

Letter from Arthur to Mary Prior, 15, June, 1954¹

23 Vernon Terrace

Hillsborough

Tues. 15/6/54.

Darling,

O'Brien on Ogden Richards, with discussion, went off very pleasantly. Albert Rose drove me home, and I took him up and showed him round the house. He's more or less in process of shifting himself, to a place in lower Dyers' Pass Rd., and was very interested in our floors. He also thought the extension of our hot water system to the wash-house wd. be feasible, so I saw Gordon Ritchie about this again today, and asked him to recommend a plumber; he mentioned one and I've rung him, but he's out; but I'll be ringing him again tonight.

Bob Sprackett² called this morning just after breakfast to ask if I minded being co-opted (non-votingly, of course) on to the Presbytery's Public Questions Committee, and could I go along to a discussion of War there this morning. It was feasible, so I did; he called for me at 10, and the meeting went on till c. 11.30. I moved on from it to College, and collected letters there from (a) you and (b) Ivo Thomas. Ivo had a solution (most neat and ingenious) to one of the three problems I've submitted to the JSL; and also describes the Boole celebrations³ he went to in Dublin. Mail at home included a note from Jack Smart and letters from Masterton, containing a gift of £26 to help pay nurse. I {2} banked this, together with a Bldg. Soc. cheque for £6-7-6 that came the other day, before 3 this afternoon. By my calculation, our overdraft with the Bank of N.Z now stands at about £3760; and we have £112-16-8 in the Savings Bank.

Have my Wall saying you'd do Priestley; he's not sure if he still has it but will send it to you if he has. The Grenell girl at 3YA⁴ also wants to speak to me about something, but I don't know what as I haven't yet been able to catch her in.

The clock has just struck 5 which means that I may now permit myself to slip off and buy 10 cigarettes. Which I shall proceed to do, without delay.

5.55 p.m. – have managed to get on to La Grenelle. It was an enquiry from Wellington about Gilbert's visit, and esp. about his part in the Congress. I referred them to George.

7.55 p.m. Ann back home. I thought of posting this on the way home, but missed the plumber again, and will have to ring him after 8.30, so might as well post this then.

¹ Editors' note: This letter has been edited by Martin Prior, Peter Øhrstrøm and David Jakobsen. It is part of the Martin Prior Collection, presently kept at Aalborg University folder B, item 5. The letter is written on standard unheaded writing paper. The letter was written while Mary was hospitalised with tuberculosis.

² Editors' note: Colston Robert (Bob) Sprackett (1916-1993) was the minister of St. Martin's Presbyterian Church in Christchurch. He's wife Joan was Mary's second cousin. During the war he was a pacifist.

³ Editors' note: The celebration is most likely connected to the centenary of George Boole's publication of *Laws of Thought* in 1854.

⁴ Editors' note: The 3YA was a Christchurch radio channel which links up to YA services throughout New Zealand. The letter 3 means the Canterbury region.

Gillian told me last night that ...⁵ {3}

⁵ Editors' note: The last part of the letter is missing. On a third page kept together with the letter, the following is written:

that, though I'm too sleepy to judge with any confidence, I have the impression that her stories really are delightful. She makes them up about her rabbit. However like the bed-wetting of an earlier period this will pass.

Heaps and heaps of love.

- Arthur

XOXOXOXOX

P.S. Also dropped in at the Employment Agency today and told them I wanted a gardener.