T/O ~~[illegible]~~.123 The Red Lands.
Paignlai. Texas.
May 23rd 1917.

Dear Mother

I wrote you a line last Monday, & it has just occurred to me this perplexed you with fear as to our doings if either I the last two letters go astray. But must trust to luck. Wrote Uncle on the 19th but am afraid I said very badly what I really felt. Although we have heard nothing further, in fact the War Office have said they know nothing beyond the news they sent you — still I have felt very much encouraged — 1st on hearing that the Germans do not have always reported any of the Flying Corps officers killed in their country — although they never report either wounded or

or prisoners — & while it is terrible to think of Temple wounded & a prisoner, knowing the type of machine he was on the chances are if he was not killed, the wound would be very slight or nothing at all. And I feel had he been killed we surely would have heard by now — Then I have been told to give has much better the R.F.C. Prisoners have been treated than anyone else, that there must be some truth in it.

Saturday the 19th was the only day we didn't get a Times & of course that is the paper in which Temples name appeared as missing — It is most un-usual for it to come out in the papers so quickly — Unfortunately Mr Arnold sent it before he received my letter, in

spite of my having written the previous day, but because mails are not what they are in peace times, & this is a very out of the way place. I did not write the news for I knew Mr Corbin, & perhaps Mr Arnold might be very upset, & one can say so much more in a letter.

It seems a long time since I have heard from you, & each day hope for a line. The thought of what you & Uncle have been going through this past week has made me think of so many things & just how much you both dear mean to me. I suppose it is the Holland reserve that makes me say so little about it — but this time I have been away I have

realized what a selfish
daughter I have been to you
at times, not through lack
of love, but sheer thoughtlessness.
The whole life of it is you
have always been so
un-selfish yourself you
have spoiled us all —
Sometimes I wonder if this
old war will ever end, & life
go on in the old way.
As usual the days go
rushing by, & we spend all
time taking long walks &
resting. The weather has
only been fair. We arrived
at the Thursday night. It
poured with rain all Friday,
& while we went out in spite
of it, couldn't walk far.
Friday we had breakfast in
bed — I wrote letters in the a.m.

& immediately after lunch
we went for a long walk,
going thro' immense
lovely flowerbed lanes.
I never imagined
anything could be quite
so perfect as the scenery
around here - the roadside
is a mass of primroses,
violets, bluebells & dozens of
other dainty spring flowers.
By every house are lilac
bushes in full bloom,
fruit blossoms of all kinds,
& everything in nature
looking its very best.
everyone declares it to be
a wonderful spring, the
flowers larger & more immense
than usual, & a large
harvest is anticipated.

If nature is kind until the harvest is in, it will help largely in making our country realize the country is far from starving, in spite of the present shortage of wheat & potatoes!
On Sunday we went to one of the newer churches in the village, as the Bishop of Exeter Lord William Cecil son of Lord (or is it Marquis?) Salisbury? was there preaching. Rather an extraordinary looking man, with quite a peculiar accent but gave a most interesting sermon. He evidently is quite a studious man, & has very broad views — it was a treat to hear him.

a war sermon of course, and seldom hears anything else. Sunday we had such a hearty dinner, afterward lay down for a rest & fell asleep, & so ended the afternoon. In the evening went to another church, St Andrews, where we heard the Bishop was to preach. Had a very nice service, but were disappointed as far as the Bishop was concerned, for he was not there at all. In both churches the Kings Proclamation regarding economy in food was read. Really it is astonishing in spite of all that has been publicly said & written on this subject, how many people ignore it all together. I hear to-day that no more parcels can be sent to the men at the front if they contain food. This I

think will impress some
people that this must be
a storage. Because one meets
all sorts of people who are
stuck about satiguing
themselves — but there are a
great many who don't.
On the Sunday it was
dull in the morning so we
did not get up until quite
late. In the afternoon it
turned out fine so we took
the train to Torquay (about
2 miles) & had a look at the
shops - Town - Pavilion, & then
went for a walk over the
cliffs & by the sea. Because
the red earth against the
green, makes the shore line
most picturesque - Torquay
itself doesn't appeal to me
particularly, it is too much
built up - with numerous
promenades etc. I really
prefer the absolute country
parts.

