

I am glad to be in England now, and do not intend to leave it while I can further any of its interests with *my* feeble kick! Those of us who love the country of our birth and of our dearest associations, *ought* to stay in it, and kick with all our might at its wrongs until it is much more of a Socialist Canaan than New Zealand.<sup>10</sup> Her irritation – anger, almost – though transmuted in her ‘Ocean Postage’ letter to emotion on parting with the Ransteads, is still apparent.

My dear Meg & Will, . . . I can’t help wondering where this will find you, & how you’ll all be looking when you get it. That you will be feeling that God’s in His heaven and all’s right with the world I know, and I wish you joy of the sentiment, for it is pure sentiment, as I shall be feeling this day week when you are gone. Every mortal thing in this old world will be wrong then, because its sun & its shine will have gone out *black* for me. I’ll go over to Westminster Road & *choke* any newcomer there. That man’s hand, or woman’s either, will be a murderous one which dares to lift the latch, & he or she will be a criminal who calls that place ‘home’. Bah! Was not *our* baby born there & has not that house given birth to some of the very sweetest moments in my life? The black stockings I darned all glittered with gold in my hands because they belonged to you & yours. . . .

Your friend, Julia.

Nothing is known about Harry Starr beyond what can be deduced from his elaborate letter-head which, in part, reads ‘Messrs Starr & Dipple’s Unparalleled Successes. The “Ne Plus Ultra” of Musical Comedy Drama. Otto the Outcast. Carl the Clockmaker. Company of Sixteen Artistes including Mr Harry Starr. All The Year Round. All Scenery Carried. Money Talks.’

My dear friend Ranstead, There is one good thing certain – that is that when you get this it won’t catch you on ‘your busy day’ and there is even a remote chance that you may probably take the trouble to read it – and I chuckle as I consider that a WPB is not part of the furniture of an ocean liner.

I don’t know why I write to you at all – except it is that I look upon you as one of those human puzzles that a student of humanity is always encountering during his pilgrimage from the whence to the whither – in short, you interest me. When I conjure up to memory the day I first met you, and the surroundings of that occasion – the beautiful little English home, the faces of a happy family, the glorious day we had, the songs of birds and the smell of hay & fruit – and consider that from the selfish standpoint you had everything that the heart of man could reasonably aspire to including the friendship and comradeship of all those you came into contact with – and then remember that you voluntarily give this up for a roving idea and a life in a far distant country I must confess that you are a surprise packet to me, and I am consumed with a desire to analyse and probe. But of course this is out of the question now. . . . God bless thee and thine is the earnest desire of Yours sincerely and always, Harry Starr.

Dear William, In the formula of Kipling, I hope this finds you playing like a kitten, eating like a hog & sleeping like a dead man; that the skies are blue, the breezes balmy, your days delightful & your nights sweetly lovely; your present bright with joy and your outlook on the future filled with hope and assurance. I believe if any human deserves these things & more also, you are he. Please give my warmest greetings to your lucky and wise company, & my sincerest wishes for their welfare under the Southern Cross. . . . I wanted much to have a quiet word with you in M’ter, but it was not to be. My wife joins me in affectionate regards. Faithfully, Leonard Hall.