

7LGA/2/1/26-Written from the train between Boulogne and Paris

Dearest Ivy Don't bother to write to me until Xmas is over as it is always such a busy time. I am planning to come home early in January for a few days perhaps 1st-6th. I would go straight to Alde House for three nights & then return to London for 2 nights. It is perfectly easy for me to go to no. 60 [Bedford Gardens] but I wd far rather come to you if you will be back from Aldeburgh & able to take me in, but Mrs Taylor will give me a royal reception if I go home. The exact dates don't matter to me. 4th & 5th returning here on morning of 6th, or 5th & 6th returning on morning 7th. I want to come over as soon as Olga returns here & that will be about end Dec. I am afraid our dear Old Lady is very wandery. She is writing me sad letters about wandering about the country trying to find me. When one sees these men dying young I remember they are spared a big trial. It is very difficult to be happy & useful old. All the infirmities for which there is no cure are very hard to bear. I hope that my being away isn't altogether a loss to her. She probably likes my doing this bit of work & knowing, if she knows, that it has gained a certain amt of recognition for Women's Work. I shall think of you all a great deal my very dear ones. I wonder if you will have our ordinary Xmas. It is difficult to know what to do this year - but I expect it is best to go right on. I am writing in the train on the way to Paris for 24 hrs for a glimpse of La Directrice without whom I get on badly & to participate in a reception for French Med. Women in our Hospital. Claridge's is full - with not bad cases - but the 110 beds are filled with rows of young men under scarlet blankets who sing part song or hymns & who look perfectly beautiful in the big white marble halls which we have closed in with white paper walls between the pillars. In the entrance hall which holds 40 beds there is a large round marble table (it is the winter garden of the hotel). This has a scarlet cloth on it & white flowers. The idea is to impress the French medical women with the hospital & inspire them to found a hospital for women, staffed by women. Nonesuch exists in France so that as one of them said to me We could not have offered to organise & work a hospital for our red X: we had no surgeons: they would not have looked at us. It is a tiresome journey to Paris & takes 8 hours or more, under war conditions. I meant to write a lot of letters but my pen gave out early so that the polite ones have had to wait. I wonder where Louie & Kenneth will be at Xmas. They have had to pay a big tribute poor dears. Much love to you all Yrs LGA. Our first German came in the Mauricien today. I hope we will make him like the English if he [? feels] nasty about them now, but he doesn't look as if he did. Olga/QM - Olga Campbell, cousin of Flora Murray, who was the Corps' QuarterMaster 'our dear OL/Old Lady' - Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Kenneth and Louie - Kenneth Anderson, a cousin, and his wife. Their son Angus was killed on board HMS Bulwark, 26 Nov 1914