

however she was awfully lucky & only was ill 4 1/2 hours & hardly any pain - a very nice baby & lbs & weight

as soon as they could be moved they went in a car to travel and to train to train family where she still is living ~~at the school~~ awfully well - jolly. the baby is called Berri.

28 - 12 - 15

My dearest Mary,

Your dear letter arrived just at Xmas time; and I am so very grieved for you & the other dear sisters in your trouble & losing your brother. I know what a horrible loss & blank it is - no one could understand better, having lost two brothers as I have. and my thoughts & love & sympathy go out to you most truly & warmly in this grief. no one is quite like a brother to one. it is

Iron is very lucky, has got another 6 months home duty so he is much at home with Pat & the baby  
Dear Dad is pretty well a little stronger sits for 16 two nurses though so quite an invalid but anyway he is still with us - either simply live for now - devoted all her time & strength to him. Anne has been doing with the Furber & Faversham help with the baby. Walter & Parnia lost little girl, poor well is bonny - such a darling child - of course they are all well as a great deal. Walter has very hard work & is away even day in 16 weeks Travelling round inspecting stocks, but he is interested & happy in his job & is well, but very thin

Such a lovely relationship, especially when (as in Anne & your case) you haven't been separated young but have grown up together. Tom often used to say that Anne & I were more companions & friends to him even than his wife really, & that he talked with us of things ~~we~~ it never occurred to him to discuss with her, all that as you know I was quite a very happy marriage. There are all the old

associations, old jokes, family adventures & doing - which are has in common with one's brothers & which make such a strong & unforgettable bond however far separated one may be in later life.

I know what a dear your brother Ridley was - & how much you thought of him - though I only met him once or twice I remember the impression he made on me of sweetness & kindness & unworldliness.

I am so sorry too to hear of Isa being so much of an invalid, & I do think that the treatment you are giving her ought to be good, and it is so awfully difficult for anyone (especially a busy little like, like Isa)

to take any kind of a "rest cure" at  
home: one can't resign oneself to  
letting things go & all the familiar sights  
& sounds of the homestead & none of the  
desire to reap & do the usual jobs.  
I remember so strongly how darling  
Sah loathed it, & she was in a  
proper home too' where all fidgeting  
sounds were away: but all the same  
she hated it. But your description of  
that lovely verandah with the views &  
splendid air & peaceful surroundings &  
your care & clever message sounds just  
the most perfect condition for a cure  
so I do hope I dear Isa will soon be  
much better - again. It's hard work  
& anxiety for you darling & I'm sure  
you must really need a rest yourself.  
What a mockery Xmas is this year!  
one has to try & forget all the old Xmas thoughts



How darling I  
 must stop tho I  
 have heaps more  
 I want to say. How  
 I do wish we were  
 not so far apart.  
 one long talk of  
 everything & say all  
 that is in ones heart.  
 Every Xmas seems  
 to make  
 one's circle  
 of real  
 friends  
 smaller  
 although we  
 feel more  
 more they are  
 one not far  
 away.

THE MEADOW,

GROSVENOR ROAD,

(2) READING.

All my love & sympathy  
 dear & love to all the dear  
 family. How thin

and wishes - except for the sake of the  
 children - it was nice & a great help  
 to have them with us this year & we  
 have been making it as joyful as  
 possible for them. They greatly enjoyed  
 their Xmas Day - but after tea when  
 they were dancing we were brought back  
 to the war with a jerk as the telephone  
 bell rang to warn me a Conroy of  
 wounded was coming in at 9.15 pm  
 so I had to jump into uniform  
 quickly & fly down to the station -  
 200 came in all from Salonica  
 & in a sad state with enteric dysentery  
 wounds & frost bite & exposure. & in  
 spite of it all cheering & singing with glee  
 to be just home in time for Xmas!

They say Greece is the worst place they have  
been in yet. The Greeks stab or strangle every  
British soldier they can catch, alone for the  
sake of his clothes & kit. The cold is awful as  
they can't dig themselves in or get any shelter  
on account of the rocky ground. They freeze  
stiff where they lie at night. No railways  
or roads up to where they were camped &  
they were living on 2 biscuits each a day, & a  
tin of bully beef among 4 men!

They, & all of us are terribly upset at the  
retreat from Gallipoli, aft. so much  
splendid sacrifice of Australian & NZ  
troops. It seems awful. but how well  
& nobly Australia has behaved over all  
They have watered that soil with their blood  
indeed & it must be terrible for the families  
whose beloved are left lying there - but their  
glory is great & will never fade as long as  
~~the Empire lasts~~. The Empire lasts.

Did I tell you Rita's little daughter arrived  
a month ago! Rita had quite miscalculated  
& was terribly surprised. The baby was born  
in tiny lodges at Frimley Green, a big  
camp was there where the Van was stationed!



Tom is very lucky that he got omolts, 6 months home duty so he is much at home with the baby.

Dear Dad is pretty well, a little stronger still has the two nurses though so is quite uninvolved, but anyway he is still with us. Mother simply lives for him - devotes all her time & strength to him. Anne has been staying with the Forts all winter and helping with baby. Walter & Parnian that little girl grows well, is bonny - such a darling child. of course they

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are all well as a great deal. Walter has very hard work & is away every day in the week travelling round inspecting stock, but he is interested & happy in his job & is well, but very thin

New darling I must stop this I have heaps more I want to say. How I do wish we were not so far apart. one long to talk of everything & say all that is in ones heart. Every Xmas seems to make ones circle of real friends smaller although we feel more & more they are not far away. All my love & sympathy dear & love to all the dear family. Yr friend Heather.

GROSVENOR ROAD, READING.

and wishes - except for the sake of the children - I was nice & a great help to have them with us this year - we have been making it as joyful as possible for them. They really enjoyed their Xmas Day - but after that when they were dancing, we were brought back to the war with a jerk as the telephone bell rang to warn me a convey of wounded was coming in at 9.15 so I had to jump into uniform quickly & fly down to the station. So I came in all from Salonica in a sad state with enteric dysentery wounds & frost bite & exposure. & in spite of all cheering & singing with those who were just home in time for Xmas.