

Esperance
23rd Mar. 1896

My dear Cis

Here I am again, dearest but not quite so soon as I had expected, my last to you was late for the mail, so I had to hunt up the Captain, and ask him to post it in Adelaide for me. When I returned I found two men waiting to see me on business with them & the Norseman Mail I was kept going pretty well till tea time. Now it is nearly 8'0'clock and even now I am due at the social but I must have a word with my little girls before going. I would that you were here to accompany me my own Cis you are dear to me, I cannot express in words how I do love you. It was so good and kind of you to write me such a beautiful long letter Yes my sweetheart I am for you and you for me. My whole heart and soul are yours I would give anything to have a chat with you now my love. But I must wait.

2.A.M. Tuesday

Mr Foy called as I finished the above & we then went to the social You dear old Love I will tell you all about it tomorrow it is now very late and I am tired and sleepy. I would just like one more sweet kiss from you darling before I turn in but must take it from your photo Au revoir my own Goodnight Goodnight Cis Happy dreams. My own dear sweetheart I love you I adore you I will write a long letter for the next mail because you are so good to me I saw Arthur tonight and had a chat with him he is looking splendid after his trip Tra la Cis my own from yours alone
Ray

Tuesday Well here I am again my own, and what did you think of my little rambling at 2 a.m. this morning when I returned from the social. Is that what you called "spooney" Eh? Well I do not care what you call it Cis but I was thinking a lot of you last night. Now for the Social! - It was about the most peculiar form of entertainment that I ever witnessed and yet an enjoyable one. It was a sort of promenade concert for the first half – the hall was packed with men, women & children some were accommodated with chairs others standing in little groups conversing. In one corner a tea and a coffee urn and a variety of cups & saucers occupied one nicely decorated table while in the opposite corner a table was strewn with all sorts of edibles in the way of pastry, sweets and fruits. In the third corner there was a piano and the fourth a raised platform.

Just as we arrived a few notes of music greeted us then the Mayoress sang "I was dreaming" a very pretty song. After a short interval we had a piano solo by a lady pianist after this refreshments were passed round, then the Mayor made a few remarks from the platform, followed by the Bishops & one or two others. The Bishop is a capital fellow full of fun and anecdote he has just returned from a trip to the Norseman & he gave a few of his experiences – cooking [?] on the track - by the way Arthur among others accompanied him for the trip. Well my dear this was the programme till about 11p.m. but I forgot to mention that I left at about 9p.m. in order to keep a business engagement & returned at about 10.30

10:30 at 11 O'clock "God Save the Queen" was rendered by all present to the accompaniment of the piano – then the children and some of the elders departed, after which the floor was cleaned and swept and the dancing began in real earnest much to the disgust of the local parson who was very indignant especially when he saw the leading church lights taking a monumental part in it. The Bishop did not appear to mind however they both went home and the dancing continued till about 1.30. I had two dances quadrilles and lancers, meeting a very old friend of mine from Perth we with Foy and one or two others adjourned to a quiet corner and had a delightful chat of olden times. The gentlemen being in the majority of course we did no harm. Arthur was there and I had a chat with him he seemed rather pleased when I told him that since he went away I had received two lovely letters from you and that all was well. By the way Cis you say that you must have misconstrued his first letter but you do not say whether you have heard from him since – while he gave me to understand that he had written again explaining his previous letter and expressing pleasure with our little affair. However I would not be sure whether it was to you or your mother that he wrote. You know dearie I would sooner you hear from him what his views are apart from what I might tell you. I you have not heard from him you might write him a nice little letter and just ask him. Of course you must not say that I suggested this - you will understand me my pet won't you?

