



Wed 19

Pontoprint

Dearest F & R



Afr **POSTCARD**
for Industry in the
Highlands & Islands



It is marvellous here,
the weather perfect, the
house & surroundings simply
levely. We face on to the
sea, towards the Isle of Arran,
sea as still as a pond.

Ruby, The Double Helix block
is a treat - no dressing
up - pull phone when
returning (we had a
terrible journey here)

Lots of love

Printed & Published by G. & G. Ponton Ltd., Glasgow

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8YH

P4. CARRADALE GOLF COURSE
FROM PORT RIGH

Colour Photograph by Gibson Ponton, F.R.P.S.

Friday 11 Aug. 78

Dear Family,

Well, I've been back for nearly 2 weeks so I suppose it is time for me to write to you, but first let's sort out some problems. Enclosed slip is what I was given when they 'seized' my K13.50 - I wrote and asked for return of same, enclosing photostat of this slip. If they don't return the money, perhaps you could try again?

I've just been parcelling up and sending prints around. Could you contact Dave Olden - P.O. Box 967 - and tell him I found a copy of Vanishing Herds which he can have if he still wants it. I can't remember whether he paid or not, I think not, as I have no note of it. Does he want it kept, and sent to Edinburgh address he gave me in Jan 79? Most important is that after parcelling up all the prints for the Curragh Dave, I found I'd chucked the address away to which he wanted them sent - somewhere in Ireland. They are all waiting here, if you send me the address, I'll post them - as soon as possible please, as it isn't good for them to be rolled up too long. (That'll force you to write, ha,ha.)

I had a marvellous time in Nairobi, by great good luck ended up staying with a woman I hadn't met before, but who was very good to me and even lent me her car so that I could drive up the Rift valley and see the birds on those lakes I've always wanted to see, a fabulous sight. I also went to Mombasa for 2 days, stayed at quite a cheap hotel in the centre of town. It's a tourist town, streets of shops with the same wooden animals and Khangas or Kitenges, beggars, masses of German tourists. An education inspector I met said he even thought they should make German the second language at Malindi, there are always so many Germans there. A lot of them are fat. Do you want me to send you another copy of the Biko book?

Have you had any more break-ins?

It's rained every day since I returned except today, but the weather report says more rain is on the way. Today the sun is shining. Some of my pictures really came out well. Will have prints made from slides of ~~the~~ Agnes etc, to send to you. The Olympus was good in Luangwa, but game photography needs an even more powerful lens.

Came home to find everything in a muddle. Took me ages to get re-orientated and sort myself and surroundings out. Still awfully behind with everything. Trying to do some new prints with so many other things needed. Rusty hasn't found any job. He's watching the cricket and mending things. Keith installed in flat, very nice it is, too. Doesn't seem to have a great deal of work, but is doing some writing, quite successful. Toni & family left on holiday the morning I arrived - they couldn't wait to see me, because of the French air controller strike. They were afraid they would miss their booking on the channel crossing. Toni left a note saying they're going camping! not her thing, but they've just pushed off to Europe and will go until they stop. Rusty says the house in Italy is nearly finished, and that it's beautiful. Everyone wants to go and stay in it. Frances also says it's lovely there and they enjoyed it.

Pat I forgot to tell you and Y that you must get the children to clean their teeth at night and in the morning. So far they have obviously been lucky, partly because of the shortage of sweets and chocolates in Zambia, but when they come here the trouble will start, and it is a habit that must be started and maintained. It is sheer laziness not to see that it is done, and it will not be enough to ask them 'Did you clean your teeth?' one of you must actually supervise it every night and see it is done properly. I think it was the thing I felt most surprised about, but was going to tell you before I left and then forgot. I am not just being mother-in-law-ish - it is really essential and must be done. Also I do feel that you and Y should stop talking about higher walls & ing up, break-ins, etc. Spender is extremely anxious and worried. The talk goes on continuously, while one is driving around,

observing things, and so on. You need to start playing it down. The lecture will be continued in my next letter. Wait for it!

Yvonne, you would have been delighted with the poinsettias in Nairobi - they have many more varieties than in Lusaka, and all sorts of shades of pink, peach, cream, white and so on. Kenya is very beautiful, but what a corrupt country it is! There they have shortages not because stuff is short but because the wide guys corner the market and hold things back until prices go up, and manipulate the market.

