

Oct. 12. 1916.

My dearest Ruth No mail again for the last two days! I shall hope to get one to-day - or perhaps the promised cake. I believe a letter & a parcel of butter have gone astray altogether - they came here & must have been sent back by mistake in a mail bag.

I did not have a very interesting day in Arnhem; but it was glorious & fine. I felt that it was Lithgow's outing & my business was chiefly to amuse him: but that's not easy with a person whose tastes differ so completely as his from mine. It was very hard work talking to him especially in the car, he's very unempathetic & never betrays the slightest interest in my life or habits or thoughts - nor I should imagine in anyone's outside his family i.e. his brother & mother. As an instance of his conversation or rather his tastes I was asking him, a propos of expeditions he had made in a car from Leyd, whether he had been to Winchester; he said 'yes; but you know Mulloxy these old places are very sleepy. Winchester is another town I visited when we were at Portsmouth and it (emphasised in the Scotch manner) is sleepy.' I replied - 'Of course I agree with that; but whereas you use 'sleepy' as a term of reproach I should use peaceful or serene or some such epithet by way of praise.' To him I believe the ultimate good is the hustle of business. We arrived in

Arrived before 12:0 & after visiting several  
shops for a special kind of watchglass which  
Lithgow wanted we ate a large luncheon at the  
Hotel du Rhin - not a bad place nor very good.  
After lunch we separated as Lithgow wanted  
a hot bath. I went to the market with the  
object of finding out prices of vegetables  
rather than buying; and took with me  
Mantle the driver & Ramsay, the Captain's  
servant who had been brought with us  
nominally to carry our parcels. I always find  
a market attractive & this was no exception;  
there was a certain amount of chaff with the  
folk behind the stalls & we finally came  
away with much knowledge, a Rochefort cheese  
and three dozen eggs. I went off by myself  
then to tramp the town. I was chiefly on  
the look out for bookshops & curio; I wished  
you had been there to 'flatter' with me & I very  
much wanted to buy something nice for you. The  
absence of any such shops as we love was quite  
remarkable; eventually, in despair I bought  
a dirty crape for the sake of the embroidery  
which may perhaps interest you. The bookshops  
were almost as difficult to find & as useless.  
I couldn't get the one book I particularly wanted  
& the only purchase of any interest which I  
made was the new La Rousse dictionary.

of soldier's slang. And so the time passed till 4.0, with only a peep into the Cathedral where I had hoped to spend some time.

After tea, taken in the frowsiest imaginable atmosphere & in company with some rather stupid English officers (two majors particular who loudly & heartily agreed that one was no good for the day unless one had eaten a large breakfast) I wandered in the streets again with Littlejohn. He was anxious to present the mess with some fruit & we saw some seductive green figs & in the same shop lobsters. Littlejohn picked up the largest black lobster, had him weighed & paid 12.50 for him & also bought two good baskets of figs, one for the mess down here & one for himself. At 5.30 we started home back - a pleasant drive in the dusk to start with & then in the light of the great harvest moon.

I have just read over again your last letters. I am much distressed by what you say about Violet. You don't say exactly what the difference is - about general treatment I suppose? I hope you will get that straight again - Perhaps Violet has grown too used

to getting her own way because it generally coincides with yours & when she gets used to not getting it she may come round & prove equally agreeable. It's worth a lot that you should get her to work in confidence with you, & I very much hope you will. Perhaps she has been suffering from bad temper. Poor dear, you must be greatly disappointed. You certainly have treated Violet as kindly as one could conceive possible.

I should have liked to hear your conversation with Ursula about old age. I don't see that there's any way of dealing with physical changes except by keeping as fit as one can. For the rest I don't quite understand what is meant by the problem. The only essential difference so far as I can see between an old mind & a young one is in the length & quantity of experience & one can't help that. Otherwise it seems simply a matter of choice.

This is quite a long letter - almost up to your excellent standard.

I'm very pleased to hear about Marjorie's job - please congratulate her from me & also thank her for a long letter very interesting about her present life. Farewell dearest one - Great love to you always. Your loving George.