Cis you just relieve yourself of all anxiety about my love for you before that eventful night. Do you remember poor me when I asked your dear mother for you? Well that was a very simple task to telling you that I loved you. Dearest, every time I sat near you at the piano I thought I would have told you but somehow I could not. The words would not come and then I could not entertain the idea of you refusing to accept my love. I loved you Cis long before that night and that very night, being my last before leaving for Sydney I was going to make another endeavour to tell you when you came to the rescue. Ah Cis you ask do I remember that night? You should have asked "Shall I ever forget the night when the door of real happiness was opened to me. I read you like a book that night my own you filled me with joy my own so much so that under different surroundings I doubt whether I could have spoken to you. Well the next day I started off for Sydney and while on the steamer I could think of little else but you - and when I arrived in Sydney I did not feel quite so sure about you dearie until I received your second letter – I am speaking candidly now so you must excuse what I am going to say. Well I kept thinking that you were so young and that you might have just taken a childish fancy to me that night but when I received that letter Cis I was satisfied & so happy.

Wednesday evg. And how is my love tonight? I finished up rather abruptly last night my own because I was compelled to owing to the candle burning out and having no more in the place. I have a good supply for tonight tho. My dear old sweetheart I have just been for a ride on the bike with your dear little cap on it is the first ride I have had for a long time now. How I did think of you my pet with our dear old friend the moon overhead once more. If I could ride over to Hawthorn in a night I think I would ride over every night the moon was out. No I wouldn't on second thoughts I would only ride over once then getting back would take a long long time unless a certain little girl came too.

Well Cis I must tell you the history of my love as you wish to know but as I think I have told you most of it at different times. I will be brief so as not to bore you. Starting at the beginning when I first went to "Maida" well I met a young lady there who fascinated me as many had done before but in a rather different way this one by her modesty & reserve while in other cases it had been by talking and coquetting, however I thought as before it would only affect me for two or three days but no the attraction grew stronger every day and finally I decided that I would forget all about it when I got over to the West but also I found myself looking forward to her letters with great eagerness. I was afraid in replying to make any departure from the etiquette of ordinary friendship until one day I decided to address as I anxiously wished to and put My Dear Cis but – that letter never brought a reply. (Cis did you ever receive that letter? I know you did not receive it in due time but you may have received it since.) Well I thought that I had spoilt my chance that time not daring to write again I decided to wait till I could visit Melbourne again and see more of my little girl but what joy another letter arrived after some two months from which I concluded my former letter had gone astray. It was a dear confiding letter yet without any real encouragement and I could not help thinking of her as my ideal while at the same time I tried to wish that we had never met.

However in due time my trip to the east East came and I decided to have one little look at Hawthorn before proceeding to Sydney – I called was disappointed yet I felt a sort of pleasure in the disappointment. Because I thought I would never see you again and could forget you. Still I very much doubt whether I would have passed through on my journey without calling. Well Cis my dear girl it is hard to write this now but still you know that I am talking of the past.

Well the day after my call I was surprised by Herbert calling on me and telling me that the mater wished to see me I went out to Maida with him and found that my little girl was away visiting. However I remained for the night, the next day I had the extreme pleasure of seeing her. Yes my darling I did notice when I first greeted you that time that you appeared to have fears as to whether you would be able to control some inward passion hence you hurried. If I remember correctly you shook hands with me – hardly exchanging greetings you hurried off to do something imaginary or otherwise (Don't get cross Cis) I will tell you exactly what I thought (my previous explanation is rather vague) Well Cis I noticed or thought I noticed a little blush oh a sweet pretty blush it was, in your cheeks after I had taken you hand and then you going away. I thought shall I tell you? Well here goes: - I said to myself "she was anxious and pleased to see me, but now she would rather she had not.

Now my dear old love tell me if I was correct or not – If not of course you must excuse me.

Well Cis I think you know the rest Ruth & the fishhooks of lace and muslin the kitten not forgetting the 4 O'Clock and cake our various and sundry visits to the stables, garden etc the evenings at home cards (personalities etc) practising on the piano our lovely drives, walks to the post etc. Dear Minnie and all the household the Xaviers' social La Bell Therese (your dear hand) etc etc etc then oh then came the crowing event that memorable night. Cis I can never repay you for the task you saved me from that evening you dear old girl I do

love you and prize you for that action. Do not be misled by modern fiction dearie, and think you made a mistake that night. You acted as nature deserved you which is far better and truer than the artificial styles of misnamed courtship found & illustrated in every novel & magazine. Just imagine how could you really love a person and at the same time place all sorts of obstacles in his way and pretend all the time you did not love him. It is so absurd to think of it. No Cis in my mind I am perfectly satisfied in my mind that you did right, and now that I have told you all, you must write and tell me that you are as happy as the day is long.

