from you, all quite unexpectedly.

*Much of the rest of the letter responds to his parents' news and questions.*

As usual, I've been caught on the hop with a lorry passing through unexpectedly. It is a wretched nuisance not having any regular communication between here and Yambio. No sooner did I get your letter commiserating with me on my “fire” than I discovered a further loss of 16 bottles of whiskey only this time. Since the fire, I kept a drink book and made Mohammed tell me each time he took a bottle out. I checked it with the stock from time to time and one day I found that what should have been a full case of whiskey contained only four bottles and that an ostensibly unopened case, when opened on suspicion, was found to contain only six bottles. It is a great nuisance when you have lots of other work to do to have to keep the keys of one's store oneself. They are always wanting things out of it at odd moments and you have to get up and go and open the store. Now I'll have to wait several weeks before Tiger can come over and try Mohammed – for I am sure he is the culprit. On my return from leave I'm to go to Wau to take over from Cruickshank. I think I shall like that. I apologise for this scrappy note, but as I said, there's an unexpected opportunity to get one off.

## Source Yubu, 21 July 1935

(finished 24 July, franked Cairo 5 August, reached Adelaide 19 August)

It's Sunday afternoon and there is a heavy thunderstorm. The landscape outside the window is quite blotted out 200 yds away; what was a few minutes ago dry earth is now covered with water, rushing off in great sheets down the slightest incline. It's the sort of rain that finds out the weak spots in the thatch and I hear several drips on the ceiling now. This morning I was trying to design some furniture. Most of the stuff in this house belongs to the station and I shall need some new bits in Wau. I'm going to get the mission in Wau to do it for me. They have a lay brother who is a good carpenter and turns out presentable stuff. I'm starting off with sitting room furniture: a writing table; book case; sofa; and two chairs. If they make these well and they turn out as I see them in my mind's eye, I shall get some dining room furniture for which I have some plans in my head. The sitting room furniture will, I hope, be finished while I am on leave. I'm not attracted by the usual practice out here which is to buy one's furniture at other people's sales. One's house usually ends up looking like an empty second-hand sale room.

Leave is getting quite close now. I find that Alex Cruickshank and I are going together as far as Khartoum and, I hope, on to England. I'm glad as he is a good companion. It seems that there may be 9 or 10 of us in Wau next year, despite the fact that it will no longer be a province hqs. If that is so, we may get polo going again with luck. It used to be a good place for station polo years ago but has lapsed recently. The only local excitement that I've had recently was the news, in a letter from the French administrateur, that a fellow named Stagni, an Italian coffee planter and elephant hunter in his area had apparently gone berserk in Bangassou (a nice bit of alliteration!). B is the administrative hqs of the subdivision. Apparently suspecting that his wife was about to leave him, he killed two Portuguese, wounded his wife, a Portuguese woman, and a Frenchman and then committed suicide. In Soubigon's words, "*Il voulait encore tuer un russe, un belge et un portugais*". What stopped him doing that I don't know, perhaps he ran out of ammunition. I was talking to a Greek merchant from the French side about it, and he said, "*c'est la vie, M le Docteur*", which is, I suppose, about as near as you can get to the answer. Abu Shamma has been having rather a lot of fever lately so I'm trying to get him off for a little leave later on.

Yes, I've collected a few heads from time to time but you really need an ancestral hall to put them in. I'm always reminded of the woman in Punch entertaining some friends in a room, the walls of which are plastered with innumerable heads, with the caption "Yes, of course my husband was passionately fond of animals". I would very much like to photograph but that takes up much more time and requires more skill. Jack Poole at Tonj has some very good photos, particularly of elephant. Photography should be easier north of Wau than it is here as there it is open savannah and here it is more bushy and forested. I'm afraid I've got awfully behind with my daily doings and haven't the remotest idea where I left off last. Did I tell you that after the French visit I had two days holiday at Mabu with Tiger, Mika and Arbuthnot? The Inglesons joined us for the last day. It is a pleasant spot off the road to Wau amongst some granite hills. Behind the rest house there is a natural swimming pool made by a great cleft in the granite. There is a waterfall into it at one end and out at the other. We bathed there before breakfast and again in the afternoon, taking a picnic tea. It

was most enjoyable and we were all in good spirits. One of those occasions when we all found something to laugh about all day.

The following weekend, 29<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> June, Cave came to stay. I think I've told you about him. He's a jolly fellow, the Bimb at Wau and belongs to the Rifle Brigade and has pots of money. We spent a lot of time in the forest looking for birds – he's very keen and is collecting skins for the British Museum. When C arrived, Arbuthnot was here for the night and it was then that we discovered that more drink was missing. Tiger is going to try the case when he comes over on Thursday. Nothing happened of any interest until the 22<sup>nd</sup> July, last Monday. I had expected Alex and Poole to come to stay for a few days from the 10<sup>th</sup> but P got fever so they didn't come. On Monday I went over to Rangu, leaving early in the morning. I stopped at Diawo to see Larken for a few minutes. He is going home in August and September and he doesn't want to go too early otherwise he'll miss the pheasants. I got on to Rangu and found Jabbour had gone to Yambio for lunch so I went straight on, arriving there at about 2.30 pm and in the middle of lunch. There I found Tiger and Mika and Bill Tunnicliffe (T's brother-in-law – he married Alison Wyld). We played golf in the afternoon, went to A's for tea and so all to dinner with T and M. 23<sup>rd</sup> I went for a walk with T before breakfast after which I went to Rangu, did an operation and some office work and so home here. Which brings me up to today, 24<sup>th</sup>, which has been the normal office and hospital day.

### ***On the river, 22 August 1935***

*(franked Cairo 26 August, reached Adelaide 9 September)*

Here I am off on leave. We get to Khartoum on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> and I'm going through Egypt and across Italy, reaching home on the 7<sup>th</sup> of September. The last week or two at Yubu were the last-before-leave rush and packing up and so on were complicated by the loss of Mohammed. Tiger was going to try him in Yubu for the theft of the drinks but at the last minute I relented, weakly I suppose. He had been a good servant to me in many ways however, and I didn't like to think of him in prison in what to him is a foreign land. So I discharged him and sent him off. Abu Shamma, my Sudanese MO, has had rather a lot of fever recently so I arranged for him to go off on leave. Alex Cruickshank came and stayed with me for two days on his way to Juba where I caught up with him on Saturday. He and I are going home together. I left Yubu on the 14<sup>th</sup> and stayed a night at Yambio and just past Amadi on the road. Arrived in Juba in time for lunch on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> and left on Sunday morning. Beside Alex, on board we have one Major Logan Gray, DC Yei, and also a party of American tourists. Among them is an interesting man, a dentist with a national reputation in America who has for some years been travelling around the world investigating the relation of diet to dental decay and TB in primitive races. He has amassed some very interesting and important facts.

We get to Malakal tomorrow where I'm going to have breakfast with Bill Tunnicliffe [Inspector of Police]. He's feeling a bit lonely at the moment as Andy has just gone home to have a baby. The Italo-Abyssinian affair seems to be at a standstill. They cannot move until September. It seems inevitable that Italy will attack – a monstrous affair. If they do, they'll get more than they bargain for – the type of country will render their aeroplanes nearly useless. If they penetrate on land to Addis, which they may do fairly easily although it will require a large army, it will take them many years and untold wealth to conquer and

subdue the countryside itself. I don't expect that opinion will be unanimous enough to render the League in anyway an effective stop to Italy. Whether they go to war or not, the whole situation seems to me extremely serious.

### ***United Sports Club, 12 September 1935***

*(franked London 14 September, arrived Adelaide 30 September)*

Alex C and I stayed in Khartoum with Charles Crouch. We arrived on Monday afternoon and left on Wednesday morning. Our time was mostly spent doing odd jobs and in the office. The journey by train to Halfa, boat to Shellal and train to Cairo was not unpleasant for the time of year. The usual swarm of sticky Egyptian flies boarded us as we crossed the border. We arrive in Cairo on Saturday morning and thence at one to Alexandria where we caught the *Esperia* to Genoa – a comfortable boat and good food. Alex and Logan Gray and I forming a party. We had a few hours at Syracuse but didn't go ashore. We spent the morning of Tuesday at Naples and Alex and I "tripped" to Pompeii – well worth while. We went to look at a coral shop on the way – I had no idea it was so expensive. We were shown a rope of plain coral beads about three feet long, the largest about half an inch in diameter, the price of which was 64,000 lira – about £1,000. We arrived at Genoa on Wednesday morning, the 4<sup>th</sup> September. As this was the day of the League meeting, we anticipated some excitement but we saw no evidence of it. We caught the Rome express in the evening and Alex and I shared a through sleeper to Calais which we reached at about 3.30 pm on Thursday. The crossing was rather unpleasant. The Duke and Duchess of Kent were onboard travelling as ordinary 1<sup>st</sup> class passengers. She is quite attractive looking and they seemed happy together. We got to Victoria at 7 pm and I came straight to the Club where I had booked a room. Poor Alex fears he had a duodenal ulcer and has just gone into New Lodge Clinic near Windsor to be investigated. I'm going down to see him on Sunday.

*The letters from London that follow are largely taken up with news of family and friends, social events and theatre going. Tom's younger brother, John, and his family were living close to London and Tom went to the christening of their second child, Angela.*

### ***Kensington Palace Mansion, 27 September 1935***

*(arrived Adelaide 12 October)*

I have a small flat in this place. There is service and valeting and a restaurant on the ground floor and one can have meals sent up. It is comfortable and quite handy. I've bought a small car, a Wolsey, handy for town and economical with petrol. It is a sports model saloon with a sunshine roof. The people from whom I bought it have guaranteed to buy it back at the end of my leave. London looks much the same as ever. The most noticeable thing being the "Belisha Beacons" at crossing places – like jaffa oranges on the ends of anaemic barbers' poles. Many of the big buildings are either permanently or occasionally floodlit – an attractive innovation. Last Sunday I went to the clinic to see Alex. A nursing home supposed to be run on up-to-date lines with complete equipment and sponsored by Hirst. He wasn't very impressed with the efficiency of the place. It's an old private house in attractive surroundings.

### ***United Sports Club, 5 October 1935***

*(franked Kensington 11 October, arrived Adelaide 26 October)*

I think it is grand of you to entertain the idea of letting Ginge come to the Sudan. I hope it comes off. I've answered your point about quinine in my letter to Ginge. I'm leaving the flat I'm now living in at the end of next week as I find it rather expensive and not frightfully good. I've found some quite nice rooms in Upper Berkley Square, quite near Marble Arch. Next weekend I'm going to stay with Dick Wyndham at his mill.

### ***United Sports Club, 18 October 1935***

*(arrived Adelaide 11 November)*

I do hope Ginge that your fears are unfounded and that you'll find a boat to bring you. If you do this will not arrive much before you depart. Last weekend was the outstanding event since I last wrote to you. I spent it with Dick Wyndham. You'll remember he stayed for a few days with me in Yubu. He is an artist and has a delightful house near Uckfield in Sussex at a village called Blackboys. It is an old water mill which he bought and restored and added a wing to. It has been very skilfully done and is all in keeping. The mill pool makes a delightful swimming pool in summer. He has bought about 200 acres around him which he rents to a local farmer. Altogether a charming place. When I add that he has an excellent cellar of wine – a subject on which he is an expert – and a good married couple, the female half of which is a good cook, you will realise that I enjoyed myself. I drove down on Friday afternoon and arrived about 5 pm in the dusk to find that Jack Poole had arrived just before me. Dick was in Brighton but I was welcomed by a grand fire and tea. Dick returned later and we dined at 8 pm. [He then lists the menu and wine list "for father's envy".] Saturday was a delightful day for October, warm and sunny. We loafed about all the morning, walked to the village inn for beer and then bread and cheese and beer outside for lunch. Then by car to Haywards' Heath where we picked up one Curtis Moffat,<sup>112</sup> a friend of Dick's, and on to Piltdown to play golf. A pretty little course and we had an enjoyable game which my bad play couldn't mar. So home, stopping on the way to buy fish after a gastronomic discussion on fish in general with the fishmonger. Tea, talk – the latter most entertaining – and so to dinner. Again you shall have the bill of fare: it speaks for itself [menu and wine list follows]. Sunday was another delightful day. After breakfast Jack and I spent the time reading the proofs of the opening chapters of a book that Dick is writing about his trip to the Sudan. After beer and cheese we set off to Ashdown Forest where, by starting just as people were coming in to lunch, we had a pleasant unhurried round. A good course from a golfing viewpoint if a little uphill and down dale, but from a scenic point of view, it is quite charming. Delightful views of the rolling downs and near at hand little villages hidden in the folds. We were never out of the sound of church bells. A pleasant drive home to a warm fire and tea and then in due course dinner [another menu and wine list follows] – one course devised and tenderly watched over by Curtis M who is no mean cook. We had decided that we would play golf at Brighton in the morning and go to the Brighton races on Monday afternoon. After dinner we were discussing how we would make money at the races and we all decided that as Richards, owing to a spill, had not ridden for a fortnight, he was certain to ride several winners. So the obvious thing to do was to have a mixed double on everything that R rode. In the

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<sup>112</sup> Edwin Curtis Moffat (1887-1949), London-based American photographer, painter and interior designer.

morning Jack's leg was rather painful and he didn't play golf but the three of us went off and had nearly a full round. Jack met us at the club house and we had lunch there, and so to the race course. It was a pleasant day's racing on a course overlooking the downs and sea. Jack, after all our talk the night before, was the only sensible one and he had run up his bookmaker on the way to the course. Richards rode four winners and so Jack made over £70 – had there not been an over-ruled objection, he would have made £140. After the races Jack went off to Chilham where he is staying and Dick went back to Blackboys and I drove C M to town, and so ended a delightful weekend.

### ***United Sports Club, 9 November 1935***

*(franked 10 November, arrived Adelaide 4 December)*

As you will have guessed, I am leaving towards the end of this month – the 24<sup>th</sup> I expect although I may put it off until the 28<sup>th</sup>. I am still not quite sure about Ginge's moves. As you know, the Sudan Office is only just an agency here and so they have neither authority nor reliable information. At the moment it seems unlikely there will be any necessity to direct shipping around the Cape. My own impression is, and always has been, that Italy will soon be so involved with Abyssinia that she will be in no position to interfere with anyone else. I very much doubt her ability – either financial or moral – to bring even the Abyssinian campaign to a successful conclusion. If the As play their hand well they can prosecute a type of warfare which it is impossible for European troops to contest. We've only got to look at the East African campaign during the last war and the NW Frontier to realise that, and I am sure that Mussolini hasn't been able to improve the Italian morale so as to make them comparable to British troops. He is to my mind merely following the usual course of a dictator, a parallel to which you will find many in history, and his end will be the same. All that will be sixpence – I've just had an enormous dinner and a good bottle of claret. I'm feeling full of bonhomie and rather short of breath! The best thing I've seen since I last wrote is a John Gielgud production of Romeo and Juliet. J G was Mercutio and he, Edith Evans as the nurse, and Peggy Ashcroft as Juliet were all excellent. The Romeo I didn't care for so much.

I went to a very amusing fireworks party at Tickerage Mill last Monday. Dick gives it every year, mainly for the villagers, who turn up in full force for fireworks, cakes and ale, but he also has a number of friends down. The performance started with what the papers would call a lavish display of fireworks on some rising ground on the far side of the mill pond. This was followed by Sir Guy and Lady Fawkes (David Tennant and "Birdie" Hillier) attended by an effigy of Mussolini and three Abyssinian slaves crossing the pond in a punt lit by floodlights. Next the bonfire was lit and then Dick and four others dressed as firemen rescued Birdie, who had on a nightgown and a pair of stays Dick had bought in Lewes, from a top floor window – a most realistic semblance of fire having first been produced by magnesium ribbon in the fireplace. This went down frightfully well with the locals. Then the party became rather riotous and fireworks were let off all over the house. How it was never set alight I can't imagine. A very good party.



## ***SS Malda, 28 November 1935***

*(franked Port Said 30 November, arrived Adelaide 16 December)*

Here we are going back from leave. I didn't have what you'd call an enormous leave as the exam wasn't over until Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November and I left London on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. I didn't tell you that I was going to have a go at the final fellowship [of the Royal College of Surgeons] as I'd no idea that I'd any chance of getting through, so I thought that I'd wait, and if I failed then you'd not know anything about it. Directly I got home I joined a course which was going at Barts for the final, as I was told that it was the best one in London. It certainly was very good. I also made use of a correspondence course for practice in writing papers. The papers I thought were easy and I had very good fortune in the vivas, as there was so much that I didn't know that I might have been asked. The formal election takes place on the 21<sup>st</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup> of December after which I shall be a fellow. I got the result on Saturday afternoon as soon as the vivas were finished. I went and sent off a cable to you and then went and had a drink with Joe Bryant and then a spot of dinner, a show and so to bed. I motored down to Tickerage on Sunday morning – pouring with rain the whole way. I found Dick and Symons<sup>113</sup> out for a walk. The latter is a writer and secretary to the Food and Wine Society. Tristram Hillier<sup>114</sup> was in the kitchen cooking a Spanish dish for lunch and Tom Driberg,<sup>115</sup> who is on the staff on the Daily Express, was reading in front of the fire. We had an excellent lunch with delightful wines [menu and wine list follow, as they do for the dinner]. The conversation after dinner was most interesting, Symons in particular is a most stimulating talker (and could forge anyone's signature on sight). I left on Monday morning. Wednesday and Thursday were spent rushing round doing things which I'd put off until the exams were over. I lunched on Thursday with the Logan Grays. On Friday evening John [his brother] came and dined with me at Pruniers and so on to see "Night must fall", a play written by a young Welshman, Emlyn Williams, who plays the principal part. It was rather an amusing thriller. I caught the 11 pm boat train to Paris from Victoria. Logan Gray and Vickers-Mills, both from the Sudan, are on board. I shared a sleeper with the former and he took me to lunch at a restaurant the proprietor of which was an interpreter to the 60<sup>th</sup> during the war. He gave us the most excellent lunch and wines. There is little to report about this boat which has a singularly dull crowd of people on board.

## ***On the river, 19 December 1935***

*(franked Juba 20 December and Cairo "Par Avion" 23 December, reached Adelaide 4 January)*

I'm feeling very old today. I think I'll give up having birthdays. I found Ginge in Khartoum looking very well and attractive. The journey from Port Said to Port Sudan was uneventful and unusually cool, almost cold. We arrived early on Wednesday morning to find ourselves doomed to spend until Friday in Port S, thus leaving us only 24 hours in Khartoum. A great nuisance, as there was a great deal I needed to do there and nothing I needed to do in P S. On Wednesday I potted about and had a swim in the afternoon in the new swimming bath. In the evening Logan Gray and I gave dinner to two rather jolly

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<sup>113</sup> Alphonse James Albert Symons (1900-1941), in 1933 co-founder with André Simon of the Wine & Food Society.

<sup>114</sup> Tristram Paul Hillier RA (1905-1983), surrealist painter.

<sup>115</sup> Thomas Driberg (1905-1976), Lord Bradwell, Chairman of the Labour Party 1957-8.

women off the boat - Vickers-Mills joining us. It was quite an amusing party with both V-M and L G being in very good anecdotal form. I drove the girls back to the ship and they sailed at midnight. On Thursday afternoon I was inveigled by Springfield into playing polo. Stuart David mounted me for two chukkas and S for one. As this was the first time I'd played polo, and almost the first time I'd ridden, for four years you can imagine how sore I was for the next few days. I went back to tea with the Springfields and then dined with the Davids. They were jolly good to Ginge when she came through P S. I discovered Larken staying at the pub on his way home. He'd been very ill and looked it. I got the latest Yambio news from him. The complement of both British troops and RAF in the Sudan has recently been greatly increased, as a sort of demonstration I suppose. I hear that the Italians in Eritrea have gone quite off their rockers and are openly toasting the day when they conquer Egypt and the Sudan. An idle hope, as they'll never deal with Abyssinia. We had the usual train journey to Khartoum where we arrived on Saturday evening. They all met me in the car at Khartoum North and Ginge came around in the train with me. Several people came down to the train to meet me and the Crouches drove me to Pridie's house where I bathed and changed and so to the Crouches for a drink. We dined with the Hillarys and then Ginge and B M and John Cumming and self went and danced at the pub. Quite amusing and we saw a number of people I knew. Sunday was a colossal rush, trying to fit four days' work into one. This was made worse by the fact that I'd to lunch at the palace at 1 pm which broke into the morning. So I didn't get the half done. We caught the train on Sunday evening for Kosti and so onto the steamer on Monday morning. We found Jack Poole on the train, he having come through Egypt. He told us that there were 67 warships in Alexandria harbour. He has a sister who is private secretary to Sir George Clerk and Jack always stays a night or two at the embassy on his way through Paris. Sir G told him at dinner this time that he didn't anticipate any European spread of the Italo-Abyssinian war so long as we kept our heads. We've had the usual rather dull journey down the river and arrive at Juba in an hour or two. We shall probably stay a night there and then set off for Yubu. I had expected a letter from Tiger in Terakeka but as I didn't hear I'm not quite sure about Xmas but I expect we shall probably spend it at Yambio. We expect to go to Wau about the end of January. Oy! You! Doctor! You forgot to have your daughter inoculated with TAB but it's all right as I've remembered it before it's too late.

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it before it's too late. My love to You. Bob

## 1936 – Source Yubu and Wau

We have only three letters from 1936. Tom's sister, Ginger, was staying with him for much of the year and was writing home with their news.

### Source Yubu, 20 January 1936

(franked Juba 24 January, arrived Adelaide 11 February)

Ginge seems quite well and is, I believe, enjoying herself. We were, as you know, held up in Juba and didn't get away until the 5<sup>th</sup> January. That day we had the misfortune to break down and only just managed to crawl to a rest house. Next morning revealed that the engine was out of order beyond our means to repair it, so I had to write a note to Mrs Fraser at Sui, 24 miles away, and ask her to send it on the



16 miles to Amadi to get a lorry and mechanic with spare parts. Owing to a combination of circumstances, we were not rescued until the afternoon of the 7<sup>th</sup>. We spent the night at Sui and got on without mishap to Yambio the next day. That was our second failure to meet Tiger and Mika in time: the first was the Xmas fishing trip and the second a party in the evening of the 6<sup>th</sup> for Tiger's birthday, which we would have arrived in time for had we not broken down. Tiger had arranged a special witch doctor's dance which I'm sorry Ginge missed. We spent two days at Yambio and I then came on here leaving G with T and M who brought her over two days later. On arrival here I found Morrison, Tiger's Assistant DC - he's new and came to replace Arbuthnot. I spent the next two days finding out what had been happening in my absence and then on the evening of the 13<sup>th</sup> went off to Tambura to meeting T, M and G.

14<sup>th</sup> was devoted to the annual chiefs' meeting. They've just finished building the new brick dispensary at Tambura and they seem to have done it very well.

15<sup>th</sup> T and Morrison and I spent the whole day out, partly walking and partly motoring, looking for a new site for the central chiefs' court as T is not satisfied with the present site. We hadn't much luck as we weren't able to find either a very attractive site or one that was suitable from an SS point of view.

16<sup>th</sup> I came back here and T, M and G went off up the Bo road. They came back here for breakfast on the 18<sup>th</sup> and left early on the 19<sup>th</sup> for Yambio. G is to stay with T and M until the 29<sup>th</sup> when they go off to take M to Juba on her way on leave. G then goes to the Woodmans for a few days. At the moment I'm busy clearing up and packing up in the house and trying to get straight in the office and write some "taking over" notes for Hunt.

### Wau, 12 April 1936

(franked Juba 17 April, reached Adelaide 4 May)

Well, I have been resting on Ginge's oars so to speak! But the slightest excuse is enough for me to let myself off writing any letters. She seems to have written to you fairly regularly

and given you all the news. She seems to be fit herself (touch wood) and is I think enjoying herself, although the heat is a bit trying. It should be much cooler directly the rains break however. As for me, I am very well and enjoying life. I'm very glad to have got away from all the odds and ends of work in Yubu such as SS inspections etc. Here there is much more general medical work to do and not much administrative or office work, or so it seems to me after Yubu. The hospital has about 140 beds and to look after it 20 native dressers, two trained senior dressers (they would correspond, I think, to sub-assistant surgeons in the Indian Medical Service), and one Sudanese medical officer. We also have two sisters (Italian) from the mission. They run the female wards and in addition, the better of them does theatre work. We have 16 dispensaries dotted about in four districts, which have to be supplied and controlled. By the time we both get our leave in, it means that Cochrane and I are only together here for about four months in each year, but that is usually during the dry season which is the busy time, especially for looking at dispensaries, as some of them cannot be got at in the rains except by a long trek on foot or pony. Cochrane has just gone off on leave in order to be back by the time we wish to go. I think we will catch a boat which leaves Port Sudan about the 20<sup>th</sup> August, which means leaving here at the end of July. I think Ginge told you that we saw our ponies when we were in Aweil. They have since arrived here. As they have just done a very long trek through dry country, they were a bit poop when they arrived, particularly the gray, but they'll soon put on condition here. Clifford Drew bought them for me in Fasher from a man named Hope. They are schooled and have played polo. They are both geldings, one a bay, a big pony for a c.b., about 14 ½ and big-boned. He's quite a good make and shape – a roman nose and rather a coarse head like most c.bs, but they both have a good deal better neck than the average c.b. which is short, thick and heavy and makes them difficult to school. The gray is a smaller and lighter pony and his one fault is that he is a bit long in the back, but I don't think that will be so obvious when he has a bit more condition on him. He looks as though he has some Arab blood and has quite a good head. They are both good and comfortable rides and both ride as if they've been well schooled, although it's all walking and trotting so far until they are a bit fitter.

*On 14 July 1936, "Morris Wau" received the following from Richard Wyndham:*

Cable from Dick begins books in post superlative reviews already in second edition booze like hell but don't lend ends

*His copy of The Gentle Savage is inscribed "Tom with all best wishes and gratitude from Dick".*

### ***Khartoum, 6 December 1936***

*(franked Malakal 11 December, reached Adelaide 25 December)*

Here I am at the end of a week's stay in Khartoum. The most important news, for me at any rate, is that I have been transferred to Darfur Province. The reason for this is the vacancy caused by the death of Waldo Wallace – Ginge can probably tell you about him. I view the change with mixed feelings. It is a bigger job – I shall be in charge of a whole province – and there is a lot of work to do. It is a very pleasant part of the country and a good and healthy climate. It is the centre of nomadic Arab horse breeding and is consequently a very horsey place, and horses are plentiful and cheap. Against it is the fact that I should have liked longer in Wau, that I liked the place, and that I loathe the idea of shifting with all its packing up etc. I am going to Wau now to pack up and then I have two

alternatives. In any case, my furniture etc must go from Meshra by steamer to Kosti and then by train to El Obeid and then by lorry up the Fasher road. I shouldn't think that any of it will be left by the time it arrives. My first plan is to try and get directly from Wau northward through Aweil and across the Bahr el Arab and so to southern Darfur where there will be several horse shows in early January. I've rather vague ideas as to what these horse shows are except that they seem to be social events, but I'll let you know more later. If the Bahr el Arab is still too high to be crossed then I shall have to go with my kit via Kosti. My address for ordinary letters and parcels will be c/o Postmaster Khartoum as before. For airmail letters El Fasher, Darfur Province, Khartoum. This will be quite quick as Fasher is on the new West African air route from Khartoum. Cables MORRIS EL FASHER.

We had an uneventful trip as far as Port Sudan where we arrived on the 26<sup>th</sup> at midday. I stayed that night with the Beveridges - he is the SMI there - and so on to Khartoum the next day. We arrived on Saturday evening 28<sup>th</sup> [November] and I was met at the station by Michael and Edwina [Hillary] and taken to their new house. It's on the river front and a great improvement on their old one. I dined with Eric Pridie - he has R K Winter staying with him. He's on the point of leaving for good and looks rather old and tired I think. The following week I spent working most of the morning in the office with Eric and Charles Crouch and most afternoons in a round of gaiety, swimming, tennis, polo etc. I went to some good parties in the evening. Altogether it was a very hectic week and I'm quite glad to be leaving. I lunched at the Palace on Wednesday and discovered that I was the only guest - it was rather exhausting. Lady Symes is out for the first time. She seems very charming and much nicer than he.

### ***On the Nile, 2 January 1937***

*(franked Malakal 2 January, arrived Adelaide 15 January)*

We got to Malakal in the evening and left after dinner. I went and had a drink with the Tunnickliffes. Bill has chucked his hand in and is leaving early this year. We had the usual trip down to Juba. Just outside old Mongalla we saw more elephant than I think I've ever seen before - during the course of Thursday morning we must have seen 400-500. There was one closely packed herd of males, females and littlies (some of which must have been only a few days old) that must have been 150-170 strong and only about 400 yards away from the boat. We got to Juba on Friday morning. I stayed and dined that night with Alex C and off the next morning. I found one of the new lorries waiting for me, a Ford V8 and we fairly slipped along. I stopped at Lui for a moment to say how do you do to Mrs Fraser and found "Beater" James on his way to Yei for Christmas. I pushed on and did the 260 miles to Meridi that night. I met the Browns on the road and found the Routledges in the rest house at Meridi. R was busy training a new hawk he had just caught. I left Meridi the next morning and met Tiger on the road. A General Colville, who was in his regiment and who lives in Kenya, was coming up to stay and fish for Xmas. T was going to M to meet him, but the general was 24 hours late so T left his lorry to go to M to wait for the general and he came back to Yambio with me. Poor Mika had just had chicken pox but was more or less recovered. Coogan had just come back from leave and was full of beans. He'd managed to get some hunting before he left. We played golf that afternoon. The course is much improved and the greens have quite a respectable amount of grass on them. I stayed the next day in Yambio and the general appeared just after lunch. He seems a nice old



man. I left early the next morning hoping to get to Yubu for lunch but I was made to stay in Rangu for lunch. Gun was very well but Hugh had rather a nasty septic rash on his arm as the result of a scratch. They are off on early leave in February for winter sports. I slept that night at Yubu and had a look around the next morning. Hunt has done a lot since I left and the cattle particularly are doing very well. I left after breakfast and reached Wau that night and dined with Cochrane. Next day, Thursday 24<sup>th</sup>, most of Wau went to a bachelors' party at Gogrial. I had to get down to packing, a job which I loathe. In addition, I had to do an emergency operation in the afternoon. Fortunately, the mission were good enough to pack up the furniture they made for me, and very well they did it too. Xmas day I had dinner with the Mackrells<sup>116</sup>, Haig<sup>117</sup> being the other guest. I found the three ponies very well. I played a little tennis and squash and rode a little in the afternoon. On Sunday Dr Shams el Din gave a farewell party for me at which most of the native officials and merchants as well as Britishers were present. It was very decent of him. Packing up was rather hectic and the last day the more I did the more there seemed to be done. I eventually got away at 1.30 pm on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> and arrived at Meshra the same evening. Aurney gave me dinner and I slept on the boat. Next morning I got all my stuff on board and we got away after lunch. So far the trip has been uneventful and we get to Malakal tomorrow.

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My love to you all  
Tom

<sup>116</sup> JEC Mackrell, joined SPS 1929.

<sup>117</sup> JW Haig, joined SPS 1933.

