

Norseman Coolgardie
September 13th 1895

Dear Miss Ray

Your interesting and very welcome epistle of the 19th ult only to hand by the last Esperance mail. It did not come via Coolgardie on account of Coolgardie not being written in the addresses "via Dundas Cycle Express" is not sufficient to warrant a letter being sent via Coolgardie - so the "numbskulls" in the Post Office apparently think.

I am awfully sorry to think that you have not yet discovered the prodigal – Larry – however I think he will turn up yet. Since my last I have been to Esperance where I saw Arthur who told me of the trouble you were all involved in, but it gives me great pleasures to note that it is all over now though I regret the unsatisfactory result to Mrs Ray.

Your brother "Wally" is up here now managing the store till the purchaser a Mr Hutchison arrives to take it over. I am camped about half a mile from Wally – we are great friends continually dining and staying with one another. About a week ago he was here having tea with me – I made a beautiful curry but unfortunately it was burned, Wally criticised my cooking most unmercifully he said that I should not put charcoal in the curry. I should not make the tea as strong and

finished up by saying:- I should learn to cook before I invited friends to partake. I told him that I thought he was a very rude boy and that I would tell you about him, and in future when I asked him up if he wished to make sure of a good meal he had better bring one with him. Well a couple of days later I asked him to come and have lunch, he accepted and when he arrived he had a loaf of bread under one arm and a tin of meat under the other, how don't you think that was cruel? Of course I must tell you that I never cooked anything nor had any intention of doing so with the exception of making a billy of tea, I asked which he preferred tea or coffee it was the latter he preferred but as I had none in the camp I made tea – We have great fun here sometimes over our meals. It would be as good as a play to you if you could manage to drop in some day and catch us having dinner. Of course when Wally comes up I put all of the family plate (which is made of tin) on the table, also a new tablecloth which is a clean sheet of paper.

Herbert who is out prospecting ten miles from here came in the other day and I gave him a very severe talking to about neglecting

neglecting his home correspondence he has promised me that in future you will have no more cause for complaint. I think he is a very nice fellow. Very jolly.

Of course I managed to get into hot water for advising him to go to the "New Rush" which unfortunately turned out to be a "hoax" whereby two thousand people were disappointed.

So you think I have been trying to evade your query re the "Cachuaca"? Well I am going to engage you as my music teacher that is of course providing you have no objection to awkward pupils then I will tell you all about the "Cachuaca" which you will find is more of a myth than a mystery. It seems such an age since I heard you playing that I have almost forgotten the air however I am glad you like it. "Maida" must be looking beautiful now with

all those beautiful flowers in bloom and I do not wonder at you being in the best of spirits with such refreshing surroundings. A photo of you in the garden would to my fancy make a splendid picture to be placed over the name of "Spring".

No doubt ere this the Scandinavian festival is a thing of the past your dress must have looked charming indeed. It was a pity you did not give me a little longer notice for a part – I have the costume ready viz a bicycle suit which I presume would answer. In your next I will expect a full account of the Fair not omitting to tell me the number of boys who lost their hearts [??]

After being away from civilization so long I am afraid I will have to join your Sunday School class as I require a lot of reforming up here I have spent more than one Sunday watching a football or cricket match do you think that awful?

Since my experience with horses at the Land Sale I have bought a new horse which I keep in the tent with me just fancy he never requires any food or water the only nourishment I give him is a little oil. He is very handy and carries me 60 and 70 miles a day without getting tired. I will probably start for Esperance in a day or two which I expect to reach two days later.

Please address your next to Esperance.

The weather here has been terribly cold lately I can scarcely write as my hands are freezing. As I know you will be unable to read this scrawl I must ask you burn it before you read it.

With kind regards to Mrs Ray and not forgetting yourself from

Sincerely yours

Raymond J Sharkey

P.S. Kindly send me a few violets if you can spare them they smell so sweet I think them lovely. RJS

Kindly address

c/- Dundas Cycle Express

Coolgardie WA

P.S. We have now a bicycle mail between here and Coolgardie which gives us weekly communication with the latter place.

RJS

P.S.

I am afraid you will be unable to read this conglomeration of mistakes blots etc. I am ashamed but unfortunately the bicycle mail is starting.

Kindly let me know if you receive this specimen.

RJS

