

45 Carlton Road, Oxford OX2 7SA Tel: 01865-511814

Dear Phyllis,

St Nicholas Day

6 December 1996

A very happy Christmas to you, a prosperous New Year and a better government in 1997, wherever you happen to live, especially in Britain - not that there is much hope offered by Tony Blair's Tory-cloned 'New Labour'. At least South Africa's determined struggle against the brutal legacy of apartheid, and its far-sighted Truth and Reconciliation Commission, offer hope and encouragement to us all.

1996 has given me three major occasions for celebration. My first grandson, Jack Edgar, was born to Jenny and Phil on 16 April, and in May Joy became engaged to David Younger, they have now taken a house together in Harpenden and plan to marry next May. Thirdly, I have completed three years' work on Judy's doctoral thesis. This should have been done by Judy herself, with her customary speed and flair, but was excessively delayed by previous editors, and then further hampered by my house move, the South African elections, the theft of my computer, the conversion of all the disks - twice - and by the variable demands of my day job, besides active campaigning, for anti-apartheid (we won!), SOS Roads (we won!) and now for refugees and asylum-seekers (we're doing our best against oppressive laws). But two days ago I delivered the final edited script of **Migrant Labour and Colonial Rule in Basutoland, 1890-1930** to Cambridge University Press. My personal target date had been 1st November, which was Judy's tenth anniversary, but it wasn't too far behind. CUP has not yet agreed to publish, but if not we will certainly get it published elsewhere, and launch it in both UK and South Africa, perhaps combined with a Memorial Lecture in her honour.

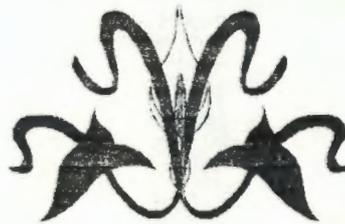
This year, unlike last, I did take a holiday, when Holly and I spent a splendid week together on the Isle of Wight, plus two days with Walter and Maisie Birmingham and their nightly, peanut-addicted visitors, the badgers. The IoW, still unspoilt, was a marvellous seaside and country rest cure for me, and full of new friends and exciting things to do for Holly (9 last month). We hope to persuade the rest of the family to join us there next year. But we two could always kidnap Georgia (now 3), even if Jane & Dave, Joy & David, Jenny, Phil and Jack can't be persuaded to make it a joint trip!

This Christmas Day I shall be visiting both Joy and Jenny, while Jane spends time with her father; then we shall all be meeting here on 29th December for our family Christmas party. On Jan 4th I plan to host a (near) Twelfth Night party for those few refugees and asylum seekers who have managed to get out of detention, if only temporarily or on bail, along with the volunteers who man the Asylum Welcome office in town or visit those still behind bars. So think of us all this festive season - if this letter reaches you in time. (It is already a day late for the last posting date to USA - oddly, two days earlier than the last date for Africa, which may tell us something about US mails. and as far as I know they haven't even been privatised.)

1997 will, I hope, be a year for travelling further afield. Iona? South Africa? Victoria Falls? Van Gogh in Otterloo? And for some other writing, perhaps. Certainly for unpacking the cases of books that still crowd a room which will then become my computer/teaching/spare room for guests (the small bedroom now being occupied by my lodger). So please come and visit me in 1997, whether you come from Africa, America, Denmark, India, Scotland, Wales, Paris, London, Cambridge, or round the corner in Oxford.

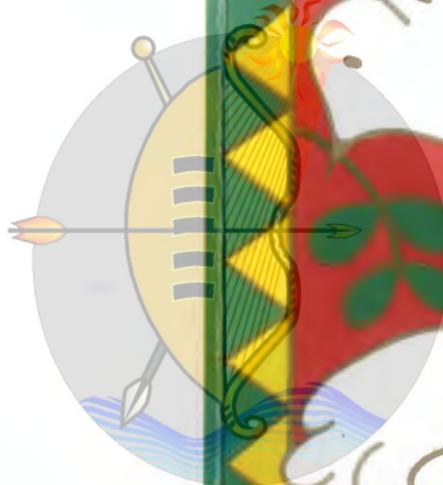
With love and all best wishes from

Helen



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## Festive Doves



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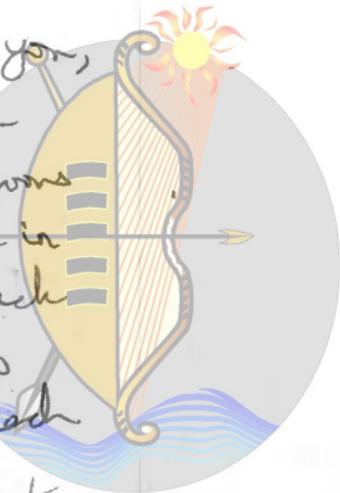
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Dear Phyllis,

Where are you? I was so pleased to get your card, message & photo from Lesotho, but no address. In August, a friend visited Durban, bearing a letter & small gift for you, but found you gone from your flat and "moved to Joburg". An attempt to rendezvous with Fatima Meer, who was to contact you in Joburg, failed, so she brought the gift back to Oxford. I won't send it until I know definitely where you are. I hope this will reach you somehow.

So sorry to hear you've been ill. Not too good myself just now, but things should improve in '97. Much love, Helen



(Merry Christmas)  
Happy New Year  
With love from  
Helen