

Transcriptions of letters between the Horne Family of Moreton-in-Marsh and Georg Haupt, a Romanian POW

An enquirer to CCHS (Query Ref. 20.047) sent transcriptions of moving letters, some in poor English, written from 1948 until 1962 between the enquirer's grandparents, Andrew and Kathleen Horne, and Georg Haupt, 541915, a Romanian Prisoner of War, who had worked in their garden in Moreton-in-Marsh with another POW Michael Arz, while imprisoned at Bourton-on-the-Hill POW Camp No. 157.

Several letters from POW Camp No. 186, Fornham Park, Bury St Edmunds, where Georg and Michael were awaiting their repatriation, express their gratitude for the Horne family's kindness, the happy times they had with them in their home in Moreton-in-Marsh, working in their garden and ask after all members of the family, 'grandmother', 'the old man', 'three sisters', Tom and his wife and baby, the children Bridgit and Jim.

Fornham Park had been an army camp during the war, but had been abandoned in 1945. In 1947 it was refurbished as a transit camp, designated Base Camp 186, for the repatriation of Prisoners of War. Fornham Park Camp closed down later in 1948.

(taken from <http://www.stedmundsburychronicle.co.uk/fornhampark/fornhampark.htm>, accessed 21/10/21)

March 10, 1948 From Andrew Horne

Dear Georg,

Thank you for your letter. We were very interested to hear which camp you had moved and hope your remaining time as a prisoner will pass as quickly as pleasantly as may be at Fornham Park. You may be able to find some English family at Bury St Edmunds who would wish to entertain you or even need some help in the garden! If you are free on Sundays try attending at a chapel, many of them have arrangements for entertaining prisoners but you are more likely to find friends at a chapel than at a "Church of England". Mrs Horne and I appreciate very much what you say about us and our house and we are very glad to have been able to alleviate your sufferings as a prisoner while you were at Bourton-on-the-Hill. I am sure if I had been in your

place, a prisoner in Germany, I should have had great need of someone to befriend me. I have great admiration for the way in which you maintained your courage and cheerfulness in the face of great difficulty and sincerely hope that you will be able, when the time comes, to establish contact with your family and reconstruct a reasonable life with them again.

I understand very well that the benefits of our association are not all on your side. I am indebted [*sic*] to you and Michael for a great deal of hard work in my garden which I could not have got done at present in any other way and the garden will be a constant reminder to me for years to come of Georg Haupt and Michael who transformed it from a wilderness into a garden. The old man and I planted the peach and apricot trees for which you dug holes and in a year or two I hope to have fruit from them. In a year or two's time also I hope to be able to tell you I have had a large crop of pears from the trees you planted.

The men have been this week to finish making the paths with two dressings of tar and two coverings of very fine stone chippings. The paths are now smooth and hard and should last for many years. The present warm weather has made the lettuce grow that you planted and some of them will soon be ready to use. We have planted the early potatoes and also six rose trees round the rose arbour. The other old man is working three days a week in the garden but he does not work as fast as you did and I need someone to work there all the time. I hope to get another man soon so that the work you did may not be wasted.

I read your letter to grandmother and showed it to the Pearman family too and they all send their greetings to you and Michael and Max.

Mrs Horne and I spent five days in London last week when the children, Bridget and Jim, had two days holiday from school. We went to four theatres and Mrs Horne bought clothes and other things she needed in the shops.

I am sorry I cannot write you a letter in German but I will have this letter typed with spaces between the lines and then you can get the camp interpreter to write in a translation between the lines. In that way you will be able to read it and perhaps to learn a little more English.

We all send our very kind regards to you and Michael and Max.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Horne

Georg Haupt 541915 POW camp no. 186, Fornham Park, Bury St Edmunds

12.4.1948

Dear Family Horne,

Thank you very much for the two letters you send me. The second of them is been in a few camps before he come to this place. I am still at my full health and hope the same from all of you. Pow Mr and Mrs Horne I am very glad to hear such a lot of good things about the garden in which I have been working with happiness and love. That's what I miss around here and so I am thinking very very often on your place where I have been working very long time and where I could go day by day to know I was welcome. It is quite good around here but I couldn't find a family till now then I can't go out so often because I am always on duty inside the camp. I got a good news from my family, my daughter Anny told me in a letter that she learns three languages now, English, French and Russian. So she will be able to write you a letter in a short time. Pow I'll end my letter, begging you to greet Mrs, children, grandmother and all your friends.

From Georg Haupt PS How is little fiffie?

In the the House of Commons, replying to a general question about the camp, the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Bellenger) answered; "There are 1,516 prisoners of war held at Toft Hall Camp, claiming 26 different nationalities. Ninety-five per cent. of these prisoners of war are German, or of German racial origin, with residential qualifications in the countries to which they wish to return."

Mr. Stokes M.P. replied that; "Is my right hon. Friend aware that the prisoners of war themselves complain that they belong to 38 different nationalities, and that the majority of them were pressed into German service against their will? Will he please hurry with the examination of their individual cases?" House of Commons Debate, 18 February 1947

(<http://ww2talk.com/index.php?threads/camp-2-toft-hall-camp-knutsford-cheshire.78299/> accessed 21/10/21)

From Georg Haupt, 541915 POW camp no.2 Toft Hall, Knutsford, Cheshire:

1st June 1948

Dear Mr Horne and family,

Because the time is coming that after a long time, I'll be released. I'll hold my promise and send you my last greetings from England. In the meantime I'll get

transferred from Camp 186 into camp 2 because this is an international camp and I hoped to be repatriated to Romania.

On the 4th May a Romanian commission has been here but they couldn't tell us if and when we would go home. Now, the time is coming that we have to leave England and so we are going to Germany and are waiting there for the occasion to go to our families. If I haven't the opportunity to go to Romania I'll write to you from Germany. I left Michael in Camp 186 because he doesn't want to go back to Romania. He will be repatriated on 15th June to Germany. I have tried to come for a few days to pay you a visit but in rain, or I, haven't had the luck to come once again in your house and in your beautiful garden. Just now there must be all things nice and growing alright. I hope the little trees, the roses and the flowers I have set are alright as well. I'll close my letter for today with my best regards to all of you, grandmother, Mrs Horne, the young couple which will be soon father and mother. I wish them that luck with all my heart, the girl and the little boy which come on holiday soon, your three sisters with their families, and the old gentleman, and the big gentleman with his Mrs where we have been at Christmas. All the best, yours very sincerely

Haupt G

PS I have to ask a favour more of you. If you can make it possible to write me back until the 9th June. I ask you to write me a certificate for one jacket and a pair of trousers as got as a present from you. Otherwise they'll take them away.

From Georg Haupt Fornham Park, 1948 ?

Dear Family Horne,

After having to leave from you and I am not yet in the knowledge of the English language to present you all regards I wanted to do, I'll try it in this letter. Again I have to thank you for your kindness you showed in the time when I was happy enough to be invited by you. I am most grateful for the confidence you gave me in your house. At the same time also for all the presents at Xmas and at my birthday, which I'll take home as a everlasting remembrance of you and your family. Further I thank you for all that you gave me at my leave as well for the parcels you sent to my family. I am most grateful to you, Mr and Mrs Horne, for all your kindness and amiability you rendered me as refugee and prisoner, for you treated me father and mother, so that I enjoyed very much visiting you.

Dear Family Horne: I don't know whether you felt how happy I was at the time when I was permitted to come to you daily, be sure I felt in your house as content and happy as in my own home and with my own family. You helped me to bear my sufferings as a POW for which I am most thankful to you, for you understood that the man doesn't live on food and drink only but also needs psychacal nourishment and satisfaction. All this I found in your house by the good understanding which you showed me as no one else before since I had to part from my family five years ago. Also my friend Michael feels the same way and wants me to express his deepest gratitude to you. We both wish you the best of health. God bless you and your house and reward you for all you have done for me with his triple blessing.

