

My darling boy, - I hope this will be in time to bid you welcome in Auckland and carry to you my fondest thoughts and wishes. If I tried to tell you all that we have been thinking and talking about you during the last weeks it would cost a fortune in air mail postage, so I had better not try. We keep trying to follow the course of your voyage on the map - very difficult since we know so little about it - and are happy to calculate that to-day, being twelve days out, you must be nearing the end of the first lap. Perhaps by the time you get this we, too, shall have news of you, with as many details as you may tell us. Where and how are you celebrating Xmas to-morrow? Ours will be of the usual kind - a tiny tree just for ourselves, a big tree at Eva's, then supper here - but the circle is greatly restricted; with you and Andris away, István in Rahó, Ilonka and Peter at Fácánkert, there will be only the Leopolds and the Badics's. István departed late last night in great joy and agitation, with the eternal problem ahead: will there or won't there be snow? There is none here, but fine, clear, cold winter weather. The preparations, packing and discussions were just as hectic as eight years ago, when you went off for your first ski tour to Ausset with poor Jancsi - remember? István helped himself freely to your gloves, stockings etc. but did not take your skis - they are waiting for some occasion when you may want them.

I can imagine how enervating the repeated postponements of your journey must have been, and what an encroachment upon your budget - but I hope you have forgotten all that long ago and really had occasion to enjoy the voyage. One of the things which worried me was whether you had been able to get hold of some sort of clothing suitable for the tropic part of the journey, or lacking this, whether you did not suffer from the heat too much. Well, I hope you will be able to tell us all about this and everything else too. You can't think how we look forward to your letters. - Postponements of sailings, of course, are the order of the day everywhere; I have just heard that Alberti's, who should have started last week, are still waiting for their boat to sail, or maybe have left to-day, so you will be in Australia before them. A very nice young fellow, whom we met at Nandors, George Rostos by name, engineer, refrigerating expert, by profession, sails by the same boat, and besides taking several things along for Gyura, has kindly offered to take your grey suit, six p. of socks and 9 handkerchiefs - a very modest and not very original Xmas present - for you. He will send all this to Gyuri, as he is probably staying on at Melbourne for the present. A few days ago I met Mrs Baré, mother-in-law of Emmy Alberti, whom I hadn't spoken to for many years but who hailed me as a "colleague", being also an Australian's mother - she knew all about you and sent best wishes, as does everybody else too. George Sandor wrote to say he'd seen you off; of course we sent them and a lot of other people, Xmas cards. - Many thanks for your Xmas present, dear; two of the books arrived safely, but not the third: we only got "G-Men" and "Sounding Brass"; have you read this? Not a very good novel, but interesting on account of its advertising background for which I had the preliminary training through the perusal of "Advertising World." - István thanks you for "G-Men" / I expect that is the one you intended for him; though he has not yet achieved the state of mind necessary to read English, he has improved in many ways and is beginning to see reason; also he is more confident of himself, which is a great thing in his case. At the last conference he had only a "re-proof" for Philosophy, which certainly is no catastrophe and a great improvement on last year, when he had about seven, - especially considering that he spends less time studying and swears and wails considerably less about school than he used to; in fact I think that in certain ways he will be sorry to leave school. What then, is of course more uncertain than ever just now, when everything is absolutely incalculable. Of course there are a hundred rumours and conjectures about what is going to happen in Spring; it is impossible to know anything, but at least one has the feeling that as far as this country's foreign policy is concerned, things are being managed with as much wisdom and caution as possible under the circumstances.

Mindenestire közlöm, hogy a napokban meghalt Fuchs Richárd.
Portóspórolás okából igyekszünk közölnivelőnket két oldalra összeszorítani. Így a fennmaradt helyet Anyunak rezerválom. Ezerszer csókollak

7. I.

My darling boy! You can't imagine our joy last night when your *you* wire from Cape Town arrived, just after Father had finished writing the above. Only when it was really in my hands, giving news of you dated from the very same day, did I realize how anxiously we had been waiting for news. It came as a big surprise, too - from the fact that you had asked for letters to be sent to Auckland we concluded that you were taking the Panama route. We had been following your possible course across the Pacific on the map - and here came this unexpected and therefore doubly welcome message from the Cape! Now we have to shift our imagination to another hemisphere, but it's nice to conjecture with a little more certainty where you will be in the next three weeks. I had a very nice note from Joan Anderson, written about five days after you sailed, to say that she was watching radio and newspapers and thought that you were well out of the worst danger zone by that time, and safe - it was really very sweet of her to think of writing to me. Of course I thanked her and am writing again to-day to tell her that you have telegraphed, also to Sandors who are taking such an interest in your welfare too. Last night, when the telegram came, we were having a dozen people here for high tea, Nandors, Mais, Solt's, Eva, Terus etc., and they all rejoiced with us. Mrs Solt's sister, Dr. Clara Gerő, psychoanalyst, is off to Melbourne by the next Italian boat, with engineer husband and child, and one constantly hears of people going. - Re the letter to Dr Szántó which Father sent you enclosed in our letter No. 2.: Dr. Sz. is an uncle or cousin of Veronka Mezei-Herz-Láng, by way of her Mezei father - this merely for your information. - The third book you sent us from London for Xmas arrived /"Moscow"/ arrived just in time to be put under the tree for Father, and is rather interesting if somewhat anachronistic by now - but who could keep pace with the rush of events? By the time the type is set everything is changed again, and the most unexpected things happen - it seems hardly worth while to plan and conjecture. - It's strange to think of you being at the height of summer just now while we are having a long cold spell. The thermometer was down to - 27° while István was at Rahó, and still sticks around there, is well below zero here too, with never a trace of snow and plenty of dust instead. Nevertheless the kid went off to Dobogókő again to-day, on the proceeds of the sale of his old bicycle, since they report 15 cm. of snow from there. And you are perhaps bathing off a South African beach to-day! Whenever three people of our circles meet nowadays, the talk is of children and relatives overseas; it's quite fantastic the places some people get to. The best reports, on the whole, seem to come in from Australia and Chile, but of course it is very difficult to judge from here how things really are. There have been a great many dismissals here on Jan. 1.; however, there are still quite a number of people who are safely ensconced and even make money. Business in some fields is better than it was and there is a semblance of prosperity in some quarters. Theatres are doing not so badly and cinemas boom; very often one can't get tickets. There is a new non-stop newsreel cinema opposite the Café New York, belonging to the Filmiroda, where people stand in queues all day - of course that is also a sign that a good many people have nothing better to do. - No news in the family, everybody is doing much the same things they used to before you left. Teaching is still trumps: Lizi has got a number of cookery pupils /even Vera Lányi is learning to cook - reminds me of Peter's favourite saying of "people eking out a precarious existence by taking in each other's washing"/; and Terus, who was here with her children to spend Xmas, has 22 pupils in Temesvár to whom she gives English lessons, says her own English is getting tolerably good in consequence; while Kornel Ligeti is teaching Spanish with great success /he took course himself only last year/. I have nothing more interesting than these titbits to report, but I don't want to go on all the time telling you how happy I am to know that you are half-way there, and what good things I wish you! All love

Drága fiacskám !

Valamelyik levledben azt írtad, hogy "no news - good news". Ehhez az axiómához tartottuk magunkat és tartjuk magunkat továbbra is. Ha ez nem lebegne szemünk előtt, bizony sokkal nehezebben tűrnők el a bizonytalanság heteit. Így is számláljuk a napokat, heteket, melyeket rólad szóló hír nélkül kell eltöltenünk és a térkép előtt kalkuláljuk, hogy mikor hol lehetsz. De hát bizonyára minden rendben ment és fog menni ezentul is. Hogy minden gondolatunk, kívánságunk, reményünk állandóan kísért utadon, azt úgy is tudod.

Anyu levelében kimerítően megírt minden lényegeset. Így én most pótlólag csak néhány rendelkezésemre álló, téged érdeklő információt akarok megírni.

Vagy két hete felhívott telefonon egy Szabó István nevű egyén, mondván, hogy iskolatársad volt. Egy másik állítólagos iskolatárs nevében telefonál. Utóbbi, Gál Endre, Bulgáriában él és onnan bizta volt meg Szabót, tudja meg, hogy itthon vagy-e és hogy igaz-e, hogy hírlaptudósító irodád van. Megfelelő választ adtam, de újabb hírt egyikükről sem kaptam azóta. Rotter nagyon hálás kimerítő leveledért és állítólag válaszol is neked. Mikor legutóbb beszéltem vele még habozott az ügy érdemét illetően. Kissé drágább az ajánlat, sem mint elképzelte volt. Jelenleg pihen az ügy, lényegén Rotter karácsonyi vakáczió a Tátrában.

Aureltől kaptam nemrég levelet Basrából, uton India felé. Nagyon fontos régészeti probléma megoldására készül most, de ezt nem jelöli meg közelebről. Igen elismerően nyilatkozott rólad és azt mondja, hogy legkielégítőbb módon készítetted elő utazásodat.

Palkó valami kisebb találmányt vagy gépátalakítást ötlött. Műhelye 60 gépét alakították át ennek megfelelően és prestige nagyott nőtt a vállalatnál, aminek állítólag pénzbeli eredménye is lesz Újévkor. Mindamellet minden előkészületet tesz arra, hogy amint lehet Au.-ba menjen. Gyuri oly ragyogóan megelégedett leveleket ír, hogy alkalmasint hamarosan odaát lesz az egész N. család.

Dévény barátodat ötvenötöd magával hivatalából elbocsátották.

Beretvás Ferkó irodája /Am.Exp./ a háború kitörésekor becsukott és ő állástalan maradt, két hónappal házassága után. A szerencse, melyhez tényleg kitűnő kvalitásai, no meg az a körülmény is járult, hogy ő nem rontja, hanem javítja az arányszámot, hamarosan új álláshoz juttatták, a Mák új alumíniumgyáránál.

Bárdosné közölte, hogy Tamás nagyon el van keseredve amiatt, hogy miután annyi tervet főztetek együtt, eltávoztál egy bucsuszó nélkül és azóta sem írtál neki. Talán ezt hamarosan jóváteheted.

Mostanában folyik a soffőrigazolványok kicserélése ujakra. A KMAC illetékes hölgye azonban azt mondta nekem, hogy ettől függetlenül a részedre kiváltott nemzetközi igazolvány a kiállításától számított egy évig érvényes, nem váltom ki az új belföldi igazolványt, minthogy felteszem, hogy Au.-ban szerzel majd odavélt.

Mint Anyu már megírta, biztonság okából e levél másolatát rendes póstán elküldjük S.-be.

Csókkollak, fiacskám, ezerszer. Rengeteget gondolunk rád és a mai családi összejövetel bizony kissé mélebus lesz. Tán csak valamiképp megünnepledte is a mai estét, ott a hajón, elhárítva magától minden sötét gondolatot, bizva új életed sikerében. Áldjon meg az Isten, fiacskám !



Pongrácz János

II. Vörmező-u.6.,

Budapest, Hungary

1939. december 24.

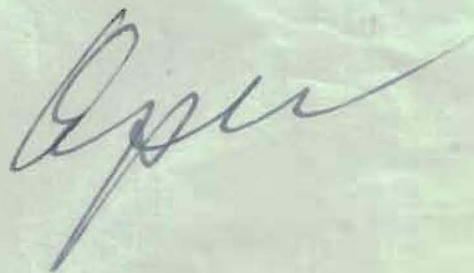
Drága ficskám !

Isten hozott új hazádban ! És engedje teljesülni mindazt, amire veled együtt mi is vágyunk.

Az ugyancsak ma repülő póstán Wellingtonba küldött levél másolatát, biztonság okából, idemellékelem. Minthogy ez minden pillanatra nyilván érdekeset kimerít, itt csak két dolgot akarok megírni, mit repülön, a kapcsolatos irások sulyára való tekintettel, mellőztem.

Ad.1./ Bizonyára tudod, hogy kicsoda barátom Dr. Sebestyén Károly. Volt gimnáziumi tanár, majd a színművészeti akadémia igazgatója, jelenleg még a P. L. színi és irodalmi kritikusa, méltóságos ur. Sebestyén kétszer nősült, második felesége szintén özvegy volt, mikor hozzá ment. Ennek az asszonynak van egy első házasságából való fia, orvos, ki már egy darab ideje Au.-ban él, Newcastleban, ami nyilván S.-nek valami külvárosa vagy hasonló. Hallom, hogy az illető igen kitűnő doktor. Nos, az a gondolatunk támadt, hogy előfordulhat, Isten ne adja, hogy valami nyavalyád akadhat egyszer és igen jó érzés volna részünkre, hogy ebben az esetben jó kezekben tudjunk. Ezért fordultam Sebestyénhez azzal a kéréssel, hogy adjon pár sort részedre mostohafiához. Sebestyén, ki egyébként elég mogorva és kesernyés ember, engem már régen nagyon szívébe zárt és így kérésemnek nagy örömmel tett eleget. Nem csak a mellékelt ajánlólevéllel, hanem azokkal a kísértő sorokkal is, melyeket hozzám intézett, tényleg igazán meleg barátságról tett ténuságot. Már csak erre való tekintettel is kérlek, lépj a doktorral mielőbb összeköttetésbe, ami csak kellemes lesz részedre is, mert mint hallom, ~~hogy~~ nemcsak a doktor maga nagyon rendes ember, hanem angol felesége bájos, aranyos asszony. Majd azután értesíts, hogy milyen volt a megismerkedés.

Ad.2./ Dr. Aportól a mellékelt irásokat kaptam. Te azt mondtad volt, hogy nem lesz semmi pénzedben a dolog. Dr. Apor mégis, bár szerényen, felszámít valamit. Közöltem vele, hogy majd elküldöm neked az irásokat. Tehát, ha hozzájutsz, vagy írd neki közvetlenül vagy engem instruálj. Csókoklak, ficskám !



No. 3. /No. 2. was sent by ship mail to Sydney/.

Pongrácz János
II. Vörmező-u.6.,
Budapest, Hungary

1940. január 6.

3.szám.

Drága fiacskám !

Karácsonyra Anyu megnagyítottatta utlevélfényképedet Balassával, ki ezutal remeket produkált. A kép pompás, és szép keretbe foglalva, kommodomon, Anyu kisleánykori képe mellett nyert elhelyezést. Az ünnepi vendéglátás során sokmindenki látta a képet és mindenki más és más hasonlóságot fedez fel rajta. Oli bácsival, Viczi bácsival és Aurél öcsémekkel fedeznek fel rokon vonásokat a látogatók. Bármelyiküknek is legyen igaza - magam ezt hiszem, hogy mindhárom irányzatnak van igaza - meg lehetünk elégedve. Mindenesetre a szintézis biztató és ha fauteuilömbben ülve, nézem a szembenálló képet, úgy vélem, hogy az a derűs, erélyes, kissé gunyorosan fölényes mosoly, mellyel az reám tekint, tényleg minden jóval biztat. - Így remélem, hogy bármily keserves is lehetett utazásod, mégis jókedvvel, bizalommal néztél elébe érkezésednek és fogsz megküzdeni mindezzel a sok nehézséggel, mely alkalmasint elédtornyosul, mielőtt révbé érsz. Persze mondhatatlanul kíváncsiak vagyunk az összes mindegyik vonatkozó részletekre és alig várjuk első híreidet. Jövő hét derekán lesz egy hónapja, hogy utnak indultál és úgy kalkuláljuk, hogy valamilyen utközbeni híradásod már a közeli napokban itt lehet. Ezt és a következőket várakozástelien lessük, de nyugalommal és azzal a meggyőződéssel, hogy végül minden rendbe jön. Még az elmúlt karácsonyi és újévi ünnepek során is ellenállottunk minden kísértésnek, hogy sem hozzád, sem önönmagunkhoz nem illő szentimentalizmusnak adjuk oda magunkat. Karácsony este nálunk voltak Leopoldák, Badicsék, majd vacsora után Guttman Leonie és Hevesiék. Baloghék Fácánkerten voltak. Szilveszterre azonban már visszajöttek és így náluk töltöttük az estét, ugyancsak Leopoldákkal. Mindenkor csendes kocsintással gondoltunk arra, hogy vajjon te hogyan töltöd el ezeket az ünnepeket.

Piczu még decz.22.-én éjjel Rahóra utazott, honnan szilveszterkor éjjel után állított be Baloghékhoz. Nagyon jól töltötte vakációját és megállapítható, hogy az ismételt együttlét vad idegenekkel, idegen viszonyok megismerése, szorosabb kapcsolat a természettel stb. kitűnő hatással voltak rája. Igaz, hogy tanulással nem erőlteti meg magát a gyerek most sem, de míg tavaly még állandóan kétellyel nézett eleibe az érettséginek, most biztosra veszi, hogy valahogyan megussza.

Egyébként csendben telnek napjaink, hála Istennek egészségesek vagyunk és egyéb bajaink sincsenek. Bizalommal és reménységgel nézünk a dolgok fejlődése elé, és úgy számítunk, hogy továbbra is kívül tudunk maradni a fegyveres konfliktusokon. Eddig oly resekül tempózott e tekintetben a kormány, hogy a továbbiakra vonatkozóan is előlegezni kell bizalmunkat. Ép most van a külügyminister Olaszországban és azt hiszem, joggal várható ez utazástól az ország helyzetének további megszilárdulása.

A tágsabb családi és baráti körből sincsen sok jelenteni való. Sajnos Metallo részéről sem. Azt gondoltam, hogy tán az új év alkalmából jelelnek majd. De bizony szavukat sem hallatták. Talán közgyűléskor? Körnerével beszéltem a minap telefonon. Még mindig nem tudtak rendbe jönni. Állítólag mérnököket nehezen engednek ki. Remélik azonban, hogy a februári hajóval majd mégis csak indulhatnak.

Nem tudom, hogy mennyire kívánsz fentartani itthoni kapcsolataidat, illetve akarsz-e eleget tenni az ezzel kapcsolatos kötelezettségeknek.

Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest
Hungary

No. 4.

14th January 1940

My darling boy,

we are still being happy about the telegram we received last Saturday, and beginning to look forward for air mail news from somewhere on your way. As far as we can make out you will be at your destination or at least in New Zealand in about 8 or 10 days from now, and you can imagine with what interest we are trying to picture what your impressions will be, how you will fare and what you will be doing. All these imaginings are very much in the air, in spite of the many items one hears from other people whose relatives and friends are in Australia, and I am dying to know what your own personal impressions and experiences will be. Meanwhile there is very little to tell about ourselves. Life goes on much as usual, except that it is colder than usual - although in this respect, too, Hungary is in a fortunately moderate position, for here we have only about - 10° of frost to Rumania's and other countries' - 30° and more. However, the family is coming through it splendidly - touch wood - so far without as much as a cold. The central heat is also functioning faultlessly, so we have nothing to complain of, - except that István complains ~~fer~~ of lack of snow, but has nevertheless gone off to the Svábhegy early this morning to ski on some slight vestiges of snow and hoar-frost. Some young men with whom he roomed during his Christmas trip are apparently being very decent to him and asking him to join them at the Duna Sport Club /not a very swell company, I believe, but no matter, they seem to be very nice and as he is always hard up for company it's very good for him/. He is getting to be quite a socialite, came home from a dance at Miska's dancing class at one o'clock last night, etc. He is getting his bearings among strangers and that's a good thing; as for the Matric, his tutor says it'll be all right - let's hope so. Well, we shall see his marks at the end of this term, which will be also celebrated by a big Mátyás Ball, once more at the Budai Vigadó, in honour of the school's twenty-year anniversary. All this shows you that life here runs in the normal groove, at least outwardly. Young people seem to be going out more than they did last year - I mean those that are still here, for a great many have left. Old Pólya has returned from the USA, feeling very elated, I hear, having been covered with honours and enjoyed himself greatly; says George and Susie are very happy, George entirely wrapped up in his baby son for whom he has bought a baby pen out of the first money he has earned - £ 12 for an article in the Chr. Sc. Monitor! What they live on is still a mystery, but if they can afford it, tant mieux for them. Andris and Erika seem to be very happy too, though Andris is reflecting upon ways and means to obtain a permit of permanent residence, in the interest of which he will probably have to go to Mexico for awhile. The Swinton boys seem to be doing very well at their respective universities, not only in sports but also in their studies; Erzsi writes in her usual elated style. From the Bears in Canada also come very contented letters; they live in a small village in a thoroughly domesticated manner; Emsy says she lives like her own great-grandmother, except that she has an electric range and a radio, but she greatly prefers this to the social and family life in Budapest which never suited her a bit.

Well, I'm afraid I really have no news for you to-day - my main reason for writing is to enclose Jóska's letter to Mr Penfold which I forgot to send you in my last, and not to miss a Monday mail. Perhaps by next week we shall have a letter from you to acknowledge - but if not, we shan't be impatient. All fond love, my darling, and the world's best wishes

Love
Mother
Father

Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest

No. 5.

24th January 1940

My darling boy,

your most welcome letter, mailed at Cape Town on the 6th, arrived yesterday, and were we glad to get it! There are a hundred more questions that I should like to ask about the journey, about your travelling companions, about your plans - but I should never get an answer to them, partly for reasons over which we have no power, and partly because by the time you get this and would answer my inquisitive questions, you will have a number of other things to write about, blotting out previous impressions. Please bear in mind that there is no detail unimportant enough to be of no interest to us - tell us as many personal things, about the things you see, the people you meet, and what you think of them, as you can, - we want the "personal note," the "human interest angle," as editors say, so the more you write the better, without taking any special pains about being literary. I am very happy that the journey was comfortable despite the 3rd class. Since you say nothing about the heat around the Equator, I trust that the Indian Ocean was not too oppressive either and that you got a chance to see something of New Zealand at its best season. I am dying to hear all about it.

Here, par contre, we are having a real winter such as we have not had for years. In fact, they say that the amount of snow that has fallen during the last week, to make up for the first part of the winter, hasn't been equalled for thirty-five years. I doubt it, but anyhow there is an enormous amount of snow. István, of course, wallows in it; he is lucky enough to have four days' "coal vacation," on account of transport difficulties, this week, and skis to his heart's content. Fortunately our own central heat has functioned satisfactorily so far, so we are perfectly all right, though I won't deny we do enjoy the weather to-day, when the thermometer hovers around freezing-point again instead of ten or twelve degrees below it, as it has done during most of the past weeks.

Endre Körner telephoned three days ago that they are leaving to-morrow, and kindly offered to take something along for you. I couldn't think of anything else, so I sent you two neckties and a couple of books which I hope you will enjoy - once you are there, give us a list of your wishes, in case similar occasions arise again. I hope Körners get away in good time and won't get into trouble on account of the snow; train communications have been very irregular, but I hope they'll be able to make the boat in time. I gave Körner your address but he will probably get in touch with you through Káldor; they are both stopping over in Sydney and Körner himself may stay there for some time although his wife intends to go to New Zealand at once. Both are greatly looking forward to seeing you. I also gave your address to Mrs Scharl who asked for it on behalf of some friend of Hanna's, who also knows you, but she did not say who it was, apparently because the young man did not want it to be widely known that he was going.

Here things are going on much as usual. The family is alright. Ilonka is rather more cheerful; there is some renewed hope for Ság, i.e. of their being classed in a category that is exempt - will tell you more about this when the time comes. At present the reform has not been carried through anywhere yet. Körner will tell you all the general news; on the whole things look a little brighter. The other day we had Pándi Moldvai here for supper, to talk over his unfortunate divorce affair; the poor young fool has got himself into a stupid mess and it may be years until he can get a divorce, or he'll have to pay alimony till Doomsday. I work rather less these days; we find it pays better just now to reduce expenses and send out just a few things that we hope will sell; Lorant is thoroughly disgusted with us, I'm afraid, but since he sells very little now it isn't worth while to prepare things specially for him, so we mostly write up things that will sell to Am. Weekly. There is a ray of hope that Heinberg may place "Sonja" in Sweden - marvelous enough just now, when Sweden has other things to think about - but I haven't heard from Tabori. I'm leaving the next page for Father! All love *Always*

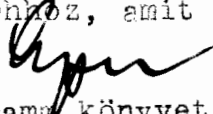
No. 5/a.

Pongrácz János
II. Vörmező-u.6.,
Budapest, Hungary

1940. január 25.

Drága ficskám !

Felesleges mondanom, hogy nekem is mekkora örömet szerzett Capetown-ból küldött leveled és annak megnyugtató tartalma. Bizony félttem, hogy a III.osz - tilyon való utazás az elmúlt hetek politikai és időjárási bonyodalmai közepette nem lesz nagy öröm. Annál boldogabb vagyok most, hogy tudom, hogy minden rendben ment. A további utazás bizonyára még fokozottabban lehetett kellemes, ha csak a hőségétől nem kellett túlságosan szenvedned. Remélem, hogy legközelebbi leveled mindenről bőségesen és részletesen fog tájékoztatni bennünket. Magam is megismétlem, amit Anyu írt, hogy minden, de minden részlet végtelenül érdekel bennünket és írd annyit, amennyire csak időből és hangulatodból telik. Nem kell félned, hogy itthon ekkora reklámot csinálunk majd leveleidnek, mint N.-ék a Gyúréinak. Tudjuk jól, hogy az ilyesmit nem szereted. Noha be kell ismernem, hogy Gyuri leveleiből nagyon sok igen érdekes részletet tudtunk meg. - Képzelem, hogy odaérve rengeteg sok szeléd - szólnivalód lesz, míg érintkezésbe kerülsz mindazzal a sok emberrel, kihez szülő ajánlólevelet szereztél megadnak, eltekintve szoktól a levelektől, melyeket mi küldöttünk volt neked. Szeretném mindazonáltal, ha hamarosan sorát ejthetné az a magyarember meglátogatásának, kihez Dr. Malonyai barátom levele szólt. /A címzett nevére már nem emlékezem./ Ez ugyanis nyilván nagyon ügyes és szerencsés ember, elannyira, hogy aránylag rövid ottlét után már házat is tudott vásárolni, sőt ép a minap halottam. Talán az ő szerencséjéből valamit át tud adni neked is. - Mint Anyu leveléből látod, itthon minden rendben van. Igazán fel nem becsülhető az a tehetséges és ügyes diplomácia, mely Magyarországot mindeddig kívül tudta tartani a háborús bonyodalmakon és mely remélhetően továbbra is sikeresen működik majd. Személyileg is nagyon jól vagyunk és anyagi bajaink sincsenek. Attila-utczai bérlőink min megvannak és rendben fizetnek. Kis műhelyem is él és ha nem is virágzik, de azért valamit csak hoz a konyhára. - Minap küldöttem neked néhány nyomatványt, melyek egyike mutatja, hogy a tőzsde mennyire javult utóbbi időben. Így még mindig tudom az adóterheket stb. viselni lombardra, anélkül, hogy olcsón kellene elkötyvetni a papirokat. - Néhány hete állandó küzdelemben állottam Istvánnal. Előbb ő pörölt, hogy meleg van és nincsen hó, majd én haragudtam a túlságos hidegért és a hallatlan méretű hevizásért. Ma ezt hiezem, mindketten megbékélünk. A város tele van ugyan hóval, de gyönyörűen eltakarva, úgy hogy a közlekedés megint kifogástalan. Hőmérséklet délből nullán felül és kisütött a nap, még apró kék foltok is láthatók az égen. Gyönyörű látvány különösen a Duna, teljesen jéggel borítva, melyen a vízimadarak tömegei sűrűnek-forognak. - Metallo részéről továbbra sincs semmi hír. Csapán Kalmár csinálja neked az olcsó reklámot. Gross doktor, ki Nándoréknál van megint elfoglalva, ott mesélte, hogy Kalmár nem győz beszélni rólad. Ily tisztviselője még nem volt, mondotta, ha ugyan a Gross-Nándor utvonalon nem ragadt valami hozzá ehhez, amit K. tényleg mondott. Csókollak, ficskám ezerszer



Kedves Bök.B.U.É.K. Köszönöm a stramm könyvet és a kesztyűt amit a te karácsonyi ajándékokképpen kaptam Ilonka nenőtől. Léced nagyon jól működik. A te cipődet használok hozzá, hogy ne kelljen pofát állítani, mert az csak gyöngíti a lécet. Összes klubtársaid üdvözölnek. Láttam Magaziner Pelit színi, ténye tudhón stramm volt nagyon, de még mindig nem nagyon tudok mély hóban. /8 Amire nyolc éve vártam, végre itt a szénszünet. Lehet lécelni egész nap. Hó emberemlékezet óta nem volt ennyi, ez rendben is volna, csak kissé ragad a Sigrain már jeges. Virány Amál Judittal beszéltem, volt Volócon és Buci szerint igen jó állásban van. 18 pa. Ég véled.

Pongrácz János
II. Vörmező-u.6.,
Budapest, Hungary

6. sz.

1940. február 3.

Drága fiam! Ugy kalkulálunk, hogy m.hó 24.-e táján érkezhettél N.Z.-ba és hogy onnan remélhetően írási légipóstaleveled ca. mához egy hétre itt lehet, egy héttel később pedig már S.-ből való híradásod. Képzeltető érdeklődéssel várjuk mindezeket. - Itthon semmi nevezetes újság. Az utolsó hetek főleg Piczu jelében teltek el. Sielés, Mátyásbál és utolsósorban féllelvi értesítő képezték beszéd tárgyát. Az a példátlanul erős tél, melyben idén részünk van, oly esélyességeket nyújtott P.-nak, aminőkre még nem volt eset. Elsősorban a karácsonyi kárpátaljai kirándulás, melyről már tudsz, majd egy-egy dobogókői kiruccanás, végül pedig öt napos szénszünet és halmozódó egyéb iskolai szabadnapok! Ugyiszólván napokon keresztül nem is látjuk a gyereket; elmegy korán reggel, ó. u. 6 óra tájt kerül haza és bizony előfordul, hogy olyankor magunk sem vagyunk itthon és házon kívül is vacsorázunk. Szörnyen élvezi Piczu mindezt. De meg kell hagyni, hogy elég rendesen viselkedik. Hatkor hazajön, meguzsonnázik és minden zokszó nélkül félóra múlva indul tanárjához, kitől kilencez felé jön vissza. - Tegnapelőtt volt az iskolai bál, melynek fényét az adta meg, hogy átalakítottuk az egyik itt heverő régi családi smokingot. Persze hozzávaló ing, nyakravaló stb. is beszerezte - tett. Mindezt P. erőlyesen ellenezte, de azért nagyon boldog volt, hogy e téren is mint felnőtt szerepelhet. A bálból reggel hat óra tájt vetődött haza és kilencezkor már indult megint a Svábhegyre. - Az értesítő négy elégségest tartalmazott, az egyik - a számtani - csillaggal díszítve. Piczu persze nagyon meg van elégedve, sőt mit tegadjam, magam is az vagyok, pláne mikor a privát tanár azt mondja, hogy az érettségi meguszása nem kétséges. Csak arról lehet szó, hogy elégséges- vagy jórendű lesz-e a gyerek. Vederemo! - A háziasszony szerencsére jól fűttet és így, ha nincs északi szél, akkor nagyon kellemes nálunk, noha sok helyütt bizony nagyon fáznak az emberek szénhiány miatt. Még előkelő házakban is gyakran előfordul, hogy nincsen szén. És még egyre újabb hideghullámokat jósol a prognózis. Unberufen, egészségileg is nagyon jól bírjuk a telet, mindhárman. - Más lényeges közölni valóm ezután igazán nincsen, ha csak nem akarok minent elírni Anyu elől. - Még csak azt az - alkalmasint teljesen felesleges - figyelmeztetést akarom megírni, hogy valahogy ne felekezze meg Aurél bácsiról. Ha még nem írtál, írd neki sürgősen mielőbb és minél nagyobb részletességgel utazásodról, érkezésedről stb. - Minthogy pedig ő valamelyik levelében - quasi excuzálva önönmagát, hogy rokonságra való tekintettel kénytelen nagyon együtt tartani kis vagyonát - közölte velünk, hogy Euróából való távozása előtt nyomatékosan felhívta figyelmeidet vele szemben fennálló kötelezettségedre - hát ne mulaszd őt e tekintetben újból és újból megnyugtetni. - Csókollak fiamcsám ezerszer

My darling boy,

by the time you get this, I expect you will be an old and experienced inhabitant of "down under", as Variety designates Australia. You can imagine with what concentrated interest we are waiting for your news and impressions. Two days ago Mrs Kerény telephoned to inquire about you, and to tell me that her son Tibor arrived in Sydney just before Xmas, and is greatly looking forward to seeing you. You may have met him in the meantime, but in case you haven't, here is his address: c/o Bank of N.S.W., Box 2722/c, General Post Office, Sydney. His mother says that he was rather depressed at first; arriving just before the holidays he found everything at a standstill, could see no one, and had the impression that it would be pretty difficult to get a job. No sooner had they received this letter, however, when the next came, reporting that he had already found employment, apparently a very satisfactory and well-paid job, but that is all that his

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I don't know whether you know Gyuri's new address: it is 170, Philip Street, Sydney; Telephone BW 4794. I am very glad you will have him and other friends as a standby /I hear Jankó also has a good job at last, as chemist in a frigidaire factory and refrigerating plant belonging to a Swede/. A letter of introduction to Mr Penfold from Jóska will be forwarded to your Sydney address with our next letter. We shall be sending a copy of this to Sydney by ship mail, too. Give Gyuri my love and tell him his English is improving enormously from letter to letter. We are always delighted to read his detailed letters and happy to know that he is in such a consolidated position and ~~such~~ so full of confidence.

I am hoping for the same thing for you, darling, but I also hope you won't let it depress you if things don't go quite so smoothly and quickly in your case. Enjoy every bit of your great experience to the full, don't take contrtemps to heart / I know you don't/, have a good time, keep well, and - oh, so many other good wishes! God bless you, darling. All fondest love from

Mother

Pongrácz János
II. Vörösmarty-u.6.,
Budapest, Hungary

7.szám

1940. február 10.

Drága ficskám !

Pont egy hónapi utazás után megjött kedves meglepetésként ja. 7.-i lapod. Ugyancsak kedves dolog volt részéről, hogy Choleséknak is írtál. Kíváncsi vagyok, jelentkeznek-e majd Anyunál. Már nagyon sok hónapja nincsen hír felőlük. Ilonka néni is nagyon örült megemlékezésednek. - Noha persze nagyon szeretnénk volna azonnal értesülni szerencsés megérkezésedről, belátjuk, hogy igazad volt a költségkiméléssel és így csak nagyon várjuk ezt a légipóstalevelet, melyet alkalmasint portraszállásodkor, N.Z.-ben azonnal elindítottál. Ugy kalkulálom, hogy az holnapután itt lehet, ha minden jól megy. Egy héttel később pedig talán már Gyöneyből kaphatunk levelet. Alig várjuk. - Közben meglepetésszerűen, három nappal ezelőtt, jelenti a szobaleány, hogy távollétünkben Baróti keresett, azaz, hogy ne hívjuk vissza, mert nem lesz található. Majd másnap reggel ő ismét hív. Miután azonban mégsem hívott, én kerestem délből, de ekkor meg ő nem volt bent a hivatalban. Eltelt egy nap újabb jelentkezése nélkül, úgy hogy felburjánzó várekozásom megint lelohadt, mire tegnap reggel azután mégis csak jelentkezett Baróti és közölte, hogy visszatér a te ügyedre most. Mindig az volt az álláspontja, hogy meg kell várni valami alkalmat, mely lehetővé teszi kívánságod teljesítését. Ez az alkalom most bekövetkezett /hogy mi volt ezt nem mondotta, de sejtem, hogy talán mérlegülés lehetett/ és örömmel jelenti, hogy az igazgatóság kétféle pengőt szavazott meg neked. Jövő hét elején átvehetem az összeget. B. boldog, hogy így jól végződött a dolog és nagyon kíváncsi sorsod további alakulására. Kért, hogy tartsam őt au fait. Persze nagyon szépen megköszöntem mindent. Hogy te kinek köszönjed meg magad, azt nem tudom. Félek, hogy kénytelen leszel három levelet is írni, B.-nek, Kalmárnak és Istóknak, külön-külön. Mindenesetre azonban várj ezzel legközelebbi híradásomig. Talán a pénzzel együtt átadnak valami levelet is, melyre majd reagálni szintén szükséges lesz. - Magam igazán nagyon boldog vagyok, hogy a Metallo így jól viselte magát, mert hiszen te max. 1500-ra gondoltál és ezt az összeget belőleg már 1000-re is leszállítottad, ha jól emlékezem. Az egész dolog mutatja, hogy sokszor mégis csak rendesebbek az emberek, mint feltehető. Főleg pedig legnagyobb elismerést jelent és minthogy az ember sohasem tudhatja, hogy mit hoz a jövő, az sincsen kizárva, hogy Istók véleménye képességeiről és egyéniségeiről, még Au.-ban is értéket jelenthet részesedre. - Csak persze sajnálom, hogy az egész úgy nem jár közvetlen anyagi haszonnal reádnézve. Bizonyára jól jönne neked ez a kis pénz, ha át lehetne utalni. Így, egyelőre legalább, mi használjuk majd fel. Én jókor jön egy 15.-én esedékes adórészlet megfizetésére és több elég sürgős bezerzésre. De ne vedd úgy, hogy ezt a pénzt kisajátítjuk. Javára van írva természetesen. - A napokban nyomtatványküldeményt indítok utnak. Tartalma főleg a francia sárga könyv lesz, melyről bizonyára olvastál az angol lapokban. Nem kell persze szóról szóra elolvasni az egész nagy könyvet. Azonban a berlini követ jelentése a német hatalmasokkal folytatott tárgyalásairól nagyon érdekesek. - A francia rádió közölte, hogy a sárga könyv a francia könyvprodukció legeslegnagyobb sikerei közé számít. Meglepetés volt, mivel az első kiadást csak 50,000 példányban készítették. De oly nagy volt az érdeklődés, hogy egyik kiadás követte a másikat és hogy vagy egy tucat más nyelvre lefordítva is megjelent a mű. Megjelenése óta - tehát egy hónap után - a könyv francziául és más nyelveken összesen

két és félmillió példányban került a piacra, mely számot eddig csak Cyrano és a Bête humaine érte el. Nem tudom, hogy mennyi igaz ebből, de tény, hogy Budapesten napok alatt elfogyott az első küldemény és sürgősen további mennyiségeket kértek Párisból a könyvkereskedők. Igaz, hogy kötetjét egy pengőjével vesztegetik. - Ujság egyébként semmi. Rémes az időjárás megint, más írtelomben. Napok óta olvad, az utcza velősárgos tóvá változott és a gyönyörű vakítóan fehér hóhegyek, melyeket még nem sikerült az utcákról eltávolítani, közben csunya fekete sárdombokká váltak. Közben pedig a háztetőkről helyenkint egész hólevínak esnek le, úgy hogy a közlekedés nem egészen veszélytelen dolog. - Csókollak fiacskám ezerszer

Apu

Drága fiacskám! Eszembe jutott, hogy amennyiben az odaérkező levelekre vonatkozóan is van cenzura - amit alig hiszek - akkor a cenzoroknak dupla munkát és ezáltal késedelmet jelent, ha egyikünk magyarul, másikunk angolul ír; ezért írok én is inkább magyarul. Igaz, hogy az cenzorok ropant kedvesek: a minap pl. a londoni Lorántnak egy, szörnyű kacskaringós betűvel és magyarul írt leveléhez egy nyomtatott cédula volt mellékelve, amelyben a cenzor kérte, hogy ezentul legyen szives olvashatóbban írni; ismerősünknek, aki Angliába emigrált anyjával naponta vált levelet, megírta a cenzor, hogy mondanivalóit legyen szives valamivel rövidebbre fogni; Gyuri egy minapi levelére pedig, melyben azt írta, hogy mellékel egy másvalaki részére szóló levelet, melyet azonban takarékoságból ugyanannak a lapnak aljára írt, rájegyezte a cenzor, hogy "no letter was enclosed," nehogy őt gyanúsítsák meg azzal, hogy elveszett. Annál inkább kell ezt a kedvességet honorálni azzal, hogy az ember megkönnyíti a dolgukat - de ha mindegy, akkor megint szívesen írok angolul. Ennél fontosabb közölni valóim nincsenek, Apu már mindent megírt. Persze szörnyen várjuk már első leveledet, bár igyekszem türelmetlenségemet és optimizmusomat türtőztetni s egyre magyarázom magamnak, hogy jövő héten még nem lehet itt a levél. Arra is kíváncsi vagyok, hogy Cape Townban mit láttál és milyen benyomást nyertél, bár képzelem, hogy az idő rövidsége és anyagiakban korlátozott lehetőségeid miatt nem tapasztalhattál sokat. Nálunk semmi ujság. Ilonka néni tegnapi estéje szintén nem nyújtott közlésre érdemes anyagot. Életmódunk és berendezkedéseink nem változtak; mint minden negyedévben, most is gondolkoztunk, azaz helyesebben csak én gondolkoztam, a lakás felmondásán, de ismét elálltunk tőle. Egyrészt még annyira bizonytalan, hogy mi lesz Istvánnal és mi lesz a világgal általában, hogy az ember most úgysem tudna véglegesen, vagy akár csak pár évi hatállyal is határozni; másrészt olyan nehéz megfelelő, valamivel kisebb, naposabb, jó helyen fekvő, de azért lényegesen olcsóbb lakást találni, amely érdemessé tenné a hurcolkodás költségének és fáradtságának vállalását - hogy okosabonak véljük, ha egyelőre marad minden a régiben. Kivált most, amikor határozott lakáshiány észlelhető s amikor ebben a komisz kemény télben egyáltalán nem lehet a fűtésre panasz: sok helyütt nagy bajok voltak fűtéssel, melegvízzel mostanában, amikor a nagy hó és váratlan nagy hideg miatt, no meg a vagonok másfelé való igénybevétele miatt szállítási zavarok voltak, de nálunk szerencsére eddig kifogástalanul működött mindenkettő. Tehát megint nem hurcolkodunk s így háztartási berendezkedésünk is marad a régiben s én továbbra is örült kényelemben élek, annál is inkább, mert a másféle munkám is sajnos most kevesebb, bár azért akad mindig. Ha más nem, hát különböző lame duck-ok számára kilátástalan fordítás, pl. Bárdos Arthur stb. No de nem baj, ez az üzleti regiehez tartozik és szerencsére azért eladni is sikerül mindig; valamit; néha magam is csodálkozom, hogy pl. Varietynek még mindig érdemes Budapest éjjeli életéről és filmprodukciójáról egész oldalt hozni, stb. - és ezért időnkint erélyes is tudok lenni, például az általában felcsigázott Papp Károlyné esetében, akit, mondhatom, nem volt könnyű lerázni! Ölellek ezerszer, drágám

Apu

Thank you, darling, for all business arrangements on our behalf and statement of affairs. Everything is in perfect order except that business is terribly slack, as is only natural/. Have just had a charming card from Weinberg with good wishes for you. I heard from Press Alliance, New York, some time ago; they said they could not use the biographies you had sent them since these were "merely condensed from Who's Who and similar books of reference which are at the disposal of every editorial office." My experience is that though they may have books of reference they seldom take the trouble to look up things, and anyone who does so stands a fair chance of getting things published if they are submitted at the right moment, but that's what they said; never mind. I wish you would tell us what was the journalistic work you once hinted ~~at~~ that you were doing in London, even if it was ever so unimportant: don't forget that we are interested also in the little things, and don't be afraid that we give your communications widespread publicity: we don't; anything you tell us is for us alone. I should also very much like to get the "inside dope" on your parting from E.G., the details of which you never told us, so I can only conjecture that my first impression of him was, alas, the correct one: that he must be slightly crazy and entirely irresponsible. Perhaps you will one day find time to tell us more about him - though I expect there will be such hundreds of new things to say that you will pass him over. Well, we shall meet some day again, and talk over every, everything....

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8.szám

1945. február 15.

Drága Pócskám! Előző levelemet vasárnap, február 10.-én délután vittem postára. Onnan visszatérve nagy, örömteli meglepetésemre itt találtam kábeleletet, mint teljesen váratlan híradást. Noha Capetown óta már nem kellett aggódnunk miattad, mégis egyszerű megnyugtató híradás az, hogy túl vagy a ten erőszakszék minden eventualitásán. Képzem, hogy ezóta már milyen nagy gözben vagy kenyérkereset utáni törekvésedben. Gondolatban mindezt lépcsőzet követtem. Az első várom levélbeli közleményeidet mennél több részletéről. - Ez a kábelhíradó megint egyike volt Ilonka néni páratlan kedvességével ki- eszelt kedves figyelmes-ágának. Nekünk nem szólt egy szót sem, hátunk megett Nándoréktól megtudaskolta Gyuri ezimét. Teljesen persze nem sikerült terved. Ő ugyanis előírás nélkül akarta feladni sürgönyét, úgy hogy te azt hiszed, hogy mi sürgönyöztünk és hogy így közvetlenül nekünk válaszolt. De persze a sürgönyhivatal nem vette fel a sürgönyt előírás nélkül és mint- hogy a feladás telefonon történt, kellett, hogy saját nevét mondja be. Így történt azután, hogy a választ is csak az ő nevére adhattad fel, nem tudva persze, hogy az egész dolog körül mi van. De így is nagy, örömteli meglepés volt. - Gubádát felvettem. Jenő nem volt bent a hivatalban, mikor jelezték. Benkő fogdott és melegen érdeklődött irántad. Majd a pénztáros- nő valószínűs dícsőimust zengett arról, hogy mily egyszerű fiu vagy. Írást nem adtak, ellenben velem aláírattek egy elismervényt, mely szerint a kérdéses összeg költségekre vonatkozik, melyek háború kitörése miatt nyersa- nyag beszerzése körül felmerültek. - A legutolsó levélomban jelzett időjá- rás-enyhülést órákkal követte csak újabb rettenetes lehűlés, hóvihár stb. Ez az újabb hullám minden eddigit felulmúlt és szokból az újságkivágások- ból, melyeket legközelebb küldök, majd egy néhány részletet kiolvashatsz. Úgyzólván az egész vasutforgalom szünetel, ami azt is jelenti, hogy szén napok óta nem érkezik. Ha hamarosan nem javul a helyzet, bizony kellemetlen lesz a dolog. Így is már legtöbb helyen csökkentették vagy megszüntették a fűtést, vízszolgáltatást. Nálunk még egy darabig nagyobb bajok nélkül megy a dolog, de azért persze itthon sincs kellő meleg, úgy hogy a sorokat is átmeneti kapótombá burkolva írom. Viszont Leopoldék már két napja nem tudnak kimozdulni lakásukból. Minden autóforgalom szünetel a Gellérthegy- en és az egyéb környező magaslatokon. Szerencse, hogy élelmiszerészallítók stb. gyorsanzerrel valahogyan fel tudnak verekedni. A fogytán levő tüzelőanyag megőrzésére azonban gondolni nem lehet. Piczunak viszont megint szén- szünete van és fűtül minden egyébre. Alsócen kisieli magát. Mára teljesen elállott a szél és a havazás, sőt van időnkint kis napfény is. Remélhetően már kilábalunk a bajokból, melyeket egyébként hálá Istennek mindnyájan egészségesen kitűnően viselünk el. - Kitűnő háziasszonyunk és kedves le-ánya szerzett most nekünk kis ramazurit. Tul komplikált és hosszadalmas a dolog ahon, hogy minden, egyébként mulatságos és érdekes részletét elő-adjam. Elég legyen annyi, hogy a háztulajdonosnő felmonotta nekünk a le- kást, mely felmondást azonban nem vettem tudomásul, egyrészt mivel előírás- ból nem augusztusra, hanem májusra szólt, másrészt pedig a felmondólevelet a.u. 1/2 6-kor kézbesítette a házimesterné, h volt csak déli 12 óráig lehet felmondani az illető hónap tizennegyedik napján. Persze el lehetünk tévedve, hogy most majd novemberre mondának fel, bár nem egészen biztos, mivel nekik augusztusra kellett volna a lakás, hogy abba izentudorcszthyók esetleg behárolkodhassanak. Novemberre alkalmasint nem érdekli már a lakás őket és ha mégis felmondanak, akkor csak rancunecöl teszik. Az egész kampagnét igen különleges módon intézték és Jancsi jó érzésére vall, hogy

alkalmat keresett és talált arra, hogy tulajdonára hozze, hogy mennyire el-
isíli anyja és nővére kevéssé loyális eljárását. Mindenesetre ezért majd most
körülnézünk, nem találunk-e valami más többé-kevésbé megfelelő más lakást. -
Gyurinek mond meg, hogy nagyon örültünk azoknak a kedves soroknak, melyeket
szülei útján nekünk szentelt. - Csókollak fiacskám szerelzer

Drága fiacskám, Isken hozott Sydneyben! ^{Apu}
Apu mindent elintézt előlem, csak ölel és szerel ^{anyu}

Many happy returns and fondest love from
Mother and Father

1940. február 15.

Drága fiacskám! Előző leveletem vasárnap, f.hó 10.-én délben vittem postára. Onnan visszatérve nagy, örömteli meglepetésemre itt találtam kábelaggódnunk miattad, mégis nagyszerű megnyugtató érzés az, hogy, tud vagy a tengerhajózás minden eventualitásán. Képzelem, hogy azóta már milyen nagy gőzben vagy kenyérkereset utáni törekvésedben. Gondolatban mindegyik lépésedet követem. És alig várom levélbeli közleményeidet mennél több részlettel. Ez a kábelhíradó megint egyike volt Ilonka néni páratlan kedvességével kísérelt kedves figyelmességeinek. Nekünk nem szólt egy szót sem, hátunk megett Nándoréktól megtudakolta Gyuri ezimét. Teljesen persze nem sikerült, mert ő úgyan is aláírás nélkül akarta feladni sürgönyét, úgy hogy te azt hiszed, hogy mi sürgönyöztünk és hogy így közvetlenül nekünk válaszolj. De persze a sürgönyhivatal nem vette fel a sürgönyt aláírás nélkül és mint történt azután, hogy a választ is csak az ő nevére adhattad fel, nem tudva persze, hogy az egész dolog körül mi van. De így is nagy, örömteli meglepetés volt. - Gubádát felvettem. Jenő nem volt bent a hivatalban, mikor jelezték. Benkő fogadott és melegen érdeklődött irántad. Majd a pénztárosnő valóságos dicsőhimnust zengett arról, hogy mily nagyszerű fiú vagy. Írást nem adtak, ellenben velem aláíratnak egy elismervényt, mely szerint a kényes beszerzés költségekre vonatkozik, mely a háború kitörése miatt nyersa-nyag beszerzése körül felmerültek. - A legutolsó levelemben jelzett időjárás-enyhülést órákkal követte csak újabb rettenetes lehülés, hóvihar stb. Ez az újabb hullám minden eddigit felulmúlt és azokból az újságkivágásokból, melyeket legközelebb küldök, majd egynéhány részletet kiolvashatsz. Ugyszólván az egész vasutforgalom szünetel, ami azt is jelenti, hogy szén napok óta nem érkezik. Ha hamarosan nem javul a helyzet, bizony kellemetlen lesz a dolog. Így is már legtöbb helyen csökkentették vagy megszüntették a fűtést, vízszolgáltatást. Nálunk még egy darabig nagyobb bajok nélkül megy a dolog, de azért persze itthon sincs kellő meleg, úgy hogy a sorokat is átmeneti kabátomba burkolva írom. Viszont Leopoldék már két napja nem tudnak kimozdulni lakásukból. Minden autóforgalom szünetel a Gellérthegy és az egyéb környező magaslatokon. Szerencse, hogy élelmiszerszállítók stb. gyalogszerrel valahogyan fel tudnak vergődni. A fogytán levő tüzelőanyag kiegészítésére azonban gondolni sem lehet. Piezunak viszont megint szén-szünete van és fűtől minden egyébre. Alaposan kisieli magát. Mára teljesen elállott a szél és a havazás, sőt van időnkint kis napfény is. Remélhetően már kilábalunk a bajokból, melyeket egyébként hála Istennek mindnyájan egészséggel kitűnően viselünk el. - Kitűnő háziasszonyunk és kedves leánya szereztek most nekünk kis ramazurit. Tul. komplikált és hosszadalmas a dolog ehhez, hogy minden, egyébként mulatságos és érdekes részletet előadjam. Elég legyen annyi, hogy a háztulajdonosnő felmondotta nekünk a lakást, mely felmondást azonban nem vettem tudomásul, egyrészt mivel előírásból nem augusztusra, hanem májusra szólt, másrészt pedig a felmondólevelet d.u. 1/2 6-kor kézbesítette a házmesterné, holott csak déli 12 óráig lehet felmondani az illető hónap tizennegyedik napján. Persze el lehetünk készülve, hogy most majd novemberre mondanak fel, bár nem egészen biztos, mivel nekik augusztusra kellett volna a lakás, hogy abba Szentkeresztthyék esetleg behurcolkodhassanak. Novemberre alkalmasint nem érdekli már a lakás őket és ha mégis felmondanak, akkor csak rancunéból teszik. Az egész campagnet igen közönséges módon intézték és Jancsi jó érzésére vall, hogy

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Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, II.

No. 9.

24th February 1940

My darling boy,

Going in to breakfast yesterday I had the great joy of finding your letter chronicling your voyage, concluded and mailed in Sydney on the 6th /No. 3./ It came fast enough, considering that at the present moment we are cut off from air mail communications owing to the snowdrifts that have made the flying-fields impracticable. Nevertheless, we are sending this and propose to send letters in the future also by air mail. Ordinary mail takes at least seven weeks, so be a spendthrift and write air mail as often as possible. You might come to some arrangement with Gyuri and send an occasional sheet in his home letter, and vice versa: as far as I know, minimum postage from Australia covers more weight than we can send for minimum postage from here, so you might do that and give the Nandor parents and ourselves simultaneous pleasure for the same expenditure. Although, thanks to Ilonka, your cable had already given us the happy assurance that you had arrived safely, it's good to know that all went smoothly and that you had a pleasant and enjoyable time. We were very interested to hear about your London doings posthumously. We had ordered "World's War News" when you mentioned it in one of your letters, but by that time it had already ceased to exist, so we got no chance to see it. We often see foreign papers; only very occasionally a few lines are blacked out /mostly jokes/ or a few pages missing, but there is no obstacle to finding out what people write and think in other places. Sorry you did not find our letter in Auckland. I don't think it contained anything of importance; anyhow we sent a copy of it by boat mail to Sydney, so you will have got it by now. It was marked No. 2 /the copy, I mean/, so I expect you will have received all the following ones in regular order. A week ago, on receiving your cable, we wrote to the Pitt Street address /Letter No. 8./, so in case you are no longer staying there, you will be able to retrieve this letter, containing the information that Metallo handed out the dough to Father. I don't think there was anything else of importance contained in it, anyhow I expect you will receive all communications regularly from now on. Of course we are burning to hear your further news, your impressions, the conditions under which you live, your meetings with friends, reactions to letters of introduction, the chances and possibilities you see ahead of you. Well, a letter is something to look forward to, and that's what we are doing most of the time.

Here the winter is slowly, very slowly beginning to make way for spring, but it can't quite make up its mind yet. To-day for the first time in many weeks the trains are all running normally again; there have been no more blizzards and the streets are gradually being freed from the snow barricades that we have grown accustomed to see since after Christmas; we have had a few sunny days, but the thermometer is still permanently below zero and the nights are pretty cold. There has been a lot of trouble over coal and firewood shortage, but that, too, is getting better. We have been very lucky, the central heat has functioned all the time, though some days it wasn't exactly hot in the rooms - however, it did us no harm; and on the whole, transport and commodity services coped very well with the climatic difficulties: things might have been very much worse. Anyway, the cold and the snow competed effectively with the war as subjects of conversation. István's school has started again of course he is indignant because several other schools are still vacation; the Universities are also closed until the beginning of March.

This week the whole family has been very operative: Father invited Father and me to see "Butterfly" - quite a nice performance but grand - and István had another invitation to see "Falstaff" which is amusing although it was set to music. Those are just his usual anti-he still indulges: as a matter of fact he greatly enjoys going out, interested in all sort of things. More than ever I feel it would be him to get away from home, among strangers abroad, but for seems less chance than ever of finding ways and means.

Ilonka
not
found
in
and
not
at

the Matric. Who knows what may happen in a few months' time - it seems useless to speculate and make plans. Nevertheless I keep doing it all the time.

Mrs Fischer telephoned a few days ago asking for your address. She said Pista is on his way to Melbourne after spending a few weeks at Cairo, which he promised to do as a sort of compromise for the sake of his father who was desperate at his going to Australia. As far as I understand he tried to get some sort of a berth in Cairo and only when that failed - as he expected in advance that it would - did he continue his journey. You will probably have got in touch with Albertis who must have arrived in Melbourne just about the time you got to Sydney. I saw a letter from Buksi Bárdos who is doing very well at the University of Hollywood. He gets his breakfast and lunch by dishwashing, earns his lodging and university fees by giving French and German lessons and by taking photographs, has saved twenty dollars and leased a "laboratory" for two dollars a month! He seems tremendously cheerful and contented, which is more than his two brothers ever seem to be.

I don't seem to have anything very important to tell you: all this chatter is only my way of telling you that we are very well and going on just as usual. But all-absorbing thoughts are for you, and what we are more interested in than anything else just now is your fortunes. Bless you, my darling, all love

Mother

Drága fiacskám! Nagyon kevésre rug, ami Intim Pistából kimaradt. - Ha nem tévedek, úgy a Pitt Street -i címre a fentemlitett levélén kívül egy nyomtatványcsomag is ment. - Aureltől a napokban jött egy lap, melyben közli, hogy befejezte új könyvét. Egyben melegen érdeklődik irántad. Persze kap erre vonatkozó választ tőlem, de azért, mint már minap mondtam, csak írd neki kimerítően. - Ha netán még nem voltál Greinernél, akkor ne is fáradj. Ugyanis arról értesültem, hogy szülei áttették lakóhelyüket Amsterdamból Shanghaiba és a fiú is odautazott hozzájuk. - 25.-én folytatom. - Mára hatalmas olvadás köszöntött be és ezzel remélem, hogy a telet végleg lezártnak lehet tekinteni. Hatásaiban azonban alkalmasint még sok bajt fog okozni az elmúlt két hónap. Szakértők szerint oly alaposan és oly mélyen fagyott össze a talaj, hogy ez őszi vetések igen nagy kárt szenvednek, a tavasziak pedig elkésnek. Hogy ebből azután milyen termés várható és hogy egész Közép - és Délkelet-Európát sújtó rossz termés minő politikai hatásokat fog kiváltani, azt csak a Jó Isten tudja. - Hogy más aspektusban, a magánember gazdálkodásában mit jelent ez a töméntelen hó, hogy az eltakarítás költségei, a megromlott vezetékek megjavítása stb., stb. mily összegeket fog forgalomba hozni teszem a háztulajdonosok terhére, a fuvarosok, napszámosok javára: az me mint kiszámíthatatlan. Nálunk az Attila-utcai kis háznál, ca 100 pengőre fog rugni a költség. - Persze a városok költségvetései, a Máv és Beszkar mérlegei szintén igen nagy mértékben lesznek befolyásolva. Csókollak, drágám, ezerszer

Hello Bőksi,

még csak az kéne, hogy elolvadjon a hó!

