

The Meadow, Grosvenor Rd. Reading.

21st June 1916

P.S. I got your dear
letter of April 25th
when I got home. Hence
don't say I was so fond
of it.
Dorothy's birthday
tomorrow.

My darling Mary.

I know how grieved you will be to hear that our darling Dad has gone from us - although I dare say you won't be surprised after the accounts of his long illness you have had from time to time. I know how much you loved him, as I think everyone did who knew him, for he was one of those people who instinctively reached the best in everyone he met. O Mary, it does feel such a blank without him! not till he ~~was~~^{is} gone does one realize what a very great deal he stood for in one's life. I went up to the flat about 3 weeks ago as they thought he had taken a turn for the worse, and I was there with him till he died; just a week later on the 8th of June, at 9 in the evening. He was very weak and weary all the last week, & just ready to slip away any minute, only his heart was strong & saved up till the last & he kept rallying again after when we thought he was gone. No one who loved him could have wished him to go on suffering, as although he had no actual pain. The discomfort & weakness were so great. At the last he fell asleep so gently, like a little tired child. We were all with him - that is Clotter, Anne & I, for Walter could not be with us - all leave was stopped for his battalion & he could not come to help us in our great sorrow. Dad looked so sweet & splendid aftr he was dead. Such a happy, gentle, & almost triumphant expression, as if he had conquered all earthly cares, & was happy in the sunshine, and I thought how lovely for him to meet his dear boy again - his beloved little "Sammy" who was so like him in character & who he has missed so

sadly all these years of separation. Poor Mother, it was hard for her, ~~for~~ and for dear Anne, both of them have been so devoted to him & nursed him so long & patiently. Mother is very wonderful & brave. She had seen it coming a long time, but it is never easy when it does come, is it? As we had no broods at home, all the arranging of every thing, & the business part fell to me to do. & you know how painful & hard it all is when one is in great grief and would rather just be quiet & think one's thoughts about one's beloved dead. but the Dr was awfully good. Reed & helped us a lot, & told me what to do. The darling Dad was buried up in Paucaeth Cemetery, so that entailed a long trying journey, & a lot of arranging with Railway Cos etc. we had to go by a very early train & the funeral was at 2 p.m. we started from Euston at 9.10 a.m. We laid him next to our dear Tom, & his little baby daughter's grave was on the other side of him, & his dear old mother's grave just opposite. it was such a beautiful dear day, & the Lake Hill & Choccombe Bay looked so lovely. It was just such a day as it was last year the very week when we buried Tom. It all seemed like a dream, as if it all came over again, & one went through it mechanically as it were. My cousin Harold Hastings took the service again, & there were some Reed friends there & lots of lovely flowers. Somehow I felt dear old Dad had so little part in it - we might have just been burying his old coat - as Mary B said - he himself seemed still with in just the same & just as much alive - more so than when he was so ill till this last year - when his poor body was wearing his spirit down. Mary B went with us, & she was with me in Town all during the last weeks before, and was such a comfort & blessing & such a good friend. I had to sit up a great many nights, but she used to come for me in the afternoon & take me away to our room - we slept out as the flat was full with nurses etc. and ~~she~~ put me to bed & make me rest & just looked after me like an angel. Mum too was a

very dear child - was so lovely - helpful & unselfish; she came up each day from Gravesend & spent all day with us; she was so very fond of Grandpapa - terribly grieved to lose him. Dad was quite clear in his brain right up to the last, and knew us all, but he could not speak to us, which made it very sad for us. but we saw by his eyes that he was recognizing us & loving us to the end.

Our old under nurse walked for miles to come to the funeral: she lives in Halton. & there were other old friends there we were glad to see & just a few relations. There are very few left now in Launceston. Kate & Tom's children ~~all~~ came from Aspatria. Tony has grown a big boy & has a nice loving nature, he was the only ~~one~~ male representative of our branch of the family there. Poor Walter is very much cut up, especially at not being able to be with us - but his work is so interesting & so important that that helps him a great deal. He has to feed 1000 men in the front line trenches, and takes the food, ammunition for rifles, & makes up from where the APC dump them about 6 miles behind the lines; he loads them on to horse & mule wagons, during the day, & at night his column creeps up over the rough country & rough roads to the actual front trenches, he has about 40 men, & 30 wagons with him, water carts, bicycles, & a machine gun. His exciting work is not at all safe. Though he pretends it is quite a picnic - but the Basels are very fond of sending up star shells - then gets a machine gun going on the transport. He is with the 4th Bedfordshire 18th Division, and is very proud of them as a hard fighting regt. always in the trenches & mentioned in despatches last week.