## 1937 - El Fasher

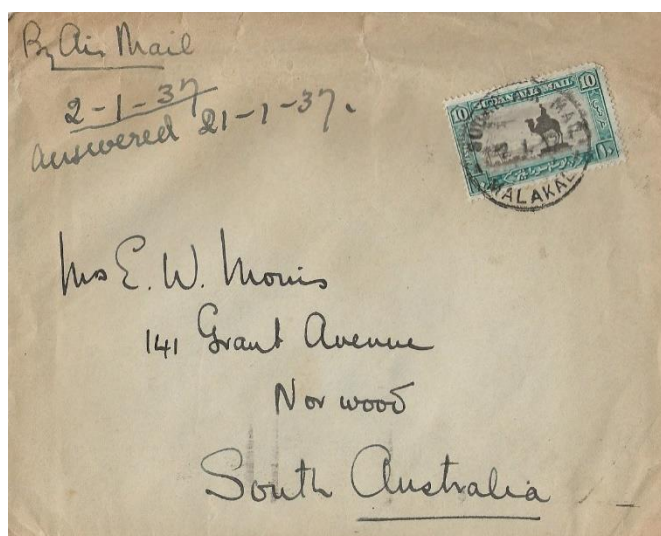
### *El Fasher, 2 February 1937*

*(finished 12 February, franked Fasher 13<sup>th</sup>,  
reached Adelaide 26<sup>th</sup>)*

I can't remember when I last wrote to you but I think it was at El Obeid (*if so, we don't have it*). I got nearly all my stuff onto the three lorries I was allowed, two hired from a merchant and one government. It's a grim three-day journey over rolling sand dunes and scrubby bushes. A good deal of it is bottom gear work and often getting stuck, particularly the govt. lorry which had a new driver, a townee, and he was far

too big a man to take the local country drivers' advice with the result that he frequently stuck. Spent last night before Fasher in Umm Kedada rest house where I found the McDowalls<sup>118</sup> - he is ADC Fasher District - a pleasant couple. Got in rather late to F and found my house quite pleasant. The ground inside the compound is dry and bare but there are beds of cannas and flowering shrubs which improve it and roses will grow quite well. There are very nice brick stables and a harness room and a fireplace! By jove it was needed the first few days after I arrived - it was so cold that I had breakfast by the fire and nearly had lunch there as well! People are very kind here and no sooner had I arrived than my neighbours on either side rushed in to take me to tea: Madden,<sup>119</sup> the DC Fasher District (who won by a short head) and Arkell,<sup>120</sup> the DC Hq. I had tea with the Ms and then on to the Western Arab Corps mess - they have a guest night each Monday to which everyone in the station goes. I already knew Nigel Tapp, the 2<sup>nd</sup> in command, and it was a good opportunity to meet the rest of the people. I stayed to dinner there as the guest to welcome me, the other diners being Guy Moore, DC Kutum, and [JS] Owen, a new ADC just come out.

Spent 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> [January] finding my way about the hospital and calling on the WAC and the DCs etc. Fasher, although sandy, is quite attractive. There are three small groups of barren hills nearby which look attractive in the early and late daylight. The town is built on high ground around a pond of some size which fills up in the rains and gradually empties during the dry season. The whole province of Darfur was once ruled and owned by Sultans, from the last of whom, one Ali Dinar, it was captured in 1917. The governor lives in Ali D's old palace, a picturesque two-storied whitewashed affair. On the 14<sup>th</sup> I had breakfast in the mess and then drove N T to Nyala, the hqs of the southern district, 130 miles south of Fasher. We arrived in the afternoon and had a tea-lunch with Colin Coburn, the second British Officer of the company there. I slept the night in Nyala and the next morning (15<sup>th</sup>) went on 80 miles to Abu Salla where a horse show was in progress. The majority of the tribes in southern D are horse breeders and each year they hold four shows,



<sup>118</sup> KSP McDowall, joined SPS 1930.

<sup>119</sup> JF Madden (1901-?), SPS 1925-1951.

<sup>120</sup> AJ Arkel (1898-1980), SPS 1921-1948.

each of which serves for certain tribes. They are gatherings to which as many as can, come, including the Sheiks ad Nazirs. They serve several purposes. They are tribal gatherings at which old friends may meet and the tribal heads can see the governor and DCs etc. They encourage good horse breeding by prizes for mares, foals and stallions etc (selected stallions get premiums), and there are races for prizes. The vets buy horses for the army etc. We take around a travelling hospital and do a lot of medical work. I arrived to find them judging the foals, and the finals of the races were run in the afternoon. Everyone lives in grass huts put up for the occasion. In the evening everyone sits around a huge wood fire and dines at their various tables in a circle around the fire.

As there didn't seem much to do in the way of work, I left G (did I say that Greany<sup>121</sup> was the other doctor here – a very nice quiet fellow) and went back to Nyala after lunch the next day (16<sup>th</sup>). Had dinner there with Paddy Weir who commands the company there, the others being Governor and wife, a Miss Newall (cousin of Mrs Gov.), and Nigel Tapp. I bought a small female cheetah at Abu Salla, a jolly friendly little beast. She purrs like a cat when pleased. I spent the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> in Nyala looking around the hospital and the town generally. Did a couple of ops and tried to find out something about the district. On the 19<sup>th</sup> I set off for Zalingei, the hq of the western district. Saw a dispensary on the way. The road passes quite close to the Murra range – they go up to over 10,000 feet and have continual running water on the upper slopes. You can grow wheat and all sorts of temperate climate fruits. Arrived at Zalingei in the afternoon, an attractive place high up and surrounded by hills. Hugh Boustead<sup>122</sup> is the DC and Beaton<sup>123</sup> his assistant. Took Osman, my new boy, to hospital as he had fever, brought on by the cold I expect. Dined with Hugh B, the two Beatons being there. Spent 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> there and played polo on the 21<sup>st</sup>, rather ragtime but fun. Left on 22<sup>nd</sup> for Geneina, hq of Dar Masalit area – the most western district in the province. The area belongs to and is ruled by a sultan and has a resident to advise him. The resident was out but the two British officers of the company there, Forbes and Hammersley, were in and I had dinner with the former. There is a branch of the Imperial Airways which runs to West Africa: Khartoum, El Obeid, Fasher, Geneina and across French Sudan to Kano. 23<sup>rd</sup> saw around the hospital. Plane came in and on it Briercliffe, Director Medical Services of Nigeria. The plane only stopped for ¼ hour so I didn't see much of him. Had good game of polo that afternoon and dined with Hammersley in the evening. 24<sup>th</sup> did op before breakfast and then set off for Fasher. Slept that night in Kabkabia and next day into Fasher. That evening, 25<sup>th</sup>, was guest night at the mess (always on a Monday). 26<sup>th</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> February in Fasher. Spent most of the time getting acquainted with the routine hospital work and sanitary work in town. The PWD hadn't decorated my house when I arrived as they had been waiting to know what colours I wanted. Managed to get some of my stuff unpacked and in before I left on the 4<sup>th</sup>. Have been very lucky – the

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<sup>121</sup> WH Greany, joined SMS 1933.

<sup>122</sup> Returning from Adelaide by sea from leave, while having a drink with the ship's doctor, Tom saw a photograph of young naval officers in South Africa. In addition to the doctor, Tom recognized Hugh Boustead, and said he knew him, and would be seeing him soon. "Well, tell that boulder to return my suitcase" replied the doctor. In June 1915 Boustead had deserted from the Royal Navy, with the suitcase, and joined the South African Scots Regiment in order to see action. He went on to win a MC and bar (and a DSO in WW II), and his desertion was officially pardoned.

<sup>123</sup> AC Beaton, joined SPS 1927.



furniture not much damaged and practically no casualties among the glass etc. Set off on 4<sup>th</sup> for Nyala. Must stop now and go off again on tour. This is written on 13<sup>th</sup> February.

### ***El Fasher, 5 March 1937***

*(reached Adelaide 20 March)*

4<sup>th</sup> February - Off at 8 am to Nyala - 4 hrs and 3 mins over the 130 miles, not bad going. Found everyone in a muck sweat over the GG's visit. Lunch with Blakie as my lorry hadn't arrived. Over the other side of the river bed (dry at this time of the year) to where there were some temporary grass huts. Tom Menzies<sup>124</sup> and I together found the 160 odd horses which had been bought at the other shows picketed along the river bank and around our huts, some nice ones among them. Races in afternoon. They have quite a good course with a railed finishing straight and a saddling paddock. They ran 13 heats of 3 furlongs off. The judging was done by tribal chiefs. It appeared that each one had picked his horse out about 29 yds before they passed the post, but everyone seemed satisfied. Dinner and bridge with Blakie, the four being Greany and Nightingale.<sup>125</sup>

5<sup>th</sup> - Saw Greany off back to Fasher and then to hospital. Saw a nice looking six-year-old grey mare of the Sudanese MO's here which he wants to sell. Rode her in afternoon - she moves nicely but wants a lot of schooling. Dinner with Nightingale and bridge, Paddy Weir and Heal making four. N's cheetah not nearly as fit as my Mary.

6<sup>th</sup> - Operated in morning. GG arrived in Vickers troop carrier. Polo in afternoon, played one chukka on the grey mare and other three on army ponies lent me by PW. Tea and dinner with Colin Coburn, TM and Ted Saunders (GG's private secretary) made party. Good dinner, especially excellent roast turkey.

7<sup>th</sup> - GG around hospital before breakfast. Grand parade on the aerodrome for GG. The tribesman, 3,000 odd, lined three sides with their horses. GG rode from house to aerodrome with a small escort and on arrival he inspected large escort of mounted infantry and then rode round the tribes. Came to dais and was presented to local notables and then tribesman came past in rows of ten. A well organized and impressive show. Some work in hospital and then to lunch with Croles<sup>126</sup> - GG, Gov., Ted, TM, Blakie and self. Races in afternoon, four semi-finals and finals. Won by a very nice bay mare. She ran two lots of - three furlongs in afternoon and is said to be five months in foal! Dinner with Nightingale, also present TM and Gifford (AdC to GG). Called in at a hilarious party at PW's house on way home. Paddy had had GG to dinner and had given him a cocktail which Paddy called a Nyala Kiss which went down very well.

8<sup>th</sup> - Rode before breakfast. Plane arrived back from Fasher with Lady Symes. Saw them off at aerodrome at 9.30 am, operated in morning. Polo match in afternoon, Nyala (Gerry Crole, Nightingale, PW and CC) v. the World (Renouf, Gov., TM and self). We were soundly beaten. I had decided to buy grey mare and was going to play her two chukkas but in the first she deliberately kicked N and CC so the deal's off! All of us had tea and drinks with the Croles. R and Gov. very anxious for return match; personally I thought we'd been well beaten and might well wait till next year for our revenge, especially as they

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<sup>124</sup> Captain T Menzies, Veterinary Inspector, joined SVS 1919.

<sup>125</sup> EH Nightingale, joined SPS 1926, DC Nyala at this time.

<sup>126</sup> GB Crole (1894-?), SPS 1920-1944, Deputy Governor Darfur at this time.

were half mounting us. Got back to camp to find that Andas had arrived with his party. He's a vet who used to be out here and is now retired and set up as a white hunter. He was bear-leading two lads named Crichton-Stewart and Ramsay. We all dined together.

9<sup>th</sup> - Work in morning, races in afternoon. PW, Renouf and CC to drinks and tea.

10<sup>th</sup> - Rode 3 ½ year old of Dr AA. He's a bit of a coper and has lots of horses and I'm trying to find something to take from him instead of the mare I refused. The horse is a nice half breed and will grow into a big pony but I want something to play in the tournament in May. Second match in afternoon – we did better this time and were only beaten by 4 to 3. I played one chukka on a big grey 5 y.o. of Dr AA. He wants schooling but can gallop. Would like to buy him. TM and I drinks and dinner alone “at home”.

11<sup>th</sup> - Away at 8.30 am. Have agreed to buy grey for £26. Picked up Renouf on the road. He'd shed a wheel and torn his hub in doing it and so was anchored. Found Greany at home with Bowden, one of the hq store keepers who has come up to organize our stores for us, a useful man. Lunch with G and hung pictures in afternoon. G and B to dinner.

12<sup>th</sup> - Friday and so our local “Sunday”. Rode a pony of G's and loafed and wrote all morning. TM to tea and dinner with Maddens, the G and Mrs I, Miss N Arkell and TM and self. A good dinner but very parochial conversation – not once during dinner did it get outside the Sudan.

13<sup>th</sup> - Hospital in morning. Early lunch and off to Fatr Burno near to Kutum in the north where Guy Moore, the DC northern district, was having a tribal gathering. Got stuck on road with petrol block and had to clean it out. Had a fool of a driver who could hardly mend a net. Was caught up by TM who gave me a very welcome cup of tea. Arrived after dark. There were a number of grass huts put up for the occasion. Dinner and drinks with GM. The party consisted of the G and Mrs, Miss N, the de Candoles<sup>127</sup> from Geneina, GR, TM, TA and Tom Colville – the man who was shooting near Wau the year before last, Ginger, he's a friend of Jack's – and Thesiger,<sup>128</sup> GM's no 2, a pleasant if somewhat peculiar fellow, hard as nails and loves roughing it. He's only been in the country three years and has already shot 20 lion.

14<sup>th</sup> - Breakfast with Thesiger who had an excellent ham. Went to look at the dispenser from Kutum who has a temporary dispensary here for the gathering. At noon, the tribesmen having gathered on the aerodrome, we all went up in cars. The G and party then rode around them and came back and sat mounted at the saluting base. The tribesmen rode by in rows of ten tribe by tribe. About half rode camels and the other half horses. The tribal sheiks rode at the head of their tribe on horses with magnificently decorated bridles, breastplates and saddle cloths, elaborately worked in coloured and silver and gold threads. They were preceded by their ceremonial copper drums mounted on decorated camels. The whole thing was most colourful and impressive. It took about four hours to get through.

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<sup>127</sup> EAV de Candole, joined SPS 1923, Resident, Dar Masalit at this time.

<sup>128</sup> Sir Wilfred Thesiger, KBE, DSO, (1910-2003), SPS 1935-40, then SDF. In his autobiography, *The Life of My Choice* (Collins, London 1987), he describes his time in Darfur with Guy Moore, whom he much admired. The dust cover of the book has a single quote, by David Attenborough, “Wilfred Thesiger is one of the greatest explorers, one of the very few people who in our time could be put on the pedestal of the great explorers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries”.

TM and GR came and had tea with me and as we'd had not lunch we had boiled eggs to our tea. Drinks and dinner with the G, the whole party as last night.

15<sup>th</sup> - Breakfast with GM and afterwards to Kutum to look at dispensary and so back to Fasher. Drinks and dinner with G.

16<sup>th</sup> - Usual day. TM came in in evening with a rather nasty sore on his hand, result of neglecting a piece of skin he'd knocked off.

17<sup>th</sup> - Usual hospital morning. Played tennis pm. The Maddens and Bollards<sup>129</sup> and G and Bowden to dinner, my first dinner party in Fasher.

18<sup>th</sup> - Pony arrived this morning from Nyala - he looks a bit poor. Spent afternoon arranging for party. Had whole station except for McDs (Mrs was in bed) to drinks. 20 people in all, 17 from station and 3 RAF including air commodore from Cairo. Gave them peanuts, olives, foie gras on biscuits, sardines on toast and hot cocktail sausages. They seemed to enjoy it quite, they came at 7.30 pm and didn't leave until 9.40 pm. Eleven people wanted to buy ponies out of the remounts that TM had bought at the shows. T had picked out what he considered to be the 20 best of the 190 he'd bought and suggested that we drew lots for order of choice. We threw dice at my party for this and, very rightly I thought considering I was giving the party, I won first choice! My dice, my party, my first choice asyermightsay.

19<sup>th</sup> - Loaf day. Went to Norris' sale in morning and to vet lines in afternoon and rode several of the 20 ponies. Finally chose a very nice chestnut half breed. His sire is Sheik, one of the government Arab stallions. He's a comfortable ride. I think I'll call him Ginger, I hope you don't mind, G. Tom says he has a lovely front and if he has a fault it's that he's a bit mean behind! Went after this to look at a liver chestnut 2 year old that G had bought at Abu Salla - he's going to be a fine pony.

20<sup>th</sup> - Beginning of a four-day Mohd. holiday. Saw Bowden off by air mail in morning. Rode my new pony in evening, very pleased with him. Went to drinks and supper with the Inglesons, a farewell party for the Norrises who have been transferred. We played skittles in the garden and then some sort of race game.

21<sup>st</sup> - Rode morning and evening.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Went to levee after breakfast and then to see G off. He's going down to the annual military manoeuvres which are taking place this year in the south of the province. Paddy is becoming General Weir for the occasion and commanding the Westland force. Fasher is full of aeroplanes and army going to the manoeuvres.

23<sup>rd</sup> - As the ulcer on T's hand was not doing well I gave him some Evipan and scraped it. Rode in afternoon. Unfortunately, Ginger has just developed strangles, but not seriously I think. At 9 pm, just as I was finishing dinner, General Weir came in and insisted on carrying me off to the mess to a second dinner to help them entertain the RAF and so was rather late home.

24<sup>th</sup> - Have put Ginger in vet lines - he's not doing badly.

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<sup>129</sup> EG Bollard, District Engineer, PWD El Fasher, joined PWD 1918.

25<sup>th</sup> - End of holiday and usual routine. Owen, new ADC, and Leather, new Bimbashi, to drinks in evening.

26<sup>th</sup> - Usual Friday holiday. Went and drank a dish of tea with the McDowalls – they seem a nice couple. Dined in the mess with Leather and Owen.

27<sup>th</sup> - Have arranged a bit of jiggery-pokery with TM to get one of his stallion syces from Nyala as my head syce as local lads aren't much good.

28<sup>th</sup> - Morning at hospital and rode in evening. G better I think. TM came in for a drink.

1<sup>st</sup> March - Usual morning, ride before breakfast, hospital etc. Ride in evening, drink with TM, Andas and Ramsay there. Dinner with Arkell, Inglesons, Miss N, Leather and two RAF. Must stop here.

### *El Fasher, 20 March 1937*

2<sup>nd</sup> March - Rode early, brought chestnut home – he's much better though still some swelling in glands. Usual day at hospital, rode pm. Bishop Gwynne arrived today by air. He's the bishop of Egypt and the Sudan and a fine old man. He's 73 and still gets about in the most amazing way. John Cumming also arrived by air today. Dined at Inglesons, bishop in good form and told several good stories. One about the absent-minded bishop of Truro whose name was Gott – he was always known as forgot. He was conducting a confirmation service in the days when the candidates were all lined up at the rails. Included was one completely bald old man who had been lately gathered to the fold. When the bishop arrived and laid his hands on the egg-like dome he said "I declare this stone well and truly laid".

3<sup>rd</sup> - Got new head syce from Nyala, the result of a mild swindle between TM, the vet, and self. He was the best govt stallion syce at Nyala and having found out that he was willing to make the change, Tom discharged him and I took him on. He came out with me this evening riding the chestnut. He seems a fair horseman.

4<sup>th</sup> - Usual morning. Played bridge at Inglesons and to dinner with Arkell.

5<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. Played deck tennis at the Bollards and dinner with TM. He had two bimbashis from the Camel Corps who are on their way home from manoeuvres. Both pleasant people, one a fellow with the Seaforths had the most unusual name of Robertson-McIsaac.

6<sup>th</sup> - Usual day. Greany back from manoeuvres and came to dinner. French military machine came in this morning carrying a general who commands all the French colonial air force. Had bottle of claret for dinner from lot I bought at Berrys – it seemed quite good.

7<sup>th</sup> - Played squash in evening with G.

8<sup>th</sup> - Rode in evening, met Jeff, one of the bimbs, and went back to tea with him. Dinner with G.

9<sup>th</sup> - Usual day, started grey in work for the races. He's had a bit of a cough lately but now gone. Had letter from Pridie, he's coming round about the end of April.

11<sup>th</sup> - Hospital, usual day. Gave ponies some bran mash.

12<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day, wrote letters in morning and played squash with Leather in evening. JC to dinner.

13<sup>th</sup> - Saw JC off by air back to Khartoum.

14<sup>th</sup> - Had Governor and Mrs I, Miss N, TN, and A to dinner, quite a good dinner I think. Played dice afterwards and they didn't leave till 12.

### *El Fasher, 4 April 1937*

15<sup>th</sup> March - Hospital all morning, lunch and then set off in lorry for Mellit, which is north of Fasher. I had got some distance when I was caught up by the Inglesons who have a touring car. They kindly took me and as their car was lighter and faster they were able to take a more direct road over the sand. The approach to Mellit is attractive. Coming over a sand dune, you suddenly see a hollow laid out in front of you filled with tall date palms. In the centre is a mud rest house thatched with grass, set in a compound surrounded by a mud wall with a few well-tended flower beds of petunias etc. We had tea and then Ingleson entertained about 14 of the notables with tea and chat, after which I dined with the Is.

16<sup>th</sup> - Away early with the Is in their car. We had a picnic breakfast on the road. We were making northwards towards the Meidob hills, attractive if somewhat barren country. Rolling downland which grows light grass during the short rains, infrequent dry water courses lined with scrubby trees, and groups of volcanic hills, all fretted and worn into fantastic shapes. We stopped and waited for the lorries at Madu well. An interesting sight - it is 90ft deep with about a 16ft square rim of wood at the top, bitten into all round by the ropes drawing water. It is drawn by skin buckets on ropes and when we were there it was a hive of industry, about 30 ropes all going at once all round the rim and a great waiting list so that the moment one had finished another was waiting to take his place. This being the only water for miles around, and large numbers of cattle, camels etc to water, it goes continuously from early morning until late afternoon. Got to Mabu on the edge of the Meidob hills just after midday. About a mile out we were met by Guy Moore and a number of tribesmen on camels who had come out to greet Ingleson. He changed places with GM and rode back with them. We found Tierney, the DC northern Kordofan, there. He had come over for a meeting with Sir Ali Tome, his big nomadic chief whose tribe, the Kababeesh, are nomads whose wanderings extend up to the Sennusi oases. In the evening we went to tea with Melik Sayor, the local chief, and about 20 notables. Amusing but rather hot and stuffy inside. He gave us things like thick cold pancakes smeared with honey. I thought they were jolly good, if somewhat messy to eat with one's fingers.

17<sup>th</sup> - Drove early in the morning about three miles to the crater of an extinct volcano, a most impressive sight [the Malha crater]. It's about half a mile across and 200 or so feet deep. In the centre is a lake of dark red and incredibly bitter water. The edge of the lake is formed of volcanic mud which wobbles when you walk on it. Around the edge of the floor are trees and crystal-clear fresh water springs. In the evening we went for a walk to a ruined village in the centre of a lava field. Many walls are still standing and in places shoulder high, they're all built of lava and it looks if it could have accommodated 2,000 or more people.

18<sup>th</sup> - Up and saw some sick and sent my lorry off ahead with my kit and the remainder filled with patients. Had breakfast with GM and a final tea party with the sheik and people and then left about 10:30 with the Inglesons in their tourer. We unfortunately stuck twice in sandy places, which delayed us a good deal and we didn't get to Mellit until evening. Found the Maddens there.

19<sup>th</sup> - Up early and away in lorry to Fasher. Took me some time as lorry boiled a lot. Got in for breakfast at 10:15. Found that the ponies had arrived from Wau. They look very fit considering they've walked over 1,000 miles in six weeks. Rufus is nice-looking but I'm afraid he's going to be too small for me. Went and had a yarn with G. Rode in evening, drinks with TM. Ginger had a bit of colic last night but nothing serious.

20<sup>th</sup> - G off to Zalingei. GM to lunch - usual day.

21<sup>st</sup> - To meeting of Rifle Club before breakfast. I came away at 8:30 leaving them still shooting. Hospital all morning. Rode early and then played squash with NT. He came back to tea and drinks. Had an interesting discussion about European affairs and the danger of war. Came to the conclusion that education had lagged behind invention and that we were now controlled by our machines. If we could hold off war for long enough then education might catch up. If not, then a war in the near future had every chance of destroying civilization with its own machines.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Gave George and Ginger three furlong gallop - not fit yet. Rode James after this and again in the evening and went and watched TM giving Nightingale's horses a gallop. Mess night, played bridge and then went to impromptu dinner at McDowalls - home late.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Rode James - he's off his head, too much grain I suppose, doesn't want to do anything but gallop. Rode George in evening, bridge at Is, Gerald making fourth.

24<sup>th</sup> - Beatons arrived from Zalingei. I'm putting them up. They're on their way on leave. He's a very intelligent fellow, largely self-educated by scholarships. Bs and I to drinks with the Maddens and so home to dinner. The first dinner in Fasher at which I didn't have to talk at all about the Sudan.

25<sup>th</sup> - Usual morning, early lunch and Bs off. Went and watched the hospital playing football against No 2 Coy WAC. A good match, a draw well refereed by Sargent Boulton, who played for the army for three years.

26<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. G back from Zalingei and came to beer and lunch.

27<sup>th</sup> - Early gallop, four furlongs - went better this time. Usual day. Replay of football in evening, tied again. Tony A came to tea and TM came in for drinks after.

28<sup>th</sup> - Local holiday - rode and practised starts. Hospital to do round and then to vet lines to watch ponies being measured for the Andas cup and weight for age and height race. Then to beer with TM. Played squash with AW and then to tea with him and to look at his stud. He's just bought three new youngsters between two and three years old.

29<sup>th</sup> - Syce is riding Ginger in Andas, went and weighed him and saddle. He's carrying 21 lbs lead. Played squash with G and then tea and drinks with him.

## *El Fasher, 26 April 1937*

*(arrived Adelaide 11 May)*

30<sup>th</sup> March - First day of two-day race meeting. Went down to course at 3.30 pm. A straight run of six furlongs and the mile just a bit of a bend. The saddling enclosure, temp. stables, weighing room, tote etc all being efficiently made of grass by Eddie Bollard of the PWD. There were five races and all attracted a good field except the 1¼ mile jump race. The principal race of the day was the Andas cup, a weight for age and height handicap of five furlongs. Basic age five years, horse height 14.1 and basic weight 11 stone. I gave Ginger an outing in Andas as I thought it would do him good. He ran quite well for three furlongs and was 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> then, but had had enough. The syce rode him quite well. Nightingale had the best day. He lives in the centre of the horse breeding area, he has been there for some time, and he knows something about horses, so very rightly he has collected a good lot. He won the Andas and the jumping race and was 2<sup>nd</sup> in the junior sprint. Guy Moore also had a good day with a win and a second. Drove Dean Ward home, had a drink with him and then bath and another drink with TM. Brought Jeff back to dinner.

31<sup>st</sup> - Usual morning. In afternoon went to see hospital play No 2 Coy for 3<sup>rd</sup> time, having tied twice in the Dufin's cup. They drew with them again after a good match so it was decided by tossing, which the hospital won. Club meeting in the Is' house which was a frightful frig. Nobody stuck to the point and it went on until 9.40 pm! Had Nigel, Paddy, Tom, Alan and Arthur to dinner. Quite a good dinner, we drank some of Mr Berry's claret, which seems to be turning out well.

1<sup>st</sup> April - Second day of races. Guy Moore and Thesiger arrived from Kutum for lunch. Had a ride on George in champion sprint. I regret to say that I was considerably over weight and G resented it. In any case, I don't think he was fit. It was a pleasant meeting. Arthur came to tea. He leaves in September and I am buying his horse and trap. Whole station to a cold supper in the mess. All the winners had to bring their cups and have them filled with fizz. There were eight big cups so quite a lot of fizz! It was an excellent party and the food was good, but they let it go on too long.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Lazy day. Greany, who was off on leave, came to breakfast at 7:15. We (Guy M, Thesiger and I) had breakfast late to which TM came as he was also going out on trek. Wrote some letters. Drinks in evening with Is. Thesiger and I dined alone. He's an unusual but pleasant fellow. His father was a Minister in Abyssinia for some time before the war. He was very interesting about A. He was the only person to receive a private invitation to the coronation of Haile Selassie and went out to it on the Duke of Gloucester's staff. After the coronation, he did a trip on his own into the heart of the extremely unsettled and dangerous Danakil country.

3<sup>rd</sup> - At breakfast today had long philosophical discussion with Guy M and T. They both admire the Bedouin type of life - the stern and harsh struggle with nature and the type of person that their struggle produces. It was interesting and the best discussion I've had since I arrived. I like them both although I don't agree with lots of their views. They're both of the woman's place is in the house school. T went back to Kutum after lunch. I and Guy M went to another football match. The hospital was beaten this time. We went and had tea, drinks and dinner with the McDowalls.

4<sup>th</sup> - Rode with GM before breakfast. He was a liaison officer in Iraq for several years. He told me how in 1923 he came in the course of a journey to a Mohamadan monastery in the mountains where he was entertained by the head of the monastery, a venerable and learned old man who had hardly moved from the place in his life. In discussing the recent world war, the old man said "Well, that was a horrible affair but it didn't destroy and exhaust everyone and it wasn't Armageddon. That's still to come and when it does the menace will come from the air and it will destroy and exhaust all and then the few remnants will turn from this callous and materialist age and go back to the true spiritual and religious life". He went on to say that it was all written in "the Book". It looks amazingly possible now for a forecast made in 1923! GM, having dined with the Inglesons, set off for Umm Kedada at 12.30 am. He has no idea of time and likes travelling at night!

5<sup>th</sup> - Usual day. Polo in afternoon, played chukka on James who went well considering, then knocked a ball about on Sam. Dined in mess as Nigel's guest. Alan also there. He loves an argument as much as I do and adopted the view that life was really hardly worth living nowadays and that really the only thing that kept him from committing suicide was the realisation of the distress it would cause his mother! I remember the part in *Music My Love* when Charlotte Haldane was saying that she doubted if she could ever commit suicide as, having sent the servants out and made herself comfortable in the gas oven, she would just be going off when she would think, what!, never hear Brahms' 5<sup>th</sup> again, and then she'd turn off the gas and dash upstairs and put on the records. In Alan's case it would be polo and his polo ponies.

6<sup>th</sup> - Usual day at hospital. Played bridge with Alan A, Inglesons making four. Stayed and dined.

7<sup>th</sup> - Rode in afternoon. Is for bridge (I did try to avoid this bridge) and dinner with the McDs. They had a Canadian missionary who was passing through. He's retired after 33 years in Nigeria but found the climate so trying in Canada that he was on his way back to Nigeria!

8<sup>th</sup> - Polo, two chukkas. Quiet evening I'm glad to say. Had bag mail in which I got some books I'd ordered including a complete Shakespeare on good paper in a single volume for 6/-!

9<sup>th</sup> - Have been riding George in morning the last couple of days. Think he will school well. McDs to breakfast as they were going out. Lazy day, round of hospital and then spent most of morning supervising Ibrahim rasping the ponies' hooves. Rode Ginger in evening. Tea with John Madden.

10<sup>th</sup> - Rode early. Left hospital at 1:30 to give lunch to the Inglesons who were going out. Hit ball about in evening. Tried James in 9<sup>th</sup> Lancer bit in which he went quite well. Sam up to his old trick of turning his head on the ball and so unsighting one. Quiet evening.

