

[Sa 30 Sep 1916]

My own dearest

I had a letter from you last night. I was not expecting one yet. I did not think you would write till you got back from the forward position. My dear dont you get awfully tired of those long nights at on duty. I cant think how you can lie on your bed and not go to sleep quite imorably. My only chance I think would be to walk about under the stars, and watch the red flashes of the guns.

I am glad you got my cake and the butter and the knife. Weren't you pleased with the packing of the cake. you dont say any thing about that.

Uncle Charlie has sent you off a box of apples mostly cookers but some eaters and that will sapliment those from le pommier de Lieut. Mallory. I do think its so nice for you being able to make friends with the French people about and such a very good thing to do. It will always modify these opinion of the English to some extent.

It is so difficult for me to believe that there can be a vegetable garden of any sort close to where you are fighting, and would you mind telling me what you have to pay for fresh eggs. Its only curiocity not because I dont think you ought to. I want you to have every thing as nice & may be.

It was very wet all yesterday so Clare could not sleep out in

The morning. So in the afternoon Masula and I took her out for a walk while Violet went off to see Maggy. We only went round about the town doing different little things that I had to do, but then we went out for a talk rather than a walk. We talked of the problem of old age most of the time. I was trying to suggest how it might be mitigated, or rather I suppose how one might stay young in spite of age, and Masula maintained that the only thing to do is to acquiesce, and not to believe that that you are young when you are really old, because it deceives no young person. I think too that one ought to decide which ages can be friends & with care.

I took my second cottage service last night and I think it went off quite well. I was rather pleased with my little talk it went so much better at the time that it had gone when I was preparing it. I did not forget any of the points I wanted to bring in and I managed to enlarge upon them more than I had before & to bring in an extra one. There were no men this time. One who came before had not come home from work so even his wife could not come and another had come back so wet that he could not come. I think I found it easier to do with only with only women. I know what they will like and what will appeal to them but I don't know it in the same way with men.

I saw Mrs Kenways boy yesterday but he is not so good a specimen a Clare. He is a lot bigger for his age than she is but then he is fat and not very strong. But I dare say that is a great deal because he is rather too big for his age and strength. He is very shy but then he never sees any one out there.

We heard yesterday the sad news that Mr Williams has lost his voice. He went out as a mining engineer. He had been a miner so they sent him out in those days without any training. He did very well and got the DSO. I am sorry for them, but I cant help being glad it wasnt Constance Mussen's husband. Father went over to see them last night and he said they were looked simply wretched. Poor people, when will the war end. Every day its taking their happiness away from hundreds of families

I received this morning a parcel of letters from you and I have put them away. I expect it means that you expect to move from your comfortable dug outs soon.

Its raining hard here with a yellowish grey mist a most depressing day if you are having the same it must be unalterably gloomy in your ruinous muddy surroundings.

My mind suddenly leaps back to that lovely afternoon we spent at Winchelsea. We were together then & happy and the sun shone on us. Do you remember watching the rocks through your glasses. And then the lovely ride we had in the

hills behind. Oh how inexpressably good it will be if we ever do those things again together and with no war overshadowing us. Dearest my heart is full of fears and sadness sometimes. Its always there I think really only when I am cheerful I can rise above it for a bit.

I love you so much dear; you are entirely the one person I want. I am much better and nicer when I am with you and much more the sort of person I was meant to be.

I dont think you do know & I hope you never will know how cross and nasty I can be. It is not that I want to deceive you, but when I am cross and nasty it is not what I really am but what I was silly and ignorant enough to allow myself to grow into. When I married you I started fresh and with more knowledge and I knew that ill temper meant unhappiness. But I have not yet conquered it when I am living at home here and I am unhappy.

We had a very beautiful walk yesterday. We went to Highdon's Ball, to the Kenways, by the wood and came back by a field path across the golf course then across fields to Turesley, and up our back way. The blue distance across ploughed fields was lovely. I always like it particularly

My love to you dearest for ever & ever
Your loving

Ruth.