Most kezdődik-remélem-a szízes. A hó még elég jó és főleg sok. Tavaly

távolról sem esett ennyi hó és mégis március végén is szeltem még, tehát illő

hogy legalább ugyanannyiadikáig lehessen lécelni. az idén is. Sokat futok

Havas Bandi nevű osztálytársaddal, egész rendes fiú; a Ruggyantánál tisztviselő.

16. Egyébként semmi ujság. Sok szerencsét. Küldj fényképeket. Ég beléd.

Mother

Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest

No. 10

March 2, 1940

My darling boy,

Your letter of Feb. 11, which arrived on the 26th, was most welcome and very interesting. Each letter makes us look forward only the more eagerly for the next. It's wonderful that mails come so regularly; we appreciate it more than ever because American mails just now are so irregular, even the Clippers often take much longer than a fortnight and letters from Canada sometimes as long as four or five weeks. So we don't feel the distance to be so much greater.

I can't tell you how glad I am that your first impressions were such good ones, especially as they are confirmed by all the other young people we hear of. I am convinced that you have done right in going and have chosen the best place to go to, and I shall persist in this conviction even if things don't run as smoothly or so fast as we should all like them to. I am sure you will get into the right course sooner or later. It's wonderful the number of people you contrived to see within the first four days, besides getting a good look at the town and finding new quarters. Of course I want to hear a lot more about it all. What sort of a house are you living in? Detached, or a flat? What do you do about meals - breakfast, dinner? Is the dressmaker nice, has she a family or other boarders, who darns your stockings, have you got the parcel from Rostos, are the socks all right; how much do you pay for your room? There are dozens more questions I should like to ask, but you know anyway how keenly we are interested in your business prospects and impressions, in your domestic arrangements and pastimes, in the people you meet and the kind of social intercourse you have with them, as well as in your impression of life in general. In George's letter to his parents which came simultaneously with yours, he says that you are looking very well, "all brown in the face," grown taller /time to stop/ and are indulging in a moustache! Please send us a snapshot of it at your earliest convenience, which we will reciprocate with a portrait of István's moustache, only I must wait for a day with very good light to make it properly visible, since it is so blond and his face so freckled from the February sun on the snow that it is scarcely distinguishable at present. To-morrow the child is going to perform with the Levente chorus in the radio - they have an ambitious new Gym. teacher who takes up precious Sunday ski mornings with such things - but István quite enjoys the fun. Besides, there are prospects of skiing for some Sundays yet, for it is bitter cold again, and there is still plenty of snow on the hills. George complains of a bad heat wave - apparently you can stand it better than he does, or perhaps the worst was over before you arrived. Anyway, I hope you are not too busy nor yet too economical to get an occasional day or half-day on the beach.

Very amusing about Mrs Gye - the only sale of our unfortunate recipes that Press Alliance made so far was to her magazine, "Woman", via New York - at a pretty bad price, considering that they got 50 per cent of it. We have now made a few new recipes and a lot of other things - household hints, needlework, and the like - which we have not sent to Press Alliance, so she might be interested to get these direct from you. Lorant seems to be doing very little, to judge from the infinitesimal sums he sends us; moreover, he says he cannot send us detailed statements about what, where, and to whom he has sold our stuff until after the war is over. So if you care to retail our stuff to "Woman" and eventually other papers or magazines in Australia, we can let you have plenty - only I don't want to start sending you things until you say the word. You might send me a copy of "Woman" and any other paper that looks promising, if you get a chance. As for Eric Gorrick, I admire him greatly since you have told me that there are only two theatres in Sydney and George says that the night clubs, etc. aren't very exciting either - he can find such a lot to say about the show business in Australia that he gets in about five times as much space as I do. Of course "Australia" is a far more important motion picture market for the U.S. than Hungary,

but he must be a good journalist to be able to get in so many inches about so little that's happening - I always have scruples about making so much ado about nothing in Variety.

Very little has been happening to us. - Here Mother went out shopping, just when I arrived at home and so I'm now adding some lines to her "news bulletin." This word became very familiar with me since the war. I'm listening in to the radio bulletins for hours sometimes. But very few good comes out of it. As a ~~xxx~~ matter of fact I came to the conclusion that broadcasting is a big nuisance, even bigger than the Press. But this statement doesn't hinder me from rushing to the radio set as soon as certain fixed moments are arriving. What a pity that I made up my mind and bought a nice set only after your departure! Sometimes we enjoy pretty good music and you could enjoy it still more. - Well, there is not very much to add to Mother's lines. I only have now to inform you that I met yesterday your friend Prager's father from whom I learned that young Prager is still here and pretty sure to be able to stay at his desk. In the meantime he passed at his exams summa cum laude. - This our dear Budapest is a funny place. You know quite well that we are no chatter-boxes and you may be sure that we don't make any advertising for you in the circle of our friends. So it is only a considerably shortened re-edition of the contents of your letters what we tell our friends. But there is no day on which we shouldn't meet some friend or other who is so glad to have heard that we had so cheerful letters from you saying things about your voyage and your arrival and your settling down which you have never mentioned in reality. And as I am regularly reading Gyuri's letters I know quite well that he didn't write these things either. But no harm is done so the whole affair is mentioned here only with the purpose to make you laugh as heartily as we do about the ways of people. However, the great interest they take in your person shows how popular you have been with everybody. All love from *father*

To resume: I have just given your address to Peter who says he means to write to you, but I am by no means sure that he will. He is busy as always; coming and going to and from Ság is now a coldish and lengthy matter, since he does not run his car except in town, for petrol rations are short; the drive to the station from Ság was an adventurous affair for weeks, while there were snowdrifts and storms, and trains are few and far between, and often late. But all these winter adventures seem to be felt even more strongly in England, where people are still less accustomed to cope with them. My English correspondents - of whom the most faithful and voluble one is Miss Forster, who transported the missing volumes of your encyclopaedia and whom you never met - complain bitterly of the cold, and I can just imagine what such a winter means in England. Mary Sendor had a bad attack of 'flu, she was at a nursing home for some time, but has recovered by now. George S. seems to be getting on all right, seems that business is picking up. I also have a lot of correspondence with the Steiners who are trying to get their old parents there, but with little result. Lengyels are at Hollywood, Menyus is writing a play in collaboration with Anita Loos, who wrote "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes", which was a sensational best-seller some years ago. Lengyel had much success with his film "Xinotchka", played by Garbo - you may see it eventually - but although this was greatly appreciated by all competent persons and got excellent notices, he hasn't got another contract. - Darling, you are quite right not to keep up correspondence with a lot of people; of course it can't be done, and there would be no sense in keeping in touch with people you may never see again; but I do want you to write a little letter to Mandors sometime. I know they would be happy to hear about George from you, and they are so much interested in your welfare, and such old and close friends, that you really should do that. The girls and Palkó are really very nice to us, they come to lunch etc. now and then, and you know how fond we are of them all. - God bless you, darling, and good luck. All fondest love *Wally*

Pongrácz János
Budapest II.
Vérmező-ut 6.

No. 11.

9th March 1940

My darling boy, Since your letter No. 5, of Feb. 19 - 21, came yesterday I am trying to get used to the idea that I have a son named J. P. Powell - no doubt I shall soon succeed, although I have anticipated that you will probably call yourself Pancras soon after landing in Australia. Well, darling, may the new name bring you the best of good luck - I think you were quite right to anglicise it right at the outset. István, of course, was genuinely distressed when he read about it - so much so that he even refrained from his usual reaction of pouring out abuse at anything he does not approve of. That is due to his age, to his necessarily limited outlook, to the influences which now impress themselves upon him. But he is inclined to listen to sense, if it is administered with due respect to his opinions. I wish you would eventually write him a good long letter in Hungarian - he reads your letters and understands them, but I don't want him to get the idea that you definitely refuse to write in H. I know you have no extra time to spare, but write to him once instead of writing to us - not about his affairs but about your own, not talking "down" to him but as man to man, without descending to his level and without reticence. It would make a lot of difference. Forgive me for giving you such instructions, but I don't want him to get estranged from you. If he does, you will not be able to help and advise him in the future as ~~xxxxxxx~~ I know you want to do. I never wanted to have an only child because I thought it was not fair to withhold from a child what I valued so much myself: brothers or sisters - and I don't want to run the risk of having two only children - see?

After this little digression I can devote myself to your extremely interesting letter. I do wonder whether you will be able to make any headway as a contact man for All-Woods - anyhow, it should give you a lot of interesting and instructive experience. I think selling anything is the most difficult thing in the world, at least it would be to me - I failed grievously when I tried my luck with it in New York. Of course I am greatly looking forward to hear about your experiences. Anyhow, it's a good thing that you have already been able to earn some money. I wonder what your next letter will contain! I was greatly surprised at your window-dressing plans. Do you remember that last year, when you were taking the Dixon course, I once mentioned to you a course in window-dressing, one of those "re-training" undertakings that were so much in vogue at the time /but have entirely ceased now/, and you turned down the suggestion with contempt, saying you had not sufficient manual skill nor inclination for such a thing? So now I am doubly curious to know what gave you the idea and how you are getting on with it. I think it is extremely sensible of you to enroll as a student at the Technical College. You will be terribly busy, but I know how you can work and behave as if it were nothing at all. I am thrilled with it all!

As for your excursion into the domain of cookery, I shall send you a few general hints to-day and put a few simple recipes into every letter - but you might get George to show you a few things, such as baking a pancake or an omelette, a hundred times easier to learn if it is shown than if it is merely described to you. In a parcel of books we are sending off to you on Monday, I have put a little cookery book containing egg recipes - which does not mean that I want you to prepare "eggs with champagne and truffles" and similar beautiful dishes contained in it, but there are also a few simple and good things in it. Don't you need a few household utensils, towels, dishcloths and the like? At the moment I know of no one going to Au., but sometimes someone offers to take along something unexpectedly, so it is a good thing if I have on hand a list of things that you might like to get when occasion arises. How I should like you to make breakfast for me on your gas ring! To-morrow we shall see Rotters and discuss things with them. I don't expect R. has done anything of late; Pius was very ill for two months, but has quite recovered now - and without her

2.

is lazier than ever. Buci has been admitted to the University of Debreczen where she is studying chemistry - though so far most of her academic career has been spent on a coal vacation. Father will answer the rest of the questions contained in your letter. To-night we have a big party, 17 people, the usual crowd - Badics, Leopold, Neuschloss, Kató, Baloghs etc. etc. If I tell you they are all going to drink tea in addition to eating various good things, which I wish you could share - then perhaps you will believe that we are not deprived of anything. In fact I think I never drank as much coffee in my life as I have done since it is so expensive, frequently meeting Livi or Ilonka at Quick's which is booming more than ever! So don't be sorry for us. God bless you, my darling; all my love

Peter says he's written to you concerning a friend of his. ~~He~~ ^{Mother} please bear what he says in mind when making further plans.

Drága fiacskám! Tegnap reggel Irma néni telefonon közölte, hogy Gyuri irt közös fürdőkirándulástokról. Így feltételeztem, hogy részünkre ez a légi - posta nem hozott semmit sem, bizonyára azért, mert nem volt semmi különös közölni való. Annál nagyobb volt meglepetésem, amikor a d.u. postakészbesítés eljuttatta hozzánk leveledet - és minő levelet! Mennyi érdekes tartalommal! A powellizálást magam is nagyon helyeslem, Mindenesetre jó, hogy semmiféle Pongrácz ösök nem fognak megfordulni sirjokban, Piczu pedig majd beletörődik. Hogy továbbképezni kívánod magad, azt szintén csak helyeslelhetem, csak nem ezeretném, ha túl sokat vennél magadra. Egész nap lótni-futni, este tanulni és közben még egy vagy két /ahogy téged ismerlek inkább két mint egy/ sportot üzni, talán mégis sok lesz. Igaz, hogy itthon is így éltél, azonban felteszem, hogy ottani tanulmányaid lényegesen több időt fognak igényelni, mint az itthoniak. - Annak pedig, hogy már ottléted első havában tudsz pénzt keresni, ha még oly keveset is, mondhatatlanul örülök. Nem azért mert ez a magad tüchtigtségét bizonyítja, melyben sohasem kételkedtem, hanem azért, mivel ebből kitűnik, hogy az az Au. tényleg olyan, aminek vázolták. Nem hiszem, hogy Au.-ban volna oly ország mainapság, mely ved idegen bevándorlóknak, ottlété első napjaiban már lehetővé tenne valamilyen fixumot. - Nagyon kíváncsian várom a fejleményeket. - Kívánságod szerint küldök két könyvet: Shibleyt és Douglést, rendes postán. Ha ez a küldemény, meg a minap küldött franczia sárga könyv, rendben megérkezik, akkor majd állandóan küldök könyveket. - A házasságlevélre egyáltalán nincsen szükségem, mert tetezősszerinti mennyiségben kaphatok, minden további nélkül, példányokat. A másik okmányt azonban, ha biztos vagy benne, hogy nincs szükséged rá, küld vissza alkalmi-veszteség és megköltés árán. Nem baj tehát, ha van két példányom. Azonban figyelembe ajánlom, hogy mielőtt visszaküldenéd ezt az okmányt, nem volna-e észszerű, ha az ottani diplomáciai vagy konzuláris képvisellel érintkezésbe lépnél, hogy a kontaktus megmaradjon és ne legyen akadály a annak, hogy valamikor meglátogathass minket. Talán tudod ott kérelmezni, hogy okmányaidat átírják olymódon, aminké módon Gyuriei vannak kiállítva. - Nagyon érdekes kis ozikked. Hogy jutottál a laphoz, fizettek-e valamit, van-e kiadás erra, hogy állandóan dolgozhass a lapnak? - Feltalálólóktól majd kérek jegyzéket, de mindenesetre feladtam egy kis hirdetést is két lapban. ~~Atta~~ ^{Atta} akad valami. - Teljesen egyet értek ezzel, amit Anyu Piczut illetően r. Noha sok tekintetben mindenféle bosszúság van vele, mégis örömmel látom, hogy lassankint mégis csak felnőtt ember lesz belőle. Örömetének emelése nagyon fontos és e tekintetben oly levél, miát Anyu proponál, nagyon jó hasással lesz. Egyébként ép ma történt, hogy Polgári egy magyar dolire nem adott osztályzatot, hanem ráírta, hogy nagyon szép utleírás. Véletlenül ép járt Polgárinál István privát tanárja /más ügyben, de persze P. dolirát is látogatta. B. megmutatta a dolit Dr. Molnárnak, de kifejezte gyűlöletét, ~~ajjon~~ ^{ajjon} tényleg maga írta-e a gyerek ezt, vagy pedig kimásolta valahonnan. ~~kor~~ ^{kor} Dr. Molnár igazolta, hogy Piczu tényleg járt a leírt vidéken /Kárpát-ja/, Polgári megígérte, hogy majd kikérdezi a gyereket és ily módon győzik meg. Persze a gyerek nehezen polástolja örömet ez eseten. Csókollak

Pongrácz János,
II. Vörmező-u.6.
Budapest, Hungary

12.szám

1940. március 17.

Drága fiacskám !

A Magyar Nemzet-ben és az Esti Kurirban közzétett hirdetéseimre vagy 2 tucsat jelentkezés futott be. Ezek közül néhány rögtön kiesett és ca. 20 jelentkezővel felvettem a fonalat, utóbbiak közül pedig néhánynyal már beszéltem is. Az eddig letárgyalt dolgok közül is van olyan, mely esetleg érdekes lehet. Minderről mai rendes postával küldött 13.sz. le-velem tájékoztat. - Csupán egy ügyről emlékezem meg már itt, részben mivel az érdekelt fél - Löwy Pál - kért, hogy igyekezzek sürgősen választ szerezni, részben pedig, mivel itt olyasmiről van szó, miről, azt hiszem, hamarosan is tudsz tájékozódni. Persze minden eddigi érdeklődési köröd-től teljesen távol eső üzletet adok elő neked. - Nos, Löwy ur - képe-
prtör. Persze nem az itthon nagyrabecsült művészek alkotásaival keres-
kedik, hanem csak oly anyaggal, aminőt itthon még a félreeső helyre sem
akasztanék ki! Ily képekben azonban, ezt már rég tudom, nagy üzlet van
állandóan. Külföldön, különösen tengerentúli országokban, jobb kereseti
viszonyok lévén sok kisembér vesz képet, anélkül, hogy oly fejlett izlé-
se volna, mint itthon van azoknak a köröknek, melyek vásárolnak. Ez a
magyarázata annak, hogy annyi vaczak kerül külföldre. Löwy ur a kontinen-
sen maga utazik, tanubizonyság erre utlevele, mely számtalan, gyakran
hosszu tartózkodást regisztrál a külföldön, néha féléveset is. Messebb
fekvő országokban képviselőkkel dolgozik. Au.-ban nincsen senkije, sőt
szerinte az egész világrészben nincsen senki sem, ki ezzel az üzlettel
foglalkoznék. Egy volt, az nagyon sok pénzt keresett, de hazajött és
itthon meghalt. - L.ur bő tapasztalatai alapján állítja, hogy a legjobb
üzlet privátfeleknek eladni. Valamely kórházban vagy más intézményben
engedélyt kell kérni egy kollekezió bemutatására és nincs eset arra,
hogy egy ily bemutatás alkalmával legalább féltucsat kép el ne kelljen
egyszerre. Legjobb kundsáft az orvos, ki mind főleg aktot vásárol. Jó
a bankigazgató is, de ennek már nagyobbak az igényei. - A privátfelekkel
való üzlet 300 %-ot jövedelmez. - Kereskedőknél "csak" 100 %-ot lehet
keresni. - Megmondottam L.-nek, hogy nem hinném, hogy privátoknál való
házalást vállalnál, azonban semmi akadályát nem látom annak, hogy ke-
reskedőkkel próbálkozz és ha a siker tényleg oly nevezetes, mint aminő-
nek L. biztosra veszi, akkor elképzelhető, hogy esetleg önálló képkeres-
kedőnek is felcsaphatnál, miután kellően meggyőződte arról, hogy van
fantázia a dologban. Pénz nem kell a dologhoz. L.maga expedálja az
árut és csak oly mértékben igényel cassát, amily mértékben az nálad be
folyik. A dolog megkezdéséhez küldene neked két képet és sok fényképet,
hogy a vevők láthassák miről is van szó. Ha a dolog megy, akkor 48 da-
rabból álló kollekeziót küldene folytatólagosan, úgy hogy mindig legyen
árud, mindig fenti fizetési feltételek mellett. Elsősorban most arról
volna szó, hogy számot vess önmagaddal, kívánsz-e foglalkozni ezzel a
dologgal, mely semmiféle szakértelmet nem igényel. A szükséges sales
talkot írásban megadja Löwy. Igenlő esetben meg kellene győződnöd arról,
hogy van-e érdeklődés tényleg, továbbá pedig milyenek a vonatkozó vám-
tételek olasztmányokra, keret nélkül. /L.szerint minimálisak, nem jön-
nek tekintetbe./ Végül pedig nem tudom, hogy vannak-e ott valutakorlá-
tozások, illetve, hogy ilyesmire engedélyeznek-e devizát. Kérlek adj
ugyancsak repülőpostán választ, mivel L.ur nagyon keen about it. Eset-
leg, ha érdemes és neked alkalmasabb, együtt is csinálhatnád megfelelő
valókkal.

+ à la Polymore kép való

No demand during war
When could be
New

Itthon semmi ujság egyébként. Ha nem beszélünk politikáról, akkor az időjárás viszontagságai foglalkoztatnak. A fertelmesen hosszú és kemény tél után a hét elején gyönyörű tavaszi napsugár köszöntött be és elolvastotta Duna jegét. Majd megint hűvösebbre fordult, havazott újból és erős szél kellemetlenkedik. Most megint további lehülést jövendő a prógnózis. - Előző levelemben elfelejtettem ráterni Aurélhoz intézett hiányosan felbelyegzett leveledre. Meg akarok nyugtatni: nemrégiben magától Auréltól kaptam levelet, melyre büntetést kellett fizetnem. Meg is írom ezt az öreg fiunak, nehogy jellemedre vonatkozólag barátságtalan következtetéseket jusson eszébe levonni a te mulasztásodból. - Az affidavit miatt írtunk az itteni amerikai főkonzulátusnak, de válasz még nem kaptunk. - Minthogy valamelyik leveledben felszólítottál, hogy a baráti körben előforduló családi eseményekről tájékoztassalak, közlöm, hogy Beretvás Ferkó apja és a londoni Strasser Jani /és Molnár Jolán/ anyja meghalt. - Jelentkezett egy klubtársad, Szenttoronyi és kérte czimedet azzal, hogy a klub fenn akarja tartani a kapcsolatot az elszármazott tagokkal és mindegyiknek megküldi a mindenkori jelentéseket, körleveleket. - Rotterrel újból beszéltem a rádium-ügyről. Utolsó erre vonatkozó jelentésem óta a helyzet inkább rosszabbodott. Feltétlen kórház kell az ügy nyélbeütéséhez. Mindegyikben azonban személyes tekintetek képeznek akadályokat. Rotter még nem mondott le a reményről, hogy sikerül nyélbe ütni a dolgot, de nincsen sok bizalma. A vitamin-ügyben sincsen semmi fejlődés, legfeljebb az, hogy most mindenféle gyógyszerekkel keverve, pilulákban, hoznak forgalomba vitaminokat, ami a Főorvos Úr szerint előnytelen, mivel az egyéb, keveréshez használt gyógyszerek, előnytelenül befolyásolják a tulajdonképeni hatóanyag hatályosságát. Az ő elgondolása az egyedüli helyes. - Megmagyaráztam neki, hogy mindez nagyon szép, de nem elég unterlag ahhoz, hogy utánajárj a dolognak. Megígérte erre, hogy majd szerkeszt egy elaborátumot, melynek alapján azután nekiláthatnál a dolognak, de ismerve kényelemszeretetét, mondanám lustaságát, kétkem, hogy ezt a kis munkát el is fogja végezni. Visszatérve a fent tárgyalt kép-ügyre, valamint a 13.sz. levélben előadott üzletekre, félreértések elkerülése érdekében ki akarom emelni, hogy én ezeket ép csak előadom, de nem ajánlom. Kiindulok abból, hogy elsőrendű cégek, elsőrendű üzleteikkel nem várnak az én hirdetésemre. Akik ily hirdetésre reagálnak természetesen kissé kalandos dolgokkal jönnek. Mármost véletlenül ilyenek között is akadhat valami jó, vagy valami rossz dolog is vezethet véletlenül jó ötletre. Azonkívül azt gondolom, hogy ha te akár All-wood-nak, akár másnak dolgozol mint contact man, ugyis sok mindenféle néppel kerülsz kapcsolatba és akkor mellékesen szóba hozhatod az általam előadott ügyek egyikét, másikat, melyben chanceot látsz - ha csak törvényes rendelkezések vagy jogszokások vagy prestige-szempontok nem teszik lehetetlenné, hogy többféle dologgal foglalkozz egyszerre. - De erre is gondoltam, hogy ha megad a kérdéses dolgokkal nem kívánsz foglalkozni, nem adhatod-e át ezeket másvalakinek, úgy hogy a haszonban valamiképp részesülj. Ugy hallok, hogy pld. Szártesék Ugyis Ügynököknek feleségeik termékeivel. Nem tartom lehetetlennek, hogy mellékesen még képeket is terjeszthetnének. - Miután így szépen előadtam, hogy kissé kalandos dolgokat tudok, ugylátszik, csupán előadni, most mégis egy nagyon komolynak tetsző ügyről is beszámolok. Szó van Loránt Artur nevű gépészmérnökről, ki szintén hirdetésemre jelentkezett. Utóbb kiderült, hogy régi, futólagos privátismerőm. A mellékelt rövid memorandumot kaptam tőle a következő felvilágosítások kapcsán: A "Heisslaufen" okozta üzembavar nagyon kellemetlen, mert a kocsiat be kell vontatni a legközelebbi javító-műhelybe, mely esetleg igen messze esik, ott pedig, ha rinfusa-áruról vagy például állatszállítmányokról van szó, az áru ki és újbóli berakása is nagyon kellemetlen és költséges. A kérdéses találmány bárhol a helyszínen való rendbehozatalt tesz lehetővé, kirakodás nélkül. Néhány év óta a Máv-nál használatban van a készülék, most azonban már egy új, javított kiadásról van szó, mely további lényeges előnyöket jelent. Komoly tár -

gyalások vannak folyamatban az angol és a francia vasutakkal. Ezekről a találmányért 6000 angol fontot kér a feltaláló. Felteszi, hogy Au.-ban olcsóbban kellene adni, különösen mielőtt még az angolok elfogadták volna; ha egyszer Angliában üzletet csinált akkor, már másfelé is drágábban adhatná. Vételárból 10 % a közvetítőté. - Maga a készülék itthon ca. 3500 pengőbe kerül darabonként. - Loránt most azt kívánja, lépjen érintkezésbe a vasutakkal és tudná meg, hogy a probléma érdeklí-e őket. Ha igenlő választ közölsz velem, akkor Loránt légipóstán elküld minden szükséges unterlegot, rajzot, fényképet, leírást, attestet a Mávtól stb. - Ha azután üzlet jön létre, akkor L. mintakészüléket is szállítana, az ottani gyártás megkönnyítésére. Ha azonban az ottaniak esetleg nem szabadalmat, hanem készüléket kívánnának vásárolni, akkor azt is lehet szállítani Budapestről igen kényelmesen, mivel a feltaláló, Loránt üzlettársa, maga gépgyáros, ki a Máv részére is maga gyártja a készülékeket. - Fenti összegek csak a te tájékoztatásodra szolgálnak egyelőre. Fő dolog pillanatnyilag, hogy érdemben van-e érdeklődés. Ha ilyen mutatkozik, akkor teljesen felszerelné Loránt téged mindennel, hogy konkrét ajánlatot tehess. - Persze nem tudom, hogy a vasutakkal hol lehet tárgyalni. Bizonyára több vagy pláne számos vasut-társaság működik Au.-ban és mindegyik alkalmasint más-és más székhellyel. De hát talán találasz valami megoldást. - Többi helyet most már Anyunak engedem át. Csókollek

Op
Drága fiam, azed a hosszú levéllel nagy anyai dolgot adok. Apu a cenzornak, h. most már magyarul folytatom, ne kelljen külön az angolnak is vesződni a dolog fölött. A sok üzleti menetek miatt sok privát hűbőrdemmi valóm: jól vagyunk, éldegélünk, rád gondolunk is izgulunk a világpolitika miatt - de azt hiszem, még sokáig fogunk izgulni. Tegnap d. n. és este ismét volt nagy egy tucat vendég, a déli restorántokat boulognijuk le, de nem volt különösebb szenzáció, kivéve Nándorék hírei Gyuri autovásárlásáról - gondolhatod, hogy az a családi drágaság, ha Sydney-ben van is, éppen olyan fontos családtag, mint annak idején Falco-lova volt. Nagyon örültem, h. Gyuri levelében rólad is írt jó híreket, jól esik, ha köze-köze köze is hallunk felőled. Különben multkor Char-eknél megismerkedtem Révész mandajával, ki szintén sokat mesélt fia bejárásairól. Nándorék néhány Gyuri által küldött "Erdélyi" lapot is ideadtak; érdekes, mennyivel inkább amerikai, mint angol jellegűek ezek. - Voltam e héten - Leonie néni jóvoltából, kinek vendége voltam - a Comédie Française vendégjátékánál a Vigintináiban; jól esett a szép francia befűtést hallani és finom, túlzásmentes játékot látni, bár a darabok - Paul Morand és Musset - az enyhe unalom meséjén mozogtak. "Békebeli" gyönyörű közönség volt, a komédiázzók jelenléte-vel és óriási ünneplés. - Családi életünk egyetlen szenzációjá, hogy eladtuk a főnépöt! Ebből ne következzek anyagi komolósunkra, csupán azt gondoltuk magunkban, hogy nagyon jótékulunk neki és egy majdani kisebb lakásban nagyon fog elférni, hát tudadtunk rája 1100.- pengőért neto. Ha hazajössz nagy más okból kedvünk szórakozni, zenepróba, minis áll rendelkezésünkre kölcsönpiánus, de egyelőre beérjük a rádióval (a magunkéval és a szomszédéval, mely nagy reggel-től-estig szól). Külön lapra mellékeltem utasítást Rixántól Aus és jótékult ké-szítésére, utóbbi céljára holnap küldök kis paprikát, persze nem repülővel! Ölelek drág-
anyu

Pongrácz János
11. Vörmezt-ú.ő.,
Budapest, Hungary

13.szám.

1945. március 17.

Drága fieszkám!

Hivatkozom használt levélre, melyben közöltem, hogy külön
írok a hirdetésre ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ reflectánsokkal eddig folytatott beszélge-
jelentkezett

táseimről. Írlek, írd meg majd minden egyesről, hogy szóba kerülhet-e,
mert peraze választ ígértem az illetőknek. Tehát:

1./Budapesti kréta, vegyészeti gyár és keresk.r.t. Igen rendesnek látszó
kís. üzem, mely vegyi terméket még Au.-ba is exportálja. E tekintetben
nichts zu machen. Ellenben van egy új ezikke: újajta biztonsági zár, mely
lajus szememben igen ötletes és szöleszerű. Szabadalom az egészvilágon
részint megadva, részint tárgyalás alatt. Utóbbi vonatkozik Au.-ra is.
Prospektust küldök külön, üzleti papírként. Persze ebből nem sok tűnik ki.
Mintát, tekintettel költségre, egyelőre nem küldök, csak akkor, ha a cik-
kel egyáltalán érdemes foglalkozni. Szabadalmi leírást nem ad ki, mi lőtt
szabadalom mindenütt nincsen rendbehozva. De talán módokban van az ottani
szabadalmi hivatalból leírást kapni. Számot a társaság nem tudott vagy skart
megadni, csak annyit árult el, hogy a kérvény 1939.-ben ment be, Dr. Wal-
enstein nevében. Ha Canberrába kellene utazni e miatt, akkor peraze az
egész dolog tárgytalan.

2./Dr. Batty Elemér. Füstöl orvos-kosmetikus. "Paradil" foghuzápolószer,
továbbá egy fogköelleni szer és egy shampoon képezik találmanyal egy részt,
-prospektusok üzletipapir-küldeményben. Mindez szabadalomra bejelentve.
Eddig magánemberként dolgozott, de most közelmúltban kereskedelmi alapon
felépített laboratóriumot rendezett be és szélesebb körben akar dolgozni.
Nyomtatványok között van egy jegyzék nem-szabadalom-képes kozmetikai cik-
kekről is. Összes árukról kész receptet adni, emballage stb. mintákkal, ha
kívántatik, de kész magát az árut is szállítani, vevő kíváncsi szerinti
csomagolásban. Kozmetikai cikkek mehetnek, Dr. Batty szerint, áruházak-
ban, azonban az egyéb cikkek gyógyszerárúgyárnak, vagy gyógyszerháznak
valók. Egyéb szabadalmazott cikkekről legközelebb ad nyomtatványokat.

3/Humor-Gregor Vilmos. Újságíró. Neues Politisches munkatársa volt, mely
lap most sváb kezekbe került, miért is őt elküldötték. Nyolcz éve áll fenn
magán-vállalkozása, mely vicezeket küld szét az egész világra, matricákban.
Mindennél minták az üzletipapir-küldeményben. Mondja, hogy egy ismerőse egy
év előtt ment ki Buenos Ayresba és ott hét előfizetőt szerzett. - Varsóban
is különböző lap volt előfizető egy-idejében. Au.-val évekkal ezelőtt levelezett,
de elalampolta a dolgot. Mintnyomtatványból kitűnik, előfizetés havi 1 1/2
angol font, miből fél font volna a tiéd. Munka, akviráláson kívül, semmi,
hacsak nem skarsz megad elosztó lenni ott és saját számlára több példányt
hozni, mely esetben lényegesen nagyobb a haszonrészesedés. Francziaor-
szág /Spanyolországgal együtt/ ilymódon van megszervezve. Persze a Gregor
által adott angol nyelvű fordítások hasznavehetetlenek. Ezeket vagy neked,
vagy a szerkesztőségnek kellene helyrehozni.

Azt hiszem, hogy mire e levelet póstára adom, még egy-rét tétel adódik
referálásra. - Közben mellékelem Dr. Apor Róbert egy levelét, melyre te-
lefonon felvilágosítottam, hogy költségjegyzékére még nem lehet válasz-
ítani; tehát várjon nyugodtan.

Csatolok továbbá egy érdekes kivágást a M.N.-ből. Feltűnt, hogy a lap-
ban közzétett gyászjelentések kissé egyoldalusak, ami a lap jellegét ve-
szélyezteti, noha ez eddig sem engedte meg, hogy a gyászjelentés ta-
lást tartalmazzon a halott felekezeti hovatartozása tekintetében. Mint-

hogy pedig válogatni nem lehet még sem, a lap inkább lemondott erről a nagyon jelentékeny jövedelemről.

Visszatérve fenti metricza-ügyre minenesetre közlöm, hogy Jacóbi-Hevesi azég nem tartja valószínűnek, hogy lehessen valamit csinálni, egyrészt mert véleményük szerint, gazdag országban a klisé-költség nem játszik szerepet és így a metricza nem bír nagy csábítóval, másrészt pedig mivel a metricza csak rossz papírra való. A gazdagéknál használatos jobb papír nem alkalmas, ^{er} X
De hát azért tényleg próbálód.

4./ Kendi Antal bőrbutorgműros megániletében feltaláló. Talán emlékezel, hogy egy-két év előtt, ügyes reklámmal, dívatba jött itthon egy "grafológiai automata" című játék. Elég ügyes dolog volt és jó pár ezer darab volt forralomban. Nos, ez Kendi ur találmánya. Ugy gondolom, hogy áruháznak, egy salsónra, bárhol egész jó üzlet lehet. Kendi közvetlenül küld neked mintát és nyomtatványokat. Itt is persze azó lehet ötlet eladásról vagy effektív szállításról, persze megfelelő angol nyomtatványokkal. Kendi ragaszkodott hozzá, hogy küldeményéhez még egy másik korszakot alkotó találmányának mintáját is mellékelje: rulett-játék, melynél a hagyományos készületek játék - kártyák pótolják. Ez is egész jó vicez lehet pár hónapra.

Folytatólag tárgyalok a többi reflektánssal és legközelebb betérjesztem neked az újabb propozíciókat. Most is megismétlem, hogy je n'impose, je ne propose - j'expose. Háttha egyik vagy másik dolog visz valami eredményre !
Csókollak fiacskám

X és főleg mivel a vice-angaz és a rajzok nagy vacakok és teljesen közér-, hogy ne mondjam belsőeurópai jellegűek; nem hiszem, hogy az képviselésé is befolyásolná! Üdv. Augusztus

Note: A letter from Grandma in English follows the Hungarian version of Grandpa's letter below so keep scrolling!

Letter 14 (Translated from Hungarian by Katalin Gaal, September 2010)

From: Grandpa in Budapest to Dad in Australia

Pongracz Janos
2nd district, Vermezo Street 6,
Budapest, Hungary
24 March 1940

My dear son!

Three days ago spring officially started and today is Easter. All this does not alter the climatic or political atmosphere. The weather is cool, sometimes there's a little rain and there's no sign of a more gentle breeze.

Politically these things are not yet relevant, and one can't imagine when and from where they will come. Teleki (*Hungarian foreign minister*) is in Rome – nobody has any idea for what reason. We continue to live peaceful lives without any hardship and only rarely remember the volcanoes.

Your letter no. 6 dated the 28th of this month caused a lot of happiness. First of all we thank you for your good wishes (*for parents' birthdays, both in late March*), which we know and feel are constantly sent from you in the same way that we stand by you every day and hour. I'm confident that even though we are far apart we are united through our souls.

Otherwise the round-figured New Year celebrations are not as joyful. Inevitably one feels that a period has come to an end and estimates how many more similar periods are plausible. If I consider that I still think of a 70-year-old man as extremely old but then realise that in a short 10 years, if I live that long, I will be a similarly old man I'm terrified. But I hardly think of this so it's ok. Thank God, both Mum and me are in excellent condition, enjoying all that life has to offer and try not to entertain sad thoughts. On the contrary, we are very hopeful – whenever we get your letter which is full of hope about the country in which you live and in your own strength and abilities. I hope all the things we wish for you come true! We await the posted souvenirs with great curiosity and thank you in advance.

It is very nice of you that now, when your first priority is the development of your own life, you keep an eye on Istvan's future. It's good to know that I can count on you in this area as well. I will let Mum address the above-mentioned passage.

After receiving your letter I called Barot who asked me to keep him up to date about your future. He was very interested in news about you and promised that he will continue to be very interested. He sends you his best wishes. This time I inquired about Kalmar as well. The poor thing died and was buried on the 7th of January. His death was very sudden, obviously due to a heart attack. I'm not sure why the news didn't appear in the paper.

Back to the doctor in Newcastle, I'm sorry that I wasn't more thorough when I asked for that letter from Sebestyen. I thought that Newcastle was in the outskirts and didn't follow up in the Encyclopedia – only now. But now that I have asked for that letter and received it, then I ask that you get in touch with the doctor and will find him if you have a chance to get to Newcastle.

I spoke to Dr Apor. Of course he interprets your agreement differently and believes that he did all he could when he filled out his account book. At any rate, we agreed to 80 pengos which I paid him.

I'm anxious to get your letter and find out whether you will stay at Allwood's. If not, are there any other opportunities? You made so many connections in relation to this topic, it can possibly be very useful. It's very difficult to make connections with native residents in a foreign country and if you succeeded

to make connections as an employee, rather than a job-seeking migrant, then I believe your acquaintances are more valuable.

in this way perhaps it's easier for you to consider those – I admit not very pleasant – propositions which I wrote to you about in the last letter and which I will continue to discuss next week. Maybe something will come of one or the other. If you are able to get in touch with an appropriate person with regards to the rail then I consider this thing to be serious. MAV (*Hungarian State Railways*) has a very good reputation, perhaps even in Australia. Therefore the fact that MAV has kept that machine alive for years must be a good reference. Lorant is himself an engineer, he seems like a serious man which is rare for inventors, he is prepared for sacrifices. After my recent letter, he proposed the preparation of documents but their export would cost him quite a bit. I reemphasise that if you feel that you're seriously interested, then Lorant will send the documents, to obtain the Australian grant and will immediately take all the necessary steps, which will again cost him money.

I can imagine that you're very busy, and it gives me great peace of mind that you are in excellent condition, and that you are they type of person who can learn fast. Write as much as you can about the evening course. Perhaps you can send a yearbook or something similar so that we can follow your studies with more ease.

I was happy to hear of your outdoor trip. I was upset when at Nandors Gyuri only went on skiing expeditions from Nizza without studying "Land und Leute". I think nothing provides as much relaxation as a daytrip. But I hope you will find other enjoyments as your time and money allows!

I wonder if you were able to get anywhere with the ABC. The London radio announced the start of the ABC Overseas Service just as you left. It would be wonderful to hear your voice on this channel, though I admit that after a few unsuccessful tries I gave up. I wasn't able to tune in at all.

We await the posted writing with great curiosity as well. Of course until we read it we can't offer an opinion whether we can utilise your article. Though there's not much hope for this considering the situation at home. "Weltwoche" was unfortunately banned from the country months ago so we can't send any nor do we know its contents. However we will inquire in Switzerland. I have forwarded the Doczi attachment from your letter. We are also waiting for the article from the Morning Herald. Is there any chance that you might permanently write there? NB. If you have a published article that you feel very good about then – with a few accompanying lines – send it to Uncle Aurel.

The American Consulate returned to us the affidavit, which Mum is now forwarding to Hutter.

Finally I have one more request. Gyuri writes something nice about you in almost every letter. If such a letter arrives, Aunt Irma calls straight away and reads it. I would very much like to return the favour and do something similar. So don't miss the opportunity to occasionally write a few lines about news concerning Gyuri. By the way the flu is going around in the Nandor family, luckily it has a short run. Though poor Palko wasn't able to accompany Kato to the long-planned ski trip to the Carpathian Mountains. Lizi went in a different direction with another troupe.

I kiss you my boy a thousand times, Dad.

Pongrácz János,
II. Vörmező-u.6.,
Budapest, Hungary

14.szám

1940. márczius 24.

Drága fiacskám !

Bekövetkezett három napja a tavasz hivatalos kezdete és bekövetkezett ma husvét. Mindez nem nagyon változtatott sem a klimatikus, sem a politikai légkörön. Hűvös az időjárás, néha esik keveset és nyoma sincs az esedékes lágyabb fuvalatoknak. - A politikában ezek még nem is esedékesek, de még el sem tudja képzelni az ember, hogy mikor és merről jöjjenek. - Teleki Rómában van - senki még csak nem is sejtí, hogy mi okból. - De hát azért változatlanul, nyugodtan és minden nélkülözéstől mentesen élünk, csak ritkán eszmélve rá, hogy vulkánok is vannak. - M.hó 28.-i, 6.sz. levled nagy örömet keltett. - Első sorban is szépen köszönjük jó kívánságaidat, melyekről tudjuk és érezzük, hogy kimondatlanul is állandóan felénk áradnak, amint mi is naponként és óránként minden vágyunkkal, kívánságunkkal mellett állunk. Bizom abban, hogy ha még oly soká, még oly messze is vagyunk egymástól, lelki együttlétünk nem rendül meg. - Egyébiránt a "kerek számu" évfordulók, magukban véve, nem oly nagyon örvendetesek. Önkéntelenül is úgy érzi az ember, hogy lezárul egy periodus és számlálja, hogy még hány ily periodusra van kilátás. Ha meggondolom, hogy 70 éves emberre most is mint aggastyánra nézek, és másrészt ráeszmélek, hogy rövid tíz év múlva, ha megérem, magam is ily aggastyán leszek, megborzadok. De ritkán eszmélek erre és így nincsen semmi baj. Hála Istennek, úgy Anyu, mint magam, kitűnően érezzük magunkat, élvezzük mindazt ami kínálkozik és, mint a hat százalékosok bölcsőbb részének elve tartja: nem veszünk előleget a bubánatra és bajra. Ellenkezőleg inkább előre iszunk a medve bőrére - valahányszor leveled jön, melyből sugárzik a bizakodás abban az országban, melyben élsz és a saját magad erejében, képességeiben. Válgék valóra mindaz amit kívá - nunk nekéd ! Az avizált souvenirreket kíváncsian várjuk és szépen köszön - jük eleve is. - Nagyon szép részedről, hogy most mikor elsősorban saját életed kifejtésén kell dolgoznod, (mégis mindig szem előtt tartod János - István jövőjét is. Jól esik tudnom, hogy e tekintetben is mindenkor szá - mithatok reád. Fentemlited leveled vonatkozó passusára való válaszádat Anyunak engedem át. - Levled vétele után felhívtam Barótí, ki legutóbb felszólított, hogy tartsam au fait sorsod alakulása felől. Nagy érdeklő - déssel fogadta most is a híreket és biztosított, hogy a további fejlemények is nagy érdeklődésre tarthatnak számot. Legjobb kívánságai kísérnek. Ez alkalommal érdeklődtem Kalmár iránt is. Tényleg szegény feje meghalt, jan. 7.-én temették. Hirtelen következett be a halál, nyilván szívizélhűdés kapcsán. Miért, miért nem, a hír nem jelent meg a lapokban. - Visszatérve a newcastle-i doktorra, sajnálom, hogy nem voltam alaposabb, mikor Se - bestyéntől azt a levelet kértem. Ugy értesültem volt előzőleg, hogy N. külváros és nem néztem utána a lexiconban - csak most. De ha már azt a levelet elkértem és megkaptam, akkor kérlek, jelentkezz levélben a doktor - nál azzal, hogy fel fogod keresni, ha módodban lesz N.-ba eljutni. - Dr. Aporral beszéltem. Ő persze másként értelmezte megállapodástokat és úgy érzi, hogy legmesszebb ment baráti önzetlenségben, mikor költségjegyzékét kiállította. - Száz szónak is egy a vége: 80 pengőben megegyeztünk, mely összeget ki is fizettem. - Érthető kíváncsisággal várom legközelebbi leve - ledet, melyből alkalmasint ki fog derülni, hogy megmaradsz-e Allwoodéknál. Ha nem - vajjon milyenek a tűzben levő egyéb vasak? Hogy ezen a réven annyi sok emberrel kerültél nexusba, az esetleg nagyon üdvös lehet még. Idegenben rendesen legnehezebb benszülöttekkel összeköttetésbe kerülni és ha ily összeköttetésekre úgy sikerült szert tenned, hogy mint odaválási czég embere jelentkeztél, nem pedig mint megélhetést kereső bevándorló,

akkor, úgy vélem, értékesebbek az ismeretségek. - Ily módon talán könnyebb is neked foglalkoznod azokkal az - elismerem tulnyomó részben nem tulságosan kecsegtető -propozíciókkal, melyeket legutóbb megírtam neked és melyeket jövő héten alkalmasint még néhány követni fog. Hátha valami kijön egyikből-másikból. Ha a vasuti találmány tekintetében módodban van mértékadó emberrel kapcsolatba kerülni, akkor ezt a dolgot valóban komolynak tartom. A Máv-nak nagyon jó híre van, talán még Au.-ban is tudják az illetékesek, hogy milyen rendes intézmény. Így az a körülmény, hogy azt a bizonyos ké - szüléket évek óta használatban tartja a Máv, jó ajánlólevél lehet. Loránt mérnök maga, komoly ember benyomását tette és, ami ritka feltalálónál, áldozatokra is kész. A minapi levelem szerint kilátásba helyezett unterlagok elkészítése, expedálása, elég sokba kerül neki. Pótlólag még közlöm, amit legutóbb kifelejtettem, hogy az esetben, ha jelented, hogy komoly érdeklődés mutatkozik, akkor Loránt az unterlagok elküldésével egyidejűen, az au.-i szabadság elnyerése érdekében is rögtön megteszi a szükséges lépéseket, ami megint pénzébe kerül. - Képelem, hogy nagyon el vagy foglalva és nagy megnyugvás nekem annak tudata, hogy egyrészt kitűnő kondícióban vagy, másrészt pedig expeditív természetű és könnyen tanuló ember. Csak írdál mennél többet az esti tanfolyam részleteiről is. Talán küldhetsz egy évkönyvet vagy ilyesvalamit, hogy jobban tudjunk követni tanulmányaidat illetően is. - Kirándulásodról szóló híreket is örömmel vettem. - Eléget pöröltem annak idején Nándorékkal, hogy Gyuri Nizzából mindig csak ski-kirándulásokra ment és nem tanulmányozta "Land und Leute"-t. A tanulmányipzélőtől eltekintve, azt hiszem semmi sem nyújt annyi relaxation-t, mint valamilyen jóféle kirándulás. De azért remélem, hogy egyéb szórakozásokra is jut majd idő és pénz! Vajjon sikerült-e valami csinálnod az ABC-vel. Ép utazásod idejében közölte a londoni rádió, hogy az ABC is megindított egy Overseas Service-t. Nagy - szerű volna, ha ezen hallhatnók hangodat, noha bevallom, hogy néhány meddő kísérlet után feladatom a küzdelmet. Egyszer sem sikerült fognom. - Az avizált kéziratot is kíváncsian várjuk. Persze, míg nem olvastuk, nem tudunk véleményt mondani arról, hogy lehet-e valamiképp értékesíteni cikkedet. Bár erre sok remény nincsen idehaza, a fenforgó viszonyok között. A "Weltwoche"-sajnos hónapokkal ezelőtt kitiltották az országból és így nemcsak, hogy küldeni nem tudjuk, de azt sem tudjuk, hogy milyen a tartalma e.i.sz. Azonban majd érdeklődünk Svájcban. - A leveledhez mellékelte Dóczi-féle levelet továbbítottam. - A Morning Herald-beli cikket is nagyon várjuk. Van kilátás arra, hogy állandóan hoznának közleményeket tolladból? NB. Ha egyszer megjelenik valami cikked, melyet magad is nagyon sikerültnek tartasz, akkor - néhány megfelelő sor kíséretében - küld el Aurél bácsinak. - Az amerikai konzulátus rendben visszaküldötte nekünk az affidavitot, melyet Anyu most továbbít Hutternek. - Végül még egy kérésem van. Gyuri majdnem minden levelében ír rólad kedveseket. Ha ily levél érkezik, Irma néni rögtön telefonál és beolvassa a készülékbe a level vonatkozó részét. Nagyon szeretném ezt a kedvességet időnkint viszonzni hasonlóval. Tehát ne mulaszt el néha egy pár sornyi hírt Gyuriról leveleidbe beiktatni. Egyébként pillanatnyilag influenzazajrárvány dühög a Nándor családban, szerencsére könnyű lefolyásu esetek. De azért szegény Palkó a rég kieszt kárpátaljai ski-turára nem kísérelte el Katót. Lizi már előzően egy másik truppal, másfelé ment. - Csókollak fiacskám ezerszer

My darling boy, - your letter of the 28. II - 2. III. was so full of surprising and good news that I longed to answer it at once, but a few days usually elapse before replying, since we nearly always write on Saturday and Sunday, as air mail leaves early Monday morning, while your letters usually arrive on Monday just after our letter has been mailed. Well, dear, if you go on being active at the rate of your first three and a half weeks in Sydney, you will certainly go far - and I am sure you will. I was particularly thrilled by your "stop press" news about the article in the Morning Herald and I am looking forward immensely to seeing it - wonder what it's about and whether any more will follow. Your radio audition is also most thrilling and I am on

tenterhooks to know whether anything further will result. István wants me to tell you that you aren't the only one in the family, since he not only sang ~~in~~ in the radio the other day with the Levente chorus, but ~~the~~ performance was considered so wonderful that it was recorded on wax disks /American spelling/ and they are to appear again in a few weeks. -

To answer your letter point by point /starting from the end/: I hope tennis at Mrs Gye's was gayer than the Sunday at Gorrick's. Sorry he is such a washout. I'm glad that you have written to Mr Goodman; of course it's all right with me. Tell me when you hear from him. -

You are a dear for sending us birthday presents. We certainly shall appreciate them: you have a gift for choosing the right sort of present, the kind that gives pleasure for a long time. The plant you gave me for our silver wedding, in its beautiful cache-pot, thrives beautifully. All winter I enjoyed the combined muff-bag you gave me last Christmas; my hands would certainly have frozen without it, and as for the little sewing necessaire you gave me last birthday, I use it every day. We are certainly not going to make a special fuss of this birthday: neither of us care to remember that we are 110 years old - but what do numbers matter? Father is particularly keen to make people forget this date, but I am afraid he won't succeed: Aunt Ilonka has an excellent memory for dates and I think she is planning some sort of assault on this occasion. - I don't think there is any need for a letter stating that your gift is a present: I don't think there will be substantial duty on it if we go to the customs house and open it there, even in case they don't deliver it at the house.

I am also greatly looking forward to your notes on your voyage. As for Weltwoche, I am asking Mme Hirzel, as a favor, to send you an occasional copy.

Now about István. I won't waste any words on telling you what a sense of relief and security it gives me to know that you are thinking of him and planning to look after him. But although you are right in saying that the sooner a boy of his age gets away, the better, I think that in this case it would be wrong to hurry or force matters. You know that, for the moment, he doesn't want to go, and I think that he is not yet fit to go. If he went now - by "now" I mean within the next year - it would mean forcing him to do it against his will. I doubt if it could be done at all, but even if it could, I think it would do him much harm: he would lose confidence in us and he would hate you for making him do it. Even if I were convinced that it is all for the best, I would not think it right to coerce him against his will - however well I know that it is only an inexperienced boy's will whose outlook is so narrow that he cannot yet know his own mind. At present he is prejudiced against taking such a step and the more one would try to persuade him, the more stubborn would he grow in his prejudice. One cannot handle everybody in the same way: there are many boys of eighteen who would jump at such a possibility and be at their best if they got such a chance, but he has got into the wrong rut somehow. I don't think we ought to drag him out of it by main force but leave him to find his way gradually to a more sensible attitude. You probably think that at such a time and in such a situation one should not have such scruples: psychological treatment is out of place on the edge of a volcano; and I know you feel that we have never been strict enough with ~~István~~ István. That may be /though I hardly think we could have achieved better results by different treatment/, but I do think that by forcing this issue now, or rather by hurrying it, we should wrong both him and you. I am absolutely against your burdening yourself with such a responsibility now, when you have your own way to make, and as long as he is such an irresponsible person. By this I do not merely mean the financial burden: far more the moral weight. He would get on your nerves and in your way, and as I have said, we should not be doing him any good because he would feel all the time that he is being made to do what he ~~xxx~~ doesn't want to. On the other hand, I am positive that if he stays here a little while longer, learns something that he likes to do and can do, thereby getting some self-respect and self-assurance which he at present hasn't got, learns English which we shall of course make him do with

full pressure as soon as he is through with that b...Marric, he will come round to your way of thinking and be glad enough to go. He has already ~~changed~~ changed for the better /though he still retains his silly schoolboy mannerisms and ill-manners for home use sometimes/, and I am positive that a potential change will come when he is through school. I don't think we lose much by letting him work in some factory, workshop or industrial plant here for a year, meanwhile pursuing his English studies with great energy. What he loses in time will be ~~undoubtedly~~ gained in maturity and self-confidence. He has ~~not~~ not yet realised, does not believe, that the outlook in Europe for a boy such as he is very glum, whatever happens, but I am afraid he will find it out soon enough. Meanwhile, considering all the circumstances and most of all his character, I do not think we can do better than let him learn some trade, and as much English as possible, at home. ^{might}

Of course circumstances may arise which ~~will~~ make it imperative that he should go as soon as possible, without taking individual inclinations and characteristics into consideration. But I do not think they will; at any rate, not so suddenly that there should be no time to act then. So if it is possible to submit his application with any chance of success, it should be done. The necessary documents can be collected at a few days' notice. ~~Since~~ The above dissertation only serves to expound my attitude to you, which Father shares. To put it briefly: If you can get a permit for him, it will give us a great sense of security, but I am against forcing him to leave now, both for his sake and your own. Let us wait and see a little longer - and meanwhile, try to get on a friendly footing with him instead of the elder-brotherly and guardianship attitude that he rebels against. This is asking very much I know, for it is his fault entirely that your relations are not as good as you want them to be - but it is the curse of the wiser, kinder, more generous and more mature one of the two that he must make advances. I think if we are patient they will be amply repaid: as soon as István sheds his childish prejudices and gets his bearings - which he is bound to do, for he is decent, straight and intelligent below his unfortunate inhibitions - he will be a worthwhile person.

Darling, forgive me for this lengthy dissertation, but this is a matter which, I know, weighs on you as much as it does on me - yet I don't want you to be burdened unnecessarily by anything now - you have taken enough upon yourself as it is! There are so many more questions I should like to ask, but you are going to tell ~~you~~ us anyhow all you think fit about your business projects and prospects, about your domestic arrangements - what about kitchen furnishings? Have you bought any, or do you borrow them from ~~you~~ your landlady? How about washing-up, bathing, laundry facilities? When and what do you shop? It is too late to-day to write any recipes, I'll send a few in my next letter again. I think I am going to suggest to somebody more competent than I am, to write a cookery-book for bachelors - it ought to sell. Anyhow, I wish you were with us to-day to eat our Easter dinner, cooked by Ilona without any personal effort on the part of all these who are going to eat it. We are just by ourselves to-day, but to-night Leopolds and Badics' are coming to share our ham, and to-morrow Baloghs and Szép Ernő are lunching here. Life goes on as usual, you see. Everybody always sends all their loves to you /excuse mixed sing. and plurals/ and wants to know everything about ~~y~~ you, including my various English and overseas correspondents. God bless you, my darling boy; I hope you are spending a pleasant Easter.

All fondest love

Mother

I am told by a gentleman who is on friendly terms with the Baden-Powell family that they pronounce their name "Poell" /Hungarian phonetics/ and not "Pauell". What's your attitude?

Pongrácz János
II. Vérmező-u.6.
Budapest, Hungary

15.sz.

1940.márczius 29.

Drága fiacskám !

Két további üzleti propozíciót nyujtok át neked e sorokkal, úgy látszik, hogy elég komolyak. Az egyiket

Reisz László nevű ember hozta. A találmány neve "Vertyl" vulkanizáló. Reisz azt mondja, hogy van hasonló amerikai találmány forgalomban, de az övé lényegesen jobb, amit a szakember a külön nyomtatványcsomaggal küldött prospektusból meg tud állapítani. Minthogy annyi töméntelen autó fut odaát, chance-a lehet a dolognak.

A másik ügyet hajdani iskolatársam, Murányi János Ödön, nyug. bizt. igazgató juttatta hozzám. A találmány nem az övé, hanem a fiáé, Murányi Péteré. Utóbbi papiripari szakember, kinek sikerült a találmányt az összes magyar papirgyáraknál jó pénzért bevezetni. Azután elment Párisba, hol szintén nagy summa pénzt kapott licensekért. Jelenleg a fiatalember Braziliában tartózkodik, hogy Dél-Amerikát megszervezze. Már ott is szép sikereket ért el. Magyar szabadalmi leírást itt mellékelek. Ausztráliai szabadalom Canberrában 106,274. sz.a. van regisztrálva. Murányi azt mondja, hogy ebbe való betekintés miatt nem kell Canberrával összeköttetésbe lépni, mivel a Sydney-ben székelő Trade Marks Sub-Office teljes felvilágosítást tud adni. Ha az ügy érdekel, akkor a továbbiak miatt Péterrel közvetlenül kell levelezned. Címe : Sao Paulo, Brasil, - Caixa postal 3166. - Én úgy tudom, hogy Au.-ban kevés a fa és így nem vagyok biztos abban, hogy ott számottevő papiripar kifejlődhetett - de Murányi azt mondja, hogy igen. Szórakoztatásodra catolok egy ujságkivágást, melyhez magyarázatul csak azt fűzöm, hogy a Comédie Française nemrégiben vendégszerepelt Bukarestben. A nyomtatványcsomag tartalmazza elsősorban Lloydbeli kivágásaidat. Ilyeneknek azonban csak ab 1938 akadtunk nyomára írásztalodban.