Our journey went out very well, three times we changed the train, from Camp we went to the station by lorry, greeting you with my handkerchief for the last time. Unfortunately you hadn't seen it. This camp is very large and is situated in a wood, maybe it is very nice here in summer. In a distance of two miles you find the old town Bury St Edmunds. If we free from work we may leave the camp from 13.00 to 22.00 all the other things are like in all POW camps. I am working together with Michael in the cookhouse there is no need of food but in spite of this I miss your house very much having most variety with you. I got news from my family that they have received your letter from 31 January '48 with the enclosed stuff. (I think, you know what I mean). It contained the request to submit to you and your family many greetings and thanks for the six care-parcels from you and are now looking forward to their arrival. Pow I'll bring my letter to the end and beg you to submit all your friends my kindest regards, Grandmother as well as your girl and your little son from whom I had no chance to say goodbye. I greet the old man and the teacher, the young man with his wife, the family Birnham, both sisters and all your intimate friends. I am at my full health and hoping the same for you, I remain with kindly regards to you, yours everlasting,

No date From Georg Haupt

Dear Mr Horne,

With my deepest thank I received on 5th June your letter and, on 7th June your parcel with the cigarettes. I say to you very very many thanks for all. It was for me an unexpected and great surprise which felt me with very great joy. It is a great help to me because I had to leave for Germany without any cigarettes as I smoked all my reserves in this camp and I didn't earn any money to buy other. Since I left Moreton I

hadn't any earnings and in every camp I came afterwards I got it worse. My best memories are in Moreton and especially in your house, dear family Horne, I got memories which are and shall be forever. I won't be long today I thank you once again very much I'll write to you again. With my very best greetings to all of you I am yours very thankfully,

Haupt G

From Horne : The Steps, Moreton-in-Marsh, Glos

My dear Georg,

Now I have a little more time to spare and will try to answer your letter and give you more news of our family. I am glad you are now free and have found work in Krefeld to support yourself but I know you will not rest satisfied until you are reunited with your family and I am afraid that will be very difficult. Rumania seems now to be just like a part of Russia and no one who is inside can get out and no one who is outside can get in except as a prisoner. I hope you will find some means of overcoming this difficulty. Is it still impossible for you to return to Sibi.. to live? Is Michael Arz going back to Rumania or will he stop in Germany?

We are all very well and have the children at home for the holidays just like last summer. Jim and his friends play cricket on the lawn and break the flowers down just the same and this year again we had a complaint from the lady on the other side of the wall when a ball went over. This year, too, there are many roses at the end of the lawn that you planted and also the roses are growing round the "ros-haus" but not up to the top yet. Bridget is still a "girl" and not yet a "lady". She is seventeen years old and has to go to school one more year.

Tom and his wife Wendy are staying with us and the baby "Andrew John" now two months old. They have no house of their own and want to get one in Oxford where Tom has to go to school next month.

The grandmother is now the great-grandmother and she is very happy with the baby. She is very well, just the same as she was last year but this summer there has been so much rain she cannot sit in the garden as much as last year. Her sister "Auntie Pattie" who was with us last year was very ill after she returned to her own home and we heard this week that she has died.

This year in the garden we have only one old man who works four days each week and sometimes another man. There is more work than he can do but next week a

new man will start to work all the time. He is a younger man and will keep the garden in proper order. We have plenty of vegetables and flowers but this year there are not many apples not pears. My sister has sold the bees and they have been taken away so now it is safe to work there. We have another pig, a little one that will be ready to kill at Christmas.

The old man is still with us and is very well and "the schoolmaster" will start his work of teaching in a school at Evesham next month.

I think that is all the news. I hope your blankets will arrive safely and I shall be very interested to hear from you again when you have news to tell.

Did you translate your letter into English yourself or did a friend do it for you?

With kind regards,

From Michael Arz, 15b Muhlenstrasse, Mettmann, Nord-Rhein-Provinz, Britische-Zone

Germany. August 6th, 1948

My dear family Horne,

I have just managed to sit down for a minute to write to you. Arrived Germany safe and good, fifteen day ago. And the people where I am, are very good to me. I hope everybody of your family is well and happy. I thank you very much for everything what you done for me. The watch I keep for remember to you and the happy time when we was together. I have seen Georg Haupt last week at my home. He live one hour from me. I was very happy to see him.

Dear Mr Horne would you do my favour please and send me some of the plankes because I have not any at all. The weather here is very cold. What about you garden, I think he fine now. I have enjoyed this time when I work at them and I was very happy when I ged some cigarettes from you. Well dear family Horne, I think I have said enough don't you! It is time I went to sleep is 11.30. I always want to be proud of you. Cheerio and all my wish from your friend Michael.

PS the best wishes to your children

From Andrew Horne

Dear Michael,

Thank you for your letter which reached me this morning. I will send you the blankets in a day or two when I can get them packed for post. I will let you know when I send them so that you may know when to expect them. I have not had a letter from Georg yet. If you see him again tell him I expect to get a letter from him. I am glad to hear you have both got so far on your journey and I shall be very interested to hear how you get on on the next stage to Rumania.

Our garden is now very full – plenty of vegetables and flowers but not many apples or pears this year. It has been very wet and not so much sunshine as last year when you and Georg worked there.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely

Blankets sent and advised August 14th 1948

Krefeld August 12th, 1948

Dear family Horne,

In best health I will write you some lines and wish that they will reach all you in healthy too. I wrote a letter to you from Camp 2 in which I informed you that I have got the small parcel with the cigarettes and I am very thankful for it, but as I have left England directly afterwards I don't know if you have got the letter, and so I will do it once more and to you heartiest thank for it. From Camp 2 we went by rail June 9th 48 by way of Leicester to Harwich and in 8 hours' voyage we came to Holland in the harbour of Hooul (?) and June 20th 1948 we got our papers in Munster and was free. The voyage was nice, the sea calm, and the sky bright. All my things in rucksack and pockets, I have brought along well because I had your certificates which you furnished me. Dear Mrs and Mr Horne! Unfortunately I must inform you the sad news that it isn't all in succeeded to come in our home, how it was my wish and effort and it will pass a long time until I meet with my family, if the state with the eastern continent apparent deteriorates itself instead of to grow better and now I'm strive my family to bring hither, to Germany, if it should succeed me I would glad certainly. I'm with friends of my former cheef from my home where I had worked

seven years. I'm well taken care of here, only I'm in want of some if I have only a empty room and we must procure all in order to live therefore.

Dear Mr Horne, I may request you heartiest to comply with me my last wish if it is possible you, whilst you let furnish me the three covers which I need urgent, for which I pronounce you my heartiest thank. A joyful communication I can send you, this days I got the news from my dear wife, that she has got the from you sent parcel from Australia five pieces, and you thanks once more hearty and you wish joy. I hope that she till now the other packet has got too, and I will communicate to you if my wife it writes me. I'm now in Krefeld here a greater town twelve miles distance from Dusseldorf and go in a textile factory have handsome and light work and gain well too, for as you know I have made me popular by my diligence here too. The life here in Germany I have me imagined more difficult and more wretched like it is in reality especially since the reform of standard now is to get all here even coffee too but so expensive all that a worker nothing can allow himself, victuals are sufficient too, rationed on food tickets of course, fat and butter only are very few and meat not at all, so that I must recall very often the sufficient securitied table at Mr Horne. I'm lodging near the terminus and do me gain after time for leaving off work in the factory there a petty income too, as I make neat three rooms of the restaurant there. It has yielded itself that Michael Arz is not far of me to whom I am gone to see him already at last Sunday and who is well taken care of and who is strived too to go in a factory, for he is come on month later than I.

Dear family Horne, POW I have described you my present conditions of life and should be glad to be told how are you all yet, how is the dear grandmother? Is it you such a fine weather too that she can sit in the garden all the days? How are the children? They will be fixed in vacation of summer at home, it's such pity that I did not keep to you, else I should have gone around the wold fixed with the girl on the reval (?). In the meantime you would have been grown fixed already happy grandparents and the young men, father and mother, and I congratulates you on a family Horne's son and heir. Here is the prospect for favourable crop and many fruit, and I wish that it's the case in your beautiful garden too, in which I have relieved my imprisonment with love and gladness. Has Mrs Horne got premiums at the exhibition in this year for the flowers?

Dear family Horne, POW I intend to come to the end and wish you all who know me the best healthy and all well with greeting. Your everlasting

Haupt Georg

From Georg Haupt September, 1948 Krefeld camp

Dear Mr Horne and family,

With thanks and joy I got your two letters before some days in best health and on 6th September I was very surprised when I came home from work, that the two packets with the covers was well received by me, for it I pronounce you my heartiest thanks especially. It's a little exchange with the covers, but last Sunday I was to Michael and had made it well. Therefore I haven't answered directly. I was very glad all to be told about your whole family and I was so inspired that I was in thoughts among you in the house too.

