

Feb. 7. 1917

My dearest Ruth, I don't know that I have very much to tell you, though life seems interesting enough. The military relations between English & French, their opinion of us, their different methods & so on are all interesting, but hardly discussible in a letter. Their general view of us is easy enough to make out - that we are too happy-go-lucky, ill-organised & slow - slow to change our ways, not sufficiently adaptable; in short unscientific. On the other hand they are ready enough to admit that we have learnt a great deal & after all are much less severe critics of us than we are of ourselves - luckily they don't know the worst. I must add that from what I can see they do things in a most thorough fashion themselves & so I can't help thinking that they have got a good deal further in the management of artillery than we have. I hope to learn a good deal more about that in the next few days by reading their pamphlets & discussing different points. So far my duties have been far from arduous.

A few conversations with Frenchmen over the telephone however, go along way; I have to attend very hard to be certain I have understood exactly. I haven't walked either today or yesterday as it has been rather an anxious time & I have to be at the end of the telephone in case I'm wanted.

One thing I have to tell you. I expect it will please you. It appears that I am recommended for a staff lieutenantancy - I have heard nothing more about the job than merely this; - that I was asked yesterday to supply certain information about my military career & when I asked why they wanted to know I was told it was for this; but what the job is to be if I get ^{it} I can't tell; presumably I should like with red tabs a possibly wear them myself. You may imagine what I feel about all that. What I have felt about red tabs in general would make me almost think to wear them, & if it were a matter of choice I couldn't bring myself to accept a staff job because to have chosen that way would always make my feet uncomfortable. But

on the other hand I should be much more
comfortable ^{in the physical sense} so I should have more to do - so that
though I wouldn't choose that way I should be very
glad of comparison in that direction. Still I shall
be really sorry to leave the battery if that happens
& I shall probably find people to dislike on the staff
even more than I found at the Group.

I like living with these people. There seems to
be so much to talk of. Practically speaking I like
with the Captain & the Lieutenant; they are both
intelligent - above the average - & very ready to
help me & converse with me, especially the latter.
They are very good tempered & pleasant with each other
- but not more than one would expect to find among
English officers. The ^{chief} reason for which I prefer their
society to that of 30 H.A.G. that if I attempt to be
humorous I ^{am} much more likely to be understood.

It's very nice & warm in my room tonight
& the stove isn't smoking at all. My servant who is
a charming person has swept the chimney today.
He has also washed my vest today (it was quite
time; my washing has been at Cobie about 3 weeks
- but I haven't yet been able to get it

and I am sitting by the fire to dry it. If only the seats
were more comfortable or if one sat less & walked more
I should be as happy here as anyone can be out here.
How wonderfully lucky I've been since I returned from
leave. I have almost forgotten that mud existed
& I can hardly remember what it was like to spend
a cold day in a wet trench.

I do want letters from you dear one, nevertheless.
Perhaps they will send some along to morrow morning
(my rest is getting beautifully dry). I'm afraid you
must be having a bad time at home. But there's
much to be happy about at present - much hope of a
real victory approaching & hope of another baby &
certainty that I'm as safe as may be at present.
How I would like to have you here with me in this
white little room! Please give my love to the
others. To you darling many kisses & some to Clara

Always your loving
George

Can you get me a new tie. I badly need
one.