

6, Holmbury Court,
LONDON, S. W. 17.

March 16, 1947.

Dear Jack and Pottie,

May I have the temerity of congratulating you, "You Lucky People" as my friend Tommy Trinder is apt to remark?

Mother sent me a Wauchope paper some time ago (as she very often does) and I noticed that you scored a bull's eye with a nice little house at Hornsby! Nice work! So, I presume you will one day be retiring from the secluded life to make a home in Sydney?

I am hoping to have a trip out home myself towards the end of this year, and if so maybe I shall have the pleasure of seeing you all again? Such a trip seems to be the utmost a chap could look forward to, especially after the awful winter we have experienced here in dear old England. Ever since last Christmas we have been snowed-up and iced-down without a break and although it is now the middle of March (when the weather should be better) we had a terrific blizzard again last night! I have never experienced such terrible weather, and hope that soon we may see the sun shine again.

How is life in general treating you these days? You are certainly fortunate in residing in a country with such a nice friendly-like climate. I expect all your children have long since grown up and married? My elder daughter, Joan, married soon after the outbreak of war, in 1939, and she has two sons, one of them born in 1941 and the other in June last year. The elder boy is quite a smart kiddie, and the baby reminds me a lot of the "Rowsell" type - a very distinctive type indeed, if I may say so without offence. My younger daughter, Barbara, married last summer also, after her discharge from the Army in which she served for three or four years in an anti-aircraft battery on the coast. They brought down several of the enemy planes. That chap Wright, the bowler with the M.C.C. team in the last Tests was her Commanding Officer.

If you are in any way interested in the history of the old Rowsell and Churchill families, may I say that I have succeeded in tracing the Churchills back to the year 1600, and have quite a lot of detail relating to the Rowsells also, but not so far back in their case. I often go to Woodstock for a few days and last summer made a visit to Yeovil, the home of the Rowsells.

I have actually been in the old Churchill home at Woodstock, which is a very fine old house indeed, and the late occupier - Mr. John Marston Money who died recently - took me up on to the roof of the old home to show me where the names of the Churchill people were carved in the lead work on the roof, some of them as far back as 1759.

All this family history would make a most excellent story BUT there is still just one little piece missing to complete it all, and for this I am afraid that I shall have to seek an interview with the one and only Winston Churchill one of these days! There seems to be no other way out of it for me, if I am to confirm or deny that Grannie Rowsell (born Sarah Churchill) and her father are related in any way to the illustrious family of the Dukes of Marlborough, of Blenheim Palace, Woodstock. Personally, I think it quite probable, but I am unable to say definitely until I have traced the records of two marriages, which took place before the establishment of Somerset House, London, where all births, deaths and marriages have been registered since the year 1837. Grannie Rowsell (Churchill) was born in 1837, and her registration is in volume No. 1 at Somerset House. Previous to that, it is necessary to know the exact church where the marriage was solemnized, and to turn up the records at that particular church. I have spent quite a lot of time and money in my search so far, which has taken me to many parts of Oxfordshire and into Buckinghamshire as well.

Last summer I traced one of our distant relatives to Deddington in Oxfordshire, and this chap was most insistent that he is in some way related to Winston Churchill, but unfortunately he could not tell me just how this relationship came about. There are many of our relatives buried in the churchyard at a place named BLADON, in Oxfordshire, where lies the body of Lord Randolph Churchill, the father of Winston Churchill - so, there are plenty instances of coincidence, so say the least.

If Eileen has any documents at all, would it be too much to ask of you to suggest that she send them to me? I have got so far in this interesting research work that I should like to complete it.

Well, I hope this finds you all in the very best of health and please accept my kindest regards and best wishes,

Yours &c.

Eric.

*Please return
this Mrs. Wright.*

(ERIC THOMPSON)