So my prophecy has been fulfilled yet, that you are become grandparents. The little son and heir of the family Horne shall be sound and live long, that he will reach a great age, and you and his parents shall live to see with the boy many honour and joy. I am very sorry for the quick die of your dear aunt. I sympathise your ache as I pronounce you all my heartiest condolence and squeeze you all the hand in ghost. As to your garden, I am glad about the success which Mrs Horne at the premiums has reached. I am surprised that there is not fruit, then here in this year very much, especially apples and plums, it has rained here on the whole not much but too warm it was not also, mostly gloomy weather.

Michael and I are willing back to Rumania, but unfortunately it will take a long time till the way for it will be free. Michael has news from Rumania that his wife is come from Russia to Rumania and now is waiting for him. My wife writes me despaired letters so that I'm in thoughts always at her. However I can help from here with nothing, the last news of my family is that the two younger children are ill of typhus and Anny has lost her work, because all German industries in Rumania are taken away. POW is my family without money.

I can so many not for a long time yet to write English. I have met a friend who translates me this letter but he goes away to school soon.

With this I come to the end, wish you all the best health and all the good. With best greetings your Haupt Georg

From Georg, Krefeld, 24th December, 1948

Dear Family Horne,

I begin my letter by wishing you all the best of health, which, thank God, I also enjoy. And much happiness in the New Year.

Please forgive me for not having written sooner, but this time all my attempts to write you a letter in English, as I have done till now, were in vain, as my comrade has gone to school, so I see nothing for it but to write in German. That is the reason for my letter being so late, for it was my most cordial wish to send off the letter in good time so as to reach you by this date for Christmas.

The last year has gone by very quickly, since I had the happiness of keeping Christmas a year ago in your home and the circle of your dear family. Yet I thought myself unhappy because I was a POW in a strange country, and it was always my great desire to be free. And now I have been free for six months and am keeping Christmas, but it is a Christmas whose sadness is indescribable and today I wish a thousand times that I were with you in England, with the dear good Mr and Mrs Horne, where I was always so gladly welcomed and had your confidence and felt at home.

Silent night, holy night, we sang a year ago tonight in your house, with my friend Michael and then with you altogether, and afterwards there came the distribution of Christmas presents and there was dancing, and I carried your dear good old mother to the schoolroom and with Michael brought her down again, and I shall remember forever how happy you all made me – a prisoner.

Today, dear family Horne, all is different with me, quite sad and lonely. I sit silent and alone in my room and my thoughts are with you all and my dear family at home: there is nothing to cheer me save that I can write to you and my family, otherwise this Christmas Eve would be too tedious and intolerable. I have a tiny little Christmas tree in a flowerpot, so as to have something green in my room, for I like green. There is no decoration on my little tree but four candles and two pictures, one of my dear family, the other of you from the summer of 1947, with you and Mrs Horne, Michael and myself on it, which I always keep in honour and is a lasting memory.

I thought I should make friends with everyone here in Germany, but I am bitterly disappointed, all my efforts are quite unavailing. This world here has quite changed from the one I knew a few years ago. Well, I can understand. The great distress that this people has suffered has changed it, so that every man is for himself and has no inclination for friendship and intercourse. And so it comes about that I am so lonely this Christmas Eve.

As for my dear family, they are in a very, very bad way. It looks as if the communists meant to annihilate all Germans there in Transylvania (Rumania) – and I fear the worst. My whole aim now is to get them out of it and into Germany next summer 1949 if it is at all possible. It is very difficult, as one cannot get housing, and I should need an extra permit for them from the town council and from the English occupation officials and that will mean a good deal of running about. I have sent money to my family and send them a good portion of my earnings every month, but in an indirect way. There are two sons of a clergyman, studying here in Germany. They have to pay their own way by what they can earn by working. Their father can send no money to them because Rumanian money cannot be used in Germany. So every month I send remittance to the sons, and the father repays it to my wife at home in lei.

As for myself, I am not too badly off. Wages are fairly good, and in six months I have got on so well that from 1st January 1949 I shall be drawing the pay of a skilled (specialist?) workman so that I could certainly keep my family well if they should come here.

Now I come to the end. My heartiest wish is that this letter may find you all well and happy. In imagination, I shake you all by the hand this Christmas Eve and wish you one and all a happy Christmas, though it will be long past before this reaches you.

Hearty greetings to you all from the dear old Mother down to the smallest of your family, who will, I feel sure, all be at home in your house. And please give my greetings to the old man, your three dear sisters and the family Birnham, and to the gentleman (and his wife) who entertained me with you last Christmas and from whose house I fetched the barrow of cement. And give my kind regards to all others who know me of whom I think so often.

I wish you, dear family Horne, and all yours, a most happy and fortunate New Year.

With greetings, yours always thinking of you,

G Haupt

2nd March, 1949, From Andrew Horne

Dear Georg

We were all very pleased to receive the letter you wrote on Christmas Eve and are glad to know you are well and have work to do. It is very sad to hear you are not able

to rejoin your family in Romania and one can tell from the news in the papers that conditions there are bad. I hope you will be able to get permission for them to join you in Germany this year and then you can be happy once again.

All our family are well. The grandmother sits in her chair and watches the people in the street just as she used to but at this time cannot sit in the garden. She remembers you and often speaks of your carrying her from her chair in the garden to the house. My wife and I are going to the school this weekend to visit Bridget and Jim and shall go to London to a theatre on Saturday. Bridget will leave school at the end of this summer but Jim will be there for four or five years more. Tom and his wife and baby live with us and he attends school at Oxford. The baby is eight months old now and has one tooth. They would like to live in Oxford but cannot get a house there.

We had a party at Christmas just like last year but this year no German prisoners! The pig was killed the week before Christmas so there was plenty of food and in the afternoon presents were distributed from the Christmas tree just as it was a year ago.

We now have another pig and the old man feeds it and also the hens at the end of the garden. We now have a new man to work in the garden and he is a good man and works hard! He has made some new paths; small ones so that Mrs Horne may walk among the flowers and have many different sorts in small plots. Now he is making a sunk garden in front of the summer house and it will also have stones for the flowers to grow over. The roses have reached the top of the "roshaus" and this summer will grow right over it. This winter has been very mild and many small flowers like snowdrops are already in bloom. Some seeds like onions are being planted this week but not yet potatoes. There is a plot of lettuce but not so good as the one you planted last year.

We all send you our greetings and hope that this year will be happier for you than last year. Good luck!

Yours sincerely

Andrew Horne

15th December, 1949, Krefeld, From Georg Haupt

Dear Horne Family,

At last I have got down to writing you again, and hope this letter will find you all well and happy and in as good health as I am myself. Please forgive me for not having written for so long, I was always hoping to find a comrade who could translate a few lines for me, but have had no luck so far. You must have been expecting to hear from me long ago and thought "Georg has not kept his promise" he has forgotten us long ago. But that is not so: it was due to a sense of disconsolateness and discouragement which oppresses me and torments me every day, about my dear wife and children. On the 2nd January 1949 I began the business of getting my family here to Germany, and so far I have not yet succeeded in seeing them all. It has cost me a lot of money and at last I have got permits from the English and German governments. The English consulate in Bucharest has handed all these papers to my wife, who fetched them personally from Bucharest. On 13th October my wife applied for permission to travel and handed in all the papers (presumably to the Romanian authorities) but so far we have not yet been informed whether they may come or not. We all sincerely hope they will get permission, as many people have had it but only such as have young children: so we are very anxious, as our girls are now growing up, and my daughter Anny is in state employment and my wife won't leave the two girls behind. I am still at the railway station and doing the work that I told you of. I also go to the factory and am well satisfied with my earnings, I get the same pay as an old skilled worker. I am liked for my industry, honesty and cleanliness. I read that in the testimonials given to me in support of my request for my family.

That is all I can say about myself and my family for this year but it is my dearest hope for 1950 that I may be able to inform you that I have my dear ones here and can be happy together with them. I was with Michael twice in the summer. He is happy up to a point; he keeps well and bears his misfortunes as heavily as myself.