We going through the
country we see so many
picturesque cottages with
thatched roofs — but alas!
some of them have re-placed
the thatch with corrugated
iron, & the whole charm of the
cottage has flown. This is
partly due that thatching
as a trade is lost, & so it is
most difficult to find
anyone who can repair
these roofs properly; consequently
the poorer people have neither
time nor money to find.
Such a man so repaired me
the most practical way
they can — I really is
pathetic, for nothing is
uglier than a flat
corrugated iron roof!!!
On Thursday as we had
been invited by a sister
of one of the patients at

~~High~~ Hyde Park Place to
lunch with her at her home
near Newton Abbot. We took
the 11 a.m. train. We met
& drove up to her house in
Highweek village, whilst
discussing a luncheon
with strangers — but were
sure their delight with
our visit — Mrs Wilkinson
is very bright & much un-
conventional (her husband
is @ the front) & her house
a dream of a place.
Originally quite a small
thatched farm house, it had
had several rooms added
to it from time to time; the
living room as usual was
the most attractive room,
very large, with huge
lounge chairs & a Chesterfield
covered in a plain dark
blue linen — rugs on the floor,

& the most beautiful old
carved mantle - the wood
almost black. Really the
room had so many bits
of lovely china, old
furniture etc. in it I can
begin to describe even what
I managed to take in, &
yet it was not a bit
crowded, but gave me an
idea of being quite
spacious - the place has
evidently belonged to the
family for years, the halls,
dining-room & living
room were full of old
portraits, & particularly
nice ones by Lely, & curiously
enough one of Lely's the
image of my friend
Mr Rashleigh - the garden
& everything about the place

made one break the 10th
Commandment. It really
belongs to this girl herself &
she is living here until
her husband comes back
from the war & then —?
Doesn't know what she
will do. There is no one else
in the family, she just
had a young cousin staying
with her. We left about
3 p.m. as we wanted to
walk back most of the
way as it was through
particularly lovely country.
Got a train from St.
Mungo's home as the
remainder of the way was
practically through the town,
& we were tired not worth
the exertion.
On Wed. started off about
11 a.m. & walked to Holmes,

a distance of about 8 or 9 miles, again taking lunch by the road-side. Passed one or two very pretty little villages & churches. When we got there the weather looked rather doubtful so we came back by a motor bus that runs to Paiguelin, & by the time we reached home it started to pour. To-day we had another long walk - mine along the sea front there & the others. They are all lovely.

Did Gwendolen sent you a 2nd cable, thinking hubby might be a little encouraged on hearing the business usually report all officers killed in the R.F.C. Possibly it seems curious that they should send

the R.F.C. men with more consideration & respect than any others?

Well dear this letter must be a little confusing for it has been written during two evenings & has had several interruptions. But it will give you an idea of what we are doing with our time. There are now five other boarders in the house, but in appearance not interesting & as we have our meals @ separate tables, & are out all day, see very little of them.

I forgot to mention that to-day when passing through Torquay we ran into the Mayor who read the Kings Proclamation in the Public Square. But it rather impressed me that the old regime is gradually giving way to a less attractive but certainly different one.

He was a splendid type of man, arrayed in all his robes, with mace bearer etc. & another man in black robe & white wig — but all were in a small motor, — ~~but~~ he just stood up in the car, read the King's Proclamation, & anyone who happened to be passing by, few cared that time owing to the clatter of passing vehicles, & although one felt it was not what it would have been in days gone by. Habits change much more slowly here than with us — but it does gradually change undoubtably.

Well I didn't intend to commence another sheet but once started its hard to stop. I haven't told you what I intended. How I longed to have you here with me. Was it your uncle William

Who are Ted a farm same
where in Yorkshire?
Have written Blanney but
haven't really had time for
a reply yet – Good night –
my love to Uncle George.
Only we could hear
something definite what a
comfort it would be – & yet
I can't help but feel that
no news means the best
news in the end.
Over & much love for
Yourself from
Your ever lovingly
Bellie.