Minden egyébről holnaputáni légipóstalevelemben írok. Csókollak

Drága fiacskám,

a nyomtatványcsomag tartalmaz egy LIFE-csillapöt is, amit csak azért küldök, mert nem kerül külön pénzbe s olyan kedves ötlet, hogy mulattatni fog. Az előfizetés, melyet tavaly karácsonyra Kittytől kaptam, újévkor lejárt, de még két hónapig küldték a lapot s olyan ügyes levelekkel bombardíroztak, hogy a szívünk szakadt meg, de ellentálltunk, mert nagyon drága - főleg a porto, amely majdnem kétszer annyi, mint maga az előfizetés. Az itt mellékelte szívhezszóló emlékeztető volt az utolsó. Ennek már nem tudtunk ellentállni és előfizettünk - annál is inkább, ~~mm~~ mert akadt egy albérlő, aki majdnem teljes árat fizet a régi számokért! - Mellékelek továbbá egy lapot a Motion Picture Heraldból. Talán tudsz a megjelölt item-re vonatkozó információt és főleg képet szerezni - hátha valamelyik lapnál, mellyel összeköttetésben vagy, akad ilyen és könnyű szerrel megkaphatod. Erről szóló kis cikket, ha van hozzá legalább egy kép, összes kundschaftjainknál el tudnánk helyezni. - Most óriási inéég van külföldi képanyagban itt is, másutt is. Ha tudsz ingyen publicity anyagot szerezni, utazási irodáktól vagy más propaganda szervtől, arra mindig van vevő. Erről különben air mail leválben is írok. Ölellek ezerszer. drágám

Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest II.
Hungary

No. 16.
/No 15. was sent by
boat mail two days ago./

31st March 1940

My darling boy,

Your letter No. 7, dated 12 - 14th March, was doubly welcome, arriving as it did just in time to greet me on the breakfast-table on my birthday, - and so full of thrilling news, too! I'm tremendously excited about your radio talk on the 18th and very disappointed that we won't be able to hear it - but I hope the script is on the way and we shall be able to read it "avant la lettre." Fortunately news coverage from Australia is very good: George sent your article "by a financial economist" to his parents by air mail, so we have already read it. As far as I can make out it is very good - I can merely judge by the fact that I have understood it, and therefore I am justified in saying that it is very clear, concise and well put. I hope more competent persons agree with me and that more will follow.

As for your new job, I'm thrilled about that too, and we keep guessing what your next one will be! I hope your next letter will tell us more about its nature, about the sort of studio you are working in, and about your new boss the Canadian, and whether you don't find darkroom work as a permanency rather unpleasant, especially at the height of summer, etc. But this Australia is a wonderful country indeed, with jobs waiting to be picked up - although I understand perfectly well that it takes a person like you to pick them up. István is gradually getting interested in this aspect of things and I think if we don't say too much about it just now, he will be quite ready to consider the possibility of going there, from quite a different angle than he did, when the time comes. Of course your being in the photograph business interests him greatly.

And that reminds me: I have given your address to a ~~gentle~~ gentleman called Dr Ungar who left for Sydney with his wife a week ago. I haven't met him personally but heard many nice things about him. He is a schoolmaster /High School professor, I believe/ who taught privately and ran a tremendously successful summer camp for children during several years; last summer in Sikonda near Pécs, where the children loved to stay and the parents cheerfully paid 9 pengoes per day! which goes to prove that he is a very clever chap indeed. Agi Wiener spent last summer with him as a sort of assistant pupil-teacher, and Dr Molnár, who is István's coach, a very intelligent fellow who is handling I. admirably, was also there and is a great friend of Dr Ungar's. He - Ungar - known as "Tancsi" among the boys, took along István for a number of Sunday excursions with his crowd this year, so knows him quite well and was very nice to him. Hence the introduction to you - if you can be useful to him in anyway by giving him tips, etc., please do so. He is said to be a remarkably good photographer and intends to take up that line, having taken with him excellent equipment. Color photography seems to be his speciality. I am told that he is an extremely clever and skilful chap, the sort who "makes a living on the back of the ice"; his handicap seems to be the usual one: he doesn't know enough English. Perhaps you can do something for him. It was too late to send anything along with him when we heard he was going. But if anyone should turn up again and offer to take along something, wouldn't you like me to send your heavy topcoat? After all, it isn't a real winter coat, and you might want it - but I won't venture to send it before you say the word.

Your Pester Lloyd articles were mailed two days ago, but we only found the 1938-39 ones in your desk. What about the three files marked "Kontrollpéldányok"? Do you want them to be kept, destroyed, or eventually returned to Metallo? There's no hurry - they can stay in your desk indefinitely, as in all probability we aren't going to move just yet, - unless our dear landlady chooses to give notice out of pure spite, which is hardly likely. Even then, it would be November before we move. However, I

hope this isn't going to happen, as there is a great shortage of flats at present - as a proof of which the right to give notice has just been greatly restricted by Govt. decree. Besides, there would be no sense in making any change before we know what is going to happen about Picu.

We sent a boat mail letter, with some descriptions of patents, on the 29th. A parcel with "personality" photographs, and a few others which you may like to keep on the chance of any topical interest turning up, will follow in a day or two. Bandi is writing to you by boat mail concerning a toy patent which he holds. Maybe you can do something with it. We'll look about for other things too. As for the soda water, someone told me that soda water manufacturing is a monopoly in Australia and that accounts for its being so expensive. Is that a fact?

Our respective birthdays passed peacefully and without undue excitement. The entire family came to tea on my birthday, bringing sundry very nice presents - a bag from Aunt Livia, dress material from Aunt Ilonka, fountain pen as a present for both of us from István, etc. and a beautiful display of flowers. As for Father, he strictly prohibited any notice being taken of his birthday, but the family refused to be put off and staged a surprise party with various beautiful articles of food - as a result of which I have been compelled to ask a number of people to come this afternoon and eat them - and a collective excursion to the Royal Apollo to see "The Wizard of Oz." Although we found this far better suited to a sixth than a sixtieth birthday, we all were in a sufficiently good temper not to be put out by it. Thence, Father with Leopolds and Badisches proceeded to the Mátyás-pince while I paid a brief visit to the Schischas where a dance was in rampant progress, with István doing the honours as honorary son of the house with good grace and the decency of dancing also with the less beautiful young ladies /don't tell him, but there wasn't a single really pretty little girl among the lot/. However, they had a wonderful time /trust Csacsy that there was plenty of grub/ and stayed till one o'clock. Now he's gone off on an excursion with the crowd inherited by Dr Molnár from the aforesaid Ungar. István is in charge of leading the hike, but is greatly disgusted with the lot of them because their idea of an outing is to walk half an hour and then pitch their camp and play football.

Among all the messages and greetings from various people which I usually don't transmit to you, I must mention particularly friendly remembrances from Vágó Jóska, who spoke of you in terms of highest praise. He has been very ill and has undergone several operations, but is all right again and back at his job. One day this week Mrs "Quick" Katona has asked me to meet Mrs Káldor at her house, so I am going to have more Australian news. I am being very reticent about you, but can't help feeling rather proud as the mother of a "travelling economist." God bless you, darling! All love *Mother*
Drága fiacskám, a fenmaradt csekély helyet csak néhány rövid értesítéssel töltöm ki: telefonált a minap Kerényiné. Fiától kapott híreket rólad is és sietett ezeket közölni. Noha újat nem mondott, mégis nagyon appreciálom a kedvességet úgy az anya, mint a fiu részéről. - Rotter most egy ny.r. egyet. tanárt szándékozik a vitamin-ügybe bevonni, hogy annak révén klinikai testek, certifikatok könnyebben legyenek megszerezhetők. Az illető tanár a gyógyszer szakma embere lévén, a találmány itteni elhelyezése is könnyebb lesz. Ha mindez igaz, akkor néhány hét múlva majd vissza lehet térni e tárgyra. Levélbéli jegek mikénti felragasztását illető kívánságodat igyekszem majd érzében tartani. - Egyébként magam is természetesen ép annyira vagyok fel - ajzva különböző aktivitásaid által, mint Anyu. Csak tájékoztass mindenről oly bőven, amennyire csak lehetséges. Ebben az undok, politikai eseményeken kívül teljesen eseménytelen életemben nagyszerű érzés, hogy a földgolyó bőségs tulsó oldalán oly élénkséget fejtesz ki. Néha pillanatokra megfeledkezem arról, hogy te csinálod mindazt és úgy képzelem, hogy magam vagyok az illető. És ez remek érzés. Légy szives, támogasd! Csókollak



Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, II.

No. 17.

10th April 1940

My darling boy,

we did not write last Sunday because we hoped that by Thursday, the next mail day, there would be another letter from you to answer - and so there was, your No. 9, Easter Sunday one, with the terribly exciting and surprising March 27th postscript - by far the most thrilling postscript we have had so far! This is big news indeed, and you have all my congratulations to your new, most interesting and gratifying newspaper job, and my very best wishes for your transfer to Melbourne. What a country! I know you will be terribly busy these days, but still you can't be surprised if I want to know everything about how this came about, why they gave you the job /on the strength of your letters or articles, or knowledge of languages, or what?/, what kind of a contract you have got, what about your studies in chemistry /or was this what you hinted at when you said you would have to give them up if any worthwhile job turned up?/ and of course all about Melbourne and your future life there. You will have to be much more descriptive than you have been so far, for in Melbourne we have no George who gives us all the details that are omitted from your synthetic mis- sives. Of course we transmitted your letter to Nándors who were very glad to get it, as well as to Peter and Istók respectively.

I am very pleased indeed at this development because I think the job will suit you and give you another big chance to get to know people and things in your new country which to you, with your uncommon capacity for absorbing knowledge and getting at the gist of things, will mean more than to many others. Whether or no journalism and the newspaper business will be your ultimate occupation, and whether or no "The Times Independent" will make definitely good, the work and the experience will mean a great deal and come in tremendously useful in whatever walk of life you may choose later. Besides, I naturally have a personal leaning towards it and of course I am glad to think of you as doing something about which I have some notion - after being ignorant of what lithopon is, to this day. Well, I am terribly curious about all the developments and eager to know how it will all work out.

Your letter to István, written on the boat, and your notes on "The Dominions in the War" came three days ago. István was visibly impressed with your letter; he read it twice over and gave vent, neither to abuse nor to criticisms after having read it. I am telling you this because I do not know how or when he will answer, but it obviously hit the mark. He starts talking about going abroad again and again, mostly asserting that although he does want to go and see the world and try working abroad, he does not want to emigrate and give up his nationality. We, of course, refrain from arguing the point and have agreed with him that he is to learn some trade which will be useful both at home and abroad, and after that we shall see. Of course he is to learn English with full steam ahead as soon as he has got the Matric behind him - only about two months now, but until then I don't want to burden him with anything.

As for the article, I am afraid poor Heinberg never got it, - or if he did, it must have reached him at the most tragically unpropitious moment. I don't think there is any point in sending it to the Weltwoche, nor to the P.L. for that matter. Of course we were very much interested to read it, but most of the facts contained therein are known to the sort of people who read those papers, and there is little of brand-new topical interest in it - can't be, at the fleeting glance you have had of the places about which you write. Is this, or anything based on it, what you are going to read in the radio? I hope you are sending us the script, and we are greatly looking forward to the articles which you say are on the way. I was going to volunteer some journalistic criticism, but since your letter came, I have humbly and joyfully discovered that it is you, and not I, who ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ are qualified to lay down the journalistic law, having already achieved much more than I ever have or ever will - so the way you do it is obviously the right one! However, not as a journalistic arbiter but as an interfering and insatiable mother, I venture to suggest that this

article, for instance, would be greatly improved if you would not so carefully refrain from striking an ~~personal~~ and subjective note. Pure information can be gleaned in a library: a glimpse of the man who has collected it makes all the difference. When you impart information, you can make it far more vivid if you mention how you have come by it: Such-and-such a sort of man told me this or that; this is corroborated or contradicted by so-and-so; also, data are much more picturesque and translatable into our terms if you quote examples /prices, describe way of living, etc/. Of course you know this just as well if not better than I do, and I fully understand that you can't be expected to spend time on what is mainly intended to give us an idea of general conditions. But it is the same thing that I miss just a little bit in your letters. You have the great benefit of having a clear and concise style, a splendid grasp of the essentials, objective judgment, and facility of expression. These cannot be rated too high, and I am quite aware that they are what you need for your job - at least as far as I can make out what a "cable job" may be. But both the training I have had to stress the "human interest angle", and the curiosity I am entitled to as a mother, make me feel that if you would descend a little to the subjective level and give us the benefit of a little idle chatter about details, - characteristics of the people you work with and meet, for instance - it would give us a far clearer vision of your life, and the same qualities, in due proportion, would be an improvement on your articles when they are not purely and strictly enumerations of informative facts but meant to give an impression, a vision of things.

Am I being too critical? I may be wrong - and I certainly don't want ~~xxxxxx~~ you to feel that letter-writing is a corvée or that you have to ~~th~~ think of style or anything like that when you are writing to us. On the contrary - I want you to let yourself go - I can't say "just as if you were talking to us" because I know it is your natural reticence that makes you refrain from chatter - but you must understand that we are interested in the slightest details. Darling, don't misunderstand me. I am terribly happy with your letters, they are full of interesting and exciting facts, and I appreciate immensely that you write so often and so much - but you do understand what I mean, don't you?

Bandi has taken a long time in getting together a batch of photographs that I hoped he would send off to you last week, but he has been ill again and only got it off, by ordinary mail, to-day. I am afraid they are not very exciting, but there are a few photos among them which may be of topical interest sometime or other, so it is best that you should have them on hand. For the last three months I have been pestering poor Heinberg for Scandinavian photos, but he never sent me any, worse luck. I shall send you a few more from Bucarest if Uncle Pali, who is spending a few days there on business, brings me any. We shall send Mrs Gye some stuff as you suggest.

I heard from Aunt Tini a few days ago. She is getting on all right but has given up her library and now keeps your books at home in her little flat. You know how small and cluttered-up it is, so she would like apparently to get rid of them. I told her I can't do anything about it at the moment, but would let you know - perhaps you can arrange for Morris to take care of them for the duration, or dispose in some other way, as you see fit. She was greatly interested to hear about you and sends her love. I also had a long and apologetic letter from Levy who told me a long yarn about how he was unable to send you the money for the tartan tie. I wrote and told him not to get too excited about it - you would be glad to have a necktie to your credit in Paris when the war is over.

As for ourselves, all our thoughts, naturally, are now occupied with the events in Scandinavia, and ~~with~~ conjectures about future developments. Personally we are very well and fit, and nothing of importance has happened in the last few days. It is still chilly and un-spring-like, and I am getting impatient because I have a nice new grey suit waiting to be worn. I am mailing a few snapshots by ordinary mail, just to show you how fit and well ~~you~~ are. I am afraid István's moustache doesn't make a very conspicuous show on the snaps, but take my word for it that he has one. He was asked to a dance at a new Amál's, a friend of Miska's, last Saturday, and enjoyed it very much.

All my fond love, darling; congratulations, and I hope you don't mind my "criticism!" Do the same to me. *affectionately*

Pongrácz János
Kérmegő-út 6.
Budapest T.
Hungary

No. 18.

11th April, 1940

My darling boy,

by the time these snapshots reach Sydney, you ~~will~~ ^{will} already be in Melbourne, but I hope they will reach you safely nevertheless. - The ones showing us intent upon life, taken by Pici with a self-exposer, were enlarged and sent to Life on the chance of their falling for them and printing one of them - I don't think they will, but they are fairly good pictures of the family. The one of me in a hat wishes to demonstrate that the sun is shining at last, a rare event worth recording, and the one of Pici as a professional photographer and Lizi as his model may amuse you. There's nothing more to say, as our air mail letter was sent off to-day. Fondest love,

dear

Mother

Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest II.
Hungary

No. 19.

17th April 1940

My darling boy,

no letter from you this week, but I don't want to miss this mail, although there is nothing of importance to record. We are awaiting with great impatience your further news about your new job, your move to Melbourne, etc. etc. The March 2. issue of the S. Morning Telegr. arrived a few days ago, and we were greatly impressed with the elegant place your article held in it - of course we had read the article itself before. Now I am greatly looking forward to the others. Yesterday I went to the Décsi movie to see a Fox travelogue showing pictures of Melbourne, and in consequence I feel very much at home there already! I hope you will be able to row all you want to on the Yarra river and spend many pleasant hours in the Botanical Park. Anyway I'll be able to locate you now in my mind if you tell me where you live, where you work etc. Last week I spent a pleasant afternoon at Mrs Katona's with Mrs Káldor who told me a lot about Pista's doings and spoke of you with great affection. So does everybody, only I don't give you all the messages. However, I must give you this one from Bandi, who wants to ask you for a great favour. Can you take the necessary steps to renew or prolong, whatever the right term is, his permit to enter Australia? It was issued by the Minister of Interior on July 31, 1939, for Endre Hevesi and wife Agnes Hevesi, under the number 35025, and ~~expires~~ is valid until June 16. of this year. He has not been able to avail himself of it owing to difficulties of money transfer, etc. - you will be able to find out in what form a request for prolongation should be motivated. Please do this for him if you can.

I am sending you a few picture postcards, views of Bucarest, to-day; unfortunately Uncle Pali brought no better ones, and we find it quite impossible to get any photos from any of the countries that are now in the centre of interest. Another opportunity missed - but on the other hand the papers here are clamouring for non-war material and we sell all the silly old archive material we have on hand - of course at ridiculously low prices which can't make up for the loss of our other markets. However, if you can lay hands on any Australian publicity photos that cost no money, send them along please - I'm very good at making up captions and texts to fit them, and we can sell them off and on, especially now when the Pacific seems to be coming into the limelight, worse luck. You might send a few picture postcards or snapshots of city views, too.

Not much news here, Chief inland topic of conversation at the moment is sugar and fat rationing - the only things rationed so far, except of course petrol, which was restricted from the first. Even now, fat is only rationed in Budapest - 24 dekas per week, with butter, oil, bacon etc. still free, so there isn't any shortage. Same amount of sugar here and in the larger towns, with lower rations in the country where the consumption is smaller, but even there children get full rations. There is talk of restricting bus communication to certain hours of the day so as to save on petrol, but it's only talk as yet. Otherwise all is perfectly normal.

The other night we had supper at Nándor's and saw the snapshots George sent home: the one of you two on the beach is splendid and it was good to see you looking so well and cheerful. As for Miss Baby Austin, don't tell George, but as far as I can judge from the picture, your late tragacy was a Rolls-Royce compared to her. However, beauty is only skin deep: it's the moral qualities that really matter. I sent you a few snapshots /Letter No.18, ordinary mail/ last week. We are all flourishing, so is the rest of the family. Picu is in the throes of Matricophobia, but is looking very well and still shows no signs of overworking - on the contrary. But since both he and his tutor, as well as the professors, are confident that he will pass, it's all right.

Fondest love, darling Mother

Drága fiacskám ! Mialatt tegnap éjjel a mondhatatlanul izgalmas rádióhíreket hallgattam, Anyu megint elírt előlem ugyyszólván mindent és az 5 grammos súlyhatárig csak ezt a nyul farknyi helyet hagyta meg számomra.- De te tudod jól, hogy Anyuval mennyire egy huron pendülünk mindig és al is tudod képzelni, hogy mennyit beszélünk állandóan rólad. Így mindazt, amit Anyu ír, mindenkor úgy veheted, mint a magam gondolatait is. - Tehát csak röviden : Éljen Ausztrália, ez a páratlanul nagyszerű ország és adja Isten, hogy vállalkozásaid továbbra is eredményesek legyenek. - Az elmúlt napokban, üzleti papírként küldöttem czimedre még egy ajánlatot. Ez az utolsó azok közül a dolgok közül, melyek hirdetésemre befutottak. "Transmissiol" nevű gépszijkezelési anyagról van szó. Láttam, hogy egész Európában mindenütt forgalomban van. Igen komoly dolognak látszik. - Persze nem tudom, hogy új job-od lehetővé teszi-e, hogy kereskedelmileg is tevékenykedj. Ha igen nagyon kíváncsi vagyok, hogy a küldött dolgok egyike-másika szóba kerülhet-e. Írd meg, hogy esetleg hirdessek-e újból és hogy amugy felmerülő ötletek stb. elvileg egyáltalán érdekelnek-e vagy pedig új munkakörödre való tekintettel, e.i.sz. nem jönnek tekintetbe. - A múlt héten újból megjelent az újságárusoknál a Weltwoche. Minthogy Hirzel alkalmasint csak e héten kezdi meg a szállítást czimedre, a múlt heti számot nyomtatványcsomagban innen küldöttem neked.- Ezt a még fenmaradt kis helyet felhasználom arra, hogy én külön is megmondjam neked, hogy minden leveled mily esemény részünkre és hogy mily boldogsággal tölt el az írásaidból kiáradó biztonság, önérzet, optimizmus stb.- Angus & Coote-től érkezett egy vámfaktura, azonban maga a csomag még nincs itt. Csókollak, drágám, ezerszer



Letter 20 (Translated from Hungarian by Katalin Gall, September 2010)
From: Grandpa in Budapest to Dad in Australia

Pongracz Janos
2nd district Vermezo Street 6,
Budapest, Hungary
25 April 1940

My dear son!

Since sending our last letter we have only received the letter you addressed to Istvan on the 2nd of February. He will reply to that personally sooner or later however in order to clarify what he will write I want to advise you of the following things. Other than reading and enjoying the radio at the moment Istvan is primarily focused on his matriculation. He is not interested in anything unrelated to this. At the same time he is not making any effort to study; apparently he will study seriously just before exam time but I'm doubtful about this. Nevertheless both he and I have faith that he will get through it.

Looking at it objectively, I must admit that the child knows a lot more than perhaps he himself realises. On top of that his tutor also agrees that failing is out of the question and that with a little effort Istvan could finish very well. Of course he will not make this effort. I myself will not nag the child. We ruined this when he was in elementary school. This time I will be very happy if he gets through. His confidence is based on the belief that if he fails than at least another 20 children would also have to fail, whereas the normal ratio is approximately 3-5 failures. Furthermore I hope that they will not fail a child who has completed eight years more or less well.

Finally it is utmost relevance that Istvan was disciplined due to his foolish behaviour a few months ago but not for his academic work. Yet if you're not academically disciplined then it's unlikely that you will be failed at the exams and if you get through it then you can face the final ordeal. This is how we encourage each other and ourselves.

If we get through all this then we can talk to the child about what happens after. The tutor, who as you know is also a teacher and psychologist, believes that Istvan shouldn't be pushed to do anything he doesn't want to do, but should be supported to follow up on his own plans, if they are not too silly. So far Istvan's great wish is to train himself to be a perfect driver. If he sticks with this we will not stand in his way. After all, whatever he does, if it's productive work, will be fine. In today's absurd situation there are so many factors to consider, consequently there's no father who can guide his child towards a career with complete confidence.

At the same time we must consider that Istvan is slowly starting to mature in different ways and I trust that after matriculating and the following few weeks of vacation he will embark on practical work with ambition and seriousness which he did during last year's vacation. Consequently he will learn English well. We just have to take into account his capabilities and handle things so that he himself comes up with ideas.

This is where I'm getting to the heart of the matter after a long-winded explanation. Both Mum and I are very grateful that you're doing everything you can to enable Istvan's trip there and I don't doubt that one day Istvan will be grateful as well. Momentarily. However. Istvan sees all your inquiries about this matter as overbearing which makes him rebel, therefore – despite his objections – we have stopped discussing this issue with him completely. Also I'm running around following up on various documents, I'm preparing everything based on your instructions. You can keep going with the planned steps but in your letters which Piczu naturally reads, do not mention this topic, but discuss these on a separate piece of paper, which we will hide from Istvan. Don't laugh at us about this childish matter as given the circumstances it is the right thing to do.

By the way, even if everything is OK at your end it might take a long time before the travel plans can be seriously organised, as Istvan would need the permission from the Domestic and Defence

Ministry's department for any travel. Based on this the renewal of his passport has already been rejected by the police. I have no idea how long it takes to get permission these days. Nevertheless I'll send the documents you have requested next time.

I hope there will come some news of you with tomorrow's post. Until then we are anxious to know when you will go to Melbourne, how you will find it there and how you visualise your future and the new paper there.

We are also very curious about how the radio play went and if there was any outcome. Of course we won't know about this for quite some time. Thanks for asking about the doctor – I think he didn't do anything.

Here I will mention that the "Capital City" declared in the last few days that 500 milligrams of radium can be bought for 27 dollars. Keep my record for as long as you need to. Only send it back when you truly don't need it, I have a copy. It's very reassuring to know that you plan to take some steps for extending your own record. I have accepted your comments about the paintings. I spoke to Lorant the engineer about the tool desk. He says that the brief introduction was sufficient to begin the talks/negotiation, but now he can offer more material as well. However when I mentioned your comments, that the official organisations over there are more interested in things which are already being used in England, he said that it's better to wait 2-3 months, because during this time things will be sorted in England. So at the right time he will return to the matter. We'll see whether he can truly fix the matter in England. By the way he advises that in a similar situation don't discuss things with the rail company but rather with a factory that manufactures tools, which can use the invention for the whole of Australia and afterwards would discuss things with the rail minister. I'm curious whether you have found anything interesting amongst the proposals.

I have heard that one of the Sziklai couples are also relocating to Melbourne. Please let me know how you went with the contacts I have given you, whether you got in touch with them and with what results. I must be a referee for the relatives here. I kiss you my dear son a thousand times, Dad.

Pongrácz János
II. Vörmező-u.6.,
Budapest, Hungary

20.sz. levél

1940. április 25.

Drága fiúcskám! Előző számú levelünk elküldése óta csak Istvánhoz f.hó 2.-án írt leveled futott be. Erre ő maga fog neked elébb-utóbb válaszolni, azonban annak jobb megértéséhez, amit majd ő alkalmasint írni fog, a következőket akarom figyelmedbe ajánlani. Istvánt, ha nem szórakozik épen olvasmányokkal, rádióval vagy miegyébvel, most kizárólag az érettségi foglalkoztatja. Minden ami ezen túlra esik, jelenleg nem érdekes részére. Mindamellet egyáltalán nem erőlteti meg magát tanulással, állítólag majd csak a vizsgákat közvetlenül megelőző időben fog komolyan dolgozni, bár én ebben sem bízom. Mindazonáltal ő is, magam is, bízunk abban, hogy meg-
ussza a dolgot. Objective nézve a dolgot, meg kell állapítani, hogy a gyer-
ek tulajdonképp sokkal többet tud, mint amennyit önönmagának bevall. De ezenfelül korrepetitora is azon a nézetten van, hogy megbukás kizárva és hogy csak oly erőfeszítés kellene ahhoz, hogy jórendűen végezzen István. Persze ez a csekély erőfeszítés azonban nem lesz meg. És én magam nem is
nógatom a gyereket. A dolog eme részét akkor puskáztuk el, mikor ő első
elemibe járt. Most nagyon boldog leszek, ha tényleg keresztülcsuszik. Ő
maga azon az alapon bízik ebben, hogy ha ő megbuknék, akkor legalább husz
gyereknek kellene elvágódnia, holott a rendes arány ca. 3-5 bukás. Továbbá
bizom abban, hogy nem igen szoktak elvágni érettségien oly gyereket, ki
a nyolcz osztályt, úgy ahogyan, de mégis rendszeren élvégezte. Végül latba
eső fontos dolog, hogy a tegnapi intézköztátnál István csak magaviselet-
ből kapott intést, egy pár hónap előtti hülyesége miatt, de tantárgyból
nem. Márpedig aki intést nem kapott, az nem igen bukik meg az osztályvisz-
gán, aki pedig ezt megussza, az alkalmasint a végső ordeal-lel is megbír-
kózik. Mindezzel biztatjuk egymást és önönmagunkat. - Ha mindezen túl
jutottunk, akkor lehet majd csak érdemlegesen beszélni a gyerekkel a to-
vábbiakról. A korrepetitor, ki mint tudod, paedagogiai és pszichológiai
szakember is azon a nézetten van, hogy nem kell Istvánt semmi olyanra sem
ösztökélni, amihez nincsen kedve, viszont támogatni kell oly terveket,
melyeket ő maga gondol ki, ha nem teljesen komolytalanok. Mármint István-
nak eddig ugylátszik az a hő óhaja, hogy tökéletes autóvezetővé képezze
ki magát. Ha megmarad e mellett, nem fogjuk kifogásolni. Utóvégre bármihez
fog, ami produktív munka, rendben van a dolog. A mai abszurd helyzetben
ugyis annyi minden faktórral kell számolni, hogy nincs az az apa, ki biz-
tonsággal tudná gyerekét valamilyen pálya felé terelni. - Emelett figyelembe
veendő, hogy azért Istvánnak sok mindenféle tekintetbe lassankint megjön
az esze és bízom abban, hogy az érettségi és az azt remélhetőleg követő
zavartalan néhány heti vakáció után ő tényleg ambicióval és komolyan fog
nekifeküdni gyakorlati munkának, amint azt a tavalyi vakációban is meg-
tette. Ép így fog rendszeren angolul is tanulni. - Csak figyelembe kell ven-
ni lelki adottságait és lehetőleg úgy kezelni a dolgokat, hogy ő maga jöj-
jön a propozíciókkal. És itt térek rá ennek a hosszú helyzetjelentésnek
velejére. Anyu és magam nagyon hálásak vagyunk neked azért, hogy István
kiutazásának előfeltételeit igyekszel buzgón megteremteni és nem kételke-
dem abban, hogy ezért valamikor maga István is hálás lesz. Pillanatnyilag
azonban mindabban, mit e kérdéstről írsz, István nem lát csak felette való
atyáskodást, ami benne ellenkezést vált ki, úgy hogy mi egyelőre itthon
- vele szemben - teljesen levettük ezt a kérdést a napirendről. Emellett
persze szaladgálók a különféle iratok után és mindent előkészítetek vonat-
kozó utmutatásaid alapján. Te is csak folytasd a megkezdett lépéseket,
azonban leveleidben, melyeket Piczu természetesen mindig elolvas, ne tégy
említést e témáról, hanem írd meg ezeket a dolgokat egy külön czédulán,

melyet mi azután István elől elsikkasztunk. - Ne nevedd ki minket ezekért a gyerekségekért, melyeket az adott helyzetben mégis csak helyeseknek kell tartanunk. - Egyébként ugyanis még hosszú időbe kerülne, míg utazásról komolyan szó lehetne, még ha te ott mindent rendbe is hozol. Ugyanis István részére most belügyi és honvédelmi minisztériumi engedély kellene bármily utazáshoz. Ez alapon a legközelebb lejáró utlevél meghosszabbítását már meg is tagadta a rendőrség. Hogy ily engedélyt pedig mostanában mennyi idő alatt lehet szerezni, azt még nem tudom. - Mindazonáltal az általad kért okmányokat legközelebb már küldöm. - Remélem, hogy még a holnapi postával jön hír felőled. Addig is nagyon izgulunk, hogy mikor mész M.-be és hogy minő helyzetet vélsz ott találni, illetve, hogy az új lap kilátásait és a magad ottani jövőjét, miképpen képzeled. - Arra is nagyon kíváncsiak vagyunk, hogy miként sikerült a rádióelőadás és volt-e valami folyománya. Erre persze még jó darab ideig nem lehet hírnök. - Köszönöm kérdésedet Főorvos Ur dolgai tekintetében - azt hiszem nem csinált semmit sem. - Itt megemlítem, hogy a napokban jelentette a Főváros, hogy 500 milligramm rádiumot vásárolt a 27 dollár. - Az okmányomat csak tarsd magadnál mindaddig míg csak szükséged lehet rá. Csak ha végleg nem kell, akkor küldjed, hiszen van másodpéldányom. - Nagyon megnyugtató, hogy saját okmányod meghosszabbítása ügyében lépéseket szándékozol tenni. - Festményeket illető közleményeidet tudomásul vettem. - Az esztergapad miatt beszéltem Loránt mérnökkel. Azt mondja, hogy másutt is elégséges volt az a rövid ismertetés arra, hogy meginduljon a tárgyalás, de most már tudna adni bővebb anyagot is. Mikor azonban említettem ama megbeszélést, hogy az ottani hivatalos helyek inkább érdeklődnek oly dolgok iránt, melyek Angliában már használatosak, azt mondotta, hogy tán inkább várjunk 2-3 hónapig, mert ennyi idő alatt elintéződik a dolog Angliában. Tehát adott időpontban ő majd visszatér a dologra. Meglássuk tényleg el tudja-e intézni az angol dolgot. - Egyébként adott esetben azt ajánlja, hogy ne vasúttal tárgyalj majd a dolgot, hanem valamilyen szerszámgépgyárral, mely egész Au.-ra szerezne meg a találmányt és azután a saját hatáskörében tárgyalna az általad említett külön-külön vasuti minisztériumokkal. - Kíváncsi vagyok, hogy az egyéb proposíciók között találtál-e valami érdekeset. - Hallom, hogy az egyik Sziklai házaspár is M.-be teszi át székhelyét. - Kérlek írd meg, hogy azokkal az emberekkel, kikhez szóló ajánlólevelet küldöttem neked, érintkezésbe léptél-e és mily eredménnyel. Az itteni hozzátartozóknak kell, hogy referáljak. Csókollak, drága fiacskám, ezerszer

Drága fiacskám, sok aprág nimes, nagyon jól vagyunk minden a szokott mederben. Érdekelni fog, hogy Lányi Vera mintha a nyilvánosság előtt is eljegyzte magát Zolnai Laci-al (velünk még nem közöltek, de másokkal már igen). Nagyon boldogok; már Eszra b. is, ki eleinte nem bírta a dolgot, nagyon örül neki és odavetette a fűt a Friesz házához. Különben a fű Maros Erzsébetnek az unokafivére szövege minden a családban marad. Lányi Gyuri Kapasó valami ösztöndíjat Harvardban, nem megy, de persze nagyon boldog. - Küldünk neked egy Horthy-cikket, egy képpel a legközelebb meg egyet is; nem mintha azt hinnánk, hogy a cikket meg használhatod, ahogy van, de mégis küldöm, mert hátha találsz benne egy-egy adatot, amit alkalmilag felhasználasz. Nagyon várom híreidet; töllek, drágám, ezerszer

Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest II.

Letter No. 2a.

2nd May, 1940

My darling boy,

Your letter No. 11, bearing no date but a postmark of April 15, came yesterday. I am sorry you should have gone without our letters for some time; I hope they all arrived eventually; so far not a single one of yours has been lost. Let us hope communication will remain as good as it has been till now. The invoice for your birthday gifts arrived nearly four weeks ago, but of the gifts themselves there is no trace as yet; I expect they missed the boat by which the invoice came, and will turn up presently. This merely for your information.

We think and talk a lot about you these days, trying to imagine what your new life in Melbourne and your work there will be like. You certainly have had no lack of "new life starts" during the last few months. I hope this one will shape well right from the beginning and that the people you work with and the conditions will be congenial. It will certainly be interesting to help building up a new paper right from the start, and I wish I could follow it more closely than I shall be able to. Anyhow, we are greatly looking forward to your accounts and to the first issue of The Times Independent. I wonder how you will find the climate in Melbourne. By all accounts, the weather in autumn and winter will be rather like it is here to-day - pouring with rain. Despite this circumstance, we all went and spent this morning /Corpus Christi Day/ at the International Fair, and even celebrated a great event - all three of us went flying for the first time in our lives. It was a great experience and we thoroughly enjoyed it, although Father and I confessed when we landed again that we didn't mind having motionless soil under our feet for a change. István stoutly maintained that it would be most stramm to be a pilot, but not even he denied that his inside had slightly reacted to the vibration. Pity that there was no sunshine, but even so, circling round the city and getting vistas at the most surprising angles, was very interesting and beautiful - and after all, it was high time that we got a taste of flying. Besides, Father had promised me a flight exactly 26 1/2 years ago, so I had been waiting long enough. - The Fair is bigger and better than it has been in previous years; of course we only looked at a portion of it; to see everything would have been too tiring, particularly in rain and slush, but the whole impression is less cheap and trashy, and better organised, than it used to be. Goldberger's, who haven't had an exhibit for the last two years, made a particularly fine show. I was on the lookout for an exhibit of Metalle, but did not find it, and we didn't go to any extra trouble to look for it, so I don't know how they have done without you this year. The radio messages are still a great feature and just as comical and idiotic as they used to be; a new attraction is that you can send radio messages from the aeroplanes during flight - but apparently nobody cares to do that - I certainly didn't feel as if that were the one thing I wanted to do.

I am glad that "Advertising World" printed the Printing Exhibition article after all - shows how "timeless" our most topical articles are. I am not writing to Lorant about it - he gives us no statements now, although he still sends a tiny little cheque off and on - says he will only be able to give us detailed statements after the war. So let me know if and when Mr Marteau pays you for it - we'll settle with Lorant, if he does claim anything, at that remote and most uncertain date. I am also glad you were able to get rid of a few Rumanian photos - never mind the price, it's not so bad. Sales are very bad now /except here, where we never were able to sell anything before/: it's a great pity that poor Heinberg let us down and although we bombarded him with requests for Scandinavian photos for the past four months or more, he never sent us any. Surprisingly enough, he wrote and asked us to send him a great deal of material, just after the change - which we promptly did,

but we have not heard of him since.

I phoned to Mrs Fisher, Pista's mother, yesterday, because she had repeatedly been inquiring about you and I knew she would be glad to know you were going to Melbourne. She told me happily that Pista's letters sounded very cheerful and confident. Hope you will be able to verify this. The other day I met Hanna Scharl at the theatre; she, too, said she had heard good things about you from Bandi Révész, and asked to be remembered to you. She is busy working on her doctor's thesis. Lots of people send you messages and inquire about you, only I don't trouble to repeat them. István was greatly tickled the other evening, when he was invited to Agi Wiener's, because somebody or other hailed him with "How's the Faculty of Economics getting on" - mistaking him for you.

I can quite imagine that the news about this part of the world made you think and wonder even more than usual about us, but you know how it is - those most concerned with what's going on hear least of all about it. It is difficult, often impossible, to peel off rumours and conjectures and get at the actual facts, but I can tell you this - with everything in a turmoil all around, we do feel that the people who are steering our course at present are doing it with the utmost caution; they have got round several dangerous-looking cliffs and one can't help feeling hopeful that they will manage to do so in the future, too. Anyhow, we are cheerful and well, sticking to "business as usual" - although business is the one thing that is not as usual. Oh yes, it would be rather nice to pay you a little visit - even apart from the joy of seeing you again: I wonder what it does feel like to be in a country where one does not constantly walk in a circle around the self-same thoughts that have been keeping us occupied for the past two years. Well, let us hope that we shall live to see the day when our thoughts get out of the rut in which they are now running. I am very, very glad that you, at least, are occupied with different topics - but there is not the slightest reason to worry about us: we are perfectly all right, and are firmly hoping to remain so.

God bless you, my darling; all love from Mother

Letter

Letter 22 (translated from Hungarian by Katalin Gaal, September 2010)
From: Grandpa in Budapest to Dad in Australia

Pongracz Janos
2nd district Vermezo Street 6,
Budapest, Hungary
9 May 1940

My dear son! Your 12th letter /IV 19 – 24/ arrived yesterday and we are happy to know that Melbourne has made a good impression on you. God grant that everything continue well. If I remember correctly Gyuri wrote once that it rains a disproportionate amount of time in Melbourne but you must have already gotten used to that in London. The fact that the Albertis are there must make things better for you. Give them my greetings, especially to Zsuzsi, who if my memory is correct is an excellent walking partner.

It is annoying that your new boss is sick and the start of the new paper has been delayed, but in the meantime I hope that everything will be all right and that the authorisation of your contract and settlement of your salary does not depend on the starting time.

I don't think it's too tragic to call the venture "a wild cat scheme". In today's world whatever one does or does not do is a risk. You must trust in good luck. - By the way last time you wrote that you have more than one potential opportunities. I have no doubt that one of those will provide you with the opportunity for a stable income. I don't believe the hearsay that one doesn't have to do any hard work to be successful over there. It's unimaginable in these days a country or occupation which doesn't require very hard work. But if I look at the overall news of the world, I still believe that things are more favourable in that side of the world. I'm sure that Australia also has those individuals who will never amount to anything but the overwhelming number of these failures are in other parts of the world. The period of time you spend waiting before the start of the paper can be used constructively to follow up on other things. It's already a great achievement to have published some articles in a paper, not so much for the fee, which I'm sure is modest, but for the creation and nurturing of connections.

I'm sorry that I can't read the articles you mentioned but I agree with you being cautious. By the way your article about the former Yugoslavia was attached to the letter sent by Gyuri which arrived yesterday which is very clear and easy to understand for a native student in the fourth year of tertiary studies. I don't mean to demean your work at all, on the contrary it made me very happy to see that you have assessed and taken advantage of the obviously deficient circle of acquaintances over there. And if you were successful in writing such an informative article about Yugoslavia then no doubt you will be able to introduce many other things to the reading audience about other countries and topics. If perhaps you might need any tools, books, etc just say the word. – I will always send you interesting items anyway about current news from the newspapers. I'm also sending the "Zurich" which complements the "Weltwoche" very well as the latter focuses on generalities while "Zurich" provides interesting details.

With regards to Istvan, I agree completely that it would be a waste to go to all that effort for him while his plans have not taken serious form. Nevertheless I will send you the records you have requested as I have already obtained them. Therefore I'm sending the medical and moral certificates as well as the photo with normal post. I think I will also get a little certificate for Istvan's workshop activities from last year, I will send that later. Let these things be with you as if the need arises there won't be any more delay.

The school year ended the day before yesterday with the usual march after which part of the class met at Fruhschoppen in a restaurant called Gul Baba. It seems that the mood was excellent because the boys were told half officially that there won't be a considerable number of fails in the class exams

which started yesterday, today and continue tomorrow. The written tests will be held during the same days next week, and three weeks later the orals. I'm certain that there won't be any trouble. In the meantime Istvan has been very moody. He is often restless and in a good mood, and at other times he is drained and pessimistic, but this is usual just before matriculation and doesn't cause any problems. Furthermore I can't talk to the child about any future plans. This must be postponed.

I'm glad you agree with us that Istvan can't be forced to do anything as nothing good can come of force. It's true that we risk him missing the opportunity to travel there, but as you say, that only makes sense if he's enthusiastic about it. It's not out of the question that this may happen one day, if the child understands all the obstacles that he will face at home when he starts anything. If he realises this too late – too bad. I can't help it. Unfortunately Istvan realises everything too late; he doesn't listen to what we or others say to him, only his own experiences. Even so he understands many things and when he's not mucking around he shows signs of serious intelligence. I hope and trust that when the hated school system will no longer suppress him he will become a nice, intelligent and purposeful person.

Thank you for your news about Dr Sandon and the relative from Malonya. I haven't heard anything of Apor for a long time, I will try to inquire.

As our first attempt to send books was successful I will periodically continue with sending it. I will send two volumes of Keynes with my next package of printed material. A letter arrived from Aurel yesterday in which he expresses his belief once again that after your conversation in London you will be successful in Australia. He has acknowledged the receipt of the letter from Auckland, but he doesn't mention the lack of postage.

Today I met the Fekete couple and their daughter. They couldn't provide any news about Gabi. They are really hoping to get direct news from you. The little girl has become a big-boned woman and in a month she will marry a man from Papa who works with textiles. I'll leave some space for Mum.

I kiss you a thousand times, Dad.

Pongrácz János
II. Vörmező-u.6.,
Budapest, Hungary

22.sz.

1940. május 9.

Drága fiacskám ! 12.sz. leveled /IV.19.-24/ tegnap megjött és örömmel vesz-
szük belőle tudomásul, hogy Melbourne jó benyomást tett reád. Adja Isten,
hogy továbbra is minden jól menjen. Ha jól emlékezem, akkor Gyuri valamikor
azt írta, hogy M.-ben aránytalanul sokat esik, de hát ezt már Londonban is
megszokhattad. Albertiék ottléte bizonyára sok kellemetességet jelent ré-
szedre. Add át nekik meleg üdvözleteimet, különösen Zsuzsinak, ki most is
még mint kitűnő kirándulási partner van emlékezetemben. - Hogy új főnököd
beteg és hogy a lap megindulása kitolódott, bizony nagyon bosszantó dolog,
de közben remélem, hogy minden rendbe jött, valamint azt is, hogy szerző-
déssed érvénybelépése, illetve fizetésed liquidálása független a tényleges
megindulás időpontjától. - Azt nem veszem túl tragikusan, hogy "wild cat
scheme"-nak mondják a vállalkozást. A mai világban bármit csinál az ember,
vagy bármit elmulaszt csinálni, körülbelül lutriszámba megy. Bizni kell a
jószerencséjében. - Egyébként a multkoriban egyszer azt írtad, hogy több va-
sad van a tűzben. Nem kételkedem abban, hogy valamelyikből csak kikovácsolsz
magadnak komoly életlehetőséget. - Távol áll tőlem az a hiedelem, hogy ott
az embernek sült galambok esnek szájába. Nem is képzelhető napjainkban oly
ország vagy oly szakma, melyben ne kéne nagyon megdolgozni mindenért. De
ha az egész világról befutó híreket nézem, mégis azt látom, hogy a te vi-
lágrészedből érkező jelentések a legkedvezőbbek. Bizonyára Au.-ban is akad
nagyon sok jövevény, ki sohasem fog zöld ágra vergődni, de az egyéb világ-
részekben az ily failure-ek vannak tulsúlyban. - Az a darab idő pedig, melyet
most ottan eltöltesz a lap megindulása előtt, talán egészen jól jön neked
arra, hogy más dolgoknak járjass utána. - Már az is nagyon szép eredmény,
hogy egyéb lapoknál tudtál közben cikkeket elhelyezni, nem annyira ama bi-
zonyára szerény díjazás miatt, melyet értük kaptál, hanem a kapcsolatok
megteremtése és ápolása szempontjából. Sajnálom, hogy nem olvashatom az ál-
tala megemlített cikkeket, de nagyon helyeslem óvatosságodat. Egyébként
Gyuri tegnap érkezett leveléhez csatolva volt Jugoszláviáról szóló cikked,
mely nagyon világos és érthető egy idevalósi, mondjuk negyedik gimnazista
szempontjából. Ezzel a világeért sem akarom lebecsülni cikked érdemeit,
ellenkezőleg nagy örömet okoz nekem látni azt, hogy az ottani - e tekintet-
ben úgy látszik nagyon fogyatékos - ismeretköröd így hamar megállapítottad
és hasznodra fordítottad. És ha sikerült így ismeretterjesztő cikket el-
helyezni Jugoszláviáról, akkor bizonyára más országokról és más vonatkozá-
sokról is sok mindent lehet még az ottani olvasóközönséggel megismertetni. -
Ha netán valamilyen segédeszközökre, könyvekre stb. volna szükséged, akkor
csak szólj. - Érdekes itteni közleményeket ugyanis küldök neked, ha akadnak a
lapokban. Ugyyszintén időnkint küldöm majd a Zürichert, mely nagyon jól el-
kél a Weltwoche mellett. Mert utóbbi inkább általánosságokat hoz, míg a
Züricher sokszor nagyon érdekes adatokat nyújt. - Ami Istvánt illeti, tel-
jesen egyet értek azzal, hogy kár volna neked különös erőfeszítéseket tenned
érdekében, míg az ő szándékai nem öltenek komoly alakot. Az általa kért
okmányokat azonban mindenesetre elküldöm neked, minthogy azokat már megsze-
reztem. Rendes postával küldöm tehát az orvosi és az erkölcsi bizonyítványt,
valamint a fényképet. Azt hiszem kapok majd egy kis bizonyítványt István
tavalyi műhelybeli tevékenységéről is, a tit majd pótlólag küldök. Legyenek
nálad ezek a dolgok, hogy adott esetben újabb késedelem ne álljon be. - Teg-
napelőtt végződött az iskolai év a szokásos ballagással, mely után az osz-
tály egyrésze Frühschoppenra gyűlt össze a Gül Baba-vendéglőben. Ugy látszik,
hogy kitűnő volt a hangulat, már csak azért is, mert közölték a fiukkal fél-
hivatalosan, hogy nem lesznek számottevő bukások az osztályvizsgákon, melyek
tegnap indultak meg, ma és holnap folytatódnak. Jövő hét azonos napjain

lesznek az írásbeliek, három héttel később a szóbeliek. Biztosra veszem, hogy nem lesz semmi baj sem. Közben István hangulata néha szélsőséges. Gyakran nem fér a bőrébe, oly jó kedvű, máskor megint kimerült és kishitű, de ez már matura előtt így szokott lenni és nem okoz gondot. Mindamelett érdemlegesen nem lehet a gyerekek most jövőbeli tervekről beszélni. Ezt későbbre kell hagyni. - Örülök, hogy te is egyet értesz velünk abban, hogy nem kell és nem lehet Istvánt semmire sem kényszeríteni, mert kényszerből nem jöhet ki semmi okos dolog. Igaz, hogy ezzel riszkirozzuk, hogy esetleg lekésik a kiméleti lehetőségekről, de amint magad is mondod, a kiméletnek csak akkor volna értelme, ha ő ezért lelkesednék. Nem tartom kizártnak, hogy erre is még sor fog kerülni, ha a gyerek jobban fogja látni azt a sok Hemmungot, mely itthon fel fog tárulni előtte, ha valamihez hozzá akar fogni. Ha csak túl későn eszmél fel - tant pis. Ezen nem tudok segíteni. Sajnos az egész vonalon úgy vagyunk Istvánnal, hogy mindre csak túl későn jön rá; arra, amit mi vagy mások mondanak neki, nem sokat ad, csak saját tapasztalataira. De azért már ily módon is sok mindenre rájött és amikor éppen nem blödlizik, akkor akkor komoly intelligenciáról tesz tanúságot. Remélem és bizom benne, hogy ha a gyűlölt iskola mindenféle kényszere már nem fogja nyomni, egész rendes, értelmes és céltudatos emberré fog válni. - Dr. Sandon és a Malonyai-rokon tárgyában adott felvilágosításaidat köszönöm. - Aporról már nagyon rég nem hallottam semmit sem. Majd igyekszem érdeklődni. - Minthogy első könyvküldeményünk rendben megjött, majd időnkint folytatom az expedíálást. Legközelebbi nyomtatványküldeményemmel megy a két kötet Keynes. - Auréltól ép tegnap jött levél, melyben megint kifejtí, hogy veled való londoni beszélgetései után, biztosra veszi, hogy Au.-ban révébe fogsz érni. Igazolja az aucklandi levél vételét, de a portóhiányt nem említi. - Ép ma találkoztam a Fekete házaspárral és lányukkal. Gabiról nem tudtak semmi ujságot mondani. Nagyon vágyódik közvetlen híradás után részedről. A kis leányból nagy drum nő lett, ki egy hónap múlva férjhez megy egy pápai textilgyári emberhez. Anyunak is hagyok kis helyet. - Csókollak ezerszer

Egy

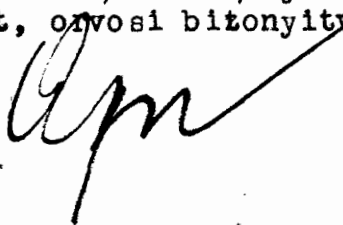
*Drága fiaeszkám, nem maradt sok közölni való, csak
kiegészítésként: hogy én is teljesen egyetértek azzal, amit Istvánnal
vonalakozolag írtál és örülök annak, hogy megintad s ő elolvas-
hatta, mert ebből látja, hogy ha foglalkozunk is jövőjével, róla -
nélküle nem fogunk semmit csinálni. Az okmányokat meg
az ő tudtán kívül küldjük, de most igazán csak azért, hogy
azok mindegyikére nálad legyenek, amilyen bizalmasan
látod az esélyek, hogy nem lehet tudni, nem lesz-e ez valami
kor célzerű. De most én sem tartanám helyesnek, ha a bizony-
ra körülmények és nehéz lépéseket megfennid. Nem hiszem, hogy
a késedelem olyan ránt jelentene, mint amilyent a gyerekek az elő-
zők közbejöttével lehetünk. Valami érdekeset majd csak kez-
dünk vele, mindenestre valami technikai - mechanikai gyakorlat-
eről bővebbet majd 4-6 hét múlva. - Nagyon örülök, Sun-beli cikke-
nek, amúgy is inkább, mivel erről nyilvánlagból való elutasításokról
nem tudtal; megvallom, h. én is sajnáltam belőle egyet - most, igaz, hogy én
nem jártam IV. gimnáziumba - de Apru hírad, ha azt hiszi, hogy őt ilyen érdekes
dolgot tanulnak! Nagyon örülök, h. jó lakást találtál és h. lesz
neked a város és a közélet - minden isten áldásával.*

Pongrácz János,
II. Vérmező-u.6.,
Budapest, Hungary

23.sz.

1940. ~~apr~~ máj.9.

Drága fiacskám ! A mai légipóstalevelemben /22.sz./ jelzett iratokat itt küldöm : István erkölcsi bizonyítványát, orvosi bizonyítványát, fényképét. Csókollak



Még Londonból hazaküldöttél volt néhány negatívot másolásra. A másolatokat akkor megküldöttük neked, a negatívok azonban itt maradtak. Most itt mellékelem ezeket, hátha kollekciód teljessége okából szívesen helyezel arra, hogy birtokodban legyenek.

Pongrácz János
II. Vörösmarty-u.6.,
Budapest, Hung-ry

24.sz.

1940. május 16.

Drága fiacskám !

Március 18.-án kelt, 8.sz. leveled, mellékleteivel együtt tegnap be -
futott. A strandképet, mint tudod, Nánibrék révén már ismertük, de azért
nagyon örültünk érkezésének. A mostani nehéz időkben jól esik ezt a ké-
pet időről-időre kissé kézbevenni és megnézni. Nagy adag megnyugtató és
stimulálást lehet belőle kisorsolni. Adja Isten, hogy továbbra is mindig
legyen alkalom oly derűsen belekacszalni a világba, mint azt ezen a képen
teszed. - A romániai cikkek alapján visszavonom azt, amit utolsó levelem-
ben a negyedik gimnázistáról írtam. Belátom, hogy európai nagyképűség
feltételezni azt az odaválósokról, hogy nekik minden európai piszlicsár
országról tudniuk kell oly dolgokat, melyeket itt a szomszédban tudunk
/vagy esetleg nem is tudunk/. Utóvégre kinek a gyereke nincsen Au.-ban
és ki e révén nem olvasott egy-két könyvet, az Pesten sem oly nagy tudós
odaírti dolgok terén. A különbség legfeljebb ott van, hogy ezek a nagy -
szerű ausztráliai országok nem okoznak annyi bajt és gondot a világnak,
mint a délkeleteurópaiak. Neked mindenestre jól jön az ottaniak tájéko-
zatlansága. - Alkalmassint csak hajszálon mult, hogy az események nem ad-
ták tolladra Szlovákiát. Az utolsó napok tele voltak erre az országra
vonatkozó hírekkel, míg most hivatalos dementik következtek be. De ami
késik, az tán nem mulik. - Hírekben, izgalomban egyébként sincsen hiány
és különösen a legutolsó napok fejleményei Olaszországban arra mutatnak,
hogy a hadviselő felek száma napokon belül megnövekszik. A mi szempon -
tunkból úgy ígérkezik a dolog, hogy mentől több ország van elfoglalva
Nyugaton, annál inkább van kilátás arra, hogy Délkelet-Európa nyugalma
nem lesz megzavarva. De esetleges olasz beavatkozástól nagyon féltem a
mi levelezési lehetőségeinket, pláne ha még a hollandi gyarmatokon is
baj találna lenni. Ha bekövetkeznék a repülőjáratok beszüntetése, akkor
prakticze el vagyunk vágva egymástól, mert akkor a lassu hajóutra egy-
általán nem lehet számítani, még úgy sem. - Anyu ép szól, hogy hagyjak
neki több helyet, mint legutóbb. Tehát csak annyit, hogy ha az érintke-
zési lehetőség meg is találna szünni, gondoltam, jó kívánságaim és
biztalan a jövőben állandóan veled lesznek továbbra is. Csakollak, drága
fiacskám, ezerszer

My darling boy,

It's nice to get ordinary mail from you, too, as a surprise
once in a while. I think your articles are very good indeed and I admire
you for having so quickly got into the knack of stating what you mean brief-
ly and being informative without being encyclopaedic. I apologise for my
criticism of the other day and take it all back! I haven't been able to
learn to this day to be concise, to stop meandering through long sentences
on the old-fashioned continental way - so I admire you all the more for
being able to put yourself in your reader's place, for getting his slant.
You've also got the "personal" note which I said you were lacking, so all
my objections are ruled out. However, may I mention that "Brush up your
Yugoslav" - a very good feature, by the way - reminds me of what I read in
an article the other day about the "Belgian language" and of what a lady
said about someone who went to Brazil and "learnt Brazilian"! But that's the
only hair I've found to split in your articles so far!

Your birthday presents have arrived at last, but they're
still at the Customs House, to be delivered in a day or two. We are greatly
looking forward to seeing them and I think we are going to have a special

second birthday celebration in their honour. Thanks for copies of "Woman" and "Picture News" which also came yesterday. As far as I can see there's not much we can do for "Woman" and it seems hardly worth while to take things away from Lorant, who makes such a point of handling all our stuff for the Dominions, in order to send them to Mrs Gye. It is true that Lorant sells very very little these days, but that's no wonder. If we do send anything to Mrs Gye direct - household hints or recipes, or the like - I'll let you know. - By the way, Bandi had a letter from a Mr Breuer whom he met at a course in photography a year ago. He now calls himself John Balfour International Press Photo Agency and his address is Melbourne, G. P. O. Box 2798V. To judge from his letter, he is only just starting; he asks us for pictures, but Bandi is writing to tell him we haven't got the sort of thing that he wants, and that anyhow we have a representative in Australia. This is merely for your information: you may come across him; eventually, you may find occasion to collaborate with him, since apparently the good man doesn't know much English, as he is asking us to send captions to pictures in English. I know nothing more about him, except that he has invested in very impressive note-paper. - As far as I know, Ervin Rado is also press photographing in Melbourne, and as far as his mother knows he is doing well - but of course I know that mothers are no reliable sources of information.

Perhaps by the time you get this you will already be working at the Times Indep. office - I hope so, for your sake, for I know that although you are sure find plenty to do in other ways, you are impatient to start regular work and see how it's going. We are greatly looking forward to your next letter - let us hope our correspondence will not be impeded! Naturally, events on the Western front and possible developments elsewhere are the only things we think and talk about at present. Mobilization of two army corps here also caused excitement until the official explanation soothed apprehensions. Just now I spoke to Mrs Székely, a lady whom I met at Matlárháza last summer, and she told me she had registered a room there for July, and strongly urged me to do the same - this is just to show you the present attitude!

Our dear landlady has again given us notice to quit for Nov. 1st, for a change. This time we're trying to fight her on the grounds that the new Tenants' Protection provisions stipulate that landlords may only serve notice to quit for apartments over four rooms - and we contend that ours is a four-room one which only we have turned into five. I am afraid, however, that she will win this time, and we'll have to go - rather unpleasant, for there is great scarcity in flats now. Well, we shall see.

