Letter 122.

To Mrs Geo.
The Redlands.
Paiguloe. Tuam.
May 20/17.

Dear Mother.

Of course I quickly can't for a moment forget Uncle George. much as I think of Temple & what he may be enduring as a prisoner in France — still he is young & if alive our pals can shield the shame — but for Uncle it is his terrible for words — the awful suspense & un-certainty. Never have I felt so far from home as at present, & it seems such ages before I can have a leave.

Mr Temple has made all possible enquiries & of course heard nothing further; I have written Miss Macdonald & straight her you I should be able to get in touch more easily with the Personally department than I could personally — then to-day I wrote the Squadron Commander of the 54th who I feel sure will tell me anything he can, & if it is different at all from Uncles cable, will cable it on. I hesitated about answering Uncles cable for over a day, fearing it might be too great a disappointment receiving one that gave no news of Temple — then felt it would be such a long time before he could hear from me, decided to send it in your name, & so save time from any shock. Truly hope it did not upset you.

And now for a confession. In writing Uncle George I ~~had~~ really left him to understand the cable followed us here, because I was so afraid he would feel hurt that I hesitated & I started off on a holiday under the circumstances not ~~under~~ realizing why it was necessary.

As a matter of fact the cable did follow us, but just as the taxi was at the door & our luggage had been sent off, we got a phone message, really giving us the news & saying the cable would follow.
The previous night Winifred had had quite a bad attack of malaria & was feeling very seedy, our tours had been taken, so we would have to have gone to a hotel – I had to decide on the moment, & thought it better to go

right on to Paiguloi where we were expected, especially as I realized we could do no real good in London. But I was so afraid Uncle might misunderstand that I didn't go into detail, but just said that the trouble as far as it went that the cable relaved us, which it did, I shall leave it to you to tell him what you think best. Now that I am here I really think it was the wisest thing to do, for I know from other peoples experience, how little one can find out

personally @ the War Office,
I feel sure Lord Kitchener
will do all the rest.
I wrote everyone I can
mention immediately, &
to-day I had a very
encouraging letter from Mr
Temple, who has also made
all possible enquiries, but
he has not been able
to obtain any further
information.
It's no good trying to
analyze it all Mr Smith!
I wonder if it is something
familiar in myself, but
I feel it seems Temple
must be alive as much

as he ever was - But I cannot get
Uncle out of my head. I suppose
you have glad I shall be to hear
from you.

I remembered to Uncle we had
stopped over in Exeter, but only
because we took a wrong train &
made bad connections - The train
service needless to say is not what
it is in peace time. So we had
dinner there, leaving by the 8.15 train
& did not arrive here until 10 p.m.
So you can imagine how we stopped
@ every little siding.

The boarding house we are @ was
recommended to us by one of the
Sisters who came last winter, & while
not in any way luxurious is
much comfortable, the food excellent
& altogether is just what we need.
Mildred is quite O.K. again. Those
malaria attacks are so peculiar
high temperature, very severe headache
& chills - miserable altogether but
after about 24 hrs. subside & just leave
one feeling a wreck for a short time.
At first we intended staying here a
few days & then moving on - but I

don't want to change my address in case there is any news of Temple — so shall stay here for the two weeks except that if convenient I shall go to the Treasury Budget on the way back to London.

Before leaving we packed our things all ready for France, & when Jeanne across the silver box I bought for Renée some time ago, thought I might as well ~~send~~ ask sending it, as to take it to France etc. Also a few menu cards I picked up one day. The earlier nearly

intended as a small birthday gift. I am afraid neither will give him much pleasure now — but the box may be useful. It is really intended for a biscuit box; the length hence could get his hand in more easily than the other shape, & they are being very much used for that purpose over here.

Well dear I must give you an daily doings since I wrote last, though I feel as if it is of so little interest or importance, so much has happened since!!

I wrote you last (letter 21) on the 14th, having spent all my time of duty shopping, and in the evening went to the Mr & Mrs Temple. Formed Marian also at home, having given up the position in Olen, & was hoping to get into the government offices. They are men very well, although Mrs Temple has been suffering for some time with her wrist, having strained it doing his heavy sewing — was work of some description, & was has to be very careful of it.

~~Yesterday was my first day~~
Tues. again I spent most
hrs. of shopping, chiefly looking
for a silk sweater for Cissie –
In the evening Parkins gave
a very swagger supper @
Prunier's – for her friend "Joey"
another sister @ No. 1 Hyde
Park Place, who is designing
a young home to be married.
Everything was most
extravagantly done, &
certainly was a great success,
& went with lots of zip.
Just the girls from the
hospital were invited & we
were all asked to bring a
small donation of linen &
to make a shawl.

When you see Mrs Parkins you
might mention what a success
it was — for Parkins went to
an immense amount of trouble,
nothing was forgotten & she
made a splendid hostess.
The following a.m. I got up
in good time, leaving Mildred
in bed feeling a wreck, having
had a bad chill @ mid-night,
went & had a shampoo, bought
a few necessary odds & ends,
got back & packed our valise
(having sent all other things
yesterday to Kingsley Hotel
for storage) & was just
leaving when the phone
message came — !!!
Well you know the rest.

These must be very trying days for you I know, & only wish I were a little nearer to help you bear them — for it always makes so much difference having some one to talk things over with — although I have scarcely mentioned you, you are in my thoughts more than anyone. I only hope you won't worry about my going to France — there really is little danger in crossing, for it is so short & very few hospital ships, which are considered the number crossing daily, have come to any harm. Always love to you dear from Bessie.