And how are you all keeping? Is the grandmother still hale and hearty? I often think of you all, and your house and garden where I worked with joy and was happy in those days. I think of them often and with gladness and would be happy if I could be amongst you again, or if I had a little garden here where I could find joy and refreshment after the day's work, but alas alas never in all my life shall I find again what I had in your house and in my own home. How are the roses that we planted together? Have they all thriven? And the strawberry bed that I made and planted? Did you have a good crop of fruit and other things? And I am much interested in the paths: have the stones worked out of the cement and have the paths sunk a little? In the rose-house you will have found a refreshing shade, as it was very hot this summer and much fine weather. We had so much fruit here that the trees suffered under the weight. Was the pruning of the old trees worthwhile, or did you cut them

down and replant? Have you still the bees and chickens and did you kill a pig this winter or is it not worthwhile to keep pigs now that (I hope) meat and fat are no longer rationed? Nothing is rationed here now except sugar, but we get enough of that. Only everything is too dear in proportion to wages. However we manage to live. Does the old man still come to work for you and does the new man keep the garden in order? Is the wood pile still standing in the garden or have you carried it into the shed to keep it dry? Yes, my dear people, I remember every single spot very well and think of it very often and very gladly. Does the man keep the garden in better order than I did? Yes, it is much easier now than at the beginning, if I had had one or two years I should have made it into a little paradise. Anyhow, I hope you have had some pleasure out of it. I hope the two sisters are well. My kind regards to them and the Pearmain family. Is the schoolmaster still with you? Kind regards to him and to your young married folk, and your two children. The young couple will certainly have much joy in their child, which I suppose can now walk and talk. So your girl has left school, what is she doing? I hope the boy is doing well at school, what is he going to do?

From Georg

Dear Horne Family

As we have now survived another year safe and sound, and are close to Christmas, I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a good new year. I am thinking of you all and of the happy days I spent in your family circle.

I posted a parcel to you today, containing a tablecloth (or cover) as a token of affection and gratitude for all that you have done for me and my dear family, and something to remind you of me. I shall be happy if it gives you pleasure. It is a product of my factory, it can be washed with warm soapy water on the board or table, with a hairbrush. And now I close this letter with best and heartiest greetings to you and your family and to all who know me, and remain your friend Georg Haupt

Please let me know if (and when) you have received the parcel.

To Georg, The Steps, Moreton-in-Marsh, 1950?

My dear Georg,

I was delighted to get your letter and to know that you are well and have work to do. Thank you for your Christmas greetings and I also wish you a very happy new year and more happiness in 1950 than you have known in the last few years.

I am glad to hear you are still hopeful of getting your family to join you in Germany and sincerely hope your efforts will be crowned with success. It will be difficult for your wife if she is not allowed to bring the children but perhaps the little boy will be able to come if not the older ones and the older ones will, I should think, be able to manage their own affairs in the new Romania, perhaps better than their mother can.

I notice from your letter that you have not forgotten any of us and we are all well and just the same, except for being a bit older, as when you were here. The grandmother is the same, no better but not noticeably worse though she did not sit in the garden quite so much this summer. Mrs Horne and I are very well and busy as usual. We had two holidays this year. For a fortnight we lived on a boat on the rivers and lakes of Norfolk and then when the children had returned to school we spent a few days in an hotel at Torquay for a rest.

The eldest son now has a house in Oxford and he and his wife and baby are very well. They stayed with us for ten days at Christmas and told us they expect another baby in March.

The daughter, Bridget, has now left school and has started a three year course at a domestic science college at Gloucester where she will learn to be a schoolteacher of housework, cooking and needlework.

The younger boy, Jim, is still at school and plays much cricket and football but not so much work!

The schoolmaster teaches in a school at Evesham and comes very often to see us. His mother died last year and his old father has no home.

The old man works hard and feeds the pig and the hens and does all those things he used to do.

The gardener is a good man and keeps the garden in good order but he is not such a hard worker as Georg Haupt or Michael Arz! Give my kind regards to Michael when you see him and tell him I hope 1950 will be happier for him too.

You ask so many questions about the garden. I think you have not forgotten anything you did here. The logs were all brought in to the woodstore over a year ago and all burnt last winter. The rosehouse is now covered on all sides with some branches growing over the top and there were a lot of blooms last summer. The

stone paths you made are all perfect, just the same as when you made them with no subsidence anywhere but Mrs Horne had a hole made in the spot in the rosehouse where the water collected. The new fruit trees you planted are all doing well and some of them had fruit last year but not very much. There were three peaches and we hope for many more this year. Last year the lawn was very brown for a long time as the summer was so dry but it has recovered well now; the grass is good and there are not many weeds. This winter we have a lot of lettuce planted out to be ready for the spring even more than we had two years ago when you planted them. The strawberries were not very good last year because of the drought but we hope for a better crop next year and we have planted several more rows on the piece of ground opposite the ones you planted. The rest of the piece where you planted strawberries is now filled up with currant bushes and raspberry canes.

The POW camp at Bourton-on-the-Hill is now occupied with Polish workers but as there are only about 400 of them the camp is mostly empty. The Spring Hill camp is now occupied with Polish families and so is the hospital camp at Blockley. There are very many of these people in England now not only Polish but many other European nationalities. They, like you, are not able to return to their own countries and so have stayed here. Some of the men have married English girls but most of them are still "foreigners" and are not very popular with the local people.

Well, Georg, I think that is all the news I have to tell you about our family and our little affairs. We still think we are poor in this country but I know you will not agree with that. We still have food rationing for nearly all our foods but we get enough and we certainly have no trouble of separation from our families or oppression by the political regime like you have.

Once again, I wish you a speedy reunion with your family and send you greetings and very kind regards from all the Horne family!

Yours very sincerely

Andrew Horne

From Kathleen Horne, To Georg Haupt, 1950?

Dear Georg,

We were all so pleased to receive a letter from you again and such a long one too, we enjoyed reading it and have given your messages to our friends.

I also want to thank you for the tablecloth, it is quite different from any we can buy in this country, it is a good idea to be able to use one side for the meal then turn it over to the fancy side when you have finished. We will use it and think of you Georg. Our garden is looking rather bare now as it is wintertime, but soon the snowdrops or other spring flowers will be showing. I shall be pleased to see them – you know how I like flowers.

How nice it would be if you could bring your wife over to England to stay with us for a while and show her the garden you worked in for so many hours. Perhaps you will in the not too distant future. I am just thinking how hot you were when we made the rockeries, the stones were so large that even you found them heavy.

We are now doing some building at the very bottom of the garden. We are making a garage for two cars and a greenhouse out of the big red shed where we kept tools etc.

We have a pig which we keep to get fat, then make into bacon. We also have eight hens which are laying very well and nine cockerels which we are fattening for the table. I think we had none of these when you were with us.

Now I wish you a happy New Year and a reunion with your family.

Kind regards from

KMH

From Jim Horne, The Steps, Moreton-in-Marsh

Dear Georg,

I hope you have a happy and prosperous New Year. We received your present, the tablecloth, on Thursday January 5th. I think it is very pretty and it has a nice design on it. Do you use one like it? I am nearly 14 years old now and have grown quite a lot since you last saw me. Your own boy will have grown even more since you last saw him, it must be several years ago. Is he still at school? Are there any sports and do you play any games where you are? I remember how you used to play with the cricket ball with me and my friends in the garden in the summertime when you were with us. You might like to know that your name still shows in the cement by the garden door. Our dog is larger, although he will not grow much more. He is about two and a half years old and has a wife and two children, a boy and a girl. Our pig was killed last week and tonight I have to fetch two pork pies.

From Jim Horne

From the Haupt family, Krefeld, 3rd September, 1950

Dear Family Horne,

In the best of health we received your letter a week ago, and on Thursday 31st August we received two large parcels which you, dear Horne family, sent to us and for which I thank you many times on behalf of my dear wife and children.

Dear Horne family, dear friends, in all our lives we have never been as poor as now, and never have we been so glad as at this time at the sight of all these fine clothes. We were all so affected that our eyes were filled with tears of joy and emotion.

