27 Cheltenham Rd

Cheltenham

20th Sept (45)

Dear Ralph,

How are you keeping? I hope well. We had hoped you could have managed to come home, but it wasn’t to be, I know how you must feel up there, knowing how things are here. It’s so hard to have to make oneself realize that Dad won’t be with us again. Mum is bearing up better than I thought she would, but then Mum always did. I had to get Dr. Cherry to her on Monday, she has developed a heavy cold and is very run down which is only to be expected.

Dad didn’t actually pass away from natural causes, we haven’t been told the true facts and it doesn’t look as if we will ever learn that. He had a fall of some kind on the Thursday and we were not notified at the time. He had passed on when we reached the hospital and from what we were told he had done so long before they even rung us. As his arms and wrists were tied to the bed I fail to see how he could fall out of bed and even if he did he could not have got such a bruise on his forehead and a large bump on the back of his head. The news stated he got out of bed and fell down some steps, if he did that it was neglect on the hospitals part as he had to be watched. The doctor said that he was going to put on the certificate that Dad died of an abscess on the lung which isn’t the truth or anywhere near it, but the Adelaide hospital have to clear themselves. The doctors are all youngsters nowadays that’s the trouble. We haven’t had the coroners verdict yet, so there is more to it than we have been told. You see Ralph, there is something , that we didn’t know whether to tell you now or not, it’s a hard thing to tell you. Dad has been failing a lot the last few months. His mind has been very sick, worry and bad nerves brought that on. Mum and Garth took him to a specialist just over a week ago and he put Dad in a nerve ward at the Adelaide. That was on the Thursday night and on the Friday night we went to see him. Ha talked perculiar, he seemed to have an idea that he was being sent to an asylum that night and nothing we said would convince him that he wasn’t. Mum spoke to the Sister in the ward and she said he had been talking like that all the afternoon. We were very worried when we left the hospital, and next morning the Sister rang to say Dad had tried to take his life with a razor blade. The boys rushed up to the hospital, and waited for the operation to be finished. He came through alright, with blood transfusions. He seemed to pick up after that and on the Wednesday was much improved, that is the message sent to you, when I tried to get you home. If only we could find out the truth it wouldn’t be quite so bad. Even the nurses couldn’t make out or said they couldn’t, where Dad had got the razor blade from as the patients are not allowed to shave themselves. Anyway they hushed it all up (naturally).

Don’t worry over it too much Ralph, it’s done and worrying won’t bring him back. He was knocked down by a bike near Holdens some weeks back, and ever since then he hasn’t been the same, it evidently brought things to a head. When you come home it can be explained better Rall, I am very bad at writing these sort of things. We had the funeral held off until the Sunday, in case either of you boys were on your way home. John didn’t make it until Tuesday. He came by plane to Melbourne and then to Adelaide.

Olive came through on the Saturday morning by the express. They are staying a fortnight here and a fortnight in Melbourne. He has 31 days leave, and by then his unit may have come South.

Stan will be out of the army in a couple of days so then there will be only you and John to fight it out but by all accounts John will be out before you.

Ken is at a place called Jacquiment?? Bay now, goodness knows where that is, I can’t see it on the pacific map, it must be just a small place of no consequence. He thinks he might be home by April as it will be about the same time as your homecoming won’t it old chap?

Auntie Bess and Uncle Les have been down, they were a great help to us. They went back on Monday.

I have left my job but will find another when things have settled themselves again.

Well Ralph I will finish this off now. Bill Harvey is to be married on the 24th of this month, so Aunty Bess told us. “Cheerio” for awhile.

Your Loving

Sister. Fay