

Dec. 31. 1916

My own dearest I'm very sorry I forgot to post my last letter yesterday morning. My memory must have been affected by the torrents of rain which caused a stream to run down my steps and by the thought of an A.P. day before me. I can't say I enjoyed yesterday; - a sloppy messy day. As you know, my last act before leaving the battery was to construct a post by night to the construction of a little tin hut for observation, sunk really in the ground with a slit of peephole looking out under the roof - and my first work on returning was to use it; I found a foot of water in the bottom. Generally speaking I was made to think of was, as I looked about me yesterday, as a colossal futility. You see the bad results of going on leave - However I was perfectly cheerful by the time I returned here - spent a pleasant evening with Plataner; East, who has come back after all, was there too - we made four for Bridge with Grant, the adjutant of the H.A.G. to which Carl & Plataner's batteries

both belong - a very nice man.

This talk is all a prelude to what I really want to tell you - I am to be orderly officer at our headquarters for such time as the adjutant is away. I don't know that it's much of a job; it doesn't mean that I shall be acting adjutant; the previous order officer will do that work; but I shall be his relief & learn about the adjutant's work - which I shall be quite pleased to do. It seems that this job will last anyway five weeks. The Colonel I'm told is a very nice man; the acting adjutant & signalling-officer are both what you would call 'decent fellows' & the doctor is a bore of the British kind - so I at present believe; perhaps I may have a different tale to tell later. Altogether my dear I consider this as a good move. I'm not sorry either to have been selected for the job - perhaps after all I'm less of a fish out of water than I sometimes feel & often consider myself.

This seems a dry letter. I don't feel dry; I feel quite lippy. I have already

begin to read 'Raymond', which I found worth
for me. I like his letters. I hate Oliver Lodge's
style; it gives me the impression of a glib
person who doesn't know what to leave out.

The communication from Myers - 'Dumms' -
is interesting; but it may be simply a case
of thought reading. Mrs Piper is of course very
well known to all the S.P.R. folk - or telepathy
as we might say; a sufficiently extraordinary
matter, but of course no evidence of Myers'
immortality since the communication may
have proceeded from Mrs Verrall's mind!

The photograph story seems to me then -
absurd. I would almost say. The medium
only says he may have had someone leaning on him;
the stick is common to almost all the officers'
& half of them are sitting down. Details like
this are not sufficiently extraordinary to be
taken as evidence in one case; the chances
of a statement of that kind being right are
about $\frac{1}{2}$; if the medium had given a great
number of such details all right or in say
100 cases of group photographs had got one
or two common facts right almost every time.

it would be time to begin considering ^{it} as evidence
~~at~~ in the form in which it is presented it
could not be considered, from the point of view
of evidence, as a very slight circumstantial
corroboration. At least that is how it strikes
me.

I'm thoroughly interested in the whole
inquiry. I wish I could discuss it with you. Of
course I'm sceptical - I consider that the only
attitude by which we can arrive at the Truth -
just as a judge is sceptical & has to be if he is
to sort out evidence. And granted that attitude
of mind one wants to know much more than
O.J.L. tells. Who are these professional mediums?
Presumably they make a living by being mediums
& in any case would be almost certain to know
all about the activities of the Lodge family. In
that case O.J.L.'s talk about going to visit one of
them incognito is pure rubbish. Of course the
woman & Feda may be perfectly all right: but
a great deal depends upon that; the temptation to
make up a story must be very great to one whose
living depends upon 'communications' of this
kind; certain mediums who were trusted by
the S.P.R. have at various times been caught
in dishonest tricks - personally I shouldn't

dream of taking O.J.L.'s word for it. What they are out to prove is very difficult of proof: but that's no reason why I ought to believe it on insufficient evidence & it has for a long time seemed to me fundamental in the ethics of belief that one ought not to believe what is proved, or what does not convince you.

I must make an end now. Great thanks for the socks (which are very nice ones) and stockings, which, now that the chocolate cake has arrived, have all turned up.

All my love to you dearest. I'm hoping to have a letter soon. My new address is 50 H.A.G., B.E.F.

Yours lovingly,
George.