My two girls were the most pleased, because the dresses and coats fit them so well and they can wear them without alterations. It is a great kindness on your part, dear friends, which we highly appreciate and will never forget, and for which we can never properly express our thanks in writing. I wish you could have been here to share our joy. The girls immediately put on the best and prettiest dresses and, for the first time since they have been here, walked out into the town. Their first walk was to look for work, and they were lucky. They both returned beaming with joy. Anni, the elder one, found work in the office of a factory and is to get 155 marks a month; she starts on Monday 4th. Susanna who is younger but rather taller and stronger than Anni, also starts work on Monday 4th as seamstress in a silk underwear factory. She learnt the work at home. She can sew on special machines with three or four needles per machine. We are all so happy and grateful to you, for without your help with the clothes the girls would have had to stay at home for a long time. I have also to thank you on my own behalf for all those good trousers and the coat, and on behalf of my wife for the two dresses (the green one and the brown one) which are little tight for her but she can let them out. We thank you once more for everything and wish you all the best of health and all good things. With many hearty greetings,

Yours sincerely

Georg and family

Dear (literally honoured) Horne family,

I should also like to express my heartfelt thanks for the fine clothes which have given us so much joy. We all wept for joy to think that there are still such kind people in

the world. My Georg has told us so many good things about you and all the presents you have sent him; and how you have given us all these lovely things. We often talk about you, for my Georg likes to remember the happy days that he was privileged to spend in your midst as a POW. And I should like to thank you for that from the bottom of my heart – may God reward you a thousandfold and give you good luck and blessing in days to come. Once more, hearty thanks and greetings to you all,

Anna Haupt

Dear Family Horne,

Though you do not know me, I send you my heartiest greetings and thanks for the lovely clothes.

Anny Haupt

Dear Family Horne,

I too will not omit to express my heartiest thanks for all the lovely clothes that you have sent us and with which we were all delighted.

With many greetings

Susi Haupt

15th September, 1950, 15 Aldenham Avenue, Radlett

Dear Mr Horne,

I am sorry this has been delayed, but I was on holiday, and my postal arrangements went wrong.

It is a very touching letter of Georg, and his spelling mistakes seem to add somehow to the effect – just as a touch of dialect improves a good story.

His wife, too, sounds very genuine. The elder daughter is the educated member of the family; she begins with the formal “sehr ge ehrte”, and goes on with the kind of apology for addressing you without being personally acquainted. The younger girl, Susi, writes with difficulty.

I mention these points, because a translation is so inadequate to express all the nuances of

Yours sincerely F. R. McLellan

October 1950 -From Georg and family

Dear Family Horne,

With great thankfulness and joy we received two further parcels from you, a great surprise to us all, containing something for every one: also the letter of the 9/9/50 which young Mrs Horne wrote in the garden.

I am glad to hear that you had a good holiday at the seaside and are now all together again in your familiar home and garden. When I read your letters, I am with you in my thoughts, just as I felt in those days, though it was sad for me then because I was a prisoner. But my captivity was ended when I came amongst you. Those days are now long past but the memory is undying in me.

Much has changed since then. I have had many difficulties to overcome before I succeeded in getting my dear ones home and now I think myself the happiest man alive. True, we have become very poor through all our losses, and have everything to build up anew but with God's help and good health we shall work ourselves up, step by step, till we have a proper household again and can make it comfortable and homelike as far as we are able. It will never be as good as in our old home.

Our fate is hard, unmerciful, vast, but we will bear it as it is laid upon us, if only the world would come to peace and all our work is not to be wasted once more and ourselves not plunged once more into unrest and war.

So, dear family Horne, and all you who have sent us these gifts of lovely things, we thank you most heartily for it is a great step forward towards our new family life.

Once more, many thanks from us all. Hearty greetings and best wishes for your health and all good things to all of you.

Georg and family

30/9/1950 From Georg

And now we have received another parcel from you with great thanks. It has given us much joy. We cannot thank you enough in words and letters for all that you have done for us. May God reward you in health and wealth, as he has helped us in our need, for it is a true saying: When the need is greatest, God's help is nearest. So God has, through your aid, helped us in the first step to our new life, and will help us further, if we deserve it. I have to tell you that very shortly we are getting a flat in Krefeld-Oppum, that is ten minutes from here and twenty minutes by tram, in a new building erected for refugees. I will then write and give you our new address.

Hearty greetings to you all, Georg and family

12/2/1950 Krefeld From Georg

Dear Horne Family,

It was a great pleasure to receive your letter, which means so much to me and for which I express my most heartfelt thanks to you all. I was especially glad to get such a detailed account after a year's interval, of all of you and to connect my memories with it – for I do remember you all very often and very kindly because you were all so kind to me and showed me such sympathy and understanding.

Dear Mr Horne, how could I forget people with whom I spent a whole year, and greeted them and talked to them every day. I have already said that I will never forget you and your house as long as I live. I am heartily glad to hear that your children are all turning out so well; for that is the joy and pride of every father and mother. So in future, will you please just have the letter read to you, and write your answers in English. If you do it on the typewriter I can read it quite well.

Here, dear Mr Horne, I will close for today, hoping this letter finds you in the best of health, as (thank God) it leaves me.

With kindest regards to you all and to all who know me,

Yours etc Georg Haupt

Translator's note

You know that I am quite glad to do these little things for GH so don't hesitate to use me. I think he would really like to get a typewritten letter in English from you, but of course that still leaves the German into English translation to be done, as I don't imagine he is prepared to write to you in English. F. McLellan

Dear Mrs Horne,

I was very glad to see from your letter that you had passed on my Christmas and New Year greetings to all your friends, and hope they were all glad to receive them.

I am happy to know that you have received the tablecloth and that it gives you pleasure.

It is a little present and souvenir which perhaps you will have before your eyes every day and think of Georg. It is like this with us, that we Germans must be careful about everything, because for the time being we are very poor and must make full use of every object.

Dear Mrs Horne, it will really be my wish to be united with my family once more, and then to spend our holiday in England with the Horne family, with my dear wife who, I am sure, would feel as happy under your roof as I did. But I am afraid we shall never manage it, for even if it should one day be possible for my family to join me here, it will certainly be a very hard job for us to get together all the things needed in a household, and we are getting older and weaker, so that we shall have to content ourselves with the dream of a holiday trip to England. But you never can tell. We have a proverb mountains and mountains never can meet, but to men who know one another it is given by God to see each other's face again and recognise each other. So we will hope for the best. But if it is ever possible, we will once more lift up the heavy stones and cheerfully lay them again in the same place, however old we may have grown. In conclusion I wish you all the very best health and all good things. Many greetings to your dear mother and your dear children and all who remember me.

Yours very sincerely

Georg Haupt

Dear Jim Horne,

I will answer your questions and thank you for your letter. I am glad you thought of me and have not forgotten the jolly evenings when we played on the lawn. You remind me of my son that I so long to see again. It is a long time since I saw him, and in that time he has grown and is now in the fourth form. He is supposed to be quite good and clever, my girls tell me. He is top of his form, and they have elected him

form leader (or president). If I manage to get him here, I shall promptly buy him a bicycle. He wants one, and he can ride quite well.

I hope my name in the concrete of the garden gate will be there forever and be remembered by you as a son and heir of the Horne family.

Hearty greetings,

Georg Haupt

Please type your answer in English – I can go on learning.

1st August, 1951 From Georg Krefeld

Dear Family Horne,

It is a year since I last wrote to you and now, after a long year I take up the pen in deep mourning to tell you, my dear friends, of my grief and sorrow. As I wrote a year ago, my family came to join me at Krefeld on 20th June, 1950. After living eight long months in the dugout, we got a nice plan (?flat?) on January 3rd and were very glad about it and bought all sorts of household goods. We were happy and contented to have found a new home where we could all be happy together. And now after just a year of joy and love and concord, a heavy blow has fallen on us. It was the will of God and our destiny that we should so soon lose our dear, good daughter from the family circle. On 18th June, 1951, our dear daughter Anni was taken from our house and home to the infirmary. Typhoid was suspected but alas it was not typhoid, else our dear child could have been saved. It was a much more malignant and insidious disease. We don't know how she could have caught it and from the very first there was no hope of recovery. An attack of influenza affected the poor girl's lung and she went into a galloping consumption which carried her off in five weeks.

The dear child was in no pain, she was quite bright and cheerful to the end and could always eat and drink. She was always in good humour and enjoyed telling us stories. On 19th July I spoke to her at 11am, at 12 she had a good meal. Then she went to sleep and never woke up again. At 3pm was visiting time, my wife, my second daughter Susi and myself could unfortunately not speak to her and in the presence of my wife and myself she breathed her last at 10.45pm.