Incidentally, although I saw the pelicans and a few flamingoes, the great masses of flamingoes that everyone read about on Lake Naikuru have disappeared. They're destroying their assets as fast as they can. But the ones who get rich quickly don't care.

Please let us know what has happened about your house in Tadley and if you want Rusty to do anything, as he has the time at present and could go out there if you wished.

gorgeous books to read. Except for the heat - and the afternoons are really getting fierce - I'm quite content.

Toni, I realise you are right about the tapes, that's why I asked for more to be sent. I will repay you and Ivan when I return. As for the typing, I've written to Beryl twice and had no response, but you do have to wait weeks for answers to letters to reach us. I would prefer to get it all transcribed onto discs, because it will make the ultimate editing so much easier, but if I find out Beryl is not getting on with it, you had better get the person you know to do the tapes. Patrick has my power of attorney, and there is money in a special 'Exiles' account, so he should be able to make out cheques, or I can send a cheque from here - the bank sent me an 'Exiles' cheque book.

Ivan, please develop pictures of Kieran and Seanb and send them to me. I stick them on our walls with blue tack and it pleases me. We read Derek Malcolm's favourable view of 'Resurrected' my spellings gone haywire, it never was much good and hear that it has already won some awards. I hope it proves a success.

Keith, I can't understand about the camera. The shutter button just wouldn't depress. We loaded and unloaded it - in fact it started while there was still half an unused film in it - we read every word of the instructions, we got Toni to buy an expensive new battery (although I suspected it was not that), we checked and double checked everything. It must have been the journey to England that jugged it up. Anyway, I will have two cameras and two typewriters (your little one and mine) and two lots of art materials, because the Germans have been getting me water colour paper and paints, and by the time I get going with all these things, it will be time to leave. There are, for me, additional activities. We now have a 'literary circle' that meets every Saturday afternoon in our house and discusses and criticises poems and short stories written by the members. If you have had a book published, you are a real author, and your opinion is sought. And I've been trying to get some of the young women to have some sort of discussion circle, they are a pathetic lot, although, as always, there are a few who are more alive and interested. The trouble is that nearly every young woman under a certain age are not really South African, in the sense that they have lived all their lives outside SA and have no knowledge or interest in the politics of apartheid. They have grown up here at Mazimbu, or with their families in Zambia or Mozambique or Angola, and what they want is nice clothes, love, escape. They've never been involved in any political struggle and they don't want to be, they've never handled money, they are given all the food and clothes they need and they have not the faintest idea of what the real world is like.

We had a rally in Morogoro together with the Tanzanians to celebrate the releases. Rusty spoke, but it was rather an awful affair - all speeches were translated into Kiswahili, which of course made them disconnected and double-length. Most people weren't listening. Still the band and parade and songs were

good; we marched from town to the stadium, and was it hot! We catch an echo of the excitement on the cool BBC news, but would love to see TV. Perhaps Babette will send videos.. It's the first time I've really longed to be there, to be in that stadium, to see Walter, Kathy and the others. I keep thinking of Kathy - he was a young man of 35, now he is an old man of 60. (Except that I don't feel really old at 74, so there's still a lot of life left for him).

I'm going to Dakawa this afternoon to try and interview some people there. If I manage to get them, I think I will have done enough here at Mazimbu, except that I keep hearing about others who should be interesting. What I really want to do is spend time in Zambia and Zimbabwe, particularly Lusaka where there is a long list of people to see. The problem is: transport first, staying in a guest house without transport or any means of getting around is hopeless, as I already found out; and secondly, actually getting to see the people you want to see - they're either travelling around somewhere or not available. But I do need to do this before we leave Africa.

We talk a lot about the big trip we want to make - but without any firm conclusions except that we want to visit some of the parks in Tanzania, and Zimbabwe is definitely on the list as well. But Tanzania probably has the biggest selection (and the biggest) nature reserves, and people who have been to *Serengeti and Selous etc, keep wetting one's ~~s~~ APPETITE: But we are beginning to collect information, although we haven't yet decided about the means of travel - car, etc.

A GDR teacher here, Dietmar, is a herpetologist (Rusty says) an expert on reptiles, he has some beautiful snakes in his house, and he has the skeleton of a chameleon which he is 95% sure has never before been discovered. He goes into the mountains to look for more specimens. I've promised to draw the skeleton for him. I actually like his snakes. His wife says Selous is the best of all reserves.

