

Letter of September 12, 1943 from Kenneth Shawcross stationed in India to Ivy Shawcross living in Timperley with Kenneth's parents and sister.



Original envelope is above and text of letter transcribed by Sarah Nosal in August 2013 and reviewed by John Shawcross, follows on next page.

Capt. K. G Shawcross RAMC
No 154421. 18 B.G.H
India Command
12/9/43

My Dear Love.

I have had your air letter on the moving business. Now I really must get the understanding straightened out. Now, firstly I admit that I had agreed to you going on your own at the end of this year. At that time it seemed a long way off and I thought I might be home by next spring or Summer. If that had been the case, I probably would have been in favour for your sake, as that's what you want to do. I admit I am thinking of myself, but I think with fair justification, & I hope I can make you agree with me. Supposing Darling I had out here any control over my movements, I might like want to go in for adventure and plunge into the wilds, as has to a certain extent happened but I would not do that, for your sake; if I had any power in the matter, out of my sense of duty to my family I would stay in Bombay or Poona. There I should be easily in touch with you, & you would be more happy, because I was in a safe place (comfortably) & you would feel you knew where I was & what I was doing. Now, putting the boot on the other foot I am on active service in the future I'm liable to get out of touch with you. Darling, don't you see, although you yourself are quite happy to go & live on your own, & it is quite a reasonable attitude on your part, I shall be worried to death, I know without cause, but I know I shall be literally off my nut if I get really out in the wild, and knowing you are on your own, I know I can only have a reasonable peace of mind if you are in the midst of people I know, to look after you & help you if you are sick or something. While you have been at Highfield Rd, & visiting Aunty Lucy & Ida & so on I have been happier than at any time since I have been away. Now I have no power to stay in Bombay or I would, but you can stay at Highfield Rd, I know you are happy there, you & your letters have said so many times. I don't expect to be home next Summer, perhaps the spring of 1945. & darling to be quite honest I just cannot bear the thought of you on your own for another 18

months & two winters. Please darling stay on at least this Winter, until we see how the war is going on. If say things go well & next Summer, we are in a position to know when I am coming home, then honestly dear I shall be only too glad to make plans with you for taking a place, buying furniture & so on. You say I am impracticable (?) dear, but I really think you are. You have already the responsibility of a rapidly growing son you don't want to be saddled, with furniture & so on, when we have no idea at all when I shall be coming[sic] to help take part in the fun & share it all with you. Here is a definite promise darling, & I assure you I won't forget it. If you will stay with my people for the time being, when the time comes when I can definitely expect to come home in six months. Then I will give you a free hand to take rooms, or a flat, or whatever suits you, & make available for you £200 to do what you like with, buy what you like with, but please don't take any definite steps now darling. If I am going head first into this war, & the future is still so uncertain. I want you to be as safe and free from responsibility as possible, when you might not be able to get in touch with me for several months. Darling I am not demanding now or ordering, I am pleading with you, to do nothing hasty & try & see my point of view. From the other side of it, it crosses my mind have you fallen out with my mother or have they upset you in any way that I do not know. I do know you are very sensitive & liable to think they do not want you from some little remark, that you took the wrong way. I will tell you this: when I wrote and said to Mother, would she help you to get a place of your own, she wrote me a very nice letter which cleared away any doubt or misgivings I may have had as to whether you were really welcome there. My mother said quite definitely that she liked you to stay on with her & could see no reason why you should not both get on very well together. As you know I have a terrible memory for what I have written & I vaguely remember writing a strong letter, some time in the late spring to my mother, saying that you were wanting to live on your own, & asking her not to oppose you but help you to find a place. It occurs to me now that if she acted on this, it would give you the impressions that she really wanted you to go, you being

thin skinned like me. & me not having told you, at the same time that I had written to that affect. Well times have changed. I don't see the time of my home coming at all defined. I am now on active service again & not in Bombay & all the feelings I have expressed on my first page have made me change round, to wanting you to stay. Also I am sure my mother & father are only too glad to have you, in fact they want you to go on staying with them, you can have no doubt on that.

I sent off your Xmas present yesterday. I hope it arrives in time for Xmas. Now the Med is open it should easily. This has been a great week that has just finished. The invasion of Italy & the capitulation of Italy. The Italian fleet reaching Malta & other ports, & the Russians 45 miles from the Dnieper (?). With all this, I expect you are expecting the war to be over & me home in no time. It's no use dear kidding yourself. The main core of German resistance has not been reached yet. They are still fighting many hundreds of miles from their own land. Even if we get a foothold in Europe, France (and? or?) Greece, there will be a long campaign of at least 6 to 9 months before we could gather enough forces on the continent to be decisive then it will take time before units overseas will begin to be recalled. I reckon at an earliest estimate May 45. don't be downhearted darling, time goes quickly and that is only 18 months, which is well over the halfway line. I got your polyphotos. They are very good. There are at least six of them which are first class. Expressions, which I well remember bring you so much closer to me. I got the wedding photos, & the photo of you and John. The proof (?) is very good of John but not much like you. The individual wedding picture is more like you. although god only knows where you got that silly Hat!!! I have no more room so I will write an Air Letter (mail) tonight dear.

All my love
Kenneth

Sender. Capt. R.C. Shawcross.

No 154471

Written in ENGLISH.