István is in the middle of his written exam - yesterday was Hungarian, which he thinks has gone off well, and since he inclines to be pessimistic as to his own achievements, I am sure he has done well. The theme was "The role of physics in medicine and health care" or something similar; he preferred it to the alternative "Characterisation of Mothers in Hung. literature." Both pretty easy, and he says the profs. were decent and the ordeal which has been such a bugbear for years, was not terrible in the least. To-day is German and to-morrow, Latin. In my clearer moments I realize what a crazy thing it is to spend months and years, money and nerves, to pass an exam about Mothers in Hungarian Literature while the world is tumbling about one's ears - but what can one do? In Rome one must do as the Romans do - worse luck - and there is nothing better I could substitute for it, given the present circumstances and I's individual characteristics. I'm glad he is getting through it much more cheerfully than I hoped. His tutor, Molnár, is largely responsible for this; he is handling him very wisely. A great asset is also M's other pupil with whom I. has made great friends: young Barcza, nephew of your friend the H. Minister in London, a very nice boy, intelligent, too - who has for some mysterious reason also been doing very badly at school. They study together and get on very well; pity it's a friendship that can hardly last nowadays.

Weather is cold and unpleasant again - there is even central heat in the evenings! Darling, by the time you make up your mind to ask for your heavy coat and I can send it, it will be spring again! Hope you won't need it.

all fondest love Mother

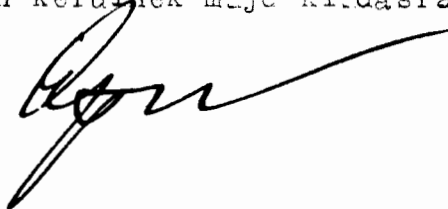
Did I tell you, Liddy, Ferdele is going to be married? The lucky man is in the textile business in Eger, home town of Mrs. F.

Pongrácz János
II. Vérmező-u.6.
Budapest, Hungary

25.sz.

1940. május 20.

Drága fiacskám ! Minthogy a multkoriban emlitted, hogy vannak kundsajt-
jaid magyar bélyegekre, e boritékon küldök két új példányt. Mint ezekről
látod, tetemes felárral hozattak forgalomba a posta által. Azonban így
is csak oly kis mennyiségben, hogy további felárral kereskedőtől kellett
beszereznem a bélyegeket. Hamár ennyit költöttem rájuk, még az ajánlási
díjat is spendirozom, hogy biztosan megkapjad a küldeményt sértetlenül.
Megjegyzem, hogy az 1 pengős feláru bélyegek, a hozzájuk tartozó kerettel
együtt, 1 darabos blokkokban kerültek kiadásra, míg a másik bélyeg a szo-
kásos rendez ívekben. - Állítólag a közel jövőben újabb árvízbélyegek,
csekély felárral, teljes sorozatban kerülnek majd kiadásra. Persze ezekből
is küldök majd. Csókollak



Pongrácz János
II. Vörmező-u.6.,
Budapest, Hungary

26.szám

1940. május 23.

Drága fiacskám ! E hó 20.-án, 25.sz. alatt rendes postán ajánlott levelet küldöttem neked, csak a ráragasztott bélyegek miatt. A levél tartalma is csak ezekre vonatkozik. - Közben befutott a te 13.sz.leveled, melynek, első sorban, üzleti vonatkozású tartalmára válaszolok. - Sajnos e tekintetben a kilátások igen kedvezőtleneknek bizonyultak közben. T.i.ha az ottani devizagazdálkodás lehetetlenné teszi, hogy pénzt küldjetez ide, akkor le kell mondani minden kísérletezésről magyar találmányokkal. - Uyanis aggályaim támadtak, hogy a M.N.B. vajjon minő álláspontot foglal el és hogy bizonyosságot szerezzek, ma felkerestem a Bank illetékes osztályát, hol is azt a felvilágosítást kaptam, hogy szabadságot Au.-ba csak engedéllyel lehet átruházni, az engedélyt pedig csak deviza ellenében adják meg. Tehát az általam felvetett gondolat, hogy én vegyem meg itthon pengőért az illető jogositványokat és quasi ajándék-ként ruházzam át reád vagy feleidre - tilos. /Nem beszélve arról, hogy a dolo keresztülvitele, ha nem volna tilos, akkor is nehézségekbe ütközne. Tudod, hogy csekély depot-m jelentékeny része angol és hollandi tranche-u Népszövetségi kötvényből áll. Ezek árfolyama p rsze az utóbbi időben lényegesen csökkent, úgy hogy a lombard lehetőségek alakulása a jövőben nagyon is bizonytalan. Azért egy vagy kétezer pengő talán nem okozna nehézséget, de már több ily tételt sehogy sem bírnék el. De ezt csak a teljesség kedvéért említem meg, mert hiszen az említett tilalom miatt a zárójelen belüli passusnak csak akadémikus jelentősége van./- Mielőtt a M.N.B.-nál eljárnam volna azonban már tárgyalnam volt a tekintetbe jövő felekkel és megbeszéléseim eredményét mindenesetre közlöm. Háttha mégis akad mód arra, hogy ott devizaengedélyt nyerjetez. - Tehát : Grafológia. A feltaláló kész volna kizárólagosságot engedélyezni Au.-ra, N.Z.-ra és annyi körülfekvő szigetre, amennyit csak akarsz 2000 pengőért. Ez persze első ajánlat és nem kételem, hogy adott esetben alkudni lehetne. - Ezt a kizárólagosságot persze mással, mint írásbeli nyilatkozatával nem tudja garantálni. De nem is hiszem, hogy ily garanciára szükség volna. Az biztos, hogy eddig nem áll összeköttetésben odakint senkivel sem a feltaláló, tehát az előnyöd megvolna. Másrészt, úgy vélem, hogy az egész dolog csak egy saisonra alkalmas, amint itthon is csak egy idényben került piacra. És pedig elkelt állítólag 2000 készlet, 20 pengőnyi horribilis áron. A feltaláló azért ezabta meg ily magasra az árat, mivel sokat kellett leadni a viszontelárusítóknak, másrészt pedig netáni külföldi üzletek szempontjából látta jónak a magas árat, tekintetbe véve azt is, hogy Budapest utóvégre tízezzrével úgy sem tudta volna felvenni az árut, még ha csak öt pengőjével is árusították volna.- A magyar szabadságot engedélyezve van, de a feltaláló a kihirdetést elhalasztotta, hog a védelmi periódus később járjon le. Csak augusztusban fog megtörténni a kihirdetés, mikortól kezdve számítódik majd az egyéves nemzetközi védelem, ha ugyan a berni egyezmény a politika folyamánként fel nem fordul. - Sehol külföldön eddig nemkerült a cikk sem gyártásra, sem eladásra. - Itthon a készlet a Feltalálók egyesülete versenyén megnyerte az arany érmet. - Ennek következményeként írtak a dologról a pesti lapok és lett figyelmessé három külföldi tudósító is. Így megjelent az Observerben és a pittsburghi Sonetagsboteban egy egy közlemény, mint a budapesti tudósítójuk jelentése. Mindkét közleményt lemasoltam részére és a másolatot a legközelebbi "üzleti papir" küldeménynyel el juttatom hozzád, noha nem bír nagy fontossággal. A harmadik /fényképes/ közlemény állítólag megjelent a N.Y.T.-ban, de erről nincs támpéldány, nem ismeretes a megjelenés időpontja sem. A fotóriporter pedig, aki a közleményt csinálta, elköltözködött külföldre és a feltaláló még a nevére sem emlékezik.- Angol íráspróbák nincsenek és a kisse lassan mozduló feltaláló nem is akar ilye-

neket elkészíttetni. Igért azonban a jövő hétre egy angol prospektust, mely szerinte, feleslegessé tesz ily angol íráspróbákat. - Kliséket, megint szerinte, nem érdemes küldeni, mivel a portó legalább annyiba kerülne, mint az ottani elkészítés. - Opciót szívesen ad, ha komolyságunkat azzal dokumentáljuk, hogy egy csekély összeget, pld. 200 pengőt ezért kifizetünk. Négy hónapra szabja meg az opció tartamát. Biztosan minderről is volna még alkunk helye. - Kiderült, hogy a feltalálónak van Melbourneban egy sógora Fellner Imre nevű. Az illető Csepelen volt alkalmazva, most pedig heti 8 font fizetéssel egy ottani vasöntőben dolgozik. Mikor az illető elment, a feltaláló átadta neki a készletet, hogy próbáljon valamit csinálni vele odakint, de nem történt e téren semmi sem. Mindazonáltal súlyt helyez a feltaláló arra, hogy ha netán a véletlen összehozna téged F.-rel, ne említsd neki a dolgot, míg a szerződés nincsen kezében. - Roulette. Seholy e cikkkel nem kísérletezett még. Ugy véli, ha a hazárdjátékokra vonatkozó hazai tilalmak nem akadályozzák a cikk forgalombahozatalát, az ottaniakat is ki lehet talán kerülni, ha a játék gyermek-társasjáték jellegét emeli ki az ember. - Fiziológiai automata. Ez a feltaláló legújabb szabadalma. Ugy látszik szintén egészen ügyes dolog. Leírását legközelebb küldöm majd. Egyelőre még nem szabad, mivel az utolsó véderő-törvény értelmében minden szabadalom forgalombahozatalához szükség van a Honvédelmi Minister engedélyére. Ez az engedély - persze nem kétes - csak egy-két hét múlva fog leérkezni. - Zár. Erről az ügyről is még tegnap tárgyaltam és a vállalat megígérte, hogy postán eljuttat hozzám egy részletes kalkulációs adatokat tartalmazó írást. - Továbbá közölni fogja írásban, hogy mennyit ér a licenszért. - Közben azonban a M.N.B.-kal folytatott megbeszélésem során ez az ügy is szóba került és az illető közeg azt állította, hogy a vállalat Au.-ba exportál ily záradakat. Oly cikkekre pedig, melyből export van, a Bank nem engedélyez licenszt az illető ország részére. Erre telefonon beszéltem a feltalálóval és abban maradtunk, hogy holnapután ismét felkeresem, hogy ezt a témát is megtárgyaljuk. Ő előzően nem említett volt ez irányú exportot. - Orvosságok. Mineműre beszélek az illetővel, de csak annyit mondom, hogy foglalkozol a dolgokkal. Opciót nem fogok kérni tőle. Oly hosszú időre, azt hiszem, ne volna nagyon érdemes neki, de neked sem. Az ily orvosságok úgy teremnek, mint a gomba eső után és nem kétes, hogy bármikor, ha a cikk érdekel, ettől az embertől, vagy másiktól vagy másoktól tömérdek anyagot lehet majd kapni. - Mindezt a kezdetben említett nehéz ségek ellenére tárgyalom ily bőven és vigyok örömmel kézen tovább is tárgyalni. Nagyon jó az ilyesmi arra, hogy elvonja az ember figyelmét percekre vagy órákra a politikai viszonyoktól. A világpolitikaikat értem, itthon minden csendes és rendes, hűlt Istennek. Minden egyébről Anyu ír. Csókolak

My darling boy, - I am going to be very brief to-day so as to save postage - more next time. Your presents arrived at last - many thanks ~~and~~ once more, they are very pretty. The vase stands on my writing-table and will always have a flower in it. However, I'm afraid both you and we must deny ourselves the pleasure of giving each other presents - duty's too high. Not in this case, but in the future! I am very sorry to think of you as temporarily unemployed, but never mind - I firmly hope your new job is worth waiting for. Glad your landlord- and lady are so nice and that you are comfortable in your digs. - Am writing to our various friends re your articles - don't know whether I can get in touch with Lorant and Tabori at present. Press Alliance, N.Y. has apparently not sold a thing, either of yours or of ours - nothing, all this time, except two recipes, of all people, to "Woman", Sydney! - Gave clipping re Korodi to Kató. Extremely foolish, to say the least of it! He has, in fact, been charged by the Arts and Crafts Soc. with creating a market for Hungarian product in Australia, since he was going there on an excursion anyway - that's what he means by "being sent by the Govt." "Old Women's Summer" is called "Indian summer" in English but I know of no equivalent for "little fish" are good fish! All my other news will have to keep until next time - there's nothing of importance anyhow. All fondest love *Mother*

27.sz.levél

Pongrácz János
II. Vörösmarty-u.6.,
Budapest, Hungary

1940. május 26.

Drága fiacskám ! Noha az általános helyzet nem nagyon biztató és noha már megírtad volt, hogy ottan nem kapni devizát importok fedezésére, mégis nem akarom a felvett fonalakat ismét elejteni. Háttha mégis akad valamikor valami lehetőség. Így tehát ismét beszéltem a Kréta r.t.-vel a záruk miatt. Azt mondja a vállalat, hogy az az információ, melyet a MNB-től nyertem és melyet utolsó levelemben közöltem, hogy t.i. a kérdéses cikkek a bank nem engedélyez licens-eladást, mivel a gyár magát az árut exportálja, téves. A helyzet valójában az, hogy a gyár mindenfelé igyekszik eladni és az ehhez való engedélyt biztosította magának a banknál. De nem mindenütt sikerült valóságos eredményt elérni, sőt nem is csinált mindenütt kísérleteket. Így Au.-ban sem, míg pld. Holland Indiában tényleg eladott. Ha tehát most a vállalat azt mondaná a banknak, hogy ez a helyzet, akkor utóbbi alkalmasint visszavonná az egyik engedélyt és megadná a másikat, konkrét ajánlat esetén. Ilykép tehát, ha az ottani helyzet esetleg mégis lehetővé tenné az üzlet-kötést, akkor kaphatsz akár árut, akár gyártási engedélyt.- Kalkulációk megejthetése érdekében a gyár egy levélben, melyet leközelebbi üzleti-papir küldeményemmel juttatok majd el hozzád, a következő önköltség elemzést adja meg : Nyersanyag - hidegen hengerelt fényes szalagvas, 0.3-tól 4-ig

terjedő vastagságban /természetesen milliméter/, 14 külön -
böző méretben, kulcs készítésre szükséges lágy öntvények,
szál huzalok, 0.9 mm Ø rugó aczélok, vas szegecses, sár-
garéz fogaskerék, csavarok, adjustáló anyaggal, kulcs nik-
kelezésével, a kulcsozimke kromozásával, minden együtt
per 0/00 db zár, anyag súly 80 kg, anyag érték

P	92.63
"	95.58
"	80.-
"	90.-

Munkabér, 120 munkára

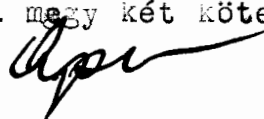
Szerszámköltségek amortizációja

Regie

1000 db. előállítási költsége, hazai árak és bérek alapján P 358.21.

Üzletkötés esetén persze rendelkezésre állanak a részletes és pontos adatok. A gyártási engedély díját az egyéb valuták mosteni ingadozására való tekintettel dollárértékben adja meg a gyár és pedig darabonként 6 dollárcenttel, minimálisan 100,000 darab vállalása esetén. /Arra az ellenvetésemre, hogy ez óriási mennyiség, azt mondja a gyár, hogy ha Budapest évi forgalma - igaz, hogy nem csak Intakt-ban, hanem valamennyi típusban - legalább ennyi, akkor egész Au.-ban és környékén, kellő propagandával a mondott mennyiség nem elérhetetlen szerinte. De hozzátette, hogy lehet vele erről még beszélni./ Örök áron való eladásnál 8000 dollárt kérnek. - Ha nem licens, hanem effectiv áru kívántatik, akkor záranként 1 dollár volna az ár. Ehhez járul ca 15 % a fuvar-költségek fejében. A biztosítást vevőnek kellene még ezenfelül viselnie. - Az említett levél csak a gyártási kalkulációt tartalmazza, míg fenti árakat szóbelileg adta meg a vállalat nekem azzal, hogy ezek csak tájékoztató árak, melyekről szintén lehet még beszélni, ha már komolyra fordul a dolog. - Ha minden várakozás ellenére tényleg módokban volna ezzel a dologgal valamit csinálni, akkor jó volna, ha a levelezés ezentúl ügyfeled és a gyár között közvetlen levélváltás útján történne, hogy a tárgyalásnak komolyabb jellege kiütközzék. Persze azért jöhetne a gyárhoz intézett levél a nekem szóló bo-
ritékban, csak tartalma legyen közvetlen közlemény, esetleg ajánlat. - Dr. Battyai is beszéltem. Mondottam, hogy jelenleg üzletkötés nem várható - de - vizaneheztségek miatt, de továbbra is szemmel tartod az ügyet, mely talán még megéri. - Nem kell félned, hogy Battyai kiugrik. - Különböző oldalról hallok felőled, így pld. via Sziklai-Abonyi, vagy Körner-Feiks uton. Mindenki nagy

barátsággal emlékezik meg rólad. -Az íróasztalon elhelyezett ajándékváza minden látogatónak feltűnik. Természeténél fogva a szalvétagyűrűnek nincsen ekkora publikuma. De mi, mindketten szörnyen örülünk ezeknek a tárgyaknak, melyek állandó érintkezésben tartanak a te ottani életeddél. -István, az ő standarjához kepest rengeteget tanul és, megint csak viszonylag, nagyon rendesen viseli magát. -Ugy látszik, hogy a háztulajdonos nem adott be keresetet ellenünk /végleg csak holnapután derül ki/, mely esetben legalább még egy évig nyugodtan itt maradhatunk. Nyugalmunkat legfeljebb az teszi kétéssé, hogy ablakaink előtt, a hajdani jégpályán, rejtélyes munkálatok folynak. Biztosat senki sem tud, de a közhiedelem szerint valami Beszkárt indóház lesz itt. Ez bizony nem nagyon volna kíváncsú, nyugalomunk szempontjából. - Legközelebbi nyomtatványküldeménynyel meg két kötet Cassel és egy kötet Ray Vance. - Csókollak fiacskám



My darling boy,

at long last we are having lovely summer weather, a peaceful Sunday morning when it is difficult to imagine what is going on not so far from us, and what is at stake - and I am sitting on the balcony typing this letter to you, to the great surprise of our new neighbour, a retired schoolmaster who does not approve of such goings-on. Sometimes I play with the idea that you are really here, just spending the day on the river - but most of the time I am deeply thankful that you went when you did, and that, of all places, you are in Australia - as far as one can predict anything, it is certainly going to be the best place for the next decade or two. As for my personal opinion of the next decade or two, don't ask me for it. Well, such reflections are futile and space is scarce, so I had better revert to the present. I have all sorts of "personal news" items for you to-day. Gyuszi Dezsényi is about to be married; young lady is his colleague at the Comm. Bank, secret engagement of long ~~standing~~ duration, hardened and proved during eight years of excursions. Bandi Jacobi is about to marry a Miss Thaly, excellent family, two ancient predicates, not a cent but a job in a bank, very charming girl according to the testimony of neutral observers, love affair of three years' standing; they are going to live with Uncle Andor who is apparently very pleased. They /the J. parents/ were here last night and announced the engagement, and also another sensation: Jolan is planning a lecture tour in USA next autumn /do you Australians call it "Fall"?/ and showed us the publicity leaflet issued by her agents, with her photo and biography - stunning! I don't think, despite, your Dixon diploma, you could do as well. She's to lecture to women's clubs on "The psychology of the age over 50" and on personalities she has known, wants me to translate her lectures. Remarkable woman! I wish I had half her tenacity. Two other tourists bound for the USA are Hanna Scharl and her Aunt Böske Róna who is to work at Berkeley University while Hanna means to take a postgraduate course at some other university, I forget which, and hopes for a scholarship eventually /subject:statistics/. They are to ~~xxxxxx~~ sail from an Italian port in a few days: of course Mrs. S. is very much upset and agitated. Yesterday we went to see Zsiga Lányi who has undergone a grave operation but is very much better now. Vera is to be married in July and they will occupy George's flat. Aunt Irma has also had a slight operation /varicose veins on her legs/ but is doing very well. I think that's about all for to-day. Father always writes so much about negative business matters that I have no room for recipes! Next time, perhaps. Thanks for information re Hevesi's permit. I told him so in advance, but he wouldn't believe me! I hope you are not letting your temporary unemployment, knowing that it won't last, depress you /excuse confused syntax; I am reading a book by Hergesheimer, a great writer, and he does just that/. After all, you always counted on this; it's bound to happen, and now you've got your bearings, and friends, etc. it should worry you still less than it would have if you had failed to find something to do from the first. Nevertheless, I am greatly looking forward to the start of The T. I. Mrs Fisher phoned a few days ago to say Pista had written about you. All fondest love

Mother

Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, II.

No. 28.

June 1, 1940

My darling boy,

Your letter No. 14 of May 16th arrived on the 29th, with all enclosures, which we duly forwarded to the addressees /Erzsi Martos is married and settled in a flat of her own, furnished by Kató, at Attila-u. 85/. Mails are really beautifully prompt; let us hope that they will remain so. Your letter was most welcome, and all you write about the paper sounds good. I wish I could see your future offices; I wonder if they are anything like those I saw in New York: huge rooms with dozens of people working in them and a clamor of typewriters and machinery that perfectly served the purpose of not letting you hear yourself /or others/ speak - I always wondered how on earth people could turn out decent work either there, or in the little airless cubicles of the N. Y. Times, in one of which I visited the then very prominent Foreign Editor. He sat in a glass cage like the cashier of a dairy does with us, and it was difficult to believe what a very much more important person he is than his colleagues here who reside in luxurious premises furnished with easy chairs etc. Tell us as much about it all as you can. I respect your reticence and understand your reasons for it, but still I'd like to hear as much as you can say about the personality of your future boss, colleagues etc.

I don't wonder you find it increasingly difficult to place articles. Same here, which also has the drawback that there is less material ~~than~~ than normally which you might use. However, we shall be on the lookout. No replies yet to inquiries as to your articles sent to our various friends. We are in touch with Heinberg and László but not with Vajda and have not heard from Lorant for some weeks, which is hardly surprising. Thanks for your arrangements re photos for us; I shall let you know when they arrive and will send you "tear sheets" /American/ if any of them are published.

I am practising how to say "Melbourne" correctly and am instructing ~~other~~ relatives of other Melbournians to do so! That reminds me: yesterday my friend Kata Benedek /she who drew the illustrations to "Andris"/ was here, inquired about you and gave me the address of friends of hers in M. who, she thought, would be delighted to meet you. They are a very young couple; the wife, 19, is some family connection of Kata's and she says she is exceptionally nice; the husband K. does not know personally but has heard much good spoken about him. The address is: Mrs Kate Fellner, c/o Mr Kingston, K2, Union Street, Windsor, Melbourne S. 1. This doesn't sound quite correct to me, but you'll probably be able to find them if you want to. Funny thing is, when Father saw this address, he discovered it was that of the brother-in-law of Mr K Kendi's who was to handle the ~~lock~~ ^{lock} business and apparently did nothing about it. This for your information, in case you do look them up or meet them accidentally. Although Kendi specially asked that you should not mention the lock to young Fellner if you happened to come across him, Father thinks that to work the affair in conjunction with him would be the only way to wangle the matter. Well, this is only to let you know all the facts: it's for you to decide whether you want to do anything about it.

After getting all the music we needed only over the radio all winter, last week we went to the Opera twice in succession: one night we saw "Fledermaus" with István who enjoyed it vastly - so did we, it was really an excellent performance - and two days later Aunt Ilonka invited us to see "Don Carlos", gorgeously staged and a really very fine production. Otherwise there's not much doing, theatres were mostly bad and we mostly are at home evenings, except for an occasional bridge at May's or similar excesses. Last night we were at the Jacobi's to meet Bandi's fiancée, a very nice little girl who ~~was~~ would be pretty except for protruding teeth. They are to be married in a week, with Jóska acting as witness! Congratulate them if you like, also Vera, whose engagement is quite official. Hannah Sch. did not sail after all - now they are in despair because they didn't start a month earlier - they might have.

News has just come from Andris to say he is back in N. Y. after a short stay in Mexico City. George Nandor wrote home to ask for your address! Simplest way to find out! I hope you have written to him in the meantime. István's exam is on the 12th; he is "bearing up" and being quite sensible about it; I hope it'll be O.K. Father needs rest of space, so good-bye, darling, fondest love

Drága fiacskám! Már egynéhányszor úgy írtam neked, hogy nem voltam biztos abban, vajon megkapod-e leveleimet. Most fokozottan ez a helyzet az olasz lap-hírek értelmében. De ezuttal nem búcsuzkodom tőled, ugyanis tudsz jól mindent, amit mondhatnék. - Határozottan megszokád a postai összeköttetést, akkor üzleti dolgoknak amúgy is befellegzett, még az esetben is, ha sikerülne neked a vízaengedélyeket elnyerned. Így tehát sok reménység nélkül, csupán a rend kedvéért referálok ezuttal is üzleti dolgokról. - A grafológiát illetően egyrészt hivatkozom arra, amit Anyu talált ki mond, másrészt megemlítem, hogy kaptam a grafológustól egy gyatra angol írásművet, ami nem más, mint a birtokodban levő nagy, angol nyelvű kulcsfüzet fordítása. Más nem lehet már kihozni a tudósból, de azt mondja nem is kell. A fontos ismérvek ugyanazok, akárhányen nemzethez is tartozzék az íráspróbák elkövetője. - Nem tudom, megírtam-e legutóbb, hogy a zárkészítő csak pénzért ad mintát. Portóval együtt 16 pengő volna a költség, amit tekintettel a tekintetbeveendőkre most nem akarok megíraskírozni. - Ha várakozás ellenére mégis komoly színezetet öltene a dolog, akkor persze készséggel vállalom e költséget. - A vasúti ügy mozgatója azt mondja, hogy jelenleg Londonban az illetékeseknek más dolguk van és így az ő ügye szünetel. - Állítólag van most egy bővebb leírás, melyet elküld nekem és én majd továbbítom, ha ugyan még lesz rá mód. - A napokban ment neked üzleti-papír-csomag, mely tartalmaz néhány ujság kivágáson kívül részletes anyagot a fillognomiai ügyre vonatkozólag, két ujságcikk másolatot re grafológia, fentemlített angol nyelvű kulcsot, végül a zár-gyár hozzám intézett, multkor már ismertetett levelét, melyből csak azért vágtam ki a címzést és az aláírást, nehogy postacsallás viddja érhesse tulbuzgó közegek részéről. - A ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~-könyvet előjegyeztem.

Robinson

Egyszerre azonban nem küldök könyveket, míg nem tisztul a határ. A határon belül, hála Istennek, továbbra is rend és nyugalom honol. Csak bizonyos dolgok drágulnak vagy kifogynak. Holnapról kezdve például az autóbusz jegyek drágulnak meg ca. 10 %-kal, mult héten a taxi emelte a tarifát stb. - Találkoztam Bekény Ferivel, ki továbbra is csinálja a szállóigazdaságot, G-urka a Horthy Miklós kórházban dolgozik, az öreg asszony jól van. - István azt mondja, írjam meg, hogy ő majd legközelebb ír, ha tul lesz a bajokon. Én is azt hiszem, hogy meg fogja uszni a naturát, és ezenfelül bologan állapítom meg, hogy lassankint leveti pályás-kamasz dolgait, elunyhira, hogy már Amálok körül majd akkora forgalmat ér el, mint te, annak idején. Csókollak fiacskám ezerszer

Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, II.

No. 29.

9th June 1940

My darling,

the news in your letter of May 23rd was really thrilling and very interesting. Your job with APM and the way you got it sounds extremely promising, so does everything you say about your new manager and the atmosphere of the place, and although my conception of what you are doing is necessarily rather vague, I imagine that it's something that suits you and to which you are suited. At such times it feels very strange to be so far from you and not to be able to discuss things. At a distance ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ of one month at best, it is impossible to express an opinion and still less to give advice as to what you had best do if the dilemma of choosing between two possibilities should arise. Besides, by the time you get this, it has all probably been decided one way or another, so to volunteer any opinion at all would be useless. But I feel that in either case you cannot go far wrong and it makes me feel happy that you are in a country where such possibilities may arise at all - although I know perfectly well that even there chances aren't waiting to be picked up: you must go out and look for them. But it does make me feel very confident to see that you do go out and look for them and that the people you come across seem to discover your capabilities pretty soon. Your manager taking you round the plant on a Sunday and home to supper with him, etc., sounds very encouraging, not in the least like people here and not even like some of your experiences in England - I firmly hope that things have continued the way they started and that you are satisfied with your work. All that has gone before may have been interesting and instructive and quite good fun, but if I know you at all you must be glad to have a steadier and more congenial occupation by now. I wish I had some idea of "Hollerith machines" and the work of a sales analyst. Thanks also for the clipping re your new chief. I hope the supper they gave you did not consist solely of freshly gristed whole-meal. Can you get Graham bread in Australia? If not, I might send you a recipe for it and you might make your own and some baker's fortune with it.

Enclosed you'll find a story on the Coburg family, rehashed with topical interest, plus illustrations. I expect there will be photos of King Leopold in any newspaper archive or picture agency, so you can easily complete the set if any paper is interested in it. In order to save on weight, Hevesi cut down the margins, that's why the ms. looks so disgraceful, but I don't expect you could have used it as it is anyhow - too long and too American. However, you may be able to rewrite it in convenient form. We sold the stuff concerning the former Coburgs years ago, but not in Australia. Now, with the "topical slant," you may be able to find some paper that will care to have it - unless you want to keep off this type of journalism, but even in that case you may be able to hand it on to someone else. However, ~~yes~~ I don't see why you shouldn't handle it yourself, if it is saleable.

To-day we are only sending you a few newspapers, clippings etc. by boat mail, no books, as mails seem so uncertain at the moment. If shipping appears to be consolidated again, I'll send you a volume just published for "Book Day," containing amongst other things a rather good article by Barcs. Don't be discouraged if other people get in a few articles on "your" subjects now and then! After all, you must let them live too. But I know how it feels - I was deeply offended the other day when some d... competitor of mine got in a story about Katharina Schratt, the old king's lady friend who just died, ahead of me in the "Weekly."

Yesterday we were asked to represent the family, not only at Bandi Jacobi's wedding but also at the luncheon at the Hotel Gellért which followed it. Accordingly, we were compelled to give them a nice present, but the lunch was not only good but unexpectedly quite agreeable. There were nearly thirty people present, the mixed families and a few friends, and in spite of mixture the atmosphere was very pleasant and a good time was had by all. Of ~~us~~ our branch, Uncle Lajos was the only one present beside us, since Jóska has not been well /his old trouble: gall bladder, but nothing dangerous/ and Aunt Livi had to go down to look after the children while Eva came to town with J. - Otherwise, not much news here. István has got three more days to stew; we shall all be glad when he's safely through. Bless you, my darling. All love

Hevesi

1940. jun. 9.

Drága fiacskám ! Persze én is csak azt mondhatom új állásodra vonatkozólag, amit Anyu kifejtett. Szörnyű kíváncsi vagyok, hogy miként fejlődik ki ez a dolog és hogy mit határozol. Én is nagyon hálás volnék, ha megírnád, vagy esetleg valami nyomtatvány /prospektus/ kapcsán megmagyaráznád nekem, hogy mi az, hogy sales analysis és hogy Hollerith gépek. És továbbra is nem győzők csodálkozni az ausztráliai lehetőségeken. Például, hogy egy igazgató úgy viselkedjék egy kisegítő-kis-hivatalnok-jelölttel szemben, ahogy a te emberes tette ! Két órai megbeszélés, gyárbemutató, vacsóra stb. ! Fantasztikus ! Hasonló esetben például Baróti maximum 7 1/2 percet szentelt volna az illetőnek, ha egyáltalán szóba állott volna vele. Gondolj csak arra, hogy mennyi ideje voltál már a Metallo szolgálatában, mikor végül kivittek a gyárba. És amellet Metallo még nem is volt a legrosszabb hely és te nem voltál ott vadidegen külföldi. - A vasuti-ügyben Loránt átadta nekem a mellékelt újabb írást, mely nem sokkal mondja többet az előzőnél, de L. szerint feltétlenül elég arra, hogy szakember megmondhassa, hogy érdekli-e a dolog vagy sem. Ha tényleg érdeklődéssel találkozik az ügy, akkor azután majd ő maga teljes szakszerűséggel lelevelezi a dolgot. Átadott nekem egy fényképet is. Ezt nem csatolom, mert nagyon sokba kerülne a portó, de nem is hiszem, hogy bemutatása lényeges volna. - Akárhogy, azt hiszem, hogy ezzel a dologgal érdemes foglalkozni, mivel, ha grafológiára vagy hasonlóra nem is engedélyeznek ott devizát, úgy olyasvalamire, amire a vasutaknak van esetleg szüksége, tán nem oly szűkkeblűek. - Megjegyzem, hogy a mellékletet tőle quale kaptam kézhez, vagyis a sajtóhibákért nem én vagyok felelős, továbbá, hogy L. nagy súlyt fektet arra, hogy a leírást ne add ki kézből, mivel szabadságom odaát nincs még, és csak a prioritás védi egyelőre a készüléket. És L. újból kiemelte, hogy valami precízizációs szerszámgépgyárral kellene érintkezésbe lépned, mely azután a különböző vasutársaságokkal a maga részéről lépne érintkezésbe. - Egy csomó egyéb üzletről nem referáltál még. Talán nem kaptad meg azt az üzleti papír küldeményt, melyek a vonatkozó adatokat tartalmazzák. Az egyik dolog papíripári vonatkozású ügy volt, mely neked talán most, új jobodra való tekintettel különösen fekszik, sőt esetleg kapóra jöhetne. - Egyéb ujság nincsen. Csak egyik laptól a másikig és egyik rádióbemondástól a másikig élünk. Ma derűsebbnek látszik a légkör. De tegnapelőtt rossz volt és vajjon mi lesz holnap ? Remélem, hogy e levél még mindenesetre megérkezik hozzád. - Másik izgalmi forrás István közeli maturája. Érdekes módon, tagadhatatlan izgalma a szokottnál is több bohóczkodásban nyer kifejezést, de amellet kétségtelenül sokkal többet tanul a gyere most, mint sem hittem volna. Csókollak fiacskám



Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, II.

No. 30.

19th June 1940

My darling boy,

what we have been apprehending for weeks has come to pass: our air mail connection is severed for the time being, but since the post office promises to do its best to transmit ordinary mail by some sort of route, I am launching this letter on the chance that it may reach you some day - when? At all events, I am keeping a copy to send to you by air mail in case communication should be restored within conscionable time, and I hope the copy may reach you by air mail sooner than ~~the~~ original letter - for that will mean that we, too, have news from you. How much we long for that you may well imagine. The last letter we had from you was your No. 15, dated May 23, which we answered on June 9th. It contained the very welcome news of your job with APM. By the time you get this all that will be old history, you will either be a seasoned old sales analyst or an equally seasoned old cable editor, or - who knows what else? So there is no sense in offering any comments except the repeated assurance that I am very happy to think of you in Australia at present, and that I am confident that under any and every circumstances that may still arise you will make the best use of your opportunities. I hope and pray that the world may deal kindly with you, whatever happens - and a great many things are bound to happen before the world becomes a nicely balanced place /if ever/.

All this by no means is to convey that anything is amiss with us. Really we have been in singular luck throughout the last nine months - luckier than ever we could hope to be, and if one may presume to make any forecasts at all these days, I think we are justified in thinking that things will remain fairly serene here in the months just ahead. So don't think of us with any worry or apprehension. You know all three of us well enough to realise that we don't meet troubles halfway or let ourselves be unduly worried by anything, and there is nothing that we lack /except your letters/. So, in case you have been worrying about us during the weeks you get no letters, just scrap it.

I am enclosing István's letter, which isn't all that it might be and certainly less of a reply than your letters to him deserve, but what can one do? The only point in his favour is that he sat down to write to you first thing when he was through with the Matric. He has actually passed "bene" and apparently might have done better had he not had such a bad previous record, and has suddenly discovered for himself that with a minimum effort he might have had good marks all the time, ~~saved~~ all the money spent on tutors and studied a lot of other things at the same time. That much for the past - how he is going to fructify this realisation in the future is another question. He is the very embodiment of the old axiom about the horse that one can take to the water but one cannot make him drink - most people are more or less like that, but no one I know more so than István. He absolutely refuses to profit by anyone's experience but his own. I can only hope that he will never do so too late. At present he is extremely cheerful, pleased with himself and with life, and is at this moment busy planning another Carpathian walking tour with two of his ex-classmates - the one he went with last year, and another. This week he is spending a week-end in the country with the Rotters; on his return from the walking-tour he means to spend a few days in a soi-disant children's "camp" which his tutor, Molnár, is conducting, then he hopes to go to Cservölgy for a bit and after this chequered vacation he wants to take that car-driving and fitting course. After that, perhaps it will be possible to see things more clearly. Since going abroad is out of the question this summer, it's the best thing he can do.

As for me, I am such a confirmed optimist that I have reserved a room in Matlárháza where I was last summer. Whether or no I shall be able to go there by the middle of July remains yet to be seen. At present it looks likely.

Darling, it feels idiotic to be writing to you into empty air like this, without even being able to imagine the course my letter will take, without knowing whether you will get it in winter or in summer or at all, with-

out being able to ask you any questions. Still, we have gone through similar things before, and I remember what joy it was to get letters from Uncle Vici in America after eighteen months, however belated they were, in 1919. Not that I expect to be without news of you for that length of time - God forbid! but there is no telling what may happen.

So there is nothing for it but to go on writing and telling you what the day may bring, regardless of its unimportance from the historical point of view. We are having beastly weather, thunderstorms and downpours every day; verily, "the time is out of joint." Harvest prospects aren't cheerful. Peaches in the Filler-utca will be few and far between, but although after the very cold winter and late spring frosts it was feared that there will be no fruit, I think of you every day now, when we eat lovely strawberries and cherries. Housekeeping expenses costs have risen to some extent, but the one thing I save on since you've gone is the fruit bill! What is the fruit situation like in Melbourne? I know apples are plentiful and wonderful, of course, but what else? At last I have discovered a good cookery-book with recipes for a single gas ring, but now of course I can't send it - I'll mail it as soon as there is a chance, but by that time you will have developed into such an accomplished cook that you will no longer be interested.

I haven't much news of your old friends to-day. Marti Halász - I forget her married name - has become the mother of a little girl in Batavia; they seem to be doing very well. I saw her parents at the Solt's the other day. A sister of Mrs Solt and Mrs Halász is in Melbourne; they asked for your address but I don't expect they'll look you up. In case they do, here are the directions for use: the lady's name is Mrs Gerő, née Dr Clara Lázár, physician and psychoanalyst. She has a husband and a little boy, and has gone to M. upon the invitation of an Australian neurologist who means to psychoanalyse jointly with her. This merely to let you know what it's all about, in case.

God bless you, darling, whenever and wherever this reaches you.
Always with fondest love

Mosher

Drága fiacskám ! Mily furcsa az élet ! Bármennyit is tapasztalt az ember, mindig újból és újból rájut erre a megállapításra. Most az a meggondolás váltotta ki belőlem e felkiáltást, hogy mennyire kellene aggodnom érte, ha hajdani főnököd E.G. nem bizonyult volna megbízhatatlan embernek. Ha állotta volna szavát és "jól" elhelyezett volna téged L.-ban - ki tudja mily szörnyűségeket kellett volna átélned. De minthogy G. nem tett meg semmit sem abból amit ígért, most, hálátlanul, minden emberi számítás szerint, biztos helyen vagy !
Ölellek, fiacskám

Apu

Letter 30 - Short paragraph at end
(Translated from Hungarian by Katalin Gaal, September 2010)

From: Grandpa in Budapest to Dad in Australia

My dear son! How strange life is! No matter how much one has experienced one comes to this realisation again and again. This statement is due to how much I should be concerned if your future boss E.G. proved to be an unreliable person. If he kept his word and placed you "well" in L. who knows what kinds of monstrous things you would have had to live through?. But as G. didn't do anything he promised, now, thank God, according to all calculations, you are safe and secure! I hug you, my boy, Dad.

Letter 30b (Translated from Hungarian by Katalin Gaal, September 2010)
From: Istvan (Unk) in Budapest to Dad in Australia

Pongracz Istvan
Budapest
10 September 1940

Dear Bok,

I hope that you have received news of my matriculation so that I don't have to inform you about the exams.

I have heard or rather I read that you are OK and everything is going well. Lots of people are inquiring after you in the club and other places which makes me angry as on some Sunday mornings I have to tell twenty guys the same story about you.

During the summer after finishing exams I didn't have enough fun: my only adventure was a banquet which was quite innocent and boring. The banquet was held at home, from there I went to the English Park with a guy and drove around all night with the little car. I arrived home about half-past four on foot, feeling exhausted, and couldn't sleep in the end because it was already light. I got up at half - past six and with the Molnars – without a minute of sleep – went on a boat to Szigetmonostor. We swam in the Danube all day – it hasn't been that hot since. Later I fixed Molnar's accommodation issues: it was terrible.

During the night of the 20th of July I travelled to Miskolc in terrible conditions, from there I had a beautiful two-day trip by myself through Bukk/Balvány, I went down to Kacs to the Molnar-Sandor Boarding School. It was a great tour; Bukk is beautiful, I've never been there but it was incredibly hot and it was quite exhausting. I stayed at Kacsfurdo for two weeks, it was great fun as I was there as a carer rather than a patient.

I came home for the 5th, for the Technological National Transport course. This lasted 5 weeks, I did my last exam on Saturday. I got a certificate and licence for driving personal and delivery cars as well as motorbikes. I drove different cars for the test including Ford, Opel Blitz and Jawa. In the meantime I also went to a photographer: For weeks I wasn't at home between 8 in the morning and 9 at night, I was running around and not eating. I won't write about the course, rather I will send you information brochures about it.

Erdely ... I will not write about Erdely, as I'm sure you already know about the news/ but not final!!!/borders from the newspapers and radio. I'm now listening to the bliss of the Kolozsvár march ...

I'm travelling to Sag now, then I will be an apprentice somewhere. Write! I'm very interested for example in how one finds friends in a strange place ... Is your machine good?

Have fun,

Istvan.

Bonyházi János
II. Rákóczi u. 6., Budapest

Budapest. 1940. szept. 10.

Kedves Bök,

remélem érettségi beszámolómat már ugyis megkaptad és így legalább a vizsga körülményeiről nem kell tájékoztatnom Uraságodat.

Hallom ill. olvasom, hogy o.k. vagy és minden rendben folyik. Rengetegen érdeklődnek irántad a klubban és egyebütt, megam pedig az ilyesmiért rettentő mód dühöngök, mivelhogy egy-egy vasárnap d.e. húsz pasinak kell ugyanazt elmondanom.

Nyáron, érettségi után nem züllöttem eleget: egyetlen kicsapongásom a bankett volt, az is meglehetősen ártatlan és unalmas. A Kakukban tartottuk a bankettet, onnan még egy sráccal az Angolparkba mentem és egész iccaka a benzines kisautón robogtam körbe. 1/2 4 körül érkeztem haza gyalog, meglehetősen hullá állapotban, s lévén már világos aludni nem tudtam. Reggel félhétkor fölkeltem és Molnárékkal--egy per c alvás nélkül--Szigetmonostorra hajókéztam. Egész nap a Dunában uszkáltunk--azóta sem volt olyan meleg.

Később Molnár lakbizonylat-erkölcsi-karpaszomány ügyeit intéztem: szörnyű dolog. Jul. 20-án éjjel a legszörnyűbb körülmények között utaztam Miskolcra, onnan gyönyörű, teljesen egyedül megtett kétnapos turával az egész Bükkön keresztül/Bálvány/ lementem Kácsra a Molnár-Sándor Klári féle Frimmintézetbe. Remek tura volt; gyönyörű a Bükk, még sohasem jártam benne, de rettentő meleg volt és alapos strapa. Kácsfürdőn két hétig maradtam, remek szórakozás volt, hiszen nem mint ápol(t) inkább mint ápoló voltam.

Ötödikére hazajöttem a technológiai Állami Gépjárművetetői Tanfolyamra. Ez 5 hétig tartott, szombaton nyögtem le az utolsó vizsgákat. Oklevelet és skemély, teherautóra és motorkrékpárra kitöltött jogosítványt kaptam. Mindenféle kocsit hajtottam, végülis Ford 1/2 on, Opel Blitz-en és Jáván vizsgáztam. Közben fényképészhez is jártam: heteken át reggel 8- este 9 ig itthon sem voltam, rohantam, nem ettem. Tanfolyamról nem írok, inkább majd egyszer elküldöm a róla szóló nyomtatványt.

Erdély..... Erdélyről nem írok, mert az ujságokból rádióból biztosan tudod már az új/de nem végleges!!/ határokat. Most hallgatom a kolozsvári bevonulás hihetetlen örömmámorát...

Most Sággra utazom, aztán inasnak állok valahová.

Irj! Nagyon érdekel pl., hogy miképpen szerez az ember magának társaságot vadidegen helyen,. Jó a géped?

Jó szórakozást:

Bonyházi

Letter 30a (written in Hungarian by Stephen (Istvan) Powell/Unc to brother John Powell in Melbourne)
(Translated by Katalin Gaal, October 2010)

Budapest

June 14 1940

Dear Boksi,

Thank you for your letter. I'm glad that you always manage to find some kind of work with good pay, but to be honest I don't understand A's work relations. Never mind. I have accepted it.

Thanks for your fatherly advice, however you can't really fool me. For instance, you write that I should choose an occupation which interests me. That's clear. The only thing is that nothing interests me for more than two months.

The things you write about friends are valid. I think the most important point about being friendless is whom one calls a friend. I myself am an idealist and interpret the word literally. This is obviously a mistake. Most people's friends should be referred to as "a friend" ... I used to say I only have one friend and even he/she is stupid. I think you know that I refer to Gero. By the way I'm really rooting for him: he's sitting for his exams from the seventh [grade?] and if he fails now he won't be able to go again. Back to the above topic, I think the main problem is that people – above the age of 25 – don't use the term pal and instead call their drinking, sport and card-playing partners friends. I have a lot of these sport/partners but I consider them to be only pals.

What you write about the Amals is clear. Lately I'm starting to get active in this area too. First with Sarika - do you know her? Well, you will be amazed: Miska!! There was a ball, and a garden party with a girlfriend 2 weeks ago in Svab Hill. The table tennis table crashed. On the latter there was a boy who knows you from Pista Kaldor. If I suspect correctly his name is Istvan Kurti.

Zamory/Krikler/ inquired warmly after you and sends you greetings.

I matriculated successfully yesterday! I don't know the results yet but it's not impossible that it's ...(*indecipherable word*). Usually – at least with us – it's weak. There are truly those whom I wouldn't allow into fourth [grade] let alone myself. All up, there were perhaps two fails from I-I subject whereas at other times there are 10-12, you can imagine that I don't mind it's over and done with. Altogether I studied for three days, it would have been a waste to do more. From Mum {and Dad} I got a substantial sum, a cigarette holder, a beautiful, rattling pipe from Albert (he's gone crazy!), again lots of money, from Aunt Livi some Ady (poetry) and from Aunt Hedi (she's gone mad!) a cigarette holder.

I have a lot of plans for summer, tours etc. I have to learn to play tennis since I've never even held a racket. At the moment I'm trying to buy a camera, of serious quality and value. Why aren't you willing to share some instructions about your little Rodenstock? Perhaps it's having a rest?

One of my photos about frying some 'parizsi' meat was published in the *Chronicle*.

I'm not sure what I will be doing in autumn. I would really like to join the army but I don't think anything will come of it.

I don't have anything else to write, therefore I wish you lots of luck and close my letter:

Istvan

PS. The most awkward thing about matriculating is all the congratulations. See Nando under the headword.

Kedves Bócsi,

köszönöm leveledet. Örülök, hogy mindig találasz magadnak valamilyen munkát és jó karesetet, csak őszintén szólva nem értem A. munkaügyi viszonyait. Node se baj. Belenyugszom.

Atyai jótanácsaidat köszönettel fogadom csak hogy nem nagyon lehet ezeket rámhuzni. Azt írod például, hogy olyan foglalkozást válasszak, amelyiknek tárgyköre, munkaköre érdekel. Világos. Csak hogy engem ha foglalkozom a dologgal - két hónapnál tovább semmi sem érdekel.

Amit barátokról írsz az mind áll. Azt hiszem a baráttalanság főkutyája ott van eltemetve, hogy kit nevez az ember barátjának. Magam idealista vagyok, és a szó értelmét eredeti jelentésében fogom fel. Nyilván ez a hiba. A legtöbb ember barátját így kellene írni: a "barátom"... Azt szoktam mondani, hogy csak egy barátom van, az is hülye. Azt hiszem tudod, hogy Gerőről van szó. Egyébként nagy drukokban vagyok miatta: 25-én vizsgázik a hetedikből és ha most elhúzzák, többé nem mehet neki. Visszatérve a fenti témára, a főhibám abban látom, hogy az emberek -25 éven felül- törölik szótárukból a haver szót és ehelyett barátjuknak nevezik az ivó, sport, kártyapajtásukat. Ilyen sport/ társam nekem is van sok, de ezek számomra csak haverok maradnak.

Amit Amálokról írsz világos. Ujabbban ezen téren is kezdek megindulni. Először Sárkánál /ugye nem tudod ki az? Hát derülni fogsz: Miska!!/ volt estély, majd egy barátnőjénél, két hete meg Garden-pa tyn voltam a Svábhegyen, össze is dült a ping-pong asztal. Ez utóbbin volt egy fiú aki téged is ismer Káldor Pistától. Ha jól sejtem Kürti István a neve.

Zámory/Krikler/ melegen érdeklődött irántad és üdvözl.

Érettségit tegnapelőtt sikerrel letettem! Eredményt még nem tudok, de nem lehetetlen, hogy bene. Általában - legalább nálunk - potya volt. Tényleg vannak olyanok, akiket negyedikbe sem engednék föl nem is beszélve magamról. Össze- vissza talán két bukás volt 1-1 tárgyból, míg máskor 10-12. Képzelheted, hogy nem tulságosan bánom, hogy tulvagyok rajta. Három napot tanultam csak, kár is lett volna többet. Anyuéktól komoly összeget, cigarettatárcát/gyönyörű, stramm pipát kaptam, Alberttől/megörült!/ szintén sok gubát, Livi nénitől Ady-t, Hédi nénitől/megörült!/ cigarettatárcát.

Nyárra sok programom van, turáistb. Teniszezni is meg kell tanulnom, hisz jóformán még út se volt a kezemben.

Most fényképezőgépvétélben sántikálok, komoly értéket akarok venni. Miért nem vagy hajlandó, a te kis Rodenstockod működéséről tájékoztatni? Talán a "könyörület hegyén" üdülsz?

/Egy párizsisütiéről tájékoztató képem megjelent a Képes Krónikában./

Hogy ősszel mit csinálók, nem tudom. Legszívesebben bevonulnék, de azt hiszem semmi sem lesz belőle.

Több irnivalóm nincs, így sok szerencsét kívánok és zárom leveletem:

István

U.I. Az egész érettségiben legkellemetlenebb a sok gratuláció.

lásd Vándor című alatt.

I.

MEDIEVAL PANORAMA. The English Scene from Conquest to Reformation.

~~By~~ By G. G. Coulton, Cambridge, at The University Press, 1939.

Page 45. - Chapter IV. Feudalism Emerges.

.....

The German, as described by Tacitus, was an individualist. He was a peasant, herdsman or agriculturist or hunter, and inclined to say, as the Mongols said : "We are all kings in our own country." He was dimly conscious of duties to his village: more vaguely of certain duties to his tribe. The idea of a nation he grasped, in so far as he grasped it at all, only in such great crises as those of war; very much as it needed the Great War of 1914 to make Europe think seriously of a League of Nations.

The Roman of the Empire at its full development was, on the contrary, brought up in strict collectivism: he was forced to feel that the State was infinitely more than the individual. He lived under a most complicated bureaucratic machinery, in which he knew himself to be only one of a hundred million cogwheels, and he knew that the Emperor was the mainspring of it all. He passed his life, therefore, under the most perfect and comprehensive system of laws devised up to that time by the genius of man. He was met at every step by "the State commands this", "the State forbids that"; and at every step he found a State official to enforce these commands and these prohibitions, until he scarcely felt that he had a will of his own.

.....

Drága fiacskám ! Semmi lényeges hozzáfűznivalóm nincsen Anyu soraihoz. Csak azt akarom megemlíteni, hogy úgy vélem, hogy most, mikor full time ujságíró leszel, bizonyára sok minden érdekelhet téged, aminek ujságírói szempontból valamilyen érdekessége lehet, még ha tulajdonképeni resortodon kívül esik is. Így ne csodálkozz, ha ezentul leveleinkhez vagy nyomtatvány-és üzleti-papír-küldeményeinkhez, minden kommentár nélkül csatolok majd egy-egy itemet, amiről fölteszem, hogy valami érdekességgel bír. - Ilyen item fenti idézet is egy gyönyörűen megírt, igen érdekes könyvből, melyet most olvasok. A szóban forgó fejezetben azt állítja az író, hogy a feudalizmus nem germán és nem római eredetű, hanem mindkét népfaj fejlődésének eredője. Ezzel kapcsolatban mondja fentieket, hogy az olvasót tájékoztassa a kiindulási pontokról. Szerintem ezek szenzációs megállapítások, ha a mai helyzetet veszi tekintetbe az ember.-Csókollak



29th June 1940

Darling Sonny,

Of course we have no news from you since your No. 15 of May 23rd, but that is only what we could expect and we are not worrying in the least - I hope you aren't either. I expect half a dozen letters will arrive in a heap, and what a glad day that will be! I am again sending two copies of this: one via Kitty and the other trusting to good luck and the wise discrimination of the Post Office, merely thrusting it into a letter-box on the chance of it reaching you sometime or other. - Whenever you get it, will you remember, in your reply, to mention anybody you may come across who has relatives here. Many people are even worse off for communications than we are, and anyway everybody is glad to hear about their overseas belongings.

We are perfectly well and everything goes on as usual, although of course the latest developments re Bessarabia are causing great excitement and expectations, as well you may imagine. However, no one knows what is going to happen next, and meanwhile the city is perfectly calm, no demonstrations or anything. So far, the government has tided over every recent crisis so wisely and judiciously that we have every reason to hope this one is going to be managed in the same spirit. Anyhow, there is not the slightest reason to worry about us. I hardly think my proposed summer vacation in the Tatra or Istvan's trip will come off as we planned only a few days ago, but we shall be able to judge developments more clearly in a week or two. - Meanwhile one prefers not to think about summer vacations yet, in rains in torrents every afternoon and it's coolish all the time; nowhere does the harvest begin to-day as it ought to, it has been too wet. István is still basking in the glory of his "bene" Matric., it has vastly improved his outlook and his behaviour. At present he is enjoying his honeymoon with his beautiful new Super-Sport-Dolly-Certo camera, Tessar 2.8 lens, Compur shutter - called "Dolly" for short.

Family atmosphere rather depressed: two days ago B's were officially informed that the whole of Ság, every square inch of it, will be claimed on Oct. 1. for small leaseholds. They had been pinning their hopes to various possibilities which have all crumbled, and it's all the sadder because theirs is among the very first, comparatively small, batch to be claimed at all - according to the law, all that has not been claimed until July 1st can't be touched for another year. They don't know yet what they are going to do about the livestock, house etc. I expect to go down with Ilonka for some weeks, although I can't do much to help her, but still it's better than being alone.

There's not much other news of a private nature. Palkó has been called up for manoeuvres some weeks ago and seems to be having quite an enjoyable time. The other day Father met George Bekény who inquired with great interest about you, complained you never dropped him a line. He's working at the Horthy Miklós Hospital. Gabi Salgó also wanted to hear about you; he's at his job at the Comm. Bank; his sister is in England. All except telegraphic communication with England being now cut off, of course many people are worried here about their offspring, though the personal news about all the people we know there is good. The Leopold clan is very well; Lajos has quite lately had various assignments to assess and revise some big estates; one, on which he is at present at work, belonging to a foreign proprietor whose person makes the job not merely satisfactory and gratifying, but, under the present circumstances, downright amusing - of course he is greatly tickled and very happy.

Darling, it makes me feel awful that I can't even ask you any questions, for it's impossible to foretell when I can get the replies thereto. I can only hope that you will anticipate them and that some day soon we'll get all the answers to the unasked questions, with all details of your doings, development of jobs, etc. etc. If and when you write, tell us as much as you can about everything and everybody. God bless you, darling

All fondest love

Mother

Love Father

Letter 32

**(1st part, written in Hungarian by Grandpa in Budapest to son John in Melbourne)
(Translated by Katalin Gaal, October 2010)**

Janos Pongracz,
II. Vermezo Street 6.,
Budapest, Hungary

7 July 1940

My dear son! We are sending two copies of this letter as well, one through Kitty and the other directly. I hope that the first trip will not take longer than a month, if it works at all.

We still haven't received a letter from you since May 23. In the meantime our acquaintances haven't received anything either, except for Mrs Solt, who received a letter from her sister dated 30 May and the Palestinian censor's marks were evident. I imagine that some of your letters are floating around in some censor's office and I hope that one fine day the post will deliver a number of your letters at once. Based on your lucky stars we are not at all worried and think that you are all right in all matters, only we are very curious whether you've become a journalist or a factory worker/bureaucrat.

You don't have to worry about us either; we are perfectly fine health wise and all other aspects. My impression is that there will not be a conflagration in this part of Europe. Of course the government will take all precautions, wisely, so that there are no surprises.

Whether Mother can begin her holiday planned for the middle of the month in the Tatra Mountains is still uncertain but I don't think there will be any obstacles. As Istvan's planned walking trip to the Carpathian base has been cancelled he's living in carefree idleness relative to his circumstances. For instance the other day he went on an expedition to explore the caves at Hars Hill with Gero, who recently completed his exams for VIIth grade as a private student and arrived home around about half past 1 at night with the satisfaction of a job well done.

After much persuading Istvan went to the Club. He hesitated for a while as he's no longer a student and cannot row, and he also thought the normal membership fee was too much. Well, yesterday he finally went. They were very kind to him and offered such an advantageous deal that he couldn't refuse. They only want to charge him 10 pengos per month and waive the membership fee. Therefore we voted for the expense and the child is already happily rowing today. I'm also happy with this solution, as other than the sport aspect, it's great for such a child, who finds it difficult to make friends, to have something to count on.

There's a very bad atmosphere at poor Baloghs. It looks as though the thing is completely hopeless. Financially they are also in bad shape as the official estimate is very low.

After weeks of rain the weather is as it should be at this time year.

God bless you, my son! A thousand kisses

Dad.

(2nd part, written in Hungarian by Grandma in Budapest to son John in Melbourne)

(Translated by Katalin Gaal, October 2010)

My dear son,

It would be good to talk, but it's difficult to write from such a distance – if there's another letter from you, it will become easier.

There's no special news, we're living as normal, of course with increasing anticipation of the unknown future, but in total calm. Due to the army's readiness some bus ways and train lines were closed down for a few days, but the majority have restarted and there were no delays in food delivery or other areas and all other areas of work are continuing.

