

[?12 May 1916] 40th Siege Battery,
B.E.F.

My dearest Ruth, you may clap your hands
for the present & sing songs in your
bath, or anywhere else. As far as I can
tell my fate is a good one. At least it
is not what I feared - how shall I
explain matters? ~~As~~ As I got nearer to
the front I became out for certain that the
company to which I was sent was holding
the worst part of the line - & then this
morning for reasons which I can't explain
it seemed likely that I might after all
go to a trench mortar battery. The prospect
of writing to tell you that was too horrible,
I know you would feel extremely anxious,
& rightly so. My darling I can't tell you
all I thought; it wasn't for my own skin
I really believe, but I did feel afraid for
you. And then it also came home to me
with a sense of tragedy, I haven't felt before
that married men are out here with

~~in~~ the after. assault in the most dangerous
circumstances. Well dear Ruth you
are spared the worst of what those men's
wives have to suffer & when you pray
God for me you can thank him for that.

What's more I feel I am going
to be happy. I'm in a siege battery all
right - not the biggest guns, but big
enough & in quite good general position
as to safety - a "good" place & a good deal
of protection, and a first rate lot of
men! I'm living in a cottage at present
with a real lady - from the ranks as
my companion - just the sort of man
one would expect a genuine man right
through. He's been in the work
& very anxious to instruct me. I was brought
round to his about by one Captain Littleton
& found then just man reading
music & playing nearly a flute. We

haven't talked of that yet; but it indicates
something we want in a man. More
than half the men in this battery are
Sortel, including the said Captain &
at least one subaltern. Everyone there
seems a Christian! I'm going to have
lots to do. I only arrived here after
tiring about that country mostly in
A.S. wages, at about 500 dollars a piece
seen all round the place - & several
more shelter & every thing of all
town) & we shall expect to be busy to night
There's some water in the trenches, &
can hear where I sit, very clearly, & the
infantry may call on for help. I shall
probably be in command of a gun in a few
days. I hope so. It is about
11 o'clock & I'm going round present with
Sells to see the ground, & then to bed
probably with clothes on; but that

is not a frequent condition.

I'm afraid you'll have to be content with less than we should like to by our correspondence, these next few days. You probably have not had my letter from Kani, as I had to put it in another packet & I'm told it will be retained in consequence. — It chiefly said that I had not yet heard from you & so probably shall do for ~~some~~^{two} days yet.

That is very trying. I do want to know what you have been thinking. I'm no doubt you keep a cheerful face.

Now my dear love I must end. I shall think of you very happily to night. Please send a line to B'head. — I haven't managed to write to them since I left Havre.

Yr. loving — George

with xxx etc as the
Tennessee part!

G. Mallory