11<sup>th</sup> - Rode Ginger. Hospital. Rode George pm. He fiddled about so over jumping a small ditch that he fell down. He got up quicker than I, so I had to walk home!

12<sup>th</sup> - Polo, three chukkas - both ponies went well, particularly Sam. Mess night.

13<sup>th</sup> - Schooled George, doing well. Hospital all morning. Schooled Ginger pm. McDs and Alan to dinner, we drank Mozelle and claret. The former is at last going off I think, G, it still has some nose but the taste is now going.



14<sup>th</sup> - Rode George. He did quite well until coming home he fell on his nose while trotting. I think his hooves must be too long (we don't shoe them here of course). Rode Ginger in evening and met Alan, went back to his house for tea.

15<sup>th</sup> - Usual day. Polo, three chukkas, Sam went better today.

16<sup>th</sup> - Lazy day. Took as much as dared off George's hooves with a rasp.

17<sup>th</sup> - Rode George on morning round. He went better as a result of his shorter hooves. Hospital till 12 and then home, lunch and off to Kutum. Good journey, found Thesiger and had tea and dinner with him. He has one large room in his house pleasantly decorated for this country with things from the country mostly. Rugs - he has three very nice Persian rugs among them - camel saddles, and on the walls, swords and knives, on the chairs and settees, leather cushions of local work. He is very keen on lion shooting - he shoots them on foot and now has killed about 26 or 27. Their skulls are gathered about the room. There is a line of 12 or 14 on the mantelpiece and others on the broad window sill. The only note of sophistication is his books and his father's traditional red Foreign Office despatch box. He dislikes civilization, motor cars, aeroplanes and anything to do with this mechanical age. I enjoyed talking to him.

18<sup>th</sup> - Worked in dispensary most of morning. Had tea in the evening in the garden with the local effendi, a pleasant cool spot, date palms and vegetables and fruit trees and in the centre a cool shady area surrounded by massed petunias and some rose bushes. The smell of the former in the cool of the evening was delightful. Home to bath and dinner with T. In the course of a discussion, T said he regretted the passing of the age of leisure and culture. He thought that money and a good public school (preferably his Eton) and the varsity were essential to its acquisition. I said that he was confusing culture with social cachet and quoted the Scots as being a generally cultured race without those advantages.

19<sup>th</sup> - Up and away at 6:30 for the dispensary at Umm Buru, further north. Stopped at Ain Sirsu and had breakfast under a great tree. A pleasant spot, a little valley in mountains full of palms and big trees and some running water against a background of ochre red rock. Got to the local chief Melik Mohamadain's house and stopped to see him. He'd been thrown by a camel and sprained his ankle. Had to spend some time and drink tea with him. Pleasant country, rolling with surface of schist and shale, scattered acacias of various sorts, broad sandy river beds lined by bigger shady heraz trees and scattered hills around. Pleasant little rest house built of granite slabs and grass roof. Has a fire place which I'm sure is needed in the cold weather. Well, I must stop. I've nearly caught up this time!

### ***El Fasher, 3 May 1937***

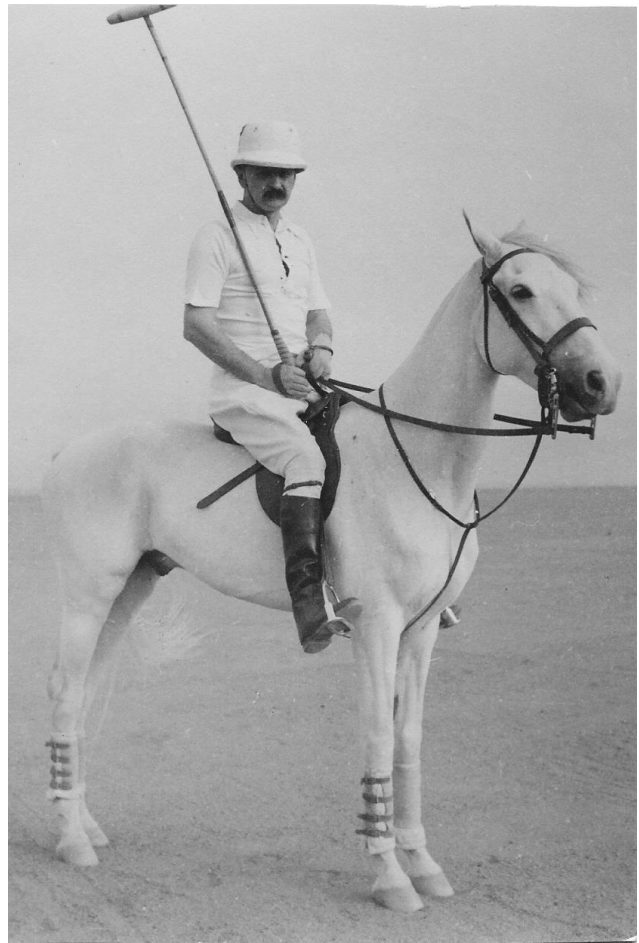
*(franked 4 May, reached Adelaide 18 May)*

20<sup>th</sup> April - Inspected dispensary at Umm Buru. When I got back to breakfast I found the Melik had sent me a present of a sheep as well as the long and useful onyx skin camel rope which he gave me yesterday. Having finished work, I set off again, stopping at the Melik's house to say goodbye and give him some shotgun cartridges in exchange for his presents. Drove through to Ain Simu where I had lunch and then slept on a long chair in the cool shade of a tree until 4 and then drove in to Kutum. I knew Thesiger was out, so I drove direct to the rest house where the mamur came to call to see that I had everything.

21<sup>st</sup> - To dispensary, breakfast and then off to Fasher. Had lorry load of sick people and one man on stretcher in box car. Arrived in time for lunch. Rode in afternoon and went to see TM and have a drink in the evening.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Rode Ginger. Hospital all morning. Polo - had two chukkas, Sam up to his usual tricks. Tea with TM.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Rode Ginger. Lazy day, called for TM and then did round at hospital and so to look at G's ponies. They all seem fit. Brought T home for some beer. A bag of mail today: got an amusing letter from Guy Moore from Khartoum. In the course of it he quoted the prophet Jeremiah and recommended him as a good commentator on current events. I expect that if anyone writes common sense and spreads his net wide enough in any age, then you may always find something suitable to be quoted as criticism or comment on current affairs. Rode Ginger in evening and dined with TM. The Inglesons, who have just returned from trek, were there.



*"George, El Fasher" (Peg on back)*

24<sup>th</sup> - Took Sam into the school for ½ hour.

He knows what to do, it just depends on whether he wants to or not. Schooled George - he's a horse of entirely different character, intelligent, friendly and quick. Had drink with TM.

25<sup>th</sup> - TM gelded Ginger today. Dinner with the Is. "Lizzie" Laidlaw has just arrived here as commandant of police. He was in Khartoum and you probably met him, G.

26<sup>th</sup> - Rode Sam to see sanitary service animals and then took him into the school. Hospital all morning. Polo in afternoon - had three chukkas, one especially good one on James. Mess night.

27<sup>th</sup> - Finished off letter to you. Hospital all morning. Schooled George in afternoon and then hit a ball about at walk on George.

28<sup>th</sup> - Holiday for accession of King Farouk. Levee at 9:30 and rest of morning writing letters. Had George in the school in afternoon, passaging and striking off with correct foot.

29<sup>th</sup> - Rode then hospital. Polo - had three chukkas - two on Sam. In the first he was damned if I was going to hit the ball if he could help it. James' and Sam's second I quite enjoyed. I played back for a change.

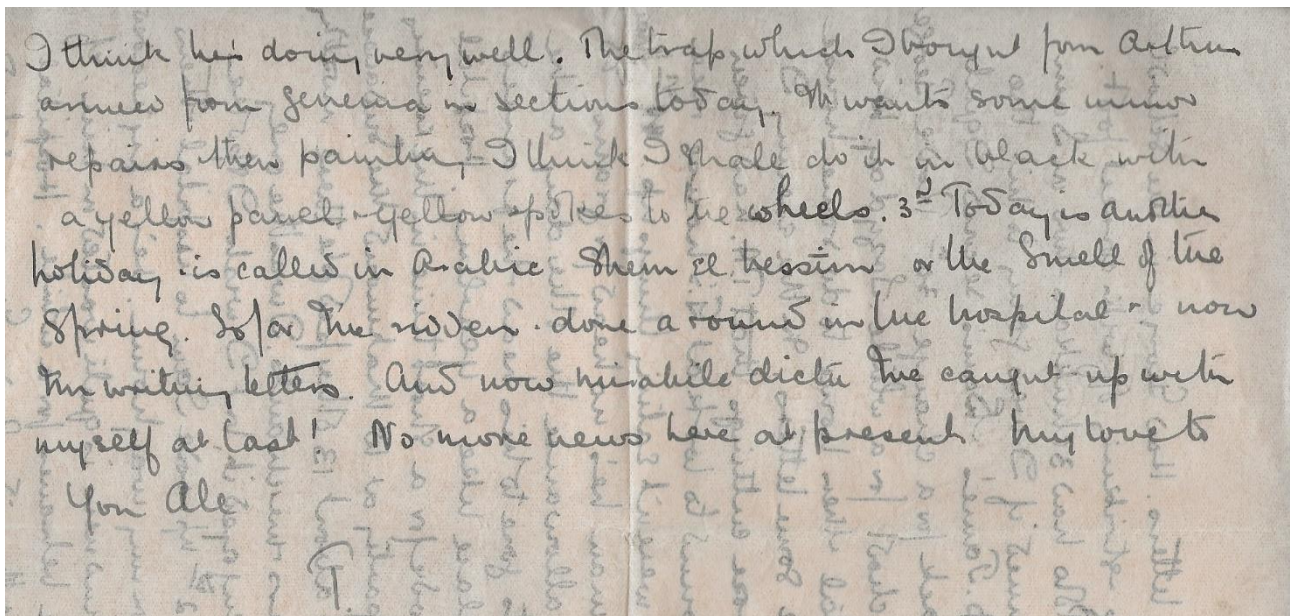
30<sup>th</sup> - Rode George and took him into school for a while. Lazy day, did a round in the hospital and then home to do some house and paper tidying and write some letters. In the evening I planted out some rose cutting that TA had given me. Later I went round to look at G's house and see that the white ants weren't eating things up.

1<sup>st</sup> May - Rode James. Poor old man, he's no head for grain. I'd increased his grain allowance as he was playing polo and it's gone to his head - he pranced all over the place like a yearling. Hospital all the morning and rode for a short time in the evening. I then went to a tea party at the house of Dr Mahmoud, the Sudanese MO. He had about 13 people there, mostly native officials, officers and merchants. I was the only white man. I quite enjoyed it, but I wish I spoke much better Arabic.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Rode Sam to hospital and then took him into school on my way home. He's a pig-headed and sour-tempered pony and kindness is quite wasted on him. If you bully him a bit he behaves for a while. Hospital all morning, did colossal thyroid. Rode George in school. I think he's doing very well. The trap which I bought from Arthur arrived from Geneina in sections today. It wants some minor repairs and then painting. I think I shall do it in black with a yellow panel and yellow spokes to the wheels,

3<sup>rd</sup> - Today is another holiday, called "the smell of the spring" in Arabic. So far I've ridden and done a round in the hospital and now I'm writing letters. And now *mirabile dictu* I have caught up with myself at last. No more news here at present.

*That letter is the last from Tom to his family that we have. We know that he was planning to leave El Fasher around the end of July 1937, when his deputy, Dr Greany, returned from leave, and hoped to be in the UK from mid-August. Tom's parents and Ginger, his sister, left Adelaide for the UK on 23 July.*



I think he's doing very well. The trap which I bought from Arthur arrived from Geneina in sections today. It wants some minor repairs then painting. I think I shall do it in black with a yellow panel & yellow spokes to the wheels. 3<sup>rd</sup> Today is another holiday, is called in Arabic them el bessim or the Smell of the Spring. So far I've ridden, done a round in the hospital & now I'm writing letters. And now *mirabile dictu* I've caught up with myself at last! No more news here at present. My love to you all.



## 1938 - 1940

### 1938

We have two letters to Tom from his mother, the first written from Cannes on 23 March 1938. From this, we know that his sister visited him in the Sudan again after his leave: his mother was not sure whether Ginger was still with him in El Fasher. As he left writing to his parents to Ginger when she was with him, this may explain why we do not have letters covering this period. The second letter was written from London on 10 April 1938 and begins by announcing Ginger's safe arrival at Victoria by the ferry train on the morning of 7 April. The letter refers to Tom having a "pretty busy time", which may be explained by a question she asks: "Is the relapsing fever a sudden epidemic or is it more or less always with you?".



Tom was on leave again in the UK in the second half of 1938. Through mutual friends, he had met Margaret (Peg) Orr-Paterson briefly in London on an earlier leave. She, her sister Diana, and her parents were living in Northern Ireland, close to the border with the Irish Republic. Before travelling to the Dublin horse show, held in early August, Tom contacted Peg to see if they might meet there. Peg and Diana took it in turns to go to the show and it was Diana's turn. She went, enjoined by Peg to bring Tom home "if you think he's nice". Which she did: Tom and Peg's engagement was announced on 10 September. They were married on 5 October and left for El Fasher two days later.

### 1939

In July 1939 Tom and Peg travelled to Adelaide, Australia, where she met his parents for the first time. They arrived there sometime after 17 August. On 28 August, Tom received a two-word telegram from the Director of the Sudan Medical Service: "Return immediately".

They must have left by sea and air as soon as arrangements could be made. In one of her letters, Peg refers to embarking on the Strathnaver on 13 September. As they would tell the story, on arrival by air at Khartoum, Peg was greeted with: "What are you doing here?" and Tom was asked why she had come back, as the three-word telegram sent to all those on leave had instructed him to "return immediately alone". Dependents were now having to leave the Sudan, and some were at the airport waiting to leave on the plane that had brought Tom and Peg back. Faced with the actual cable, with no "alone", and as she

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CABLE ROUTES  
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Circuit	Clerk's Name	Time Received	Station
WAL	L	9.40PM	8

PD14 XXPB S KHARTOUM 16 28 1240 BG ETAT

E W T MORRIS C/O COMMONWEALTH BANK OF AUSTRALIA  
KING WILLIAM ST ADELAIDE

RETURN IMMEDIATELY  
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MARK YOUR REPLY *Via Imperial*

NO ENQUIRY RESPECTING THIS TELEGRAM CAN BE ATTENDED TO WITHOUT PRODUCTION OF THIS COPY.

Office of Trade  
ADELAIDE  
28 AUG 1939  
STATION

The first line of this telegram contains the following particulars in the order named:—  
Circuit, Letter and number of Message, Office of Origin, Number of Message, Date, Time received in and from the office of destination.

would be in Darfur, remote from the capital, the authorities relented and allowed Peg to stay at least temporarily. In their telling, the story was embellished with the explanation that the cable operator, faced with the higher cost per word to Australia compared with the UK, must have decided to save money ("probably a good Scot"). We know from a letter from Tom's mother that Peg had to make her own way back to El Fasher, where she was initially the only non-Sudanese woman.

### 1940 - Peg's letters

In March 1940 Tom learnt that he would be transferred from El Fasher to Wad Medani, the capital of Gezira Province. The move was delayed until September by which time Peg was pregnant. The authorities were encouraging wives to leave. While it appears from her letters that she could have stayed longer, the authorities were not prepared to allow her to give birth in the Sudan.



"Rest House Kallerktiling"(in Peg's writing on back):  
Tom, Helen Crouch, Peg

Peg's first letters to Tom after they parted describe her journey as far as Cairo, where she boarded a flying boat bound for Australia and her parents-in-law in Adelaide.

### No 1, Chez Bollard, El Obeid, 7 a.m., 7.9.40

Luckily so far I have not really taken in that in all probability I've left you for some time - there is such a strong element of unreality about everything that I feel rather numb.

I've pictured you at the various stages since I left: going straight back to breakfast, then packing a bit [for his move to Wad Medani] and perhaps looking at the ponies, more packing before tea with Haigs and then to the Aclands - which will have cheered you up. How nice they are.

The trip here was uneventful and anyway I didn't feel like taking much in. I tried to pick out our house and just managed to do so. The fullah [the large pond at El Fasher] looked terribly low and like a rather empty big puddle. Hugh Woodman was nice and twice came back to see how I was and told me when we were over Jebel el Hilla. We got here just before 11.30 and I was met by Eddie [Bollard]. Euan Campbell was also down there, by chance as he'd heard no news of the arrival of the RAF lads. They looked so young and defenceless and made me feel rather sick - when one thought of the 1000s like them. Being Friday we all just sat and talked and Douglas Rankin came in for a beer. There was a train today (Saturday) at one time but it's changed now and the next is tomorrow night.

El Obeid seems rather a hot-bed of wild rumour. From what I gather, due to women who do de-cyphering and pass on jumbled and inaccurate information. Grace [Bollard] informed me first "you'll never get a train - I hear there are none for at least a month owing to evacuating Khartoum, Atbara and P Sudan" - this may be partially true but obviously gross exaggeration! I believe all officials have received a circular urging them

to send wives out of the country, but this I don't think is an order for now. However it seems a lot of Khartoum women are shifting. Having the internment camp here rather adds to the rumour - but Fasher seems an oasis of calm compared to the atmosphere here. Poor Grace is very fussed as to where she'll go if she has to, but several wives mean to stick together and go to the same place. All the women seem very Red X minded and have an exam in a few days. I am to have bandaging practised on me this morning I believe. El Obeid is much hotter than Fasher and very sticky.

Sunday, 8.9.40. All yesterday morning we were in Mrs Taylor's house while 5 or 6 women practised bandaging etc and I read and looked on. It was really awfully funny - they lay on the floor and were tied up in splints and bandages by other perspiring women.

### **No 2, Kosti, 10.30 a.m., 9.9.40**

Eventually we didn't leave until about 10.30 pm last night and arrived here about 8 this morning where we were told we'd remain until 5 pm as a steamer arrives then from Juba. So here we are for the day! It is hot here but might be worse. They say we should be in Khartoum by 5.30 am tomorrow. It's nice having Douglas Rankin with me - we are the only Inglisi but I suppose more may be on this steamer. In the evening, I went with the Bollards to the Governor's to have a drink. Then having heard the train was leaving two hours late I went back with the Bollards for supper and at 9.30 Douglas came to fetch me. I went straight to bed when we got to the train. Everyone in El Obeid was very nice and friendly.

Khartoum, 11.30 am, Tuesday 10.9.40. We got in about 10:30 and Charles [Crouch, with whom she was staying] was there to meet me. We didn't leave Kosti till after six last night, having been stuck there the entire day. Then we must have crawled along during the night as we should have arrived in Khartoum by 6.

The airways co. will not refund our fares if for any reason we do not go (so Dr B<sup>130</sup> said) - this seems a bit off but he said one just had to take the risk and he is not paying until the last minute, so I will do likewise. Apparently the latest is that we will not be leaving Cairo until the 23<sup>rd</sup> but we leave here 14<sup>th</sup> as arranged.

Khartoum, 1.30 pm, 10.9.40. I went to see Imperial Airways. Mr Grey is away in Cairo and the fellow I saw struck me as very inefficient. Both my passport and Mrs B's have been sent to Cairo and have not yet come back - he says he thinks they'll come on a plane tomorrow - I suggested he cabled to make sure and he said he would. According to him, I can't book through to Adelaide as Sydney is their terminus. Dr B was apparently wrong about fares being refunded as the agent says of course they are - but if one is turfed off at any place to let a bigwig on then you have to pay your hotel bill while waiting for another plane.

There is apparently no definite order re women evacuating yet but Charles says they are being urged to go. Helen [Crouch] has only gone to Kenya - about 40 miles outside Nairobi, I think. If things then improve, she'll come back - if not can always go on to S Africa. I've had a charming semi-official letter from the Chief Secretary thanking me for

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<sup>130</sup> Dr CEG Beveridge, joined SMS 1921, at this time Medical Officer of Health, Khartoum. Peg travelled with his wife as far as Darwin.

my services in Darfur [she had been working for the governor, Phil Ingleson] – awfully nice of him isn't it?

7 am, 11.9.40. There was a raid last night – two planes came over about 8 pm or earlier and dropped 20 bombs, all on the aerodrome and no casualties. Charles was out when the alarm went and I was in my bath. Old Fudl came and told me I must go to the shelter, so hastily putting on a dressing gown I went along with him. Before the sirens stopped Charles was back, accompanied by Douglas Rankin – they brought their whiskies down into the trench and we all lay on the mattresses. It was a well-organised warning as it went quite ten minutes before they came and the moment they were over the aerodrome our guns opened fire – but I don't think did any damage to them. The whole thing from beginning of warning to all clear lasted about 20 minutes. I slept in the usual spot on the roof and Charles in his usual – about midnight it began to rain so we finished the rest of the night in the house. Khartoum is rather sticky, much hotter or more unpleasant than Fasher.

I hear that a boat leaves P Sudan in the near future for India and Australia (only cargo or else we could have gone on it). Apparently army wives are being ordered to leave but so far others are merely advised to, and most of course intend to stay. The raids at home sound pretty grim – what a nightmare of horror it all is. Charles has just come in and says the bombs all dropped on the golf course! We've just come in from listening to the 8:15 news. Apparently it's true that there is a definite need for you in Medani. I must now write to the family – I think there are sure to be letters from them soon – people here have papers of 30 June and mail up to beginning of August.

Re 2<sup>nd</sup> class sleepers – Dr B says they are over the wheels and for 50 PT difference it's wisest not to go!

### ***No 3, c/o Charles, Khartoum 12.9.40***

I went to the PO and got 8 letters from the family [dated from 16 June to 5 August]. An Italian push is anticipated here about 15<sup>th</sup> and will probably coincide with an attempted advance into Egypt and the long-expected invasion attempt at home. From Churchill's speech one can see he expects one at almost any moment now. I thought he was as always extremely good.

Wasn't it sweet of Bobby (McIsaac) – he sent me a telegram yesterday saying good luck and goodbye.

Charles took me en route for his office to the Public Security Office where I managed to get a pass out of the Sudan – as my passport is still in Cairo and I'll collect it there. Dr B was quite wrong about 2<sup>nd</sup> class sleepers – Charles and Helen always take them and they save quite £2 to £3.

6 am 13.9.40. A year ago today we left Adelaide. The flick last night was poor – “My Bill” – it was at the cinema right along the river front past the palace. Talking of the palace, H.E. is again in Erkowit but didn't go till the day I arrived here, and had I come the night before I had been bidden to dine at the palace with Charles. Charles has sold his trap (two-wheeled). He only means to keep two ponies – the syce he's sent us sounds just what we want.

The home news yesterday sounded cheerier and we seem to have discovered more effective anti-aircraft measures unless it's just propaganda for morale. Charles says he

hopes you'll come up and stay with him a lot when in Medani – as there will be no difficulty in getting away for a few days occasionally. You might tell Osman that Charles now runs this house with Fudl Osman (the suffragi whom I dote on), a cook and a gardener cum general handyman! i.e. three and entertaining as usual more or less. The servants here impress me more than I can say – Fudl Osman literally does everything – including washing – except the cooking, and always at the double too!

**No 4, Khartoum, 13.9.40.**

The passport business is all fixed and the Airways people say everything is OK – I am not going to pay till Cairo – and they say this is best and I think it is too. ... in all probability all but key women (i.e. nurses, cypherines etc.) will probably be forced to go anyway before long. Charles is very strong on hoping they do – as he says they'll be such a complication when things hot up (if they do).

9 am 14.9.40. We are just back from listening to the 8:15 news – nothing much but one feels hourly now an attempt at invasion may begin. We had tea with the Beveridges yesterday.

Douglas Newbold, a Frenchman (liaison) called Le Blanc and Jack Maurice came to drinks – very interesting conversation. I liked DN very much and he was charming to me. I went to the Graphic Museum with Charles before breakfast and will go in again this am. It's incredibly interesting and a pity it is so near the station as a bomb might get it.

I must start and pack up a bit as with the blackout light in my room I can't see enough at night. I wonder if the river will be very hot – we've had nice cool nights here, but it seems terrifically hot about teatime. Have you had any rain? There is an idea that we may be late [in Cairo] as the river boat may tie up at night.

*The last page of this letter is headed "Last Will and Testament!" and gave the disposition of her jewellery.*

**No 5, In train to Halfa, 9.10 a.m., 15.9.40**

The next stage has now begun. I've a double cabin sleeper thing to myself. The train should have left at 7 this morning but was an hour late in starting owing to some Egyptian Consul from somewhere who hadn't arrived. To go on from where I left off yesterday – I looked in at the Graphic Museum again and spent a long time looking at a photo of you staring at some bug. I then came back to the house and packed up a bit.

Charles said he's very much afraid Jack Poole was at Calais.<sup>131</sup> Tiger [Wyld] has been in and has had bilharzia I think. He and Mika have been away somewhere. I got another letter from the family yesterday – written August 19<sup>th</sup> – super getting such a recent one.

From what I can gather, Charles says that you will probably have a theatre on a hospital train if things hot up – he also thinks in that case you'll be commissioned – but don't go by what I say as you know I'm a bit vague. Charles says you'll be much needed anyway – it looks as if things are going to hot up. The Italians apparently have announced they'll be in Khartoum on the 27<sup>th</sup> – it's nice we seem to have a great many more troops

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<sup>131</sup> In early August 1941, Tom wrote to Peg that he had just heard that there was "a photo in the *Tatler* of May last of Jack Poole among a group of prisoners of war". Poole escaped, was recaptured and spent the rest of the war as a POW.



about (plenty on this train – going I suppose to Atbara). Charles told me that he was sending a wire to ask Hugh Woodman to meet us – Gun [Hugh's wife] is in Kenya.

7 am 16.9.40. We should be in Halfa quite soon I think.

### ***No 6, In train to Cairo, 4.30 p.m., 18.9.40***

All has gone very smoothly so far. Hugh Woodman was at the station at Halfa and put us quickly and efficiently on the boat, where we had breakfast. I got a 'bon voyage' wire there from Gwen and Phil [Ingleson], which was very nice of them. Our fellow passengers on the steamer consisted of a RAF dentist, another RAF chap and the Egyptian Consul from Addis Ababa and also the nice little French lieutenant [who had been with her earlier in the journey].

We are due in Cairo at 9 am tomorrow – we only started about an hour ago and spent the day on the boat waiting for the train to come in. How much less nice the Egyptian trains are compared to the Sudanese ones. The flies have been damnable – those horrid tiny ones. I've talked a lot to Lieut. Pinhède who is a very nice wee man. We tied up both nights.

19.9.40. We got in on time this a.m. and Matthew<sup>132</sup> met us – he really is being extremely kind. We came straight to this pub – Carlton Hotel – and had breakfast and a bath. I'm waiting for Matthew who is calling for me in his brother's car. Luckily there is a nurse from Khartoum staying here [Miss Gordon<sup>133</sup>] whom Mrs B likes so I can leave her with a free conscience. It's a nice pub – 65 PT per day and judging by breakfast, good food. It's run by English management and is quite new and very clean – also central. Most suitable for "single ladies". Matthew said I should have gone to the Metropole – same price and gay – but this is exactly my type. It seems quite full – mostly service people I think. Cairo seems distinctly cooler than Khartoum and full of khaki.

Later – Matthew came and we went to the Airways office. I've paid for my passage now, Egyptian £ 166.750 (this is apparently £174 English). The Airways man said we definitely leave 23<sup>rd</sup> and he says there is practically no possibility of losing our seats. It takes 8 days, so we should arrive October 1<sup>st</sup> or thereabouts. One cannot book through to Adelaide apparently so I'll see what's cheapest if Ginger isn't at Sydney to meet me. I had my baggage weighed and appear to have only 2 kilos over and therefore paid 17/6.

The air raids at home seem pretty terrible and I do wonder when the attempt at invasion will take place – our defence seems jolly good now. I think Cairo blackout is on a par with Khartoum.

### ***No 7, Carlton Hotel, Cairo, 21.9.40***

I do wish you were not going nearer the war zone. We've heard no news since being here, other than what one can read in the papers and that is gloriously non-committal. The place is full of khaki – a lot of Australians about and it seems to me as if there must be hundreds of army nurses, but maybe I'm always seeing the same ones! If in future you just say "Allen" I'll take it to mean RAF and I will say the same. Actually I believe the censorship from here is supposed to be fairly strict but your letters were not opened.

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<sup>132</sup> Probably MC Wordsworth CBE (1905-1976), SPS 1927-1954, DC Nyala at this time.

<sup>133</sup> Miss I Gordon, Nursing Sister, Civil Hospital Khartoum, joined SMS 1937.

I have been bitten a lot here, I think by sand flies or possibly some other kind of bug. Obviously it's because we're new blood, as Mrs B has too. For a preg. woman, I've received quite a number of advances from people in the street – mostly from our Tommies! They are on the whole an awfully young-looking lot and it makes one's heart ache to see them so far from home and in a filthy place like this – I sound like Aunt Mi! I've now had to pay 110 PT for visas and an "exit permit", which seems a bit hard on top of everything else. However, I shall be leaving the country with the £10 cash I am allowed and £40 in the letter of credit. I believe they are rather strict about taking any papers or letters out.

***No 8, Carlton Hotel, Cairo, 9.30 p.m., 22.9.40***

We think we leave tomorrow at 10 am and the Airways bus calls for us at 9:30. Matthew returned from Alex today and rang me several times but I was out. Finally he rang just now. He said that Jean-Yves' ship has been anti-British and from what I gathered (he said he couldn't say anything definite over the phone) all the crew are interned. He didn't know for certain whether J-Y himself was anti us, but anyway he is also interned.<sup>134</sup> Had I know about this sooner I might have been able to see him or do something, but it is now too late and Matthew advises me that it's best not to write to him. Isn't it awful? He's just like a relation.

To go on briefly from where I left off yesterday. In the afternoon Mrs B, Miss Gordon and I took a car to the Citadel and saw Muhammad Ali's tomb and mosque – which I thought really lovely. Then we came back here and Miss Gordon went off to her train, taking a letter to post to you at El Obeid and a book for you – I felt rather a cad asking her to take anything quite so heavy.

Today I wrote letters. I can't write more as I want to finish up my packing. I'll send you a wire just before we leave tomorrow. Please don't worry if you then don't hear for at least ten days.

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<sup>134</sup> Jean-Yves de Muizon was a French naval officer. After the surrender of France, the French squadron Force X, comprising a battleship, four cruisers, three destroyers and a submarine, was interned by the Royal Navy in Alexandria harbour. Within the crews there were sharp divisions between supporters of the Vichy Government and of the Free French. Only several months after the collapse of the Vichy authorities in north Africa in late 1942 did the squadron finally side with the Free French.