Well, that's enough unimportant things to write about in one day, not having anything of any importance. I was just carried away by the excitement of having the two phone calls in one morning.

Much love to all of you

SOMAFCO. November 17th 89

Dear Children,

First some general chatter, then some particularised requests.

This week we had two videos from SA. The first one was of the reburial of Dalinayabo. It lasted for 3 hours. We were unable to sit on the hard wooden chairs for more than 1 and a half hours, so we never actually got to the stadium where the big gathering took place. What we saw was a minute by minute report of the great day, starting at dawn when women came out of the kraals and began making preparations for the day, moving very

quietly (I hope) to a crowd of one or two hundred people coming from over the hills, small group by small group, all religious, preachers making speeches, dreary hymn-singing (what has Christianity done to the beautiful choirs of South Africa?) and, incidentally, all, including the lengthy speeches and prayers, in vernacular, then going on to the breaking of the dry earth to lift the coffin from its original burial place - as we were watching every spadeful of earth that was being turned, this took at least an hour . . . but our backs were aching and our bottoms sore, so we never did get to see Holomisa.

Next night, another video of 3 hours. This one showing the release of the leaders, their homecoming, the first press conference, the meeting in the stadium, another press conference, individual interviews. This time the excitement generated and the delight in watching the faces, & the thrill of the tremendous gathering at the stadium kept us until the end, despite the fact that camera and sound was so appalling and amateurish, and that it was completely unedited, with a cameraman who zoomed in and out until you felt seasick (prolonged close-ups of Walter's left ear, or of the back shoulders of someone who came in front of the camera; magnified relays of a persistent cougher and throat clearer when Walter was being interviewed - the soundman must have had the mike in the wrong place.) Despite this we were rivetted. Walter looked marvellous, spoke wonderfully, just the same. And most of the others looked very good. Only Kathy seemed to have changed most, it was hard to equate this balding man with a long face with the round-faced black-haired lively Kathy of 26 years ago. The hall where the video was shown was packed and the audience reacted audibly to everything. A very exciting evening.

To cap such unusual entertainment, yesterday two German teachers took us for a day's trip to Mikumi, starting at 5.30. The road is awful. We enjoyed it very much, like getting out of jail for a day. We saw the usual game - elephant, zebra, impala, warthog, hippos, giraffe, etc, and nothing spectacular, but we all had binoculars; we had a late breakfast sitting under a baobab tree, and in the afternoon visited Mikumi Wild Life Lodge, which is the place to stay if you have money (Beautiful view, attractive building, a swimming pool, and in sight of a waterhole where animals come to drink.) Mikumi itself is very, very dry, fairly flat, much of it bare dry land with a few small scattered bushes, not a patch on some of the game parks I've seen. As you approach the reserve you see masses of animals near the road: herds of zebra right on the road edge, undisturbed by passing cars, just like domestic cattle; elephant thudding across. I liked it.

The Germans are very nice, though a bit bewildered by what is happening in their country, but they discuss all the problems openly and recognise that change should have come sooner. The ones who are most disturbed are people here who received their training in the GDR and came away thinking that it was a perfect socialist country; to them, it was, especially compared with Soweto etc. They simply cannot comprehend that anyone - much less 12000's, would want to leave socialist paradise for Western capitalism.

As to more serious matters, Rusty is preparing to abandon his work here, but he will write about that. As far as I am concerned I have almost completed interviews here; well, I could go on indefinitely but I think I have a range of people that is good enough, with one or two exceptions that I still want to do. My problem is Lusaka. All efforts - a visit, letters, discussions - have failed to produce any assistance, and I can see that I am not going to get it. Lusaka is a key place as far as the people I want to interview are concerned, so the only solution is for me to go there and stay while I forage around and pin down as many as possible. This means finding a place to stay - ANC Guest Houses inaccessible - and arranging transport (car hire or taxis) to get around. This I must do, either next month or in January. Rusty doesn't want to sit around Lusaka doing nothing any more than sitting around here. So we will have to plan some alternative. Also we are thinking of what we are going to do in the period between leaving here and being able to return to Dorstone. Tourist trips are definitely part of our programme, but not for three months! I have to get on with the book in any case. So it's all in the air at the moment.

Now particular things:

Toni: Will you let us have phone number/address of Tim Leach for when we go to Zimbabwe, or to contact him beforehand. Any other contacts you have who might prove useful.