There are no letters at the moment from Cicus (Kitten) and her family but it seems that everything is alright with them though of course there is much excitement. There was a letter from Heinberg: nothing was sold from your things; business is very weak there too. Nevertheless the plan is to start a new paper: a daily paper which mostly provides entertainment and pictures, not much news! He thinks there will be a public for this as there are not many readers for other papers.

At the moment we are hardly doing anything; and for want of something better to do I have started to do knitting and darning, I would really like to knit a jumper for you!

I hug you a thousand times, my dear son.

Mum.

Másolat

Pongrácz János,
II. Vörmező-u.6.,
Budapest, Hungary

32. sz. levél

1940. július 7.

Drága fiacskám! Ezt a levelet is két példányban küldjük, az egyiket via Kitty, a másikat közvetlenül. Remélem, hogy az első út nem fog tovább tartani egy hónapnál, ha egyáltalán szuperál. - Tőled még mindig nem kaptuk levelet, május 23.-i híradásod óta. Ismerőseink közül más sem kapott semmit sem időközben, kivéve Soltnét, ki nővérének egy máj.30.-án kelt levelét kapta a héten, a palesztinai cenzor keze nyomával. Gondolom, hogy egy néhány leveled bizonyára hánykolódik valami cenzori irodában és remélem, hogy a posta majd egy szép nap egyszerre hozz tőled több levelet. - Jó csillagokban való bizodalunk okából egyáltalán nem aggodunk és feltesszük, hogy minden tekintetben all right vagy, csak persze nagyon kíváncsiak vagyunk arra, hogy közben végül újságíró vagy pedig papírgyáros lettél-e. - Viszont neked sem kell miattunk aggodnod; mi is teljesen rendben vagyunk egészségesen is, minden egyéb vonatkozásban is. Az a benyomásom, hogy nem fog sor kerülni konfliktációra Európa eme részében. Persze azért minden óvintézkedést megtesz a kormány, bölcs módon, úgy hogy semmiféle meglepetés ne érhesse az országot. - Persze, hogy Anyu megkezdheti-e körülbelül e hó közepére tervezett nyaralását a Tátrában, azt még biztosan nem lehet tudni, de úgy vélem, hogy ennek nem lesz semmi akadálya. - Piczu, minthogy a részéről tervbe vett kárpátaljai gyaloglata kameradjai visszalépése miatt vízbe esett, most itthon élvezi a dolce far niente-t, már a maga módja szerint. A minap például Gerővel, ki szerencsésen letette a VII. osztály vizsgáját, mint magántanuló, elment a hárshegyi barlang belsejének felkutatására, honnan azután, ugyan nyakig sárosan, de a jól elvégzett munka érzésével tért haza éjjel 1/2 10 tájt. - Nagy rábeszélésre István végre rászánta magát, hogy elmenjen a Club-ba. Habozott sokáig, mert, nem lévén már diák, tavalyi alapján nem evezhet, a rendszer tagság költségeit pedig sokalta. - Nos, tegnap végül mégis kiment. Nagyon kedvesek voltak vele és olyan előnyös ajánlatot tettek neki, melyet lehetetlen refuzálni. Ugyanis csak havi 10 pengő tagdíjat kérnek tőle, belépési díjról pedig lemondanak. Így hát megszavaztuk a költséget és a gyerek ma már evez, nagy boldogan. Én is örülök ennek a megoldásnak, mert mégis nagyon jó, a sporttól magától eltekintve, ha egy ily gyereknek, ki amúgy is nehezen barátkozik, van egy souche-ja, melyre támaszkodhatik. - Szegény Baloghéknál nagyon rossz a hangulat. Ugy látszik, hogy a dolog teljesen menthetetlen. - Anyagilag is elég rosszul járnak, mert a hivatalos becslés nagyon alacsony. - Időjárás, hetekig tartó rengeteg esőzések után, most olyan amilyennek illik lennie júliusban. - Áldjon meg az Isten, fiacskám! Csókokkal ezerszer

Drága fiacskám,

jó volna beszélgetni, de így a süket messzeségbe írogatni nehéz, - ha újra jön majd tőled levél, könnyebben megy majd. Nincs különös újság, éldegélünk úgy, mint rendszeren, persze napról-napra fokozódó várakozásban a még bekövetkezendő események iránt, de teljes nyugalomban. A katonai készenlét miatt pár autbuszvonalat és vasutvonalat néhány napig szüneteltettek, de már újra megindult a legtöbb, élelmezési vagy egyéb fennakadás nem volt s minden üzem megy tovább. Cicuséktól most nem jön levél, de úgy látszik náluk sincs semmi baj, csak persze nagy az izgalom. Heineberggtől jött levél: nem adott el semmit dolgaik közül; most ott is gyengén megy az üzlet. Mindazonáltal azt tervezi, hogy új lapot indít: napilapot, mely túlnyomó részben szórakoztató olvasmányt és képet hoz, híreket alig! azt hiszi, hogy ennek lenne publikuma, mivel a többi lapokat alig olvassák. - Mi most alig csinálunk valamit; én jobb híjján stoppolásra és kötésre adtam a fejemet, már nagyon szeretnék neked egy pullovert kötni! Ölellek ezerszer, drága fiacskám

Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, Hungary

Copy
No. 33.

16th July 1940

My darling boy,

we go on sending our letters into the void, without a sign so far, whether they are likely to ever reach you, in the hope that you are doing the same, and that some day soon there will be a whole batch of letters with good news from you. Meanwhile, I can but continue to try and picture what that you are doing, saying and thinking - the two first are not so easy, but I think I have a fairly adequate idea of the third. I hope that either on the strength of your newspaper job or otherwise you have been sufficiently well-informed about events in this part of the world to have no apprehensions had no apprehensions about our welfare during the past fortnight. At present the tension is completely eased. Trains and buses again run to schedule - in no other respect had there been a change from the normal - and a great number of men have been sent home on leave for the harvest. Communications are normal again: in proof of this Aunt Cicus suddenly descended upon us a few nights ago, asking to be put up for a couple of nights in your room /to Father's and István's great dismay/ since Rotters didn't know she was coming - and had gone away for the week-end. So we got first-hand news from down there, and were glad to know that so far they had not been made to feel any of the changes which have already taken place or are still impending. Of course no one knows what exactly is going to happen, although everyone is aware that changes can't come without upheavals down there, but at the moment every effort is being made to keep up normal conditions as far as possible. Personally, George is very busy and is exempt from military service since he is indispensable to his firm; Terus' health is not good, she is having a lot of trouble with her ischias which makes her quite disabled, poor girl; and Cicus herself, looking more overwhelming than ever, is wrapped up alternately in theosophy and in her grandchildren.

Since everything at this end looks so peaceful now, and communications are as good as they were last year, I have made up my mind to go to Matlaköz again, although I had previously quite given up the idea. A number of people I know are going, so there's nothing venturesome about it, and I am looking forward to the air, the mountains, the rest and peace, although another side of me would like to stay where I get the news quicker and can discuss it with father while it's red-hot. But I know that is silly - it doesn't change facts, so what's the good? My health has been so good during the past year - touch wood! - that I feel the most sensible thing to do is to go again to the place which apparently has agreed with me so well. By the time you get this, some way or other, I shall be back, even if I do stay four weeks as I mean to do. István has given up his plans of Sub-Carpathia since his partners have melted away; instead, he has become an assiduous club member and goes rowing every afternoon, and swimming most mornings, and is looking better than he ever did. He means to go on a walking tour in the Bükk next week, dropping in on his ex-tutor's camp, where he has a number of friends, on the way, and expects to start on his car-driving etc. course on August 5th. Simultaneously, he may work in a photogr. studio and get some practice in dark-room work, and then, in September, I hope he will be able to start work in good earnest, though we don't yet know where. At least, he is now in the right mood for it, knows that it's got to be done and is determined to do well and to earn money, no longer content with asking for it as he used to be. Although I still have a good many objections especially to his manners, he has very greatly improved and I think he is going to shape well.

My darling, if I ask no questions you know it isn't because I'm not anxious to know all there is to know about you - but because I am afraid I'll never get an answer to them. You are in my thoughts all the time. Bless you, dearest. All fondest love

Mother *John*

Letter 34 (written in Hungarian by Grandpa in Budapest to son John in Melbourne)
(Translated by Katalin Gaal , October 2010)

Janos Pongracz

24 July 1940

II. Vermezo – Street 6

Budapest, Hungary

My dear son! It has been almost two months since we received news from you so you can imagine how happy we were when this morning's post brought your letter dated May 23, no. 18. Numbers 16 and 17 are missing but perhaps they will still arrive.

I'm happy to see that you continue to enjoy yourself in all aspects and the paper factory job looks permanent. I don't doubt for a minute that you will be outstanding there as well, even though your position might be less interesting than it would have been at the unborn newspaper. Regardless, what you write about your job leads me to believe that you are in a good place.

I hope that now that airmail has started we will be able to receive constant news from you. Your letters had the handmarks of an Egyptian censor. We can't send letters through airmail yet to your part of the world, that's why this letter is sent through Kitty. A copy is coming through post as before.

Mum travelled to Matlar on the 20th and I received news for the first time today. Everything is alright and she's very satisfied. Only everything is slightly more expensive than last year. Istvan began his trip to Miskolc the same evening, from where after a two-three day long walking tour he will arrive at the holiday resort supervised by his tutor, and he will go on further trips. The child has enrolled in a six- week government-funded driving course from the 5th of August. This was his great wish. After that I hope he will be able to find some work as a labourer in a company. He has great ambitions to earn something and currently there are no other opportunities.

Everything is OK in the family. Only the poor [*indecipherable word - probably Baloghs*] have been through a lot of upheaval before reaching an agreement with the assignees which is more like a lost cause. Everything has to be renounced, only the castle and park remain, which of course is a great burden.

Otherwise everything continues to be OK. All is quiet and peaceful in the country and the only thing to complain about is that everything is much more expensive. I think that the next few days will bring great relief to south-eastern relations and the majority of those called in for service will return to their jobs. However we await with great concern the developments in the North.

It's lovely to hear about the mood over there. It can't be assumed that things will be easier here regarding graphology and other matters. You have to drop these things or find another solution. Perhaps it would be more advisable to discuss graphology with a local relative there who might be able to propose something through a family member/acquaintance in Budapest which I wouldn't be able to deliver.

By the way the other day the guy gave me some news, which I will forward to you as a curiosity in normal post alongside a copy of this letter. The handwriting can't really be understood. But all will become clear when I tell you that the book publisher doesn't want to publish the academic work as a book but rather in the form of a file/record so that through new discoveries and familiarizations the buyer is able to expand and develop it further through their own contribution.

I have forwarded the letter addressed to Vera. The wedding took place recently. Vera was cute and attractive but looked like a school girl. The groom also looks like a thin, underdeveloped fellow. Other than that nothing but the best can be heard about him.

You will be interested to know that your friend Toni Czigler has recently gotten married. It was so sudden that even Aunt Ilonka who is one of Cz-s most intimate friends found out through the newspaper. The husband: Lajos Gadoros, an architect, a Kraut boy. Toni studies with him and a great love developed over a long period of time. Perhaps the parents weren't overly happy about it. The fact is that no one knew about it. Last week the boy came home for a few days to have a holiday from the army and Toni took advantage of this time to suddenly get married.

The Nandors haven't received news from Gyuri during the whole time, not even today, therefore they were very happy to hear based on your news that you are in touch with him.

The other day the wife of Dr Fischer called and I found out from her that three families came together in a cumulative rush - the answer is paid for, altogether 72 P. They inquired about the wellbeing of their children over there. It's a shame that they didn't think in time of asking us to participate. All said, write a few words in every letter about your acquaintances over there, if you know anything about them. It's a great thing to be able to call friends/acquaintances to say that you have heard something of those living abroad.

Istvan is sure to write to you again, if he returns home. He will tell you all about how enthusiastically he visits the Club where they obviously treat him well.

I have no need of my records/documents. Don't let these become a problem for you. However I would like to know whether you have used the documents at the Embassy. I believe that appropriate action will be very important for the future.

Congratulations on your latest success as a journalist. I imagine that Ch. E. is a serious journal and it's quite remarkable for someone with no background in chemistry to have written such a high quality article. I think the offer from Au. Qu. is very respectable. I hope it also means some money. Perhaps you can send these articles one day.

I kiss you my son a thousand times,

Dad.

Pongrácz János
II. Vörmező-u.6.,
Budapest, Hungary

34.sz.

1940. július 24.

Drága fiacskám! Közel két hónapja, hogy nem kaptunk hírt felőled és így képzelheted, mekkora volt örömöm, mikor mai reggeli posta elhozta a te m.hó 23.-án kelt 18.sz.leveledet. Hiányzik tehát a 16. és 17.szám, mely talán valamikor majdmég befut. - Boldogan látom, hogy változatlanul jól érzed magad minden tekintetben és hogy a papirgyári állás állandósulni látszik. Egy perczig sem kételkedem abban, hogy ott is kitűnően fogod megállani helyedet, ha elfoglaltságod talán kevésbé színes is, mint lett volna a meg nem született lapnál. Mindenesetre az, amit állásodról írsz arra enged következtetni, hogy jó helyen vagy. - Remélem, hogy most már, hogy onnan megindult a légi posta, megint állandóan kapunk hírt tőled minden fejleményről. Leveled az egyiptomi cenzura kezényomát tüntette fel. Innen még nem lehet légiposta levelet küldeni a te földrészed felé, miért e levél is via Kitty megy. - Másolat ezuttal is rendes póstán. - Anyu 20.-án utazott Matlárra, honnan ma kaptam az első hírt. Minden rendben van és Anyu nagyon meg van elégedve. Csak valamivel drágább minden mint tavaly. Piczu ugyanaznap este indult Miskolcra, honnan két-három napos gyalogtúra után fogja elérni volt korrepetitora vezetése alatt álló nyaraló telepet, honnan további kirándulásokra megy majd. Aug.5.-én veszi kezdetét az a hathetes állami gépkocsivezetői tanfolyam, melyre a gyerek beiratkozott. Ez szíve vágya volt. Azután majd remélem sikerül egy vagy más iparvállalatnál munkásként elhelyezni. Ő nagyon ambicionálja már, hogy valamit keressen és más lehetőség ez idő szerint amúgy sincsen. - Családban minden rendben. Csak szegény ságiak sok izgalmon mentek keresztül, míg valamilyen veszett fejsze nyelének töredéke-alapon megállapodásra jutottak az illetékesekkel. Mindent le kell adni, csak a kastély és park marad meg, ami persze nagy teher. - Egyébként továbbra is minden rendben van. Teljes csend és nyugalom honol az országban és csak amiatt lehet panaszkodni, hogy bizony nagyon megdrágult minden. - Ugy nézem, hogy a legközelebbi napok jelentékeny megkönnyebbülést fognak hozni a délkeleti viszonylatban és hogy a behívottak túlnyomó többsége hamarosan vissza fog térni munkájához. - Annál nagyobb várakozással és aggodalommal nézük persze a fejlődést északi irányban. Mindenesetre nagyon jól esik hallani, amit az ottani hangulatról írsz. - A grafológiai és egyéb dolgokban nem lehet számítani arra, hogy itt könnyebbségeket érhessek el. A dolgokat vagy el kell ejtened vagy valami más megoldást találnod. Talán mégis észszerű lenne speciell a grafológiát az ottani rokonnal megtárgyalni, ki esetleg oly megoldást tud proponálni budapesti hozzátartozójának, amelynek közvetítésére én nem tudnék vállalkozni. - A pasi különben a minap átadott nekem egy újabb dolgot, melyet már csak a kúriához kedvéért is megküldött neked e levél rendes póstán küldött másolatával együtt. A leírás nem nagyon érthető. De mindjárt tisztán áll előtted a dolog, ha azt mondom, hogy arról van szó, hogy valamely könyvkiadó az illető tudományos művet nem könyv, hanem kartoték formájában adja ki, úgy hogy az a vevő által mindig tovább fejleszthető és kiegészíthető újabb felfedezések vagy megismerések sajátkezű bevezetése által. - Verának szóló levelet továbbítottam. A közelmúltban volt az esküvő. Vera aranyos és csinos volt, de úgy nézett ki, mint egy iskoláskisleány. Igaz hogy a fiatal férj is szörnyen vékonydongájú legény. Egyebekben azonban csak a legjobbat hallani felőle. - Érdekelni fog, hogy Czigler Tóni bárátnőd a múlt napokban hirtelen férjhez ment. Annyira hirtelen, hogy még Ilonka néni, ki Cz.-ék legintimebb barátjai közé tartozik, is csak az újsághírből értesült. A férj: Gádoros Lajos, építész, sváb fiú. Tóni nála tanult és már hosszabb ideje nagy szerelem fejlődött ki. A szülők

talán nem szívesen látták a dolgot. Tény az, hogy senki sem tudott a dolgokról. A múlt héten a fiú, ki jelenleg katonáskodik, néhány napi szabadságra hazajött és ezt az időt használta ki Tóni arra, hogy hirtelen megesküdjék. - Nándorék sem kaptak hírt Gyuritól az egész idő alatt, sőt ma sem kaptak és így nagyon jól esett nekik, hogy közleményeid alapján jelenthettem, hogy kapcsolatban vagy vele. - Ma nap telefonált Dr. Fischer né és megtudtam tőle, hogy három család összeállított volt és kumulatív sürgönyben/válasz fizetve, összesen 72 P/érdeklődtek ottani gyermekeik hogyléte iránt. Kár, hogy nem gondoltak idejébe arra, hogy bennünket is feleztőlítsanak részvételre. - Mindenesetre minden leveledben írj egy pár szót ottani ismerősökről, ha egyáltalán tudsz valamit róluk. Itteni hozzátartozóknak nagy jótetemény, ha az ember felhívhatja őket az azal, hogy hallott valamit a kintlevőkről. - István bizonyára is majd megint neked, ha hazajön. Majd beszámol arról is, hogy mily buzgón jár ki a clubba, hol nyilván jól bánik vele. - Okmányaimra semmi szükségem nincsen. Ezek ne okozzanak gondot neked. - Viszont szeretném tudni, hogy te felhasználtad-e az aint - külképviseleti hatóságnál. Azt hiszem, hogy megfelelő eljárás nagyon fontos a jövőre való tekintettel. - Gratulálok újabb újságírói sikereidhez. Felteszem, hogy a Ch. E. komoly szaklap és ha ilyen minőségében cikket hoz olyasvalaki részéről, ki még sem mondható kész kémikusknak, az mindenesetre nem mindennapi eset. Az Au.Qu.-tól nyert megbízást pedig nagyon megtisztelőnek tartom. Remélem, hogy gubát is jelent. - Tán egy zer majd elküldheted ezeket a cikkeknek. - Csókollak fiacskám ezerszer

Apru

BY AIR MAIL

My darling boy,

I can't tell you how happy it made me to hear from you via Father, who communicated to me the contents of your letter of June 23rd. Ridiculous to think what an enormous lot of difference it makes to know for certain that you were well and happy on a certain day five weeks ago! but there it is and can't be altered, parents seem to be made that way. I think we've good reason to hope that we can keep in touch from now on - though there's no knowing what may still happen. Anyway, it's good to know that you are getting on so well pleased with your job and, apparently, vice versa. Congratulations about the Austin. Quarterly - I'm looking forward to reading that article. If I had to write 3000 words on your subject, I'd be at a complete loss where to begin. I wonder what will happen about the Times Independent and what you will ultimately decide to do. In every case I feel it's a good thing that you have plenty of time to settle down to work and make up your mind about APM first. Well, perhaps we'll hear more from you soon.

I am having an extremely pleasant time at Mattar again, enjoying it even more than I did last year because now-adap everything one may enjoy seems like an extra-special gift. And everything is just as pleasant, pricelessness and comfortable as it was a year ago. Prices are up about 10%, but they're plenty of everything. Of course the hotel prices are much to be pitied because in these uncertain times guests are scarce and the service attended very well, but it's timing up now; here the public is seeing the Mexican government and the situation of the country. But we have plenty of people from the United States and Europe - many, mostly, from the U.S. - and the weather is so good, so we have good bridges in the morning. The weather is comical and overcast most of the time, but that doesn't trouble me - the hills, the woods, the brooks, the wide look over the plain are lovely in every sort of weather. Yesterday Mrs. Schuyler (Brachfeld) drove up to visit one of my acquaintances, friend of hers, and took us on a very pleasant trip in her car. I hadn't met her since she was a girl, and realized yesterday how absurd it is to keep up close friendships with so many who had disappeared. Instead of being on friendly terms with such a nice, intelligent, amusing. She inquired about you and sent you good wishes. I expect to stay here until mid-August; whether or no I'll go down to Lige for another fortnight after that, depends on Don Cu's plan. Good bless you, my darling, all fondest love Mother

**Letter 36 (Written in Hungarian by Grandpa in Budapest to son John in Melbourne)
(Translated by Katalin Gaal, October 2010)**

Janos Pongracz
II. Vermezo-Street 6,
Budapest, Hungary

16 August 1940

My dear son! I wrote to you at the end of August through Kitty. Since then there hasn't been much to report, and I waited for news about you either directly or through Kitty. But so far there's been nothing. Even though the post is obviously functioning well, since others, for instance the Nandors, have since received a letter. But I'm not concerned and hope that the long silence is pure coincidence. Of course I would very much like to know that everything continues to be ok regarding your job, etc.

There's really not much news at home. The mood is quite calm though just today there's some excitement over the Hungarian-Romanian talks. Everyone commiserates with the misfortune of the Australian ministers which has been commemorated in today's paper.

I'm fine except for my foot? (*partly illegible*) which as you recall has caused me a lot of pain four years ago. It's not serious but unpleasant, and its treatment is boring and costly. But I'm already getting better.

Mum arrives home tomorrow. According to her letters it did her wonders to spend some time in the Tatra Mountains and she really enjoyed going on day trips. In September she will go to Sag Hill. Perhaps I will go too.

Istvan is behaving well. He's friendly and works hard. He works at the photography workshop from 9 in the morning until noon, then he does practical work at a driving course. In the evenings he learns theory. I don't see him all day. I'm still not sure what happens with the child after the course, but doubtless he will be able to work as an apprentice in a serious industrial business. He can't wait for this as he wants to start earning money.

Palko has been home for a holiday, he's been a soldier for months. He has mild jaundice again but is in good shape, friendly and in a good mood. Spending some time here has done him good.

Your letter addressed to Vera [*illegible*]. ... I send these few lines through Kitty, and the copy through normal post.

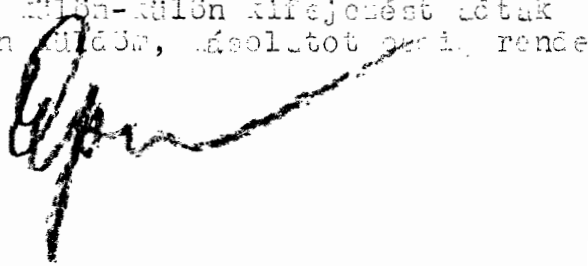
I kiss you my son a thousand times, Dad.

Pongrácz János
II. Vécseztő-u.6.,
Budapest, Hungary

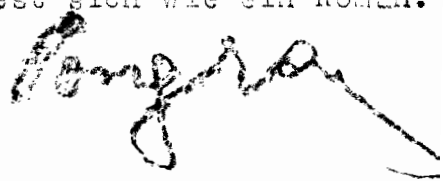
No.36.

1940. aug.16.

Drága fiúcskám ! Aug.1.-én irtam volt utoljára neked via Kitty. Azóta nem igen akadt jelenteni valóm, no meg naponként vártam újabb híradást részadról, akár közvetlenül, akár szintén Kitty révén. De mindeddig nem jött semmi sem. Holott a posta nyilván rendben funkcionált, mert mások plá. Nándorék is, kaptak időközben ismételt levelet. De azért nem agyodom és bízom abban, hogy a hosszú halogatás valami véletlen körülmény következménye. Persze szeretném már nagyon újból igazolva látni, hogy továbbra is rendben van minden job-od körül, stb. - Itthon tényleg nincs semmi újalg. Közlélapotok tekintetében teljes a nyugalom, bár ép ma, mikor a magyar-román tárgyalások megkezdődnek, persze mindenki nagyon kíváncsi. - Az ausztriai ministerek szorongatottsága, melyről ép a mai lapok emlékeztetnek meg, nagy részvétel kísértett mindenfelé. - Magam rendbe vagyok egészen, eltekintve egy lábnyalától, minő, minek talán fogsz emlékezni vagy négy évvel ezelőtt is megkínzott. Nem komoly dolog az egész, csak kellemetlen, kezelésre pedig unalmas és költséges. De vár lábilok kifelé. - Anyu holnap este érkezik haza. Levelei szerint nagyon jót tett neki a tátrai tartózkodás és nagyon élvezte, hogy kávéházakba is mehetett. Szeptemberben alkalmasint még 1 hétig Ságára. Talán én is elindulok. - István igazán mint-szerűen viselkedik most. Irárrabilis, kedves és szorgalmas. Reggel kilenczestől délig doloznak az ikei-telefőn gépészeti műhelyben, ezután megy gyakorlati munkára az autózástól tanfolyamon. Este pedig elméleti oktatásban részesül. Ig. egész nap nem látom. - Hogy a kurasz befejeztével mi történjék a gyerekekkel, azt még mindig nem tudom pontosan, de nem kétséges, hogy valamilyen komoly ipar vállalkozásba lehet hozni tanoncznak. - Ezt ő maga is már nagyon kívánja, mert pénzt akar keresni. - Palkó, ki már hónapok óta katona, itthon volt most szabadságon. Noha egy igen csekély mértékű tárgyalást bevezertt segített, mégis igen jó színben volt, és kedves, jókedvű. Ittléte során rendbe hozták segített. - Lányi Verához intézett leveleddel nagy örökre volt. Egy nagy vára, mint tudja, külön-külön kifejezést adtak örömeiknek. - E pár sort is írt Kitty utján addig, későbbet pedig rendbe péntek. Csókollak fiúcskám szereszer



Liebes Kitty, Im Vorhin in herzlichsten Dank für Weiterleitung obiger Zeilen, ferner für Ihren Brief vom 5. ds., nebst Beilagen, der heute eintraf. - Böske kommt morgen nach Hause, nach einem recht angenehmen Aufenthalt in der Hohen Pétra. Sie wird Ihnen gewiss einst ausführlich schreiben. Das traurige Los der armen Stella liest sich wie ein Roman. Schade um eine so prächtige Frau ! Herzlichst



Pongrácz János
Budapest II.
Vérmező-ut 6.

Letter No. 37.

19th August 1940

My darling boy,

I returned from Matlárháza two days ago, hoping to find another letter from you, but alas! there was only No. 18 of which Father had already written me the gist. Well, it's better than nothing, but I do hope that several others will reach us shortly and tell us more about your doings. I wish I had a little clearer idea about what "developmental work in the Statistical Dept." means, I wish I could form some picture of the people you work with and spend your leisure with, about your daily itinerary, about your hosts, about friends old and new - you have no idea how hungrily we wait for details, to be digested during weeks and months when we hear nothing and live on the meagre items of your previous letters. Of course the main thing is that you are well, that you are there, that you are working and in congenial surroundings - I never cease to be grateful for that, but you know how greedy I am - I want more! I know that it is difficult to recount intimate details in a letter that may possibly never reach us but will assuredly be read by the censor, yet there are a hundred little things you might tell us on the chance of the letter reaching us some day after all. Just go ahead and write all you can, dear, will you?

In spite of much cold and rainy weather I had a really very pleasant time at Matlár and came home looking and feeling well, sun-burned without much sun, and tremendously refreshed by the sort of irresponsible vacation resort life that unfailingly makes one feel as if all worries were infinitely remote. This is all the sillier because all our home worries are increasingly in evidence over there, but as a visitor one can't help being less concerned with them. I enjoyed every bit of my stay, although - or perhaps because - I felt I should probably have no chance to come again - but then I had the same sort of feeling last year, and yet there I was! Who knows but I may return next year again. We had a few fine sunny days and were lucky in timing our excursions; a small party of us had a lovely day at Csorba and the Poprád Lake, and another for a big automobile excursion across the Magura, to the Dunajec, down the river in a raft - which is really not a raft but four canoes tied together in which you are poled downstream between romantic pine-covered rocks, rather like the Sebes where it's wildest - then back again from the point from which we started in a very jolty wagon driven by a temperamental twelve-year-old youngster. We dined on salmon from the river and returned by a roundabout way, stopping at Késmárk. I've been wanting to go on this trip since the time when I was fifteen, when I was first in the Tatra and it took two days because you drove in a carriage and spent the night at some out-of-the-way place - but my father said little girls need not see everything, there was plenty of time for me to go when I was older. Well, I've been after all, and it has given me particular satisfaction, fortifying me in my conviction that one should "never say die." That is the reason why I have told you about it at such length!

At home I found everything alright, including István about whose present occupations Father has probably told you. For the moment he is really busy and seems satisfied and in good spirits, but we see very little of him. On Sundays, of course, he is on the river. The men at the Club seem to be very nice to him; I'm glad he has friends there and also in other quarters now. He will certainly write to you, but just now he is really busy, coming home every evening about nine, and you know he isn't the sort who can make use of every odd moment. When he has finished his course I want him to spend a couple of weeks at Ság before starting his new work, whatever it's going to be - I should like him to put on a bit of fat before going to work in good earnest; besides, it really looks like the last chance of going to Ság, and I should not like him to miss it. Father and I will probably go down for a week or so in September, too. Not that it will be a very cheerful visit.

To-morrow is St Stephen's Day, but it hardly seems like other years. For one thing, it's coolish, and the town is not very full. Of course there are hardly any foreigners, but country people have also not come in as big crowds as usual. Fireworks, Pearly Bouquet and all the rest of the program is coming off as usual, but not with the same zest. A good many people are out of town, Leopolds in Csorvölgy, Nándors in Oroszi, so I've hardly seen anyone yet. Blessings on you all.

Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, II.

Letter No. 38.

24th August 1940

My darling boy,

our last letter - No. 37 of August 21st - was scarcely in the box when two of yours arrived: No. 16 dated June 1st and No. 18 of July 5th. They made us very happy, containing an answer to some of the questions I asked in my last one, although there's a lot more I should like to know. I do hope that during the well-nigh three months that have passed in the meantime you have found someone to tell you how to bake potatoes in their jackets - it's the simplest thing in the world. You just wash them and drain them and put them on a tin or in a pan, and dump them into the oven when it's moderately hot and then in about half an hour they are done. If you don't want them in their skins, peel them, wash them, wipe them dry, then smear them with a little butter or fat in which you have mixed a little salt /and paprika, if you like/ and put them in the oven, and that's that. I didn't know you had an oven, there are a great many simple things you can make if you have one - but our letters take such an age now that it seems silly to send recipes: you may have moved or become an accomplished cook or goodness knows what else may have happened in the meantime. I have found a little book of simple bachelor's recipes which I am going to send you, it may reach you in six months or so, and I hope it will still be welcome. **shake the tin once or twice, so they don't burn!*

We sent the Bicsérdy article to Lorant ages ago; probably he placed it in Australia, so it's all right. At present we are entirely out of touch with him; although the Post Office accepts mail for England, nobody gets any replies unless they send their letters via the United States, so that is what we are trying to do at present. We have no news of the Palmers, although both Livia and I have written via the Midland Bank; I expect you will hear from them sooner than we shall. I phoned ~~to~~ Feketes to-day and found that Gabi is working for his firm in Kecskemét; I gave his father your message and also congratulations on your behalf on the occasion of Lidy's marriage. Poor child, her husband was called to arms after they had been married two days, and now she is running his small textile factory in Pápa about which she probably didn't know a thing. Some people have to grow up very rapidly these days. - No, we have no blackouts; your paper probably made a news item out of the fact that there was a trial blackout for one night some weeks ago, like there had been last year, long before you left. On the contrary, all the buildings are floodlit every night this week, and things go on just as usual, except that there is uncommonly cold and catastrophically rainy weather, to make a bad harvest worse. To-day the atmosphere is tense, for the news has just come through that negotiations with Rumania have been broken off. Of course nobody knows what is going to happen next. - Thank you, we have plenty to eat, even if sometimes you can't get quite as much butter as you want to /but still a lot more than where it's rationed! / and the sale of cream is not permitted - but that's about all. Sugar is rationed all over the country /but sugar beets are about the only crop that promise a very good harvest/ and fat in Budapest only, but rations are plentiful. Coffee, tea, chocolate are expensive but still available. So all one has to do is to think twice about menus, but we still live on the fat of the land. Father doesn't always approve of the economical menus over which Nándors get so enthusiastic, but then that's nothing new, is it?

István greatly enjoys his car-driving course and is much more pleasant to live with than in his school days. The course lasts another fortnight, then we'll probably all go to Ság for a week or two, and by that time I hope some further occupation for him will materialize. I suppose it is hard for you, in that consolidated country, to realize how difficult it is to make any plans here at present. The one thing that István can do at present is to learn something - anything! while we wait and see how he can subsequently make use of it. And I am quite reassured now that he is going to learn. It is quite useless to look further ahead.

Darling, tell us something more about what you do in your free time. Read, write etc. - I know that, but I wish you'd tell me whether you have any new friends, anyone you go and see sometimes, who your tennis partner are etc. Do you see anything of Albertis? I was amused at having made a hit with Mrs Morrison by having been a Chr. Sc. Monitor contributor - wish I still had that job, it ~~was~~ is a fine paper. - I forgot to make a copy of this letter, so I am only sending it via Kitty, hoping that all these letters reach you safely - we are looking forward very eagerly to your replies. God bless you, darling.

fondest love Mother and Father

**Letter 39 (1st part, written in Hungarian by Grandpa in Budapest to son John in Melbourne)
(Translated by Katalin Gaal, October 2010)**

Janos Pongracz

1 September 1940

II. Vermezo – Street 6.

Budapest, Hungary

My dear son,

One copy of this letter is being sent to you through Kitty and the other one is being used as an experiment. Please let me know exactly when this second copy arrived and whether it arrived through airmail or normal post.

At the beginning of last week two of your letters arrived on the same day, no. 17 dated June 15 and no. 21 dated July 28. The latter only travelled for four weeks which is good given today's circumstances. Both letters contained many interesting things. First and foremost we were interested in what you wrote about your job and we're happy to know that your job has been made permanent, that you can save something from your salary and that you will receive a pension in approximately 37 years etc. The fact that you enjoy your work is a blessing and I'm beginning to suspect that the Hollerith situation must be fascinating. I did some research and found some information in an encyclopedia. I also found out that there is an electronic bookkeeping company which represents the Holleriths. I have received some documents from this company so I'm beginning to suspect what this is all about. Of course how this matter functions in reality is beyond my knowledge.

That's why I visited the Maks, to see things, but unfortunately your information was incorrect: they don't work with this system. They are using some sort of system, but this is much less comprehensive. Apparently there is Hollerith at the Mavs'. But it's difficult to get any insight into any of the public offices you mentioned here, the same as over there, so I have to be satisfied with a few illustrations which I found amongst the KFT publications.

What you wrote about old Aurel is very entertaining. It seems that he's become completely antiquated in every way, except of course his occupation.

We're happy to know that occasionally you're able to incorporate some entertainment into your schedule. I hope you have some company to share this with. After all, there are girls there too.

As for other businesses it's futile to think about them now, because of the postal service for one thing.

It's a shame that your boss doesn't like the idea of paper manufacturing. This would be the only thing that could be corresponded about with Sao Paolo. Otherwise the other day I was talking to old Murányi who was so excited about his son's achievements in South and Central America that I thought it advisable not to close matters regarding him. If these successes are indeed true then your contacts/people might revisit this matter. The old M. said that his son will write to you directly.

Istvan works very hard. He leaves at 8 in the morning and returns at 9 in the evening. He hardly has to time to row as usually he doesn't have time to discuss the Sunday tours. Today it was finally possible to join a tour. He will complete the course this coming weekend and after that he will go to Sag with Mum and me. It will be enough for me to stay there for a week but they will stay longer.

Do you know Imre Székely? He was the vice president of the phone company until one-two years ago the government asked him to urgently leave his job because of the Jewish Policy. Afterwards – he's a rich man – he established a smaller factory in which he mostly manufactures auto candles and offers car service. The wife of my old acquaintance was good friends with Mum, and went on holiday to Matlar. They were together again this year and a warm friendship developed between the ladies which has resulted in Mrs Székely wanting to help us in any way possible. Therefore she is supporting Istvan so that from 1 October the child will begin an apprenticeship in her husband's factory, the address is "Technical Automobile and Metal Caster Factory", Kerepesi Street 26. I'm very happy about this as it's a small business so Istvan can learn more, especially as Szekely has ensured that the child sees as much as possible. Furthermore the factory is not far and a lot of time will not be spent on commuting so Istvan can have time to learn other things. He would have preferred to work in a motor factory, but he will accept the situation.

There were many guests at Sag during the summer and the house will be full again. The poor things are trying to forget about problems, which is difficult as the trial is continuing. In summary it seems that three-quarters of the property will need be passed on to small landowners from October 1, who will only rent it and will pay a moderate rate. The rest can be sold privately within a year at the latest. The castle and park will stay but this of course is only a burden which can be difficult to get rid of.

Altogether the decision in Vienna brought in more than the public would have expected but it's true that some parts of the country which we were counting on have been lost. Everyone is happy that there will not be a war. It will be all the more difficult of course to solve the thousands and thousands of problems faced by a country that has grown. Not to mention other things, 1 million Romanians and more than 100 000 Jewish people returning. This is plenty of trouble! I will send you some documents and newspaper cuttings from which you can familiarise yourself with events, even though you may receive them a bit late.

Luckily my foot has healed almost completely. Everyone else is alright and as we have gotten used to only thinking of tomorrow at most without thinking of the day after, I can say that we're fine. The fact that we can observe events with such calm can be primarily attributed to seeing you in a secure and good position and knowing that you're content. Continue to keep us going with good news. Every letter you send is a source of great happiness for us.

I kiss you, my dear son,

Dad.

(2nd part, written in Hungarian by Grandma in Budapest to son John in Melbourne)

(Translated by Katalin Gaal, October 2010)

My dear son!

Dad has already written the most important things so I will only add a few things. I'm very happy that I can finally form some idea of your activities and day- to-day life. Of course I'm interested in many other things. For instance, how are you with clothes and underwear? Have you had to do any shopping? What are prices like in this area? How are you going with washing and fixing things? Who cleans? Mrs M or yourself? I'm interested in these kinds of silly things.

Though Istvan used your ski gear last year if there's an opportunity we will send it to you – though in today's political situation, don't expect it too soon!

We got 23 beautiful photos from the National Travel Association which we are likely to use though at the moment all the magazines here are preoccupied with Transylvania and little is sold through foreigners, but a few things go through. I thanked them; if something gets published I will send you the proof copy, to show them. The following articles - Greek monastery, Snail race, Silent Levente - of course ours were placed by Lorant; I don't need a proof copy; but if you see something like this let me know for any possible future check-up. You could however send one or two issues of the *Radio Times*, I would be interested in your article. I only asked about the Graham-bread because I read in one of the articles you sent me that Sir Herbert grinds wheat with his own hands from which he makes bread for himself I thought instead of this he could try bran Graham-bread which is made through the same health recipe Maybe he will like it more – but perhaps he likes to grind wheat – best to leave it alone!

I saw "The Barretts of Wimpole Street" four years ago at Wienerwald, but I read in *Variety* – Gorrick is very diligent – that you get newer films, for instance "Grapes of Wrath" which we only know through the book. I'm curious what you think of it? It's a dark but extremely well-written book; in America many are vehemently denying its allegations.

Did you write a few lines to Kitty acknowledging that you have received our letter? For the time being we will continue to use her as it's doubtful how well direct post operates.

I hug you a thousand times, my dear son,

Mum.

Pongrácz János
II. Vörmező-u.6.,
Budapest, Hungary

39.sz.

1940. szept.1.

Drága fiacskám, E levél egyik példánya ismét via Kitty megy neked, a másik pedig kísérletet képez. Kérlek írd meg, hogy ezt a második példányt pontosan mikor kaptad meg és hogy légi póstán érkezett-e vagy pedig csak amugy. Az elmúlt hét elején egyazon napon jött meg jun.15.-án kelt 17.sz. és jul.28.-án kelt 21.sz. leveled. Utóbbi tehát ca 4 hetet utazott, ami a mai viszonyok között elég jó eredmény. Két leveled sok érdekeset tartalmazott. Elsősorban persze az érdekelt bennünket, amit job-odról írsz és nagy megelégedéssel vettük tudomásul az erre vonatkozó híreket: hogy állandósított van állásod, hogy fizetésedből meg tudsz takarítani valamit, hogy nyugdíjad lesz ca 37 év múlva stb. Hogy mindemellett még tetszik is munkaköröd, igazán nagy áldás és magam is kezdem sejteni, hogy az az Ördöngös Hollerith dolog végtelenül fascináló lehet. Kissé utánanéztem a dolgoknak és találtam is az Encyklopédiában némi felvilágosítást. Továbbá kikutattam, hogy van Pesten egy Elektromos gépkönyvelés kft, mely Hollerithékat képviseli. Ettől a társaságtól kaptam is némi nyomtatványokat, úgy hogy kezdem sejteni, hogy miről is van itt szó. Hogy valóságban miként funkcionál az Ugy, persze azért kívül esik azon, amit megtudtam. Ép ezért jártam a MÁK-nál is, hogy lássam a dolgot, de sajnos, információd téves volt: ők nem dolgoznak ezzel a rendszerrel. Használják ugyan valami géprendszert, de ez sokkal kevésbé átfogó. Állítólag a MÁV-nál van Hollerith. De itt, úgy mint az általam említett egyéb közhivataloknál igen nehéz volna betekintést nyerni és így meg kell elégednem egy pár illusztrációval, melyet a KFT-től kapott nyomtatványokban találtam. - Nagyon szórakoztató, amit Öreg Aurélról írsz. Ugy látszik most már teljesen begyepesedett minden tekintetben, persze eltekintve szakmájától. - Örömmel vesszük ki közleményeidből, hogy időnkint némi szórakozást is tudsz beigtatni programmodba. Remélem azonban, hogy ehhez ~~praxix~~ társaságod is van. Utóvégre odaát is vannak Amáliák. - Ami a különböző üzleteket illeti, ezekkel most amugy sem lehet foglalkozni, már csak a postai viszonyok miatt sem. - Kár, hogy az a papírgyártási dolog nem tetszik boss-odnak. Ez volna az egyedüli, melyet rendszeresen le tudnál levelezni Sao Paoloval. - Egyébiránt ép a napokban beszéltem Öreg Murányival, ki oly ragyogó színekben ecsetelte fia Dél - és Észak - Amerikában elért sikereit, hogy jónak láttam a te dolgotat vele szemben nem végleg elintézettnak beállítani. Ha ezek a sikerek valóban fennállanak, akkor talán a te embereid és még visszatérnek a dologra. Öreg M. azt mondotta, hogy fia majd közvetlenül ír neked. - István nagyon szorgalmas. Reggel nyolczkor megy el, este 9-kor tér vissza. Evezéshez alig jut, mivel rendszerint arra sincs ideje, hogy vasárnapi tura miatt tárgyaljon. Ma végre sikerült bejutni egy kirándulásba. - A most kezdődő hét végével elkészül a tanfolyammal és azután lemegy Ságára, Anyuval és velem. Magamnak elég lesz egy hét az ottani tartózkodásból, de ők ketten még tovább maradnak. - Tudod, hogy kicsoda Székely Imre? A Telefongyár vezérigazgatója volt, míg egy-két évvel ezelőtt a kormány kívánságára sürgősen el kellett hagynia állását a zsidótörvénnyel kapcsolatban. Ő azután - gazdag ember - létesített egy kisebb gyárat, melyben főleg autógyertyákat gyárt és autószervizst tart fenn. Nekem régi ismerősöm felesége pedig Anyuval volt laza nexusban, míg tavaly együtt nem nyaraltak Matlárón. Idén ott újból együtt voltak és így igen meleg barátság fejlődött ki a hölgyek között, mely abban kulminált, hogy Székelyné minden módon igyekszik kedvünkben járni. Így felkarolta István dolgát is és az eredmény az, hogy a gyerek október 1.-én belép tanonczként férje üzemébe, melynek czime: Automobiltechnikai és fémöntőgyár Rt., Kerepesi-ut 26. Én nagyon örülök ennek, mivel kis üzem és így többet tanulhat István, pláne, minthogy biztosítva van, hogy Székelynek lesz gondja arra, hogy mentől többet lásson a gyerek. Azonkívül nincsen nagyon messze a gyár, nem megy el annyi töméntelen idő közlekedésre és így módjában lesz Istvánnak, hogy más egyebet is tanuljon. Ő maga jobb szeretett volna motorgyárban dolgozni, de majd megbékül a helyzettel.

Ságon nagy vendégjárás volt egész nyáron és most is tele lesz a ház. Igyeksznek szegények megfélekezni a bajokról, ami azonban alig sikerül, mivel a tárgyalások állandóan folynak. Végeredményben úgy látszik, hogy a birtok 3/4 részét most okt. 1.-én át kell adni kis-birtokosoknak, kik azonban csak bérlők és igen mérsékelt bért tartoznak fizetni. A megmaradó részt szabad szabad kézzel eladni, azonban legkésőbbben egy éven belül. A kastély és a park megmarad, de ez persze csak teher, mely nemcsak lesz lerátható. - Az utolsó napok itthon nagyon izgalmasak voltak. - Végeredményben a bécsi döntés többet hozott, mint amennyit a közönség várt volt, bár igaz, hogy elmaradtak oly országrészek, melyekre biztosan számítottunk volt. Végeredményben mindenki boldog, hogy nem lesz háború. - Annál nehezebb lesz persze a megnövekedett ország ezer és ezer problémájának megoldása. Hogy mást ne mondjak, több mint egy millió román és több mint 100,000 zsidó tér vissza. Elég gond ez! Küldök nyomtatványként néhány újságkivágást, melyből az események és eredmények tekintetében kissé tájékozódhatsz, bár mily későn is kapod kézhez az adatokat. - Szerencsére majdnem teljesen kigyógyultam lábbajomból. Mindenki más is all right és mint-hogy megszoktuk, hogy legfeljebb a holnapra gondolunk és már a holnapután is figyelmen kívül hagyjuk, mondhatom, hogy nincsen semmi bajunk. Hogy ily nyugodtan tudjuk szemlélni a helyzetet, ebben legfőbb része van annak ~~hogy tudjuk~~, hogy téged biztonságban, jól elhelyezkedve és megelégedettnak tudunk. Csak tarts minket jól hírekkel továbbra is. Minden leveled nagy öröm kutatórészünkre. Csókollak, drága fiacskám

Drága fiacskám! A lényeges dolgokat Apu már elírta előlem, én csak kiegészítem. Nagyon örülök én is, hogy most már tudok némi fogalmat alkotni magamnak tevékenységedről és napjaid folyásáról. persze még sok egyéb is érdekel. Például hogy állsz ruhákkal, fehérneművel? Kellett-e már valamit vásárolnod? Milyenek az árak ilyen cikkekben? Hogy állsz mosással, javításokkal? Ki takarít? Mrs. M., vagy te magad? Ilyen bolondságok is érdekelnek. Si-felszerelésedet István részint némileg önkényesen használta ugyan tavaly, de ha lesz még valamikor valami alkalom rá, majd elküldjük - igaz, hogy egyelőre nem olyan a világhelyzet, hogy egyhamar számíthatnánk rá! - Kaptunk a National Travel Ass'n-tól 23 darab szebbnél-szebb fényképet, melyet bizonyára fogunk használni, bár egyelőre persze tele vannak az itteni képes lapok Erdély-lyel, a külföldieknek pedig vajmi kevés anyag kél el/de azért egy és más mindig csurran-cseppen/. Megköszöntem nekik; ha megjelenik valami, majd neked küldöm a támpéldányt, hogy bemutathasd nekik. - Az említett cikkek /Görög kolostor, Csigaverseny, Néma Levente/ persze a mieink, még Loránt helyezte el őket; támpéldányra nincs szükségem; de azért ha ilyesmit látsz, csak írd meg ezután is, a majdani ellenőrzés kedvéért. Küldhetnél ellenben egy-két Radio Times-t, érdekelne a rovatod. - A Graham-kenyeret csak azért kérdeztem, mert egy általam beküldött lapkivágásban olvastam annak idején, hogy Sir Herbert sajátkezűleg őrli a buzát, amiből kenyeret készít magának - gondoltam, hogy ehelyett talán megkóstolhatná az ugyanezen egészségügyi elvek alapján készült korpás Graham-kenyeret, hátha ez jobban ízlik neki - de lehet, hogy szeret buzát őrölni, nem kell bolygatni! - A "Barretts of Wimpole Street" et ezelőtt négy évvel láttam a Wienerwaldban, de a Variety-ban olvasom -Gorrick roppant szorgalmas- hogy ennél újabb filmeket is kaptok, pl. a Grapes of Wrath-t, melyet mi csak könyv alakban ismerünk - kíváncsi vagyok, mit szólna hozzá? Sötét dolog, de remekül megírt könyv; Amerikában sokan vehemensen cáfolják állításait. Ugy-e írtál Kitty-nek pár sort, levelünk vételének igazolásául? Egyelőre még őt vesszük igénybe továbbra is, mivel kétes, hogy a direkt ut hogy szuperál. Ölellek ezerszer, drága fiacskám

Annyu

No. 40. *Bryndis Janos*
Verona n. 6.
Budapest

Sag, 10th Sept. 1940

My darling boy,

Your letter No. 22. of August 12th was forwarded to me here - it came in record time, even though Clipper mail from N. usually comes faster than this one did. Yes, I feel some compunction for putting Kitty to such a lot of expense and can only hope she can afford it. Still, you need not hesitate to send her your replies, as she writes to me anyway, so no extra postage is incurred. However your last Air Mail letters via Egypt arrived all right, so it comes to the same thing. Our case is different, since the Post Office does not accept Air Mail for Australia. Let us know as soon as you have received the copy of our No. 39 which we sent by post - then we shall see how that plan works.

Your letters are extremely cheering and comforting, like no other from another planet. I can't tell you how glad I am of your choice. One hears such a lot about the doings of young men in other countries nowadays, and I feel convinced that the advantages of America outweigh those of all others - certainly those of the U.S. for America seems to be well and happy, and Erica's camp and Eric seem to be well and happy, and Erica's camp did good business during the summer, but A. seems to have lost confidence in the future of his firm which deals mainly with Euro securities, so he seems to start a small business of his own with a friend. I don't know any details.

I am the only one of the family here at present; I believe it is a day or two when he has obtained his Certificate as ~~driver of cars~~, lorry and motor bike driver - he has successfully passed all these exams and feels very pleased since now he can be a taxi or bus driver after only 3 months practice whereas with an ordinary licence he's need one year! Now he is determined to be a professional as a fitter, so he and father are looking for another place instead of that in the small factory which was offered to him. That, however, is still available if nothing more suitable can be found, so he will certainly go to work on Oct. 1. And he has other plans for his own improvement at evening classes, so he'll be all right for the present. I should feel happier if he were a student at Hawkebury College, but I hope he will find his feet in this way too. The idea of agricultural studies because your year 1 and 2 college, with no prospects, seem an absurdity and a short special course seems especially pointless under the circumstances. It does not appeal to him; besides, the family expects much from him that it would be to no purpose. I hope he will have a good fortnight's vacation here, although the family court has gone and it's too cold to be here and nearly all the houses (and most of the men) have been mobilised and are only returning by slow trains. The harvest was very late anyhow, what with all the rain and the shortage of labour, and Father's worries are plentiful. The major part of the estate is to be taken over by the new business

the 1st of next month, but there isn't a sign of any change yet, and the new tenants the selves - they are, for the most part, the old family hands - don't know what, when, how it's going to happen. Life in the house goes on just as usual and Aunt J. is really admirable under the strain. There's quite a nice house party, John Molnar, Mr & Mrs Gibber; last week Cass and Uncle Fiki were here too. I'm terribly sorry that Father can't come, one of his nephews has been called to arms, the other is working in a labour camp, like a great many other friends and acquaintances of ours - so Father is alone to look after things in the workshop, and in addition Terezi will probably also be called to service shortly, and however ~~small~~ our business has dwindled, someone must attend to the mill but something should turn up. I hope that Father will get away at least for a week as soon as I am back home - although, thank God, he is quite well and his lung trouble is definitely better, he could do with a little vacation.

As for our financial situation and the food question, there is nothing to worry about! Of course there is bound to be a certain increase in some articles of food, and prices have gone up some what and will probably go up still more, ^{but} we've put up preserves and provided for future needs as far as possible, and the essentials will certainly not be lacking even if there is some passing inconvenience. For the present we've got everything - the breakfast table it still looks the same as it used to, and we have changed nothing in our domestic arrangements at home either. This may not be a sound policy financially, but one can't help living beyond one's means when one doesn't know what one's means really are, still less what they will be to-morrow. So you needn't worry about our having to economize. For the time being we are perfectly O.K., and there would be no sense in meeting possible future troubles half-way, practically as I expect there will be no future troubles.

I forgot to tell you that Pál had been attacked after the war had started, with another fibrous attack and jaundice, just when his company was going to be moved to the newly recovered territories. Poor chap, he's had more than his share of illness this year, but the doctors promise he'll be all right in a fortnight. Fond love, dear Mother

Father

Dearest Kitty. Please have everything enclosed, forwarded to Father. So many thanks.
Yours
Oscar

Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, II.
Hungary

No. 41.

25th September 1940

My darling boy,

we've had no news from you since your letter of August 12th, forwarded by Kitty. Since this does seem to be the only practicable way, at least for us, we shall continue to ruin Kitty and send our letters by the same route, at any rate as long as we don't get an acknowledgment of our No. 39, sent direct on Sept. 1st. Of course it would be foolish to count upon Australian mail these days: all our friends who have children over there are without news, and we are not worrying a bit: I hope you continue to be cheerful and contented and are pleased with your work. It's good to think of you where you are. I also hope that you are not worrying about us: there is not the slightest reason, we are going on just as usual. The more chaotic the world all round is growing, the stranger it seems that this spot, of all places, should be singled out for comparative normalcy. Of course it's not all plain sailing, and the future is as doubtful as elsewhere, but for the time being there seems, for the superficial observer, hardly any difference between conditions as they were when you left, and as they are now - at least as far as our own way of living is concerned.

I returned from Ság a few days ago, after a few days of perfect weather such as we haven't had all summer. It's a funny situation: the transfer of four hundred acres should be effected within a week, but nothing tangible has been done about it yet, so nobody knows what is going to happen in a few days. It does not touch next year's harvest, though, since work in the fields must continue as usual. István is still down there, enjoying his last days of liberty, but rather unhappy because he can't make use of his newly-acquired driving licence on account of petrol rationing and can't get any riding because nearly all the horses have been commandeered. He returns in a day or two and I hope he'll be able to start work in one or the other of the various "services" which come into consideration, quite shortly. Everybody is back in town; all our acquaintances, at least all the men over 42, are back from the various labour camps, most of them none the worse, in fact physically even better, for their unusual experience of living the simple life. Although accommodation was of course primitive, food was very decent and plentiful everywhere; the worst part was being called away from their civilian occupations.

Last week we got a big batch of English mail, dating from the middle of June! There was a p.c. from Tabori saying he had not sold either Sonia or any of your articles, and asking whether he should send the ms. of Sonia to you. There is no prospect of his getting my reply, so I am letting the matter rest - it's a hopeless proposition for the time being anyway. I have not heard anything about him since, although I expect his people are in touch with him by telegraph. I am sorry to say we have heard nothing of Palmers, nor do I know anything about friend Maxime. Lici Andersen is still in Paris, sending occasional messages and hoping to be able to return sometime soon. Aunt Tiny and her sons seem to be alright.

Poor Palkó is still in hospital with liver trouble and jaundice; I haven't seen him yet as visiting hours at the University Clinic, where he is in a ward with others, are limited, and the family is plentiful enough. I have hardly seen anyone except Leopolds since I'm back; naturally the conversation revolves exclusively around the war. Hevesi and I are still working off and on, though somewhat desultorily; still, I think it's worthwhile to keep up connections as far as possible. Heinberg, a friend of whose has called on us lately and told us many interesting things, is starting a new daily paper which is to contain only a minimum of news and fill its pages with feature matter - it seems that in those parts people are looking for things that will take their minds off daily events and politics. Other countries are asking for the same. The trouble is that postal communication and money transfer is made so difficult. Our synopsis subscribers have also dwindled to a single one; so far there is not much in the theatres to justify the confidence of that single one, but all the theatres are playing, even the Magyar which was closed last year, so we shall see. István is getting interested in opera and drama; I hope he will be able to & sometimes.

I hope to have a letter of yours to answer at time. Bless you, my darling; all fondest love

Mother

There are lots of letters I should be delighted to receive. But they are all in the hands of the post office. I am sure they will get to you. I am sure they will get to you. I am sure they will get to you.

**Letter 42 (1st part, written in Hungarian by Grandpa in Budapest to son John in Melbourne)
(Translated by Katalin Gaal, October 2010)**

Janos Pongracz

11 October 1940

II. Vermezo-Street 6,

Budapest, Hungary

My dear son!

Your letter no. 24 dated September 8-10 arrived fairly quickly after 3 and a half weeks and like previous letters caused us so much happiness. Just the fact that we receive news from you makes us happy. What you write about your job creates much calmness for us. I wonder when you will be able to tell us in person what your job consists of?

It's very nice of you to write about the rowing club and of course Istvan didn't miss the chance to provide all the details to his own Club. Finally we have great weather and Istvan rows as much as possible but also participates in Club functions, therefore he very much enjoyed a recent social evening where they fried bacon. Meanwhile the child awaits his notice to attend one of the ama services, at which he is likely to be called in as an apprentice. I hope that things will settle in one or another place. In your time it wasn't an easy thing to get an appointment as an official/clerk. Today it's even harder to get in somewhere as an apprentice.

Istvan started to learn English this week. Last year or in the spring (*word is cut off*) we met a nice but somewhat strange English person. I think I wrote to you about it when we spent a week together in Sag. He is actually an opera singer with a deep baritone voice, but he hasn't performed in front of an audience for a long time. He lives here in Pest because he's in love with the city and the residents of Pest. I think he had some income from home. Now that he doesn't receive money from abroad he has become a language teacher. I'm not sure what he's like as a teacher but he is a pleasant, nice and in his own way amusing man and Istvan likes him from the initial contact. I think learning about Jack Emerson will heighten Piczu's interest. The rascal knows much more than one would think and happily babbles.

