

Holloway Prison. Easter Sunday. April 7. 1912. 5475

My Darlings, Miss Billingham, the tricycle lady, is going out on the 11th, & will take this. I tell her not to trouble to thank it, so if it comes unpaid, you will, I know, not grudge 2^d for it. The Matron read me your letter to the Governor, so I know where you are. By the time you get this, you might try sending me a letter, for then it will be 2 weeks since I was sentenced & I ought to have one then according to Churchill's Code, wh. we take for granted will be allowed. If I don't get it, we can't help it. We are all quite well and pretty jolly. I'll tell you our day. I always wake about 4, and watch the light coming in till 5.30, then I get up, strip and sponge from my little tin basin, am dressed and have all my bedclothes folded up on the shelf & the wire wire bedstead turned up against the wall (2 feet are fixed to the floor) by 6. Then a wardress comes round "Are you all right? any applications?" On remand that was the time to say "3 letters please" but now we can only ask for Governor, Matron, Chaplain or Dr. I always go out then to get drinking water, & sometimes my door is left open for about an hour, and I pace up and down, 5 steps each way. Most of the others bkft in bed. Bkft comes between 7-7.30 brown bread and hot milk, both good. Some have tea, wh. is vile. Generally more than I can take. Thick white crockery mugs and plates, before Suff. were here the dishes were tin, & turned tea black. At 8.15 doors are opened "Chapel," & we all collect & pass, under cover, through other wings & corridors. Chapel is appalling, there is a chaplain and a curate, both as dry and official as the Governor. Our hearts ache for the poor ordinary prisoners, whom we meet there & we long for some human woman to address them. Our people from E wing are there too, but we are not allowed to sit beside them. Chapel lasts abt. 1/2 an hour, & then we go to exercise in an asphalt yard, but the sun shines, and the sky is blue, and there are pigeons. We are 72 in this wing now, some have gone out, we were 81. At 11 we come in & are shut up till dinner at 12. (Waiting about takes up odd bits of time) Once a week we have a bath during this hour, in hotel of 12, beautiful pale green baths, plenty of hot water, turned on from outside. But wardresses are very good, & let me have some cold afterwards for a splash. It feels so comfortable when you only have it once a week. At 2 we have another hour's exercise and then work together sitting on chairs in the basement hall. Dinner, I forgot to say, comes in 2 tin dishes, fitting like the double milk pan. The top one has 3 potatoes in dirty skins - sometimes I eat one, generally none. The bottom dish has a hard boiled egg, wh. I always eat, and a vegetable varying from day to day - onion, I always eat, carrot, greens, and haricot beans, they are always cold, and I very seldom take them. Another little brown loaf and a mug of hot milk and an apple. Sometimes there is cheese instead of egg. The "associated labour" lasts till 5, and then comes

Supper, brown bread ^{+ butter} and cocoa, quite good, and when I am hungry I enjoy it, but I very seldom take it all. They come for our supper dishes towards 6, and then I get out to get water, after wh. we are shut up for the night. We have electric bells to ring when we want to go out. At first it was difficult to get them answered, but some of us made a row about it & it is much better now. Still, I always try to manage my outings when the door is open in any case. On Sunday mornings we are an hour later. I have written this since dressing. It is now near 7, so I'll stop. On Sunday church is later, & we exercise first. The Unitarians send in a minister from outside, who comes twice a week, & sees Unitarians, Ethical Ch., Theosophists & all the queer sects. I have applied to see him, & when I do, you can write to him, & he will read me your letters. As he is our spiritual adviser, the wardress sits outside the glass door during his visit. He is the brickiest brick of anybody yet - gives any amount of time & trouble to us. His name is Hankinson - I'll get his address sent to you as soon as I can. I wish you would send me some cotton knickers and another cotton blouse a dark one, with its own collar, for white ones dirty directly. Any old one wd do, if it has no holes. You might unpick the knicker band or the blouse's yoke, put a note in and sew it up again. Use jap paper which won't crackle. We are prisoners of war, & not on parole, so expedients like that are morally justifiable. Some get food from outside, & "Vote" came in once, cut into strips, wrapped in oiled paper, in the stuffing of a roast chicken! Those who sent their washing home unpick night gown hems, write notes on handkerchiefs, &c. One girl writes shorthand, and so does her sister, outside. This whole paragraph is written since bkft, but I'll stop now & continue later.

After dinner. 1.10. We had a nice exercise time, & then church. There were flowers on the altar, in the windows and in the font. Fancy a font in prison! It made me cry the first time I saw it. poor little Valie, born & baptised in prison. Church is always very stuffy, we are going to complain to the Prison Commissioners the next time they come round. We are generally given the choice of exercise or afternoon church, and generally we say exercise. So we shall probably be out in $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour or $\frac{1}{4}$ till 4 o'clock. On Sundays we have supper soon after 4, and then are shut up for the night. Vera Wentworth & Gladys Hazel & one or two others are very athletic at exercise, jumping over a twisted ring held waist high by 2 others. Sometimes some of us play rounders, but generally we older ones just walk about & talk or sit about now that it is getting warmer. I made myself a sun bonnet with a piece of paper, for I like the sun on all of me except my face. When you send the things, put in a slip of paper saying "I send these as it is getting warmer. All are well" and then when they find one message they will not look further.