## 1941 – Wad Medani and journey to Kenya on leave

*While we have almost all Peg's letters to Tom during their separation, we have none of his to her before the series beginning in March 1941. Tom's horses and ponies, some of which had been left in El Fasher, featured frequently in their exchanges, and Peg's comments belied her lack of personal*



"Returning from early morning golf [in El Fasher]. James is horse. Behind is S/Sgt Bolton."  
(in Peg's writing on back)

*attraction to riding. A trap was a necessary means of transport in Wad Medani as in El Fasher, and in March 1941 Tom had a serious crash while schooling one of his ponies in his trap and needed several stitches to a deep cut. Peg had warned him against that pony, Jackson, in a letter, and had also advised him "no four-in-hand cart".*

*The letters that we have of Tom's are dominated by the birth of their son, Nicholas (Nick), on 3 March 1941, and Tom's reactions to Peg's letters, but also contain accounts of his doings, generally written in daily instalments rather than*

*retrospectively, as in his letters to his parents. As time passed, how and when they were going to be reunited featured ever more prominently in their letters.*

### **Wad Medani, 5 March 1941**

6<sup>th</sup> - I've had much the usual day today, expect that I didn't walk to the hospital before breakfast. G [F Hennessy Goss, the Provincial Medical Inspector] did my dressing after breakfast and took out three of the deep stay sutures. It is going well. On mature reflection, I think that I must have got off lightly as I might easily have broken something. Came home to lunch at the usual time. In the afternoon I oiled a saddle which had been relined with leather and then went out onto the 3<sup>rd</sup> green and practised putting for a bit and so to tea. While I was at this, Lewis, the medical entomologist, came in to see me. He lives at the Research Farm and has a lab there. He's quite a decent fellow and very good at his job I believe. Eckson, our next-door neighbour, came in this morning very kindly to enquire after me.

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> - I loafed and didn't come down until 7.45. After breakfast I went to the hospital as usual and didn't get back until 12:30. I had to stand and watch and instruct Mohd el Din how to do an operation (I don't want to begin operating again until the scabs of the scratches have gone from my hands). Of course, to stand and tell someone what to do always takes much longer than to do it oneself.

### **Wad Medani, 7 March 1941**

I slept this afternoon and then did a little desk tidying and then went out and practised a little putting and so to tea and the hospital. I bought G home for a drink.

8<sup>th</sup> - Today was the usual sort of hospital day. G took the remainder of the stitches out of my behind – ten I think there were – and it's been quite comfortable ever since. This afternoon I went to the agricultural research farm to see Lewis' show. He deals with any

bugs, insects etc of medical interest in the way of disease carriers etc. His chief concern in this area is malarial mosquitoes and their control. This is important of course in view of the vast areas of water lying about as the result of irrigation. One of the methods used is to put tiny fish which normally feed on the mosquito larvae into the water. They are very small, the adults only about two inches long, the small ones so tiny that they can get about anywhere even when the water is full of weeds etc. The best fish for this purpose come from California. Lewis has been experimenting with local varieties found in the Sudan, but it is an amazing thing that none of them thrives so well, or breeds so freely, as foreigners from America. He showed me one lot which have the most peculiar breeding habits. The female hatches the eggs in her mouth and during this time she eats nothing and her gullet is temporarily closed. She keeps the fry in her mouth until they are about a week old. They then swim out but always hang around mother at first and if any danger threatens they swim back into her mouth again until it is past. He showed me some terrapins or water tortoises which also eat mosquito larvae. In certain areas in the Nuba mountains the water supply is scattered in the dry season so that the people draw large quantities at a time and keep several days' supply in their houses. Mosquitos, particularly aedes, tend to breed in these stores of water and Lewis found that the Nubas commonly kept terrapins in their water supply in their houses, presumably to eat the larvae. I then went and had tea with him. He is at present sharing a house with another entomologist called Routledge whose wife is in Kenya. R is a very keen falconer and has two hawks at the moment. He flies them at quail in the cotton and bean crops near the farm. He was very interesting about it all. The difficulty is to get the quail up out of the cover. He uses small boys as beaters at the moment, but he really needs a setter or pointer to mark and put them up. He's got a three-month-old bitch who is part labrador, part beagle and part dalmatian and he hopes to train her to function. I said I would like to go out some Friday morning to see him at work.

9<sup>th</sup> - G came to dinner unexpectedly last night. He'd been going out to dinner but when he got to the hospital he discovered an emergency case in his ward. I offered to do it for him, but I think that he was really quite glad of an excuse not to go. I stayed to watch him and we then came home here together: O's [Tom's cook, Osman] meal was very good. I went and had a drink with G and was back late.

10<sup>th</sup> - Went to the garage on the way to the hospital to see Curly K about repairing the trap. Back from the hospital earlyish for once. Yesterday afternoon the hospital football team were playing a cup tie and G and I went to watch. They're very superior here as they play on grass. They were playing the Syndicate and it was a good clean match - they lost 2-1. When I got to the hospital in the evening G asked me to go and have a drink with him and so I didn't get home to dinner until 9:15. Too late for me. Today I took in the stable on my way to see Curly K about the trap. He says that there is no serious damage and he will have it right again in two or three days which is very good. This morning was operating day and I spent part of it trying to dig small bits of bomb splinters out of a POW, an Eritrean. This afternoon I had a few practice shots at golf and so to tea and hospital. My behind is nearly as good as new now and I hardly feel it's there except when I go over a big bump in the car. I shall be very glad when I can have a proper bath as I've been sponging in sections up to now. I have a vague idea that I smell a bit! I've been trying yesterday and today to get G to fix up about leave. The trouble is neither of us really wants to go, particularly G. I say that we must fix a date in what is approx. the middle of the worst

weather and make that the change-over date so that one of us misses the first half of the bad weather and the other the second. If neither of us has any definite views about when to go, I suggest that we toss up.

The local saddler came up this afternoon to collect the trap harness to repair the damage done by J [Jackson, the pony]. He's a very good saddler but a villainous looking old man, long and cadaverous with one eye, a long night gown and a tarboosh. He, much to my surprise, said "mabrook el walad" [congratulations on your son], and then said "when you heard I suppose that you were so happy that you quite forgot about your behind", "Too true", I said, and how!

11<sup>th</sup> - I did the OPs as usual before breakfast. I hope that I shall soon be able to walk to the hospital in the morning, I think in a day or two. This morning was rather disjointed as I broke off at intervals to help G with a pretty sick woman. I came back at 4:30 to give him a hand but unfortunately she died. Poor G gets very upset and depressed when he loses a case. I went back with him and looked round his farm yard and vegetable garden and then listened to the six o'clock news. He has a fine lot of turkeys and geese and some good vegetables.

12<sup>th</sup> - Today has been the usual hospital day. I did a bit of office work this afternoon, trying to clean up my desk, and then went out and spent about half an hour practising golf shots and so back to tea and hospital. I went back with G for a drink. I think he is rather lonely now that DLG [D Logan Gray] has gone. He asks me much more often for a drink in the evenings than when DLS was here. I've at last got him to do something about our leave. He doesn't want to go but I've said that I think he should. We've fixed that I shall go first - he wishes this and it suits me, although I must say that so far I feel very well.

13<sup>th</sup> - Today being Thursday was an operating day and I spent the morning at it and didn't get home till 3. I thought that I would play a few holes of golf on my own to see how my behind stood it. I began on the 8<sup>th</sup> which is near our back gate. I found Mrs Robertson and Vera S just finishing the 7<sup>th</sup> so I played the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> with them and then played two balls on my own over the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, the 3<sup>rd</sup> being the green that I usually practise putting on, it is actually in front of Gibson's house. My behind stood up to it very well, not a twinge of any sort! Mrs R had been out on trek in the White Nile with her husband. They had seen John and Rosemary and she said they were both well and that they were leaving Setaina for good and going to live in Dueim where they will have a decent house and some company. It used to be the hq of the old White Nile Province and is right on the river.

14<sup>th</sup> - Friday again. I rang Helen Crouch yesterday morning to ask her what was a good time for Kenya and where to go and stay. She said that any time is pleasant, that May and June are the heavy rains but they make a lovely change from the Sudan and it never rains all day so that one can always get out and do something. I think I shall try and go off about the middle of April. Someone who has just been to Kassala was telling me that there wasn't much damage done in the town itself. The Italians had dug huge air raid shelters under all the houses and they had taken the doors and windows out of the houses to use as entrances to the shelters. I've just ordered my usual Friday morning gin and ginger beer.

### *Wad Medani, 14 March 1941*

This morning was the usual Friday, hospital after breakfast till 11:45. I played golf with G this afternoon. He came back to tea and asked me back to drinks, so didn't get back to dinner until 9:15 – far too late for me.

15<sup>th</sup> - I walked to the hospital before breakfast this morning. Usual working day, didn't get home till 3. Had about half an hour's practice at golf. Didn't get back from the hospital till 8. Ted S rang me up to ask if I would play polo tomorrow but I said no. I've not ridden yet – I think I'll put off polo till next Sunday.

17<sup>th</sup> - To get on with my dull story. Yesterday was the usual hospital day except that Dr Modi el Din was worried about his small son who has bronchopneumonia, so I sent him off home and did his work, with the result that I didn't get home till 3. I hit a golf ball about for a bit and then had a bath, my first real bath since the regrettable incident. I then went to tea with Ted and Vera. They had a large party, ten or more, including the Archdales, John Gaitskill, the Traceys, Sharps etc. I left early as I was going to the flics for once and wanted to do Modi el Din's rounds for him. G and John Lawes and I went to see a nice bit of nonsense called *If I were King*, Louis 11<sup>th</sup> very well played by Basil Rathbone and Ronald Coleman as François Villon. A nice bit of escapist entertainment. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* is next week and I think I must go to that – becoming a regular motion picture fan! Went back afterwards to supper with G, a pleasant evening. Bridget [Acland] rang me up last night about several things including asking if O [Tom's cook] knew where Abddin, who used to be Bill Henderson's servant, was. Poor Bill has been wounded: he was hit in the shoulder I gather, but is now OK and thinks he may get some sick leave and go to Palestine to see his people. Bridget is still working at the War Office apparently. Peter,<sup>135</sup> complete with beard, is well within Abyssinia. She seems to think that there is not much chance of his getting leave soon.

18<sup>th</sup> - Yesterday was operating day and I spent all the morning at it and didn't finish until 10 to 3. Practised golf shots in the afternoon. A ground mail arrived yesterday containing two weeks papers, 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> December, the first papers we've had for about 2½ months.

19<sup>th</sup> - I'm writing this just after breakfast. It's beginning to hot up now – where, a few nights ago, I had on two blankets, last night I sweated a bit under a sheet. Yesterday was a filthy habooby [sand-stormy] day. Usual hospital morning. I had a ride in the afternoon, a very gentle hack to the forest and back on Peter, a procedure which P thoroughly enjoyed – his idea of the next best thing to standing still being to walk. Dinner with G who was detained at the hospital, so I went on and acted as host until he came. We were Jack Farney, Lewis, and Sheeham, the public health inspector. John Gaitskell [Hugh Gaitskell's brother] was also there but he'd only come in to see G and didn't stay to dinner. A pleasant party, good eats and I got home nice and early. G is going off this afternoon to Khartoum and a quick tour of the White Nile area. I think he will be back on Sunday. Poor little Modi el Din's child died yesterday. I'm very sorry for them. Usual day at the hospital today. I had another mild but very pleasant hack on Peter.

20<sup>th</sup> - I'm going out to dinner with the Griffins so must go and put on a tie – not a very pleasant prospect as it is very still and rather hot.

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<sup>135</sup> Peter Acland, whom Tom first met in Kassala in 1930..

21<sup>st</sup> - Yesterday being on my own I was kept going steadily all the morning. I rode J in the afternoon and hit a ball about a bit on him. Dinner with the Gs was intended to be a mild bridge 4 but they couldn't get a 4<sup>th</sup> so I was the only guest. I quite enjoyed it, they are a pleasant couple and we didn't talk very much about the Sudan. Today was the usual Friday. It was hot on the roof by sevenish so I came down for a further snooze. Jack Maurice turned up for some advice about a gum boil. He's on his way back to Gambela by motor and had been staying with Vera and Ted. I drove Peter in the trap to the hospital after breakfast - except for one or two hardly noticeable things, it's as good as before. ... All in all, at the present the three ponies cost (including syces) about £7.500 per month, which is about double what they cost in Fasher I think. Hugh Woodman has now also got into the army and is somewhere in the Roseires area. Apparently the way to get in is to make yourself a considerable nuisance.

### ***Wad Medani, 21 March 1941***

22<sup>nd</sup> - This morning was the usual hospital day. I rode James this evening and when I got to the hospital I found a message from G saying that he had arrived, so having finished my round I went to see him. Today has been a foul day, hot and dusty. When I was coming back from riding this evening, despite the fact that it was still about half an hour to sundown, it was so hazy that you couldn't see the sun at all! Everything you touch feels gritty.

24<sup>th</sup> - Yesterday was a usual hospital day. It was also polo day, though not a very pleasant one as it was windy and dusty. I played three chukkas, two on Peter and one on George. They both went well and are both looking much better than when they arrived. G, Lawes and I were due to go to the flics again and come back here for supper, however L rang about 6 to say that he had had a very trying day and would I excuse him. The film should have been good - *The Hound of the Baskervilles* - but by the time films reach here they have seen so much service and have been broken or cut and spliced so many times that a great deal of them is missing. One notices it especially in a film like that with a plot that needs closely following. However, I quite enjoyed it. When we were sitting a dinner discussing the film, which had been pretty grim and eerie, suddenly a voice said "excuse me". We looked up and both jumped about two feet in the air to see a man standing at the wire door of the dining room. He was a soldier, a fellow who had just recently joined the Pioneer Corps which is being raised here of Sudanese personnel with British officers. They feed in a central mess and are housed in 3s and 4s in various empty houses and he had lost his way home from the mess. He sat down and had a drink and chatted and G took him home when he left. Today was the usual Monday operating day. This afternoon I drove Peter down town then back for a little golf practice. We had another bundle of papers today but going backwards as these were all November! It's been a bit cooler today and last night I had a blanket on again.

26<sup>th</sup> - I forgot to tell you that young Will Thompson rolled up on Sunday morning. He had been on a little leave in Cairo and had broken his journey at Sennar on his way home and then was brought in to Medani by young Lindsay at Sennar. He looked quite well. He said the rains had been very poor and grazing so bad in northern Darfur that the majority of the inhabitants had left it and were now in Zalingei district. The hotel has 60 bedrooms and the birds of passage have now reached large proportions, in the neighbourhood of 150 a month. He said that John Owen was going on leave and that Rollo C he thought was back

in Geneina. Fasher is pretty empty these days and polo is scarce. Gerry is apparently quite well now. Anthony is well but very hard worked as he is alone in the merkaz, although they have three in Nyala, which hardly seems fair. Yesterday was the usual hospital day. I rode James in the afternoon and hit a ball about on him for a bit. It's still coolish and I had one blanket on last night. It's just after 10 pm and I'm just back from the hospital. I went along about half an hour ago to look at a man who had been stabbed in the chest, but he was in too bad a condition to operate on. Today was the usual hospital and I rode J this afternoon. I got permission from Khartoum today to go there for a day or two on Friday. I had a note from Bill Henderson today – he says he's practically OK and hopes to go off to Palestine for some leave with his family.

28<sup>th</sup> - I am sitting in the Grand Hotel [Khartoum] of all places, quietly sweating as it's a bit hot. Yesterday was a normal hospital morning. I drove Peter downtown and then on to tea in the sisters' mess with Miss Johnstone.<sup>136</sup> She had the Maxwells and one of the Italian doctors to tea. M asked if I could take his wife to Khartoum and I of course said certainly. After going back to the hospital G drove me out to one of the irrigation centres on the main canal, which rejoices in the name of Kilo 114. It is about 17 km from Medani. A very nice north countryman named Ted Gatley lives there. He had John Lawes also and we played bridge after having discussed the fall of Keren and the coup d'etat in Yugoslavia in all its aspects. We went on after dinner with the result that we didn't get home until 1 am! That as you may well imagine, made getting up this morning at 5:30 a bit difficult. I picked up Mrs Maxwell and we got off at about 6:45 and had quite a pleasant run to Abu Usher where we had breakfast with Wheaton, and so on again reaching Khartoum at 11:30. The latter half of the journey being a bit hotter. I dropped Mrs M at the Clergy House. She is a very nice girl with a good sense of fun like Paul. I drove on to Charles and Helen's house and met H. They have a convalescent officer staying with them and had booked me a room at the pub and to feed with them. Actually it was a room in a barge alongside the pub, as the pub was full. Saw Bill H in the pub for a few moments and then went downtown, took my polo boots in for repair and did several other things. I ran into Jumbo Kerr, who used to be in the Eastern Arab Corps years ago and has been bought back by the tide of war, Buck Keayes and Ben Tarleton. People are pretty cock-a-hoop over the fall of Keren, which has proved a pretty tough nut. Yes, it is fun playing in the better polo in Medani – on the average, I'm hitting the ball better than I ever did before. I hope to begin James soon; I would like to get him a little less excitable with other ponies first as I'm afraid if I begin too soon he'll develop into a puller. There are no slow chukkas in Medani of course. Yes, he did begin in slow chukkas in Fasher. Yes, the work in Medani is much more varied and interesting than it was in Fasher, and one can be fully occupied all day with clinical work.

### ***Wad Medani, 31 March 1941***

1<sup>st</sup> April (Goodness me, I've only just realized this – I wonder how many more people than usual had me for a mug today!). What wonderful news it is about Eritrea and also about the naval battle. It seems most unlikely that Abyssinia can last for much longer now. Today had been the usual hospital day and as usual I was kept going all morning until lunch. G didn't remember to tell me about Eritrea until nearly the end of the morning. I rode P and J after lunch. Hospital and then in a short time I must go out to dine in the

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<sup>136</sup> Miss SE Johnstone, Charge Sister, joined SMS 1937.



sisters' mess. Now to go back and tell you a bit about Khartoum. The atmosphere was very bright and cheerful as the result of the fall of Keren, as you no doubt heard over the wireless. Saturday was a public holiday but Khartoum was not decorated with flags as the "news" suggested. On Friday evening I went back to the house. H and C had gone out and Critchley and I dined alone. He has been up somewhere on the Abyssinian front and had got bad ulcers on his feet from jiggers and thorns. He is normally in some cavalry regiment and is a very pleasant and interesting chap and we had a very pleasant dinner together - Helen's usual good catering and a very nice bottle of burgundy. We went off to bed at 11:30 - I went over to the barge and undressed and came back in pyjamas and dressing gown and slept on the lawn.

2<sup>nd</sup> - I had quite a pleasant dinner in the sisters' mess last night, there were two officers from the pioneer corps there and Miss Johnstone and Miss Crowe,<sup>137</sup> the two sisters. To go back to Khartoum. I took the car after breakfast and went to do a little shopping but couldn't do much as it was a holiday. I went on to the lab and hospital but drew blanks there also as people had gone home for the holiday. I went to south block and sat for some time with Bill H. He was shot through the shoulder and is very lucky as it is a miracle how the bullet missed the main vessels and nerves of his arm. Helen and Charles had a tennis party and I played a set. The other people were Beatty Powell and Cameron and his wife from the Agric Dept and a DC named Rowly. Also at tea were a Wing Commander Seldon and his wife who had been hacking on the Crouch ponies. Johnny Gifford also came to tea, which carried on into drinks and there must have been at one time and another at least 20 people to drinks including a man who had commanded one of the British regiments at Keren and who had just got back after its fall. He said that it was a very tough affair and that our troops behaved magnificently. The Walkers were there at one time and also Roy Humphreys (Cecily and Mervyn have just gone back to Kenya) and Rhino Fosdyck. We finally sat down to dinner six, the two others being Terence Airley and a fellow named Shand. I didn't get to bed until midnight but it was a good day and I enjoyed meeting all those people and hearing bits of news and scandal etc. 11 pm - I had an emergency op to do this evening and have only just finished.

3<sup>rd</sup> - This letter seems to be getting into what you might call a chronological mess. Yesterday was hospital all morning. I loafed in the afternoon and then went to a farewell tea party for the Sanders at the Robertson's house. The Ss are going to Cairo as Sudan Agent instead of Mac who has been promoted to governor's rank and is coming back to the Civil Secretary's office. I don't yet know who is coming here in Ted's place. I went from there to the hospital where I found a man who needed operating on. I went with G to listen to the news while they were getting the theatre ready and then came back at 8:30 to do it - I got home at 10.

Now back to Khartoum. Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> I upped and sat on the verandah and drank tea and read a bit. I rang Bridget [Acland] - did I tell you in my last that Peter had been wounded but not seriously. I arranged to meet her in the zoo that afternoon. I went to the hospital to see Findlay M and Roy H and then to the lab to see Horgan, and so to the south block to see Bill. Poor Bill was so hungry when he got to Khartoum that he was like a boy home from school and said the food in the south block was absolutely super. They've been a bit short

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<sup>137</sup> Miss E Crowe, joined SMS 1938.

of food in Abyssinia owing to difficulty of transport but this is improving every day. Bill was very browned off with Wilfred Thesiger who'd joined up with him in A and was boasting about how he lived on native porridge and beer, and suggested that Bill and co were living in the lap of luxury and then proceeded to eat half of Bill's last tin of grapenuts, his last tin of milk, and all his remaining sugar at one sitting! Bill said he felt that a bit hard as he had been counting on the grapenuts lasting him a fortnight with care. I then went to the office to see EWP and the chief storekeeper and this took until lunch time.

I met Bridget in the zoo. She was very excited as she had just heard that Peter was coming to Khartoum the next day. Bill H met us there also and after a bit of a stroll we went into the Crouch's for tea. B soon had to dash off - she works very hard and is being very efficient in the War Office. I left at 6:30 on Monday and had breakfast at Abu Usher with Wheaton, as did Ben Tarleton who was on his way to Roseires. He used to be out here in the SDF and has just come back again. He'd come from home and was cheering about things there. I got back here at 11:15 and so was able to do quite a lot of work that morning. In the evening I went to a large tea party in the native officials' club for the SMO Anis who has just been transferred. He has been made a medical sub-inspector and goes to take charge of the Merowe Hospital and district.

Helen and Charles were as usual very charming and kind to me. I enjoyed the change enormously. How they keep going at that rate I don't know - every day people to tea, drinks and dinner, or out themselves, and bed at 11 or 12 each night. I just couldn't do it. Bridget has rather adopted Bill H and it was slightly funny to see she and Helen with Bill and Critchley. H bullied Critch and said "don't walk about", "put your feet up on a chair" etc, and B was saying "is your shoulder comfortable, Bill", "would you like another pillow", "don't get up Bill" etc. There seemed to be quite definite rules to the game, as the moment that either H tried to do something for Bill or B to order Critch about there were subdued sparks flying at once!

4<sup>th</sup> - G has gone off to Roseires so I may have a longish day at the hospital. Yesterday was the usual hospital and operating day and I didn't get home to lunch until 3. I rode P and J in the afternoon. G had asked me to dine as he had oxtail stew but we were both held up at the hospital and so didn't get to his house until 8:30. We were just about to begin dinner when the Griffins turned up - having had dinner - to give G a box to take down to Roseires to their sons who are doing cypher work there. They didn't go for a bit so we were very late to dinner and I left almost immediately as G was wanting to get off at 5 am.

I'm just back from the hospital and it's only 11:40 - not bad that! You may well have wondered what my reference to Eritrea was. The news as we got it officially here from Khartoum was that Eritrea had fallen. It later turned out that it was only Asmara that had capitulated. I heartily agree with your remarks over the newsreel of the taking of Bardia. I felt all along that the talk about the Western Desert campaign was bombastic and unwise, and this morning's news relates that we've had to evacuate Benghazi again. Yes, the Balkan situation is still tense, although changed from when you wrote. I don't often mention war news because with the advent of wireless news the whole tempo has so speeded up that things are dead almost before they happen. Yes, there are about 4,000 in the POW camp and possibly more to come I think.

### *Wad Medani, 4 April 1941*

5<sup>th</sup> - As usual when G is away I was up a bit earlier and was at the hospital before 7. I had a pretty long morning and didn't get home till 3. About 1 pm, just as I was getting down to some office work I walked a quorum consisting of a Colonel of Engineers who calls himself CRE (Nile), a captain, Prior who commands the POW camp, Gilchrist, the PWO, and one of his assistants. I soon realised, or thought I realised, that they were out to get me to approve on G's behalf something that he probably wouldn't have done himself. Moreover, I was in the shaky position of only having the vaguest idea of what the whole thing was about, based on a few hurried remarks by G as he left for Roseires! In the middle of this, the telephone rang three times. First, Robertson saying that a large batch of Ps of W was arriving tomorrow and what was I doing about it? Secondly, Pritchard<sup>138</sup> asking me what to do with a donkey. Third, a gent named Teem, whom I don't know but believe is in the Syndicate, ringing up hot from the offense to say he had been insulted by one of our medical assistants and would I do something about it! As you can imagine, I sat back and heaved a sigh when the office was empty again. I forgot to say that CRE (Nile) was deaf and had one of those black boxes on a cord which he poked at me, at the same time with an expression on his face as one who would say, and don't you try and put a penny in the slot or spit in it neither, for I've had that joke played on me before!

6<sup>th</sup> - I was at the hospital before 7 and did a round of the female wards and the female OPs before breakfast. Just as I was sitting down to breakfast the phone rang and a voice at the other end said "I am the NCO in charge of a railway ambulance unit and me and my three coaches were supposed to be uncoupled in Medani in the middle of the night last night and to report to Dr Goss or Lieut Maxwell. Instead, I wakes up and finds myself on a siding in this place." So I said, "well where are you?". He replied, "well I don't right know, Sir, but I'll ask". Having asked, he gave it as his opinion that he was in Hasha Creisha! which I interpreted as Hasaheisa [a third of the way from Medani to Khartoum]. I had to get up from breakfast and get into the car and go and look for Maxwell, who I eventually ran to earth having breakfast with the padre, to find out if he knew anything about the arrival of this unit, and then to the District Traffic Manager's house, as he was at breakfast and not on the phone, and arrange for the unfortunate NCO and his coaches to be rescued and brought to Medani. This done, I didn't have much time for breakfast.

7<sup>th</sup> - The weather is not as bad as it might be here since although hot in the daytime it is still fairly cool at night - last night I had a blanket on. I had the usual day at the hospital yesterday and was kept going pretty well until 2:45. So home to lunch and a rest and then polo. What with the Syndicate people going on leave and Ted S's transfer, I think polo will close down soon. I played four chukkas yesterday including one on J. I thought that if he wouldn't go in the trap, at least he'd better try and make himself useful at polo. He was wild and excitable and only had one idea, and that to gallop, but I think that he will settle down later. I'm just back from the hospital after a usual day: I've been going most of the time. Yesterday evening a very slap up new ambulance arrived here in charge of a Sudanese driver, with St John's ambulance and Red Cross written on its side. This just arrived without any letter or wire or anything about it. While the driver was reporting to me in my office, one of the hospital drivers, without any instructions from anyone, decided

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<sup>138</sup> Captain LE Pritchard, OBE, Senior Veterinary Inspector, joined SVS 1922.

that he would take it out to do a job of work, backed or ran into something and tore a hole all along the side of the body. I don't even know if it is meant to be here and if so, what for.

8<sup>th</sup> - I had thought that G might be back today, but no sign or word of him. I wonder when he will be coming back. I think he must have gone to Addis! The usual morning at the hospital. I was going steadily until 2:45 when home to lunch.

9<sup>th</sup> - I had to get up at 12:30 last night and go and see an Italian POW with appendicitis, but as he refused to have an operation, I wasn't out of bed very long. I loafed this morning and didn't get up until 7:30. I then drank tea and read Freya Stark's *Southern Gates of Arabia* - it is delightful reading. Hospital after breakfast, I was lucky there and found little work to do beyond a routine round of all the wards and so I was back here by 11:30 which is good. In the afternoon I went for a ride on J and P. I was going out to bridge and dinner with John at the farm but when I got back from riding Semefsky rang me up to say that his wife had had a sort of heart attack and could I go out. When I got to the hospital I found a wire from G saying that he had gone to Kurmuk so God knows when he'll be back again. Last night when I told Miss J that G had gone to K she said "Oh yes, I knew, he told me that before he went"! I don't mind the work because anyone as naturally lazy as me has a very good natural protection against overwork, but I do think he might have told me. Bumping out to Kilo 99 to see Mrs S in a dilapidated boxcar didn't improve my temper. I missed the bridge and didn't get to dinner until 9 - how petty one is to complain when so much tragedy is happening in so many places!

10<sup>th</sup> - Today has been rather busy. I wasn't back to breakfast until after 9 and I wasn't back to lunch until after 3:30, and was back at hospital at 5 to see a woman who was nine months pregnant and had just started labour with bleeding. Having delivered her I spent over an hour trying to resuscitate the baby with Miss J's help and finally had to give up. I'd just got home at 8 pm when I discovered a note from Aglen saying that a convalescent officer who was staying with them had developed a high temperature. As they have a small house they can't nurse a sick man in it, so I said that they had better bring him to the hospital. Having had a bath and dinner, I am now off to see him.

11<sup>th</sup> - I was down earlier than usual on a Friday as it was very hot on the roof. I drove to the hospital in P and trap as usual and was there till 12:15. Sister J gave me a very welcome cuppa while I was writing up the notes of the officer who was admitted last night.

### ***Wad Medani, 11 April 1941***

12<sup>th</sup> - Today has been the usual day except that as G is back I wasn't so busy. I had a pleasant hack on P and J this evening, and G came back from the hospital for a drink. It's been a rather unpleasant day, hot, close and dusty but it is more pleasant now and there is a small breeze.

13<sup>th</sup> - A holiday. Hot on the roof this morning so down early. P and trap to the hospital and back quite early. In the afternoon played four chukkas, G 2, P1 and J1. J was still a bit wild but better than the time before. I think he will do when he gets into the way of it. I am definitely improved on my average performance in Fasher, I hit the ball better than I used to there.

14<sup>th</sup> - I'm sitting on the verandah at a trek table at which I've just had dinner and there is a small but refreshing breeze. One of the small compensations for the heat and dustiness and

general unpleasantness is that we have one or two laburnums in bloom now and they look delightful. Today had been the usual hospital day and this afternoon I drove the trap to the club and had a swim. As before, the water looked rather green and uninviting but once in it was very refreshing. The club gardens and lawns and the strip of river in front are very attractive. Now, of course, the river is very low and showing masses of sandbanks on either side.

15<sup>th</sup> - Today has been the usual hospital day. This afternoon I drove in the trap to the club again and had a swim and sat and read a *Field!* After the hospital again, I went to a drink with G.

16<sup>th</sup> - Last night was coolish and tonight is not bad either. I rode J this afternoon down to the monkey wood and back. The weather is not too bad so far and although hot and frequently windy and dusty and unpleasant during the day, the nights haven't been bad. Having a little time to spare after breakfast, I wrote to Tiger and Mika.

18<sup>th</sup> - Yesterday was a usual Thursday operating day. Today I went to the hospital in the trap as usual on Fridays and got back about 11:30.

I think the Keren casualties were fairly high but the majority were not very severe and proportion of killed to wounded was not very high. Bill Henderson's regiment had been in the Western Desert and then came down here just in time for Keren and they seem to have had fairly heavy losses in both places, and Bill had lost several of his friends. I believe the same thing happened to some of their officers as happened to Dick F. Surrendering prisoners with their hands up were concealing in the palms of their hands those small Italian "egg" bombs, and throwing them at the last moment as our people walked up. Dick had a miraculous escape, as the thing burst at his feet and he hardly had a scratch! Yes, the sappers did well at Keren - I don't think that anyone we know was there. I agree that the French are being very bloody. G holds the view that it was very lucky for us that they collapsed when they did and that we didn't waste more men and materials in supporting them. Yes, the Germans seem to have been almost as quick with us as we were with the Italians.