It is ordained in the counsels of God that we must part from our dearest (*this is a quotation from a well-known song which Mendelssohn set to music*).

At 10am on 24th July, 1951, we gave our dear Anni her last escort to God's acre. A clergyman from my home in Transylvania took the service and preached such a sermon that all present were in tears. He spoke of her life and all the hard and bitter years my family had endured during my seven years' absence.

Our dear good Anni was beloved here as she had been at home in Roumania and well-known for her industry and ability, her brightness and cheerfulness. She had made many good friends here. She was a youth group leader of the East German Displaced Youth in the Krefeld region. And so, our good and dear child had a great and beautiful funeral even here far from her loved homeland. The little grave mound is covered with countless flowers.

After a year of happiness, this deep and unforgettable grief has come to our hearts and to our home. We are all enduring this grief, this incurable wound – so hard that it seems unbearable. God alone can comfort us, as the old proverb says: what God does is good; his will is always just.

With this we conclude, in deep sorrow and with our greetings.

PS How are you all? Are you all well? How is the garden? Kind regards to all that know me. Michael Arz sends kind regards to you all. He was at Anni's funeral.

From translator Mr McLellan 1/8/51

I had to finish this in the train and hope the last part is legible.

Dear Jim

Thank you for writing. I was grieved to hear the news of Georg's daughter. You will find this rather an untidy answer as I have to catch a train and I want to get your translation off today.

So please give my very kind regards to your parents and Bridget whose memories of me (I hope) are not too grim. And I hope you will have a very good holiday.

Yours very sincerely

F R H McLellan

25th August, 1951 Krefeld

Dear Family Horne,

We were very grateful and pleased to receive your letter and particularly appreciate your words of comfort which touched our so very sad and inconsolable hearts.

A blooming rose has passed from us, from our midst and from our house, whose loss we will never forget as the memory will remain with us forever. We believe that no passing of time will serve to ease the pain of such a family bereavement. Our dear Anni was the sunshine in our house. Dear Family Horne! Yet we do find consolation in your letter as you let us know that your whole household shares our pain. It is surely bitter and hard if someone is alone in this world and has no one who would, at a time such as this, pass on such consoling words as I have received from you in this letter. Or to have an acquaintance with whom they can share their grief in the way that I would like to share my sorrows with you. Ah! Dear Family Horne! Our pain is so deep that it cannot be expressed in words. All our hope and zest for life, all our work and aspirations have been shattered in one blow, it weighs down on our souls like the weight of a mountain. We would all very much like to leave here, to go somewhere where we can lead a quiet life and do not have to hear or see the world. Every day we ask God for his support and help, that our faith in him will help to lessen the loss of such a good child, but it is in vain, we cannot forget our dear Anni, our child.

Dear Family Horne! I am pleased to learn that you are all well, that you have been on holiday at home and that you are all happy together just as I remember you. I am particularly pleased to learn that Tom and his dear wife have two sons. My heartfelt congratulations to Tom and his dear wife and I wish they may find long-lasting pleasure in their dear children and that they will all reach a good age. May God keep and protect you, dear Tom, so that you will not, one day, have to endure such an untimely pain as we are experiencing now. I also congratulate Tom and will keep my fingers crossed for his exam, for another successful outcome and that he can soon also stand on his own two feet. Similarly, I wish Bridget and Jim every success.

With regards to your garden, I am delighted that my erstwhile work is now coming to fruition, it fills me with pride, happiness and contentment. Especially as I have learned that Mrs Horne has won eight prizes which must also have brought great pleasure to Mrs Horne. It is a shame, and I regret with all my heart that I am unable to accept your invitation and to fulfil our long-held dream. Unfortunately it is not possible as we are far too poor to be able to afford a trip to visit you in England, as I have now built up some large debts because of the dear child for the doctors and the funeral which I will be paying off over more than a year. However, I would have liked

very much to visit you for a time and to forget my grief, to find pleasure in your company and to find my heart and soul strengthened by the beauty and splendour of your garden and my erstwhile work. Should it, however, one day be possible for me, I should love to take you up on your offer to visit England, Moreton and you, as this has been my desire ever since I had to part from you, dear Family Horne.

Hereby, dear Family Horne, I must conclude. Once more I send all my love and wish you the best of health and thank you again for your consoling words. With the most heartfelt greetings from us all, I remain your faithful

Georg and family

Announcement sent separately:

God the Almighty has tonight at 22.45 taken our dear and good daughter, sister and grandchild Miss Anna Haupt

Into eternity with him. She passed away following a short, difficult illness and with great patience endured a time of suffering aged 22 years.

In our deepest sorrow we request your quiet commiseration:

Georg Haupt and wife Anna, nee Hoprich

Susanne Haupt

Gunther-Georg Haupt

Krefeld-Oppum,...The funeral will take place on Tuesday, 24th July, 1951 at 10am starting at the mortuary of the new cemetery in Krefeld.

Possible wreath donations to the mortuary please.

15th December, 1952 Krefeld-Oppum

Dear Family Horne,

It is a long time since I last wrote to you, my dear friends, so I will try once more to write a few lines to you all, with the most cordial wish in my heart that this letter may find you all well and happy and I should be very glad to hear that you all are still alive and well. Is the dear Grandmother still alive, and the Old Man? How are you getting on? And is everything as it was? Did you get plenty of good fruit in the garden this

year? And are there still any traces of my work? Excuse my asking you so many questions at once but I have such precious memories of you all, for I had a very happy time with you.

And now, my dear people, I must tell you about myself and my dear family. Every day I go to my work, but unfortunately we have not much work to do, just enough to make a bare living; and my daughter Susi too has but little work. My dear wife keeps house and my son Gunther goes regularly to school and learns easily and well. We are all well and happy together, but unfortunately we have no real home here and are constantly thinking of our dear old home in Transylvania. We have now bought all our furniture but we shall have to buy a good deal more before we have all that we once had; but we thank God and must be content, for there are still millions of families who are parted and much worse off than we are.

Our greatest sorrow is for our dear dead Anni whom we can never forget. Time has somewhat lessened the pain but the wound in our hearts will never be quite healed. Again and again there come hours and days when the wound bleeds afresh and we seek consolation at the grave that stands for remembrance.

Dear Family Horne, as we are now near Christmas, I wish you all a happy Christmas-tide and all happiness in the New Year.

Kind regards to the Pearmain family, your sisters and all who know me.

With best wishes, Yours sincerely,

Georg and family

8th January, 1953 The Steps, Moreton-in-Marsh, Glos

My Dear Georg,

We were all delighted to get your letter which arrived on Christmas Day and all of us send you and your family our very best wishes for the New Year. May 1953 prove a happier and more prosperous year for all the Haupt family.

We are all well and all of us that you knew still alive and busy with our various occupations. My eldest son, Tom, now has three children, all boys, and they are all staying with us now and have been since before Christmas. They still live at Oxford where he continues to study Science. He does not intend to seek employment until the autumn of 1954 when, I hope, his education will be completed!

My daughter, Bridget, has completed her training and is teaching Domestic Science at the school in Moreton-in-Marsh since last September. She lives at home and is the proud possessor of a small motor car which she uses for her own and her friends' pleasure. She expects to remain in this job for a year and then seek employment at a school in a larger town.

The youngest boy, Jim, is still at school and wants to leave at the end of the summer term this year to start work in my business. I would like him to remain at school for a further year when it would be time for him to do his National Service (18 years old) but he is very unwilling to do this and I fear will only waste his time if I insist on his remaining at school. You know, don't you, that I, as a parent, have not the control over my family that you think I should have!

Mrs Robinson, my wife's mother, is just the same as when you were here. Her inactive life makes no demands on her strength and her health remains very good. She is, of course, as helpless as she was but no worse and her life is spent listening to the radio. We have a television set in our sitting-room but Mrs Robinson does not like this so remains in her own room with her own radio. She has not been in the garden very often during past year.

Mrs Horne and I feel we are getting older but we go about our occupations just the same as when you were here and there is very little change in our lives.

The "Old Man" has been ill and was in hospital for a time but he is well again now and just as busy as he always was. Only yesterday he was employed all day in building up a stack of firewood lots in the shed.

