

April 14 1917

My dearest Ruth I think the most interesting thing that happened yesterday was the doctor's inspection of my ankle. He seems to be a wise man & I quite believe what he says;— that the ankle bone is not properly joined up where the original fracture occurred & tends to get pressed apart & so causes an uncomfortable enlargement. For the present he advises bandages to hold it together & restrict movement. But he says that after the war I ought to have an operation which consists in cutting the bone so as to make a clean surface & then wiring it together & he seems to think that would make it sound. The joint itself is happily in quite a good state now.

This is not altogether an unsatisfactory report;— I'm glad to know what is wrong & to be assured of a remedy — not assured perhaps, but encouraged to hope for it — one can't know exactly without an X-Ray photo. That's the present trouble partly because it is a weakness & partly as a sort of deformity, & I would give a lot to get it put right.

We have no more news from the north — only one disquieting rumour. I think if we had

had any further big success we should have heard - so I'm not very happy about that.

Dumber had a nasty fall two days ago - hurt his knee. He's a very helpless creature & spent yesterday hobbling about & looking extremely miserable so I got the doctor to look at him to-day & he has ordered fomentations all day & I am to be chief nurse! I shall look in periodically to see how he's getting on, but I shall have to be up here near the guns most of the time. We had a lovely sunny day yesterday - almost windless - a beautiful change. But we have cold wind again to-day with a falling glass & a hail or rain prophesied for later. I shall probably be going to the O.P. to-night or early to-morrow morning so I don't want it to be wet. We have to man an O.P. literally from dusk to dusk beginning to-day; we are making a small dug-out for shelter, & shall probably go back to our 48 hrs. system, which is on the whole the best. I have an idea of pitching my small tent in the wood nearby - only it might get stolen, or the contents might.

It only wants some seasonable weather to make such things quite pleasant. I wonder how Mildred - Deb are getting on. There must be some feet of snow on the hills. I wish we were there. Do you remember the great glissade we had down the slopes of Crif, Dysjyl with David Poy. By the bye I must attempt a letter to David - but I've been trying hard to get some letters written for the last fortnight - never have time. Did you hear about Polly's father? Henni told me in a letter that he is a 'paralytic' whatever he may mean by that.

Our men have been very busy trying to find cellars this morning, but they seem all to have been blown up here. It's wonderful what one may find buried under the rubbish - how a little work will make a habitation fit for a general. We may be here some days longer. I hope we shall be - I like my little hut.

I had two good letters from you yesterday morning which had come by the mail overnight. I am very glad Mary Ann is to take a rest & very glad you are going to stay with her. You are sure to enjoy London by way of a change, and

You will be back before the blossom is over
won't you? I gather from the personal
remarks you indulge in that you are secretly
feeling rather nervous about the end of the
war. Of course it will be rather a bracing time
for some wives when their men come back
triumphant from the war - full of the swift-
ness of military life & looking for efficiency
everywhere; the dilatory housewife must
expect to feel the spur of martial vigour.
Still, you ought not to feel too great alarm;
if you cannot expect so light a vein as in times
past you may safely reckon that it will not be
a question of Rheobeam's scorpions; and
provided that meals are not more than one
minute late, that the shrill voices of the
domestics are never heard beyond the kitchen
door, that the provision of such refined amuse-
ment as becomes the establishment of cultured
people is punctually carried out, with no
unthrifty forgetfulness at one moment and
irresponsible afterthought at another, that
unseemly brawls never occur either between
the cook & her mistress or between the jackanapes
& the maids, that there is no stamping on
floors by heavy-footed women nor banging of

doors by irritated disputants, that no footprint
is ever seen on the front door step, that dirty
rags and ~~the~~ unseemly undergarments belied
out by the wind are effectively concealed from
the casual glance of the passer by and that
the clocks are wound up & corrected at 10.00 a.m.
each Sunday — I think you will have no
need to expect an excessive amount of criticism.

I hope my dear you will keep this letter
a copy out all that part which is intended
for your guidance both in your personal
notebook & your household book to which it
would furnish an apt preface; — and carefully
underline those points in which you are
most likely to become deficient.

Even in the midst of a great war you see, and
surrounded by scenes of the most lamentable
desolation a man may find time to think
of his household. Please to take this lesson to
heart.

Godbye darling - I have some work to do
now
Your loving
George.