

Saturday 23 [Sep]

My own dearest

Good morning. Such a lovely morning and such a lovely sky. I do like to come down early like this and speak to you before any one else. I had such a horrible dream I dreamed the Germans had invaded us and Mildred + Harry Farr had gone to the town and they had killed them both. I was in a rage of misery about it. I don't like dreams like that. You are all keeping us free from invasion. I do think we ought every day to be glad we are free so few countries are now.

My darling I hope you too are having this good weather I expect you are it will help you so much in every way. I have not had a letter now for two or three days, but not yet a long gap and it might easily be that you were observing and busy or the post may be slow. I am not really expecting one yet because I have had so many lately I feel it is the time for a good long gap. You may be moving so I am quite prepared for a gap I must tell you how I got on last night at that little movie. As far as I can tell it went well, there were ten people I think not counting a baby and two little girls. The baby was very sweet and had it to hold after the movie was over but I will own that during the time it was going on it made too much noise to be altogether convenient. I began the movie with

two short prayers from the evening service, oh so first we sang 'Abide with me' they all knew it and as long as I sang the beginning of each verse firmly it was alright they came in on the second or third word and we went along alright. I dont think it would have been very pretty to listen to but I think they liked singing it.

After the prayer I read a piece from St Johns gospel then I talked to them for a little while. I think Mrs Fausch had spoken last time of God love for man. So I tried to say that if we ^{accept} Gods love as we must, we must love one another. I dont know if it would interest you to know just the way I did it. I began ~~with~~ ~~them~~ saying that now when every ones in sorrow or anxiety its harder than usual to realize Gods love. Then I went on that to show the ways in which we may see his love, one in the beauty of the world, & for just now in the fact that our country is not overrun by enemies. Then I quoted Christs words telling us to love one another and then I spoke of different sorts of love and how it is easy to love your husband and children but harder to love your neighbors and of how fond people are of saying in a superior way, we keep ourselves to ourselves, but how really unchristian that is. Then about helping one another, if you love people you cant stand by you must help them and when

you do help them you have glow of pleasantness toward them which makes it easy at the moment to be kind. But when we help people it is usually because they are ill or in trouble, and then sometimes they don't receive our help kindly and then we must try hard not to be angry and say we can will never do it again but we must remember that it is not easy to receive help well. And when we are receiving it we must remember that if we do so well and with gratitude we are doing something good that is not easy. Don't you think that about the difficulty of receiving kindness well, is often overlooked but is a very real difficulty to many people. And if people realize where these difficulties are they are more likely to be able to overcome them.

One thing that really pleased me was that ^{at} when the end of the service after I had prayed by name for all you who are fighting they all knelt on and prayed as though they wanted to.

Next week I shall talk of loving God and of prayer I think.

Dearest they want me to take that road & be a distant visitor to it and I don't know what to say. I like the people and I like knowing them and I think they would like me. But then comes the religious part and that's where the difficulty is.

I would be doing it under the church and would be expected to encourage the people to go to church & to communion I suppose and all the rest not counting buying the Parish magazine which Mrs Fanchase calls prose literature but which I call trash. You see if they dont want the Parish magazine I shall sympathise with them and if they dont want to go to church I may sympathise with them that would depend. I am not a pillar of the church & I dont want to be. But at the same time I am quite as likely to be helpful to those people as any one else they may get and they are short of ~~a~~ district visitors. Please dear give me your advice. I think I've enough to do without it but doubtless it would get put in alright.

I believe they are going to start a 'Mothers welcome' here, I should really like to help with that, and I shall if I get the chance. Mothers bring their babies to be weighed & seen by the doctor and you help and visit if necessary, also mothers come before the babies are born for advice and I believe that is often very helpful. In poor districts they have very very cheap but excellent dinners for expectant and nursing mothers & I believe it does improve the babies quite a lot. I am more getting good babies born into the world is just as important

Churchmen are with themselves and with the Church, but most with the Church. Its also amusing to see how every time the Church is criticized the persons get up one or other of them and say. The Church is all right its only you who are wrong because you do not back us up and want work, all is being done that can be done we are working desperately hard and these things you are saying have been said before and nothing has come of it.

Well thats partly damping, and it leaves one feeling that if anything is to be done it must be done in spite of the clergy and not with them. I dont think they mean to have that impression but they are worried and troubled and feel that they cant put with anything in the way of ritual & formula.

Well it was a very interesting little meeting last night but it was really carried on between Father and Mr Pitcher and the two persons there, both nice men, and Mr Newhook. Well anyway the national mission is making us think about religion. We were discussing it with Harold a good deal yesterday. She is one of the people who feels it better not to go to Church and who prefers to do her prayer and praise alone. I do understand the feeling and yet I want to be able to go to church I think its nice to go one definite time in the week to praise and pray with

other people, it also make a public acknowledgement of your faith. But clergymen seem quite satisfied often that you should do that. Poor clergymen I think we ought to expect less of them and more of ourselves.

My dearest when I went down to breakfast I heard the great news that Comble and Thiepral have been taken by us. We are so very pleased. They say our cavalry have been at them too, it is splendid. Also the paper says that between Mastinuish and High Wood the enemy evacuated a trench without a fight, so it looks as though your guns have been doing good work.

I have had another letter from you this morning and you don't say any thing more about lice so I do hope you have not got them. It would be so horrid for you.

Your little story of the scotch man who ran away with his trousers unfastened & fell into a trench tickled me awfully I must tell it to Father it would just fetch him he does so like things that are a little indecent.

I'm glad you have seen more of Mr Earl I liked him very much & I am glad you still do, yet what a good thing it is that we can like so many different sorts of people. I am sorry Mr Earl makes himself unhappy over the people he dislikes, it is so very useless. I learned that my second term a school. Our coffee cups that I shall paint someday came

yesterday. I wish I could get some time for doing painting, letters take up a desperate lot of time now. Its not only you I can ^{manage} ~~manage~~ that looks its way one else, and they seem so many.

I spent the morning in the pouring rain yesterday visiting those people where I take the cottage service. I have got more than half done and that is satisfactory. I gave one woman who is going to have a baby a long sack for it, it was quite a sweet one and she was very pleased. I like her and she does keep her house nice. I gave her some advice about looking after herself, good enough if she takes it, but resting is such a bother.

Mrs Brock came to Guildford with us this morning. She says that Kit has gone back to school again this term. The symptom of his illness is still there but they hope now it means nothing, they will keep a very careful eye on his health.

Darling I must stop to do other letters.

Your very very loving
Ruth.