We have had such a number of nice & beautiful letters about dear Dad, every one seems to have loved him so much. & even people who only met him once or twice seem to have known what

he was a bedridden helpless without her - Dad allude to this when you write to Dolly or Anne as they know
nearly about fall. - have not heard of Harry for years. Well Harry darling this is a sad letter, but I am

tells you all about dear Dad because I know how fond of him you were and he was of you too. It is nice but sorry one heart to think of our old
Carnation day now still stay were so happy bright made a level list of life. Job of love clearest and thought from your dear friend as always
Heather

a lovely character he was. - in many ways I always thought he was very like your dear brother. He seemed genial charitable large hearted nature - yet just so modest & quiet about themselves. One knows that for such characters all must be well for always. - their souls are in the hand of God. no harm shall happen unto them.

We have made Mollie promise to go away for a little soon. She will go up to Scotland or somewhere nice with Kate & the children as soon as their holidays come; we don't want her & Anne to be too much alone together in the flat now. Anne will come to us & then to Rana & then to friends at Lynton & elsewhere she has lots of invitations; everyone would love her to stay a bit. We hope Ivay (Kate's husband) will soon have some leave, & perhaps Kit will be able to go & stay with them & take her baby. Ivay will arrange it I expect; as he is very kind & most anxious to be a great help to us in every way. I go up every few days just now as I am helping Mollie with all the business. She will stay on in the flat just for the present anyway. Do you remember Harry Peppin? he died last Sunday. He spent the last years of his life in Launceston - of all places - he married a little dancer, a sweet little woman who has nursed him devotedly for years. as he's been a complete invalid for many years. They lived in a tiny cottage & were badly off. I went to see him every time I was in the North. This time after Dad's funeral I went to see them & found Harry just getting to the end. I said goodbye to him and knew I should never see him again. he died the Sunday after. His little wife won't live long as she has a fatal disease. but it's a great mercy he went first as

He was absolutely helpless without her - Don't allude to this when you write to Mollie or Anne as they know
nothing about it all. - have not heard of Harry for years. Well Harry darling this is a sad letter, but I am
telling you

all about
dear Dad
because
I know
how fond
of him you
were and
he was
of you too
It is nice
but wrong
one heart
to think of
an old
Carrington
day now
still they
were so
happy
bright
made a
lively bit
of life.
Lots of love
dearest
and
thoughts
from your
loving friend
as always
Heather

a lovely character he was - in many ways I always
thought he was very like your dear brother. He same general
character - large hearted nature - yet just so modest & quiet about
himself. One promise that for such characters all must be well
for always - their souls are in the hand of God. no harm shall
happen unto them.

We have made Nell's promise to go away for a little soon. She
will go up to Scotland or somewhere nice with Robt. The children
as soon as their holidays come: we don't want her or Anne to
be too much alone together in the flat now. Anne will come to see
her to Rowan or her friends at Brighton & elsewhere she has lots
of invitations, even one would have her to stay a bit. We hope
you, (Robt's husband) will soon have some leave, & perhaps Robt will
be able to go & stay with them, & take her baby. You will arrange
it I expect: as he is very kind, & most anxious to be a great help to
in every way. Go up every few days just now or I am helping
Mollie with all the business. She will stay on in the flat just for the present
anyway.

Do you remember Harry Pepkin? he died last Sunday.
He spent the last years of his life in Courcauld of all places - he married
a little dancer, a sweet little woman who has nursed him death till
for years. As he's been a complete invalid for many years. They
lived in a tiny cottage & were badly off. I used to see him every time
I was in the North. This time after Dad's funeral I used to see them
& found Harry just felt to the end. I said good-bye to him and I knew
I should never see him again. He died the Sunday after - his little wife
until the long weeks has a fatal disease. But his great mercy, he was found on