

June 28 Wednesday

Dearest Ruth, I'm sorry I've left you longer than I intended without a word. I am working on shifts of 24 hrs. & was on duty for the day & night preceding 9 p.m. yesterday. I meant to write during my night up^{but} didn't manage it - chiefly through sheer weakness of the flesh; & all yesterday I was on the guns from ~~some~~ daylight to dinner. [At this point about 9.30 am I am called upon to help the Captain with figures - It is now 12.45]. We are all happy here & full of hope - the men of course rise to this sort of occasion & enjoy it & will enjoy it even if we get a bad time (of which no signs up to date). I was feeling rather deaf last night & it's certainly rather a wearing life just now. Lethargy does not make it easier by losing all sense of cool control the moment a hitch occurs. We have to fire at particular times & sometimes at a moment's notice - it's not always easy to be ready in either case - but every one knows that he has to act at once when time is short & to bustle is only to confuse. How excited folk must be in England now & will be still more I suppose by the time you get this. I don't think the Germans will get Verdun in spite of these desperate attacks but I suppose its fate is trembling in the balance. I'm told that 5 German divisions have been taken from the British front, 2 of them from near here

This information } the byo from Gabain who saw me as he
was passing in a car two days ago & came in to tea; he is
an intelligence officer of a neighbouring corps: The divisions
of course are on the way to Russia. The papers seem still to be
very optimistic about the course of events on that front.
I suppose they have reason; it looks almost too good to be true.

I read two letters from you in bed last night. I am
very glad you are enjoying or rather have enjoyed your visit
to Mary. I think she'll always manage to have a nice home
- a place of order & repose & some comfort. What do you think
of Ralph? I also received a parcel containing chiefly
Soup tablets. The prunes were an excellent idea - I shall
keep them for private consumption. This parcel you see
came with your letter. The ham & cake came about
two days ago - I can't remember whether I acknowledged
them. Thank you very much dearest. Really it has rained
cakes, with Mary's contribution & this last of yours (which
is extremely good!) so punctual. Little Joe has a lot of things
sent out, & we do very well in the mess now all things
considered. Seven of us feed together - the R.A.M.C. man
from the cab stand included. The present man is very
dull & adds nothing at all to our gaiety. I think for
general working purposes if you send me one cake a
week like the Westhrope one you made the other day
I shall do very well. I'm sorry I've been
remiss in acknowledging parcels. I've had all you mentioned

or you may be sure I should write bitterly on the subject. Surely
I told you I had received the one containing crystallized ginger
& the watch cover among other things — the letter by
the bye has not been used, as I managed to get a watch glass
in A.; but I'm glad to have it all the same in case of
accident. This is a distressing day as rain has
been pouring down — the last thing that we want.
What a month of June in all!

I have managed to read most of Chatter Brook's book
'The Ultimate Belief' — do get a copy & read it. You
won't find it too stiff — my only complaint is that
on some parts one wants more illustration. The life
of the spirit has a poor chance out here — so far as
concerns the intellectual & aesthetic parts. One is so
seldom wholly free. Half the mind is taken up with
the job, one way or another, near/away. The best chance
of having to speak one's thoughts to oneself has come
with this system of hours off duty — but then you
see I haven't had to say to myself. I am sitting in the
Map dug out now, with work going on still standing by
for a job — one is always 'standing by'. Perhaps after tea
I shall have some time by myself in my dug-out — I shall
try to get some work before sitting up to-night. It was
very difficult to keep awake last time.

I shall have to give you some description of my sleeping
place next time I write — but I'm afraid if I don't

finish this up now it won't catch the post.

My dearest one I wonder what the future has in store for us - could I conceivably be home for good before Xmas? I long to see you & be with you & build up life again together.

Insewell

Yours loving

George.

