

25.9.16

My dearest Ruth This will be a short letter, it is already 11.0 a.m. and I must get the water party to take it back with them; they generally get here about 12. I have been on duty all night - which doesn't mean that I have been walking about under the stars all the time watching the red flashes; as a matter of fact I was 'on the job' till about 1.30 am and after that was awake nearly all the time though I was lying on my bed - I had to see that the man on the telephone was awake, & the guard alert. Then at 6.0 I was up for some firing. From 7.0 I tried to sleep & handed over my duties to the Sergt. who acts as Section Commander - but I had no further winks & there was business again at 9.30 - so to breakfast finished half an hour ago. A good enough meal; water bath on my cot bed while I am dressing. Tea is made & then a little porcelain dish is put on - butter melted in that & two eggs broken in & fried. Raspberry jam to follow & then an apple.

These delicacies (I include fresh butter & quite fresh eggs) are the result of a visit to Corbie the day before yesterday. My principal errand was to get potatoes for the men. I quite amused

myself over this; we get them from a sort of vegetable
market garden which extends itself behind a very
insignificant looking shop - such a nice family.
I tried to get apples there but mostly they weren't
ripe & anyway they haven't many! however I
climbed an apple tree & shook a few down - very
good considering their immaturity & I brought
away a pocket-full - the tree is now known
as le premier de Lieut-Mellay & it is to wait
till I come back when I shall carry away the
rest - not a large number.

Many thanks, dearest for the cake which came
up here yesterday; it is excellent; I had a particular
feeling towards the slice cut by your hand. The butter
also came yesterday but is still down below. Don't
think that because I was able to get some at Gotic
that ~~year~~ it wasn't worth sending yours - We
can't get it often enough here & anyway Westons
butter is ever so much better; I shall have my
share when I go back to-morrow.

I was pleased by your account of Clara's
birth - I'm really feeling very anxious to
see her again. I think the photos are very
attractive or at least they suggest that
Clara is attractive when her face is in movement.
I hope you aren't disappointed that she is
backward. It's hardly too early to say what

is her endowment of talents. You constantly make me think she is a pensive soul & that's a great start - After all the will to think is one half of what usually is called 'brains'. It looks as though she's likely to be a bit slow at picking things up - but even that can hardly be indicated by any slowness at this stage. You can't tell how much attention she pays to talking - that must make a difference - I mean how strong the desire is. And then again it may be much easier to ~~pick up~~ imitate the speech of one person than another - perhaps a vast deal of baby talk goes better with dearest one. I quite hope she won't be stupid - from what you say I don't feel much alarmed particularly as she is backward physically - because that may be an explanation. It doesn't seem to me matter in the least that she should have fewer than the usual number of teeth for her age provided she is endowed with the proper number in the end; & there's no more ^{from the evidence} reason to doubt her endowment of brain than her endowment of teeth. Now if she had a superb row of teeth but appeared to have no strong desires or to exhibit no intelligence

in her efforts to get what she wanted - with
I think there might be cause for a big doubt.
And it's not only a question of brain, but of
temperament. Will she have a big capacity
for emotion? That combination of sensitive-
ness with depth of feeling. After all that
distinguishes people in the best sense more
than mere brains.

The water part had been a gone, it now
appears before I began my letter - But any-
way, this must suffice for the present. I
must give ground - really there's no other
word.

Ever so much love to you dear.

Your loving
George

I could bathe with you ^{today} in the little black
lake below ~~the~~ Craig to Isfa - the Gray of
Carring. I forgot to say thank
you for the excellent little knife - just
what I wanted.

