

April 23 1917

My dearest Ruth, I had three rather old letters from you yesterday - the latest dated 15<sup>th</sup>. It's annoying that the mails are so bad both ways, & in spite of all that's going on, I don't see why it should be - still it always is. You seem to be answering letters which I wrote 3 to 4 weeks ago. As to these great operations north & south, we hear very little about them - nothing new for several days, although the weather has been favourable. It looks as though the French attack were expected where it was achieved much more than our own, and considering what wonders they have achieved <sup>before</sup>, I'm rather disappointed so far. But we're no right to judge yet - it's no use trying to.

I had a wonderful letter from Potty with yours last night - after reading about 8 pages I got to the answers to my questions about her father. It appears that he has had two bad strokes & is partly paralyzed - there's nothing very wonderful about that: but it is surprising to learn that he has married

again. A very sensible & strong-minded thing to do  
under the circumstances; evidently he didn't want  
to live with Polly but it became necessary to have  
someone to look after him. The new wife is an  
old friend; he lives in her house & she is practically  
his nurse. But what a world it is in which  
a semi-paralytic of over 80 years finds it  
necessary to marry in order to make this friend's  
arrangement. Poor man! he didn't like to make  
it known publicly. Polly seems quite calm  
about it & has no false sentiment as far as  
I can make out about her relations with  
her father, whom she neither knows nor loves  
& she couldn't like him. But she refuses to let  
the new lady Jenkinson to her house; her  
father pays her periodical visits. A funny  
business altogether. I'm inclined to think  
Polly is insane — I don't know exactly what  
that means; but she has an abnormal capacity  
for creating & living in false worlds. Her letter  
is in her most gossamer mood; I suppose she  
can write at a tremendous speed & never has



occasion to stop & think - well, there's something  
to be said for just chirping along like a lark.  
Evidently she has created the same bustle of  
life around her as she did at Godalming - she  
is nursing; it would be well for her sake if the  
war could go on another 50 years.

I had a fine day at the O.P. this time & con-  
ducted a shoot of 100 rounds on some farm  
buildings, which relieved the monotony. It was  
too cold to enjoy sitting about in the wood for  
its own sake, but it was quite good to be  
there & I spent much time in making out  
the distant country. In the evening I picked  
what I now take to be wild polyanthus & we  
now have a glass of them in the oven & also  
your bowl with polyanthus & grape hyacinths  
which are growing sparsely along a bank near  
my hut - it looks quite lovely; no flowers could  
suit it better.

There is a good deal of activity about in circulation  
just now. Do you remember how I moaned  
over that at Abbotsbury last year. I suppose

I shall be victimised again before long. So far the only inconvenience I have suffered is that my servant has given notice, in consequence of his inoculation, that he will be unable to officiate with the razor for some days - at present he shaves me in bed every other morning - which is almost worth a war!

The sun has really got the better of the wind to-day - a cool north wind quite was out by it; this afternoon has been very pleasant & it looks as though we shall have some warm weather at last. I saw some daffodils out this afternoon & Lilliput has found a little cachet of shrewsbury which we shall eat to-morrow. Talking of food - I never told you how much we appreciate the cream - do send some more one of these days. And you ask what substitute you shall send for sausage - but please go on sending them as long as possible - they are so good. I have ordered two pipes from Cambridge & told them to send you the bill & also I recently had some things from Holden & I've no doubt there will be some thing to pay for them. Could you



Sometime send me something for my hair which  
inclines to scurfiness - Dandelion I'm told is  
good & my barber servant says I ought to  
have dry-shampoo mixture, which is a very  
good idea out here where it is difficult to  
wash one's head.

The battery is all together now - Wood is sleeping  
with me at present in Dumbas's place - of  
which I'm glad. The effort of dispelling D's  
habitual clouds of gloom becomes wearisome.

We seem to have settled down here for a bit -  
a pleasant change, & the Hun is fairly quiet  
- I suspect he has withdrawn some guns to  
repair his losses elsewhere.

Best-time approaching. Darling: I wish  
we could meet in this region of the spring,  
under the malus flexibundus for choice (though  
it will want another month I suppose) or  
amid the scyllas & anemones of the Apennines  
or in some old palace garden of glorious Rome  
- and it would rain kisses.

Your loving George.