Can you send me two or more strong hair slides. I have one (I'll do a drawing of it). I need something to pin back lengthening grey straight wisps for hair that is in the awful stage between being not short enough to be tidy, and not long enough to tie completely back without bits hanging here and there. I've given up on trying to look halfway decent as far as hair is concerned.

I've heard from Beryl and written to her. She said she discussed finance, etc with you, and I have agreed to her terms if you think it's OK. I also agree that the tapes should not be wiped, and asked her to return the ones she has transcribed to you. I have a big pile here, but must wait for someone to take them over, I don't trust the post.

We are expecting Wilf East next week, although we had no response to a telex sent to Wolfie asking for further particulars for the Tanzanians who are very fussy. I hope he arrives with my camera, badly needed, and the tapes, soon to be ditto.

I'm interviewing Alpheus on Sunday - we rarely see him, but he sends his love to you.

Patrick: we were bowled over by receiving a second letter from you - perhaps in your new persona you will have overcome your inhibitions about writing letters. We are, of course, delighted, and pleased to have your news. The only thing I worry about is that you may be putting so much into the need for your business to succeed, that objective circumstances (like interest rates and slumps) might destroy things for you. Well, we can't do anything about that.

Regarding my accounts: I see from bank statements that I still have only \$5000 (plus interest) in the 'Exiles' account. You should have had a cheque from Anthony Shell, and if you did and you deposited it in one of the other accounts, you should transfer it to the Exiles a/c.

We liked your write-up and publicity material. I'll write to you again soon.

Keith: Haven't worked out dates, but guess you will be back from India by the time this letter arrives, and wonder if it was an interesting experience. I think of you especially when I take a shower - about twice a day now. First I use Dewberry Body Shampoo which has a lovely smell and is much nicer than soap. Then some Rose Petal Talc (the mixture of perfumes is quite OK)

followed by a face cleansing with Orchid Cleansing Milk finished off with White Grape Toning lotion. All this from the Body Shop, courtesy Keith. It feels great! Although it doesn't make any difference to my leathery old face and sagging belly. We enjoy your letters very much and waste hours of useful (useless) time reading New Statesman and similar magazines that you send. I got a bit of a clue to what goes on at the Tel. from two articles about the editorial mess-up there.

(The finale after all that Body stuff is to put on slippery Thailand pyjamas that Toni gave me, and to feel cool for the first time)

Frances: Haven't anything to tell you, except that there is a young woman here, Lulu, who is returning to Bradford where she is studying. She has been here to do some research on to what motivates women to get into politics (SA's, that is). She is very nice, intelligent, would probably be a capable speaker, and I will talk to her about getting in touch with you, and get her address to send to you. I'm hoping she will be willing to come and speak to your AA women's group, or at a meeting. In any case, you should meet her.

I've not done any drawings you can use. Mainly there are objective difficulties, as for instance that I can't do sketches at the nursery school without dozens of interfering bodies and hands, and that it is now just so burning hot that I can't sketch out of doors in any case. All the Acacia trees are bursting into brilliant blossom - Flame trees - and I painted one spray. Although we've had very little rain, the whole countryside is becoming bright green and trees are blossoming everywhere.

The next piece is for Sean, but may interest others as well.

We have a weekly news sheet here at Mazimbu, called News And Views. This week it had the following item:

ELEPHANTS AND LIONS AT LARGE

The community is hereby warned of the possible danger from lions and elephants in the environs of our community.

On Sunday three lions were encountered at the slope of the hills just beyond the farm. They were killed by our Masai neighbours while a fourth was badly wounded but managed to escape.

One of the brave Masai men was badly mauled by one of the beasts. He was admitted to Morogoro Hospital after receiving emergency treatment at our Hospital. About four weeks ago some 30 elephants entered the Dakawa complex where they remained for some days, causing a delay in the transfer of cattle from Mazimbu to the greener pastures there. BEWARE! THE DANGER IS REAL!

End of item. I am hoping to visit the Masai village where the drama took place, if our German friends can arrange it next week. The Masai used spears to kill the lions. I felt sorry for the lions, but was told they were attacking the cattle.

It's very, very, very hot here now. Too hot. That's all. All our love to you all, and your families.

Collection Number: A3299

Collection Name: Hilda and Rusty BERNSTEIN Papers, 1931-2006

PUBLISHER:

Publisher: **Historical Papers Research Archive**

Collection Funder: **Bernstein family**

Location: **Johannesburg**

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