We have lived in very anxious times for quite some time now, but neither we nor friends are affected more than necessary. This means that we don't think beyond tomorrow and try to make the most of today. There's written proof of this, if you receive it at all, in the postcard signed by Aunt Roza, the Nandors, the Albertis and ourselves from the Hangli pub/eatery one or two weeks ago. The opportunity allowed Aunt Roza, who is 78 years old and had a terminal illness last year but pulled herself together, to happily participate in the fun. So on the day the Albertis took her to the movies, then to the restaurant I mentioned where as a surprise alongside the Nandors we came along as well. It was a pleasure to see how much the lady enjoyed the environment, the excellent food, the beer and she even smoked a cigarette. Of course we took her home early, but we enjoyed ourselves so much that the rest of us went to the Pommery Bar. This is a new establishment, which was started in one part of the nearby Buda Castle Coffee Shop and gets its somewhat unusual name from the owner who is called Pomegyerszky. The enjoyments offered were more a reflection of this name rather than the famous brand of champagne. It's been at least 15 years since I've been in a bar and based on this experience I think it will be at least the same amount of time before I visit a similar establishment. Though the people, who mostly consisted of Szena-Square-Country small business representatives, obviously had a good time, putting aside any religious differences. I'm mentioning all this in these circumstances for you to see that, thank God, the above-mentioned difficult circumstances for the time being do not affect our everyday lives.

There are two things in particular that are highly relevant. One is the Romanian question, of which perhaps you have read one or two things in English papers. The matter concerns the reunited parts of Transylvania where the Hungarian administration works flawlessly and the Government has insisted that the returning Romanians must be treated well and there's no place for creating any barriers, as we want complete national peace. With this not only do we want to achieve internal peace but also ensure that Romanians treat remaining Hungarians with kindness. Unfortunately the exact opposite has happened. The Romanians are harassing the remaining Hungarians in Transylvania to a great extent, the likes of which has not been seen since the 1919 example. Tens of thousands of Hungarians are being chased out from their country, destitute and tortured. On top of this they have the nerve to accuse our army of the worst atrocities through official news and radio channels. Therefore the situation is very tense and there's no way of knowing where it will lead.

The second serious concern is the Minister's announcement of the Jewish Policy No. III, which will be put in front of Parliament. No one knows what it will contain but the Minister said that based on the inconsistencies and weaknesses of Policy No. II this will be a radical, short and clear [new] Law/Policy. The laxity in question refers to the inconsistencies and contradictions between the Government and the Parliamentary Court regarding who can be considered Jewish. I think the new policy will be severely tightened in this area. As our belonging unfortunately has never been in question this problem doesn't concern us. Of course we will see what else this law will contain. Of course the carrying out of these kinds of laws is a very difficult thing. The best proof is that Aunt Ilonka's land is still theirs even though the Government has already published that it's been confiscated. The claimants still don't know where they stand in this regard, neither do Ilona and her family, but of course until then every job must be completed and all burdens must be endured.

Personal news: Palko is significantly better, but it will take weeks before he recovers completely.

The other day I got a very nice letter from your friend Lindner who asked me to tell him about your things and the situation over there. We invited him for a coffee and told him everything we know about you. As you might know he received his permit right before the outbreak of the war but couldn't take advantage of it. As soon as there's an opportunity he wants to restart the matter. That's why he's so curious about things over there. We agreed that he will give us a letter he wrote to you which I could attach to this letter, but so far I haven't received it. Maybe he will write directly. I thought he's a very nice, likeable and intelligent boy.

The other days Mrs Vikar was taken to a sanatorium with serious poisoning. It seems to be a suicide attempt and I'm inclined to think the announcement of the above- mentioned Policy no. III must have provided the impulse. I have heard that there's hope she will get better.

Joska Badics' mother has died in the last few days. Perhaps it would be right for you to write a few lines to him.

I haven't heard anything about Aurel for months. If perhaps he happens to write to you mention that we think of him all the time and perhaps he could send some sign of life through you. I wrote to him about two months ago but [it seems] or indeed he hasn't received my letter.

I kiss you my son, a thousand times,

Dad.

(2nd part, written in Hungarian by Grandma in Budapest to son John in Melbourne)

(Translated by Katalin Gaal, October 2010)

My dear son,

Dad left very little space for me and as I don't want to create frequent expenses for Kitty and as far as I can tell our letters sent through normal post arrive in a mere 10-12 weeks, so I will send a longer letter through the next post. Though current events lose their relevance in three-four weeks, I know how happy I am to receive a letter from you regardless of its age – I'm sure you're the same.

Now that the shadow of war appears closer to your hemisphere I'm scared that you will realize that relations are not normal, but I believe and hope that it will continue to be from afar and not through its immediate effect. I'm concerned again that we will lose contact but let's write to each other diligently for as long as possible. Letter no. 23 which you evidently wrote at the end of August is missing from amongst your letters, but no one else received letters from there. This is probably where you signaled your interest in participating in a radio play, which as you write did not eventuate.

I'm glad you're rowing. Your old club is not the same either: The other day there was a farewell function with beer, sausages and bacon frying as they said goodbye to the season – despite this they happily continue to row in the beautiful autumn weather – also every Tuesday there's a big gramophone concert through the radio, enriched by a classical program and pool playing. Istvan participated enthusiastically, in fact the other day he went to listen to Sandor Sved. By the way, he has made his room into a photo lab, but his pictures develop quite slowly.

I heard from the Lindners that poor Fonagy is in the Janos Hospital again; his old illness returned but he's getting better. Both Bekeny boys are in labour camp, many others as well, but now only the younger ones and most can tolerate it well.

There continues to be good news about the Sandors through telegraphs, they currently live in Harrow and placed the workshop there as well.

Next time there will be more; I hug you, my dear son, a thousand times,

Mum.

Drága fiacskám ! Elég gyorsan, ca. 3 1/2 heti utazás után jött meg 24. sz. leveled, szept.8.-10.-ről keltevezve és ez is, úgy mint az előzők megint nagy örömet okozott nekünk. Már maga a tény, hogy hírt kapunk tőled is örömet okoz. Az pedig, amit ezuttal job-odról írsz, nagy megnyugvással tölt el bennünket. Vajjon mikor fogod nekünk élőszóval elmagyarázhatni, hogy miből is áll munkád ? - Nagyon kedves, amit az evezős egyletről írsz és persze István nem mulasztotta mindezt leadni a Clubban. - Most végre remek időnk van és így István igyekszik mentől többet evezni, de nem veti meg a Club által nyújtott egyéb event-eket sem, így nagy élvezettel vett részt a minap szalonnasütő estélyen. - Egyébként várja a gyerek behívását valamelyikéhez ama service-eknek, melyeknél kilátásban van tanonczkénti alkalmazása. Remélem, hogy most már hamarosan egyik vagy másik helyen rendbe jön a dolog. A te idődben nem volt egészen könnyű dolgotisztviselői alkalmazást nyerni. Ma még sokkal nehezebb tanonczként bejutni valahová. - E héten kezdette meg István angol tanulmányait. - Tavaly megismerkedtünk egy kedves, furcsa angol emberrel. Azt hiszem irtam is neked annak idején róla, mikor Ságón együtt töltöttünk egy hetet. Az illető tulajdonképpen mélybariton operaénekes, ki azonban már rég nem szerepel nyilvánosság előtt. Itt él Pesten, mert szerelmese a városnak és a pestieknek. Azt hiszem, volt hazulról valami kis járadéka. Most, hogy nem kap kintről pénzt, nyelvtanításra adta magát. Nem tudom, hogy mennyire pedagógus, de kellemes, kedves, a maga módján mulatságos ember és István is szereti már privát érintkezésünk alapján. Gondolom, hogy Jack Emerson tanulás tekintetében is fel tudja majd kelteni Piczu érdeklődését. A betyár különben sokkal többet tud, sem mint az ember gondolná és egészen vigan kotyog. - Meglehetősen izgalmas légkörben élünk most már egy darab ideje, de sem magunk, sem barátaink nagyobb része nem alteráltatja magát ez által kelleténél jobban. Értve ezen, hogy a holnapnál messzebb nem gondolunk és a má-ból igyekszünk mindent kihozni. Erre okmányyszerű bizonyíték, ha ugyan megkapod, az a képes levelezőlap, melyet Róza néni, Nándorék, Alberték és a magunk aláírásával ellátva a Hangli sörözőből küldöttünk volt neked vagy egy hét előtt. Az alkalmat adta az a körülmény, hogy Róza néni, ki 78 éves és tavaly ilyenkor halálos beteg volt, időközben annyira összeszedte magát, hogy örömmel vesz részt kisebb hámból való kirugásokban. Így a kérdéses napon elvitték Alberték a nénit moziba, majd a nevezett vendéglőbe, hol azután meglepetésként, Nándorékkal együtt, mi is befutottunk. Öröm volt nézni, hogy a néni hogy élvezte a környezetet, a kitűnő kosztot, a sört és még cigarettára is rágyújtott. Persze korán hazavittük, de addigra már oly emelkedett hangulatban voltunk, hogy mi többiek betértünk a Pommery barba. Ez egy új létesítmény, melyet a szomszédos Budavár kávéház csinált helyisége egy részéből és mely kissé szokatlan nevét onnan vette, hogy a kávést Pomegyerszkynek hívják. A nyújtott élvezetek is inkább ezzel a névvel állottak egyenes arányban, mint a híres pezsgőmárkával. Legalább 15 éve nem voltam barban és a mostani tapasztalat alapján, úgy vélem, hogy megint legalább ennyi idő fog eltelni, míg újra ily helyiségbe ellátogatok. Azonban az egyéb publikum mely a Széna-tér-vidéki kiskereskedelem reprezentánsaiból állott főleg, nyilván nagyon élvezte a mulatságot, valláskülönbségre való tekintet nélkül. -Mindezt csak azért említem ily körülményesen, hogy lássad, hogy a fenthivatkozott izgalmi momentumok, egyelőre legalább, hála Istennek, nem nagyon befolyásolják a mindennapi életet. - Két ily momentumról var szó e.i.sz. Az egyik a román kérdés, melyről talán angol lapokban olvashattál egyet-mást. Arról van szó, hogy a visszacsatolt erdélyi részekben a magyar közigazgatás kifogástalanul működik és a Kormányzótól kezdve mindenki, kinek szava van, unos-untalan hangoztatta, hogy a visszatért románsággal jól kell bánni, semmi megtorlásnak nincsen helye, teljes nemzetiségi békét akarunk. Ezzel nem csak a belső nyugalmat akarjuk elérni, hanem azt is, hogy a románok a náluk maradt magyarsággal jól bánjanak. Sajnos, ennek ép ellenkezője következett be. A románok oly üldözést folytatnak a náluk maradt Erdélyben a magyarok ellen, amintőre 1919 óta nem v

BY AIR MAIL

példa. Tizezrével üldözik ki a magyarokat országukból, kifosztva, megkínözva. E mellett pedig még arra is van bátorságuk, hogy a mi katonaságunkat hivatalos újság és rádióközleményekben a legvadabb atrocitásokkal megvádolják. Ily módon nagyon feszült a helyzet és nem tudni, hogy még mire fog ez vezetni. - A másik súlyos gond a miniszterelnök által bejelentett III. zsidótörvény, melyet legközelebb terjesztik a Ház elé. Hogy mi lesz benne, azt nme is sejteti, csak azt mondotta, hogy a II. törvény hiányossága és pongyolasága után, most radikális, rövid és világos törvénnyel jön majd. A kérdéses pongyolaságok arra vezettek, hogy igen ellentétes nézetek alakultak ki a kormány és a közigazgatási bíróság között a tekintetben, hogy ki tekintendő zsidónak. - Azt hiszem, hogy az új törvény e tekintetben fog erős megszorításokat tartalmazni. Minthogy a mi hovátartozásunk, sajnos, soha kétséges nem volt, az a probléma nem nagyon izgat bennünket. Persze, hogy mi egyebet fog tartalmazni ezenfelül a törvény, azt nem sejtetem, de majd meglássuk. - Persze az ilyesféle törvények keresztülvitele nagyon nehéz dolog. Legjobb bizonyíték erre például az, hogy Ilonka néniék földje még mindig az ő kezükön van, noha a kormány már publikálta is, hogy elvette. Az igénylők ezzel szemben még mindig nem tudják, hogy hányadán vannak, Ilonkák még úgy sem, de persze addig is minden munkát meg kell csinálni és minden terhet viselni kell. - Személyi hírek: Palkó lényegesen jobban van, de még hetekig fog eltartani, míg teljesen rendbe jön. - Minap igen kedves levelet kaptam Lindner barátodtól, ki nagyon kért, hogy tájékoztassam őt a te dolgaiddal és az ottani helyzettel. Meghívtuk erre valamelyik nap feketére és elmondottunk neki mindent, amit tudtunk. Ő, mint talán tudod, a háboru ki-törése előtt közvetlenül kapta meg a permitet, de már nem tudott élni vele. Amint lehetőség nyílik, újból meg akarja indítani a dolgot. Ép ezért nagyon kíváncsi az ottani dolgokra. Abban maradtunk, hogy átad nekünk egy neked szóló levelet, melyet jelensoraimhoz akartam volna csatolni, de mind eddig nem kaptam meg. Lehet, hogy talán közvetlenül írt. - Nagyon helyes, szimpatikus és intelligens fiúnak láttam. - A minap súlyos mérgezéssel szanatóriumba vitték Vikárnét. Alkalmasint öngyilkossági kísérletről van szó és közelfekvő gondolat, hogy az említett III. törvény beharangozása adhatta meg az impulzust. Hallom, hogy remény van felépülésére. - Meghalt neki. - Hónapok óta nem hallok semmit Aurél bácsiról. Ha netán írsz neki, akkor említsd meg, hogy állandóan gondolunk rá és talán általa adhatna valamilyen életjelt. Magam írtam volt neki vagy két hónap előtt, de alkalmasint nem kapta meg leveletem. - Csókollak, fiacskám, ezerszer

Drága fiacskám, Apu nagyon kevés helyet hagyott nekem és mivel nem akarom Kittyt tulságos gyakran költségekbe verni és úgy látom, hogy rendszeres postávküldött leveleink is megjönnek csekély 10-12 hét alatt, majd így módon írok neked legközelebb hosszabb levelet. Hiszen az események már három-négy hét alatt is elvesztik aktualitásukat, de tudom, hogy én mennyire örülök, akár milyen régi levél is jött tőled, - bizonyára te is így vagy. Most, hogy a háborus konfliktus árnyai közelebb húzódnak a ti féltekétekhez, félek, ti inkább meg fogjátok érezni, hogy a viszonyok nem normálisak, - de hiszem és remélem, hogy ezentúl is csak messziről és nem közvetlen kihatásukban. Újra attól tartok, hogy megszakadhat köztünk az összeköttetés, de amíg lehet, csírjunk egymásnak szorgalmasan. Leveleid közül a 23. számú, melyet bizonyára aug. végén írtál, hiányzik, de ebben az időben mások sem kaptak onnan levelet. Alighanem ebben jelezted valami tervezett rádióelőadásodat, melyről írod, hogy ugy látszik nem lesz belőle semmi. Nagyon örülök, hogy evezel. A régi klubod sem a régi már: a minap sörrel, virslivel és szalonasüttéssel bucsuztatták az evezősszezont - aminek ellenére gyönyörű őszi időben vígan eveznek tovább- ezenkívül minden kedden a klubházban nagy rádióhangverseny gramofonhangverseny van, klasszikus műsorral és billiárdtal tarkítva. István lelkesen részt vesz, sőt a minap a Vigadóba is elment Svéd Sándort meghallgatni. Egyébként most a szobáját szerelte fel fotolaboratoriumnak, de képei azért vajmi lassan készülnek el. + Lindnertől hallom, hogy szegény Főnagy megint a János-kórházban van; régi betegsége ujult ki, de már javulban van. Mindkét Bekény fiu munkatáborban, mások is sokan, de most már csak a fiatalabbak a legtöbben jól bírják. - Sándorékról sürgőnyleg továbbra is jó hírek jönnek, most Harrowban laknak és a műhelyt is oda helyezték. Legközelebb többet; ölellek, drága fiacskám, ezerszer

Apu

Pongrácz Jánosné
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest II.
Hungary

Letter No. 43.

17th October 1940

My darling boy,

Your letter of July 17th having turned up about a week ago /by ordinary mail/, this has given me a new impulse to write you a long letter, unconstrained by air mail weight limits, on the assumption that it will reach you some day. It is too late to wish you a Merry Christmas, and it will probably not even reach you by New Year's Day, but it is never too late to wish you the happiest, most contented, most prosperous and cheerful days in the year to come. By now you have had so many experiences which we cannot share, you have come to decisions and built up a new life, a new lookout for yourself, but yet I don't feel far removed from you; I feel that if ever we have the good luck to get together again, there won't be much explaining to do: we can start again exactly where we left off and shall understand each others' viewpoints just as we always did. All the same, I wish we could talk just for an evening: I wish you'd light your pipe and sit down in the old easy-chair /the springs are in a very weak condition, all the chairs need upholstering badly - they did before you left, but we won't have it done before we move! / and tell us all about it. Of course I'd have a lot to tell you too, which I can't do in writing - but all that will have to wait - how long?

Well, in the meantime we must make letters do. I don't quite understand why you write so little about old friends, although I expect you don't see much of them. When you do, however, please always mention anyone you have seen, for everybody complains about scant news from Australia, and mothers are happy if they hear about their children even if it's only second-hand news. Thank you for information about the Boys' Town stunt; I am sorry it was such a washout, but such things will happen. I am writing to George to thank him for taking the trouble of going to see it. - I couldn't cancel the subscription of the Swiss paper but asked to have it sent to your South Yarra address, so I hope you'll get it regularly, although it will have only historic interest by the time it reaches you, what with events speeding the way they do. Same applies to "Life" of which a copy turns up now and then, aged two or three months, but still interesting. But Clipper mail still comes through beautifully; sometimes I get letters from Kitty faster than from the next neighbourhood. She also transmits correspondence from Emsy which wouldn't come through otherwise. They are well and happy, but Feri finds his job is not worthy of his capacities and is always on the lookout for a better one. - I think I told you that Andris ~~has~~ quit his job and has set up ~~for~~ on his own. He is in partnership with Marc Mitnitzky, whom you may remember from the time he was on the staff of the Lloyd, as Vago's son-in-law. Now he is in New York with a new wife, and seems to have been busy selling bonds and giving advice on investments, etc. for some time. Apparently this is what they are doing together now, also all kinds of other business; at present, for instance, they are manufacturing some special kind of Xmas card and selling it to industrial concerns, etc. Andris seems very busy and says his prospects are very good. They have a small apartment of their own and appear to be very happy; Erica's camp prospered during the summer. They write frequently and cheerfully. - We haven't heard from Swintons for ages; Kurt was still in London in June, but his mother was very anxious that he should join her. - We have heard nothing either about Palmers or Huddlestons, not about Thesa and other friends, but a good many people get telegrams regularly or correspond over USA; we also listen to the broadcasts, so we know pretty well what's going on.

Here the days pass much as usual. On the one hand we daily enjoy the miracle that we have still kept out of the war and are "still alive", on the other hand one can't help feeling apprehensive of the future, particularly as there are so many people who make it their business to kindle such apprehensions when one would prefer to lull them to sleep. However, you know that neither Father nor I

meet trouble half-way, so we keep pretty cheerful most of the time, especially since we have suffered no personal inconvenience so far. I've nothing to complain of even as regards housekeeping. Of course everything is getting more and more expensive, but then we've lived so well that there's a big enough margin even if we cut down expenses a bit. Three meatless days a week are not exactly to Father's liking, but it's good for him, so he makes the best of it. To satisfy István's enormous appetite has not been a problem so far, and although you know our house was never overheated, even at the best of times, they started the central heat on regulation time, October 15th, and we now have hot water all day, although it was reduced to certain hours during some weeks. Reading to-day the very strict heating restrictions that have been issued by the Swiss government, I went and washed my hands in hot water /they were very dirty because the censor had blacked out such a lot of the Swiss paper with black paint, which goes off on your fingers, and thanked my stars for living here this winter, - at least I hope I shan't change my mind before the winter is over.

István is still jobless, the director who has the final word to say being absent, but I hope his apprenticeship at Opel's will come to a clinch next week. If not, he'll go to work in Father's workshop until he can find something better. Yesterday we gave ourselves a treat and hired a car for a few hours, so he could show off his driving. It was a tiny two-seater, so he first took me up to the Hármashatárhegy, and then deposited me at home again and took Father for a run. He drives very well and carefully, does not try to speed and is quite sensible in every way /except that he couldn't contain his joy and kept up a running fire of talk all the time/. It was a lovely clear autumn afternoon, almost exactly like the day three years ago when you first took us for a run in your car to the same place, remember?

I'm glad you sold the Coburg article. In a few days I'll send you another one, on Ruthenia - just on the chance. Bandi has been up there with a photographer last week, taking pictures for the press department of the Foreign Office! and is going to Transylvania on a similar errand to-morrow. They pay his expenses and allow us the use of pictures. Unfortunately the market is very limited, as you may imagine, but still it's well worth the trouble, particularly since there is nothing better to do. Of course it's difficult to make them see that we could get far better results with a different kind of material.

Peter and Ilonka are still down at the farm and matters are still pending, not like in Rumania where the same reform was carried through summarily and without delay, within a few hours, leaving people absolutely facing ruin from one day to another. - Our own friends there appear to be alright; Terus is staying at Kolozsvár where she hopes she can remain. - Leopolds and Badicses are very well, always inquiring about you. Eva's children are really remarkably pretty and amusing. Little Livia goes to school and thinks it great fun. She tyrannises her little sister and is a throughgoing autocrat, with Jóska's intensely practical turn: at the farm she has her eye on everything and promptly reports when anything is amiss. Agota, on the other hand, tries to ingratiate everybody and is a regular coquette. I wonder what sort of a world they will grow up in and how it is going to treat them. - Palkó is still at the clinic; I went to see him the other day and found him very much better, but he has lost 16 kilos and it will be many weeks before he can go back to work. Bad luck, since he'd have a chance for advancement now, several of his superiors having been called to arms. Of course he can't think of any athletic occupation for a long time to come.

I try to imagine what you are doing at present: enjoying the river in lovely spring weather, I hope. According to the map, Melbourne is very close to the sea, yet you never mention any trips to the seaside, sea-bathing or the like. Isn't that a feature of life in Melbourne? In summer, perhaps. I'm glad you go to a show or a concert occasionally. What we've seen of theatres so far was very middling. To-day István has invested in a season ticket for ten orchestra concerts at the Municipal Theatre - very classical program, all the nine symphonies - what do you think of such a change? Probably the fact that his Amelia-in-chief is very musical and plays very well, has something

to do with it, but so much the better, and she's a very nice little girl, too. Needless to say, don't make any allusions to this in your reply - but I needn't tell you that: you're the soul of discretion ~~and~~ anyway! - No, I'm afraid we won't get a chance to see the picture "Waterloo Bridge," but there are still quite a number of American films in the cinemas. Nothing very striking so far, except "Stanley and Livingstone". There are a lot of new Hungarian films, but most of them are very weak.

We haven't sent you any books and clippings lately, thinking that books might get lost, and clippings lose their interest by the time they get there. However, if anything of perennial interest crops up, we'll forward it. Time and again I think: Muki would be interested to read this - but then I begin to calculate the time it would take to get to you, and pitch it in the waste-basket instead. Besides, the papers are utterly devoid of anything except official news and comments thereon, most of which also sound official, more or less. Everything, art, letters, even science or business seem to hold their breath and stay in abeyance until the war is over. And what then?

Time to finish, although it's nice to be talking to you all alone - Father has gone to play cards, István has gone to bed, even the radio is silent, for all Central European stations stop broadcasting at nine o'clock now. Half-past ten - bedtime for me, too. I expect you've just finished lunch and are going back to work, or are you just getting your breakfast? I never know which. God bless you, darling, whatever you're doing. Fondest love always

Mother
And László

Pongrácz Jánosné
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, II.
Hungary

Letter No. 45.

1st November, 1940

My darling boy,

If postal communication works out anything like as promptly it has been doing lately, this ought to reach you somewhere round about your birthday - a few days earlier, I expect. I wish we could be together on this memorable quarter-century anniversary, but anyhow I shall think of you with much happier thoughts and a sense of greater assurance than I did on this day a year ago. Even deducting the rosy spectacles which every boy puts on for the benefit of his parents when writing letters home from overseas, I feel that you have not only made an excellent start with every chance of further development but what is far more important, I do think that you are contented and that you feel at home in Australia. That is what we are hoping for for you: that you should feel contented with your choice, not only on the grounds of relativity but absolutely. Darling, you know what a wealth of good wishes and prayers for your well-being and happiness go forth to you across that distance which is so very great at the moment - but we are fervently hoping to spend your birthday together at some future date, perhaps before we have grown quite old and decrepit. God bless you, and many very happy returns!

This week has been a happy one for us because it brought two of your letters: No. 25, dated Sept. 23, via Kitty, and No. 26, of Oct. 6, via direct air mail. This came yesterday, which is really very fast these days. Although we feared that events in Greece might interfere with the direct air mail route at this end, the Post Office assures us that this is not the case, so we shall speed this letter on its way hoping that it may reach you. Thank you for both long descriptive letters. It is good to know so much about you, and I am very glad you find the Mercantile R.C. such a congenial place to go to - it makes a lot of difference, I am sure. I wish I could help you with your cooking and laundering, etc., but I am sure you do it in a much more practical and up-to-date style than I could - you will have to teach me if we ever keep house together again.

You ask for more news about ourselves. If we don't usually discuss our course at length upon our health, it is because - touch wood - we are all perfectly well and have nothing to complain of. My own health is perfectly satisfactory; whenever I call on Dr Nádor, every two or three months, just for the sake of good order, he is very pleased with me and not at all interested in my condition. I feel quite fit and am only reminded of not being all that I once was when I walk uphill. Father, too, is very fit; his knee is quite alright again, so is everything else. As for István, he is hale and hardy and constantly complains of putting on too much fat and being smaller than some of the other chaps, but I think he is nearly as tall as you are and much broader than he was. As a matter of fact, he has a friend, a boy of twenty whom he met at the camp last summer, who is inches taller and much heavier than he is and just as crazy about mountaineering etc., so he has a companion for outings now, and what with the club and so forth, he is quite well provided for socially. Your congratulations to his new job in your last letter made me feel very sorry again that he did not accept the job at the spark plug factory which was offered him in autumn. I think by now he feels sorry for it himself, but you know how stubborn he is: he must find out things for himself and refuses to accept other people's opinion. However, he is so set on working as a motor fitter that we had to let him have his way. Now, when to our own surprise it seems very difficult to find a suitable place for him, he is pretty upset about it: he is very impatient to work and earn money, and genuinely interested in the motor trade. His own greatest wish is to work at Csepel, but that, at the moment, is very difficult. However, there are several irons in the fire and sooner or later something will turn up. Meanwhile he is starting on Monday to attend another evening course at the Technology, a seven-weeks course on the handling of various motors /motor

kezelői tanfolyam/ which includes Diesel, suction and other motors, workshop practice etc. It will certainly be useful and I am sure some job will turn up in the meantime. Just now he has gone to see Palkó who is at last home from hospital, but still in bed and doesn't yet know, poor chap, that he won't be able to go to work before January.

I forgot to tell you in my last letter that I received a dozen photographs of New Zealand views from the Tourist Department of the Ministry of Commerce - they took exactly five months to arrive. I acknowledged them, but I am afraid I shan't be able to do much with them - beautiful views of mountains which make István's mouth water, but nothing of "feature interest" nowadays when the papers have so little space for this kind of thing. I haven't even been able to place any of the Australian photos which are much better and more interesting than the N.Z. ones, but I still hope to succeed with the former. I think it's splendid that you have been able to place several of our articles - I know how difficult it is at present. We sell something in America occasionally, and off and on something in one or two European countries, but very little, of course. Still, one goes on since there is nothing better to do and even so, adding up my earnings of the past war year, I find I have still averaged over 200 pengős a month, which, though little enough, is not bad considering the little work I've done. So it's worth keeping up as far as possible.

The house, of course, is fully occupied; there is a great shortage in flats of this type, so we have nothing to fear from that quarter, unless, indeed, there is truth in the rumours that houses will go the way of estates. But who worries about the future? There are greater things at stake and no one can foretell what's going to happen anyhow.

Our daily life is pretty much the same as it used to be. We haven't been to the theatre more than once yet - dress rehearsal tickets are not as plentiful now as they used to be, neither are good plays, and since synopses are no longer very important for us, I have let things slide a bit - we only have one subscriber to our service, two others have not yet made up their minds, but since mail ordinary mail to America takes a very long time now anyway, I am putting the blame onto the mails and am in no hurry to get the synopses done. Father goes to the pictures oftener than I do, since I occasionally have various ladies to tea /"Planta" tea, chiefly of consisting of mulberry leaves, but not at all bad - however, for choice guests I still have real Indian tea/ whom he is not particularly anxious to meet. There are still occasional bridge battles in the Olasz fasor - by the way, I've just been told that Bab Bodor is the proud father of a second baby, and apparently is doing very well in Detroit - or other occasions to meet old friends, although invitations to supper are rare - guest suppers are getting rather expensive, and everybody thinks twice about asking people. "After supper" is more fashionable. To-morrow we are having Nándors, Bardos', Szép Ernő and Mrs Katona of "Quick" - which is doing as well as ever - to coffee. Of course everybody always inquires about you and if I would transmit all the loves they send you, it would fill a whole letter.

Although we have been promised a very mild winter to make up for last year, the meteorologists have apparently been mistaken as usual; it has suddenly grown cold for the time of the year and it has been snowing in some places, but maybe it won't last. So far, the central heat functions - moderately, but no worse than in other years. The streets in this district look very untidy at the moment, the tramcar rails on Margit-körút and Krisztina-körút are being transferred to the centre of the road and everything is upset on account of the new loop and junction which they have built under our windows - István made a photograph of it for you, but hasn't enlarged it yet - it's a big change from the skating-rink and tennis courts. The BBTE now has beautiful grounds and a very fine club building on Pasaréti-ut, at the place where there used to be, first a pond and then a dung heap when you were a little boy - remember?

God bless you, my darling - all fondest love

and Honka's great friend, as perhaps you remember.

Mother
Father

Fongrácz Jánosné
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, II.
Hungary

Letter No.46.

November 8, 1940

My darling boy,

Once more Kitty must throw herself into the breach to keep up our correspondence. The Post Office has again ceased to accept air mail for Australia, as was to be expected when complications in Greece set in. The worst of it is that we are told that the mail which has been sent off previously has probably also got stuck on the way, so I am afraid you will be left without news for some length of time. Very probably our last two letters have not reached you. I am sorry, for one of them contained that rare specimen, a letter from István, also one from your erstwhile friend Laci Lindner, who wanted to know "all about Australia", with a view to going there some day /but he said he'd send you a copy by another route/, as well as a letter from Father, while No. 45. was a long letter from me. Not that it contained any special news except that we are all very well indeed, perfectly healthy and of good cheer. I also acknowledged in it your two letters No. 25 and 26, which arrived remarkably promptly and made us very happy indeed. I am afraid that some of your letters will be stranded on the way, too, in consequence of the Greek situation, but even if we don't get news for some time, we are not going to worry. You have contrived to give us such a sense of comfort and security with regard to your whole situation, business and personal, that we all feel very cheerful about it. Though one never can tell what may happen next, still I think it wisest that you should send us your letters via Kitty again, as they are more likely to reach us safely that way. Poor Kitty must pay for the privilege of inhabiting that great and glorious continent, but no matter - I am sure she doesn't mind.

However, I hope that some day those derelict letters will reach you after all, so I am not going to repeat everything contained in them. Since I last wrote, István has settled down to work in Father's workshop as a locksmith from 7.30 a.m. till 2. p.m., with no pay during the first fortnight and 30 fillér per hour after that, and he is very happy that he will at last be able to earn some pocket money. Every night he attends classes at the Technology, taking a seven-weeks course in motor tending /motorkezelési tanfolyam/, which includes Diesels, suction gas motors, etc. So you see he is pretty busy, but does it quite cheerfully and he seems to be very skillful at the workshop. He returns home pretty filthy but not at all tired. Of course this is only a temporary arrangement, to fill in time usefully until he can be apprenticed as an automobile fitter, which is not as easy as it looks. However, he has been promised a job in several auto services, for March 1. at the very latest, so I hope one of these will click and meanwhile he is learning to use his hands and get on friendly terms with tools, etc. which will certainly come in useful. I'm sorry he did not accept that job at the sparking plug factory which was first offered to him, but he was so set on automobile fitting, which seemed available at the time, that we had to give up the idea.

Other stop press news is that we have long dreaded has come to pass: we have been given notice to quit for May 1. I am not at all unhappy about it since the flat is really too large and one must start to simplify things sometime, so it's as well to get it over; besides, you know the flat's disadvantages. The trouble is that there are practically no flats available at present, and I really don't know where we are going to find one, but we have roused all our friends and acquaintances to energetic action and everybody is searching high and low, so

no doubt something will turn up. Aunt Irma is particularly active and says that since it was she who found our two first flats - Olasz fasor and this - she is sure to find us one again. If the worst comes to the worst, we can make some makeshift arrangement by claiming a flat in Attila-uca, but of course we shouldn't like to do that. However, something is sure to turn up, and being an inveterate optimist, I hope that it will be something more suitable than the present arrangement. Meanwhile, we are enjoying the lot of space which we surely won't have again, and particularly enjoying the fact that for the moment, central heat and hot water function unfaithfully, thanks to the insistent bullying of some of our fellow-tenants.

Other news: Palkó is much better, beginning to move about in doors. Baloghs are still at the farm, despite foul autumn weather; nothing definite has happened yet, work goes on as usual. You ask about Peter's plans: I think he has none, since at the moment everything seems pretty high impossible, and since his work at the farm lasts another year in every case. Necessarily, plans for a year ahead must be very vague... The other night we had Bárdoss, Szép Ernő and some other people here; of course everybody inquires about you and sends you affectionate messages. Tom B. is still with Shell's and very busy, Jóska is head over ears in his medical examinations here, and Buksi is earning his way at Hollywood University and seems to be doing very well. He sees a lot of Lengyel - Menyus is working on a play in collaboration with Aldous Huxley, and the rest of the family, including Lidy, are at the University - Tommy studies medicine, Annie bio-chemistry and Lidy languages.

Hevesi is sending you some stories and photographs about Transylvania and Ruthenia. You will see from the stories that this was an assignment, inspired by official sources. However, you can handle the stuff as raw material; I think there are quite a few photographs which you may be able to use, taking points from the too-long articles. Of course it will be many months until you get this, and the topical interest will have worn off by that time - there is so much happening to obliterate it - but since the material costs us nothing I am sending it you on the chance that you may use some of it, or perhaps by that time it will be of topical interest again! If anything does appear, please send us clippings as it is important that we should be able to show them. I think it's splendid that you have been able to sell those things to Argus: I know how difficult it is to place anything now. We still go on working: it is still worth while since there is nothing better to do, and it is certainly worthwhile to keep up connections in the hopes of better times ahead. Just now I've got a translating assignment: a new play by Márai, for Singer & Wolfner's. I'm very pleased about it, since it's the first in many months, and I'm glad they remember me if there is anything in my line to be done. The money comes in handy, too, as usual. When I called on them I inquired about Tábori and was told that he is still at his old address, and seemingly getting on O.K. Of course they can only communicate by telegraph now.

No room left to ask you any questions to-day, but please answer them without being asked. You've no idea how happy we are to know all the details of your life, and how the calm and consolidated note in your letters cheers and comforts us. God bless you, darling. Fondest love

My darling boy, Mother always writes her letters to you when I am not at home. When I get home everything worthwhile is already put down, leaving for me only a very small space and no news left unmentioned. Next time, I hope to be able to forestall her. In the meantime all love from

László

Pongrácz János,
II. Vörmező-u.6.,
Budapest, Hungary

1940. nov.21.

Drága fiacskám! A tegnapi wien-i események hírét bizonyára az ottani lapok is közölték. Hogy ez eseményeknek gyakorlati következménye miből fog állani, azt persze nem tudni. Félő azonban, hogy elsősorban a postaszolgálat fogja megszűntetni a dolgot. Tartok attól, hogy megszűnik közöttünk a közvetlen levelezés lehetősége, sőt azt sem tartom kizártnak, hogy budapesti keltezésű levelet az ottani cenzura nem ad ki. Így majd arra leszünk utalva, hogy Kitty útján izengessünk egymásnak. Meglássuk. Egyébként a sok politika mit sem változtat életünkön egyelőre. Az egyedüli kellemetlenül jelentkező körülmény a fokozódó drágaság. - Egyébként is igen jól vagyunk. Meglepően enyhe az időjárás, sokszor gyönyörű napfényvel. Így -hál' Istennek - még nem nagyon mutatkozik az ilyenkor szokásos influenzajárvány. -Személyileg csak István az, kinek dolgaírói érdemes megemlékezni. Mint tudod, redőnyműhelyemben dolgozik egyelőre d.u.kettőig. Majd pedig este motorkezelői tanfolyamon van, sőt néha műhelygyakorlatok is vannak, délután, úgyhogy ilyenkor lefekvéstől, másnap este 9-ig nem is látjuk a gyereket. Nagyon jól bírja a strapát és noha váltig hangoztatja pour épater le bourgeois - hogy unja a dolgot, mégis jókedvvel csinálja és nagyon szeretik a műhelyben, elannyira, hogy a szokásos első ~~xxx~~ kétheti ingyenmunka felét elengedték neki. Így múlt szombaton már kapott pénzt kézhez, ami nagyon emelte önértékét. Társam nagyon dicőéri István ügyességét, melyet nagyon meglátszik a múlt évi párhetes műhelygyakorlat. - A héten Olaszországból visszaérkezett két nyomtatvány-küldemény, melyet még júniusban küldöttünk volt ezimetre. Tartalmuk közben persze már elavult. - Ugyancsak a héten jött vagy félévi szünet után, életjel aurél bácsitól, jun.8.-r 1 keltező. Azt írja, hogy nagyon jól van és jól megy a munka. Megemlíti, hogy leveleiből örömmel látja, hogy keresel és félre is raksz valamit. Utóbbin úgy látszik, nagy súlyt helyez. - A lakáskeresés egyelőre még eredménytelen maradt. Nem is nagyon szorgalmaztuk még. Igen meg van nehezítve a dolog, hogy mostanában nem írják ki az üres lakásokat a kapukra, hanem minden kéz alatt megy el. De majd csak lesz valami májusig. - Palkó most már rohamosan összeszedi magát, noha még mindig nagyon sovány. De egészen fessen jár-ke. Dolgoznia azonban egyelőre még nem szabad. Péterék még mindig fülön vannak és így nem tudok semmit sem ügyük jelenlegi állásáról. Tény. hogy az ügy még mindig folyamatban van és semmi végleges nem történt mindeddig. Csókollak fiacskám ezerszer

Édes fiacskám! Okt. 6-i leveled óta nem kaptunk újabb hírt felőled. Itt legutóbb felfüggesztették az ausztráliai légiposta felvételét, úgy hogy ismét Kitty útján irtam vagy lo nappal ezelőtt, azóta azonban megint megnyílt - állítólag - a forgalom. Egyebet nem tehetünk, mint hogy írunk szorgalmasan abban a reményben, hogy majd csak elérnek leveleink, s arra kérlek, hogy te is írj mindenesetre, amerre lehet, ha el is kell készülnünk arra, hogy előbb-utóbb egy darabig nem lesz forgalom. Időnkint aztán újra megindul olyan helyekről is, ahonnan közben megszűnt, így pl. tegnap Opplerék újságolták boldogan, hogy közel féléves szünet után kaptak Pistáék-tól levelet, akik most egy más farmon, ezuttal úgy látszik eléggé kulturált helyen, tennisező és bridgező szomszédokkal, a bevonult tennisezőhelyén felügyelői állásban vannak.

Istvánról még meg kell írnom, hogy mikor múlt szombaton első keresményét megkapta, olyan boldog volt, hogy madarat lehetett volna fogatni vele örömeiben s rögtön fogta magát s küldött nekem egy cserép virágot egy pár aranyos sorral. Mondhatom, nagyon megörültem neki. Majd pedig elment Sáríkával /alias Miska/ és a hozzátartozó egyéb kislányokkal táncolni Cseh György tánciskolájába a Kapás-utrába, mamák gardírozása mellett éjjél. Így mulat az ifjuság 1940-ben.

Kérlek szépen fiacskám a következőre: lépj érintkezésbe Mr Hans Fisher-rel, Darrington House, Flat No. 27, Caroline Street, South Yarra, S.E.1. Ez nyilván nincs nagyon távol tőled, de úgy is jó, ha csak írsz neki pár sort azzal, hogy mivel mamája nagyon régen nem kapott hírt

Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, II.
Hungary

Letter No. 48.

December 6, 1940

My darling boy,

your welcome letter of October 23. /No. 27/ arrived a week ago, just after we had mailed our last one to you. It is always such a happy day when a letter comes, particularly since we always brace ourselves for the possibility of receiving none for a time. This time there was mail for all the Australian parents we know, except for Polyas who were greatly thrilled because they had heard in a roundabout way that John had moved to Melbourne, and not having heard from him didn't know the whys and wherefores. Let us know if you have met him, also whether you see anything of Albertis and Steve Fisher.

Darling, if I ever I need a publicity agent I shall engage you, to the major glory of Mr Dixon /I often think of his little house and wonder what has become of it/. I was thrilled by the beautiful biography in Radio Times and most impressed by myself, but even more by you. Most of all, I was very happy to see the assertion in print that I am planning a visit to Australia. Since it was in a newspaper I suppose it must be true. I only wish you had had a less witch-like /I don't mean bewitching/ photograph to give them.

I wish I had been with you on your visit to the animals - from photographs I have seen, I am especially taken by the Koalas, while I should hardly care for a platypus ~~for~~ as a pet. All that you say in your letter, rowing, theatre party, even the fact that "The Gondoliers" and "H.M.S. Pinafore" are still staples on the repertory, breathes such ~~peace~~ peace and consolidation that it is always a comfort to hear from you. The one thing I miss in your letters is a little more personal detail about your friends, the people you spend your time with, in and out of office. You never were one to go into much detail in that line; still, you can't wonder that now we are so far apart we are more interested than ever about your contacts, just as we are in your work and play.

Here life goes on much as usual. If it weren't for the subjects one keeps talking and thinking about, one might feel perfectly happy - as, I am sure, one ought to, seeing that there is really nothing amiss with us personally while such terrible things are going on in many parts of the world. Really the few restrictions that are now being planned are very moderate: cutting down show-window lights and neons, to economise on fuel, some restrictions on restaurant menus and so forth. We get all the food we want, though, of course, prices have gone up considerably.

István continues to work cheerfully and doesn't even swear too vigorously when he hears that schools will have a long "coal vacation" this year, while his work of course goes on just as usual. He enjoys Sundays more intensely than ever - especially last Sunday, when there was a thin layer of snow and of course he and all the addicts were out on the Norma slope - but he also relishes Saturday, pay-day, and gladly works all the week looking forward to it. He is also very assiduous at the Polytechnic and is already planning to take another course when this one is finished, but I hope he'll get time to resume his English lessons for which he had no time now.

Last Tuesday Aunt Livi arrived with a beautiful pot of cyclamen to congratulate me on your birthday. Last night we celebrated Uncle Lajos' sixty-first birthday with a family supper at Badioses. Although it is quite eighteen months since you last attended a similar function, had you been here you would have seen there is little change - only everything a little more so. Peter still lays down the law, Livi still replies with mild /?/ irony and Ilonka still retorts cuttingly. But on the whole, considering that everyone has plenty of worries and that this charming family ensemble has been going on in this fashion for the best part of thirty years, I must say that we are a very happy, united and sensible family after all, because most other people would have quarrelled seriously under such circumstances long ago. It was a very pleasant and cheerful occasion, thanks to the capital supper and our combined efforts to make it so - I am only telling you this to amuse you.

The other day we went to see "Elizabeth and Essex" - a really beautiful picture. Next week is the premiere of Heltai's new play at the Vígsház. On Sunday we had Ernő Szép to dinner - he is always tremendously interested to hear your news, and always asks to be quite particularly remembered to you. This time even more than usual, because he asked me to send you some of his short stories, on the chance of your being able to place them in some Australian paper. I am afraid there is very slight chance of doing this, but I couldn't deny him the promise to do so. I shall send them by ordinary mail, of course, and if you get them, you'll do what you think best. No obligation, but I should be glad if you could try to do something. He's more like a bedraggled sparrow than ever, but just as courteous, kind and full of good-will towards all the world. One really has no idea how he and his like manage to live - and he keeps several out-of-job sisters and a brother-in-law, too - I have no notion how he does it. He has written a new play, too, which five years ago would have been sure to be a success, but now there's no chance of it getting produced within conscionable time.

Nandors were very happy to have several enthusiastic letters from George by the last mail, full of the details of his happy vacation. Palkó is back at work again, quite fit - sooner than the doctors expected. Lizi, who had no cookery pupils this year, and did not see her way to holding classes because foodstuffs are too expensive to admit playing about with her extra-special diet dishes, is now working as typist in Albert's office, and both are very pleased with each other. Albert is very busy and prospers as he has never done before.

News about Cicus is not so good - her business has been taken out of her hands, but she hopes to be able to recover some of her losses in time. I wish I could tell you all the new complications and also the humours of the present situation. Jokes and quips are as plentiful as ever but I'm afraid - or shall I say I hope? - I shall have forgotten them all by the time we next meet.

I am leaving a little space to Father to finish this letter. Darling, it is too late to wish you a happy Christmas - I wonder how and where you will spend it this year! I hope that your thoughts of us will not be anxious - I assure you in all sincerity that we are safe and well and cheerful, and determined to remain so. But it's not too late to wish you a very, very happy, prosperous, successful and contented New Year. There's no need to go into details - we all know what we wish each other. God bless you, my darling boy, keep well! All fondest love

Mother

Am greatly looking forward to your first letter acknowledging ours sent by the direct route - let's hope they reach you safely!

My dear boy, You know perfectly well that all the good wishes Mother expressed above are fully shared by me. My thoughts are constantly with you and it is a great comfort for me to look at your somewhat shrewdly-smiling photo on the commode as often as I make a pause in my reading, sitting in my old, rather dilapidated arm-chair. - I think I better don't write to any authority as long as they don't bother. Once, perhaps in August, they asked you to report with your driver's licence. I went there, told them that you are abroad and they took notice of this fact without any ado. - I dropped a line to your club and gave them your present address. - As they keep on sending you their papers, it is as well you shall have these directly. - It may interest you that your friend Prager still works in a camp, your other friend D.../what's his name, he lives in the flat below ours/ is still out of job, hopelessly. - Féli cuts all her former friends, spends a lot of time promenading in Belváros hatlessly and sitting in espressos with rather dubious-looking youngsters. - Mévi has still her job with a commercial company founded recently by Commerz and managed by former secretary of State Berenczi. - Sévi is somewhere in Cornwall.

With love

Father

Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, II.
Hungary

Letter No. 49.

20th December 1940

My darling boy,

we have been hoping for a letter from you all this week and have put off writing in the hope of being able to answer a new letter from you at the same time, but none came, so this goes off in the expectation that, as has happened so often before, a letter from you will turn up the day after ours has been mailed. The last one we had from you was dated Oct. 23, but in a letter from George dated Nov. 10. he mentioned that he had just heard from you and you were doing well, so we are possessing our souls in patience until your next - I hope it will turn up in time to give Christmas a specially festive atmosphere.

To-day I went to buy a tree; there are heaps all along the Széna-tér and Széll Kálmán-tér as usual, but I hadn't the heart to bargain with as much entrain as in other years /although the trees are more expensive/ because it was so bitterly cold. All the meteorologists were mistaken when they said that after an exceptionally cold winter like the one we had last year, a mild one was sure to follow - well, for the last eight or ten days it has been miserably cold, last night it was down to 15 degrees of frost here in Budapest. The heating is fairly good for the time being; let's hope this grim cold /aggravated by a fog of almost pea-soup density/ won't last too long. I might have become accustomed to the idea by now, but it still strikes me as terribly strange that you will probably be rowing and bathing at Christmas while I shall be vexed because I can't persuade István to take along another sweater for skiing. The child was very indignant when I said I was going to buy just a tiny tree since there were so few of us left to enjoy it; he thought that was just another reason to have a decent tree and as Christmasy a Christmas as possible. There is something in that, so I bought a fairly large tree and will do my best to make Christmas as good as can be. Xmas Eve is not going to be a very lively affair since Badiesses are not coming - the kids have measles, and although both cases were very mild and have quite recovered, Eva doesn't want to leave them and has some of Jóska's relatives to supper. Aunt Ilonka and Peter are going to Fácánkert, so we shall be alone with Leopolds and any stray lame ducks who may turn up.

István is finishing his motor-tending course to-day; it's a pleasure to see with what interest he can devote himself to a thing if he is really interested in it. He goes to work very cheerfully; nevertheless, he enjoys a day off intensely, as you may imagine, and will take a few days off at Xmas for skiing. He has arranged to go for gymnastic exercises /Levente/ to his old school, as that is more convenient. The other day he returned highly indignant: the fellows this year have all the luck, he never had such a good time etc. What happened was that the boys from the boarding school set forth in the middle of the night and bust up the main pipe from the central heat furnace five days before Xmas vacations were due to begin, so the whole school was sent home. I don't know what happened to the delinquents, but the rest of the school benefited and István was green with envy. - After New Year he wants to attend some other lectures and courses and will start again studying English in good earnest. I hope that by March 1. at the latest he will be apprenticed as one or another of the auto services where this has been practically promised, but in the meantime I am sure he has greatly benefited by working at the shop, getting familiar with tools etc. It seems they all like him at the shop because he works cheerfully and with ambition; apparently Mr Beck is very pleased with him and so is the foreman.

There is little else to tell you. Life goes on just as usual, and as for our thoughts and interests, you can imagine in what grooves they run. In Ság, nothing has actually happened yet. Mail from America is very irregular now, I haven't heard from Kitty for a long time. She is in a state of high excitement as usual, working to get a visa for the man she hopes to marry /I think I told you she got a divorce last year, and subsequently discovered that she was in love with

an old friend whom she had known almost all her life, but they never knew they cared for each other until they were parted and began to correspond/. Whether she will be able to get him over seems doubtful, but then Kitty knows no obstacles. - Poor old Baer is still staying with his brother, but apparently under very distressing circumstances, and without a possibility of getting away. - He writes me very melancholy letters, sometimes only a postcard saying that he tore up his letter because it was too full of complaints. - He always inquires about you and is much interested in anything I can tell him - I think my letters are about the most interesting things in his terribly dull and restricted life. - Yesterday I had a long letter from Dudus, all of it one sentence without a stop, in her usual style. They are doing very well, Ákos works very hard, has to travel a good deal, but they also have good times and are content with their lot and with each other. Dudus has a lot of nasty things to say about the people she meets, natives as well as immigrants, and says that conditions are not so good at present; she wouldn't be surprised if Ákos' good job came to an end sooner or later, but in the meantime they are happy to be there.

Darling, I've asked George to send you a little present in our name, either for your birthday or for Christmas, depending on when he got my letter. I hope he has done so, and that it helps you to recall that we are always with you in our thoughts, and miss you more than ever at such times. What I'd give to have a good long talk with you, without benefit of censors or listeners-in! But one thing is certain: that our thought communications are undisturbed and will remain so whatever happens. God bless you, darling. I hope you will spend a pleasant Christmas, have a good rest and a good time in every way, and tell us all about it. And once more: the best and most loving wishes for happiness, good luck and contentment in the New Year. Fondest love

Mother

My darling boy, As Mother generally does, to-day again she outdid me, giving you all that is to be said of cheerful news, before I could start on writing you. What she left for me is the obituary which, however, might be of interest for you. First there is the sad story of the Abonyi family. After ~~the~~ the ordeal caused to the old people by their daughter and family, by emigrating, came the imprisonment of Pista, then the old lady was seriously ill with her nerves. Immediately afterwards the old man had to be operated on his head a couple of times. At last everybody was well and Pista came home. Only to find that he can't take up life again with his wife. It seems that the marriage has not been a very happy one from the beginning and during Pista's absence things got worse on account of an other man who courted Pista's wife assiduously during her straw-widowship. Pista wanted to divorce his wife but the other fellow didn't want to marry her. Result: suicide of the wife. Now, of course, the nerves of the whole family are fundamentally shattered. - An other man whose inattended death may interest you is the actor Baróti. It is said that he was an ill man for years. We sent a wire to Jenő Baróti. You better drop a few lines to him. - I won't finish these lines with these uncomely things and rather chose to reiterate what Mother said about István's doings. I am very glad to see that he is capable of doing well if he is interested in a thing. And though he is convinced or pretends to be convinced that he is disliked from the first moment by everybody whom he meets, I can assure you that he behaves in an unimpeachable manner with everybody outside his nearest relatives, and that everybody is charmed with his behaviour. - And now I want to add my good wishes to those expressed by Mother and let us hope for the possibility of a meeting in a time not too far from now. Your loving father

Father

LETTER 50 (3 parts) (TRANSLATED FROM HUNGARIAN by Katalin Gaal, Aug 2010)

Part A: Istvan in Budapest to Dad (brother) in Australia

Pongracz Istvan
Budapest II Vermezo Street 6
Budapest
Happy New Year
1941 Jan 1

Dear Bok,

We read your letter with great interest, I'm very jealous about the free concert, but not so much about the alcohol ban. Why do you refuse to discuss your camera? Mine works well, though I hardly use it. Although I have a lot of negatives, they are awaiting for me to enlarge them and they can wait for some time for that ...

I also have a concert pass for the city: an orchestral master pass. The program is very good, the soloists and conductors are first class. I await the upcoming concerts with great enthusiasm, the 9th symphony is coming up conducted by Mengelberg.

Christmas was spent relatively well, but I did something silly: last year's shoulder sprain flared up again so I had a fall after a week of skiing!

Yesterday I had a great New Year's party. I went to two places, I got home at 7.15 in the morning – tomorrow this time I will be sitting on the tram on my way to work – and it was a quarter to before I got to bed. Of course I can't sleep in the morning so I got up after two hours, I'm not sleepy at all. I'm sure I will be at work tomorrow.

I completed a seven-week mechanics course and according to the certificate of completion I learned about "commercial and economic petrol, natural oil, lighting gas and generator, as well as personal and commercial vehicles, buses, electronic ploughs, tractors and motorised boats and the structure and use of multiple cylindered petrol and natural oil motors".

I love the dawn.

(Handwritten note): With this I await your letters, I wish you all the best. Fekete Gabi says hello: you could write to her.

Istvan.

LETTER 50

Part B: Grandma in Budapest to Dad in Australia

My dear son,

I 'm continuing with the letter as Istvan's arm is still sore and has been strained due to typing. It was with great pleasure that we received your letter no. 28 dated November 3 on the second day of Christmas, sent through Kitty – it was lovely to once again receive news from you even though it was sent a while ago. The delay was due to Atlantic Clipper's post lateness, obviously due to bad weather and the strain on them. I hope you receive our letters sent directly to you: the main post office says that direct post should arrive without delay and if it's indeed true at least it's faster than the other option. I'm really keen to get your next letter, for one thing you should be able to confirm our directly sent letters.

Yesterday on New Year's Eve we thought of you even more than usual, we were wondering where you will spend this evening and with whom, and were hoping that you are enjoying yourself as much as we are. While Istvan was taking care of the above-mentioned program, Livi and I went to – of all places – the Obuda Kisfaludy Theatre where they played 'Sybill'. It was strange and touching to revisit 'Sybill' amongst this environment, with an orchestra consisting of five people, worn decorations, dirty costumes and a foreign audience, but considering the circumstances they created a very competent production, without leaving out a single note or letter and thanks to one of the performers who was part of the first "great" old band, they were true to the original's 27-year-old tradition in the direction. It felt nice to see the play being performed faithfully and the enjoyment of the audience. Afterwards we went to the Tarjan restaurant for dinner, we had a bottle of champagne to your health and a few other things and we were home at one. God grant us to celebrate next New Year's Eve with as much joy – preferably for more reasons!

We are happy to see from your letter that you enjoy the occasional theatre performance, concert and other things. I hope that you went somewhere for Christmas and relaxed and had a good time. This year we go to the theatre less often, partly as there are no main rehearsals, partly because I can't get tickets and as the synopsis service is pretty slack, I don't see it as my responsibility to see every performance. It's interesting that most theatres are doing well, generated by the National which alongside the Chamber Theatre had some great successes/writers Bokay and Marai.

Once again I have some work as a translator. Roboz commissioned me to translate Heltai's beautiful, poetic, clever play called 'One Penny' which is currently playing in the Comedy Theatre.

As we are talking about theatre, I will explain that 'Girl Trade' will be made into a Hungarian film; we signed the agreement in the last few days. Of course it won't mean much money, but like the above-mentioned 'Sybill' I'm very happy about this as well – I'm glad it will be in circulation particularly in today's world. The narrative will be significantly altered but

according to our agreement the music can't be changed. If it's true they will start shooting in the spring, but of course something can come up.

Otherwise there's no special news about the family or friends. Schwitzer sent a few of us a telegraph at Christmas which we collectively replied to but I don't know whether Kurt is there. Livi asked Kitty to find out some news about our friends /the Huddlestons and Palmers/ but so far there's no reply. We don't know about the Steiners either. There was a June letter from Aurel recently. I will leave some space for Dad as well and hug you my dear son, lots of good wishes and all my love, Mum.

LETTER NO 50

Part C: Grandpa in Budapest to Dad in Australia

My dear son!

If the new year brings all we wish for then it will also bring closer the day on which we can be together again. I know that this is definitely far away, partly because of financial reasons, but at least we can wait for its fulfilment. Until then we have to compensate with letters. If only they came more frequently. I don't mean to blame you and I have to admit that it's good of it (the post service) to function at all. As with all bad things, this also has a good side: it gives meaning for tomorrow. Perhaps a letter will arrive tomorrow!

There's no great news for the moment other than the above-mentioned. I only want to reply to your recent question about the house on Attila Street. Thank God, everything is fine there. The tenants are fairly stable, and there hasn't been a need for greater repairs so far. Of course we are faced with the construction of the government-enforced bunker/air-raid shelter which will be definitely expensive. But we haven't received final instructions from the appropriate persons so there's no task to be done yet in this regard.

The little shutter/blind business is performing better; one wouldn't think so, though there's no significant money from there as of yet.

Of course everyone I meet is constantly asking about you. I won't tell you their names individually, but know that everyone we keep in touch with remembers you. You may not be touched by this, but it makes me feel good. I kiss you a thousand times my son,

Dad

(Handwritten) I would very much like a more recent photo of you!

1941. Jan. 1.

Kedves Bök, nagy érdeklődéssel olvassuk leveledet, nagyon irigylem a potya hangversenyt, de annál kevésbé a vasárnapi alkoholtillalmat. Miért nem vagy hajlandó nyilatkozni a fényképezőgépedről? Az enyém jól működik, bár nagyon ritkén használom. Van ugyan egy nagy csomó saígi negatívom, de ezek arra várnak, hogy megnagyítsam őket, arra pedig várhatnak...