### ***Wad Medani, 18 April 1941***

19<sup>th</sup> - Yesterday I rode J and P after lunch. G asked me to go and have a drink when I got to the hospital. We listened to the 8 o'clock news which seemed more reassuring, and then to a weekly talk by Wickham Steed which was more so. I came home latish to dinner.

Today has been the usual hospital day. I gave G a hand to do an operation this morning. This afternoon I drove down town to the Sudan Book Shop. I drove on to the club - there are some good shady trees for P to stand under - and had a swim. The bath had just been filled and looked quite different and the water beautifully clear and cool and inviting. I went with G again this evening to listen to the news. I'm afraid the Australians must be getting a bad time in Greece although they seem to be fighting like tigers and inflicting enormous losses on the Germans.

21<sup>st</sup> - Yesterday was I think the hottest day we've had for some time. The morning was the usual hospital one. I had a wire from Tom [Menziess, vet in Darfur] saying that he would be on the Obeid train from Khartoum so I rang up to find when it would be due - 10.30 pm the station said. I played polo in the afternoon, P 2 and G and J 1 chukka each. It was good

polo, the same rides all the time, though I didn't play as well as I have done. Poor P came down with me in the last chukka but fortunately we were neither of us hurt. It wasn't P's fault, poor fellow. I was galloping down the centre of the ground trying to get up to take as pass from Archdale who had the ball behind me to my left. Rodney P, who was on my right, came across towards me and I tried to ride him off but he was going a bit faster than me and I think must have knocked one of P's front legs. Anyhow I was intent on trying to push R and suddenly I saw P begin to disappear from in front of me. I remember thinking to myself, dear me, I'm going to have a fall! And then I had it! We were going fast enough for me to be thrown well clear and I rolled over a couple of times and then got up. It was, as far as I was concerned, a very comfortable toss and I never felt a thing, and barring a tiny little graze on both elbows, not a bruise anywhere. P was a little lame for a few strides but quickly recovered. I didn't risk doing him a damage and finished the chukka on J.

I wasn't sure from Tom's wire whether he was getting off the train to stay or not, so I had a bed ready for him. I went down to the train which was almost on time and found that he wasn't proposing to get off, so I stayed and had a drink and a chat with him. He said that Moses [bred by Tom, the writer] was well grown when he left and suggested we should get him down here in September. He thought that Lady A was going to be very good and was impressed with her. He said that Silver Lark was now trained to stick and ball and going quite well but inclined to be a bit lazy at times. He had seen Peter [Acland] in hospital and said that he wasn't badly hit and was doing well.



*Tom & Moses, El Fasher 1939*

Today fortunately is a holiday - "smelling the spring".

Thank goodness it is as it's foully hot and habooby and the only place to be is in the house with all doors and windows shut and the fan on. I came down off the roof at 7 and slept inside for a bit. It's been an absolute stinker today - including a few heavy drops of rain at about 3 pm. I practised a little putting before going to the hospital and went back with G to listen to the news.

22<sup>nd</sup> - Today has been another stinker, hot and habooby, however it's a little cooler now. I had the usual day at the hospital and this afternoon I knocked a ball about on J. I found John Gaitskell at the hospital and brought him home for a drink.

23<sup>rd</sup> - I've been feeling a bit depressed today, as one must naturally be with the news from Greece. However, one must expect these dark times off and on and I've no doubt that we shall win eventually. Today was the usual hospital day and this afternoon I rode P and J down to the monkey wood. In the wood (one says wood - it is actually a fringe of trees by the river) I passed Mrs Agden cantering along on her donkey. She'd obviously been on an outing all by herself.

Today has been more pleasant, not so hot and no dust. I woke this morning to a light breeze blowing from the west with a softness and hint of rain about it. It has been blowing off and on all day. It's watering day today and the old man having opened the channel went away and left it and the lawns overflowed onto the drive which is all slushy in consequence and gets churned up by the car. However why worry?

24<sup>th</sup> - The pioneers are very full of beans tonight and are singing away at the tops of their voices as I write. It's amazing how they have the energy to go on singing – often a single phrase – over and over again for hours on end. As I was having tea this evening I saw a piebald cat, which I have noticed about before, jump down off the gussab rick by the garage. She seemed to survey the land and then mewed and down jumped a little piebald kitten who proceeded to gambol and play about under mother's eye. They then made off on some expedition or other out the front gate.

Today has been the usual day. I went out to the farm this morning to see John who has 'flu or something like it. This afternoon I hit a ball about on George and Peter. I bought G back from the hospital for a drink.

25<sup>th</sup> - I did the usual loaf before breakfast and then to the hospital. On my arrival there I found Jack Hammersley waiting for me. He has just been sent here with a company of the Camel Corps. He left Tara behind at Obeid and hopes to get a house here and get her here in a few days, so I said in the meantime come and stay with me. So here he is, sitting in a chair near me and drinking a gin. I told him that he wouldn't have to mind the fact that the bedrooms were in a bit of a shambles and he said not a bit, that he liked them either very tidy or very untidy. When we got home and I showed him he said "that's just how I like it, but wouldn't you get a raspberry from Peg if she saw it"! I asked Jack if he had any news of Bill and he said "yes, the last I heard of him he had captured a gold mine and a thick pair of woman's pants"! Poor Jack and Tara are in their third hot weather here without leave. I think they are being very stupid about leave for these people, SDF I mean, and they'll soon have a whole lot of crocks on their hands if they are not careful. There's no reply from Khartoum about my leave, but don't worry as I'm sure it will come soon and in the meanwhile I feel very fit and well considering how long I've been without leave.

G goes off to Sennar today after lunch and is coming back tomorrow after breakfast. It's over the question of camps in Sennar. The authorities in Sennar dealt straight with G instead of going to Bryant, the man on the spot. I don't think G has done all he should have to see that Bryant was consulted first and I can foresee a row as Bryant is the last person to tolerate any infringement of his preserves, or to miss the opportunity for a row, however flimsy. Without telling G straight out that I didn't think he had done all that he should have done, I said that I thought that B would resent it, so he is prepared for a row. Last night a wire came in from B saying he was going to Khartoum for "medical treatment". I strongly suspect that he has rushed in to have first cut at Pridie! I hope for the sake of peace that this isn't true. But this is just the season when "hot weather" tempers are developing.

The weather hasn't been bad yesterday and today – rather southern in type – gentle breeze with the softness of moisture in the air. I slept very well last night although I only needed a sheet.

### *Wad Medani, 25 April 1941*

After lunch Jack rode up to his camp to see his soldiers. When he came back we went in the trap to look for the irrigation rest house to see what the accommodation was like and the furniture to enable Jack to decide if Tara needed to bring any furniture with her from Obeid. We then came back for tea and fixed up Jack's wireless. I went off to the hospital and didn't get back until nearly 8:30 as I had to go to the farm to see John.

26<sup>th</sup> - I've just got back from the evening hospital. Today was a usual day. I did an apparently successful operation on a case that G asked me to operate on for him. I acted the part - for myself - of the successful Surgeon Morris for about an hour afterwards! Jack sent off a wire to Tara to come on tomorrow's train, so she gets here at the unearthly hour of 2.30 am on Monday. We went for a hack together this evening down to monkey wood. Lots of the females are running about now with little ones hanging on under their bellies. It was a pleasant cool night last night - I had to pull a blanket up in the middle of it - and today has not been unpleasant.

28<sup>th</sup> - Yesterday was the usual hospital day. I played polo in the afternoon, G 2 and P and J 1 chukka each. Again good polo, the same sides as last Sunday. Polo is precarious now as there are only the 8 of us left. I was mediocre myself, but I am by far the worst player of the 8 of us. Hospital after tea and then Jack, G and I went to the flics - a nice bit of south sea island stuff with Dorothy Lamour called *The Hurricane*. Jack's comment when it was all over was "Haboob quois"! After supper we listened to Churchill's speech, which was as usual very good. Jack went off then to the house they've been given to get a bit of sleep before he had to get up and meet Tara. He got a wire from her yesterday morning to say "arriving today's train with Hussein (suffragi), two wives, one child and cupboard"! Today was the usual hospital day except that I did an operation for G, a cancer of the breast. This afternoon I rode J and came across a picnic party - the Hattersleys and some others - in the monkey wood. They looked as though they were enjoying themselves. Back to the hospital after tea - the breast woman is doing well so far. I'm now waiting for Jack and Tara and a couple of others to come to drinks. Jack had asked two people from the Pioneers to come and drink with them tonight and was then regretting that he had done so as they are hardly settled in yet. So I said better bring them here instead. I had a letter today with news of London. Bell [a St Thomas' doctor] "battled down to a hospital in the East End, dealing with 200 casualties a night, until it became untenable, since then he has been organizing shelter clinics and the like, all this interlarded with incidents like creeping down dark deep potholes to minister to the badly wounded whilst demolition men supported 7 toppling stories about his head". Thomas' has had three direct hits but they are carrying on in the basement. It's all very wonderful and makes me both proud and ashamed not to be in it.

29<sup>th</sup> - Tara seemed in very good form and asked after you. One of the two people they brought around was an Australian and the other a South African, both decent people. The Australian's name was Wills, a brother of the fellow Colin Wills who one occasionally hears broadcasting from London. He was in Australia House and remembers the Old Man [Tom's father] very well and asked to be remembered to him. He, poor fellow, was worried about his wife as he had left her in Aberdeen and had sent her six cables and received no answer. Jack and Tara very kindly brought us a present of a bottle of whiskey which was very civil of them.

Today was the usual hospital day and in the afternoon I hacked on P and J. When I got back to the hospital G asked me to go home and have a drink with him, and I stayed and listened to the news, but there was little new in it. I'm afraid that the leave situation is not very bright at the moment. A letter came yesterday morning saying that I was to go on leave on the 1<sup>st</sup> May, but not saying who was coming to relieve me. So I suggested that G should ring up Khartoum and find out. They reply was that no one was to relieve me, but that G could ring up Bryant in Sennar for help any time he wanted it. This would have



been quite an impossible arrangement and I couldn't have left G under those circumstances. However, it subsequently transpired that even that was off as B was now sick! So I'm afraid no leave for a bit, but please don't worry as I really do feel fit and we have been very lucky recently with the weather.

1<sup>st</sup> May - Yesterday afternoon I drove to the club for a swim only to find that they had altered the water changing days and the bath was empty, which made me very peevish. I had a very sociable night last night as I went to drinks with J and T and then had dinner with G.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Yesterday was hot with a dry wind but quite bearable inside. In the evening I rode J down to the monkey wood. I had intended to ride both J and P but they only brought J. That finished, I went down to the club to look for and apologise to the Greek steward to whom I had been rude the day before over the bath being empty. Poor fellow, it wasn't his fault a bit and he had been on my conscience all day. That done, I went to see the Hammersleys - I had promised to find out about milk supply from John for them and I wanted to report what I had found. They are going to get milk from the farm dairy by sending a soldier for it each day.

Today it was warmish and I came down off the roof by 7 and went to sleep down here and didn't wake again until 8:15. The weather isn't too bad here for this time of the year. I think the rains begin in June and the weather from now until October is pretty foul, but not so bad in the rains as it is in September and October. I called in to the Prichards on my way to the hospital. We have six laburnum trees in our garden, and one or two are an absolute blaze of blossom. The Ps have a small grove of them at their gate, all in full flower, and one drives through and under them - they are a grand sight. At the hospital I found a case that needed operating on, a man who had been knocked down by a car and had a head injury. Unfortunately, he died as I finished the op which was sad. Miss J was worrying about her brother whom she thought was in Greece but she's just heard he's fighting in Egypt, probably Tobruk. It's really wonderful how they've managed to get the people out of Greece.

### *Wad Medani, 3 May 1941*

Today was the usual morning at the hospital except that I did an emergency operation and also one for Goss. I rode P and J this evening and since the hospital have been reading journals.

5<sup>th</sup> - I wonder if this Iraq business will make any difference to the airmails. I suppose that it may well do so. Yesterday was the usual morning and polo in the afternoon. We played four chukkas and I played P 2 and G and J one each. It was quite good polo and I played middling well for me. John at the farm had asked me to take Jack and Tara to tea and a look round the farm. As there was polo I couldn't go but I sent them on their own. John went off to leave in Kenya in the evening. G and I went to the flics in the evening. I quite enjoyed it but, unless the film is very clear and well lit, this machine doesn't show it very well. I went back to a good supper with G afterwards.

Today has been the usual hospital business. Archdale came in this morning to see G. I happened to see him and he told me that he had just this morning had a letter from his father, written on Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>!, in which he said "If you meet a doctor's wife whose name was

Orr-Paterson, please give her my kind regards and say that we were all very sorry that they have left Fermanagh". I said that I would pass the message on. G says that Archdale is 56. If this is true he is very active and bustling on the polo field for that age. This evening I drove P to the club and had a swim and sat in the sun and looked at the papers - very pleasant. The Sikh officer in charge of a detachment of Indians guarding the POWs was also in the bath. I went to G's after the hospital this evening to listen to a reproduction of Menzies' speech which I must say was extremely good. Did you hear it? Tomorrow is a holiday - King Farouk's accession or something. There is a levee. Neither G nor I are going as we say we don't hold with levees in wartime, but honesty compels me to say that I grasp at any excuse, however flimsy, to get out of doing something I don't want to!

6<sup>th</sup> - It is so hot now that one can't sleep on the roof very late so I came down about 6:30 and went to sleep again inside. I drove to the hospital in the trap and managed to get away early. I read for a bit and then went to the bath to have a swim. It was so hot that one couldn't walk on the cement surround to the bath! You can imagine it was very pleasant to be in the water. I rode P and J this evening. Having done the usual evening round at the hospital, I was just about to order dinner when I had to go back to see a case. However, I wasn't away long.

8<sup>th</sup> - Yesterday was the usual hospital day. I drove P to the club in the afternoon and had a swim. There were an unusual number of people in the bath, about 10 or so including Jack and Tara. G took me home from the hospital to listen to the news - Churchill's speech to parliament was good and I was glad to have the opportunity to hear it. There has been quite a spate of mail recently and we have had three ground mails in a week and now have papers as late as February. We have a pair of rollers nesting somewhere near I think and the other morning I stopped in the garden to look at one who was sitting up in a tree making the usual quarrelsome noise. As I was watching him he took off and came straight at me and swooped on me the same as magpies do in the nesting season in Australia. The weather is hot but bearable and one usually gets a good sleep at night.

9<sup>th</sup> - Here it is a real proper Sudan dirty day - a foul dust-laden wind from the south. It began about 6:30 and is still going. There's a film of fine powdery dust over everything and piles of it in places. Yesterday was the usual hospital morning, being Thursday I did a couple of ops. I rode P and J to the wood and back in the evening.

Today I came down at 6:30 and went to sleep again and woke up at 8:15 in a bath of sweat and mud. I went to the hospital in the car as I thought it not much fun to drive in the trap in this foul wind. I wasn't long there and got back soon after 11. The wind is knocking a good deal of the blossom off the laburnums. The golden mohr in the garden by the garage is just coming into flower.

Yes, it's difficult to understand how they let the Huns get across to Libya but of course it isn't very far from Sicily to Tripoli. I have heard it suggested they came through French territory. Anyhow I noted in the report of Churchill's speech in parliament on Wednesday that he said that an error of judgement had been made. It's a great pity that O'Connor was taken prisoner as I understand that he was the expert on that particular form of desert fighting.

### *Wad Medani, 9 May 1941*

The haboob had died down by lunch. About 4 pm a colossal copper-coloured cloud began to work up from the north this time and came nearer and nearer. Finally, when overhead it began to rain – enormous great shilling blobs of mud. Then it came down in real earnest and we had a really heavy shower. Everything now looks beautifully clean and washed as a result. I didn't tell you that coming back from the hospital two or three mornings ago I picked up a horseshoe on the road, the first cast one I remember seeing in the Sudan. It is now hanging on the light switch above my desk.

10<sup>th</sup> - Today has been pretty sticky as a result of the increased humidity from yesterday's rain. I had the usual day at the hospital and rode P and J this evening. I brought G back for a drink. Some time ago I noticed that O was having 4 or 5 tins of beef suet a month for the kitchen, which considering I have nothing cooked for breakfast or lunch I thought was a bit hot. So I said this must stop, I said, from now on economy, I said. You can buy fat in the suk and render it down yourself, I said and no more beef suet I said. What's more, I said, while we're on the subject, there's no need to be extravagant I said and clean fat can be used again I said! Last night I had fried fish for dinner. This evening O produced crumbed cutlets – very good but they tasted ever so little of – you can guess! O wins I think.

I saw a solitary black and white stork yesterday, the sort that nested in our trees in Fasher. This afternoon has been cloudy and overcast – there was quite a lot of thunder but no rain. The sky is still cloudy and if this were Fasher I'd say no roof tonight chaps, but I think I'll risk it here.

11<sup>th</sup> - Today I was on my own as G went off for a morning's visit to Abu Usher. I saw a fellow this morning who'd been in France and then England for six months and had just come down from Egypt where he had helped organize reception camps for the people from Greece. He said they were all in remarkably good heart, which is good to know. Today was polo day and I played four chukkas, G 2 and P and J 1 each. I quite enjoyed it and I do think my general form shows a slight improvement on Fasher. It is much faster and more team-like polo here of course. Today has been overcast and cloudy all day with thunder storms and some lightening hanging around the horizon, but no actual rain. I was driven off the roof last night by a few drops – just too much to be able to stick it out, but I'm risking it again tonight.

13<sup>th</sup> - I'm sitting inside with the room all shut up, waiting for dinner and there's the most colossal haboob going on outside and thunder and lightning all round the horizon it seems. What remarkable news about Hess! It's mysterious but one can only suppose that he saw a "purge" coming his way and was lucky enough to get out in time, but whatever the cause, the German explanations are neither very convincing nor very much to their credit and seem bound to do them some damage. It seems to me quite the most important thing that has happened for some time.

Yesterday morning I was in the middle of doing my female out-patients when in walked Pongo! He, as usual, looked as though he might be pregnant but that wasn't what he had come about! He wanted to know where Jack and Tara lived. He has recently been made Officer Commanding Camel Corps and now lives in Obeid. He was on his way to Khartoum and had stopped here to see Jack's company of the Camel Corps. Little can he have thought when he relinquished command of the Equots [the Equatorial Corps] 13 years

ago that he would so much later again command a unit of the SDF.<sup>139</sup> Pongo, enquiring after Nicholas, asked if he had grown a moustache yet [Tom was known for his]. I said I didn't know, but that the last report from you said that he looked like a bull terrier. P said that he always liked bull terriers and considered them very handsome.

In the afternoon I drove Pongo to the club and had a swim. (The haboob has now stopped and it's pouring with rain, praise be.) In the evening at the hospital I was talking to G when one of the house surgeons came in to talk about a case. "How old is the case?" said G. "Oh, an old man of about 45 years" said Dr Mhd Ali. G and I looked at each other and hooted with laughter.

Today has been the usual hospital morning. This evening I rode P and J. When I got to the hospital, G told me about Hess and I went off with him again to listen to the news about it. I dashed home as soon as the news was finished to try and beat the storm which was then brewing. The rain has now just slackened off.

14<sup>th</sup> - Today has been very hot and sticky after last night's quite heavy rain. I did a couple of ops for G this morning. I drove P to the club this evening and had a swim. I hope they change the water soon as it's pretty green and scummy at the moment.

16<sup>th</sup> - Have I told you that the women of Medani have a sort of canteen at the station from which they give tea and cakes etc to passing troops in trains? Everyone provides a cake etc and O makes a cake whenever we're asked. The other day when we were asked I said to O, "what about making me some small cakes in those moulds like F [previous cook in Fasher] used to make". Last night at tea I found one on the table which was heavy and not very tasty (horrible word!). So I said to O this morning, "that little cake you sent me for tea yesterday was a bit heavy". "Yes I know", says O, "that wasn't your cake really, it was a bit of stuff I had left over from the 'iskarries' [soldiers] cake! I've made some others for you"! I hope none of the people in the canteen have tried the Morris cake for export only as supplied to the troops!

Yesterday was grey and cloudy again. I operated and helped G do one. I hacked down to the monkey forest on P and J and met Jack and Tara on my way. Later I had a note from Jack mentioning that he had just killed a snake in his bath - he finished up with "what a country"! I think it's a bit off to have a snake in your bath. I did the usual hospital round in the evening. There was distant lightening to the east, but I decided to risk sleeping upstairs. However, before I'd gone to bed it had come on to blow and before I was in bed on the verandah it had begun to rain.

This morning I drove P to the hospital and did my usual round and had a word with G before driving down to the town for supplies. In the afternoon Abu brought the other two ponies to be seen. The trap was still standing at the front door and J snorted and blew at it as if it contained a pack of lions. I tried to get him to go near it and then began one of those struggles with which you'll be familiar - trying to persuade J to walk past it without jumping about and blowing. It was quite futile, so we gave up after a bit, much to Abu's relief! I hasten to add that I have NO idea of putting him in the trap again. It was just that I

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<sup>139</sup> The supplement to the London Gazette dated 3 June 1929 announced the award of an OBE to "Major Lionel Carrington Bostock, MC, late Officer Commanding, Equatorial Corps, Sudan Defence Force". That must be Pongo.

wanted him to be reasonable about the trap as an object. What nonsense to expect J to be reasonable about anything! It's possible that leave may be on but when I don't quite know. In the meantime, I'm quite fit I'm glad to say.

### *Wad Medani, 17 May 1941*

Yesterday after tea I went to the hospital as usual and brought G back for a drink. I went to bed on the roof but sometime during the night I woke to the familiar sound of drops of rain – the sky was heavily clouded over. I pulled the sheet over my head and tried to pretend it wasn't there, but it was no use. It got heavier and I had to go down – it finished by raining quite heavily. Today as a result when walking to the hospital I had to stick to the road as my usual short cuts were too muddy and gluey to take. I noticed a black and white stork walking about picking something up off the ground and closely attended by a bunch of carmine bee eaters (which have recently also made an appearance). One of them was actually sitting on the stork's back and they looked at times as if they were almost mobbing him. Today was the usual hospital day except that I had a couple of ops to do. This afternoon I rode P and J. I went with G to listen to the news. I do hope that if we have the troops and the machines necessary to do it, we will put Syria "in the bag". I think that we should have done it long ago. If the Germans get a firm hold there it will be very awkward.

18<sup>th</sup> - It's been a hot and unpleasant day and is now blowing a haboob so I must sleep downstairs. We played polo, today being Sunday. It seems to have taken a new lease of life and we played five chukkas though I only played four, P 2 and G and J 1 each. It was good hard galloping polo and I played averagely well for me. Jackson will, I think, be quite a good pony next season when he had thickened out and become a bit more muscled up, but he will never be up to my weight, I'm afraid. P had a note which he brought to polo today saying that Douglas Fabyn wanted to sell all his ponies. I wonder where they are going. On my way home, I went to the hospital to do a round.

19<sup>th</sup> - It's been pleasantly cool and quite a decent day today. I had the usual morning at the hospital and this afternoon I rode J. I had an English mail this morning, some papers and a letter written on April 9<sup>th</sup>, so mails although not express are quicker than they used to be. Our hedges have just had their monthly trim and are looking very neat. Now that the rains are near I must do something about preparing the vegetable garden and some holes in the ground for some flowering shrubs from Sennar. It's just come on to blow and I hope it won't rain and drive me off the roof.

21<sup>st</sup> - Yesterday I had the usual hospital morning and rode P and J in the afternoon. When I was on the point of going to the hospital in the evening Miss Crowe (the second sister) rang me up to say she'd had a note from Mrs Wicksted – she used to be a sister in the SMS and is now married to a fellow in the Syndicate who is at the moment with the SDF. She is two and a bit months pregnant and had begun to bleed and wanted to see me. I got Miss C to go with me. It was quite a pleasant cool day for a change.

Today I went early to see Mrs W and persuaded her to come into hospital. She doesn't like G and it was a bit awkward as he does the first class upstairs as a matter of course. However, she's in and all seems to be going well. After the usual hospital morning I drove P to the club and had a swim. It's been a very hot day and the bath has just been filled and cleaned so it was doubly pleasant. I saw Jack and Tara in the bath. We've had a mild rain

storm this evening. I didn't get back from the hospital until nearly 8 as I spent some time looking at a fellow who was in a very bad way following a crack on the head.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Yesterday I was kept going in the hospital until about 2:30. As it was another hot day I thought I wouldn't ride so I drove P to the club and had a swim. Not only was it the best place on a day like that but I thought it a good idea to take full advantage of the clean water. I have a routine - when the water is fresh I have a shower first as I think I may contaminate the bath, when it is old however I have no doubt about who's the dirtier, so I have a shower when I come out! Just as I got back to tea the MO on duty rang me up and asked me to go and see a case - a fellow who'd been hit on the head with the business end of an axe. It rained at odd times during the evening so I slept down.

This morning I drove P to the hospital. Having done my usual round I found that G wanted me to give him a hand with an operation on a Syndicate fellow named O'Dowd.

I got a *New Statesman* of early April last post in which I see that pro-Axis activities had been going on for some time in Iraq. A thing that one hadn't realized as one's only source of recent news is the BBC.

Now that the laburnums are going off - they've lasted for quite a long time - the golden mohrs are all coming into flower and form lovely masses of colour all over the place, in the houses, the club garden and along the river front near the club. Yes, the trap is very smart compared with the Fasher one, but it has the disadvantage that there is nowhere for the boy to sit. I must teach P to stand tied up, so that we won't need a boy with us when we go out together

### ***Wad Medani, 25 May 1941***

Having finished my letter to you on Friday [23<sup>rd</sup>] I sent O off to post it and had tea and so to the hospital where I did my usual round and saw O'Dowd with G. Got back just in time to have a drink and put on my tie to go to dinner with the Robertsons. They had John and Rosemary and Jack and Tara and I enjoyed myself. They have a troops' club for the few British NCOs and men who are here and someone has to be there every night to manage the canteen etc. It was Mrs R's turn so she was not actually at dinner. I heard some political moves at the Rs. Ted N is going from Nyala to Tong. Tony Hawkesworth at Tong is coming here and Peter [Acland], who is being released from the army, is going to Nyala. That's a very good appointment and I think that both he and Bridget will be very pleased.

On Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> I had the usual hospital morning. I was going to ride in the afternoon but the telephone rang and I had to go to the hospital to see a case that I found needed operating on. I only just had time to get home for a bath and change before going to the cinema. Jack and Tara had asked me. It was the Robin Hood film we saw in Adelaide but so cut and so many parts missing that you could hardly have followed it if you'd not seen it before. They also had Mitchell-Innes with them and we both went back to supper with them.

Yesterday (today is 26<sup>th</sup>) I was driven down off the roof in the night by fairly heavy rain and as a result it was rather a sticky day. We had polo in the afternoon and I played G 2 and P and J 1 chukka each. It was again pretty fast galloping polo and I enjoyed it. I regret to say that I'm afraid our P is really outclassed here. It's not that he is slow in a straight line, but in turning and manoeuvring he suffers from 'nertia and you can only make up for

that by being extra fast in the straight. I have to confess that I don't exactly look forward to the days when I play him two chukkas. However, his performances in the trap must be considered, and as a chap I would less rather part with him than either of the other two, although as a performer on the polo ground – well P said to me yesterday “which of your ponies is it that is so slow?” – that's about it I'm afraid. Last night was pretty hot so after polo I didn't do much. I had a good night on the roof however.

Today on my way to breakfast after a big op I got a note from Tara saying that J had had a bad night with tummy trouble and would I go and see him, which I did before going back to the hospital. This afternoon I rode J to the forest. I met P taking Mrs O'Dowd for a drive – she's staying with them. She's a nice little Irish body and must have had a very worrying time over her husband and his appendix, but he is much better today I'm glad to say. P has recent bought a governess cart - from where God only knows! – he also has a number of captured Italian mules and he drives on one of them, a great big brown fellow who trots out like anything. One of the British vet sergeants here drove up to the polo in it yesterday.

28<sup>th</sup> - I suddenly realized yesterday that Jack [Brownrigg, Peg's first cousin] must have been on the *Hood*. How ghastly if he was. There's nothing that one can write about it that means anything these days. The loss of life must have been colossal. Yesterday was the usual hospital day and I went to the club for a swim in the evening. Eric and Charles are coming down tomorrow for the day – it will be nice to see Charles.

29<sup>th</sup> - Yesterday I rode P and J in the afternoon and went to G's for a drink in the evening. Today I had breakfast with G, Charles and Eric being there. I am to go on leave as soon as I can fix it. I do not imagine that will be less than a month because there is such a run on the streamers that it is difficult to get a passage south, and also there is such a crowd in Kenya that they will not let you go unless you can produce evidence that you have accommodation somewhere. I rang the Railways today and they are finding out how soon I can get a passage.

Today being Thursday I operated and did the usual hospital work as well. C and E went off after an early lunch. I rode J this evening and then went again to G's as D Logan Gray had just come up from Roseires on his way to Khartoum. He was just the same as usual. I didn't get home to dinner until latish.

30<sup>th</sup> - Friday is the day I change my razor blade and wind the clocks! I then drove P to the hospital where I did my usual round, saw G and had a chat and so home. Jack and Tara have gone to Khartoum and are coming back tomorrow afternoon so I've asked them to come to dinner and I've got Rodney P as well. On watering days now our garden is full of the storks and those white buff-backed cattle egrets, who stalk about on the flooded lawns. A plague of small brown butterflies or moths have recently hatched out and are everywhere.

As soon as I hear from the Railways when I can get a passage south I will write to Helen and see if she can get me a room at the Brackenhurst. Failing that, I'll try the Outspan. I've also hear that the White Horse Inn in Uganda is good.

No, the ban [on wives coming to the Sudan] is not on again so far as I know. As I think I told you, for people in England it is the same as if it were on as you can't get an exit permit. I agree, it's not much use commenting on the news. I think we should begin discussing

your movements. As far as this end goes, the climate here is tolerable by the end of October. Perhaps you could make tentative enquiries your end about possible ways and means. I imagine that it would be better for you to go via Colombo and Bombay rather than the long stretch Perth - South Africa. Once you get here the climate is quite good in normal years until the mid or end of April. Helen and the other women I've met speak well of Kenya for children.

[In a letter, Tom's father-in-law, living on the Kent coast] also says what one has heard from other sources, that the army vehicles on the roads at home are now among the most dangerous things one has to contend with.

### *Was Medani, 31 May 1941*

Jack and Tara were coming to dinner tonight as you know. However, I got a wire today to say that both poor J and T were in hospital in Khartoum with fever and so Rodney P and I were on our own. He came just after 7:30 and we had quite a pleasant dinner and talked like anything. He left at 10:45.

