

2/6.

Darling, I finished up my last letter to you in a perfect sweat. I mean, I'd been bashing away all evening, or night at the end I had to go into a deep essay on politics which positively floored me - I mean I had no strength left at all. I hope you got what I was driving at, honey, & I hope, too, that I didn't commit any cross gaffes which made you snort in rage - in a lady-like manner, of course. Which all brings me to the fact that I didn't have the chance to comment on yours of the 14th, & I've got down to that right away. In lovely addition, I've had another from you today & ain't it nice.

Those day-dreams & flights into the realm of imagination of yours, darling, are highly diverting, & they give me little ~~spings~~ ^{spings} of ecstasy when I read of 'em. You've no idea - or have you - of ~~how~~ how susceptible I am to dreaming of the future. I mean such things just make me forget everything, literally everything. All else are just noises off, going on that we no part of my life, I want none of them - & even when I come back to earth I can't say that I find ought else very interesting. I don't want anything else. At the beginning of all this war horror I would, perhaps, have said, with truth, that my first desire was to take part in whatever adventure might be thrown my way in order to get back to love & sanity in the shortest possible time, but now, all I want to do is to get back to love & sanity in the shortest possible time. I don't want

to take part in any more adventures & I don't want to be a member of the Royal Navy any longer - I just want you. And so I dream of 'motor trips, & burning lips, & burning toast, & pounce', just as you do my queen, & it being a mental activity, like you I get great happiness from it.

That dear. Clipping you sent me was the first of many similar clippings sent to a number of the boys from their wives & sweethearts. It did cheer us up & we've got the idea, not only from the clipping, that the women of Britain are stirring up a considerable amount of controversy about Naval demobbing. Is that right? I can imagine the candidates for Parliament being besieged by irate relations demanding satisfaction, & I chuckle at the thought of the wife of a boy at sea being told that her man cannot be released because - well "really, I don't know, ~~your~~ your husband has done 6 years in the Navy, he has been foreign, & there are plenty of men ready to be conscripted in the next year, & they would be sent to relieve such as your husband but - well really I don't know & I don't think the Admiralty knows either". I think that wife would speak her mind. I suppose I can count myself as being lucky in this war, compared to others, but I still say that, look notwithstanding, I should be released in my Group with the other Services, indeed I believe that I shall be so released, but why the hell can't the Admiralty make up its mind. The clipping tells of revised plans - they'd better revise 'em some more.

I ain't depressed about our lack of a home, baby. As a matter of fact I'm glad to have the opportunity to have us build up from scratch in such a deliberate & steady manner. We're forced to hold our hand, whereas if we'd been married in normal times we might have had to rush matters a little, (I'm not thinking of a shot-gun wedding), & been panicked into a home that didn't come up to our ideals. Now we can sit back in our improvised mortal or flat & wait for conditions that suit us & not anybody else & sit back in comfort, too. I think we've been sensible in our household purchases - apart from the woodrobes we've bought nothing that couldn't be turned to some use & at the same time, fit into the general scheme.

The camera situation is now very grim. I've returned Amand's camera because I'm afraid the damp will get to it, but, in any case, the shortage of films & the rains have forced me to give up photography for a few months. The prices of cameras in Bombay are prohibitive at present, but they're getting better, & I have hopes for the end of the year. If ever you hear of a bargain in cameras don't hesitate to give me details, honey - of course that wouldn't apply to shop purchases because of the time-lag, but if any private seller is prepared to wait, good & well. You could cable details & I could cable acceptance or otherwise. Remember that a good camera will have a lens marked f 6.3 or f 4.5 or f 3. or f 2.5 - those are fast lenses.

4

Anything above $f6.3$ is a "slow" lens & not suitable for the camera work I'd like to do - for instance a Cosm Brownie would have a lens of $f15$ or $f24$. There are, of course, many things to look for when buying a camera, but it's not very likely that you'll find a cheap or shoddily made article with a lens lower than $f6.3$. Of course I must have a film roll-film camera, but, contrary to what I wanted in England, I'm not particular as to size. Don't make a deliberate search, sweets, but if somebody mentions that he's got a camera to sell & it sounds O.K., give him the old flannel about a husband exiled abroad & call me. Prices? - hard to judge - roughly, very roughly, a $f6.3$ shouldn't cost more than £8-£12, a $f4.5$ more than £15, in good condition & appearance - the $f3.5$ & $f2.5$ run up to £100 & can't be considered normally, but if a philanthropist is willing to let a snip go at £20 I'd say good-oh! Wallace Heater of Sand St would willingly answer any questions about buying a camera if you explained the circumstances. Oh, I nearly forgot - after all this you send it out to me insured & by registered post. All this, darling, is to be considered in the unlikely event of you finding a suitable bargain - I merely mention it in passing, & partly, to ^{impress} ~~convince~~ you with my extensive knowledge of cameras.