As to the garden there are many traces of your work still to be seen as much of it was of a permanent character. The rose arbour (Roshaus) was a mass of blooms last summer and will be again this year. There is, however, one big alteration. I have sold half the garden to a man who is going to build himself a house there to live in.

He has built a brick wall 8 feet high right across the garden to divide it. We retain the door in the wall opening on to the side street and we retain the piece of concrete you laid on which you signed your name and address with the date on which you did it. The wall goes straight across from there.

You will understand from this that we have lost most of the apple trees but young tress that I planted in our part of the garden are now bearing and we had a good crop of apples, pears and peaches this year.

We often think of you and of the work you did in the garden and wish we could have you back. I am sorry that your affairs are not so prosperous as you would wish and can only hope that they will improve. Perhaps when your son Gunther is older and able to work he will be able to help you. My younger son intends to do that for me and I am sure when the time comes I shall be glad of his help.

All the Horne family join in sending you their very best wishes and hope that you will eventually achieve the comfort and prosperity that you deserve..

Yours sincerely

17th December, 1953 Krefeld-Oppum

Dear Horne Family,

Another long year is ending, and the feast of peace and joy is near. So I will think of you, dear friends, and write you a few lines. Sometimes I feel such a longing to see you all, who were so kind to me, and to speak with you again, but alas! It is not possible as yet. Perhaps, if it be God's will, and if all goes well with us, I may in four or five years be able to afford a trip to England to see you, if you agree.

Meanwhile a good many things have changed for the better. We have at last bought the complete equipment of the kitchen, living-room and bedrooms, and I hope life will be easier for us – but one is never content, one always wants things to be handsomer and more comfortable, and there is a good deal still to be wished for, and everything is dear and costs money. But let us thank God and pray for good health, for in this short time we have acquired a good many things.

Otherwise, by and large, there has not been much change. I still work in the same factory. My dear wife is also employed as a seamstress and sews here at home for a factory. We have bought a new sewing-machine with an electric motor, so that she does not have to tire herself by footwork, and she can work faster and more smoothly.

My daughter Sue is a skilled worker in an art-silk factory and earns very good money, she is 22 years old. (I'm not sure whether this means an artificial-silk, or one where they do artistic work in silk).

My son Gunther has grown very tall, he will soon catch up on me, he is 1.70m (almost exactly 5'7") high and leaves school next Easter. He is the best boy in his form, and always brings home the best report. We are very proud of that.

After Easter he goes to school again (presumably some kind of continuation school), he wants to be in business, or an official in post office, telephone or railway.

If I could afford it, I might send him to a higher school, for all his teachers say it will be a pity if the boy cannot study, for he learns easily and well. Now, my dear friends, forgive me for writing such a long screed about my family. It must have bored you.

I gather from your last letter that your son Tom was with you, so he is sure to be with you in Moreton this Christmas, for Christmas is always a family feast. Please give him my kindest regards and best wishes, and the same to his wife and children. I am surprised that he has three children already, for he is still very young, isn't he? I wish him success in his studies and should be glad to know what he is studying – and what subject?

Your daughter Bridget is no longer a little maid but a grown-up lady. As you always used to say once she has finished with school and college and has her own car, she is no longer a girl.

And your youngest son Jim is certainly no longer a boy, but a big full-grown young man and an enterprising fellow. Is he serving an apprenticeship in the Horne's business? And is he as competent as his father? So that some day he will be able to take over the business without his father and mother having any anxiety about it.

And what is Mrs Horne doing? Is she still as industrious as ever, doing all the housework herself, or have you a maid to help her out?

And what is the grandmother doing? Is she still active? I know, dear friends, that it is hard for you and for the grandmother, you all have a hard lot to bear, but what else can one do but bear everything patiently and do one's duty by one's parents, as their children, we owe it to them.

What most surprised me was to read in your letter that you had sold half of your garden. I don't know how you could bring yourself to sell such a lovely garden to a stranger, and I am very sorry about it. I can remember quite well where the door (?gate) leads to the lane, and where the wall crosses your garden and divides it in two. I remember everything as if it were only yesterday that I was among you, and yet, my dear friends, it was six years ago. Time goes quickly, and we grow old. I can no longer read and write without glasses, and I have not the old strength for my work.

Dear Horne family, please give my kind greetings to your three sisters, the Pearman family, the grandmother and the Old Man, and all who can still remember me.

I wish you all, my dear friends, the best of health in the coming year. A merry Christmas and a happy New Year,

Yours sincerely

G Haupt and family

From Mr McLellan (translator and German teacher to Bridget) 15 Aldernam Avenue, Radlett, Herts. 30th December, 1953

Dear Mr Horne

I am glad that Georg has nothing but good news this time. He has had his full share of troubles.

It was very pleasant to see you at Harpenden, and to see Bridget obviously maturing in the right lines. One so often wonders what these young folk will be like when they are twenty – and after. And if we forget them they do not forget us.

The Daily Telegraph published a short letter from me a fortnight ago, and before the week was out, I had two letters from men whom I last saw in 1915 and 1916 respectively, one an old boy and the other one ex-private in my company. Both of them must be over sixty-five.

Please don't trouble to acknowledge this – I know it is a busy time for you, and for me, too.

All good wishes to Mrs Horne and yourself and to Bridget and Jim. And a Happy New Year,

Yours sincerely

From Tom Horne, St Catherine's Society, Oxford, Wednesday

My dear Mother and Father,

Here is a translation of sorts of Georg's letter. It's more or less literal if not literary. As you might expect, John had some difficulty with it. Georg doesn't write the German in wide usage, and he has a tendency to make up words. His spelling is a little out sometimes too. I told John to leave the rough draft as it is. The sense is clear I think. The word missed out about selling part of the garden means half or a part or the further piece or somesuch but it's obvious what he's on about.

I could get a reply translated by another man, born in Berlin, of German parents, so it will be in quite good German.

We had about four inches of snow yesterday but it's on the way to the sea now, thank goodness.

Thank you for our stay at Christmas, and the loan of the car on occasions.

With love from Tom and family

PS Thank the Lord for fast bowlers.

From Andrew Horne, The Steps, Moreton-in-Marsh. Early 1954

Dear Georg,

We were very glad to get your letter at Christmas and thank you for sending it and letting us know how you and your family are getting on.

It is good to know that you have succeeded in re-making and furnishing your home and I congratulate you on your achievement. It is an example of how much can be done by hard work and careful spending which could be usefully followed by many in England.

Should you ever succeed in saving enough for a trip to this country, as you suggest you might, you may be assured a welcome awaits you at The Steps, Moreton-in-Marsh and we shall be pleased to entertain you. Perhaps you should be learning the English language so as to be ready for the day.

The old man asks me to send you his regards. He also is glad to hear of the improvement in your circumstances and wishes you well. He says "Do you remember how the mud splashed in your face when driving a pole into the ground for the Roshaus?"

We are all very well and going about our business in the same way as when you were here. Mrs Horne's mother is just the same and sits all day listening to the radio. The only change is that she does not now sit in the garden even if the weather is warm.

My eldest son Tom is still at Oxford but expects to get a job as a research chemist later on this year when he will start to earn a living for himself and his family. Their three boys are aged five, four and two and the eldest has started school.

My daughter Bridget, after a year at home when she taught at a school in Moreton, has now left home and teaches in Buckinghamshire. She has many friends and goes to many parties and dances but is not yet engaged to be married.

The younger son, Jim, will leave school in July and start his two years' national service in the army soon after that. He is now as big as me and is captain of the school football team.

Mrs Horne and I are entertaining our friends and family to a party to celebrate our silver wedding, ie twenty five years since we were married on 7th February, 1929. That seems a long time ago and makes us feel old but it is a great pleasure to have our family growing up and bringing new interests into our lives.

I have shown your letter to all here who knew you and they are very interested in your news. They join me in wishing you all prosperity in the future.

Yours sincerely

19th December, 1954, From Georg, Oppum-Krefeld

Dear Family Horne,

At last after a long year I come to write to you, my dear ones, a letter. It is certainly not a torment to write to good and known friends only once a year, but please do not take it personally, for through the whole year I have been in haste and hurry with the doings and work which every day demands require, as well as the requirements of my trade and domestic matters, that must be attended to. Looking back over the past year, it was not so rosy and easy for us, for we have had many unusual events and expenses this time, which I should like to tell you about, my dear ones.