1<sup>st</sup> June - Friday evening I went to a farewell party at the Pioneers mess as they are closing down here now. Lots of people there including two lots who'd just come back from Kenya and were very enthusiastic about it. Yesterday was the usual hospital morning. In the afternoon I went out and hit a few golf balls about. Today I played polo in the afternoon. Despite the fact that we seem to be hanging on by the skin of our teeth, the polo seems to get faster and harder each Sunday and today was a real dingdong. I played better for me, despite the fact that it was one of my less good days as it was P's turn to play twice. But, while not up to the standard of the others, he went quite well and turned less like a battleship than usual. J is improving and should be a good pony next season when he is more experienced and is stronger and fitter. He's not yet quite acclimatised I think. Having done my hospital round I went to the flics, meeting G and John Lawes there. A good film and a nice bit of escapist stuff about the early days of Australia called *Captain Fury*. I must say one of the more trying things is the News Reel which tonight was full of British aid to Greece. The last one I saw was rather full of boastful remarks accompanying news of the capture of Benghazi!

3<sup>rd</sup> - Yesterday I walked to the hospital as usual. They have got a new x-ray plant in Khartoum and we are getting the Khartoum one here and ours is going to Atbara I think. Dunwoodie,<sup>140</sup> the technician from Khartoum, arrived yesterday to begin the installation of the new set. I've asked him to stay with me. In the afternoon we drove in the trap down to the monkey forest. D had come down in the train with Harding and had taken his bags there on arrival so I dropped him at H's house and came home to tea - quite the longest single trip P has done. I had a bath and went to the hospital and sent a car from there to collect D's bags and bring them to the house. D had asked me to pick him up from the club on my way home. This is the first time I have been to the club except to swim. I found him sitting having a drink with several other chaps so I sat down too. We came home to dinner.

I forgot to tell you that I was woken at 2 in the morning by the MO on duty who couldn't get on to G's house, so as I was already out of bed to answer the phone I went to the

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<sup>140</sup> W Dunwoodie, Radiographer, Khartoum Civil Hospital, joined SMS 1930.



hospital and did an emergency op and wasn't in bed again until 4. Last night was peaceful, thank goodness.

I got a notice from the Railways today saying that I had a reservation on the train leaving Medani on 4 July - the boat leaves Kosti on the 5<sup>th</sup>. So I must write at once and try and get in somewhere in Kenya or Uganda. This afternoon I took P and went down to the club for a swim. It was delightful as the water had just been changed.

5<sup>th</sup> - On Tuesday evening I went to the hospital as usual and then D and I went to drinks with G. I then dropped D at the club where he was meeting Wilson to dine with him. Yesterday I wrote to Helen asking her if she could get me in at the Brackenhurst. I forgot to tell you that when Eric and Charles were down, C, having told me that I could go on leave as soon as I could arrange it, asked me where I was thinking of going and said "There is a hotel at --- (mentioning the name of a place I've forgotten) in the Belgian Congo and there's a very interesting leper camp there" and then adding as an afterthought "but I don't think there's much else to do there"!! If I can't get in at the Brackenhurst I may try somewhere in Uganda where I hear there are some good pubs in pleasant and healthy places.

Yesterday afternoon I rode P and J. In the evening rather against my wish, I went to the flics with D and the sisters and two army chaps. Actually the flic was quite good. We went back to the sisters' mess afterwards to supper. Today was the usual morning. Being Thursday, I did a couple of ops and also got some valuable tips about the x-ray plant from D. Today was a special appeal and flag day for the Red Cross and St Johns and I must say it was very creditable to see the temergis and people rally up and pay their piastre or tarifa for a flag. In the afternoon I drove P to the club and had a swim. D insisted on my going to the club this evening which I did and I've just got home. He is dining with Wilson and catching an 11 something to Khartoum.

The last few days have been patchy - definitely cooler at times and at others stuffy. We've slept down the last two nights because it's been cloudy. It's overcast again tonight and I'm being made to sleep down again. I hope it will rain soon and be done with it as it's of course hotter on the verandah down stairs than on the roof.

6<sup>th</sup> - I imagine that things must be pretty grim with you just now with the casualty lists for Greece and Cyprus coming out. The Maoris seems to have fought like tigers in Crete. Our high command seems to have made a gross underestimation of the requirements for that show. I hope we soon set about putting Syria in the bag, as Bill would say. However, time will show and I feel it's not much use making comments on events these days.

Today has been the usual Friday to date. P took me to the hospital where I did my usual round and then did a board with G on young Wynne the policeman. He's had no leave since he came out in 1938 and has been sick in hospital so we're recommending him for extra sick leave. He's flying down to Durban. Dunwoodie is also going on leave on the 16<sup>th</sup> - his wife and child are already in Durban and he is going by boat to Juba and flying from there. I then got G to look at a case with me that I was worried about and so home where I've just done the accounts with O and looked at the ponies. Things are definitely becoming more expensive in the market and this is affecting the servants' food stuffs as well. I'm rather wondering whether we will not have to give them some sort of war allowance while things are like this.

## *Wad Medani, 7 June 1941*

When I got to the stables this morning on my way to the hospital I was shown that G had a cut on his nearside hock, the result of being kicked while out on exercise by that old scoundrel P. I sent him to Pritchard who says it's nothing serious but I shan't be able to play him polo tomorrow. Apparently Sabr was exercising them when it happened and he went to the suk to get his dinner without telling Abu who didn't notice it himself until this morning. I told Abu that although S should have reported it to him, I thought it a bit poor that A hadn't noticed it himself when he went round the stable in the evening, but if it was dusk he probably wouldn't have seen it. Anyhow, A came this evening and says that he is fed up with S and would like to change him as he is now very idle. So I've told him to produce someone else and we'll send S back to Darfur.

8<sup>th</sup> - This morning I was woken at 3:30 and had to go to the hospital to see a very bad case of ruptured appendix which I had to operate on. Operation was his only hope, but he was too far gone to recover and died this afternoon. I spent the usual morning in the hospital except that to begin with I gave yellow fever inoculations to a number of Britishers, and eventually G and I did each other. This afternoon I played polo, three chukkas only, 2 P and 1 J as G is still suffering from his kick - nothing serious, a skin wound only. After the hospital I went to G's for a drink and to listen to the news. I'm glad we've gone into Syria at last.

9<sup>th</sup> - Today was the usual Monday operating day. This afternoon I rode J. It's been much cooler today and is just blowing up at the moment and I think may rain tonight. I had a letter this morning from young Mackenzie,<sup>141</sup> the vet who has just arrived in Fasher. He says that both the chaps are well and looking fat. Moses is big, over 15 hands, and now a bit of a handful. He suggests that he should be backed and ridden, but I should like if possible to do that myself. He says that life is pretty dull for them in their present routine, which I suppose is true. I plan to get Moses down when I come back from leave if all goes well.<sup>142</sup>

11<sup>th</sup> - Yesterday towards the end of the morning a very nice Greek woman came in with her son aged 7 who had fallen off a wall and broken his arm. They were brought in by one of the Greek doctors, who both have the habit of rushing to the hospital for a bit of free advice (*consulation très grave*) whenever they get into trouble. I gave G a hand to set it and so didn't get home until nearly 3. I rode P to the club in the afternoon and had a pleasant swim although the water is a week old now. I went with G to listen to the news. Not much about Syria so far. It sounds as though the House had been asking some awkward questions about Crete which is not surprising. I heard one very good remark in the course of a talk by an American commentator from Washington named Alistair Cook. His Greek barber, while cutting his hair, had waved the scissors above his head and said "we declare an emergency! OK! When do we emerge?" I must say that they seem to be getting a move on.

13<sup>th</sup> (and a Friday!) - [On the afternoon of the 11<sup>th</sup>] we had an Italian in from the camp who died almost as soon as he got to the hospital. As I had seen him only on the point of death, I couldn't give a death certificate. After friggling about a lot, they decided that they wanted

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<sup>141</sup> PZ Mackenzie, Veterinary Inspector, joined SVS 1939.

<sup>142</sup> We have a tankard engraved "*Khartoum Racing Club, Polo Scurry, 27.2.48, MOSES*".

a PM done. I felt that they might have sent him in to hospital before and that had a PM been necessary that they might have let us know before. I went round to see Maxwell about it and nearly had slight word with him. I then went off to the hospital to do the thing and found that G (whom I'd rung up before to enquire his views about it) had gone to the hospital and begun the job, so I gave him and hand to finish it.

By that time it was 6:30, so we both did a round and so home to bath, reading and dinner. I went back again at 10 pm to see another Italian who was pretty sick, and so home to bed. I was woken at 11:30 by one of the British Sgts from the PoW camp, speaking on the phone from the hospital. They had been going back to camp in a lorry and bumped one of their number off and he had landed on his head. I went around to see him and discovered that he had a fractured base of skull. By the time I'd got him fixed up and into bed etc and got home, it was 1 am.

Yesterday (12<sup>th</sup>) was a holiday, but I got up at 7 and went to the H to see the Sgt. and do his dressings etc. After breakfast G asked me if I would like to take charge of the case and I said I would. I went back at 1:30 to change his dressings etc. Considering that he must have had a pretty severe blow - he's broken his jaw as well - he wasn't going badly. I rode P & J in the evening. Maxwell rang up and said there was a hospital train leaving Medani for Khartoum that night and would I like to send the Sgt on it? I said that I'd have a look at him and decide if he was fit enough to travel. I was anxious to get him to Khartoum soon as he needs special dental treatment for his broken jaw. I got early to the hospital but by the time I had done his dressings again, examined him carefully again, decided he could be moved and made out case notes etc to go with him and done a round etc it was nearly 8 and I got back home to find that our guests had arrived, the Griffins and John Gaitskell. O turned on quite a decent dinner and it went off quite well. We had a thoroughly chatty and bolshy evening and criticized all and sundry and volunteered cast iron plans for the salvation of humanity, settled the African problem, and talked a bit of scandal - all quite pleasant and they went off about 11.

Today I came down off the roof at 7 and went to sleep again inside and didn't wake till 8:45. Went to the hospital by kind assistance of P and did the usual round and had a chat with G. I forgot to say that Sabr went off last night and we now have a Fur from Zalingei whom Abu selected. He had been working for John Ready and seems quite a decent fellow. I haven't heard from Helen yet as to whether she can get me into Brackenhurst or not but I hope to soon.

[Responding to Peg's letter of 18 May received 9 June]

Yes, wasn't the affair Hess extraordinary. I think he realized they were about to bump him off and he made for the only place where he felt he would be safe. It was a good effort piloting the plane and navigating it so accurately.

I wonder if your letters from [your parents] were lost. I suppose we must be losing a fair amount of shipping these days, but most of it in the Atlantic. G told me this morning that the Germans had dropped pamphlets somewhere in England recently stating that they were sinking 750,000 tons of our shipping a month. I hope we won't be drawn into publishing the true figures as that's just what they want.

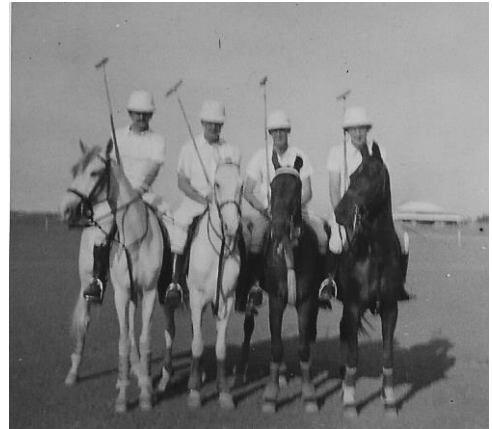
## *Wad Medani, 14 June 1941*

Yesterday, after a rest, I rode J in the afternoon, then hospital as usual. I spent most of this morning operating, a busy day to finish off some cases that were left over from the last day. This afternoon we had a really heavy but short downpour which had freshened things up a lot. I drove down town to try and buy some durofix to put polo beads on with. I couldn't get any but got some extra strong secotine instead which seems quite good. Having done that, I went out and had a few practice shots at golf. I went to the station with G to meet Pridie who was passing through with Macleod. They were going to Asmara and Massawa. I must say I think they go off pretty frequently on the joy rides and leave Charles to hold the baby, which is tough. Both G and I came away a bit fed up with them and their attitude. I went to G's to listen to the news and so home. I heard from Helen today that she has managed to book me at the Brackenhurst for a month, which is a bit of alright. I propose leaving here on the 4<sup>th</sup> July and will get back about the 7<sup>th</sup> September. I'm feeling very well and don't really need leave except that I feel a little like the fellow who said "no, doctor, don't feel ill doctor, but when I sees a job of work I comes over all queer"!

Today G arrived at the hospital not feeling quite up to the work, so I sent him home early. It was the usual morning of work, work, and a little office work for G. This afternoon was polo and we had the usual four chukkas - I played G 2 and P and J 1 each. G has quite recovered from the kick P gave him. J is definitely improving and will be a good pony. I played fairly well for me and it was good fast polo. We were augmented by fresh blood returning from leave: Sharpe and Hayes, both of the Syndicate. I was interested to hear from S that Brackenhurst is a very pleasant pub with a good golf course. It has been a fairly hot day and stinking hot at polo which I finished in a muck sweat. I dropped in to see G on my way back. I did the usual evening round. It's blowing hard at the moment and with lightening in the right quarter, so we may have rain at any moment. The sand flies have got rather bad recently and I've just said that if I must sleep on the verandah I must have a sand fly net up as they bite me there even when I am sitting reading in the evening.

17<sup>th</sup> - Yesterday I was rather busy as G, although feeling better, was not quite right so didn't come to the hospital barring half an hour after breakfast to see a maternity case who was coming up for the usual monthly overhaul. I also had to go out and see Mrs Tracy who was laid low with fever of some sort. In the afternoon, as it was blowing and overcast and looked as though it might rain at any moment, I did accounts and wrote out cheques etc. So in the evening to see Mrs T, to hospital, to see G and finally to a drink with Jack and Tara. After their malaria in Khartoum they have just had a week's local leave in Sennar.

Today I did G's work before breakfast, but he was feeling quite fit and came after breakfast so I had the usual hospital morning and rode J in the afternoon, quite a pleasant hack. Just as I was leaving hospital in the morning I had a note from Mrs Symevsky asking me to go and have supper with them at 99, so after I'd been to see Mrs T and done my round at the hospital I went off there - it's about 11 miles. I took the tourer and driver as I wasn't sure



of the way – one can't do much driving out in the Gezeira as at 3 pt a mile that was 66 pt! The party included Hayes (Syndicate) who's just come back from leave in Cairo and Alex, and Bannerman (Irrigation) and a Mr and Mrs Reed (Syndicate). It was a pleasant party. We sat either on a chair or on cushions leaning up against the parapet on the roof which was quite pleasant, and we had the usual very good cold eats. But as usual it was too late for me, we didn't get any food until about 10 and it was 11:30 before we left.

18<sup>th</sup> - The usual hospital day. They've just changed the water in the bath so P took me along for a swim which I enjoyed very much. In the evening I brought G back for a drink after the hospital.

19<sup>th</sup> - I got my passport back from Cairo today. Did I tell you it had run out in 1940?<sup>143</sup> So now I must send it to Khartoum to get a visa for Kenya and then I think I am all prepared for leave. Symevsky told an amusing tale the other evening. Having a servant who drank but was otherwise a good servant, he wrote to one of those people who advertise drunkenness cures. He got by return a packet of brochures etc and a letter saying he was only just in time and that his moral fibre was weakening, but with the help of the advertiser all would be well and to send £10 for details of the cure. A stern but just letter. He didn't reply and a little later along came a second collection of literature and a much sterner and more reproving letter. Still her did nothing – the servant in the meantime having left, I think – and then a third letter arrived. There was no mistake about the tenor of this one: it began "You Miserable Backslider"!

Tom's [Menzie's] letter is super. I had written to him partly to ask if he was by any chance going on leave when I was and partly to enquire about Moses after Mackenzie's letter about him. I also wanted to know if Tom advised having him gelded. Normally speaking I would, but there is just a question as to whether the leg which was so swollen when he had strangles would stand up to schooling and polo. If it didn't then he might be of use as a govt stallion. Mackenzie had said in his letter that if I didn't want him he would probably buy him as a stallion. Tom starts by saying how sorry he was not to know I was going as – not knowing anyone – he had put off his leave till September and was going to Cairo, "perhaps a little of the Levantines might broaden my mind"! He says "re Moses – watch those b--- vets. I should do as you planned". He says don't geld him until I see how he begins his schooling. He says that Silver Lark [another of their horses left in Fasher] "is going as well as her matronly nature will allow her. She is intelligent but will not make proper use of her enormous bottom and loins. I played her once in a slow game and she went well. She will carry you if you get rid of Peter and I think she will be good in a game. The fetlock is better if anything. She has a tremendous belly and I'm wondering if she's done anything she's not told me about. The boys swear she is not in foal. Actually I don't think she is, as they are all too big in the belly".

I stopped here to go off to tea with the Maxwells and it's now after breakfast on Friday 20<sup>th</sup>. A young DC named Bell was at tea. Paul was looking better than I've ever seen him and quite fat in the face. He seems to have had an interesting time. He has a month's leave and is going to spend part of it in Fasher. Bobby is on leave in Cairo as is Bill. Some decorations have recently come out and Bill Henderson got an MC. His arm is still

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<sup>143</sup> Tom's explanation of how he acquired a British passport while in the Sudan was that it came with a note: "Sorry, Tom, we've run out of Australian passports – here's a British one to be going on with".

troubling him and he's got extra leave and gone to Kenya with his mother who has come down from Palestine with him. I hear that the story about Phil ordering Tom's official mail to be opened is quite true and that he was officially made to apologise to Tom by the Civil Secretary for it. I believe that he had a pretty uncomfortable time in Khartoum as they had at him over several other things as well.

I dined with G last night. G La Touche and Ted Gatley were there as well. A pleasant evening, I enjoyed it. Lots of good arguments! I crawled inside at 7 this morning.

[Responding to Peg's letters, which were taking under three weeks, and one 11 days, to arrive from Adelaide.]

I don't think that the sympathies and actions of the Vichy government really represent the feelings of France, at any rate one hopes not. People like Dorlan etc have realised that their only hope of personal safety lies in Germany winning and they act accordingly, but although now holding supreme power I don't think they represent France. Excepting the clothes which are in the old brown canvas trunk, which is well moth-balled and which I don't touch, all your other clothes are hung out on the verandah with mine every Friday morning. Fancy Helen's letter being cut about [by the censor]. I wonder what it was - at that particular time of course she probably had a good deal to talk about as Khartoum was a bit of a hub then what with Eritrea etc. I must tell her when I see her.

Miss Johnstone had a letter from a fellow who was here in the Pioneers and has since rejoined his regiment just in time to get to Crete. His letter was very interesting but they had a very grim time. He says that when the parachute troops first began arriving everyone stood open-mouthed looking at them. At first they killed a great number of them in the air but once they got the few RAF out of the island, they started to come in waves of 60-70 troop-carrying planes at a time. He said that the evacuation was well carried out and that the navy were wonderful but it was pretty grim. He says "for the first 6 hours after leaving we were escorted by dive bombers, unfortunately not our own!" I've no idea what has happened to Dick Wyndham but as he was also 60<sup>th</sup> and was probably called up at the same time as Jack, he may have been at Calais.

No, Jack H is not playing polo. He had a bad fall with severe concussion after it last year in Khartoum and the Kaid has forbidden him to play polo until further notice. He sold the gray pony he got from Alan - "The Tetrach" it was called - to someone in Shendi. The vet in Shendi aged it as three years older than it actually was which shows how mistaken they can be at times. Did I tell you that Peter has been released from the army and is to take Ted's place in Nyala? He and Bridget are at the moment enjoying life at Thompson's Falls. I suppose that Scotch whiskey will soon be unobtainable. The Australian brand that the Old Man [Tom's father] used to get from Milnes was not bad, although some Australian whiskeys were terrible. We have a frightful synthetic gin in the market here now which comes from India, called Juniper Gin. It's all one can get here at the moment, but I would rather drink none at all.

### *Wad Medani, 22 June 1941*

Friday afternoon I rode P and J. From the hospital after tea, I went to drinks with Jack and Tara. They had asked me as they had Paul and the Mrs coming in. Prior, who commands the POW camp, was there also. I didn't get much news and left early as I was going to

Barakat to dine with John Gaitskell. The sky was overcast with lightening and it blew all the way out there, but no rain came. He had Brian Sharpe, the head accountant of the Syndicate, and Roger Nixon and his wife (also Syndicate) as well. She is the woman who plays polo, as I think I've told you. I thoroughly enjoyed it – a very good dinner including roast duck. The talk was mainly about the significance of the recent German/Russian movements – that is of course solved now as I hear they are at war this morning. I think this cannot be regarded as anything but a reverse for the Germans, however the actual war goes. The Symevskys say that the people in the Ukraine Republic are, and always have been, restless under the Soviets and anxious for autonomy. They think that this will lead them not to resist – even if they don't actually help – the Germans. Anyhow, I think that it is a good thing from our point of view in that Hitler has been forced into doing something that he can't have wanted to do at this moment if he could avoid it. I was home earlyish and got back without being rained on, though there was a little rain during the night.

Yesterday morning I gave G and hand with a big operation which took a fair time. G, I think, looks a bit grey and tired after whatever it was he had last week and I have been trying to persuade him to take a week off before I go on leave, but he's a bit pig-headed about it. I shall plug away at him. I had a quiet hack on J in the afternoon and to the flics in the evening. It was quite a good film and more-or-less intact for once I should think. Janette MacDonald and a fellow named Eddy in *Sweethearts*, a colour film. I quite enjoyed it. The Mrs and Paul and Miss J came back to supper afterwards.

23<sup>rd</sup> - Yesterday was the usual hospital day except that I did two ops, one for G. It was polo afternoon and I played P 2 and G and J 1 each. It was a stinking hot afternoon and I sweated some! But quite enjoyed it. I played quite well for me although I've never again reached the dizzy pinnacle of that one afternoon when I did a complete run down the ground. It was a hot and breathless evening and I came inside and sat under the fan, a thing I rarely do. I read a pamphlet lent me by John Gaitskell. It was written by Eboué. Do you remember, he was the Martiniquean who was governor of Chad. He has since been made GG of French Equatorial Africa by de Gaulle. It was written for members of the FEA administration and services. Bourdillon, the Gov. of Nigeria, saw it and was so impressed by it that he obtained Eboué's permission to have it translated and has had it circulated to all administrative officials in Nigeria. It is a first-class document and leaves one filled with admiration for Eboué.<sup>144</sup> I will try and get it typed up before I send it back to John. There were clouds and lightening all around the horizon when I went to bed but it didn't rain at all except for a few drops at about 5:30 this morning.

24<sup>th</sup> - Yesterday was the usual hospital day. In the afternoon I drove P to the football ground and watched a match between the hospital and the public health staff. It was quite a good clean match, but I really don't understand the tactics of association football. After hospital in the evening I went to see the Padmore child – Mrs P's parents are farmers in

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<sup>144</sup> Félix Éboué (1884-1944) was in fact from French Guiana. In 1938 he was transferred from Guadeloupe, where he was the Governor, to Chad. He had earlier been the acting Governor of Martinique. His "Memorandum for general circulation" is dated 19<sup>th</sup> January 1941. On his copy of the memorandum Tom wrote "it was said that at the time he elected to join the Free French his family were in Paris and so in the hands of the Germans. His was therefore a very courageous act. He was said by all who met him to be an outstanding man in every way." He was the first black Frenchman to have his ashes placed in the Panthéon in Paris.

Guernsey and she is naturally worried about them. She says that the Germans have already shipped the majority of the cattle out of the island. I then went to G's to hear the news. I should have liked to hear Churchill's speech this morning, which G said was a good one. I'm just reading *Nemesis* by Douglas Reid which Miss J has lent me. His writing seems to get more journalistic with each book and tends to make me distrust him. But certainly it would take a very big man indeed to forego the temptation to be sarcastic and say I told you so when he has been preaching in the wilderness and has been so right over so many things.

Today has been the usual hospital day. It has been increasingly difficult to get grass recently and today there was a crisis as the contractor had brought none and Abu couldn't find any anywhere in Medani yesterday. So we had the ponies in this morning grazing on the lawns. Actually there is quite a lot of good grazing around the edges of the lawns and under the trees etc. I hit some golf balls about this afternoon and have been reading since I came from the hospital.

25<sup>th</sup> - It has been a bit cooler today I think and this evening isn't at all bad. It was the usual hospital day. I gave G a hand to set a child's broken arm. He had fallen off his donkey. He was a brave kid and lay chattering away asking what things in the operating theatre were for while we prepared the things to set his arm. He cried a very little when being given the anaesthetic but as soon as he came round began to chat away again. While under the anaesthetic we'd taken off his clothes and one of the first things he said was "hey, where are my pants?"! His father is a Syrian clerk in the Sudan Political Service. This afternoon I went for a hack on J down to the monkey forest. I went down to the river and J walked straight in almost without any persuasion. He began pawing the water and I suddenly realised that he was probably about to lie down! So I hastily took him out again. I had the usual visit to the hospital and since then I've been reading *Nemesis*.

27<sup>th</sup> - If all goes to plan I shall be off in a week this evening. I shall be very glad of the change, and to a naturally lazy person the chance of any loaf is always welcome! I feel that I have no real right to have a holiday when my contribution to the war is absolutely nil and looks like remaining so. However, I've no doubt that I shall enjoy it when I get there. G, who started the day by saying that he didn't want any leave and that Kenya had no interest for him anyhow, has now ended by becoming quite keen and asking me to send him details and impressions etc. I can't remember when Mika said that they were going on leave, but with a bit of luck I may see them.

This Russian affair seems very queer and the absence of any definite news of the fighting from either side is unusual. I wonder if it can be a gigantic hoax! If it isn't Hitler must be pretty hard up for food etc to have to fight Russia for it. Now to get on with a bit of diary. Yesterday being Thursday was operating day and I spent most of the morning at it. It being Thursday, I also had a gin when I got home to lunch. I had intended to ride P in the afternoon but about 4:45 the most colossal haboob came up and there are scattered tree branches about this morning and I imagine some of the tents must have gone up at the POW camp. It then came on to rain - the heaviest we've had so far and left great pools of water about everywhere and the lawns looked as though they had had their weekly watering. The roof leaked too and we had to put a bucket down in the dining room to catch the drips. It was still blowing and spotting when I went to the hospital. Just before the storm came I had a note from Jack saying that Tara was sick and would I go in, so on



my way back from the hospital I went. I think she had a mild go of the same thing as G had, some sort of sand fly fever. G came in for drinks. He told me that old Lewis – who owns Lewis stores in Oxford Street or wherever they are – used to come in regularly every day to the RAC. He is, or was, a colossal old man and wore one of those old-fashioned square hats and a sort of semi-frock coat, like a game keeper's coat. He came down in a colossal Rolls, walked into the lounge with his hat firmly on, marched up to the same chair each day and fished a packet of sandwiches out of his tail pocket, called for a double port and ate his sandwiches and drank his port, then lit a colossal cigar and promptly went to sleep for an hour and then woke up, struggled out of his chair and into the Rolls and drove off. I suppose if he is still alive and the club is still standing he's still doing it!

It was quite a cool night thanks to the rain and I slept well. I went to see Tara on my way to the hospital and found her better, but I think her temperature may be up again tonight. I've got to the stage now of making lists of things that I must do before I go. I must take what heavy clothes I've got with me I suppose as I imagine it will be cold at Limuru. Fortunately, I've got a good supply of thick stuff with me in the way of jackets and pullovers etc.

### *Wad Medani, 28 June 1941*

Yesterday I had lunch and then a rest and then went for a hack on J. The rest of the day was the usual tea, hospital etc. I woke up this morning with my right eye all bunged up with conjunctivitis. G has washed it out and put drops in it for me and I now have it covered with a pad and shade. I feel as though I am looking round the corner the whole time. Today is beautifully cool. There is quite a strong wind blowing but carrying no dust. It is strange how one wind will be absolutely free from dust and next day a wind of the same strength from the same quarter is just a haboob.

29<sup>th</sup> - Yesterday having done a round of the wards I rather loafed about. G did my eye again at 10 and at 2. In the evening I had the usual look around at the hospital where G did my eye again. I went to listen to the news with him. A fellow named Lloyd-Warren was also there. He is in the Syndicate and was in the Navy and has been called up again. He said he knew Jack Brownrigg, he also said that it was nonsense for them to have said that it was one lucky shell which sank her [HMS Hood]. He says that being old fashioned her armour was not up to resisting the very modern armour-piercing shells and that she must have been hit by two salvos in rapid succession. I went to bed early up on the roof and woke about 10:15 to realise that a storm was imminent, so I got transferred to the front verandah. There, after about half-an-hour, the storm broke. First it poured, then rain and a hurricane and before I knew where I was, I was sopping wet, mosquito net and all. I got up cursing, with one eye of course shut with everything flapping and banging about me, feeling not in the least like Nelson! I put on some dry pyjamas and went to bed inside. It was a real proper hurricane and there are big branches of trees, mostly Persian lilacs, down in the garden and it looks as though there are not many tents left in the POW camp.

My eye is a bit better today I think, although still a bit sore and inflamed. It's beginning in the other eye, I'm afraid, but I hope I shall manage to keep one eye open. I now realise what a handicap it must be to lose one eye. I suppose one gets used to it in time, but with one eye shut I am definitely quite clumsy.

30<sup>th</sup> - Yesterday I had a rather lazy morning. I did a round of the wards and then a little office work and had my eyes done twice during the morning by G. I did the usual evening round and G did my eye again. After dinner Prior and Wilson from the POW camp came in and they didn't go until after 9. I started the night upstairs but was woken about 2 by a haboob and came down. This morning I did the usual female OPs and G did my eyes. They are much better today and I think we have got control of the infection now. I find that I can't read for long with one eye only so it gets a bit boring, but one can always sleep! The advantage is that it is much cooler than it has been for a long time. I haven't needed to turn on the fan these last two afternoons while resting.

1<sup>st</sup> July Tuesday - My eyes are much better today and should be quite OK by Friday. I still have the right covered as G put some drops in to dilate the pupil and I mustn't have it uncovered until it gets back to normal size again. What a climate this is. A colossal rain storm and floods on Thursday and Saturday, a little rain last night and this morning a first-class haboob! With the house full of that fine powdery brown dust. Yesterday was the usual hospital day. I had my eyes done several times by G and did the usual routine work in between.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Yesterday afternoon I began to look out clothes for Friday and tidy up a bit. Campbell,<sup>145</sup> my relief, is not coming until after I go and it's just possible that he may want to live in the house rather than go to the club, and if he does of course he can do so, although I would prefer under similar circumstances to go to the club. I shall collect all the odds and ends and glass etc together into one room and lock that in case he does come into the house. After tea I did my usual round and G did my eyes. I met Rodney at the hospital and so asked him, G and Miss J to come in for a drink. Which they did and we had a pleasant chat. Just after dinner the telephone rang from the hospital to say that an Italian prisoner had just been sent in with ?appendicitis. So I went up to see him and decided to operate - the increase in technical difficulty resulting from only using one eye was far greater than I should have imagined. My eyes are almost normal today and I only have to wear the shade as the pupil is still dilated.

