

Arabah  
Jan 18<sup>th</sup> 1931

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Dear Mother.

This is your birthday, so I have wished you many Happy Returns of the Day. I hope you had a nice time.

I am using the new pen this time, it is a very nice nib but I cannot write so fast with it as I can with the swan pen. The oblique nib seems to slide over the paper at a great rate I expect this will write faster when I have got used to it, a new pen always seems stiff at first. It is nice & small & easy to hold. The Swan pen is rather a fist full. They each have good points.

We had a bit of excitement yesterday evening, we took Mrs Davis for a desert ride in Joey & we chased a jackal. He was on his way to the cultivation to see if he could steal a chicken for his supper, so we went after him my word he could run. Joey was bumping over the rough desert at over 20 miles an hour, we got within a few yards of the little beast so as to have a good look at him &

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107

then stopped & let him get away, it didn't seem sporting to overtake a little wild beast in a car, when he found we weren't following him, he stopped & had a good look at us - the cheek of it. then he went his way & we went ours.

Poor Joey had a misfortune when he was nearly home, it was dusk & Amice did not notice a big stone, she drove over it, & it hit the under carriage such a bang. of course we stopped & found poor Joey dripping thick black oil from his hinder parts; the stone had broken the oil container that feeds the main shaft where it connects with the back axle, we found the broken part, it didn't prevent him going. but of course one must not drive him far without proper lubrication for this joint; Amice has written to the agents in Cairo for the necessary spare part & Joey will have to sit in his garage until it comes.

The packet of seeds arrived yesterday. Suttons had sent it parcel post & had made

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107

a declaration value  $1/6$ . the customs promptly charged 9 P.T. duty ( $1/9\frac{1}{2}$ ). we refused to pay & have written up to the head office to ask why such an absurd percentage is charged.

Amice had to pay nearly a pound for the parcel D Gardiner sent us, it was about half the value of the contents, this also is being enquired into. Mr Tatton Brown has retired from the Directorship of Customs. he is now Advisor & a Gippy has taken on his old job. the result is they just change what they like without any system what ever. when they get in a hopeless muddle they will go to Mr Tatton Browne & ask him to straighten the mess out.

I wonder what they will charge for the wedges. letter post & sample post comes all right. so do books & papers. but there's the devil to pay with the parcel post.

Jan 19<sup>th</sup> There are two regular patients, an old man with an enormous finger & a young man with a bad place on his wrist. they are having

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107<sup>4</sup>  
 the usual hot water & lysol treatment & iodine dressings. I think there's a lot of faith too.

The old antika men have been haunting us lately. I do not think they are doing much business with the tourists this year. I have purchased a few more amber beads & Amice is getting some more carnelians to send to a friend in Canada. The Heath & Heather pills we brought out with us are known here as Pa's Potent. so far we have kept them for our own use, the natives would require a box full as a dose, judging by the quantity of Eppy they get through.

Lots of love to you both  
 Your affectionate daughter  
 Myrtle.

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