

Shardon Manor,  
near Northenden,  
Cheshire.

23/6/24.

Dear Ruth,

There isn't much one can say on such an occasion. Words are the most inadequate things through which to express grief at the loss of a friend & sympathy for the loss of a husband. I wish to God I could write anything - anything at all that would make things easier to bear, but I haven't the heart to say the stock things. You've probably said them over to yourself often enough the last few days.

George's firm delish, especially when I was at Charterhouse & not over happy there, meant a tremendous lot to me & helped me to an extent I never could, in any case, have repaid. There won't ever be anyone to fill the gap that he's left. There never was anyone quite like him, was there?

Oh Ruth, I can't write this letter. I sit here with a pen & for every minute I spend in writing I spend ten in thinking - about him. I hope you've cried - I wish to God I could, but because men go out & harden their natures they lose that boon.

There's one thing I'm going to do. I run a troop of Rover Scouts, fellows of 17 years & upwards, pledged to service & comradeship & citizenship & physical & mental fitness. There are four patrols of about eight ~~each~~ men, & each patrol

has the right to choose some really fine character as the name of  
their patrol & as their inspiration in work & play. I am going  
to tell the troop about George when I see them on Wednesday night  
& offer one of the patrols a chance of taking his name. I know  
in advance that they'll jump at it - they know something  
about him already & he had promised to come & talk to them  
about climbing next time he was up North. I can only hope  
that they will carry his name with honour into the Scout Movement.  
His life was an inspiration to me in the way of keeping clean and  
fit in body & mind. His going out on the Everest expedition,  
not of his own choice but for the sake of the others - a thing  
done in cold blood & (I think) with a foreknowledge of danger  
& what was to happen - will never be forgotten by me  
nor, I hope, by my Rover.

If there is anything at all I can do, please let  
me know.

Yours ever,

Man Gifford

