

Sept. 29, 1916.

The Anti-Room

Dearest Ruth I came back here last night and am all alone here to-day - We still use this place as a sort of base till the other places are a bit more comfortable - but things are going so much faster now that nothing is likely to endure for long. I found a letter here last night - in which you talk of preparing - I can't quite make out what - a sermon? I'm sure you would preach very sweetly or very sensibly - but to whom? Do tell me all about this. Is it connected with the Mission?

I expect your next letter will tell me how it came off.

These last two days have hurried away. The day at the O.P. was fairly quiet so far as enemy shelling was concerned. In the afternoon I saw the infantry make an attack. It was thrilling - indescribable. Looking down the slope about 2000 to 2500 yds in front of me was Caumont L'Abbaye - a group of monastic buildings converted into two farms which were almost ruined. When our bombardment began

this place was smothered with shell fire
- all along the line there was an intense
'curtain' of shrapnel fire - more like
an umbrella than a curtain. Our men
poured out of a ^{communication} trench in three bodies
one after the other & ran down the
slope & then wheeled round & crossed
in front of Baucourt L'Abbaye. What
amazed me was to see them stop
when they caught up the 'barrage' -
like people sheltering from a storm -
& then when it lifted going forward
again. Ultimately I was following
two jumps through my glasses & one
after another they ~~had~~ completely vanished.
"I saw no more of them - safe in a
trench! Apparently they found no enemy
to oppose them & their only casualties
were through shell fire - not many.
The whole scene was romantic - the
sun was shining brightly & the white
ruins ^{of the abbey church} showed up frequently through the
the smoke which was blowing across

throwing queer ^{dark} shadows.

The advance was about 1500 yds on the average. We have come to a different stage of affairs; there was no network of trenches over this ground. No doubt there are many lines to take, but they must be much further apart.

I wonder how much the German shortage of ammunition amounts to. Certainly he can't use it as extravagantly as we do in these parts - and less just lately. They molest our communications very little compared to all the firing of our batteries at cross roads etc. There are days near the front when he seems to have plenty - but again there is no comparison when one thinks of what we give his front line.

I believe the question of leave is 'getting warm' - but I am not deceived by that; there won't be much leave so long as the fight goes on at this rate; when the time does come there

will still be Littlejohn & Bell before me.
However I hear that other Corps have
been getting it.

Dearest, I want to see you; I can't
imagine how wonderful a pleasure
that would be. I suppose you'll look
as strong & straight as ever!

This letter has been half interrupted
"here's the (postman)" so

Yours truly

Your loving

George

