

Jan 31. 1917

My darling, I'm very idle & consequently
not very pleased with life. The Colonel &
Robinson arrived this morning. We don't
yet know whether we are to stick to these
quarters; the R.E. & R.A. of our Cosps
seem to be having a battle royal about that
question. It certainly is a desirable place
- a long terrace with a series of splendid
rooms built into the bank; the one we
are occupying present. as mess is only
about 20' x 9' - with big square posts & beams
to carry the roof leaving a series of panels
on the walls which are covered with a sort
of grey paper; it has three little windows
of transparent tulle. I speak humbly of such
convenience because the real mess room
further along the terrace is at least three
times as big with beautiful ^{clean} blue walls
& real furniture (i.e. made by the trade).
It is not yet vacant. The view is magni-

ificent, peculiarly beautiful just now
in the snow. It tells you one day exactly
what comprises it & you'll understand.
And all this only five or six thousand yards
from the enemy.

It makes my mouth water telling you
of this, because I have decided to go back
to the battery in any case - i.e. whether
Halifax, the late adjutant returns or
not. The probable date of that move
is Feb. 6, so you can arrange about
my address accordingly. The trouble
about this life is that it makes me
feel uncomfortable - as though I didn't
belong to the war.

It is warmer here today, thawing slightly.
I'm sorry. There will be a disgusting rush
when the thaw comes & I would like to
postpone it as long as possible. Meanwhile
it is beautiful & invigorating. You'll be

glad to hear that this is a calm part of the
time at present. I wonder where the
next big blows will be struck by either
side; & I wonder if it's true that Hunder-
berg has told the politicians they must
make peace by hook or by crook. The French
seem much more optimistic now & expect
the end I gather in the middle of the
summer. Only about five months more
if they are right! But there'll be some
heavy fighting before then. I hope the
Aims won't attack Italy - I don't think
they will because I can't see that it would
pay them to use troops there when they
have already such long lines to protect;
I couldn't bear to think of them in N.
Italy. I'd much rather they violated
the neutrality of Switzerland.

Allen has put up his three stars today
for Acting Captain - I suppose when
Lithgow goes will put up the crown.

I think he'll do very well in command of
the battery. I shall quite like to serve
under him.

I must now go & attend to one or two
jobs before tea. I may do some more this
evening.

Well, we've secured
our present quarters, though not all of them
- I'm very glad it's ended that way. It's
freezing hard again to night. A strong officer
who has some connection with the Army is
here to night; he & I & the doctor have
been playing Bridge - dummy auction if
you know what that means. quite amusing.

I shall go to bed now or very soon - a cold
dark little chamber but a lovely warm bed.
One is not likely to suffer from cold here; almost
every room has a fire stove & it is only a quarter
of wood, which is fairly plentiful.

Good Night dearest Ruth. I am only half alive
without you. I wish you could see this place &
walk with me over the frozen marshes, we
would enjoy ourselves. Your loving George.