3<sup>rd</sup> - It's just before dinner and I have got both my eyes open. They are practically normal now except that my right pupil is still a little dilated from the drug. Yesterday was the usual hospital day. Rodney rang me up in the morning and asked me to play golf which I did and quite enjoyed, having my eye uncovered for the first time. Brian Sharpe came as well and we played a three-ball. I played quite well for me and beat them both. In the evening I went to the flics with the Allans, Mrs Robertson, and a nice fellow in the syndicate named Richardson. It was a pretty grim film named *You and me* all about people on parole from American prisons. We had quite a pleasant dinner and I heard a lot about Kenya from the As and R, both of whom had just come back from there. Apparently Nairobi is a very good shopping centre but very expensive. All three said that the Brackenhurst was very pleasant and the golf course very good.

Today I did a small op from the female ward for G. O came to me about a week ago and said "may I go on Thursday night (tonight) as if I wait until you go I can't get a train to Dongola until next Thursday". I said yes, certainly, I'll make plans to go to the club for meals on Thursday evening and Friday (actually, G is very kindly feeding me). This

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<sup>145</sup> RT Campbell, joined SMS 1936.

afternoon when O was asking me about something I said M can do that tomorrow. OK says O, but M is going with me tonight. And who's going to bring my tea in the morning and my shaving water, and who's going to help me pile up the furniture and generally lay up the house and finish my packing tomorrow?, says I. Oh, says O, Omar (the cowman) I've no doubt will give you a hand! Can you beat it? I said not on your life. I've just done the accounts with O and paid him his wages, fare etc. I've said that he can either bring back a good suffragi with him or, if he would prefer to come back into the house, he can bring a good cook – even Fudl [their cook in Fasher] if he likes. I secretly hope that it will be F!

I hear that Peter and Bridget [Acland] are returning from leave in Kenya tomorrow and are going to be here for two months (until the road to Nyala opens). What a pity that I shall be away for most of it.

There doesn't seem to have been much interruption in the air mail as your 56 came in 11 days and your 57 in 15 days which isn't bad. Must off to G's now as it's 8:15.

4<sup>th</sup> - As usual, I've left everything until the last moment. When I got to G's last night I found them playing bridge – Lawes, Ted Gatley, Wilson. I sat and watched them until they had finished a rubber, then we had dinner, as usual a very good dinner. Today I was up at 6:30 packing and putting things away. To the hospital after breakfast and what with one thing and another I didn't leave until 12:15.

I must off and post this and then come back and pay off M and do my last-minute packing, and see the cowman and look out some books to read on the boat. My train is supposed to go at 10.40 pm but I reckon it will probably be a bit late as there is certain to have been some rain somewhere on the line [“washouts” of the track were common during the rains]. I leave Kosti tomorrow, 5<sup>th</sup>, arrive Juba 18<sup>th</sup> and leave 19<sup>th</sup>, and arrive Limuru 25<sup>th</sup> I think.

PS My eyes are quite OK now but I intend to go on washing them myself for a few days to make quite sure.

### *On SS Something or Other, 5 July 1941*

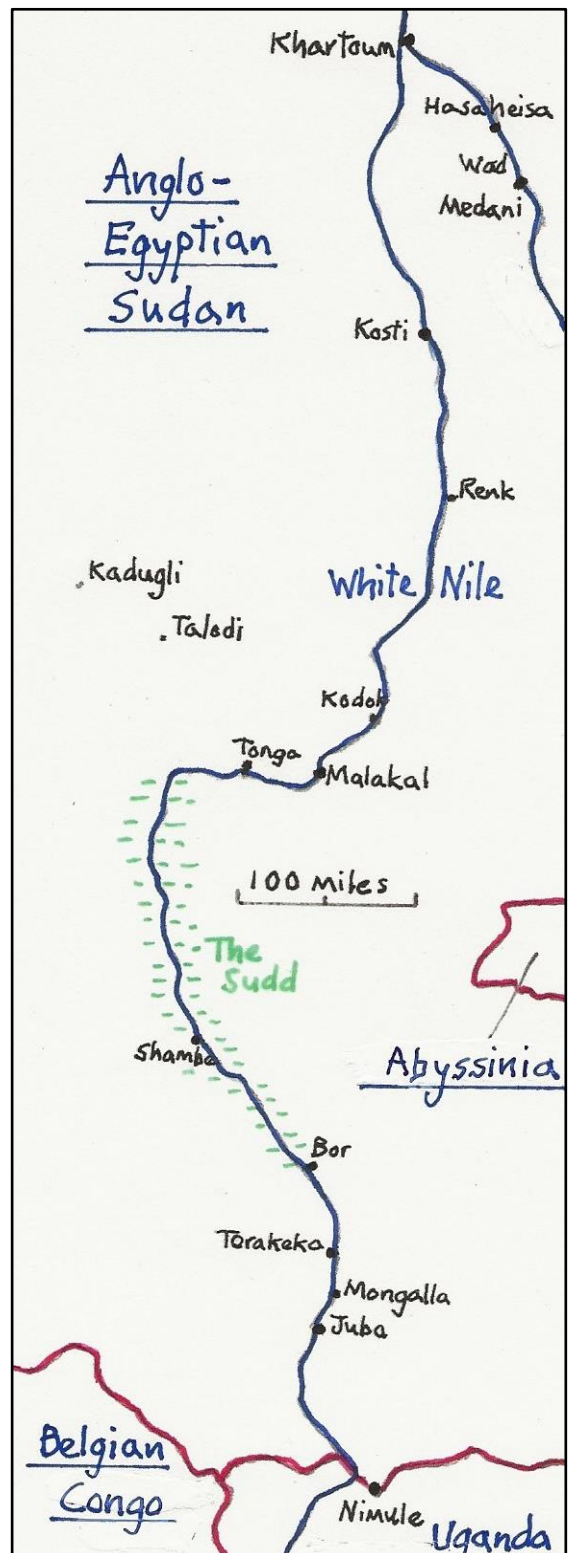
We've just started. Yesterday having finished your letter I took it to post and then saw Omar and Abu and gave them instructions. I've arranged to give the milk from Bella until she goes dry to Miss Johnstone. G is then going to arrange to send her out to John Lawes where there is a half-breed English bull. There is a sheikh there who looks after G's cows and in return for the bull calf she now has, he will look after and graze her until she calves down again. By the time I had finished it was time to have a bath and go to the hospital. I went from there to G's for a drink and dinner. The train was on time so I left G's about 20 to 10 and went to the house and collected the luggage.

I went to the station at 10:30 to find the train just in, found my sleeper and got my luggage in, had a whiskey soda to celebrate and then went to sleep. We got to Kosti at about 7 am and straight on to the boat and had breakfast. When I got out of the train this morning I found Mrs Lomax! She had a letter for me from Bobby [perhaps Bobby McIsaac] asking me to look after her. She had left him in Khartoum where he had just returned after leave in Cairo and Alex. She said that he was in good form.

This is an intermediate boat and we are about 15 on board. I don't know anyone onboard except a DC named Macphail who's quite a decent fellow but a bit dull. He and Mrs L and I are at one table. I have quite a decent cabin - in fact one of the two best on the ship - it's on the front corner and has a door and window looking ahead as well as a window on the side. Being full of the leave spirit and having been asked to look after her by B, I offered it to Mrs L but she refused. I think that I shall quite enjoy this trip as I usually do, and I have a good big box of books. At the moment it is beautifully cool and there is a breeze head on. The only fly at the moment is that a bottle of iodine in my trunk removed its cork and flowed over everything, but even that hasn't really upset me.

Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> - Yesterday was a cool pleasant day with a head wind which is still blowing, and I was sitting in front just now and almost felt I needed a pullover! I spent all yesterday morning reading and talking. Mrs L lent me *Guilty Men* to read which I think would interest you although most of it I think we both knew. Mrs L is intelligent and has similar interests to ours, but is apt to be intolerant and almost as didactic as I am! She told me that although Mrs Fabyan had gone to Cairo - she had hurried off as she feared they might put a ban on her going there - Fabyan has not left Khartoum yet. As he hadn't heard from her for some time he sent her a wire the other day saying "Confirm fidelity. Douglas". Rather amusing don't you think?

She told me a story which Bobby - who was with Bill [Henderson] had told about him. The force which Bill was commanding had had a running skirmish with a force commanded by an Italian for some days or weeks. The Italian apparently putting up a very good show and always just avoiding defeat and capture until Bill's force did finally corner and capture him. He turned out to be a very decent fellow and Bill discovered that he had a wife and three children in Asmara. So when Bobby was going off on leave a few days later Bill filled him up with stores and cigarettes etc to take to this man's wife as he knew that things might be a bit short there. The impressionable Bobby, arriving at her house in Asmara, found that she was out but that two other beautiful! Italian



Map 4 - The White Nile

wives were there. So Bobby sat down to play with the children, who he said were charming, until she returned, when he handed over the stores which Bill had sent her. As Bobby said, it was incredible to find yourself sitting on the floor playing with the children of a fellow whom you'd been chasing and doing your best to kill a few days before! That type of country of course makes it possible for the sort of campaign and individual engagements to be fought where personalities counted, which gave it a great resemblance to old fashioned wars, where that type of thing went on and so earned for war its reputation of glorious chivalry.

I had a very good night last night with the wind blowing directly into my cabin, and I woke up once and almost felt I needed a blanket over me.

7<sup>th</sup> - Yesterday I spent most of the morning reading and talking to Mrs L and MacP. We had one stop at some small village. After lunch I slept as usual until we arrived at Renk at about 4. When there was a DC there he kept a good vegetable and fruit garden going on the river bank - the house is on some raised ground away from the river - but now that he's gone the garden has rather gone to ruin. I went for a bit of a walk through the old garden and along the foreshore. The grass in the neglected garden was full of those yellow durra finches, and I also saw one of those metallic-plumaged honey eaters. At dinner we had quite a pleasant bottle of white wine of unknown origin except that it was allegedly French. Another pleasantly cool night with a head wind. The scenery is quite pleasant: the river is broad with low flat banks covered with coarse grass on either side - occasional grass-fringed pools of water on the flat banks, groves of trees dotted about and a low ridge of ground a little inland on which are scattered Shilluk villages at the moment, on the west bank. There are masses of birds on the grassy flats: cranes, golden-crested cranes, Abdim's storks, waders, some duck and geese, but we've so far seen no game, although elephant may occasionally be seen here. We've got into the serootfly country, huge flies about three times as big as blow flies and with stings proportionate to their size! I remembered to bring a fly swat with me, for which I'm very glad. By the way, did you know my nickname in the Sudan? Macphail told me yesterday - it's "Oxford and Cambridge" - why I don't quite know. I didn't think that I spoke with a very affected accent - for that I suppose is the inference. I did MacP an injustice. He is a more amusing fellow than I thought. I underwent a new experience in Nile travel this morning. A fellow came up and said could he put my name down for a whist drive this evening! I must say it's the first time I've ever known anyone try to organise fun and games on a Nile steamer!

8<sup>th</sup> - It's just after breakfast and we are tied up at Kodok. This used to be a DC's station. The King of the Shilluks - the "Rek" he's called - lives here. Now there is only a mamur. I've just been for a walk around the station and DC's house. I realise afresh how good a place the south is for the type of man who likes an open-air life. It approximates more to the life of a country gentleman than any place in the north. The DC's house is built on a slight rise, and itself is on a raised plinth. The garden, though overgrown, was sweet with the smell of frangipani. The ground sloped away from in front of it and down to a grassy flat edging the river and on this were numerous duck and geese feeding and resting. It's just like having a place with a rough shoot. Macphail used to be DC Shilluk and lived at Malakal - it was actually the ADC who lived at Kodok. When we arrived this morning he came up to us with a beaming face and said "The Rek is coming down to see me"! The Shilluk had a habit in pre-government days - they've tried it on once or twice since - of

burying the Rek alive when he showed signs of losing his physical or mental powers. We appear to be very much ahead of time and I'm told we now get in to Malakal tonight, which is two days ahead of time. If we go on like this we shall have two or three days in Juba waiting for the connections, which is tough on the junior officers onboard who will have the extra and unlooked for expense in Juba hotel. There was rain again in the early morning and now it is grey and overcast and a beautiful cool wind blowing. I'm sitting writing in the dining saloon and even here I almost need a pullover. Yesterday I read most of the morning and again in the afternoon and evening while others played whist. I am now reading the Versailles Treaty! I'm doing this as a result of *Nemesis* because David Reid in it says that the VT was a good treaty and that practically no one who talks about it has read it, which was true in my case so I'm about to remedy it.

Today I've done nothing but get up rather late, have breakfast and go for a walk. We're just off now. Later: it was so cold later in the morning that I put on a pullover and a scarf round my neck. I wrote a letter to Campbell, who is due to come down to Medani as my relief, telling him a bit about the place. I also wrote a letter to Tom thanking him for his last. He had suggested in it that when Moses comes down the road that Lady A should come with him and live in Obeid with a filly about her age who belongs to the Wallises. So I asked him if he could arrange it for us. I had some beer, ate an enormous lunch and then slept like a log. The wind has dropped now and it's a beautiful overcast evening with promise of a beautiful sunset. I'll close this now and post as soon as we get to Malakal.

### *At sea! 9 July 1941*

It's after dinner and I'm sitting in the dining saloon alone. We got into Malakal after dinner, about 9 I think. Mrs L, MacP and I went ashore to the post office but found only a telegraph clerk there and could buy no stamps. When we came out we found Winder. He's a DC and I knew him years ago in Port Sudan. He said that most of the people were out, but that several people were drinking with Sherwood, whom I don't know. MacP went off with W saying that he would go to Sherwoods and bring the party on board, so Mrs L and I went back to the boat. MacP said that when he brought the party to the boat someone would take our letters and post them the next day. Knowing Malakal of old, I knew that what would happen would be that the whole party would come clattering on board five minutes before the boat sailed, all clamouring for a drink! And that in the general confusion our letters wouldn't get posted! So after waiting for a bit, Mrs L and I went back to the post office and by good fortune found the Post Master who'd come down to receive the mails, and he kindly gave us stamps. I didn't see Pratt, who I gather was at the party, but Ramsden,<sup>146</sup> his No 2 whom I'd not met before, came down and looked me up. He seemed a very decent north country lad, very fed up at being stuck in Malakal and unable to get to the war. As I had thought, MacP and several members of the party came on board at the last minute, just before we were due to sail which we did 11.30 pm.

This morning after breakfast we stopped at Tonga. This place was actually my first introduction to the South. In 1932 I drove my car from Kadugli through Talodi to the river and joined the boat going south at Tonga. It was my first sight of a river boat. I was very frightened of malaria and mosquitos etc. I got off this morning and went for a walk up to the suk with MacP and two other chaps off the boat. There is an RC mission station here

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<sup>146</sup> GFE Ramsden, joined SMS 1938.

which used to be run by Italians but which is now run by Mill Hill Fathers. I read as usual and wrote a letter or two – no, that’s boasting, they were cheques and enclosures to pay bills!

This afternoon I slept after lunch and then sat on the top deck. I saw several hippo in the water and one on the bank a little distance off, looking very nude out of the water! Also a family of white-eared cob and two or three tiang, but nothing else. The country on the left bank of the river where we now are is a game reserve, so there should be a lot about, but the grass is too high now to see much.

10<sup>th</sup> - Today had been a pleasantly cool day and I’ve now got a pullover on. We had quite an eventful morning. I was sitting on the top deck after breakfast when I saw quite a good herd of water buck and then late on when I was sitting on the lower deck reading, one of the sailors came down from above to say that there was a big herd of elephant ahead. They were on the west bank and a big herd indeed, about between 120-150 I should think, and some of them as close as 300 yards from the bank. They slowed the boat down and we got a very good view of them, not as good as we might have had as the grass is high, and except when the odd one got temporarily into a short bit of grass, all one could see was the upper part of their body and head and their trunks as they raised them every now and then to “test the wind”. The wind was blowing away from them towards us so that, as their sight is very bad, they were quite unaware of our being there. The grass was too high to see the really baby ones.

I spent the morning reading and the afternoon sleeping as usual. We are in the Sudd proper now, but the channel is still fairly wide and straight so we haven’t done any ‘cannoning off the cushion’ so far. I was sitting in the front before dinner and as we turned a corner there was the moon rising, huge and pale golden, with an unbroken ribbon of reflected light down the length of the water. I had the melancholy feeling that in these times one hardly had the right to such simple pleasures as the contemplation of that picture.

12<sup>th</sup> Saturday morning - Yesterday nothing much happened, we ploughed our way steadily through the Sudd – we expect to get to Shambe and the end of it this evening. It was an overcast and cloudy day and turned quite cold by lunch time, so much so that I was glad of a blanket over me when I slept in the afternoon. I’m making one of my periodic attempts to learn French on this boat. I’ve spent an hour after tea reading your *Histoire moderne et contemporaine* with the aid of a dictionary. I am appalled when I realise that my sole contact with history at school was the books of Mrs Trout – English history only and that, I expect, only what would pass the church and the Tory party headquarters! I never learned any European history whatever.

Every evening before my bath I go and walk round and round the upper deck by way of exercise. Last night was so cold that I had a blanket and was glad of it. Ever since last night we have been passing what must now amount to thousands of dead fish – some monsters up to 100-150 lbs – as you can imagine, the air is a bit fishy. I’ve never seen it before, but apparently it nearly always happens at this time of the year, although the crew say that they’ve never seen so many before. They say that it is due to the early rains washing stagnant water out of dry-weather ponds and pools etc into the general stream. Each morning after breakfast I go up to the top deck and have a sun bath – it’s strange how

much one still enjoys the sun despite the continuous saturation with it for years. Also this morning, I borrowed a screwdriver from the engineer and tackled the cine camera and managed to put right, temporarily at any rate, the footage meter.

13<sup>th</sup> Sunday - Having finished my bit to you yesterday morning, I read till lunchtime, or rather tried to read but was buttonholed by a fellow who is a past master of the drearily obvious and must have read Oscar Wilde's essay on the art of being a successful bore - or was it Hilaire Belloc? I don't remember. The floating trail, and smell! of dead fish continued until I went to bed last night but had stopped by this morning. We arrived at Shambe at dinner time to find another boat, N bound, there. We were away again in an hour. A good thing as it was hot and thick with mosquitoes while we were tied up. It is slightly hotter today, but there is still quite a pleasant breeze in front and it's cool there.

15<sup>th</sup> - The rest of Sunday was spent in sleep, French lesson and exercise etc. Yesterday we got to Bor at about 11 am. It has greatly improved since I was last there and the foreshore and town and merkaz area now have a fine lot of trees about. Arthur Forbes is away doing a leave relief at Akobo. He has several pets which roam around the station - two red hussar monkeys which make rather a nuisance of themselves and two small zebra which are rather fun. I went and saw his ponies. He has seven there and they all seemed quite fit except poor Tim Finnigan whom he bought from Jack Hammersley. Do you remember him? He was an ugly strawberry roan with a revolting pink eye, but he was very fast. He's got something wrong with his upper jaw, which was very swollen. They live in mud-walled and grass-roofed stables which are mosquito-proofed, and very dark and dingy in consequence. It must be a very boring life for them, particularly when Arthur is away, but it is the only way that you can keep them in that country. We had hoped to get some news there, but found that the line was out of order, so that they knew no more than we had heard in Malakal, except that one passenger said that he had heard from an effendi who must have had a wireless that fighting had stopped in Syria. I hope that is true. We left about lunchtime by when a little rain had fallen and it was quite cold.

I slept like a log last night and didn't wake until just before 8 when a suffragi knocked on the door and said that Mrs L was ill and would I go and see her. I found her with a bad migraine headache, but as I had nothing better than aspirin which she already had, I wasn't much use to her. We have passed several elephant today so that the passengers are becoming a little blasé about them! We've just passed a bare bit of bank in which 11 enormous crocs were lying, some with their mouths open - a most revolting sight. We are now in sight of Terakeka, where I first landed in the south, and should be in Juba tomorrow afternoon or evening.

17<sup>th</sup> - We've just arrived in Juba where I discovered two super letters were waiting for me, so my day is more than complete. To go on from where I left off. When we got to Terakeka we found a north-bound post boat already in. As we neared them, I recognized Phil and Gwen [Ingleson] on board. They were travelling on a regular post boat and had 63 people on board!!! Everyone doubled up. Thank goodness we were not on that. I bought them and a Commander Millward and his wife - he's something in P Sudan - on board our boat as it was a little less crowded, and gave them as drink. I didn't see anyone else that I knew on board bar John Smith. I was asked to go and see a DC named Elliot Smith, whom I'd not met before, who was sick with fever. We had a very slow journey after that as we had plenty of time in hand and so we spent that night tied up at old Mongalla, which used to be



the munderia before Juba was built and in the days when Mongalla and Bahr el Ghazal were separate provinces. Last night we also tied up about three miles from and within sight of Juba. Yesterday I spent most of the day reading.

We got in at 6.30 am this morning. Even despite our dawdling we are more than a day early and don't leave here until early morning 19th. Owing to so much coming and going, there was some doubt as to whether we could get into the hotel, and there was a suggestion that we might have to stay on the boat. I shaved, bathed and did a little packing and then as it was only 7:30 I walked up to the hospital, about a mile or more. Juba has greatly improved since I was last here in 1936 as all the trees have grown up and the gardens are improved. I went in and said how do to Lorenzen,<sup>147</sup> the Senior Medical Inspector here, and got my letters which the efficient Ali, the hospital clerk, had sent on. I also saw Jack Furney who has fallen sick here with a gastric ulcer on his way back from leave. I got a lift back to the boat where I had breakfast and read your dear letters nos 58 and 59 [posted on 23 and 26 June] and then finished packing and paid my bill. By then they'd decided that there was room in the pub and whisked us all off there. I went to the H again and had a look round and met Somers,<sup>148</sup> who is Lorenzen's no 2, whom I'd not met before. In a rash moment, I said "Is there anything I can do to help?" and L said "Yes, you can give the trainee AMOs class a lecture at 1.15! So I came back here and wrote to you for a little and then went off to do my lecture and back here for lunch. I'm going to have a sleep now and will then finish this off as I hear, by good fortune, that there is a mail plane going out tonight.

### *On board SS Lugord, 19 July 1941*

After posting my last letter I played tennis on a quite good hard court attached to the hotel. Somers, a PWO fellow named Bathgate whom I'd not met before and Mrs Charlton. She is the wife of a Public Health Inspector - they used to be stationed in the Gezeira and have only recently moved down to Juba. We played four sets and then Mrs C very kindly took us all back to tea. We found her husband, who had been out for the day, back at the house when we got there. They are a very nice quiet couple. They have a nice small house of pleasant design - one was reminded how much better most of the architecture is in the south. Cream walls, red tiles on the floor and pale green Crittall windows etc, and they have some nice furniture to go with it. We had a good tea with home-made cakes. Just after tea a thunderstorm broke and S drove me back to the hotel where I had a bath and waited for Lorenzen to pick me up.

The hotel is very crowded with all sorts and conditions of people coming and going by all means of transport. Juba is lovely now and after the flat Gezeira it is very pleasant to stand on the hotel verandah and look out over the aerodrome towards the hills. L picked me up at 7:30 and took me to his house. Miss Dickens,<sup>149</sup> one of the two nurses in Juba, was there and also a Mrs Crosslé. The Cs are in the Syndicate and were just returning from leave in Kenya when he fell ill with tonsillitis, so he is in hospital and Mrs C is staying with L. I had dinner there and then L drove me back to the pub. There was so much noise with parties to begin with and then people getting up early that I didn't have a very undisturbed night.

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<sup>147</sup> AE Lorenzen, joined SMS 1925, Director of the SMS from 1945-48.

<sup>148</sup> RBU Sumers, joined SMS 1934.

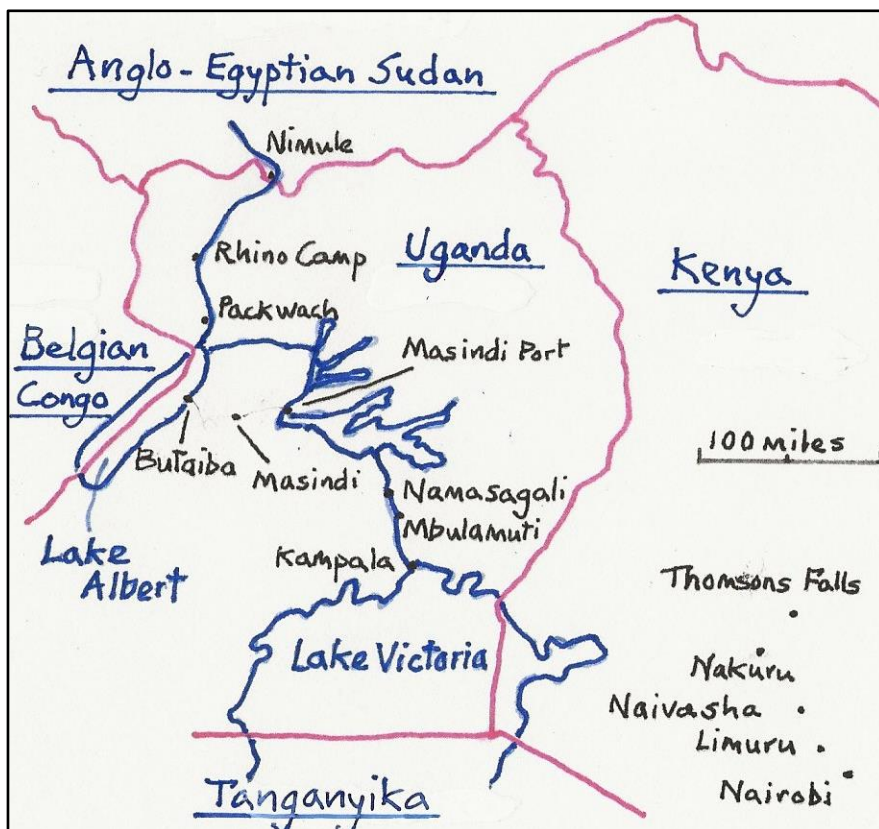
<sup>149</sup> Miss PM Dickens, Charge Sister, joined SMS 1935.

Yesterday (Friday) I loafed before breakfast and came out to find it was a lovely soft grey day. Immediately after breakfast I did some shopping such as labels etc and also had a canvas holdall made to take the cameras and field glasses. I went to the hospital later on as arranged and did my second class. I was going to play tennis again with the idea of working off some of the stiffness of the day before. However the court was pretty crowded, so Bathgate and I played squash. I forgot to tell you that there is a nice small bath in the hotel grounds with lawn all around and beds of cannas behind. I had a very pleasant swim and sun bathe in the middle of the morning. I had a bath after squash and then walked up to the hospital to get some medicine for Mrs L and so back and had a drink with some fellow passengers before dinner. I then packed and got ready for this morning.

It was another noisy night and parties went on till all hours. I was up at 5:30 and we were breakfasted and on the road by 7. We travelled in those wooden-bodied Fords – station vans I think they call them. We were 14 in three cars and our luggage followed in a lorry. We crossed the river by ferry one or two miles out of Juba and then motored for 120 miles to Nimule on the Sudan-Uganda border. It's a first-class road through lovely scenery with distant and near views of mountains including the Imatongs. We saw one male bush buck by the side of the road, but nothing else as the grass was high. We did the journey in under four hours. At the top of the hill just outside N there is a lovely view looking down onto

the Nile valley, flanked by blue misty hills on either side and the river winding through.

This is a good and comfortable boat, better designed than the Sudan boats I think, although she is rather old and therefore rather shabby. I'm sitting in the blunt end near the paddles and it's quite shaking my hand! We got on board comfortably for lunch despite the fact that we are now  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour ahead of Sudan time. It's rather fun – there's no dining saloon and we feed at a long narrow table across the deck at the front end of the ship – rather like a church treat! The food is



Map 5 - Nimule to Limuru

good and it's quite a change to see stewed chops at lunch with a lot of fat on them! The scenery is charming, the river – narrower here than when we left it at Juba – winds through flat banks with doleib palms growing here and there and rising up into steep hills on either side, making a lovely background. Lots of hippos and this evening a herd of giraffe which

must have been 25 or more in number – some of them were nearby and others in the scrub bush. Those one could see clearly were much darker than I have seen before, the dark parts of their skin being dark brown and almost black. The sunset was grand, sinking behind the blue hills and casting heavenly coloured reflections in the water.

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> July - It turned quite cold last night, so that despite the fact that we slept in the cabin (I was sharing with MacP) and under mosquito nets without fan, I wasn't hot. We were woken up at 7 to find ourselves stopped at Rhino Camp. It was a raw cold morning with the rain pouring down and the hills shrouded in mist. We left at 8 as we were about to begin breakfast – porridge, fish and omelette and ham, of which I ate a disgusting amount! It rained most of the morning until about noon, but the scenery was lovely and the colouring soft. There's a very nice Scots body called Carney on board with her son, an attractive kid of seven. She said how nice it was, and that her face had relaxed for the first time since she came out 18 months ago! There are several Scots people on the trip and they were talking about west highland scenery and someone mentioned the Kyles of Bute, and Mrs C said "Aye, they're magnificent. I mind when I was first coming out to the Sudan and we were passing through the Straights of Messina (do you remember them on the *Yorkshire* and how we stood up at the sharp end as we went through at night?) and someone said to me 'come out and look, it's wonderful'. I came out and had a look and said, 'Oh, it's nothing like the Kyles of Bute!'" .

It was cold, almost bitter, all morning but lovely scenery – at times flat papyrus-covered banks with low undulating orchard bush just behind that and hills in the background, and at other times high thickly wooded banks to the river. At intervals along the papyrus flats were native cultivations and the soil looks very rich. There were masses of game on the east bank, which is a sleeping sickness area. No people are allowed to live there and consequently it's a sort of game reserve. We saw herds of water buck, hartebeest and Uganda cob and two or three lots of elephant. We got into Packwach at 4:30 by which time it was a sunny afternoon. It corresponds to a market town I should think. The river is not very wide there and there was a steamer in at the wharf unloading. There were several elephant not 200 yds away on the opposite bank, scattered about like donkeys on a village green, with natives sitting on the same bank fishing not 100 yds away from them! I don't think that we were ever out of sight of some game or another for the last hour and a half up to Packwach. At P we changed onto this boat, the *Robert Croydon*, which is just like a small cross-channel steamer: four white officers all in uniform and gold braid. We're now steaming down the last of the Nile into Lake Albert. Still on the east bank, which is open rolling country with scattered bush and big trees, there are masses of game and as I look up now I can see five elephant scattered along the water's edge having come down to drink, and ten minutes ago I saw three buffalo. Ahead of us and to the west are high mountain masses in the Belgian Congo, which comes down to the west shore of Lake Albert, which we should soon reach.

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> - We got into Butaiba on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> at about 10 pm. It was quite a cool night. On Monday (yesterday) we were called early and I saw the most beautiful sunrise over the hills at the edge of the lake. Butaiba is about half way down the lake on the east side. It's on a flat sandy spit with high hills rising up behind. Looking out across the lake towards the west it is impossible to see the Belgian Congo side except some indistinct mountains at one spot. We had breakfast and did the customs (Uganda) and then got onto

a very comfortable motor bus and drove about two hours to Masindi. The road runs for about two miles across the flats to the foothills and then winds slowly up them. At the top there is the most heavenly view looking out across the lake to the mountains faintly seen on the far side. The roads are first-class metalled roads covered with red ironstone gravelling and kept in perfect order by PWD workmen, who live in camps at intervals along the road. The scenery was beautiful, at first winding in and out among the sparsely wooded mountains and then into a huge forest of trees with dense undergrowth and matted with vines and lianas. At intervals there were groves of coffee and rubber trees, with the tapping cups in place on many trees and the white latex running down into them. Every now and then we came on attractive looking houses in clearings with bright flower gardens and velvet-smooth looking lawns. In the middle of the forest was a huge saw mill, a hive of activity where we saw some huge logs. It belongs to Buchanans, who are alleged to be the same firm as the distillers, who put the money into this some time ago to avoid paying on excess profits at home. Later, the police officer at Masindi told me that they had made the same mistake as the Agriculture and Forests in the Sudan, who were so keen to make money that they began sawing and selling unseasoned wood.