Over Easter we had many celebrations and expenses for the confirmation of my son Gunther. It has now come to the stage when my daughter Susanne celebrates her engagement at Christmas, then the parents must again fork out, although we are short of cash.

However, what is a more important thing for us, will also be a joy to you, I tell you, that we have bought a house. It is a very sturdy old building but one which we must thoroughly overhaul – the roof, the doors, the windows, the stairs and existing fittings. The house has two storeys and contains eleven rooms, and is situated in the middle of the town of Krefeld. We hope that by next Easter or Whitsun, we will be settled in our own house and home.

At this time there is work for all hands, as in every house with the secret preparations for the coming Christmas, which will bring many joys. How are you my friends? Are you all together? Will you be all together at home this Christmas for the big festival of goodwill and of the family, as I remember truly with you. Also in anticipation of many joys, which I wish to you my friends, and to your children and grandchildren. How is dear grandmother and the good old man?

How was the produce of the garden this year, and who works in the garden? I was very surprised and sorry as well to learn that you have sold part of the garden. It is certainly sad to do so with such a beautiful piece of orchard.

I still have everything in my memory exactly, of every small path and tree and all from which I have found joy and pleasure thinking about my work with you.

I now come to the end and wish you the best health from all of us.

I wish you all my love and a joyful Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

Many wishes also to the Pearman family, your dear sisters and to all who still know me. Wish best wishes

Georg and family

From Andrew Horne, March? 1955

My dear Georg,

We were all very pleased to get your letter at Christmas and to hear of all your activities.

Please accept our congratulations on your daughter's engagement and we all hope it will lead to a very happy marriage and family life.

I should like to congratulate you too on the acquisition of a house. I am sure you must have worked very hard and stinted yourself of all luxuries in the past few years to make this possible. Now you have much work to make it into a comfortable house but who is there better able to do this than that conscientious worker Georg Haupt? May you enjoy the comfort of your own home for many years!

We had our usual large party at Christmas with all the family at home, the elder boy Tom with his wife and three sons, Bridget and the younger boy Jim. Then there was the grandmother who is well and just the same as when you were here and all the Pearmain family visited us on Christmas Day.

Tom is still at Oxford till the end of April this year when he expects to get work of a scientific nature possibly in some government department.

Bridget is well again now but at Christmas she was recovering from a motor accident in which she sustained injuries to her face, chest and leg. Her car, a sports model, skidded and hit a telegraph pole. She was lucky to escape death and now, I am pleased to say, has a safer car.

Jim was called up to do his National Service two months ago and is in the army. He is now training with a view to becoming an officer but does not yet know if he will be successful. He is new to it and does not mind being a soldier but for you or me it would be a great hardship to do that again.

Mrs Horne and I are just the same as when you were here. She is busy with the house and garden and I with my business. The garden was in good shape last year and we are just finishing some apples and pears grown there. Some more trees have been removed and new shrubs planted but there are no great alterations since you saw it. "Georg Haupt, Sibiu, Romania" can still be read in the concrete!

The Old Man continues to work for us and saws logs for firewood in the winter to keep himself warm. He is eighty years old!

Mrs Horne and I go to London this week to spend a few days and to say goodbye on the ship to my youngest sister who is going to South Africa for a year. This sister is one who lived in London.

We all send you our best wishes and hope the future holds nothing but joy for you and all your family.

Yours sincerely

Andrew

From Georg Haupt, Krefeld-Oppum, 1958/9?

My Dear Family Horne,

It is now three years my dears, that I have not written to you and you will think that Georg has forgotten you. I have not forgotten, but the three last years were very strenuous and difficult for me and my family through the complete alteration of my old house and the many debts that I have incurred through this. Every day I had to work on the house in addition to my work in the factory which by itself is killing.

At Christmas three years ago my son Gunther had a motorbike accident following which the doctors at the hospital gave up hope for him and he was moved into the death ward in the hospital where he lay three weeks unconscious. He had concussion, damage to the spinal column, four ribs broken, lung damage, kidney damage and heart displacement. Thanks to good medication and nursing and his strong constitution he has survived.

He passed his school examination with “excellent” despite the fact that he had to be away from school for three months because of his accident. He has now two years practical work behind him and must now practise for a further year then go back to school until the finals and special qualifications.

I have been ill a lot in the last two years, I am still ill and shall never be quite well again. I suffer from the manager illness, heart impairment (coronary insufficiency). In spring I was four weeks in a heart care clinic and in July a further fourteen days with my dear daughter Susanna in Wolfsburg where the Volkswagons are made, where she is happily married and has two sons who are three and a half and two years old, very funny and cuddly.

My wife Anna does the housework and in addition she sews aprons for a factory. We have bought an industrial quick sewing machine which does three thousand stitches per minute.

Otherwise it is reasonable well with us, and still have a lot to do on our house for which I need a lot of money until it is the way I want it.

Now my dears, how are you all, are you all well and still alive? How goes it with dear grandmother? By now I couldn't carry her alone in my arms any longer. Has the son Tom finished his studies? Has Jim all his studies and apprenticeship completed? What does Bridget do, is she now a qualified teacher and has she married yet? They will surely remember me, as I played ball with them on the grass eleven years ago, since then much water has flowed under the bridges and we have got old and tired.

I think that my wish and dream will never fulfil itself, that I should visit you once more in England.

Is the old man still alive? If so, please give him my best regards. With that I would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year, especially grandmother, all your dear children and grandchildren from whom you surely get great pleasure. Please pass on my best Christmas and New Year's wishes to your dear sisters and your brother-in-law Pearmain with his three girls.

Are there still traces of my work in the garden? I hope that the paths and ways which I made are still in good order but from the planted roses and plants all signs will have disappeared and one will no longer notice signs of my work in the difficult but happy times I spent with you.

With best regards,

Your Georg and family

From Georg Haupt, Wiedenhapstr. 1, Krefeld. January 1960

Dear Family Horne,

Another long year is at its end, it is Christmas again, the time for a family reunion, the presents, but also a prayer by the tree with all its glamour and the candlelights and to think of the past year with all its good and bad points.

I saw in your last letter that you had a lot of changes. The children are grown up, and the once so-united family life is over. The children live their own life. The house seems empty and one suddenly realises one is getting on in years. The children's rooms, especially the playrooms are empty, and we have only the memory of their childhood.

Nothing so far has changed with me and my family. We had a lot of work, but our health is good. These both together are the road to prosperity.

But I had some very sad news, but perhaps it will work out for the best. The town Krefeld is going to pull my house down. An area in the middle of the town where my house is, will be pulled down and a car park-garages will be built there. The plans are all ready but it may be 1963-65 before I have to leave. The payment from our house will be very good.

All the best in the new year and my compliments to the few who may still remember me. Peace on earth and goodwill to all men.

Yours sincerely

Georg

My letter is a bit late, but on Boxing Day an old woman died in my house, the Christmas excitement was too much for her. She left a husband who is an invalid for nine years. There was a lot to do to get him into a home.

Krefeld, December 16th, 1962

Dear Family Horne,

After a long time, I am sending you a few lines just to tell you how we are. Concerning health, my wife and myself are better than we were three to four years ago. The old complaint with my heart is still here. On February 11th 1962 I had an appendicitis operation, but it was not very bad, after eleven days I was out of hospital, since then I am feeling so much better.

In the meantime my daughter Susanne had a little girl, now she has three children – two boys and one girl. They are all very sweet and we have great pleasure with them. It is a pity they live such a long way away. We are going every year twice for a visit, but even with a fast train it is still a six hour journey. They are living in Wolfsburg where the Volkswagen plant is. The district is very nice and they had a very nice house built.

My son Gunther is learning to be a machine-builder and still has to go to evening classes for another two and a half years until he has finished his course. So the battle of life goes on and every year the strength of your body becomes weaker.

Dear Family Horne how are you? Is everybody in good health? Has your son Jim finished his military service? Has he taken over the business yet, or are you still running it? How is your eldest son and your daughter? How is the family Pearman and all your sisters? I often think of that rather well-built gentleman where we always fetched the cement.

Please remember me to everybody. To you Mr and Mrs Horne I wish a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, also to your children, grandchildren, and all your relations.

Kind regards to you both,

Yours Georg Haupt and family