

Nov. 16. 1916.

My dearest Ruth, We have just got the men to work on a vast chamber - 'the saloon' I think it must be called. It will be about the size of the reception room in Buckingham palace. Literally it will be a magnificent place - 18' x 24' ; I have suggested a minstrels' gallery at one end for the various performers on melodeon, mouth organ & penny whistle. And it is to be warm. Goodness knows whether we shall ever get enough material to make the roof! It will be a wonderful pleasure to the men to have a place where they can congregate & will tend I hope to promote song as well as laughter. I am projecting some topical songs for the Xmas season, but have little faith in my ability to produce that sort of literature.

It is like having a new heart at seventy to get some dry days here; the ground almost dried up completely yesterday & that is worth the bitter east wind. We awoke to a gorgeous sun this morning & a frost-bound earth - not only the earth either; I shirked my bath because it was too difficult to extricate the water from the ice in my basin.

Much talk of leave continues; if by any chance it were to be granted in the next five or six days - before Littlejohn comes back - I might get it at once. At all events my name has gone in & this lot comes first in the group, so you may imagine what a state of hope I'm in - I allow myself to project quite definitely now as a future state the various situations of life in England: still I shan't believe in leave till the word actually comes, it is the common experience to find yourself somehow defrauded at the last moment - So count on nothing my dear one.

The night before last we had the adjutant in to dinner - a lachrymose business, for the enemy was shelling all round here with unheard of vigour & the tear gas penetrated everywhere. He is a very nice fellow & I quite enjoyed his company. Yesterday Charmier came in to tea & with him his brigade doctor, Falconer by name a very agreeable Scot. It was quite a gay little party. This evening I hope Charmier is coming again with another

by Shepherd who was in my format that time. These sociabilities certainly make all the difference to the monotonous life here, & I must add, are much more pleasantly indulged in when the Captain is away. This last success on the Anere has a pleasant way of growing from day to day; we heard of 1500 prisoners at first, then 2000, the following day about 3500 & now the total is more like 6000 I suppose, so that in all it is quite a notable success. But I suppose we shall talk enough or more than enough about the war when I come home.

I don't think I ever acknowledged a large cake which came 5 or six days ago, did I? Notice it is rather different to the usual plum cake, but quite good. By the bye I never wrote that note to Mr. Wotton. I shall wait now to thank her in person.

I am reading very thoroughly M. Chéradame's Pan-Germanisme - did I tell you about it? A very interesting account of Germany's ambitions & almost

makes me want to go on fighting till she licks
the dust of that could ever be. It is translated
into English so you could get ^{it} from the London
Library I expect. By the bye do you know what
happened to Daudet's 'L'Avant Guesse'; a black
whore I took out just before we went down to New
Romney. I seem to remember that I read as much
as I wanted of it before coming out - so the ~~copy~~ ^{condition}
seems to be that I left it in your charge. Anyway
the L.L. wants it back.

An revoir till - perhaps 4 day, perhaps
14, perhaps 40. What a wonder life is that can
hold in store such extremes of immediate & glorious
fulfilment & cold delay.

I send one pointless ethereal kiss in advance.

Yours own
George

Open letters but don't forward any.