Hangversenybérletem nekem is van, a Városiba szól: zenekari mesterbérlet. Nagyon jó műsora, elsőrendű szólisták, és karmesterek vannak benne; nagy várakozással tekintek az elkövetkező hangversenyek elé, most jön ugyanis a 9 szimfónia sorban, vezényli Mengelberg.

Karácsony egész jól ütött be, csak én töltöttem ki magammal: az első ünnepen kiújítottam tavalyi vállficamomat és így elestem egy majdnem egész heti szíztől!

Tegnap nagy szilveszterezést csaptam, pendliztem két helyen, reggel negyed nyolckor vetődtem haza---holnap ilyenkor már régessrén a műhely felé robogok a villamossal--- és volt háromnegyed mire ágybakerültem. Reggel persze aludni már nem tudok, így két óra múlva már föl is keltem, cseppet sem vagyok álmos. /Leszek bezzeg holnap a melóban./

Elvégeztem a felsőipariskolán egy héthetes motorkezelő tanfolyamot és a vizsgabizonyítvány szerint 18. sz. az ipari és mezőgazdasági benzín, nyersolaj, világítógáz és generátorgázmotorok, továbbá a személy és teherautóautó, autobuszok, motoros ekék, traktorok motoros csónakok, többhengeres gyorsjáratu benzín- és nyersolaj-motorainak szerkesztését és kezelését tanultam itt./szerettem a hajnalt./

*Amennyiben valamelyik levelemből minden jót kívánok:
Férfi Gabi udvarból: ismételt nézi.*

Drága fiacskám,

én folytatom a levelet, mivel Istvánnak még kissé fáj a karja és belefáradt a gépelésbe. Karácsony másnapján nagy örömről volt nov. 3-1, Kitty útján küldött 28. sz. levélleddel - nagyon jól esett újra hírt kapni felőled, ha kissé régi keletűt is. A késésnek az Atlantic Clipper-posta késedelmes volta az oka, nyilván a rossz idő és a tulterheltség miatt. Remélem, megkapod közvetlen uton küldött leveleinket: a főpostán azt mondják, hogy fennakadás nélkül működik a direkt posta s ha ez tényleg így van, mindenesetre gyorsabb, mint a másik út. Nagyon várom már legközelebbi leveledet, többek között azért is, mert abban már kellene, hogy közvetlen uton küldött leveleinket igazold.

Tegnap, Szilveszterkor, persze a szokottnál is többet gondoltunk rád, tanakodtunk, hogy vajjon hol, kivel töltöd ezt az estét és kívántuk, hogy érezd magad legalább olyan jól, mint mi. Mialatt István a fent jelzett gazdag programot bonyolította le, mi ketten Livi néniékkel elmentünk - of all places - az óbudai Kisfaludy-színházba, ahol a Szibillt játszották. Furcsa és megható élmény volt ebben a bálmas balmazújvárosi környezetben, öttagú zenekarral, ütő-kopott díszzetekkel, piszkos jelmezekkel, kültekkel publikummal vizontlátni a Szibillt, de a körülményekhez képest nagyon tisztességes, rendez előadást produkáltak, egy hangot, egy betűt nem hagytak ki és hála az egyik szereplőnek, aki még a régi, "nagy" első

együttessel volt tagja, még a rendezési trükkökben, a játékokban is igyekeztek megőrizni a régi, immár huszonhét éves tradíciót. Igazán jól esett, hogy ez a szép darab még mindig ilyen élő és hogy a publikumnak mennyire tetszett. Utána jó hangulatban elmentünk a lukácsfürdői Tarján vendéglőbe vacsorázni, megittunk egy üveg pezsgőt az egészségedre és még egyre-másra és egy órákor itthon voltunk. Adj a Isten, hogy a jövő Szilvesztert legalább ilyen jó hangulatban tölthessük - lehetőleg több okkal!

Leveléből nagy örömmel látjuk, hogy te is élvezel olykor egy-egy színházat, hangversenyt, megymást. Remélem, tényleg elmentél valahova karácsonykor és jól kipihented, jól érezted magad. Mi az idén ritkábban járunk színházba, mert főpróbák részben nincsenek, részben nem kapok már jegyet s minthogy a synopsis-service amúgy is pang, nem tartom kötelességemnek, hogy ész nélkül minden darabot megnézzek. Érdekes, hogy az legtöbb színház igen jól megy, kivált a Nemzeti, mely úgy a Kamaraszínházban, mint a Nemzetiben kifogott egy-egy nagy sikert /szerzőik Bókay és Márai/. Most újra van fordítási munkám, Roboz megbízásából Heltai nagyon szép, poétikus, szellemes "Egy fillér" című darabját fordítom, mely jelenleg megy a Vígyszínházban.

Ha már a színházi rovatnál tartunk, azt is elmesélem, hogy a Leányvásárból magyar film készül, a napokban irtuk alá a megállapodást. Persze anyagi szempontból igen csekélykét jelent, de épen úgy mint a fentjelzett Szibill-előadásnak, ennek is nagyon örülök - jól esik, hogy újra forgalomba kerül, kivált a mai világban. A szöveget lényegesen átalakítják, de megállapodásunk szerint a zenéhez nem szabad idegen dolgokat hozzákeverni. Ha igaz, már most tavasszal elkezdik forgatni - persze az is megeshetik, hogy valami közbejön.

Egyébként nincs különös ujság sem családi, sem baráti körben. Schwitzerék Karácsonykor többünknek sürgönyöztek, amire mi is kollektíve válaszoltunk, de hogy Kurt ott van-e, nem tudom. Livi Kittyt kérte meg, hogy különböző barátokról /Huddlestonék, Palmerék/ próbáljon hírt szerezni, de eddig még nincs válasz. Steinerékről sem tudunk semmit. Auréltól nemrég jött egy júniusi levél.

Hagyok még helyet Apunak is és csak ölélek, drága fiacskám, sok-sok jókívánsággal és minden szeretetemetel *Apun*

Drága fiacskám! Ha az új év meghozza mindazt, amit várunk tőle, akkor tán közelebb hozza azt a napot is, mikor megint együtt lehetünk majd. Tudom, hogy ez mindenkép messze van, többek között anyagi okokból, de lehetne legalább várni bekövetkeztét. De addig is levelekkel kell pótolnunk az együttlétet. Csak gyákrabban jönnének. Ezzel nem neked kívánok szemrehányást tenni, hanem a postaszolgálatnak, bár el kell ismernem, hogy szép tőle, hogy ennyire is funkcionál. Mint minden rossznak, ennek is van jó oldala: tartalmat, a másnapnak. Hátha holnap jön megint levél! Semmi érdemleges közölni valót nem tudok e perczben, fentieken kívül. Így csak minapi, az Attila-utcai házra vonatkozó kérdésedre akarok még válaszolni. Hála Istennek, ott minden rendben van. A bérlők meglehetősen állandóak, nagyobb javítások szüksége sem merült fel eddig. Persze előtünk áll a hatóság által elrendelt légvédelmi óvóhely létesítése, ami feltétlenül költséges dolog. De végleges utasításokat az illetékesek még nem adtak ki és így e téren még nincsen teendők. - A kis redőnyműhely is rendesebben megy, mintsem hinné az ember, bár persze lényegesebb pénz onnan nem néz ki egyelőre. - Persze minden ember, kivel találkozom, állandóan érdeklődik irántad. Nem sorolom fel az illetőket egyenkint, de vedd úgy, hogy mindenki, kivel kapcsolatban vagyunk evidenciában tart téged most is. Téged ez talán nem hat meg tulságosan, de nekem jól esik. Csókollak fiacskám ezerszer

*nagyon szeretném már egy újabb
évképet kólad!* *Apun*

Toukadey Sanoone
II., Vermeyo - ut 6.
Budapest, Hungary

No. 51. January 2, 1941

My darling boy,

Since it seems that ordinary boat mail reaches you with fair regularity, I am complying with Eric's request and sending you some of his stories, and also some of Helga's, on the chance that you might find some occasion to place them in an Australian paper or magazine. I shouldn't have thought of suggesting this, as I think it most unlikely, but poor Eric, to whom every penny matters, begged me to make the experiment. Don't do anything about them if you think you had rather not, but if you happen to have any connections in that line, or can think of a magazine that is likely to use them, you would be doing a great kindness by making an attempt to place some of this stuff. "Fortune" was published both in England and America, but none of the others were.

I am also enclosing a few snapshots of István's. The one of me with apparently closed eyes by candlelight was taken just as a "study in lighting," by ~~photographing~~ ^{exposing} first only by the light of the candle, so as to get the flame effect, and a second time with a flashlight. Hence the ghost-like double profile: I couldn't keep still long enough. Well, I thought you might like to have it.

In the labyrinth of rails and the building under construction, you will perhaps recognise the view from our windows. (I have never seen anything take so long - they started on it in August, 1938, as you may remember, and it's not done yet! They have transferred the tramcar rails on Margit-Körut and Ringtina-Körut to the middle of the road and it all looks terribly complicated - well, we probably shan't be here to see how it works out.) The rest of the snapshots speak for themselves. There are a few more I want to send ~~to~~ you, but dear Stephen has not yet found time to enlarge them. I wish I had a new one of you - what are you looking like? Fat, thin or medium? Perhaps one day you'd also send us a few snapshots of the house you live in, club, office and the like - you know how we're interested in everything. George sent some home to his people recently, so apparently there is no objection to sending photographs.

We wrote you an air-mail letter yesterday, so there is really nothing more to say, except heaps of good wishes and all my fondest love, darling

Mother

Pengrác János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, II. Hungary

Letter No. 52.

13th January 1941

My darling boy,

Your letter No. 29, dated Nov. 22nd, arrived last week, taking somewhat more time than usual, but we must be thankful that the mails function as well as they do - it is more than we could hope for. Your good news is always most welcome and I am very glad that you usually report about theatres, concerts and the like - I'm glad that you get some pleasure besides work. I am pleased, too, that you still do some newspaper work off and on, though of course I know that papers have had their columns taken up by different things now than those that we can supply them. Same here. Our business is at an almost complete standstill at present. Mail from America is very irregular and letters are few and far between. In most European countries there are money transfer difficulties, in consequence of which it is not worth our while to work for them, at least not worth while to spend money on photographs, etc. Nevertheless, we still send out some stuff spasmodically, but at the moment Bandi has launched upon a new business on his own /partnership in a photographic studio/ and I have been busy with the translation of a Heltai play, so we have done next to nothing in the past three weeks. Now I mean to get busy again, having nothing better to do, in the hope that we shall reap the fruit of the articles and photos we send out now, before we are very much older.

By the way, I never sent you those stories on Transylvania and Subcarpathia which I mentioned in a previous letter. We found that we had no prints of the photographs left, and since I very much doubt whether you would have been able to place them, I thought it was hardly worth the expense to have a lot of new prints made. On the other hand, I sent you a batch of stories by Heltai and Szép by ordinary mail on Jan. 2nd, with an accompanying letter and a few of István's snapshots.

István is now taking English lessons with a rather exotic teacher: an exceedingly nice young Hindu who lives next door, as a boarder with the people who took the flat that used to be the Kállays'. He - the Hindu - sometimes comes over to use our telephone, and we got friendly over that. He has been here for the past three years, studying at the Medical Faculty and simultaneously taking courses at the Gym High School, planning to take a medical degree and to return to his native Madras to practise as a "sports doctor." He speaks remarkably good Hungarian, but what qualifies him to teach English is that he speaks quite exceptionally good English. István approves of him because he is so "sporting" and a good amateur photographer, so they have plenty to talk about and get on very well.

The latest sensation among our friends is a piece of news from Melbourne: the engagement of John Polya. You have probably met him since he has transferred his location from Sydney to Melbourne. I have just spoken to his mother: she is very glad that that restless, erratic boy is safely anchored, and apparently very happy. All they hear about the young lady sounds very promising, so they are extremely pleased. There is nothing of a similar nature to report about our friends here.

We have heard nothing of Uncle Aurel's new book, in fact we have heard nothing from him for a good many months, although I don't quite see why letters should not come from India. However, there are a good many things nowadays which one can't explain: one reason may be that he doesn't write.

George Sandor wires to his mother fairly regularly, she had a wire from him a few days ago, and also letters, which are of course obsolete by the time they arrive. They seem to be doing very well, and to be busy all the time. - I am very sorry about Dr Stewart. Poor old chap, I remember when you first lived with them my impression from your letters used to be that he was a typical "pensioner" - and now, years later, he died in harness.

Of course we get very scant news from England, but all that we hear corroborates what you say. Remember me to Joan Anderson when you write to her - I launched a postcard to her address some months ago, just as a sign that we think of our friends there, but I am sure neither she nor others ever got these cards.

Don't worry about us - we are neither freezing nor starving - quite the contrary. The flat is rather cold sometimes, but not more so than in normal times - more owing to the north wind than to fuel shortage. As for starving, I am having eight women here for bridge this very afternoon, and I am going to feed them quite satisfactorily, so you see things are not half as bad as they may look from the perspective of 12,000 miles / is that correct?/

We don't go out much, but still somehow or other there is some occasion for going to bed late often enough, what with family and our small circle of friends and what-not. Father usually goes to the pictures once or twice a week, when I have visitors of whom he feels no compelling urge to see; I only go if there is something extra-specially good, as I am not so very keen on pictures. Even so, I am sometimes disappointed, as I was recently when we saw "The Rains Came" - I enjoyed the book ever so much more than the film. However, I can't say that I have read something so exceptionally good lately, either. Have you?

We still don't know where we are going to find a roof over our heads after May 1st. I feel confident that something will turn up soon, probably before the first of February. Whether we shall be able to find a really convenient flat is another question - but it's too early to worry.

No real news, as you see, darling - but now more than ever, no news is good news. God bless you, dear - all fondest love

Mother

My dearest boy, As usual, I am only able to glean, and, as a matter of fact there is very few stuff left for me. I think there is only one item which might interest you: the news concerning Stuss Jacobi who is going to marry a Jung Swiss lady whom he met in Davos, skiing. Besides this, Stuss' mother, when we met her a few days ago, was not able to give any particulars. The only information is that the young lady is very beautiful and earns her life as a journalist. - Did you ever try to collect some information about Thesa and her husband? We made every effort to get in touch with them, but in vain. Perhaps you see some means to this effect. I am rather anxious to know what became of them. - Love

John

* I don't think you have ever met him! He is Andor's younger son, studying in Zurich.

LETTER 53 (TRANSLATED FROM HUNGARIAN by Katalin Gaal, Aug 2010)

From: Grandpa in Budapest to Dad in Australia

Pongracz Janos
2nd district, Vermezo Street 6,
Budapest, Hungary
25 January 1941

My dear son!

Our last letter was hardly sent before we greeted with joy your Christmas present. We were terribly happy about it as a nice memento as well as for reading. The subject is very interesting, a very well-written book through which we have already fallen in love with Old River Murray.

We would be both prepared to spend our old age with which we are faced in Mildura or Renmark, in the fruit and grape gardens. The landscape must truly be lovely there and it seems the people living there as well. On our way however we would happily spend a few years with you in Melbourne. It's good to dream about these things.

Today your 30th letter has arrived dated 8th of November. It had the necessary effect. The same effect all your letters seem to have. We know and feel that you're in the best possible place, that you have a good life and your opportunities for the future are promising.

We are happy to hear of your news about moving. It's great that you can afford to live without having to worry about petty domestic chores and waste your time and energy on those things. We are also glad to hear that you have decided to have a little Christmas break. After reading about the above mentioned little estates I assume that we regardless of which little village you decided to visit, you found everything there which you can expect to find in a daytrip. We await your report with great curiosity.

Back to your new place, I draw your attention to – at the risk that you already know – that your landlord has a very famous name. One of the greatest representatives of the great French school of Impressionism / Corot, Manet etc./ was called Sisley. The person was of English heritage and as the name is not very common, it may be that your landlady is related to the painter.

We are greatly satisfied that that our Christmas present arrived safely and in one piece and it proving to be useful. By the way, coffee is one of the luxury items which is plentiful for us. Other than the occasional espresso, on Sundays after lunch we have our usual coffee, which Istvan is a great fan of. Quality wise everything is fine, except of course it's very expensive. Unlike tea, which you can also buy in high quality, however it's price is prohibitive, so that for months now we have been drinking planta tea which is a homemade mixture made from various leaves. But we have gotten used to it and wouldn't dream of taking up your offer. Don't even think of sending us tea as the customs tax needs to be paid even if it's for personal reasons.

I hope after a time you have overcome your work overload. Your previous trouble is perhaps not as unpleasant and perhaps can mean a few good points on your list of tasks. I would so love for you to familiarise me with the mysteries of Hollerich! I imagine the machine's purposeful use to be fascinating.

We await all your photos attached to your letter with great curiosity. When the opportunity arises send photos which show Amal. Thanks for the information from Gero which we have forwarded, to the great relief of the Solts who have not received direct news for a long time.

I can only report good things about us. All three of us are in top condition, which must be said with caution as there's a severe flu virus in the city. Fortunately there are no serious cases of illness. The course of the illness only takes a few days. Nevertheless Mum and I were just discussing today that as a precautionary measure she may visit Kekes for one or two weeks or a similar place, which is not too expensive in this season. If Mum (end of letter).

Pongrácz János,
II. Vörmező-u.6.,
Budapest, Hungary

53. sz.levél

1941. január 25.

Drága Fiam ! Alig ment el legutolsó levelünk, mikor befutott nagy örömmel üdvözölt karácsonyi ajándékod. Szörnyen örültünk neki, ugyanis mint kedves megemlékezésnek, úgy is mint olvasmányoknak. Hallatlanul érdekes tárgy, kitűnően megírt könyv ez, melynek révén máris szerelmesei letünk Old River Murray-nek. Készek volnánk mindketten, hogy aggkorunkat, melynek idestova már küszöbén állunk, Mildura-ban vagy Renmark-ban töltsük el, szálló - és gyümölcskertek közepette. Valóban remek szép lehet ott a táj és úgy látszik, remek emberek is lakják. Utközben azonban örömmel tölténénk el még jó néhány évet veled, Melbourneban. Jól esik ilyenekről álmódózni. - Ma befutott 8.-11.-i, 30.sz.leveled. Ez sem tévesztette el hatását. Azt a hatást, melyet leveleid mindenkor kiváltanak bennünk. Tudjuk, érezzük, hogy a lehető legjobb helyen vagy, hogy szépen és jól élsz és hogy kilátásaid a jövőre biztatóak. - Örömmel üdvözöljük hurczolkodásod hírét is. Nagyon jó, hogy módodban vagy úgy lakni, hogy apró háztartási dolgokra nem kell idődet és figyelmedet pazarolni. - Ugyancsak szívesen halljuk, hogy kis karácsonyi kiruccozásra határozta el magad. Azok után, amiket a fentemlitett könyvben kis telepekről olvastam, felteszem, hogy bármily kis faluba is mentél, megtaláltál ott mindent, ami ily rövid kirándulást élvezetessé tehet. Kiváncsian várjuk beszámolódat. - Visszatérve még új lakásodra, felhívom figyelmedet arra - auf die Gefahr hin, hogy amúgy is tudod - hogy házi-gazdád nagyon híres nevet visel. A nagy francia impressionista festőiskola /Corot, Manet stb./ egyik legkiválóbb képviselőjét hívták Sisley-nek. Angol eredetű ember volt és minthogy a név nem nagyon gyakori, lehet, hogy háziasszonyod közeli rokona a festőnek. - Hogy a mi karácsonyi ajándékunk rendben megjött és hasznos berendezési tárgynak bizonyult - nagy megelégedéssel tölt el bennünket. - Kávé, egyébként, egyike ama élvezeti cikkeknak, melyekkel mi is még elég bőven élünk. Időnkinti espressobeli látogatásoktól eltekintve, vasárnap, ebédután főzzük most is a szokott kávé, melynek István is nagy híve. Minőség tekintetében minden rendben van most is, csak persze nagyon drága. Nem úgy, mint a teánál. Ezt is kapni ugyan tökéletes minőségben, ilyennek az ára azonban prohibitív, úgy hogy már hónapok óta, rendes használatra, u.n. Planta teát iszunk, ami valami hön keverék, mindenféle levelekből. De egész jól megszoktuk és a világért sem kívánunk ajánlatoddal élni. Ne jusson eszedbe teát küldeni, mivel a vám teszi ki az ár tulnyomó részét és ezt a vámot szeretetadományok után is meg kell fizetni. - Remélem, hogy időközben már túl vagy úgy a munkahalmazon, mint a nagy melegeken. Előbbi kalamitás talán nem is oly kellemetlen és esetleg jelent néhány jó pontot konduktlistádon. Jaj de szeretném, ha a helyszínen megismertethetnél engem a Hollerich-rejtelmekkel ! Úgy képzelem, hogy nagyon fascinááló valami lehet a gépek egyszerű kezelése és felhasználása. - A leveledben mellékeltek, majd külön küldöttnek jelzett képeket nagyon kíváncsiak várjuk. Alkalomadtán azonban küldj oly képeket, melyeken különböző amáljaid elől is láthatók. - Köszönjük a Gerő-féle információkat, melyeket megfelelően továbbadtunk. Sőték nagy megnyugvására, kik már rég nem kaptak volt hírt közvetlenül. - Magunkról most is csak jót jelenthetek. Mindhárman kitűnő kondícióban vagyunk, ami azonban "unverschrien" legyen mondva, mivel nagy influenza járvány dúl a városban. Szerencsére azonban súlyos esetekről nem hallani. A betegség lefolyása is többnyire csak pár napot vesz igénybe. Mindazonáltal ép ma tanácskoztunk Anyuval arról, hogy kondíció-tartás érdekében menjen el egy-két hétre Kékesre vagy más ilyfajta helyre, ami ebben az évszakban nem is drága dolog. Ha Anyu

Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, II.
Hungary

Letter No. 54.

Feb. 8th, 1941

My darling boy,

no further news from you since your letter No. 30. of December 8th - I suppose your next will be telling us all about your Christmas trip and the holidays which I hope you thoroughly enjoyed, also about your new quarters. I hope you will tell us a lot about it all. It needs such a stretch of imagination to picture the details of your life that every little sidelight is always most welcome. I am afraid you must have gone without news from us for some time lately. When the Greek war started in November I feared that direct communication would cease, and sent two letters /Nos. 46 and 47/ via Kitty. However, she does not seem to have received them, so I am afraid you will be without letters for some time, but trust you won't worry. After Nov. 20th we again sent letters regularly by direct air mail which seems to function better than any other way.

Your Christmas cards addressed to Leopolds and Baloghs duly arrived, with some delay. That encourages me to send you to-day another little package of printed matter; a few illustrated papers and dailies - not that they contain anything of particular interest, I merely thought you might like to see what they look like, these days. I am also sending you Heltai's play "Egy fillér" /One Farthing, in my translation/ which we both liked very much. It wasn't a big success here, but I hope its day may still come.

I have read "Water into Gold" with very great interest. It gives a very vivid picture of a world which we entirely ignore; I think it is written in a fascinating style, and the facts are exceedingly interesting. The book is now making the rounds of the family's fruit-growing and Australia-minded members; at present Uncle Lajos is reading it and I shouldn't be surprised if he'd turn it to good account by writing an article in the Buvár magazine about the Murray River fruit settlements. If he does, I'll certainly send you a copy!

Father and I are now busy house-hunting, and although we haven't found the right thing yet things don't look hopeless - at least, we might already have taken several not quite convenient flats, but we are confident that we may yet find something suitable - at least, a flat of which we do not know the drawbacks in advance, for drawbacks there must be. Nobody puts up signboards advertising flats to let these days, everything goes through the hands of agents, which means additional expense, of course - but at least it saves you tramping the streets. Well, perhaps in my next letter I'll be able to give you a new address. Something will turn up sooner or later, no doubt - anyway, we're not worrying, because there does not seem to be such a great shortage after all - or even if there is, people are constantly moving in and out, and there's always a sporting chance to get something good.

István is steadily working at Csepel; he is now regularly apprenticed as a "machine and tool locksmith", to translate it literally, and if all goes well he can "graduate" as a skilled worker next January. He is much more cheerful about it than I expected he would be, though of course he does not enjoy getting up at five in the dark mornings and the long ride in the cold, crowded tram and bus is no fun - but he is much less sorry for himself than he used to be at school. Needless to say, Saturday afternoons are his happiest times, especially since there is not only Sunday but also Monday, when there is no work at his shop during the winter months, to look forward to. There is still a bit of snow on the hills and of course he skis for all he's worth. I hope you have no objection to his using your skis and your trousers! I told him to regard

them as your Christmas present. To-night is the "Mátyás Ball" to which István is going in your made-over dinner jacket /I think it was originally Jóska's/, and since he now frankly confesses that he likes to dance, I hope he is going to have a good time. Do you ever dance, these days? - I am sending you a snapshot of István by ordinary mail; he took it himself from the looking-glass, and I think it's rather good.

As you may see from all this, life goes on much as usual for us. Reading, radio, our few friends whose circle is perhaps more restricted than it used to be, a little bridge now and then - just as if nothing had happened. I've just got an assignment to translate another play, this time for your old friend Mr Bartsch, who is still running his playbroking agency here. Sometimes I'm amused to think of the very varied subjects which I'm supposed to be able to translate. The other day Dr Rotter asked me to translate an article of his for a medical paper, on the technicalities of a new method to detect thrombosis. Just now Magda Forró called asking me to correct a paper which she had written on cosmic radiations - I didn't understand a word of it, but I corrected valiantly. Then I was asked for translations of Petöfi poems for a short-wave radio transmission - my English version of "The End of September" is very poor, but nobody can say I'm not versatile. And now I have on hand a highly philosophical "Treatise on Happiness" by some unknown author, but I hope to God he'll shy at the expense and change his mind when he hears my terms, because I shouldn't enjoy doing that at all. Most of this is not very lucrative, but I'm glad to have something to do. The Rotter assignment brought as its reward an invitation to a wonderful "peace-time" supper at the "Little Ludláb" restaurant which must have cost about three times the amount I would have charged to a stranger, but at least the Rotters themselves enjoyed the food just as much as we did - if not more.

A few days ago came a letter from Uncle Aurel with an August date, and one from Thesa, via Andris, with no date at all, but written obviously round about Christmas. They seem to be quite well and continuing their usual routine. Erzsi Swinton sent cabled greetings from Vancouver to us and a number of their friends at Christmas, but that is all we know about them; I don't know whether Kurt is with them his family or not. Andris and Erica are well but it appears that the Christmas-card business proved to be a washout - I don't know exactly what Andris is doing now.

I'm leaving some space for Father though I am afraid I have left him no subject to write about. God bless you, darling - all fondest love

love

Mother

A thousand kisses from

Father

Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, II.
Hungary

Letter No. 55.

24th February, 1941

My darling boy,

I've put off writing to you from day to day, always hoping there would be a letter from you next morning, but there hasn't been one for over a month now. The last one was your No. 30, dated December 8. Nándors have had no mail from George either, so evidently there is a general delay, and I only hope that we will be compensated for our long wait by getting several letters simultaneously. I am very anxious to hear all about your Christmas holidays, your new quarters and all the rest of your news. Sometimes one does feel that those 12,000 miles are quite a distance. Not that letters from the neighbourhood come much faster.

The boat mail, on the other hand, functions better than one might expect: we got your clippings only a fortnight later than the air mail letter you sent at the same time. I was thrilled to see the back of your head in the audience of the Stawell Gallery concert - as far as I can see you are looking very well! The blonde hair and nicely arranged curls of your companion look very attractive and I wish I could get a front view of her and know more about her. Do get out your camera and make a few snapshots of your surroundings, your friends and above all of yourself.

The article about ^{the} Hollerith equipment was very interesting and I'm beginning to understand what it's all about, although Father quotes the old joke about "now I know what milk looks like." I expect you can now indulge in your old hobby of drawing "curves" - when poor old Makoldy taught you, we little dreamed that some day you would be drawing up sales statistics in the Garrick Building in Melbourne! I am greatly impressed by the dimensions of the APM business as suggested by the capacity of the Hollerith machinery. If there is any prospectus or newspaper article on the company's activities available, you might let us have it.

There is very little news to tell you to-day. We are still in the throes of house-hunting, and apart from the war and other public affairs, that is the question which chiefly occupies our thoughts at the moment. Every day there is some flat to be seen, but it is either on top of a steep hill, or equally inaccessible on account of its tall price, or there are two rooms less than the agent promised, or it isn't to let at all, or there is some other ~~flaw~~ hitch. Probably in the end we shall have to reconcile ourselves to going over to the other side of the river, but for the moment all three of us are still reluctant to do so. Well, something will turn up. We have decided that we are not going to consider it a catastrophe if we have to store our things and stay either at a pension or scattered among our relatives for three months - but of course we hope it won't come to that. However, mankind has undergone greater upheavals lately than even that would be, so we won't make a fuss about it even if there is no better way out. But there are quite a few prospects on the horizon, so we are hoping that one or the other of them will materialize soon.

István is working steadily and though he occasionally uses strong language with regard to the rottenness of having to rise at five, etc., that is only his charming way - as a matter of fact he positively likes the work and above all, the place; he is impressed by the big-scale activities of the plant to which he belongs, watches and observes what he can, and as far as I can judge is conscientious and at pains to learn as much as he can. He is getting more and more sensible as time goes on; he is looking well and stands the physical strain very well. He goes to bed directly after supper most days, but occasionally there is a concert

or something, which he greatly enjoys. The other day his friend Sári /alias Miska/ gave him her ticket to a Beethoven recital by Dohnányi because she had a cold, and there was István walking out with no less than eight little girls, and of course enjoying it! However, girls are not taking up much of his time - but I'm glad he isn't such a hermit as he used to be.

The family are all right, save for some spells of 'flu, which we have so far been spared - touch wood! Of your friends, there is nothing much to say. Evi Mihelffy's father died about a week ago; perhaps you'll be wanting to write to her. The other day I had a letter ^{from} Erzsébet in Vancouver, the first one sent by direct air mail in many months. It bore a December date, and she said in it she was hoping that Kurt would soon be with them. She has bought a house with extensive grounds, a beautiful home which "cost next to nothing" as usual, and which is much too large for them, but she is glad of it because a London friend of hers is coming to stay with her, plus three children, for the duration. The address is 6251 N.W. Marine Drive, in case you ever want to write to her.

There is no other gossip for your benefit either at home or abroad. Our days pass just as usual. The other day we greatly enjoyed the Mickey Rooney picture "Babes in Arms", and far less, "All This and Heaven Too." I am very well informed about the Australian show business because Variety's huge anniversary number has just come to hand, and Eric Gorrick and Myself are the principal foreign contributors - news from abroad is restricted to Australia, Hungary, Chungking, Tokyo and Shanghai.

Father is waiting for the typewriter, and since there is nothing more of importance to say, I shall close. God bless you, my darling - all fondest love

Mother

Father

LETTER 56 (2 parts) (TRANSLATED FROM HUNGARIAN by Katalin Gaal, Aug 2010)

Part A: From Grandpa in Budapest to Dad in Australia

J. P. Powell Esq
Flat No 1, 39 Airlie Street
South Yarra
Vic

Pongrazc Janos
2nd district
Vermezo Street 6
Budapest Hungary

14 March 1941

My dear son!

After many weeks of silence, the silence has finally broken, when your letter no. 33 and no. 34 arrived on the same day. No. 31 and no. 32 are missing to this day, and perhaps will arrive some time. The former obviously contained your good wishes for your mother's upcoming birthday. Your mother is convinced of the warm gentleness [of these letters] even if they haven't arrived in the same way that I greeted your congratulations towards me with happiness in your letter no. 33.

Thank God, we face these respective anniversaries with health, without a broken body and soul. We face any problems, some small hardships etc, that destiny assigned to us with a positive attitude, which is not difficult if we think of the many, many millions of people who truly have difficulty in all the five continents.

Far from these [continents] yours has the least trouble and it fills us with great happiness that due to the whims of fate you find yourself there. Of course we are terribly interested in what you write about your lifestyle, work etc ; it suggests that you're on your way to a happy, interesting and completely consolidated future.

It's very reassuring to know that others agree with me who are not aware of your current circumstances and predict an outstanding future based purely on your personality. For instance, the other day I met with Biro Balint, who commented with great conviction that you are predestined to achieve great things, something a father could not say better. Even though B.B. is a fairly cynical and selfish man and reluctant to say good things about other people. Perhaps you might be interested that his son has transferred from London to a film school in East England to study.

You have probably received my letter in which I confirmed receipt of your Christmas present and wrote how much we are interested in the book. I suggest that "Pix" will be equally interesting reading as long as they all arrive.

Mum spoke with Mrs Kaldor. After a long break she also received a few letters and a telegraph. She was very happy that you thought of her. The Nandors received letters at the same time as us.

Istvan, as Aurel would say, works diligently and has gotten used to getting up early. At the same time he enjoys it very much when the opportunity provides one or two days of sleep ins, even if he has to pay for it with the occasional discomfort. In the last few days a large piece of metal fell on his hand which damaged two of his fingers. He has recovered almost completely, has been working for the last two days, but had two days when he could have time off, for sleep.

Thanks so much for the photos. You seem to be in good health based on them and your attitude seems very positive. It's good to hear that you're still happy with your place and we're also happy that you decided against taking up a demanding evening course. Your office job is undoubtedly draining, and, knowing you, we are certain that without formal study you still find a way of learning many things in your spare time. I think that women are more or less the same in the whole world so I can imagine what it's like to supervise 12 girls. It must be a veritable army of women! (Perhaps you have heard news of an operetta with a similar name.)

There's only one thing which has tainted our lives for the last few weeks, and that is searching for accommodation. There are very few available places, and most are expensive. On top of that the real estate agents' offices are like a veritable jungle. In the end we will find something, I'm just sorry that I can't give you an address yet. We will only make a compromise with ourselves in the last minute which will enable us to choose a direction. We kiss you a thousand times, my son.

Dad

Part B: From Grandma in Budapest to Dad in Australia

My dear son!

Your letters caused great happiness, but I really hope the missing ones will arrive in time – I would be very sorry if we would miss your recount of the Christmas season and your little holiday. We are especially happy that you have a nice room with comfortable boarding among nice people. It's good thing to be able to cook and clean but it's better not to have a need for it – and you have plenty to do without that.

Thanks for your news about the sold pictures and articles. The article about the 'gypsy king' is undoubtedly ours and Lorant placed it – it's been with him for years. Of course we don't have any contact with him for years. The letters from London have arrived four or five months late; if someone has something to add they get in touch through a telegraph. Mrs Livi recently received – of course still older – news about the Huddlestons and other acquaintances, but we don't know anything about the Palmers.

Tolman sent three wall calendars with Istvan and diligently sends copies of the 'Rotarian' paper, but we haven't received your letter from him for a long time. I myself am forced to send him new stamps to maintain our friendship.

Family and friends wise there's no particular news, other than the death of Mrs Bekeny 2 weeks ago. The poor thing has been seriously ill with a heart condition for years. We sent our condolences to their son in writing; it crossed our mind that they will move out of their house which may become available for rent and we would return to the old Trumpet house, but I hear that they will keep the property. Gyurka must be thinking of opening his medical practice there soon, if possible.

I'm attaching Istvan's little letter, which he wrote about ten days ago, before receiving yours. The Badics children have grown and are quite funny and lively. Livia is attending school – though she misses more than she attends as she has missed a lot due to measles and the flu, but she has learned everything she needs to, she can even read and write in English somewhat. Eva was just here and made me promise that I send you her greetings as she thinks of you a great deal. This can be said for many others.

I'm very happy about *Pix* and hope it will arrive – sooner or later almost everything arrives. Thank you, my dear son and I hug you countless times.

Mum.

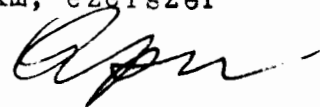
J.P. Powell Esq
Flat No.1.,
39, Airlie Street,
South Yarra, S.E.1., Vic.

Pongrácz János,
II.Vérmező-u.6.,
Budapest, Hungary

March 14, 1941.

Drága fiacskám ! Hosszu hetek hallgatása után, végre megtört a csend, mikor egy napi időközzel befutott a hét elején 33. és 34. sz. leveled. A 31. és 32. számú mindmáig hiányzik, de talán vala - mikor ~~írtam~~ mégis csak megérkeztek. - Az utóbbi tartalmazta nyil - ván jó kívánságaidat Anyu közeli születésnapjára. Ezek meleg gyen - gedségéről Anyu, levél híján is, ép úgy meg van győződve, mint a - hogyan magam boldogan és örömmel vettem a 33. sz. levélben részemre kifezésre juttatott gratulációt. - Hála Istennek, a respectiv évfordulóknak teljes egészségben, töretlen testtel és lélekkel me - gyünk elejébe. Ami gondot, kisebb fajta nékülözést stb. nekünk a sors osztályrészül juttat, azt derűs filozófiával igyekszünk viselni, ami igazán nem nehéz, ha gondolunk arra a sok-sok millió emberre, kinek valóban rosszul megy a dolga, mindenfelé az öt kontinensen. - Ezek közül mindenesetre a tiédnek jut ki legkevesebb a bajból és nagy boldogság nekünk, hogy a sors kiszámíthatatlan szeszélye jóvoltából, ott tudhatunk téged. - Amit életmódról, munkáról stb. írsz, persze szörnyen érdekel bennünket és azt az érzést kelti, hogy legjobb uton vagy szép, érdekes és teljesen konsolidált jövő felé. - Jól esik ne - kem nagyon, ha ez érzésemet megerősítve hallom olyanok részéről, kik mit sem tudnak jelenlegi életkörülményeikről és a remek jövőt csupán egyéniségekből következtetik. Így például ép a napokban találkoztam Bíró Bálinttal, kit évek óta nem láttam, és ki melegen érdeklődve dolgaid iránt, oly meggyőzően fejtette ki nekem, hogy praedestinálva vagy arra, hogy valami nagyot elérj, hogy saját apai szíves sem tudta volna szebben megítélni jövődet. Pedig B.B. meglehetősen cinikus és öntelt ember, ki nem túl könnyen mond valami jót másvalakire. - Tán érdekel, hogy az ő fia valamilyen Londonból Észak Angliába áthelyezett filmfényképészeti iskolában tanul. - Közben bizonyára megkaptad ama leveletem, melyben a karácsonyi ajándék vételét igazoltam és megírtam, hogy a könyv mennyire érdekelt bennünket. Felteszem, hogy a "Pix" hasonlóan igen érdekes olvasmányt fog nyújtani, feltéve, hogy megjön - nek számai. - Káldornával beszélt Anyu. Hosszu szünet óta most ő is ka - pott több levelet egyszerre, meg egy sürgőhnyt. De azért nagyon örült annak, hogy gondoltál rá. - Nándorék velünk egy időben kaptak levele - ket. - István, ahogy Aurél bácsi mondaná, serényen dolgozik és már egészen beleélte magát a korai felkelésbe. Mindazonáltal nagyon él - vezi, ha alkalom kínálkozik egy-két napi rendkívüli alvásra, még ak - kor is, ha ezt némi szenvedéssel kell megfizetnie. Így a napokban kazére esett valami nagy vaslap, mely két ujját bizony kissé megté - pázta. Ma már majdnem teljesen rendben van a gyerek, két napja ismét dolgozik, de közben volt két napja, mikor lóghatott, illetve alud - hatott. - Köszönjük nagyon a beküldött fényképet. Ugy vesszük ki be - lőle, hogy jószinben vagy és az egész attitude is nagyon cheerful benyomást kelt. - Jól esik hallanunk, hogy meg vagy elégedve tovább - ra is lakásoddal és egész szívesen értesülünk arról is, hogy nem vettél a nyakadba valamilyen nagy, komoly esti studiumot. Bizonyára eléggé kimerít téged a hivatalbeli munka, azonfelül, ahogyan ismerünk biztosak vagyunk abban, hogy tanfolyam nélkül is sok mindenfélét

tanulsz azabad idődben. - Azt hiszem, hogy a nők többé-kevésbé egyforma az egész világon és így el tudom képzelni, hogy mit jelent 12 leány felé főnökösködni. Valóságos Frauenbattalion ez! /Ha ugyan hallottad valaha hírt az ezt a címet viselő régi operettnek. Egy dolog van csak, ami kissé megkeseríti életünket néhány hét óta, és ez a lakáskeresés. Tényleg nagyon kevés lakás disponibilis, legtöbbje pedig drága. Ezenfelül valóságos dsungel a lakásközvetítők tisztességes czéhe. De azért végül majd mégis fogunk valahol lakni, csak sajnálom, hogy még címet nem tudok adni neked. Alkalmassint csak utolsó perczben fogunk önönmagunkkal oly kompromisszumot létesíteni, melynek alapján egyik vagy másik irányban elhatározáshoz tudunk majd jutni. Csókollak, fiacskám, ezerszer



Pongrácz János

Drága fiacskám! Leveleid óriási örömet szereztek, de nagyon remélem, hogy még a hiányzók is megjönnek idővel - nagyon sajnálnám, ha épen a karácsonyi ünnepekről és kis üdülésedről való beszámoló maradna el végkép. Különösen örülök annak, hogy kellemes szobád és jó ellátásod van kedves emberek közt. Jó dolog, ha az ember főzni és takarítani tud, de azért az sem rossz, ha erre nincs szükség - és van neked elég dolgod és elfoglaltságod anélkül is.

Köszönöm értesítésedet az eladott képekről és cikkekről. A "cigánykirály"-ról szóló cikk bizonyára a mienk és Loránt helyezte el - már évek óta nála van. Persze vele most semmiféle érintkezésünk nincs. A londoni levelek négy-öt havi késéssel jönnek meg; akinek ott hozzátartozója van, sürgőnyileg érintkezik vele. Livi néniék nemrég kaptak - persze szintén régi keletű ~~hírt~~ - hírt Huddlestonékról és más ismerőseikről, de Palmerékről nem tudunk semmit.

Tóthman bácsi Istvánnak is küldött valami három fali naptárt és szorgalmasan küldözi a "Rotarian" c. lap példányait is, de levelet már rég nem kaptunk tőle. Magam is arra szorítkozom, hogy egy-egy új kiadású postabélyeget megküldjek neki, a barátság fenntartása céljából.

Családban, baráti körben nincs különösebb ujság, kivéve, hogy vagy két héttel ezelőtt meghalt Bekény néni. Szegény már évek óta igen súlyos szivbajos volt. A fiuknak írásban kondoláltunk; arra is gondoltunk, hogy bizonyára kimennek a lakásukból és mi esetleg kibérelnők és visszatérnénk a jó öreg Trombitás-házba, de hallom, hogy megtartják a lakást - Gyurka bizonyára arra gondol, hogy maholnap ott nyissa meg orvosi rendelőjét, ha ugyan lehet.

Mellékelem István levélkéjét, melyet már vagy tiz nappal ezelőtt írt, mielőtt a tiedet megkapta volna. - A Badics-gyerek már nagyok és igen mulatságosak, elevenek és jókat mondanak. Livia már iskolába jár - azaz hogy többet marad ki, mint a mennyit jár, mert kanyaró, influenza és hasonlóak miatt sokat hiányzott, de azért mindent megtanult, amit kell, sőt már angolul olvas és ír valamelyest. Ép most volt itt Éva és külön lelkemre kötötte, írjam meg neked, hogy nagyon sokat gondol rád és üdvözl. Ezt különben még sokakról elmondhatnám.

A Pix-nek nagyon örülök és remélem, meg is fog jönni - előbb-utóbb majdnem minden megjön. Köszönöm, drága fiacskám
Ölellek számtalanszor



/Pongrácz Jánosné/

LETTER 56a (TRANSLATED FROM HUNGARIAN by Katalin Gaal, Aug 2010)

From: Istvan in Budapest to Dad (brother) in Australia

February 25

Dear Bok,

I have finally decided to write to you, though I have nothing noteworthy to report. I don't particularly want to ask you anything, except again to ask that your machine ...

As you have probably been informed by Mum, I work at Csepel as a tool mechanic on a one-year contract. My salary equates to approximately minus 60 filler per day: that's how much the transport costs. I have to get up about 5- quarter past 5, I get home around a quarter past 4 in the afternoon, I have lunch then I have a wash.

I don't go out much though I went to a lovely concert for Dohanyi's Beethoven piano evening. I have also attended some beautiful poetry recitals at the Academy of Music. It's now the end of the ball season: I only attended the Matyas (Matthew) Ball, but I don't really like these kinds of things.

Unfortunately the ski season is over. I only went about 12 times due to my Christmas sprain. I'm still utterly enjoying the Svab mountains even though I can run down on either side with eyes closed. The most wonderful territories of Karpat and Erdely were regained, but unfortunately I can't go anywhere due to lack of money and my job.

Regrettably, there's not much time left for reading, though today I'm reading books with my old enthusiasm. I have just put down a remarkable work: The cultural history of human stupidity. The creator is Bat – Vegh.

I don't have much time for photography either, let alone energy though my new machine is working very well. My film development tank awaits any film with great excitement and I could have a lot of photos to enlarge, for instance about Sag.

Other than that, as you can see I'm merely 'playing with words' because I don't have anything serious to say. In consequence of that I close my letter and hope that you will provide me with more enjoyable tidbits.

Istvan

febr.25.

Kedves Bök, mégrevalahára eljzántam magam, hogy írjak Neked, bár semmi érdeklő közölnivalóm nincsen. Tőled sem akarsz semmi különbséget kérdezni, legfeljebb megint csak azt, hogy a gép...
d....

Mint Anyuétól bizonyára már értesültél, Csepelen

dolgozom; egy éves szerszám és géplakatostanone-szerződéssel. Keresetem kb. napi minusz hatvan fillérre tehető: ennyivel kerül többbe a közlekedés. Öt-negyedhatkor kell kelnem, du. negyedöt tájban érek haza, megebedélek majd a végtelenségig tisztálkodom. Szórakozni nemigen járok, pár nagyon szép hangversenyen voltam/ utoljára Dohnányi kongora Beethoven-estjén/ Néhány gyönyörű szavalóestet is hallgattam a Zeneakadémián. Mostan már vége a bál szezonnak: Csak a Mátyás- bál voltam, de nem szeretem az ilyesmit.

A siidénynek-sajnos-nyilván már befűtültek. Talán tizenkétszer lehettem kint csupán-- karácsonyi ficamom miatt. A Svábhegyet még mindig rettentő mód élvezem, annak ellenére, hogy behunyt szemmel is leszaladok már bármelyik lejtőjén. Kárpátaljával és Erdéssel a legcsodálatosabb terepek kerültek vissza, csak hogy sajna nem juthatok el sehová a rohadt pénztelenség és a meló miatt.

Az olvasásra sajnos nagyon kevés időm marad, bár ma is a régi szenvedélylyel falom a könyveket. Éppen most tettem le egy remek munkát: Az emberi butaság kulturtörténete. Szerzője Rát-Végh.

Fényképezésre sem igen marad időm, mégkevésbé energiám bár új gépem kielégítően működik, tankom opedve vár bármilyen filmet s rengeteg nagyítanivalóm volna például csak Ságáról is.

Egyébként mint látod, csak "szószaporítok" mivel semmi komoly mondanivalóm nincs. Ennek következtében zárom is leveletem és remélem, Te majd valami élvezetesebb csemegével szolgálsz majd legközelebbi levélkédben

Pongrácz István

István —

Pongrácz Jánosné
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, II.
Hungary

Letter No. 57.

28th March 1941

My darling boy,

No news from you since we last wrote, but that is hardly to be marvelled at - only I am sorry that two of your letters seem to be definitely lost. Well, I'm hoping that others are on the way and will soon reach us, bringing good news again. Here everything is O.K. The family gave me a beautiful birthday yesterday, as usual, with heaps of presents, with the slogan: who knows how long we'll be able to give presents - but since we have been saying this for several years now, and are still continuing to celebrate birthdays cheerfully, including nice presents and a bountiful tea for those who bring them, I have every hope that ~~next~~ my next birthday is going to be no worse than this one - perhaps even better. Of course Aunt Ilonka was again most lavish, giving me material for a dress and a blouse; Aunt Livi gave beautiful tea-table covers from her niece Flora's workshop; stockings from Father, two Penguin volumes from István; a truly regal present: a whole kilo of chocolate, rare treasure nowadays, from Aunt Rosa who is grateful because I spend an afternoon with her regularly once a week/which I much enjoy doing/ and because Kitty forwards her letters to and from Emsy; and heaps of flowers and potted plants from everybody, including even our Hindu friend and Aunt Lenke, who is at present buried at a distant farm belonging to some friends of hers, where she is doing social welfare work among the labourers' children. I'm afraid Father's birthday after to-morrow will be far less spectacular, but then he has always protested against celebrations and reserved them for me!

Sorry to say I can't give you our new address yet - it's most exciting, for we are playing for a small flat on the top floor of a villa in Nyul-ucca whose present tenants can't quite make up their minds to leave it, but are still holding out the hope that they might - and meanwhile we may be losing other chances. Well, next week we must come to a definite decision one way or another. I'm hoping that the abovementioned proposition may come to a clinch, for in many ways it would be very convenient. For one thing the rent is very low - there would be a premium, but even so it would be cheaper than anything else we have seen. Then, although it's rather small and we would have to give up a good deal of our things, it's pretty, compact and modern, has large terraces and an excellent location, as you know. Well, we shall see... and let you know, of course, as soon as the matter is settled.

István is at present enjoying a holiday - the little accident to his fingers that Father mentioned in his last letter, turned out to be a fracture of the bone in two finger-tips of his left hand - fortunately above the joint, so it is to be hoped it will heal without further ado in a short time. The dear child went to work with his bandaged hand for ten days before he could be persuaded to have it X-rayed, whereupon it was put into splints, so of course he can't work now. It doesn't hurt, so I hope it will be quite all right. Needless to say, this doesn't prevent him from planning to go skiing at Easter, but I hardly think it will come to anything, since the weather is now very mild - after having been vilely cold and windy for some weeks.

I had a letter from Aunt Erzsi a few days ago, announcing very happily that Kurt had arrived in Canada at last - she was looking forward to his arrival two days after the date of her letter, in mid-February. They all seem to be doing very well.

I don't think I have any news for the "personal" column of my letter to-day. Last Sunday I threw a semi-juvenile party at which you were greatly missed and inquired after, but the participants had nothing to say that would be of interest to you. They were Kató, Peter, the Moldvai "children", Hevesis, Sándor Jacobi whom I invited because Uncle Andor wished to make his acquaintance /they are cousins but had never met/, and the latter who was much gratified at being invited with /relatively/ young people. István, who also had two friends of about his own age /a "juve" from the club and another chap whom he brought along/, of course thought all the other guests were as old as the hills, but nevertheless played the vice-host very hospitably. So you see we don't mope and are making hay while the sun shines, i.e. inviting

guests as long as we have a place to invite them to, and food to regale them with.

Although there are now various restrictions in this respect, we are still far better off than people in almost any other part of Europe. Flour is now rationed, but bread and rolls are not, and although 20 per cent of cornmeal must now be added to the flour for bread, it is excellent, - not at all like our dismal memories of cornmeal bread during the World War. Fat, of course, has been rationed for some time and is now sometimes difficult to get, but thanks to Ilona's excellent relations with everybody at the market, we have never run short yet. Butter is free, so is goose fat. There are various restrictions in the way of different kinds of meat, ham, sausages etc. - but as long as it's no worse we have every reason to be cheerful about it. Of course prices are going up. Same applies to other staples - textiles, shoes etc. Leather-soled boots can now only be had by special permit, or to be more correct, the issuing of such permits is merely planned and for the moment they cannot be bought at all - but there are all kinds of substitutes, allegedly very good new inventions, such as wooden and rubber soles - we haven't tried them out yet. It's quite amusing to see the window displays of nice leather-soled shoes, with price tickets on them, and beside them slippers, children's shoes, wooden-soled ones etc. with a sign: "Available even now" - meaning that the others aren't, until further instructions are issued. Anyhow, we haven't got "wet feet" yet, neither in the physical nor in the figurative sense, so there's nothing to worry about.

"Pix" hasn't turned up yet, and couldn't be expected to, but I hope that it will in time, and am greatly looking forward to reading it. It will really be a treat to get an Australian illustrated paper; we are getting so familiar with things Australian as to be really interested in what happens week by week - even though we only hear of it three or four months later. I still get "Variety" and "American Weekly" fairly regularly, but "Life" turns up most irregularly, usually months after subjects of topical interest have grown obsolete. Still, it's interesting even then.

At present I have nothing special to do - no translation, and very little "journalistic" work, since practically all our customers have money transfer difficulties, and if we can't get money, we can't very well spend any on photographs either. So we just do a little occasionally, economizing on prints, stationery etc. Our new sphere of activity is reports on Hungarian films, which now sell in several European countries. They give us photos gratis, since it's good publicity for them, and as the film magazines and columns are now rather short of other material, we hope to make a certain amount of profit on this sort of material. For the rest, we are just marking time. Besides, Hevesi is pretty busy at his studio, so has little time to follow up stories which eventually might sell. I am trying to think of something useful to do, but for the moment, what with the flitting in prospect, I'm just lying low.

Not much news in this letter, but I'm afraid it's the best I can do. Anyway, I hope it conveys to you that we are very well indeed and thinking of you all the time. Fondest love, my darling

My darling boy, I'm sorry having no news to add to Mother's compte rendu. So I must restrict myself to enclose a clipping containing Metallo's balance-sheet which is probably still of interest for you. Love

Mother

Father

Pongrácz János
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, II.
Hungary

Letter No. 58.

4th April, 1942

My darling boy,

Your letter No. 35, dated February 18th, arrived this morning - less promptly than did the last few letters, but it was no less welcome nevertheless. You have no idea what pleasure and relief we feel on reading every one of your letters - they exude such an atmosphere of security and content. May they always convey the same feeling to us - until we meet again!

I have real news to-day - we have at last taken a flat. Our future address is XII., Budakeszi-ut 14/F. This means that it is in one of a new group of mezzanine-and-two-storey villas built on the site opposite Szép Ilona, just above where there is a parting of the ways of the 81 and 83 tram lines - if you still remember where that is. The flat is on the first floor of one of these villas - two others are being built to the right and left of our future abode, worse luck - but even so, it's going to be light and airy and I think a very pleasant place to live in. Of course it's a bit of a distance, but that is a drawback chiefly for István. However, he says he doesn't mind - it has its advantages, being superiorly convenient for skiing. Besides, he is hoping for a motor bike, and I suppose he'll get one in time, when finances are at a less low ebb. Both bus and tram communication is very good from Budakeszi-ut, and there are a lot of shops, it has become quite a suburban centre during the last year or two, with another large group of new houses on the other side of the road, too. And the air is very good out there - we are going to have a large balcony on which we can enjoy it - so personally I like the place very much.

We shall have three fair-sized rooms, larger than in most of these modern flats, and a small hall; kitchen, bath etc. are small but quite satisfactory, and there is also a small passage in which we can place cupboards, etc., so that we will have room for most of our things without being too crowded. Kátó is already at work planning to fit in everything that we need. Of course the whole flat has about half the area of our present one, and costs as much as our dear landlady wanted us to pay here - so we have repented that we hadn't the good sense to swallow our pride once more. However, if we're once settled in I think I shall be glad of the change. It was most unpleasant having this threat hanging over our heads all the time. Also, our present flat was badly in need of repairs, and you know it was too large for us. At Budakeszi-ut, I hope at least to be able to economise on the house-keeping - we shall dispense with the services of Ilona, - I can always have her come in to help occasionally, if there are guests or anything special - and it will be quite easy for Roza, the little maid from Ság, to do the housework and get meals. One big drawback is that the house isn't finished yet and although we have to move out at the customary time we won't be able to move in before the 10th or 15th of May. The furniture will have to go into storage for a few days and we shall divide ourselves up among the family - probably Father and I will stay with the Leopolds and István with the Baloghs. However, we are firmly hoping that nobody is going to be ill this time and that by the time you get this letter we shall be nicely settled in and pleased to have it over. The house-hunting was a veritable odyssey, with most dramatic episodes - flats whisked away under our noses, agents in danger of being murdered by Father, beautiful cheap flats temptingly dangled before us and when we wanted to grasp them, revealing that they could only be had on condition that we buy furniture for ten times the amount it is worth - etc. etc. All this has combined to make us very glad that we have at last secured this shelter which I am sure will make a very pleasant home.

István's fingers are no longer bandaged, but he is still having a massage treatment for them at the Social Insurance surgery - you know what an amount of time has to be spent there. So he is still on sick leave and won't be working before next week. The little holiday has done him good,

his face is looking rounder. Quite a good thing too, for next month he is planning to go in for rowing in good earnest - he means to go to the club straight from the factory, get his dinner there and go ~~fer-a~~ on the river with one of the teams before coming home. It's the only way he can manage it, and I don't think it'll hurt him, in fact I think it will do him good.

I am sure that yesterday, when you read the news of Prime Minister Teleki's tragic death, you could imagine what a shock it was for the entire country. Everybody is under the spell of that tragic event. Nevertheless, everything goes on as usual - except, of course, that there are no theatres, no music in the cafés, etc. until after the funeral - and complete calm prevails.

I'm very glad that you find the Sisleys so congenial; it's nice to think that you have a family circle to ~~turn~~ to whenever you like, and that you are well taken care of. I wonder whether you will be moving again, and if so, whether you will like it as well as you ~~do~~ like your present quarters. We are keeping all your books and will send them to you as soon as it is possible and if you want them. On the other hand, I feel justified by the present shortage of good materials for having the suit you left at home, and your winter coat, made over for István - hope you don't mind. He would prefer to have clothes made directly to fit him, but he'll have to put up with having made-over ones for some time to come - it's well-nigh impossible to find, and to pay for, new materials of such quality / especially the coat which used to be Uncle Oli's/. Well, the time will come for that too, but poor István will have to wait a little bit longer.

Bless you, my darling - keep well and cheerful, don't worry about us, and have as good a time as you know how. Fondest love

Mother

P. S. Met old Baróti the other day - "old" is meant quite literally: I find he has considerably aged in looks during the past year. Of course he inquired most warmly about you and discoursed upon what a wise thing it was that you left, etc.

My dear boy, I never thought what a fearful thing it is to look for a flat. For years I haven't been as nervous as during the last 4 months. The lot of agents deserves to be burned alive. - But now I feel quite confident that our new abode will prove to be quite a trouvaille, found out at noon and leased at 5 o'clock, the day before yesterday. - Yes, my foursome still exists and every Sunday and Thursday, after supper, I have my game of alsós which I enjoy as ever, much more than the occasional games of Bridge arranged mostly by one or the other of our friends of Olasz fasor and neighbourhood. - One of the chief participants of these gatherings, Főorvos ur, we very much miss since about two months. A bad cold developed into pneumonia and beat him off his feet. He now gradually recovers. - My other recreations if this expressions can be used in case of somebody who does very little work, are lecture and pictures. Especially the latter ~~g~~ give me much pleasure. To-day I saw "You can't take it with you" or something like that. American made nonsense but nevertheless a real treat. Don't miss this picture if it comes your way. Love, my darling

April 5th. - I have reopened this to say that the first two copies of "Pix" magazine have just turned up. I think the magazine is awfully good in its way; all three of us are delighted to have it. Thanks ever so much!