Talking of bringing stuff back to the U.K., we've talked of very little else besides darning, & it seems to be generally agreed that we shall all need an

extra suitcase to help pack all the presents, etc. we intend to buy before we sail. There are a large number of articles in town which have struck my eye - carved wood boxes & ornaments, fancy sandals & shoes, trinkets of all kinds, etc. + they're all of a kind of thing that's not worth parcelling up + sending home because of the tax we'd have to pay.. I shall buy them at the end of the commission. I shan't buy a great deal of men's clothing out here because I don't think much of the quality, & anyway they've started to ration cloth which will make it difficult to get anything in the cloth line.

I was very surprised to read that "The Suspect" is only just coming your way. It must be an exception. On Saturday we're all going to Bombay to see "Here Come the Waves" at the Eros + that's pretty alright. All the current films are those running in England at the time + way before I left. We continue to see film shows in this + other camps, but that Sir Chestnut, flung at a gullible public, that the troops out East see all the latest even before they're shown in London makes us laugh cynically. What we need is Betty Grable's Co - what we get are weepies + ~~not~~ or war "epics".

Our First Meeting huh? I've no idea how it'll take place, but I guess that unless I can tell you where + when I strike England the first news you'll have will be a phone call. Somehow that seems very unsatisfactory to me, as tho' I were cheated out of something. Our first, warm, personal contact will be an affair I shall remember all my life as one of

our milestones, one of those periods or moments in our life that mark a new era, & a phone call seems out of place, somehow, as a first contact. Couldn't I burst in on you, angel, or would that be too much of a shock? I know that meeting might come sooner than both of us expect - of course I shall be able to tell you ~~as~~ I'm on my way home, & you'll be expecting me, I'm all mixed up when I think of such an event - but the glory of it is it'll have to come at some time & when it does I want it to go off as smooth as silk - me walking & running, (I'll have a lot of hit, angel cake), towards you, & you uncertain whether to chance having that new hat affair drop off if you run towards me, and - oh I dunno, perhaps it would be better if we just leave it til I get on the quayside - I'll bet you any money you like, if you're w-there to meet me I shall go straight to the nearest phone booth & call you, & we shall goggle at each other, not knowing what to say, except I shall mention, casual-like, that I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, & so on 'til the end of my days.

When you headed your last letter "Shangri hai" I wondered where on earth, or in heaven, you'd transplanted yourself. But I understood, later on, how you could so describe that site - I know it very well. I know that to other people this may sound like, but anywhere would be 'Shangri hai' to me if you were there with me, sweetheart - anywhere in the world.

7

At the moment the bull frogs are croaking their
bloomin' heads off, + the jacks are replying to the best
of their vocal ability. The rain has stopped + the fireflies
are out in force - there flies settle in their thousands
in trees + bushes + the effect is ten times more brilliant
than any illuminated xmas tree - an amazing sight.
There hasn't been one insect in the cabin tonight, a
fact which makes us wonder what will happen next -
it usually foretells an extra heavy shower + that'll
mean that the gullies + ditches will overflow, + we'll
have to watch the water in case it gets into the cabin.
Maybe we'll have to go out + dig more canals to
get the water away down the road. We have a pet
frog, Freddy, that will almost eat out of our hand. We
had to put him out the other day because he kept
bringing his eggs in - it must have taught him a
lesson because he came back the next day looking
very chastened + hasn't offended since. He has a
disconcerting trick of getting into bed with one of us, but
after all, he's only young. We've killed plenty of snakes
lately, but we're not greatly troubled with them - they
shun humans + won't attack unless attacked first -
me. I don't attack em unless I'm sure of my shot.

Highie - night, honey child. Never doubt -

Love you



34

received
1899

POST OFFICE

WALLINGBORO

THE ASSOCIATED MARITIME

28(2) Belle Shore Rd

Walling

Kent-

Essex