

Torwood
Peebles

Jan 20th 1915

My dear Marion,

I was so glad to get your kind and long letter on New Year's eve, not a Christmas one this time. I was not sorry to see the old year go, it had been one of great trial in so many ways, loss and parting and anxiety and worry, and yet like you I have so much to be thankful for. I have my children to keep on struggling for otherwise the battle would not have seemed worth while. Everything is very difficult, we are very poor and yet I've big burdens to carry and don't know how to meet them, but there is always a way out somehow.

This terrible war is hard upon everyone and it touches so many things, I cannot get out of this house and yet the rent swamps almost all we have. I have many things to sell, but at present no one is buying the kind of things we have, so we have just to keep waiting on. However this seems like a grumble, but in spite of it all, I don't feel I'm going to give up. We got a great shock when we heard that Philip had married in Russia, a girl whom he met there last summer, they came here and spent a fortnight with us. She is very pretty and has charming manners, is very quiet and clever I should think, but of course she had not a word of English, so it was not easy getting to know her. We all think it was a pity he took on all the burdens of married life at this time, and when his prospects were by no means assured, but you can't put old heads etc and as one of his Father's old friends said to me 'romance was bound to be in the bag.'

Sunday Evening I was interrupted in my letter so go on again tonight. I was telling you about Philip, he has just started for Ponomania, as a special war correspondent for the Exchange Telegraph Co; the offer was so good he dared not refuse but it is hard for the two young things to part so soon. Maisie has had a very varied experience but it would take a whole letter to tell you about it. She is leaving the people she was with at York this week, they have been so eccentric and unreasonable it is impossible for her to stay any longer.

Since the war they have taken to saving lights and fires but latterly it has come to saving food too, so it was not workable. George was well and hearty, when he was home for a few hours last week, he is still patrolling the Forth, and has had some experiences, the constant watch, watch, watch is what tires them most, even their eyes get tired always looking out for the smallest object, then the weather has been so terrible. One night he was off the May Island between one and two in the morning, and they were called home by wireless, none too soon, the wind-gauge on the top of the Forth Bridge registered 121 miles an hour, difficult to look for periscopes on a night like that! I expect you and John spend a great deal of time at the papers just now it is much of it terrible reading yet one must see what they are all doing.

We have a great many troops here, and more are expected this week. Have you any one near to you engaged in this war, some of your brother's children will be in it I expect or some of your nieces nursing. Well dear friend, I must end this long letter lest I weary you. With much love and all good wishes to you both

I am ever yours affectionately

Ruth Crockett

What a moan!