Masindi, which is at about 4,000 ft, was charming and a very nice railways hotel, looking out onto rolling hilly country. After tea, Dee (a DC who joined us at Juba) and I played golf: a jolly good grass course, interesting holes and charming views. The greens were a little rough, and the "rough" was very heavy. It was 12 holes and I thoroughly enjoyed it. To round off a pleasant day, MacP and I had a very pleasant bottle of claret at dinner. I had a good night's sleep and we were up early this morning and had breakfast at 7 and set off in the same coach at 8 for the 30-mile drive to Masindi Port on Lake Kioga. We are now on another stern-wheel flat-bottomed lake steamer, which we get off again tomorrow and join the train on the last stage of our journey. The drive this morning was again attractive and just outside the port we passed a huge sisal plantation where one could see young plants - a sort of spray of long broad-bladed fleshy leaves with a sharp pointed end like a thorn - and older bushes which had flowered and the flower of which was like a huge and rather weedy stick of asparagus about 12-15 feet high. We also saw the long white fibre of sisal hung over wires today - the fibres are fine and about 2-3 ft long. They are the long fibres of the leaves, the fleshy part of which has been removed by some special machinery. We are now steaming slowly down the lake pushing four huge barges in front of us. The edges of the lake are lined with the papyrus which forms the Sudd on the Nile and which seem to be found in all watery areas in this part of Africa.

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> - Just arrived at the Brackenhurst and it's delightful. A main house, which I've not yet had time to explore, and dotted about the garden, but quite close to the house, small cottages, so that a couple with children can take a whole cottage and single people can have a room in one. I have a room looking out onto a delightful part of the garden, sloping down the side of the hill with smooth lawns and beds bright with flowers. I've seen Charles and Helen [Crouch] and Bill Henderson, all looking well although the latter is still having trouble with his arm.

Now to go back to where I left off. We steamed slowly down the lake all Tuesday. Not as attractive as some scenery we've passed, being in parts like the Nile around Terakeka. We got into Namasagali yesterday morning (Wednesday), got up leisurely and had breakfast. Dee, O'Connor and I went for a walk after breakfast. There are only three Britishers there,

all steamer engineers. The town area was green and attractive with cut grass running down to the water's edge, and quite an attractive view across the lake, which is narrow there. We got onto a small branch line train at 12:45 which came down on to the quayside and took us to Mbulamuti where we joined the mainline train from Kampala. Here we had the only suspicion of bother during the trip. The mainline train was already in when we got there and as soon as we arrived, porters, official and otherwise, fell on our luggage and rushed off and put it into the other train anywhere, with the result that it took some time to collect and sort out. When we'd done this, fortunately having held up the train while we did so, we discovered that some luggage, my box included, had been left on the other train, but this was eventually rescued and we got off.

The trains are not quite as good as the Sudan ones and the track is not very well kept up, with the result that the train sways and bumps about a lot. They have no sleepers, only couchettes for four, for which you hire a roll of bed linen. We were only three in our compartment, which made it less crowded. The scenery was very attractive going along and all the stations, which with few exceptions have no platforms, were neat and tidy with well-kept grass lawns and flower beds. On the border station we were held up for three hours with engine trouble – they have colossal engines as the gradients are so steep and we climb so much. We went up to 9,000 ft during the night and although it was bang on the equator you can imagine that it was pretty cold and one needed all the blankets one had been given. We woke this morning in the highlands of Kenya, rolling grass land with green fields! of cultivation in the distance on the hillsides, fields with fences around them! and sturdy trees and fine-looking cattle grazing. Not a bit unlike lovely parts of England except every now and then one saw herds of impala, occasional ostriches, and zebra often grazing quite close to the cattle and horses.

Just after breakfast we stopped at Nakuru and one was glad to get out and walk in the sun. From the station one looked down on a small lake in whose still water were perfect reflections of the surrounding hills and the white clouds that topped them. We passed many farms on the way and I was disappointed to see the amount of galvanised iron which was used in the roofing and even in the walls of some of the smaller houses and out houses, and often unpainted at that. It was strange at one station to see a small crocodile of young English girls all dressed in brown, with brown hats and a school ribbon on them, marching down the platform in the charge of a mistress. The crowds on the platforms are very colourful – Indians, Somalis in bright coloured and patterned turbans, and the local natives, whose women dress in bright and patterned clothes. We got to Limuru station at 2 pm and were met by the station car which brought us the two miles to the hotel. I also found a super letter from you when I arrived which made it just perfect. No more now as I'm going to get Bill H, who's going into Nairobi tomorrow, to post this.

*The last three letters that we have of this series cover Tom's stay at the Brackenhurst up to 13 August 1941. He gave a detailed account of the layout of the hotel and surroundings, and described his daily doings: golf almost every day, sometimes twice a day; some tennis; visits to Nairobi (twice to the races); the books he was reading; letters written and received; and socialising with friends from the Sudan. These included the Crouches and Bill Henderson, of whom he saw a lot (Bill H's mother was also staying). Bill H's arm had not recovered (fragments of bone still present), "but it's amazing the distance he can hit a golf ball with one hand".*

at one spot, we had breakfast - did the customs (Uganda) then got into a very comfortable motor bus - drove about 2 hours to Muisindi. The run for about 2 miles across the flats to the foot hills - then winds slowly up them, at the top there is the most heavenly view looking out across the lake to the mountains faintly seen on the far side. The roads are absolutely first class, metalled roads covered with red ironstone gravel, kept in perfect order by P.W.D. workmen who live in camps at intervals along the road. The scenery was beautiful at first winding in and out among the sparsely wooded mountains then into a huge forest of trees with dense undergrowth - includes wild vines - lianas. At intervals were groves of coffee & rubber trees with the tappers cups in place on many trees & the water later running down into them. Everywhere then we came on attractive looking houses in clearing with bright flower gardens - velvet smooth looking lawns. In the middle of the forest was a huge saw mill, a hive of activity where we saw some huge logs. It belongs to Buchanans who are alleged to be the same firm as the distillers who put the money into this some time ago to avoid paying excise profits at home. Sulu on the Police Office in Muisindi told me that they had made the same mistake as the Agricultural Foresters in the Sudan who were so keen to make money that they began sawing & selling unseasoned wood. Muisindi which is about 4000 ft up was charming - a very nice Railway hotel looking out into rolling hilly country. After tea Dec (a W.C. who joined us at Sulu) & I played golf, a jolly good grass course, interesting holes & charming views. The greens were a little rough ~~the~~, the rough was very heavy. It was 12 holes very thoroughly enjoyed it. A round off a pleasant day. I had a very pleasant bottle of claret at dinner. I had a good nights sleep - we were up early this morning.

(22 July 1941)



## 1943 – Wad Medani

Peg's letters to Tom explored possible ways she might return to the Sudan, with optimistic developments ending in dashed hopes. With the suspension of airmail between the Sudan and Australia, travel arrangements were complicated by the fact that the reply to a question could take several months.

In early February 1943, Peg was advised of a possible boat to Durban in late March, and was told that their chances would be greatly enhanced if the Sudanese Government requested the Australian authorities to expedite their travel. Peg cabled Tom:

Difficult obtain berths vessels rare. Agents advise travel facilitated if representations made by Sudan Govt to Commonwealth – preferably by cable.

The next letter we have from Tom is number 123, begun on 7 February 1943, a gap of 18 months since number 52. It was posted to her on 11 February, c/o Commonwealth Bank of Australia, Adelaide, forwarded back to Wad Medani on 19 April, and received there 8 August, when Peg would have seen it for the first time.

### Wad Medani, 7 February 1943

On Thursday evening [4<sup>th</sup>] I went to the suk and managed to get two bottles of whiskey – strangely enough, Milne's whiskey from Adelaide, and quite pleasant too! I went along to the sisters' mess where I discovered Bev and John [his brother], John Lawes, John Symevsky and Maurice Hayes. I gave Sister J one of the bottles as a present. We had dinner about 9. I took John to the station at about 11:15 and found him his place etc – he had a 1<sup>st</sup> class compartment to himself. MH was also going to Khartoum and we gathered in John's compartment and had a drink before the train went. John is glad to be getting away from Khartoum and hopes to get back to a similar unit to his old one.



Friday 5<sup>th</sup> - Walked over to Cs<sup>150</sup> for breakfast and then to hospital and then to suk to take over the General Welfare Fund [GWF] books from my Greek colleague, Mr Volianitis, who had been doing them. When I got home I found a cook that SJ had sent me – he had good references and I took him on. Barbiker is his name. I forgot to say that on my way home I looked in at the Kenningtons as they had a sale – they are leaving the Sudan. The garden is grand and an absolute riot of colour and masses of sweet peas with lovely scent and huge heads of snapdragons in various colours and huge golden marigolds, almost as good as those grown by you in Fasher. At 4 the new cook came and I went over the kitchen things with him. There's no hope of buying any new pots and pans now, but you will be glad to hear that I sorted out the worst of them and put them into a box, not to be used. Those in

<sup>150</sup> Dr W Francis Townsend-Coles and his wife Elizabeth. He joined the SMS in 1935 and was later lecturer in paediatrics at the Kitchener School of Medicine. Thereafter they lived in Kent, not far from Tom and Peg.

use are really quite respectable. So to tea and then hospital and then for my last meal with the Cs.

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> - Up and walked to the hospital. When I got home and called for lunch I heard a certain amount of scuffling in the pantry and then a crash! I rushed out to find Abdel Katim lying on the floor. He had a high temperature and had collapsed. The cook and I carted him off to bed.

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> - I'm sitting down to write to you on return from the evening visit. How I remember doing the same thing in Fasher just after you left. What an age ago that seems, almost another world.

To go back to the diary. On Saturday [6<sup>th</sup>] afternoon I went to a meeting in George Bredin's<sup>151</sup> house about the GWF. Before I went on leave [he had recently returned from sick leave] John Gaitskell and others on the committee (with whom I agreed) said they felt that as the committee had been functioning for over two years they should go to the public and give them an opportunity to change the members if they saw fit. Things had moved while I was away and on Friday I got a letter from GB saying that the committee had felt this and that the chairman had approached him and he was holding a meeting in his house and would I attend. I went and found only 13 people there - 7 Britishers including 3 members of the committee and 6 representatives of the non-British community in Medani. Before the meeting began, and before I had found out what was happening, the Padre (the chairman) came over and asked me if I would be prepared to serve again if re-elected. I said yes. When the meeting began, GB said in his preamble that the committee had decided to re-appeal to the public. I therefore upped and asked if this was a public meeting. GB then said in a hesitating way that it was. I then asked him what steps had been taken to ensure that notice of it had been adequately brought before the public in order that they might have a chance to attend. He then said that he was empowered by the laws of the Sudan to appoint the committee. I said in that case I hardly understood why the present meeting had been called. In actual fact he had really called the meeting in order to tell it what he'd decided to do and by so doing giving it the appearance of popular consent. I was supported in my protest by Victor Tiarks, and I said that under the circumstances I wished to withdraw as I felt it invidious that out of a committee of 7, the chairman and I were the only ones put forward for continuing in our job. GB said that perhaps I would like time to reconsider and that he would write to me. I feel strongly about it as the treasurer of a committee who, to date has had the sole say in the distribution of over £5,000 of collected funds, more especially as I know that many people in the Gezeira are saying "who elected this committee anyway?". As the meeting was composed of the six non-Britishers, who would be dumb anyway, the Padre who is GB's yes man, and GB's two new British nominees to the committee, it was a farce and VT and I were the only voices raised. I don't want to give up doing the job, but at the same time, I want it to be all shipshape. I hope I'm doing right.

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> - Townsend-Coles has gone off to Sennar and under the new orders which B<sup>152</sup> has brought out since I've been away, I have to do the female OPs when C is away - he has been made to do them as a routine. In the afternoon I played golf with Rodney P. He

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<sup>151</sup> GRF Bredin (1899-1983), Governor of Blue Nile Province, SPS 1921-1948.

<sup>152</sup> CEG Beveridge, the Provincial Medical Inspector.



seemed well. A had been coming but didn't feel up to it. She has recently had fever poor dear. Malaria has been bad this year and "upstairs" was crowded when I came back, every room full and many doubled up. The two army sister who were here when I left have gone and now Bicey and Mrs Tweedie, both ex-SMS sisters, are working in the hospital.

On my way to the hospital this evening I sent you a cable. Charles [Crouch] rang up at lunchtime to say that as a result of much work by him, the Civil Secretary's office say they are prepared to cable about you - I hope that will work for G [his sister] as well - they are prepared to do it for you on the grounds that you are a trained secretary and they only wish to know to whom the cable should be addressed. I'm not clear as to how it will help - are the Aust Govt being difficult about letting you go I wonder? Or are other people with official "pull" continually being put in front of you on the passenger lists? If the Sudan Government's request for you doesn't work with the Australian Government for G too, it's going to be difficult for the SG to make out a case for G on official grounds I am afraid. However, I can't do anything except hope until I get your answer and see what effect the SG's cable has.

*Peg cabled back that "Minister for the Navy, Canberra" was sufficient. She and G intensified their preparations to leave. In May 1941, G had received a letter from Alex Cruickshank, the start of a long-distance correspondence that lead to her acceptance of his proposal. Thus G was to travel with Peg back to Africa.*

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> - Operating day. Rode pm. Not quite so cold. The cook managed to find a lad to come in and work temporarily. He seems a very good no 2 and launders well. The cook sleeps out I find. I was going to the hospital to see a case just before going to bed and called for a boy only to find that they had both gone home! As I hadn't got the keys, I had to leave the house unlocked while I went to the hospital.

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> - Usual hospital day. I had the two servants in and said that they were never to go off at night without letting me know and that one was always to sleep here in case I had to go out in the night. I rode in the afternoon. I had to go and look at the Mynors' new arrival, a boy born on 2<sup>nd</sup> January.

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> - Had an operating day today instead of Thursday as that is a holiday. Rode in the afternoon. The ponies are looking well but get a little more grain than exercise I think. On the way home J put Awad down and then kicked him and then galloped madly about for about ten minutes before he would be caught. However, an excess of spirits like that is easily remedied! I went to the cinema in the evening, joining Rodney and A there - not a bad programme for Medani. A film about Hardy - one of what I understand is a series - it was quite amusing. We went to the club afterwards for a drink and so home to a late dinner.

Today (Thursday) is a holiday. I was at the hospital until just after 12 and then came home and wrote a letter to GB and had lunch. The Chapman family goes off tonight. Did I tell you about them? He's chucking up his job with the irrigation dept and proposes to take his wife and two children home with him. They are going to Cairo in the hope of getting a boat from Port Said all the way round Africa and home. I think he is very unwise both to have given up his job and to be taking the family home now. There have been several sales recently and all have raised phenomenal prices, largely I think due to native purchases and bidding. The tenants have been getting good money for their cotton and have little or

nothing to spend it on. Sumner, a Syndicate inspector, got £860 for his household stuff and the Cs also had a good sale – their car for which they paid £60 in 1939 was sold for £170!

*He continues responding to letters, which were now taking two or more months to arrive from Adelaide.*

Yes, there is a great possibility of my going to Omdurman in Bart's<sup>153</sup> place, but when I don't know. I hope to get something out of Charles when he and Helen come down for the races on Friday week.

As far as I know, A [Alex Cruickshank] is somewhere in the recently captured territory but not so far west as the activities.

Do you remember my telling you about a Lavender Seely that I met in Pease's flat in Cairo in June? I was distressed to hear from Alison last night that her husband, who was taken prisoner in Libya, had been drowned on his way to Italy.

Yes, the news is marvellous and has continued consistently good for a long time – one is lost in admiration for the Russians. I heard extracts of Churchill's speech to the house this evening – very heartening it was. I always heave a sigh of relief when he's back home again safely!

*In November 1942, Tom had travelled to Johannesburg for medical treatment for what had obviously been a serious illness. We know he had diphtheria, malaria and amoebic dysentery while in the Sudan, and it was probably the latter. He stayed with an aunt in Cape Town to recuperate before returning via Kenya. On 20 January 1943 Peg received a cable from Tom, who was on leave at the Brackenhurst Hotel in Limuru, announcing that he was very fit and returning to the Sudan on 18 January (the cable was sent on 11 January).*

Yes, I flew down as you will have seen by now. No, I've never seen Aunt L before, although she saw me when I was about a year old. The air service to South Africa, though regular, is poor – letters seem to take about 10 days. I've never been to SA before except to call in at Cape Town and Durban and I'd forgotten most of that.

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<sup>153</sup> F Bartholomew, FRCS, (joined SMS in 1932), who was then a surgeon at Omdurman Civil Hospital and was to succeed Tom as SMS Senior Surgeon in 1949. Ill health forced his retirement in 1952 and he died a few months later. He was succeeded by the first Sudanese Senior Surgeon.

TELEPHONE:  
MXY 550  
TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS:  
"NAVY, MELBOURNE"



IN REPLY  
QUOTE  
No.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

**MOST SECRET**

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

NAVY OFFICE, MELBOURNE, S.C.1.

012253

1 - MAR 1943

Dear Madam,

I desire to advise that this Department has been requested to arrange your passage to South Africa for onward transportation to Khartoum, and accommodation has been reserved for you to proceed in a vessel leaving Sydney during the first half of March.

It will be necessary for you to arrive in Sydney not later than 11th March, and your advices are requested as to whether you are able to arrange accordingly.

On arrival at Sydney you should report to Messrs. Macdonald, Hamilton & Co., Union House, 247 George Street, who will provide you with the necessary passage authority and inform you as to time and place of embarkation.

Before leaving Adelaide, you require to obtain passport duly endorsed for passage to South Africa, taxation clearance certificate and baggage export licence, concerning which it is suggested you should ask your bankers to assist you, or if desired you could approach the Sea Transport Officer, Adelaide, (Commander F.E. Hobart), who is being advised of arrangements which have been made on your behalf and who will afford you any assistance required.

Yours faithfully,

*J. B. Cummins*

Secretary.

Mrs. E.W.T. Morris,  
Commonwealth Bank of Australia,  
King William Street,  
ADELAIDE, S.A.

*Peg, Nick and G sailed from Sydney on 16 March 1943 and arrived in Durban on 2 April, travelled by flying boat from there to Mombasa, and arrived in Nairobi on 16 April.*

*Alex and G finally met up in Kenya on 10 June and were married in Limuru on 17 June. Writing many years later, Alex described how he and G came to be married. They had met in 1935 when she came to stay with Tom but, while "smitten", he had not declared himself. In May 1940, Alex joined the SDF as Senior Medical Officer in Port Sudan. In April 1941 he was sent to Lekemti in Ethiopia (240 km W of Addis Ababa) to reopen an Italian hospital.*

I had travelled from Addis with an escort of six trigger-happy, unwashed but picturesque local troops over a wretched road with dangerous bridges and in pouring rain. On the outskirts of Lekemti there was a desolate-looking house which had once been the home of a Swedish missionary. A few pieces of furniture remained and I decided to camp there. It was bitterly cold and I searched around for some fuel to make a fire. I noticed a pile of old magazines and newspapers, some of them in English, and my attention was suddenly caught by a picture of a young lady with auburn hair on horseback at some gala or other. I shouted "Eureka!" - but there was no one to hear me. It was a picture of Ginger Morris, and I knew at once that this was the girl I was meant to marry. I called myself all sorts of BF for missing my opportunity six years before.

I smashed up a rickety table, lit a fire and, stimulated by several drams, sat down to compose the most important letter of my life. It had to be an exploratory one – was she married, did she have children, did she remember meeting me, and would she consider renewing our all too short acquaintance? I told her how the photograph had struck me, and how I was sure this was more than mere coincidence. It took me days to formulate a letter which would not embarrass her, but which would at the same time indicate the strength of my feelings for her.<sup>154</sup>

*The next letter we have from Tom to Peg is number 149, addressed to the Norfolk Hotel in Nairobi, where she was staying before she left for Khartoum. It missed her there and was sent back by his sister, reaching Wad Medani on 10 August 1942, two days after number 123.*

### **Wad Medani, 3 July 1943**

I hope I'm wasting my time writing this one! I think it must be a week ago that I last wrote, so to go on from Sunday 27<sup>th</sup>. Had a busy morning and didn't get back to breakfast until 9 and was off again at 9:30 – spent most of morning in the wards and x-ray room. I rode M [Moses] in the afternoon and had the usual evening.

28<sup>th</sup> - Operated after breakfast. In the afternoon I picked Jerry up from the hospital and drove him down to see Tracey's boat building. We found CT there and were shown around by the proud and enthusiastic originator. We

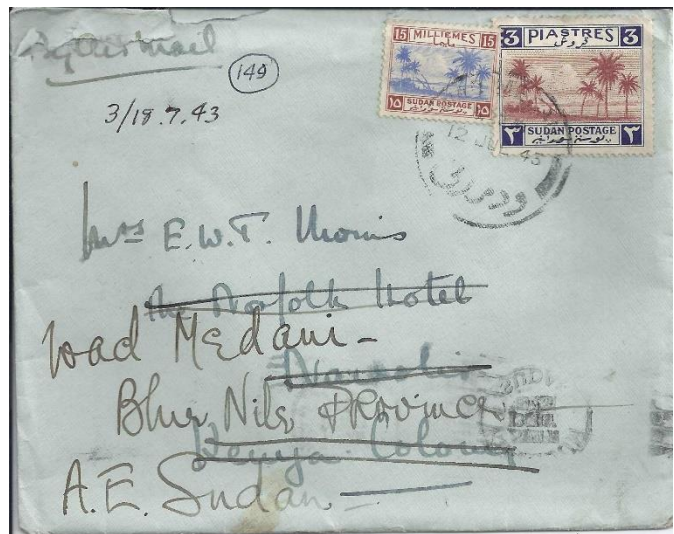
had intended to go down to monkey wood, but spent so much time there that we went straight back to tea. I took J back to the hospital and so the usual evening.

29<sup>th</sup> - Busy before breakfast again and didn't get back till late. Usual hospital morning – was delayed by a midder case and didn't get home to lunch till 3:30. Rode M. After hospital I went out to the farm to see Crowther and so home to dinner.

30<sup>th</sup> - To hospital as usual and then to the town women's OPs to see cases with Bicey. She goes there every day before breakfast, and now that Bev's away I go there once a week to see any cases she's saved up for me. Usual hospital morning and rode M in the evening. Directly after the 6 pm news they broadcast Churchill's speech at the Guildhall. I thought it was excellent. Unfortunately I didn't hear the end as B and M Sharpe came in in the middle for medical advice and I had to turn it off before the end as they wanted to go to the cinema. I was late for the hospital in consequence and so home to dinner and reading.

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> July - Usual before breakfast and then out to the farm to see Crowther and then all the morning operating and so home to a late lunch.

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> - I just can't get on with this letter at all – it seems so stupid when I feel that you may be here at any moment. However, here goes. Thursday afternoon I potted, doing a



<sup>154</sup> From chapter 15, "Romance", of *Itchy Feet – A Doctor's Tale* (published posthumously by Arthur H Stockwell Ltd, Ilfracombe, in 1991).

bit of GWF and a bit in the garden. I'm realizing only now what a disgraceful state it had got into - young thorn bushes growing in the lawn etc! Did I tell you I now have to use one of the big cars? In order not to waste its seating capacity all three of us, i.e. Francis, Bicey and I, go to the hospital in it after breakfast and I take F to and from the hospital in the evening. I stayed and had a drink with them. The Torrs were there. They'd had a good leave. They had stayed in a small seaside place in Palestine called Maharia and although they didn't stay in the best pub, paid £1 a day each. They didn't think we would find anything cheaper than that. So home to dinner, read and bed.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Loaf as usual before breakfast. I managed to get away from the hospital by 11:30 and spent the rest of the morning at GFW work, and did more in the afternoon. In the evening I went out to Barakat to dine with the As, the Ps took me out. The party was us three, John Lawes and Coope and his wife - syndicate. We had a very good dinner indeed, including some excellent beef which Billy had grown himself - even better than Tom's Xmas present in '39. After dinner we did something that I've not done for years, we stood round the piano and sang! Bicey played and we sang songs that I hadn't heard since I was a kid and my mother used to play them and we sat round the piano after dinner - usually Saturday evenings when I was home from school for a weekend.

I'm sorry, but I can't remember at all what I did on Saturday.

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> - Usual hospital day. I rode M in the afternoon. Francis and I went to hospital in the evening as usual and then, as Elizabeth had gone to church, he came in and had a drink with me. We have changed over medical officers to give them a bit of variety and so on Monday (5<sup>th</sup>) I didn't operate in order to give Dr Fuad a chance to get to know the wards. I had to go out to the farm to see the Andrews children - no sooner do they get back from leave than they need medical attention (they'd only got back from leave the day before). That's the third lot of children I've had to attend now within two days of their returning from leave - the Snows, Mynors and Andrews (whooping cough). I spent most of the rest of the morning in the office and rode M in afternoon.

6<sup>th</sup> - Jerry is back from staying in the Gezeira with the Browns and is at the Townsend-Coles' until he goes tonight. I took him out to the farm after breakfast while I went to see the Andrews children. I had the usual hospital morning and pottered in the garden until the evening.

7<sup>th</sup> - Went and paid my usual weekly visit to the town OPs where Bicey reigns every morning. In the hot weather it must be hell - a mass of screaming children and shouting women. Talking of the weather, it's much cooler now and today [now the 11<sup>th</sup>] is a lovely cool grey day with the "soft" feel of the rains. Shafto came to breakfast and spent the morning at the hospital. Having gone through some office stuff with him, I took him out to the farm and then handed him over to Francis while I got on with my work. He came to lunch and then set off home at about 4. His wife was a nurse at Thomas's and he is trying to get her out. I pottered in the afternoon and Rico came to tea. His wife and child are still in Palestine. He told me to go and buy what Lux I could in the suk for you as there wasn't going to be more. I've managed to get a few packets. We had some rain in the evening.

8<sup>th</sup> - I drove to the hospital as it was spitting with rain. Had the usual operating morning. I spent all the afternoon on GWF stuff and then went to a meeting in the evening and after that to hospital and so home in time for dinner.



Friday 9<sup>th</sup> - I loafed and then went to hospital after breakfast. I managed to get away by noon. Francis and I went into the town to do some shopping and when I got home I did GFW stuff until lunchtime. Rode M in afternoon and read in the evening.

10<sup>th</sup> - Walked to hospital as usual and after breakfast did some ops that I had left over from Thursday and spent last part of morning in office. I potted in garden in afternoon. Bad as it still looks, it's a great improvement on what it was! Had rather a busy evening at hospital and didn't get home until after 8.

11<sup>th</sup> - Usual hospital day. Had a bit of a shock as I thought I'd lost a cheque for £62 from the Syndicate - however I found it later. I spent the early part of the morning in the wards and the latter, grudgingly, at office work. I rode M in the evening. It was a heavy overcast evening and began to rain as we left for the hospital, but not much. I did a small op and so home. Each day I begin late, thinking you may get in early, and come home early expecting A to say you have just rung up from Khartoum.

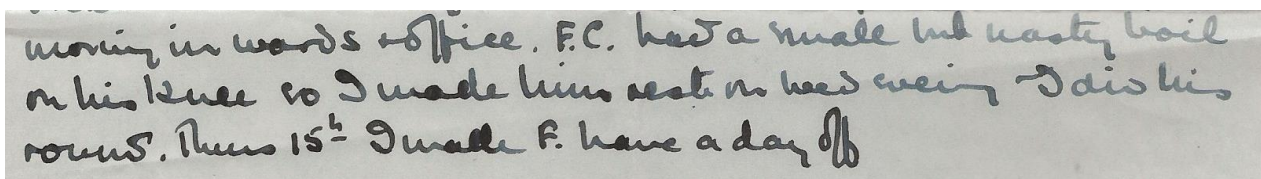
12<sup>th</sup> - Usual hospital day and now here I am having lunch.

### ***Wad Medani, 18 July 1943***

I suppose that you really will be coming sometime, but it seems a powerful long time a-happening. I've, at long last, become completely demoralised about writing to you, as you will have realised. I can't even remember what day it was I last posted to you. I think it was about last Monday.

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> was a usual hospital day. Dennison of the Syndicate came in to have his appendix out. In the afternoon I potted, hoping for a phone call from Khartoum. It rained heavily during the night and was still raining when I got up. I made sure on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> before breakfast that all was ready and properly prepared in the theatre. Having done D after breakfast, I spent the rest of the day in wards and office. Francis had a small but nasty boil on his knee so I made him rest on Wednesday evening and I did his round. Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> I made F have a day off

*The letter ends in mid-sentence. We know from Peg's last letter to Tom, posted in Nairobi on the 12<sup>th</sup> but only received after they were re-united, that she had just been told of a probable BOAC flight on the 17<sup>th</sup> that should have reached Khartoum in time to connect with the overnight train to Kosti.*



working in wards + office. F.C. had a small but nasty boil on his knee so I made him rest on Wed evening + did his rounds. Thus 15<sup>th</sup> I made F. have a day off

## Thereafter

In 1944, having moved to Khartoum, Tom took over from FS Mayne as Senior Surgeon and Lecturer in Surgery, positions he held until retirement. Peg and Nick left Khartoum for the UK in late August 1944 and arrived in Liverpool on 20 September. She had not seen her parents for six years. Tom joined them on two months' leave in March 1945, and Peg and Nick left to re-join him in Khartoum at the end of June 1945. Tom and Peg's younger son, Hugh, was born on 1 August 1946; he was to follow his father and grandfather and qualify at St Thomas' Hospital. The family left Sudan for the UK in 1949, when Tom retired from the SMS.

The friendships that Tom and Peg forged in the Sudan were to prove long-standing, indeed lifelong, and extended to the next generation: Peter Acland and Tiger Wyld were Nick's godfathers and Francis Townsend-Coles was Hugh's.



Faculty of Medicine, Khartoum, 1966



Khartoum, 1967

From 1949 to 1965, Tom taught anatomy at St Thomas' Hospital, first as a lecturer, a hospital appointment, and then as Reader in Anatomy, a University of London appointment.

On again reaching retirement age, Tom returned to Khartoum from 1965-7 as the last non-Sudanese Professor of Anatomy in the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Khartoum. Peg joined him for much of this time. Their expatriate friends were long gone but not, of course, their Sudanese friends.

In February 1974, Tom returned to Khartoum for the last time, to attend the Second International Conference on Basic Medical Sciences in Africa. The conference was linked to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Faculty of Medicine.

After Tom's second retirement from the Sudan, the family moved to Fife, where Tom taught anatomy at St Andrews University, retiring for the fourth and final time in his 94<sup>th</sup> year.

Tom died in 1995 and Peg in 1999.