

Dec. 8. 1918.

My dearest Ruth, I'm now with Trafford - having stayed a night with him on the way back to the battery. My last adventures in Paris were some of the best. In the morning of Friday I made a fairly early start & completed my purchases of books satisfactorily. I was then intending to go to the library, but it occurred to me that I would first like to go & have another look at a picture I had seen the previous day in a shop; it was in the window & I was just as much struck by it as before so I again went in to talk with madame about it & had hardly been these two minutes continuing my admiration when in walked the artist. I speedily arranged with him to go & see his studio in the evening. He is a young man who has been wounded in the leg during the war, & evidently has very considerable talent. He exhibits at the Salon which would correspond to our Academy if there could be any correspondence between French

and English painting. The picture is simply an interior in which his mother stands in calm stillness; it has nothing of the 'possi' style about it - not what you would call striking. Its technical origin is probably a mixture of Velasquez & Titian. In fact everything according to my usual point of view about pictures is against its being a good picture; but there are two opposites (1) that it happens to be alive (2) that I really want to possess it. Well now the question is whether we shall buy it. If only you could see it; because though I know you won't dislike it, still it may just mean nothing at all to you. The spirit is one of poetic meditation & that I feel is carried out in all parts of the picture - I can't give you much idea of the colour. The walls of the room are white, the carpet red (in the Marjorie quality) & the Madame's gown chiefly blue. I can assure you that its a decorative composition will

look nice on a suitable wall whatever it may or may not mean. Its size is about 20" x 14" - I'm only guessing & the price is £31, but Jorot says I could certainly get it for less. Personally I have no doubt that it would be reasonable in us to buy it (1) Its very seldom we either of us see a picture we really want & when we do it always turns out to be much more costly than this (2) The money would not be lost by spending it - the picture will always be worth what we give for it & for that matter, as the painter is quite young, probably more. (3) We want pictures for the Holt more than anything.

I liked Jorot very much when I went round to see him - he is absolutely natural & earnest & he paints portraits with great skill. His great aim is to make something that lives. On the strength of what I saw of his work I asked him if he were to come to England to come & see us & paint Clare & he seemed to think

that a very pleasant prospect - I think it very likely that he will come in the summer.

I hope you won't think I have been very precipitate when one has only an hour or so to make a liaison one has to get on pretty fast.

I enjoyed my last work at the library & bade an almost affectionate farewell to my luncheon companion there. He turns out to be a baron & full of hospitality & good will. I left the library shortly before 3:0 & when I arrived at the Hotel found a little boy from a bookshop all ready in the hall with a packing case half full, waiting for my other parcels; we then set to & packed the other parcels & took the case round the corner first & then, carrying it between us across a market place to the A.M.F.O., who I don't doubt has by this time sent it off to England.

The post, apparently, leaves here at 1:00, so I must end now -

please answer at once about picture.

Ever so much love to you

I return to Ltg. tonight George -