Laphe

Pongrácz Jánosné
Vérmező-ut 6.
Budapest, II.
Hungary

Letter No. 59.

13th April, 1941

My darling boy,

While Father has gone to the café to read the papers, and thence to Aunt Rosa to pay her his usual Sunday morning call, there is nothing better I can do on this cool and unpleasant Easter Sunday morning than write to you. Stephen has gone off to the hills round Kassa with his friend Patkai, a rather nice though somewhat self-important youngster of twenty whom he has picked up at the Club and with whom he has established a firm friendship - P. lives quite near and works at the same place as Stephen, so it's a very good thing. They went off on Friday night, not quite knowing how far they would get, hoping to find some snow to ski on, but if there is none, they'll go tramping. Our own holiday programme is much as usual - Leopolds this afternoon and Nandors to-morrow. So you see there is no reason to make any change in our usual routine, even though world events are creeping closer and closer. We have blackouts now, but that is hardly an inconvenience just now, when days are long and there is a full moon; besides, street lighting has been so much reduced for the sake of economy during the past months that the dimmed lights we have at present don't seem to make any great difference. So we just go about as usual.

In my last letter I told you all about our new flat, but in case the letter should not reach you, I am giving you our new address again: it is XII., Budakeszi-ut 14/F. The builders say that it will be ready for moving in by the 10th of May, but we'll be glad enough if we can move in by the 20th. Meanwhile we have begun our preparations by picking out a lot of junk, some of the pictures, a few rugs, old china etc. for which we shall have no room and which we hope to sell at a price which will pay for the expenses of moving, alterations of furniture etc. Our expert - Mr Szilárd - says that such things fetch a relatively big price nowadays, as they always do in such uneasy times. Of course we're not selling any of the things to which we are really attached, neither the plates on the dining-room wall nor our good set of china, nor the pictures we are fond of - just the surplus. I have already bought some very nice material for covering the three old easy-chairs which are really in the last stages of dilapidation. Of the furniture, only the two old wardrobes in your room and Stephen's will have to go, also your writing-desk and a few little things - Stephen gets your couch and bookcase; he is going to have a very pleasant room opening onto the balcony. The rest of the things will all fit in somehow, even the dining-room which is always a problem because the sideboard is so large. Perhaps it would have been more sensible to get rid of it on this occasion, but then we should have had to get some other furniture in its place, and that costs a lot of money nowadays - I think it is wiser to stick to things as they are, as far as possible, than to make new investments when you don't know anyhow what is going to happen next.

As soon as we are settled, we'll send you snapshots of our new home - although I am afraid you did not receive various photos I sent you by boat mail on previous occasions. I sent you a photograph of myself in letter No. 43. which appears to have been lost, and several other snapshots sometime in February - the latter may still reach you. I am mailing this letter both ways again - one by air mail and a copy by boat mail. I wonder whether, and when, either or both copies will reach you. We are quite prepared for an interval without news from you, but we still go on hoping that mails will continue to be fairly regular. Go on writing whatever happens, we will do the same, and trust to good fortune!

The other day I met the Fisher parents, also Dr Makai who has a son in Melbourne - I don't know whether you have met him. Dr Fisher seems to be in good health now, much improved since his son left - he does not give the impression of having anything wrong with him. They do not seem to be very enthusiastic about their daughter's impending marriage - they prefer not to talk about it. I'm told that John Polya has married already - have you met him and his bride?

Strange to think that exactly two years ago I spent Easter in London, stopping in Paris on the way - what a different world it was then! It's curious to think of all the people I met on that trip, and what has happened to them. The last thing I heard about Uncle Delmar, for instance, was an article in a Budapest paper last week about some fifteenth-century bishop of Hungarian extraction whose tombstone he discovered in a church in Switzerland. It was a very dull article, but it's good for him that he can keep his mind fixed on such things. He is staying at Geneva, being unable to procure the various transit visas necessary for returning. - I told you about the Swintons in my last letter - Kurt has joined his family in Vancouver at last. They seem to be flourishing as always.

I enclose an obituary notice - I believe Hortense Schulz was a friend of yours, and you'll be sorry to hear that her brother died. I don't know what happened to him - sounds rather like suicide.

Another Melbourne matrimonial item which you may not have heard /at least I think it's Melbourne, but it may be Sydney/ is the engagement of young Bobby Beck, son of Robert Beck, former director of the Credit Bank. I don't know whether you have ever met the boy, but you will probably ~~remember~~ remember his father who used to be a great friend of ours in the old days. I believe you once informed him on the subject of English schools for his son. Well, young Beck has been in Australia for over two years now /he was in England for some years previously, and before that he studied at Zurich, so you probably never met him since you were small children/, and now I hear he is about to be married. He used to be a terribly quiet, reticent, shy or arrogant /I don't know which/ sort of boy; it's a triumph for Australian womanhood to have induced him to marry, for I think he would never have managed to do it in Europe. He is an electrical engineer, I believe.

Well, darling, you see I have nothing of great importance to report, but I want you to know that we are well and as cheerful as possible. I fervently hope that we will be able to keep in touch with each other. Bless you, my darling - best wishes and fondest love

Mother

Father

LETTER 60 (2 parts) (TRANSLATED FROM HUNGARIAN by Katalin Gaal, August 2010)

Part A: From Grandpa in Budapest to Dad in Australia

1941 April 25

My dear son!

Your 32nd letter through normal mail and your 37th sent in airmail arrived at the same time. Both project a positive calm tone as the others. It makes incredibly peaceful to know that you continue to have every opportunity for a good, interesting and pleasant life over there; you will agree that it's worth working very hard for it. We hope that the current state of the world with its surprising, unexpected often dramatic events will not change your situation.

We are happy to see that you respond to our questions and therefore will encouraged to keep asking them. What I would like to find out now is have you been able to meet a friend with whom you can have honest talks about possible problems? I know that even at home you were never to intimate with your friends. However you were able to talk about important things with Mum and I. Not so that you would randomly accept our advice but to discuss it. Do you have an opportunity for this there? It occurred to me that before you accepted this position, your boss was so nice with you and invited you to his house. Did this relationship continue?

Health wise I can only report the best about us. Emotionally however we are very concerned about the events happening to the city and the world. But we continue to make the most of every moment. I continue to enjoy the occasional card party at the National Coffee House and mum enjoys the frequent get togethers to play bridge, especially with Ilonka, as the food and drink compensate for the mistakes of foreign players. Istvan occasionally returns from concerts in such an enthusiastic mood that the enthralling effect of music never ceases to amaze me. By the way the child is working well in again the factory. He is not much more talkative than you were so I don't exactly know about what he does or studies. But sometimes he's in the mood to talk and I'm happy to see that he can concentrate, observe and think.

Mum and I are purely focused on moving and the things associated with that. Of course as usual Mum is taking care of the majority of things as she prefers to do most things herself. Sometimes it's hard to stop her from doing everything. From the beginning of the week the apartment has looked very messy, especially the delivery man has flooded us with boxes this afternoon. We will leave Vermezo Street a week from tomorrow. Our belongings will be taken to the delivery company's address in enclosed vehicles and will be stored there for approximately a month when we can move to the new place. In the meantime mum will live at Livia's and I will be the guest of Ilonka. We haven't decided yet about Istvan's accommodation. At the moment we prefer the Wieners who will have a vacated room, as they are forced to rent two rooms due to the produce business's current situation.

Of course as we are moving to a significantly smaller place we will have to leave many things behind. A few pieces of furniture and 150 or 200 bric-a-brac objects. We will try to

sell them. There's a market especially for the latter and we hope that in the beginning of the new month at the Ernszt auction we will be able to get a price which will give us a sum of surplus money on top of the expense of moving which first of all will allow us to make a bigger contribution to the purchase of Istvan's motorbike. The bike is not a luxury item when you consider the time and expense of travelling to work especially from the new home.

Besides the things we plan to sell, we plan to get rid of a lot of other things, especially books and records. Of course we will keep important things but out of date things, old letters and similar things will have to be destroyed as we don't have the space to store them. Many of your things will have to be sacrificed which we hope you approve of. For instance, a part of your photos, copies of Metallor, study materials and similar have been taken to the boiler – your books on economy and your various essays however will be kept. Perhaps one day we can send these to you

Yesterday I went to the shooting of the film "Leanyvasar" (The Marriage Market). According to the interested parties it will be an outstanding film, but what I have seen did not point to this. Furthermore, it's hard to believe that it will be ever completed based on the fact that during the 1.5 hours I spent there they only shot material worth 1.5 minutes. But they say it's always like this and the layman is always as doubtful as I was.

Martos Ivan took me to the studio and brought with him his colleague and friend Kalman Bandit as well, who of course warmly inquired after you. I heard from him that poor Fonagy Miki is still sick and currently in the Janos Hospital.

Mum has just warned me that on the previous page I have used one or two non-literary phrases which can be traced back to often hearing these things from Istvan. I hope the censor will not get stuck on these things; in any case in the future I will be more careful not to divert away from literary language. I will send 2 copies of this letter. The second will be sent in normal post. I kiss you a thousand times my son, Dad.

Part B: From Grandma in Budapest to Dad in Australia

Dear son,

Don't think that I'm as troubled by the move as Dad writes, I'm more concerned with directing organising/directing things: I'm bossing around old Rezi and other helpers, and I try to figure out where to put the furniture together with Karo, who has created small models of the furniture by cutting them out from paper and we push these around on our drawn plan. So luckily our thoughts are kept busy by the move which is not a bad thing. In the meantime I will consider the stay at Gellert Hill as a holiday and I think it will be very pleasant. The Budakesz apartment will be very nice in the summer; our small balcony, if not as big as the current one, at least overlooks green trees, two large pine trees stand guard around it and the air is very good, not urban. We wouldn't have found a more appropriate place, maybe not as good as this. The investments embarked on while you were still here have gained momentum since then. There are two giant holiday resorts style houses built on Svab Hill and they continue to build newer and newer ones. There's a whole new side of town being built at Lagymánys, four are being built in Csalogány Street, a lot on Rose Hill (Rózsadomb) and elsewhere as well – of course with correspondingly raised prices as construction/building prices in general have become terribly inflated. Pali is again speculating whether to create something similar on our plot in Filler Street; of course it's very difficult due to lack of transport.

The peaches, thank for your inquiry, were catastrophically bad last year, which was made all the more painful because there was an excellent peach harvest throughout the country; this year it's flowering beautifully, but what will happen until the harvest is another question. The stewed fruit was still wonderful this year, we had the last one yesterday evening. But it would be better if condos were growing on our plot, that's for sure.

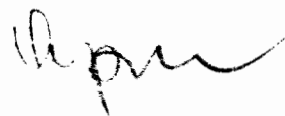
I'm glad that you were able to find a home for the Duna photos and your praise regarding the article also felt good. Of course at the moment we are not doing anything; I have things to do today, Bandi is very busy with his new photography business, the investments into the pictures, photo folders etc. have not come to fruition due to the current uncertain conditions of money transfer. I would be prepared to make some investment in the home of future return, especially regarding work, but Bandi won't – perhaps he is right, especially as he can momentarily profit from his job. Anyway, when things are sorted with the accommodation we will see consider the situation and the opportunities.

God bless you, my dear son, I hug you a thousand times and I really, really hope that things will continue to go well for you. Mum

We can never tell when one or two letters might get lost so I will again write our future address: 12th district, Budakeszi Street 14/F.

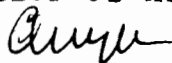
Drága fiacskám! Csaknem egyszerre érkezett meg 32.sz. rendes postán küldött és 37.sz. légipostaleveled. Mindkettőnek tartalma derűs, nyugalmat és biztonságot sugároz, ép úgy mint az eddigiek. Kimondhatatlan megnyugvásunkra szolgál látni, hogy továbbra is minden előfeltétele meg van annak, hogy szép, érdekes és kellemes életben legyen részed odaát; ha nagyon meg kell dolgozni érte, az bizonyára szerinted sem baj. Reméljük, hogy a világ folyásának meglepő, váratlan, gyakran oly drámai fordulatai sem változtatnak helyzeteden. Örömmel vesszük, hogy kérdéseinket szépen megválaszolod és ezzel arra biztatsz, hogy továbbiakat tegyünk fel neked. Most azt szeretném tudni, hogy sikerült-e neked már időközben szert tenni oly baráttra, kivel kibeszélheted magad a felmerülő problémákról. Tudom, hogy itthon sem voltál soha bizonyos fokon túl bizalmas barátoddal szemben. De viszont azért, bármi felmerült, Anyuval és velem mégis csak megbeszéltétek minden fontos dolgot. Nem mindig azért, hogy véleményünket vaktában elfogadd, hanem az értekezés tisztázása érdekében.. Van-e ottan alkalmaid ilyesmire? - Az is eszembe jut, hogy állásod elfoglalása előtt, igazgatód mily kedves volt veled és hogy házába is meghívott. Volt-e folytatása ennek a relációknak? - Magunkról egészségi tekintetben csak a legjobbat jelenthetem. Lelkiileg persze súlyosan nyomasztanak a történések urbi et orbi. De azért változatlanul igyekszünk minden pillanatnak leszakasztani virágját. Egy-egy Országházkávéházbeli kártyacsata részemre mindmáig megőrizte varázsát és a gyakori olaszfasori bridgeösszejöveteleket Anyu is szívesen látogatja, főleg Ilonka néninél, hol a kaja és pia mindenkor kárpótol egyes más körzetekből idekerült koczajátékosok játékhibáiért. István pedig időnkint oly lelkes hangulatban tér haza egy-egy hangversenyről, hogy nem tudok eléggé csodálkozni a zene lenyűgöző hatásán. Egyébként a gyerekek megint rendben dolgozik a gyárban. Ő sem sokkal közlékenyebb, mint te voltál hajdanában és így pontos részleteket nem tudok arról, hogy mit csinál és mit tanul. De néha beszédes hangulatban mesél egyet-mást és ilyenkor örömmel látom, hogy tud figyelni, megfigyelni és gondolkodni. - Anyu és a magam idejét és figyelmét most már majdnem kizárólag a küszöbön álló hurczolkodás és kapcsolt részel veszik igénybe. Persze az orosz-lánrész a strapából, szokott módon Anyué, ki lehetőleg mindent maga végez-ne. Alig sikerül őt néha visszatartani, hogy tulzásba ne vágja a dolgot. A lakás e hét eleje óta már csatátérhez hasonlít, különösen mióta, ma délután a szállító elárasztott bennünket csomagoló ládákkal. Holnaphoz egy hétre hagyjuk el a Vérmező-utat. A holmi a szállító telepére megy zárt butoros kocsikban és ott rostokol majd, míg körülbelül egy hónap múlva bemehetünk majd az új lakásba. Időközben Anyu Liviéknél fog lakni, magam Ilonka vendége leszek. István elszállásolása tekintetében még nem döntöttünk. Most Wienerék vannak előtérben, kiknél alkalmasint lesz egy megürülő szoba. /Ugyanis kettőt kénytelenek kiadni, a terményüzlet mostani helyzete miatt./ - Persze, minthogy lényegesen kisebb lakásba megyünk, sok mindent nem vihetünk magunkkal. Néhány butordarabot és vagy 150-200 bric-a-brac-tárgyat stb. igyekszünk eladni. Utóbiáknak most meglehetősen keletjük van és reméljük, hogy a jövő hó elején esedékes Ernst-aukcióon sikerül majd oly árakat elérnünk, hogy a hurczolkodási, stb. költségeken felül marad még egy summa pénz, miből elsősorban István nagyobb hozzájárulást kapna motorkerékpár vételére. Tényleg munkahelyére való költözkedés, pláne az új lakásból, elég időtrábló és drága dolog, úgy hogy a motor nem volna luxus. - Az eladásra kerülő holmi kívül ausmistolunk sok minden egyebet, főleg a könyv- és irattárból. Persze fontos dolgokat megőrzünk, de elavult dolgokat, régi levelezéseket és hasonlókat kénytelenek vagyunk elpusztítani, mert nem lesz hely elraktározásukra. A te dolgod közül is sok esik áldozatul, mihez utólagos jóváhagyásodat reméljük. Például fényképfelvételeid egyrésze, Metallokratok másolatai, relikviam-tananyagod és hasonlók kerültek a kazánba - Közgazdasági könyveidet, különböző dolgozataidat azonban megőrizzük. Hát ha egyszer majd elküldhetjük ezeket neked. - Tegnap voltam a Leányvásár-film egy felvéte-

nél. Az érdekeltek szerint remek lesz a film, az azonban amit én láttam, igazán nem mutat erre. Sőt, ha tekintetbe veszem, hogy ötlétem 1 és fél órája alatt csak annyi került felvételre, amit 1 és fél percz alatt vetithetnek vászonra, egész hihetetlennek látszik, hogy a mű valaha is is elkészüljön. De azt mondják, hogy ez mindig így van és hogy a laikus mindig oly hitetlen, mint amilyen én voltam. - A stúdióba kivitt engem Martos Iván, ki magával hozta hivatalbeli kollegáját és intim barátját, Kálmán Bandit is, ki persze melegen érdeklődött irántad. Ő egyelőre rendben megvan régi állásában. Tőle hallom, hogy szegény Fónagy Miki még mindig beteg és jelenleg a János-kórházban van. - Most figyelmeztet Anyu, hogy az előző oldalon egy-két, nem egészen irodalmi szólásmódot használtam, ami arra vezetendő vissza, hogy igen gyakran hallok ilyeneket Istvántól. Remélem, hogy a cenzor nem fog fennakadni ezeken a dolgokon és minden - esetre a jövőben jobban fogok vigyázni arra, hogy ne térjek el az irodalmi nyelvtől semmiben sem. - E levelet két példányban küldöm. A második rendes pótával megy. Csókollak fiacskám ezerszer



Drága fiacskám,

ne gondold, hogy a hurcolkodással olyan sokat vesződöm, mint Apu mindig, inkább csak hadvezéri teendőkre szorítkozom: a jó öreg Rézit és egyéb segéderőket dirigálok, valamint a batorok leendő elhelyezésén töröm a fejemet Katóval együtt, aki megfelelő mérték szerint kivágta papírból az egyes tárgyak apró modelljét és ezeket tologatjuk a tervrajzon ide-oda. Szóval szerencsére meglehetősen elfoglalja gondolatainkat ez a hurcolkodás, ami nem rossz dolog. Közben a gellérthegy-i tartózkodást nyaralás gyanánt fogom felfogni s azt hiszem ez egészen kellemes lesz. A Budakeszi-uti lakás is kellemes lesz nyáron; szép balkonunk, ha nem is olyan nagy, mint a mostani, de legalább zöld fákra néz, két nagy fenyőfa áll mellette őrt és arraféle mégis csak nagyon jó és nem városi a levegő. Azóta sem találtunk volna megfelelőbb lakást, sőt ilyent sem. Hihetetlen lakáshiány van annak ellenére, hogy igen sokat építenek, sokkal többet, mint két évvel ezelőtt, és pedig majdnem csupa öröklakásos házat. Ez a máti ötlétedkor fellendülni kezdő tőkebefektetési forma példátlan lendületet vett azóta. A Svábhegyen most már vagy hét óriási öröklakásos szállodaszerű ház áll és még egyre újabbakat és újabbakat építenek. A Lágymányoson egész új városrész épül ilyen házakból, a Csalogány-uccában most egyszerre épül vagy négy, a Rózsadombon szintén egy csomó és másutt is - persze megfelelően emelkedő árakon, minthogy az építkezés, minden egyébben arányban, szörnyen megdrágult. Pali bácsi is újra spekulál azon, hogy Filér-uccai telkünkön létrehozzon ilyesmit; persze ott közlekedés hiányában nagyon nehéz. A barack, köszönöm kérdésedet, múlt évben katasztrofálisan rosszul termett, ami annál is fájdalmasabb, mert országsszerte remek baracktermés volt; az idén gyönyörűen virágzik, de hogy szüretig mi lesz vele, az más kérdés. Azért a kompót az idén is nagyszerű volt, tegnap este ettük meg az utolsót. De jobb lenne, ha öröklakások teremnének rajta a telken, az bizonyos. - Örülök, hogy a dunai képeket el tudtad helyezni és a cikknek szóló dicséret is jól esett. Most persze nem csinálunk semmit; nekem is ma dolgom van, Bandi nagyon el van foglalva új fényképezési üzletével, főleg azonban a képekbe, portóba, stb. való befektetés nem gyümölcsöztethető a jelen pénzáttalalási viszonyok miatt. Én még csak hajlandó lennék a majdan jövedelem reményében némi befektetést eszközölni, főleg munka terén, de Bandi nem - talán neki van igaza, főleg minthogy ő e percben jobban tudja munkáját gyümölcsöztetni. No, majd ha rendben leszünk a lakással, meglásuk, milyen a helyzet és a lehetőségek. - Isten áldjon meg, drága fiacskám, ölellek ezerszer és nagyon-nagyon remélem, hogy továbbra is jól és rendben megdolgod.



Sohasem tudni, mikor vész el egy-két levél, tehát még egyszer ideírom leendő címünket: XII., Budakeszi-ut 14/F.

May 4th, 1941

My darling boy,

As you can see from the heading, I have started upon my holiday at the Leopolds' hospitable home and am relaxing to my heart's content after the somewhat strenuous and very exciting "flitting" that took place yesterday. The weather is just as cold, stormy and disgusting as it was when we moved into Vörmező-ut six years ago, but fortunately no one is ill this time, on the contrary: we are all perfectly fit and everybody congratulates me on my looking so well. The special excitement was due to the fact that at the last moment we found, quite accidentally, another flat which would suit our purposes far better than the one at Budakeszi-ut, and we are making every effort to get it, and hand over the one we have already taken, to someone else, but we are encountering difficulties but and will probably have to move in to Budakeszi-ut after all. The flat we are trying to get hold of is in Keleti Károly-uca, a far better location; it is more roomy and convenient in every way, has two rooms and two small balconies on the sunny side and a huge covered terrace, twice the size of our balcony on Vörmező-ut, opening out of the third room overlooking the gardens at the back, - and last not least, it is considerably cheaper than the other proposition. We could come to terms with the present tenant but the landlord is not willing to agree to this transaction; now we are trying to persuade him by various ways and means. If we succeed, we can easily get rid of the first flat we have taken, seeing that there is such a shortage in flats, but I expect the end will be that we shall have to stick to Budakeszi-ut and move in in about four weeks' time, since the house isn't finished yet. So you see there was plenty to get excited about. Add to it the usual thrills of packing and preparing, enhanced by the fact that all our stuff - there were forty trunks and packing-cases over and move the furniture - did not find room in two vans and a few things had to stay over the week-end in the flat we were quitting, and the new tenant made a hell of a fuss about it; and the circumstance that the three of us went our three different ways, - and you will understand that I now enjoy the well-ordered peace and comfort of Aunt Livia's household to the full. Father is equally comfortable at Aunt Ilonka's, and as for Stephen, he is having the time of his life as an independent and grown-up boarder at the well-furnished room to himself. Our little housemaid has gone home to Ság for a holiday or to himself. Our little housemaid has gone home to Ság for a holiday or I need her, so everything is settled quite satisfactorily. To-day the rest of the family are here for dinner, to-morrow we are all having dinner at the Baloghs, so we meet frequently enough and are none the less for this brief irregularity in our domestic life.

Excuse messy condition of this letter: Aunt Livia's seldom-used typewriter has wrought havoc with the air mail stationery, but I am not going to re-write it. A copy of this goes to Kitty, in order to give her an idea of our domestic adventures.

No news from you since your letter of March 15th, but that is nothing to complain about: I hope all goes well with you and things continue to be satisfactory. Last week we received a number of copies of "Pix", with January and February dates: considering that they come by surface mail and are delayed by the censure, that is not so bad. We greatly enjoy looking at them, especially the bathing beauties which /or should I say who?/ are quite exceptionally good-looking and admired by everybody who enjoys the privilege of seeing the paper. Considering that few overseas papers now find their way to us, you can imagine with what delight all our friends grab "Pix" whenever they can get hold of a copy.

Here things go on much as usual. We no longer have black-outs /they only lasted about a fortnight/, and this week, on the occasion of the annual Fair, even the neon lights and floodlights are in full blast, curfew is two hours later than usual, and a good many people have come from the provinces and the neighbouring countries in spite of transport restrictions. If you took a stroll in the city these days you would not perceive any difference between what it is now and what it was two years ago. Apart from the actual events of the war, even the subjects of conversation remain the same, only more so, that is all. So you can imagine more or less not only our everyday doings but also our thoughts. All the same, I'd give a great deal to be able to talk everything over with you, or even to write you a letter without any repressions and considerations. It cramps my style to keep thinking of all that had better be left unsaid. Silly of me, for what really matters is our personal life, and we can tell each other all about, ~~that~~ still, a real "outpouring" would be a treat. Well, never mind, the time will come for it some day.
that.

On the occasion of our flitting we had Mr Galambos in to dismantle the electric fittings. He told me that two of his sons are married, your classmate Béla is the proud father of a four months old daughter. Both boys are in the merchant navy and the youngest is now doing his military service. I think these are the only acquaintances of yours of whom I have any special news at the moment. Everybody is okay. Neither Peter nor Palkó have been called to arms. Peter has increasing difficulties with the management of the estate - most of which is still his until the autumn of this year - the latest being that the use of private motor cars /excepting those which are granted a special permit/ is suspended for the time being. Railway traffic being greatly reduced, this makes communication with Ság very difficult. Taxis and buses continue to run, so there is no inconvenience for ordinary people like us who don't own a car.

Stephen has started rowing fairly regularly, or at least he would do so if the weather wasn't so execrable. I wonder what sort of weather you are having and whether life on the river goes on during autumn and winter. If not, what do you do with yourself in the way of exercise? Do you meet chaps from the Club off the river, too? George speaks of skiing holidays in his letters - are you thinking of anything of the sort? I expect you are due for a vacation, too - it will soon be a year since you got your job with APM. I am always thankful when I think of that chance you got, and especially now, since Radio Times has died an untimely death. This is certainly far better, and I trust you feel the same as we do from the distance.

My darling, I hope this reachesx you by some route or other - I am afraid I am a very selfish wretch, and whenever ~~there~~ a new surprise is sprung upon us in the way of war events, my first thought always is: is it likely to cut off communication between us? However, that is more than we can calculate, so the only thing I can do is to speed this letter on its way, trusting to our good luck that has held so far. God bless you, dear - the world's best wishes and fondest love from

Of course everybody sends all sorts of love and affectionate messages.

LETTER 63 (2 parts) (TRANSLATED FROM HUNGARIAN by Katalin Gaal, August 2010)

Part A: From Grandpa in Budapest to Dad in Australia

Pongracz Janos
2nd district. Garas Street 5.
Budapest, Hungary
1941 May 13

My dear son! It's already been three weeks since we have heard from you, the Nandors also didn't get anything since then, but I understand that there has been some post from Australia. It's all very unpredictable. The letters are all over the place even from the US.

In the meantime our lives are pretty eventful. As you can see from our letter – if you had access to it – we left Vermezo Street on the 3rd of this month. Mum lives at Somlo Street, Istvan with the Wieners on Vilmos-Csaszar Street, and I live at the above address. All three of us are happy with our respective hosts. And it seems that the satisfaction is mutual.

Mum and I can meet quite often, we see less of Istvan. Mum wrote to you that after a long search we more or less found a suitable new place on Budakeszi Street, which is still being built and will be available to move in at the end of the month. In the meantime we tried to plan the placement of furniture on paper and we had the unpleasant surprise of discovering that it's difficult to fit our large pieces of furniture. As we became a bit disillusioned about the apartment, we started to take note of the rest of the circumstances. When we rented the place we tried to forget the fact that it's too far away, relatively expensive and may occasionally get wet etc. Therefore we didn't stop looking and – even if not full speed ahead – we kept on searching. Two options became a possibility but were dismissed, until finally three days ago in the same house where the Nandors live and which is looked after by Uncle Pali, a great apartment became vacant, or rather will become vacant on June 15. It's truly great, in almost all ways and as our various hosts are happy to extend their hospitality until the said date, we rented it.

The place consists of three rooms, a hall and a 'winter garden'. The spaces are large and airy. Transport wise it's also remarkable and on top of all things it's cheaper than the accommodation on Budakeszi Street. Therefore both Mum and I are very happy about this solution. The only comical thing is that for decades I promised not to live in a house with relatives, and now I'm caught. But we will get on just fine.

The excitement is not completely over yet as we still have to sell or return the Budakesz Street place. The first step in this regard have already been taken. This should all be worked out.

We think that perhaps you have already written to the B. Street address. When the house becomes habitable or when the janitor moves in we will ask them to send any letters arriving from you to our true address. As there have been many complications, I imagine there will be more, for instance that the old tenant may not move out on the 15th etc, or that we may

find something better, I don't consider this address final until we actually move in. So until finalising things, address your letters to 2nd district, Margit Boulevard 5 but write underneath addressee Nandor Pal. That way we will definitely get it.

I must write about something painful. The poor head doctor has died suddenly. His illness started about five months ago in the form of a flu, then became persistent bronchitis, then the doctors talked of chronic pneumonia. In the meantime the poor thing lost a lot of weight and was constantly complaining about weakness etc. Nobody in the family took this seriously and all of us teased poor Rotter that he believed he was so sick. But last week it was obvious that there's something seriously wrong and four days later the end came surprisingly [quick]. That's when the doctors told us that they knew from the beginning that the poor thing had lung cancer and was terminal. Through their warm friendship and acuity they were able to keep the truth from the patient, and the environment which was good for everyone. Auntie Piczus endures this adversity with her usual calmness and wisdom. The condolence that was given was also touching. Can you write to her a few lines as well? (Mrs Rotter Henrik (Dr) 2nd district, Olasz Avenue 51). Mum and I are honestly sorry,

(rest of letter missing)

Part B: From Grandma to Dad in Australia

(First part of letter missing)

...she asks news about his well being. As far as I know the boy is a photographer and according to his relatives living here he is doing well. His stepfather is Auntie Borbas Stefi's brother, consequently he is Dad's distant relative and he was very helpful in placing Istvan as a car mechanic, so I would be very happy if I can return the favour by providing news to his wife – who is lovely – about their son.

Otherwise our days flow in the usual channels. One can see much trouble, problems and seriously changed life conditions already, there's even more fear about future trouble but so far there's little change in our immediate circle of family and friends. We have very good news about Cicus but many are facing serious hardship over there.

Yesterday afternoon six women played bridge at my place with such persistence that two of them stayed until midnight. I'm not complaining - only telling you so you can see that we are happily getting by. It's true that due to some players' unstable financial position our stakes are so low that we can hardly count the small pieces of filler but I think you will approve of this. Otherwise our days are spent well as I had some translation work, and Dad was typing the written document as quickly as possible; if one has urgent tasks to complete they are likely to think less, which is a great blessing.

I think about you a great deal and I try to imagine what you do, how the room and office look where you spend the majority of your time (I can imagine the river as I saw it on film!), what your colleagues are like and the people you have daily contact with; what you read, your thoughts and future plans, how you see the future, all things which I am unlikely to get answers for, but it feels good to play around with these thoughts. I confess that at bed time, before I fall asleep, I imagine such a beautiful fairytale about you which I imagined for years in my childhood about an imagined family; I imagined that in a modified and idealised form similar things happened as to us.

The Australian pictures haven't been published anywhere yet, at the moment the papers are filled with other things. It's interesting that in the middle of the war Jacobi Jolan's book in the field of psychoanalysis which was published last year in Switzerland has been signed up by six countries and the English edition is already being printed! In contrast no one seems to want Sonja Kovalevska.

I hug you, my dear son, a thousand times

Mum

Drága Fiacskám! Már vagy három hete vagyunk hír nélkül felőled, Nándorék sem kaptak semmit sem ugyanennyi ideje, míg más oldalról úgy értesülök, hogy közben érkezett ausztráliai pósta. De hát mindez teljesen kiszámíthatatlan. Még U.S.A.-ból is annyira össze-vissza jönnek a levelek, hogy csuda. - Nekünk közben elég mozgalmas az életünk. Mint legutolsó levelünk-ből, ha ugyan időközben kezeidhez jutott- kitűnik, e hó 3.-án elhagytuk a Vérmező-utat. Anyu a Somlói-uton lakik, István Wieneréknél a Vilmos - császár-uton, magam pedig fenti czim alatt élek. Mindhárman felette meg vagyunk elégedve respektív házigazdáinkkal. Az illetők pedig, legalább is úgy tesznek, mint ha a megelégedés kölcsönös volna. - Emellett Anyuval elég sűrűn tudok találkozni, István peresze ritkábban látjuk. - Anyu megírta hogy hosszas keresés után találtunk félig-meddig megfelelő lakást a Budakeszi uton, mely azonban még csak épül és alkalmasint csupán a hó vége felé lesz elfoglalható. Közben persze igyekeztünk az új lakást papíron berendezni és azt a kellemetlen felfedezt tettük, hogy nehezen tudunk benne nagy butorainkkal elhelyezkedni. Minthogy ez által meglehetősen elment kedvünk a lakástól, az egyéb körülmények is fokozottan eltérbe léptek. Mikor kibéreltük a lakást, igyekeztünk megelégedezni arról, hogy messze van, aránylag drága, alkalmasint nedves lesz stb. Így nem hagytuk abba teljesen a lakáskeresést és - ha nem is teljes gőzzel - de tovább kutattunk. Fel is merült és megsemmisült közben két kombináció, míg végre három napja abban a házban, melyben Nándorék laknak és melyet Pali bácsi kezel, megürült egy remek lakás, illetve megürül per június 15. Tényleg remek, majdnem minden tekintetben és minthogy különböző jelenlegi házigazdáink készek a vendéglátást a mondott időpontig kiterjeszteni, tegnap kibéreltük. A lakás három szobából, hallból és télikertből áll. A helyiségek tágasak és levegős. Közlekedés szempontjából is nagyszerű a hely és mindezen felül még olcsóbb is a lakás a Budakeszi-utinál. Így tehát Anyu is, magam is, nagyon boldogak vagyunk e megoldás okából. A komikus csak az, hogy évtizedeken keresztül fogadkoztam, hogy nem megyek oly házba, melyben rokon lakik, most pedig nyakig benne leszünk. De hát egészen jól meg fogunk férni. - Az izgalmaknak még nem vagyunk azért egészen a végén, mert hiszen hátra van még a Budakeszi-uti lakás tovább- vagy visszaadása. Az első lépések már megtörténtek e tekintetben. Majd csak rendbe jön ez is. - Arra is gondolunk, hogy netán már irtál a B.-uti czimre. Majd ha a ház lakható lesz, illetve, ha majd már lesz benne házmester, odaszólunk, hogy netán odaérkező leveleket továbbítsa valódi címünkre. - Minthogy ennyi minden komplikáció már adódott, gondolok arra, hogy továbbiak is előfordulhatnak, pld., hogy a régi lakó esetleg nem megy ki pont 15.-én stb., vagy hogy közben akad valami ami nekünk még jobb volna, még ezt a címet sem tekintem véglegesnek mindaddig, míg nem vagyunk tényleg bent a lakásban. Így tehát, további intézkedésig, csak ezimezd leveleidet II. Margit-körut 15. alá, azonban c/o Nándor Pál. Így mindenkép megkapjuk. - Egy fájdalmas esetről is kell, hogy hírt adjak. Szegény Főorvos Úr váratlanul meghalt. Vagy öt hónapja kezdődött betegsége, influenza képeben, majd konok bronchitist, krónikus pneumoniát mondtak a doktorok. Nagyon lefogyott közben szegény és állandóan panaszkodott gyengeségről stb. Senki a családból nem vette komolyan a dolgot és nagyon huztuk szegény Rottert valamennyien, hogy ennyire odaadja magát annak, hogy ő komolyan beteg. De a múlt héten már látszott, hogy tényleg valami komolyabb bajról lehet szó és négy nap előtt azután meglepetésszerűen bekövetkezett a vég. Ekkor mondták meg az orvosok, hogy ők kezdettől fogva tudták, hogy szegénynek tudásukja van és menthetetlen. Nagy baráti szeretettel és ügyeskedéssel végig tudták eltitkolni a valóságot úgy a beteg, mint környezete előtt, amivel mindenkinek csak jót tettek. - Piczus néni a megszokott nyugalommal és bölcsességgel viseli a csapást. A megnyilatkozó általános részvét is nagyon jól esik neki. Te is írd neki pár sort. /Dr. Rotter Henrikné, II. Olasz fasor 51./ Anyu és magam is őszintén gyá -

felőle, a te réveden kér értesítést hogylétéről. A fiu ugy tudom fényképezés és itteni rokonai értesülése szerint jól megy dolga. Mostohaapja Borbás Stefi néni fivére, ennél fogva Apunak is távoli rokona s legutóbb István auto-szakmabeli elhelyezése körül igen kedvesen fáradozott, tehát annál inkább örülnék, ha viszonzhatnám azt a szivességet azzal, hogy - egyébként nagyon kedves - feleségének hirt tudjak adni a fiáról.

Egyébként napjaink a megszokott mederben folynak. Sok bajt, gondot, súlyosan megváltozott életkörülményt lát az ember már most is, még több a jövő bajoktól való félelem, de közvetlen rokon és baráti körünkben egyelőre kevés a változás. Cicusékról is elég jó hireink vannak személy szerint, bár arrafelé igen sokan kerültek most nagyon súlyos helyzetbe.

Tegnap déu. hat nő bridgezett nálam olyan kitartóan, hogy kettő belőle egész éjjelig itt maradt. Nem panaszképen mondom, csak azért, hogy lásd, azért egész derűsen megvagyunk. Igaz, hogy egyesek zilált anyagi körülményeire való tekintettel olyan alacsonyan játszunk, hogy alig lehet a fillér-törtéket kiszámítani a végén, de azt hiszem ezt csak helyeselni fogod. Egyébként is mostanában igen jól teltek napjaink, mert volt egy kis fordítási munkám, Apu pedig görcsösen gépelte a kéziratot, s ilyenkor, ha az embernek sürgős dolga van, kevesebbet törli a fejét egyéb dolgokon, ami nagy áldás.

Rengeteget gondolok rád s igyekszem elképzelni, mit csinálsz, hogy néz ki a szoba s az iroda, ahol időd legnagyobb részét töltöd /a folyót inkább el tudom képzelni, mert azt láttam filmen/, milyenek kollégáid s az emberek, akikkel naponta érintkezel; mit olvasol, milyen gondolatokkal és tervekkel foglalkozol, milyennek látod a jövőt. Csupa olyan dolog, amire nehezen fogok valaha is választ kaphatni, de jól esik játszani ezekkel a gondolatokkal és megvallom, hogy lefekvéskor, mielőtt elalszom, néha már olyan szép folytatásos mesét képzelek el rólad, amelyet gyerekkoromban éveken keresztül szőttem egy képzeletbeli családról, amely lyel mindig módosított és idealizált formában olyasmi történt, ami velünk.

Az ausztráliai képek még nem jelentek megsehol, most egyéb dolgokkal töltik meg a lapokat. Érdekes, hogy Jacobi Jolán könyvét, egy psychoanalitikai témáról szóló tanulmányt, mely tavaly Svájcban jelent meg, hat ország számára lekötötték és az angol kiadást már nyomják is - a háború kellős közepén! Ezzel szemben Sonja Kovalevska a kutyának se kel

Ölellek, drága fiacskám, ezerszer

Katalin

23rd June 1941

My darling boy, my dear children,

I was sitting at breakfast on the balcony of our new flat for the very first time when Kitty's cable arrived. "John Powell engaged to Australian Jean Middleton same age tall fair unsophisticated sex he - his charming letter follows" was what she said. I wonder whether you can imagine what it feels like to receive such a piece of news - to know that one's child, dearest and closest to one in spite of terrific distance, so far away that one can do nothing to make him happy and safe, has found what is the most precious thing in the world - a companion for life, a being to whom he belongs and who belongs to him, someone who stands by him through thick and thin, who anchors him to the life he has chosen. I can't tell you how glad and happy I am - and Father feels exactly the same way. We both know that in good times and bad, whatever life may bring, there is nothing more valuable than to have someone who is truly close to one, someone who understands and who belongs - and I cannot tell you how grateful we both are that you have found her. God bless you both, my dears, and give you joy and happiness, contentment and success, pleasures and prosperity - but above all, may you always be happy in each others' company, may you always find in each other that mutual understanding, that sharing of all things, that generosity and appreciation of one another that makes marriage worthwhile. My dear boy, I have such unlimited confidence in you that I knew you will make a good husband, and I am quite sure that you have chosen well. To-day it is only on the grounds of this confidence, Jean dear, that we welcome you with all our hearts as a dear daughter - but soon, I hope, we shall know a little more about you, dear tall, fair, unsophisticated daughter, than the mere fact that you exist and that you are going to be John's wife - yet that alone suffices to make us glad and to kindle a feeling of warm affection towards you in our hearts.

It is just two years - it will be two years ago on the day after to-morrow, to be quite exact - since you left, John dear, and although we have never for a moment ceased to think that it was all for the best, yet it is an immense relief to know that you are no longer alone in that part of the world, that you have now really found a home - a very happy and contented home, I firmly hope and trust. You are very young, but that is all to the good - we have always looked upon you as a completely grown-up being since you were eighteen, and that is why I am sure you are acting wisely and well. It is good to think that in that far and remote world you and Jean are going to build a happy and peaceful haven for yourselves, and I hope and pray that it may remain remote from the crazy convulsions of this hemisphere.

We cabled to wish you joy - I hope the cable will reach you in due course; and of course now we are counting the days until the letter announced by Kitty ~~hasn't~~ she a dear to send that cable? arrives. Needless to say, beside the happy emotion aroused by your news, we are immensely thrilled too, and dying to know more about Jean and about your plans. Letters take such an unconscionably long time that maybe by the time you get this you are married already - married! All the same, it takes a bit of imagining - only yesterday you were a kid, and here you are about to set up as a serious husband. Well, it's no good trying to picture you married: there are too many details to be filled in. Please write as much as ever you can; Jean dear, you would make us very happy if you, too, would write - every little detail that may seem insignificant to you is of the greatest interest to us. I am terribly grieved that I can send you nothing at

present, but there is no way of doing so. I keep tidying cupboards and putting away things and thinking all the time: would Jean like this, or would that fit into their home? Yet I know nothing of how you are going to live, how you will manage things, what your life is going to be like. We firmly hope that one day we may ~~find out~~ see for ourselves exactly what the home and the life of Mr and Mrs John Powell is going to be like - but meanwhile write and tell us as much as you possibly can - provided always that we can keep up a certain amount of correspondence.

Of course everybody to whom we have imparted this sensational piece of news is thrilled - first and foremost the family, Leopolds, Baloghs, Nandors and all the rest who all send you their heartiest congratulations and good wishes. Stephen, who found Kitty's cable when he came in from work and neither Father nor I were at home, was greatly ~~amused~~ thrilled and inquired through the bathroom door, when I came in, what I should say if he walked in with a bride one day - he is very curious about his sister-in-law and greatly approves of the "tall and fair", those attributes meeting his own taste.

Your news, my dears, makes all other thrills appear insignificant - even the outbreak of the Russo-German war claims a smaller share in our conversation than it otherwise would. Even the moving into the new flat with all the upheavals incidental to it has receded into the background, and I am in less of a hurry to get the house in order, having other and happier thoughts to occupy my mind. However, we are getting on, and the flat is really very nice indeed - it has only the one drawback that it is almost as big as our last one - minus your room - and involves a lot of housework. But our maid and all the ~~auxiliaries~~ auxiliaries who have been called in, are enthusiastic about it because it is so clean and new and has all the modern improvements, although some of the latter ~~are~~ aim at too great perfection and fall short of it in consequence. For instance, it's lovely to have such a lot of windows, but a number of them are entirely impracticable, being too heavy and complicated to open; some of the roller blinds, covering several windows, weigh about a ton and are far too weighty to operate, etc. But these are minor details to which one must grow accustomed; on the whole the flat is really beautiful, spacious and comfortable and we are all very pleased with it. How I wish I could show you two round it!

The books are still heaped up topsy-turvy, some of the cupboards need to be turned out again to be tidied, but we'll have ~~everything~~ thing straight by the end of this week. And then I'll have little else to do but to wait for your letters and to speculate upon your doings. Well, that's merely a *façon de parler*, you know I always have other things to do, but certainly we think and talk of nothing ~~as much~~ as much as of you and Jean.

Once more, God bless you, ~~my~~ dears - all fondest love and good wishes to both of you

Mother

My dear children, I once wrote to John that reading his letters I always feel as if the stories told in them wouldn't tell of his doings and feelings but of my own achievements, enabling me thus to live a second youthtime. Nothing could increase this feeling more than your engagement. Through this happy event it is now myself who ~~unhappily~~ gloriously feels like a bridegroom and not as dignified as it becomes to a father-in-law. Thanks to both of you for the awfully good time I enjoy now, for making me young again! God bless you! Love

John

Hallo, Jean, John, congratulation!

Jean, I hope to hear more details about you. Please learn quickly Hungarian, because, I want to congratulate you in my *mother*

language.

John

March 30th, 1943.

My Darling Children,

About ten days ago I was awfully glad to receive your December message bringing happy news. Especially excited did I become through the tidings concerning Baby's progress in life. As far as I am able to reconstruct bygone days I remember the time when you, my dear boy, got your first teeth and began to babble. It was an event of utmost importance and I presume you consider Little Ginger's similar activities in a similar manner. I am sure, I do it. I am surrounded by a lot of grandparents who are always full of details concerning their grandchildren and I resented very much to be obliged to refrain from partaking in the conversation having no material to boast of. Now I am as pleased as Punch. Everybody whom it may concern or not, is bound to listen. God bless little Susy. And let me hope that you my dear Jean and John are happy and contented also in every other respect.

Thanks for remembering the present day though it is not a too great pleasure to arrive at ~~the~~ one's birthday when it is the 63rd. But nevertheless I am grateful to you and also to the fact that I feel physically nearly quite well, in any case far more so than most of my contemporaries. The cataract on my right eye I did mention in a previous letter is still in the same state it was. Just yesterday I visited my ophthalmologist he still refuses to operate on it. I am to show up again in two months. In the mean time this ailment doesn't hinder me in anything. - Sometimes my feet give me some trouble but of minor importance, anything else functions in a quite satisfactory way. Stephen, though lean, is quite a strong man and does not miss an opportunity to train his muscles. Now with Spring arrived, he goes hiking every Sunday always causing a lot of trouble to his good father. He never gives me an itinerary beforehand and so I never know at what hour of the night he is expected to be back. I, for my part, do not worry if he is not

in right time for supper, I am already accus -
to his ways. But the parents of those boys
girls he takes with himself, are not and as
as it gets dark, one after the other starts
ing me up several times during an evening,
complaining that their offsprings are not yet at
home. All my gift of persuasion is needed to keep
them calm. - On the other hand Stephen, in most
ways, Stephen developped into a very decent boy
and gives me much pleasure and confidence in his
future.

The 1st fortnight brought the first anniversary
of your good Mother's death and her first birthday
after her passing away. You, my dear boy, you know
quite well that I don't feel very sentimentally
in connexion with dates. For me each day is an
aniversary and every day, rising in the morning,
I feel Mother's absence as if she her death had
occured the previous one. Always and in evefthing I
do, I miss her terribly and you far away and Stephen
being still a child in some respects there is nobody
with whom I could really ease my feelings. But on
the other hand, don't think that I should feel con-
stantly mournful. The memory of Mother doesn't
lead me t his way; before my eyes I have not a pic -
ture of her last weeks. I see her mentally always
as she was in her prime, radiant with kindness,
with wisdom, with humour, helpful and good. And
with this picture before me I must always smile
through the inwardly shed tears. Accordingly my
style of life is a quite normal one and the kindness
of our friends is a great help in every way.
Just a few days before ~~xxxx~~ the 12th the gravestone
I ordered already in July got ready. Perhaps you
remember the stone on your Grandfather's tomb. It
is a low slab with a bouquet of palm leaves and roses
an haut relief the design of which was made by Uncle
Oliver. Mother liked this stone very much and so I
did put on her grave a replica of the same. The on-
ly difference is that the original material ~~was~~ ^{is} not
available and so I had to accept an other of a more
rough structure. But nevertheless the stone looks
very decent and when an other year passes by the
developing patina will do the rest.
Of our relatives and friends everybody is all right
and they constantly urge me to give you their love.

174
Doing this now I avail myself of an opportunity of sending you a letter which I am hopeful that it will reach you. In the same way I did send you some others in the previous months but I don't think that it will be possible to do so now for a long period. If there are means and ways I won't miss them, you may be sure. On the other hand I hope that you also will find some opportunity to write to me more fully than it is possible through the medium of the Red Cross.

However, my thoughts are constantly with you. With thousand kisses for each of you I am your affectionate

Jash

December 22nd 1942.

My darling children,

Since your message September 1st no news from you. Day for day I am anxiously awaiting the arrival of the postman and I trust one of these days he will have again something to cheer me up. In the meantime I am picturing out for myself your life which I hope is rather satisfactory. I presume the new address means that you did find at last the house you searched since your marriage. I take it for standing in nice surroundings, in the midst or at least in the neighbourhood of rich vegetation and that the perambulator of little Susan is constantly to be seen in some nearby park as yours, my boy, was 27 years ago in the "Major". This brings me to think of your recent birthday which gave us occasion to empty a few tumblerfuls of wine. The mute toasts which accompanied the performance spoke of all our love and good wishes for the three of you, for your welfare and prosperity. How glad I should feel to have details concerning that makes up your life. How is John getting on with his work? Did he get promotion and does he earn enough to make your life as comfortable as I wish it to be. And doesn't Jean work her fingers to the bone with all the different jobs of the household and of motherhood. And how is little Susan developing? I don't remember quite well how it was when John and Stephen were babies, but I presume that at the time these lines may reach you, i.e. in March, when Susan will be nearly a full year old, she may be able already to produce a lot of tricks, like stammering, crawling on the floor and putting things in her mouth which she ought not to. And does she show any resemblance to anybody and a thousand other things would be of the greatest importance for me if I only could get the information. But probably I won't get it still for quite a time and so I must be unpretentious. As for ourselves, we are quite all right. Stephen

+ every day

is now a grown-up man and behaves as such a one - in most respects. He works hard at the workshop and in the evenings is attending his engineering-school. Especially drawings give him a lot of trouble, but he manages it however. He is very much interested besides technical problems with literature, music, sports etc. He has some nice friends both male and female and is very often at Csacsy's. At the present time Stephen feels cross with Nature there being no snow at all. But I am proud to say that I succeeded in getting a close friend of Stephen myself. No trace anymore of the quarrels we used to have at every meal. On the contrary it makes now things easier for me to talk them over with him.

The condition of my health is nearly perfect. No troubles of any sort with the exception of a cataract that I am developing on my right eye. It will be cured by a very slight operation at a moment which is not yet to be foreseen. The devilry of the affair is that the cataract can only be operated when it is sufficiently ripe and one must patiently await this ripening. In the mean time you can't do anything about it. On the other hand the whole thing does not give any trouble. Reading, writing etc. are not in the least disturbed. And the operation itself is of no significance, so please don't be excited about it.

Besides all that we are living quite comfortably. Our flat is really most agreeable and we are now very well cared for as our old Ilona, Mrs. Hideg, came back to us. You remember her as being a first rate housekeeper and cook. Of course she sends her greetings.

In cases which are above Ilona's competence, Aunt Irma gives us any help that is required. I can't tell you how much I am indebted to her for all the trouble she takes for us.

Of course, in spite of everything that concerns our bodily needs, my life is overshadowed by the memory of Mother's tragedy. And especially thinking about last X-mas and New Year's Eve is extremely sad. How flourishing and gay she was at this season of a year ago. And with what a tremendous speed did her ailment work only a few weeks later. But it is always a comfort for me that her sufferings were only

1347
short and that in my inside sight she lives not as an invalid but as the vigorous, smart, ~~xxxxxxx~~ healthy companion of my life that she was even at the time of her operations. Her wit, her humour her good heart never failed her. And so does her memory live not only with us but with all her friends. When I visit Mother's grave there are always flowers to be found which were not brought by me.

Our near relations and friends are mostly all right. Only Palkó's and Charlie Bein's absence are the perpetual cause of excitement. May God help them. That we lost half a year ago good Aunt Rosa is probably already known by you. I miss her terribly. She was a good friend of mine since my childhood and my Sunday mornings are empty now at the hours I used to spend with her since years.

Just a few days ago there were news from Emazi. She and her family seem to be quite all right. She asked for your address which will be given her. But in case you want to write her which, I am sure, would give her much pleasure, here is her address : Mr. Francis Beer, c/o. Beardmore & Co., Acton, Ont., Canada.

At the same time I got a Red Cross message from Kitty, dated May 23rd, the first since Mother's passing away, of which she was already aware when she wrote. She points out that Mother was her dearest friend and I don't doubt that statement. I presume that you are in correspondence with her.

An other Red Cross message reached me the other day from Unce Aurel. It took also half a year to come through. The old boy declares himself to be "flourishing".

Well, my dear children, here I told you everything that can be spoken of. All the other items must be kept within me and I wonder even if these lines will reach you. Let us hope for the best.

This year the family gathered at Eva's on Christmas Eve. Her little girls are now quite important persons and very, very sweet and nice. My thoughts

short and that in my inside light she lives not
will however be constantly with you as they are
always. I wonder how little Susy is going to en-
joy her first Christmas. Give her my love and kiss
her for me a thousand times. Stephen is joining me
in this wish as a proud uncle. Both of us long
for you, my dearest children with all our love
always flowers to be found which were not brought

by me. I hope you and friends are really all
right. Only Paul's and Charlie's been a absence
are the usual cause of excitement. May God
help them. That was just half a year ago good
Aunt Rose is probably already known by you. I
miss her terribly. She was a good friend of mine
also my childhood and my Sunday mornings are
empty now at the house I used to spend with her
since years.

Just a few days ago there were news from Amelia.
She and her family seem to be quite all right.
She asked for your address which will be given
her. But in case you want to write her which I
am sure, would give her much pleasure, here is
her address: Mr. Francis West, c/o. Beardsmore &
Co., Acton, Ont., Canada.
At the same time I got a Red Cross message from
Kitty, dated May 27th, the first since Mother's
passing away, of which she was already aware
when she wrote. She points out that Mother was
her dearest friend and I don't doubt that state-
ment. I presume that you are in correspondence
with her.

Another Red Cross message reached me the other
day from Uncle Axel. It took also half a year to
come through. The old boy decides himself to be
"flowering".
Well, my dear children, here I told you everything
that can be spoken of. All the other items must
be kept within me and I wonder even if these lines
will reach you. Let us hope for the best.
This year the family gathered at Eva's on Christmas
Eve. Her little girls are now quite important per-
sons and very, very sweet and nice. My thoughts

people know about it. You'll soon find out more. I am looking forward to hearing from you how you find everybody; here all relatives are very optimistic with regard to their Australian belongings, though I suppose that all is not gold that glitters in the glamour of such a great distance. I am told that Ervin Rényi is also doing very well as a photographer in Melbourne and his wife still better as a teacher of foreign languages and doing secretarial work with prospects of fixed employment at a school as soon as she has passed an exam as a teacher of French and German.

Well, I suppose it isn't Australian news that you expect to hear from me, but there is really not much to tell about ourselves. Life runs more or less in the usual channels. This week we attended two dress rehearsals /both very poor/; our clients still buy the synopses but I'm afraid they won't subscribe next year, the output of stories being so very meagre; besides, the American companies don't seem to expect much from Europe in the next future, and I am afraid they are right. Hungarian pictures are getting to be a little better, at least technically; there is a new non-stop newsreel theatre on Erzsébet-körút opposite the Café New York, but I haven't been yet because you have to stand in a queue to get in, it's such a success: one-hour all-newsreel performances for 50 and 30 fillér admission. They are taking great care to keep the newsreel balance strictly neutral: one Allied, one German picture. Same applies to the news in the papers. - Otherwise our pastimes are pretty much what they used to be: afternoon tea at the Meklers' to-day; before-lunch beer party at the Kriztinkovichs' to-morrow /in New York they told me such an arrangement was called "bruncheon", combination of breakfast and luncheon/; Leopolds and Bárdos' coming to tea here to-morrow, with Lorant Löw and his young bride /he married, at the age of sixty, his lady friend of long standing, not very attractive/ looming also on the horizon. In between visit from Mariska Sukor to write renewed letters re her daughter's proposed trip to America /she is still here/, from Ernő Szép re translations; writing captions to the photographs of a beautiful pageant of tableaux vivants, copies of famous paintings represented by ladies of the Upper Ten, held at the Opera last night /seems it was a really gorgeous function/, - and so on and so forth. I am only telling you all this so that you may see that life goes on much as usual here, whatever may be in the offing. Of course everybody always inquires about you and sends all sorts of good wishes and greetings.

István has just turned up, very blue because to-day after days of brilliant sunshine and perfect snow, to-day of all days, being the day of the school ski "championship", which he took a lot of trouble to get going, there is a disgusting icy drizzle which froze onto his spectacles and made him blind, so that he was nowhere in the races although normally his chances would have been very good. I'm thankful that he got home with no bones broken; even the streets are so slippery to-day that the ambulances are kept busy.

Passing friends and acquaintances in review so as to give you all the news, I find that nobody seems to be either dead /except old Vészi, buried with much ado, with a very "good press"/, married, born or bankrupt. Neither does there seem to be anything particularly worth reading. If you get a chance, read "The Grapes of Wrath" by Steinbeck, who wrote "Of Mice and Men." A grand book, though certainly one of the most unpleasant ones I have read for many a day; it also serves to give one a profound disgust of the U.S.A. But "Mice and Men" was better in its way, to my mind. I got the "Grapes" as a Xmas present from Delmar, who turned up some weeks ago after months spent in Switzerland. Old Tolman still sends The Rotarian, clippings and calendars with great assiduity. You might drop him a p.c. sometime. Kitty spent six weeks in Reno getting a divorce; she is crazier than ever, writing a novel and thinking of taking over a hotel for would-be divorcées in Reno. Old Baer is still staying with his brother-in-law in the Protectorate, apparently safe and provided for, but very depressed because there is nothing he can do and he hasn't a penny, is completely dependent on this very old brother with whom he never was on good terms.

I am looking forward most tremendously to getting a letter of yours to answer. Meanwhile, all fondest love