Be careful how you put the note into the garments, of course and see that it does not show. Miss Davies & I are both on the middle landing of this wing, Miss Fanny Palethorpe & Miss Reya on the ground floor, Miss Morris, as she calls herself, on the top floor and Mrs. Myers in Hospital. These are all the L'pool ones left now. I am so glad that none of us had to be bound over. There seems to be an idea that all the sentences will be reduced and that certainly they can't give the ladies very much. Mrs. Marshall is in here. She gets food from outside and messages in cakes & chickens & slices of bottles. She also gets visits from her husband who is also her solicitor so we get news from her. We have not hunger struck, because a message came in to wait till Parliament meets again on Wednesday, when it is thought our privileges will be given.

Easter Monday. Aunt Lou's birthday. Please send her my b.d. wishes, I think it is almost the first time that she has not had a letter from me. I did not finish the account of our day. I begin to get ready ^{very} little before 8: the wardress comes round beginning to put out lights about 8.15, & at first I used to be in bed by that time, & then waken up about 3. But now I have found out that when I am not in bed she goes away and does not come back till nearly 9, so I can lie & read a bit. Just now I am reading the Bhagavad-Gita at night, till the light suddenly pops out. Getting shut up at 9 makes me quite ready to get up between 4 & 5, & I dare say I shall dress then when it gets lighter. Other people say it makes the day so long, but I find the night long; there is always something to do in the day. There are some good books in the prison library; I have read Pride & Prejudice with Brock's illustrations: a book on Jeanne d'Arc, giving the evidence at her trial & rehabilitation; Ruskin's Seven Camps of Architecture: Marion Crawford's Corleone; and today I have got Hypatia and the first vol. of Modern Painters. I only hope I can get hold of the rest of the 5 in proper order. I am also reading Beauchamp's Career but by one of our members. Miss Willingford was at the Leeds Summer School last summer; ask Aunt Lisa if she remembers her tricycle. She is quite lame, wears irons on her legs, and walks with crutches when she is out of her tricycle. She has the same fright look that Bertha Willmer's mother has. She is leaving me no ink & filler, so I need not fear my pen giving out. We shall miss her very much when she goes out. I think it will be 3 weeks before any one else goes out, so I shall not have a chance of sending out till then. I wish you would write to Lady Conroy & tell her I am all right. I hear she is still at

Knobworth, & still very ill. I am so sorry both for her sake and for my own. How many blouses did you send me? I only got one, a lilac one, and not its own collar. I asked for the grey one too, but any cotton one will do. It is cooler again today, which is better for my clothes.

The wardresses are all very decent to us, and we have really greatly changed the tone of Holloway. The head of one wing, Miss Jones, reminds me of Miss W. Connell; she tries to make things pleasant for us. When one sees how much a small handful of us, helpless prisoners, can attain by simply holding our ground & threatening hunger strike it shows how very much might be done in the country if the whole body of Suffrage women would only stand firm and not trust any promises. I have rather a good position in prison, a sort of go-between, trusted by both wardresses & prisoners, & generally looked up to as a judicious, reasonable person. Miss Jones says "I know you will not expect impossibilities" and the hot-headed young things come & say "Dr. Ker will you ask" so & so whatever we want to make a representation about.

But one can see how appalling it must have been in the old days, when everything was stern & inhuman. = There were plank beds in F wing, 3 planks broad, with a hay-stuffed mattress. I found it very hard at first, but was just getting used to it, (as I tried to tell you by a reference to the Pirates' Curse) when we moved in here. There is a mattress here to & the hardest pillow I ever struck - the word is appropriate for such a rock! Some of them have their own pillows, but I wouldn't be bothered.

One of our members had some daffodils sent in yesterday & gave us each one. Mine is before me just now while I write, in my little horn cup, leaning against the wall. This is the third letter I have written you. Tell me if you got the other two.

Tuesday. I must finish this today, in case any unforeseen occurrence should prevent my giving it to Miss Billingham tomorrow. I don't know who sent me the last comb, but it was one of Mary's summer ones. If I am not out when you get back, you might still send me the ribbed cotton one I asked for. And did you send my grey costume to be washed? = I enclose a "joke" which I made the other day which may amuse you. It has turned quite cold again, a bitter north wind. Much love to all. I long to hear from you. If there is anything very special to say, send a telegram - they are allowed.

My dearest love to you two, from your ever loving Mother.

Alice J. Stewart Has.