

Gordon Higgins
Halifax

May 14, 1978

My dear old friend Gordon:

I was delighted to hear from you after all this time. I've been in and out of Halifax many times since I saw you last, but somehow our paths never seemed to cross. I met Roy Daniel once in police uniform, but never saw Roy Campbell or Lionel Byalin again. Your news about Lionel was amusing and interesting. Somehow I can't picture him as a wild-eyed communist, or for that matter as a soldier. I remember that you and I had a small squabble with Bionel one day and pushed him around a bit, as kids do, and the next day his mother fixed us with those beady black eyes of hers and demanded, "What is the minning of the biting-up of Lionel?"

Often think of those early sea years of mine, when my family was in England and the Higgins house on Chebucto Road was my friendliest port of call. Your mother, bless her heart, was like a mother to me, and I was often lonely in those days. Then that marvellous spell on the farm at Clarence, after a year on Sable Island. What a contrast! I never forgot it.

My wife died three years ago. The poor old girl had been failing in body and mind for several years, and it was a merciful release for her. I couldn't stand a housekeeper underfoot whenever I ~~xxxxx~~ turn around, so I live alone and like it. A very good charlady comes in once a week and does ~~xxx~~ the cleaning and the laundry. My cooking is strictly camp style, learned in the woods a long time ago, helped out a great deal by "TV dinners" and frozen pies. Once a week my son and daughter-in-law get me out to their home at Hunt's Point, on Port Mouton Bay, and fill me with good home-cooked stuff.

Ever since the Halifax explosion of '17, when I saw so many people mutilated and blind, I've had a recurring nightmare of going blind myself. And the nightmare began to come true about five years ago, when the development of cataracts in both eyes slowly but surely cut off my sight. A long business of waiting for the cataracts to get "ripe", first in one eye, then the other. Then the operations, and post-operative complications, with long miserable spells in hospital, and fumbling and painful experiments with contact lenses, and finally the thick lenses that enable me to see now. I make mistakes in typing (as you see) but on the whole I do quite well. I drive my car locally, but wouldn't dare to venture onto a fast traffic highway, or get into any situation that involved tight parking. I've even resumed golf in a weird fashion at White Point. But my golf always was a bit on the weird side, as the club can attest. Well, write again and tell me more.

Cheers!

Tom