

Appila the 13th March 1901

First, may God greet you

Dear Bertha and Paul!

I must write to you once again, because you will have been waiting a long time to hear how the Sale went. It went off pretty well. Uncle Schneider from Orroroo was here too, but none of you people came. I was hopeful until Saturday evening's train, but still no-one came. I would have loved to see you here again.

Some of the stuff went off fairly cheaply, but other items sold well. Rose was the dearest horse; John Knauerhase bought her for £23.10s. [Jack was part owner of the Kahl & Knauerhase greengrocery in Booleroo Centre. R P]. A man from Port Pirie bought the pair of buggy horses for £20.10s. Fox was sold for £7.10s to Bowman who works Smith's farm. The cheapest horse went for 8 shillings; that was old Nelly. Some of the stock also sold fairly well, for horses, cattle and sheep fetch a very big price up here; especially fat cattle and sheep, because meat is very dear and hard to get hold of.

The sale of other items also went quite well. Of course Gotthold grumbled a bit and pushed up the price I had to pay for the grister and the chaffcutter, but that doesn't matter. He also had a lot to say about mother's cows and horse. But by and large everything went off well, because the people were very well behaved. I will tell you all about it if and when I happen to get the opportunity.

I've had a lot to do up until now and still have. Very soon I'll have to start seeding again, because I plan to sow quite a big acreage this year, and so must start in good time. I also have a lot of other work to do, because the Sale put me so far behind. I really had a lot of work to do to prepare for it. At times on the sale day I hardly knew where my head was, because there was so much to do. Then, the week after the Sale I hardly worked at all, because I was so stressed out. Now I have a working man again, I pay him 15s a week. He is Irish, Mick Hannigan. His father is Zwar's neighbour. (living on section 116).

Dear Bertha, you ask whether Edel is still with us. She left on Thursday, after the Sale ended, to stay with Alfred. He's living at Clarks and was busy breaking and raking stubble. Then Edel was at Gotthold's for several weeks but is gone now back at Alfreds. She wanted to go down (south) to learn sewing (dressmaking), but hasn't got an answer from Miss Keller yet.

And about our church project; it is still going ahead slowly, for the foundation stone of the new church was laid just today. A lot of people were there and Pastor Auricht too, as the only pastor beside Ortenburger. I believe if the church building had been finished it would have been filled to overflowing. For the old church could nowhere near hold them all. It was a very nice service.

And about our pastor. He is continuing here because the majority did not want to let him go. Only a few would have been happily let him go. Naturally, no-one could have held him back if he had really been determined to go; then they would have released him.. but when he saw that most of them were not happy to see him go, he stayed on. He said to me that he had been very mistaken about some people whom he considered his best friends, but were just the opposite. Then again, some people who he had not thought much of, he now regards differently. It was a real shame how certain people treated him, for he really has much more patience than I would have expected. He does really mean well.

When the Ortenburgers visited us Friday before last, he told me all about how some people had annoyed him. But he mentioned that so many others were attached to him, especially the youth who almost all like him. But he is very forthright and that is just how I like it, as do most people. Today he again preached pointedly and earnestly at the foundation stone laying. He particularly challenged the young people to remain true to the Church, for the temptation not to do so is so very great. His message was a real comfort to us, and at the same time very serious.

He also holds Lenten services every Friday, but I haven't yet been able to attend one, because I was never at home, usually having to go to Laura on business, for we've had a lot of that to attend to lately. You would not believe how much work is involved in seeing to the Will! But most of that should soon be over. One day last week we went to Laura expecting to be back home by 2 o'clock, but at 5.30pm we were still there in Laura!

Now I can hardly think of any more news to write. So I'll close with the hope that this letter reaches you in the best of health. Thanks be to God we are all fairly well, except that since last Sunday I have been getting some asthma attacks. It is a horrible ailment but I think and hope that it will soon get a lot better. Because I believe that all the worry about running the farm and the work it involves has a lot to do with it, and that will get easier fairly soon. The feeling of depression has almost completely left me. The medicine from your Papa did take effect immediately. You can tell him that.

Mother is also fairly well, though she was quite exhausted after the Sale. Your letter made her very happy and she asks you both to write again soon. Though she cannot write she sends her greetings to you all. Greet all your folk from me too.

So I remain, as always,
with many greetings,
your brother, Richard Becker.

Please do write again soon, because I always enjoy hearing from you, especially now that I am virtually alone.

English Translation

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