

Brockenhurst
24 October

My dear Hazel,

I am still getting on splendidly and am quite reconciled to my captivity. No use being otherwise. I believe Stan. is also doing well, but of course I have not seen him. They have some wheeled cots here, but the doctor won't allow me to use one just yet. I expect most of the patients I know will be able to pay me a visit before I can call on them. In fact most of them are up already, so I have plenty of visitors. There are three of our company officers, besides half a dozen others from our

battalion, and nearly twenty N.C.O.'s and men whom I know pretty well. There is strong opposition in this country to having separate hospitals for the various Dominions, on the ground that mixing us with the Tommies all over the country would bring about a better understanding and closer union of the Empire. I would like to have a straight talk with the old women who are agitating in that line. It doesn't matter, apparently, if a man dies among strangers, as long as he serves as an advertising agency. And anyhow I am quite convinced from experience, that close

contact with Tommies only breeds ill feeling. I am sorry it is so, but I believe in facing facts. The great weakness of the English people is that they won't face unpleasant facts, or else are very, very slow to see them. If you don't like a thing, pretend it doesn't exist. Their conservatism is appalling.

However, I don't suppose you are taking the slightest interest in all this, so I had better come down to your level. (It is ages since I said anything "horrid" to you, isn't it?). I am expecting two very old aunts to come and see me this afternoon. They are both over

seventy, I think, and they live at Blifton, so the train journey will be quite an ordeal for them, I should think. My ordeal will come at the end of their journey, but really it is awfully good of them to come. One of them wrote such a nice letter that I am quite hopeful about her, but the other is notoriously eccentric. Even in my far-away boyhood her name was a terror to me. However, I will worry through somehow.

It was very dear and good of you to write such nice letters on August 8th and 29th. You little imagine the pleasure

they give me. As for your missing a couple of weeks, you made such a dreadfully good case for yourself that I must certainly forgive you. I think Miss Lorimer must be an old cat to give you so much work. I shall certainly tell her so if I ever have the pleasure.

I have just got word that I am to be moved into another ward, reserved for long-lease malingersers, so I had better get this finished off.
With lots of love to you, my Bazel
from
Cecil.