Cis I am sending you a copy of my bedroom. Mr Foy is coming down tomorrow with his camera to have another try for me. I have had three taken so far but they are horrible. If I do not manage to get a proof off in time, I will send you a proof of the best one so far. Now my own dear girl I will say goodnight goodnight my own true love au revoir. The moon has something for you tonight.

Do I trust you Cis? Yes my own I would know that I can trust you anywhere you dear dear old sweet sweetheart of mine.

Yours alone
Ray

Thursday

My dear true loving little sweetheart you dear old girl how I do love you Well dearest I thought I would have had time to write to you a long long letter today as the mail was closing but let me tell you what I have been doing I know you will not approve of it dearest but nevertheless you shall know. Well Cis the other night at the Social I saw a party with whom I thought I could do a little business and in fact I blame him for my remaining so late. The business was this:- I had a large shipment of champagne which I wanted to dispose of and he was willing to purchase it subject to approval so I asked him to come down to my office and sample it the next morning- He did not come however till today – seeing him in town I casually asked him “when he was coming down” & he replied “ I will come now in about half an hour’s time

Well Cis he came bringing a connoisseur with him and we had hardly uncorked the bottle when who should come in but Riches (the surveyor) Foy and the Mayor Riches is a dear old fellow so I could not help but ask them all to have a little wine with us – Riches and I were so pleased to see each other again, we had such a lot to tell each other, that instead of one bottle being opened we had no less than five between us the greater portion being between our visitors while my client and I completed business in connection with the sale of champagne which resulted very satisfactorily to me. And then on joining the conversation Riches good nature getting the best of him he insisted that we should adjourn to his hotel. Out of courtesy I went over on arrival there our number had increased to fifteen

Nothing but champagne would suit Riches. After the first round some of them were getting very talkative – speech making etc during which I seized the opportunity of leaving unnoticed and came back to my dear one and here I am - How they are getting on I don’t know but will know all about it tonight as most of us have to attend a meeting of the Roads’ Board. While we were walking over Cis Riches told me that he was very sorry that he could

not oblige me in connection with Mr Ward's affair. He says he has no authority to employ professional assistance but when in need of it must apply to the Head of Department in Perth. The Perth surveyors it seems are very jealous and have been complaining about these outside appointments hence the new regulations

I felt rather disappointed Cis. I felt so sure about it tho I did not tell you & it was just as well. I would really have liked to have secured Mr Ward employment. Though he is a stranger to me at present I was looking forward to him as a sort of confidante I feel sure from your description that I would like him & then we would have some nice little chats about you dearest. I would love talking about you. I have just lost another hour dearest, a man came in and wanted some information for the mail which I was bound to give him and while he was here what did I receive Oh you dear sweet girl another lovely letter from you my own well I opened it just now dearest but when I saw those lovely violets I thought I must finish my little chat with you before I read it. Cis you are a love I shall never never doubt you again I am so sorry dearest that I cannot send you my photos yet you will see the enclosed proof is something terrible but I will try and have one taken for you as soon as possible.

My dearest of dear ones I will answer your two letters in time for the next mail which will not be long.

Give my love to Hattie the dear little thing you told me not to laugh but how could I help myself when I read it and thought of Cissie dear it was splendid for a child just fancy them thinking of me and dearie they must know it all.

Now my love I am going to post this after which I will lock myself up in my Office and have a quiet and a lovely half hour with your dear sweet letter

Oh you darling Cis Au revoir
Love to all & a big kiss to you from
Your ever loving Ray

(Horizontal from top of page 1)

Don't forget to see the moon dearie there is something very important there for you
xxx from your Ray

Horizontal from top of page 5 & 6

P.S. I thought I would have sent this by the S.S. Melbourne but she left without a mail and I did not know anyone on board Yours Ray