

33 Henry Avenue
Rustington
Sussex 30th September 1939



Dear Mum,

I am writing to tell you that I arrived safely and to say thank you for the new hair slides you packed in my case. How lovely to have a nice surprise after such a long day!

When we got to Rustington, we all had to go into the village hall where they gave us milk and buns. I shared mine with my best friend Rita Evans because she dropped hers on the floor. After that, we were lined up along the wall and people from the village came to choose evacuees to take home. Some children went together especially the brothers and sisters but unfortunately, Rita and I got split up. I was disappointed but it didn't matter as a really smiley lady called Mrs Clark asked, "Would you like to come and stay with me dearie?" So now, that's where I am. She says I've to call her Auntie Ivy and her husband is Uncle Bob. What do you think of that?

Their house is a bit different to our flat in London. It stands in the middle of a fine- looking garden with lots of vegetables growing and there's even some chickens! Uncle Bob says it all helps to prop up our rations. He's apparently been working every evening with their neighbour Mr Jacques to dig out spaces for an Anderson Shelter. They've dug up a load of grass and they're going to put it back over the top afterwards to hide the metal. Auntie Ivy says he had to dig out all his prize roses to build the shelter but she thinks actually he can replant them over its roof. I took a peek inside and it's got little beds for us all like a doll's house. Smells a bit damp and musty mind you so I don't know about sleeping in it. Unless there's an air raid, I'm in the attic on a sort of canvas cot bed. It's alright but I can't see out since there's only a little skylight and it's too high up for me. Teddy lives on the bed and when we go to sleep, we say a little prayer for you all back in London so you'll be safe.

Guess what we did yesterday? We went paddling in the sea and built sandcastles! It was incredible fun and we splashed each other. Auntie Ivy says we won't be able to do it again though because the Home Guard are busily putting barbed wire along the beaches to stop the Germans' ships invading from the sea. There are also anti-aircraft guns in the dunes to stop the planes.

Have you had a letter from Dad yet? I asked Uncle Bob if he was going to join up but he's in a reserved occupation at the water board so he has to stay in Sussex.

I miss you, Nanny and Didi very much. Can you come and visit me here soon? Please write and tell me what's happening at home.

Lots of love,

Jane X

p.s. Auntie Ivy says I can send you a jar of her homemade strawberry jam. It's yummy!