

Colonel CHARLES HENRY DUDLEY RYDER

Letters 1915 - 1916

4th December 1914, 91 Victoria Street, London: My darling **Violet**, Will you ask Miss Fenn to address letters to **Dehra Dun**, U. P. India.

My darling, good bye to all of you. I loved my little peep at you all & we will all come home as soon as ever we can.

I went and saw Edward Grey¹ () today & had a long talk with him. You know his Father & I were first cousins. I have done all my shopping & have only a little packing to do tomorrow morning. I leave Liverpool Street at 11.30 am tomorrow by the P & O Special for the Albert Docks. Our arrival at Gibraltar, Malta & port Said will probably be reported in the papers.

Heaps of love & kisses to you all, from your loving Father.

25th March, **Mussoorie**: My darling **Violet**, There is one thing we are all agreed on here, and that is that it is very difficult nowadays to write letters. All our thoughts are full of the war. Each day we long for the newspaper and as soon as we get it we long for tomorrow's. Then we meet at meals, we talk about nothing but the war. It is warming up and we are doing without a fire until the evening. Our fire used to smoke badly, but we had it swept and now when we don't want a fire much it doesn't smoke at all. **Margaret** spends all the morning painting, **Enid** & Mother sewing & I in office. I come home for lunch & today being a holiday for some Hindu festival I haven't gone back. The weather is just perfect, warm sun, cold at night & lovely views of the snows (I think I mention that most weeks). Some seed we got & planted in tubs are beginning to come up. And there darling is all my news, not much, but here's many kisses & heaps of love, from you loving Father.

22nd April 1915, Himalaya Club, **Mussoorie**: My darling **Violet**, I think the news you would like to hear most of all is that Mother & the girls will probably go home so as to arrive in time for the summer holidays. At present they think of the P & O steamer leaving Bombay on June 26. I shall not come home till next spring if the war is over by then. They will have a pretty bad time, hot & rough. It will be very nice for you being all together. **Enid's** engagement is broken off. I don't think either of them were really in love with each other, though why **Enid** wasn't goodness only knows². He was, everyone says, perfectly delightful. Heaps of love & kisses to you all, from your loving Father.

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12th December, United Services Club, **Calcutta**: My darling Sweetheart, I believe we shall get no mail at all this week. It won't get in till Saturday, the day after this has to go. So today being Sunday I must make a start. I have just been down to the office with Crosthwait, trying the lawn there as a tennis court, and we have agreed it will do quite well, so we are going to start one. It will be a great score as at present if one is kept in office a moment after 4 it is too late to play any game as it is quite dark by 5.30. I had a letter from Wilson from Delhi. He didn't give much news except to say the news from Mesopotamia is not good. He had come over on 3 weeks leave for a rest. Arthur Money³ is going off there, I believe as Chief Staff Officer, a billet he will do very well. They are increasing the force there very largely. 2 brigades went a little time ago with Aylmer⁴ in charge of the Division, besides two more brigades & a lot of the Indian force from France. The 14th Hussars from Maent & 7th Hussars from Bangalore are also said to have gone, but one doesn't hear anything official, just rumour. The frontier remains quiet which is a good thing. The cold weather here is very pleasant. I have just had to put on a warmer coat. I've caught out my bearer very neatly soundling over charging me for train fares; going out to Tollygunge 1/8 too much in Oct & 1/4 in November, so I cut him that & told him next time I should cut him double. He is an ass, because

1 His cousin the Foreign Secretary 1905 -1916.

2 She eventually married Wigram Money in 1956 after being widowed.

3 A cousin through his mother Julia Money.

4 Lieutenant General Sir Fenton John Aylmer VC.

finding him like that I buy soap & those sort of things myself coming back from office.

Did I tell you **Wilfred**⁵ is off home. They decided he would never make a good staff officer, having had no previous experience, so he is allowed to "reside out of India" & hopes to get command of a regiment at home. The news from Serbia is evidently not good, but telegrams are evidently heavily censored. And what the position of Greece (*is*) no one out here knows. I should think the Greeks out here must feel rather uncomfortable.

I find if I don't go to bed till 12 or after I can sleep right through till tea comes at 7.30. Breakfast at 8.30, then Cowie & I walk to office. It is 10 or 15 minutes walk & we leave a little after 9. That gives me an undisturbed ½ hour in office for writing. I have to draft all orders about drawing of maps for the S.G.'s approval & that requires a little thinking out. I was out at Tolly yesterday playing golf with Cowie. He beat me, but we both played badly. It is however very nice out there & in the cold weather not many people are out there on Saturdays as there almost always races in **Calcutta**. It is rather lucky my putting in my time here as a bachelor, it would be perfectly ruinous as a married man. Now I must stop to read. There is a very good library here & they get new books every month. Sir Sidney⁶ is looking very old & is as usual very pessimistic about the war.

17th December: I've finished off other letters & I just come (*sic*) back from office. Mail not in till tomorrow. I have such a nice big writing table & also an electric stand lamp on my table. Arthur told me in the fight at **Ctesiphon** near **Baghdad** we captured the first part of the Turkish entrenches (*sic*), but then their reinforcements arrived, so we had to retire losing 30 per cent of our force. I fancy the Somerset's will go there from **Quetta**, as the senior regiment here is going to **Quetta**. Major Broome (Charlie) R.E. has been given the Legion of Honour. He is a very plucky fellow & has been commanding a sapper company in France for some time.

Ida, my hair won't grow. I didn't have it cut for 6 weeks last time & you know I like it short. I hope I won't go bald. No signs of that it just doesn't grow or grows very slowly. There is a barber's room in the Club with an Italian in charge. I have been taken (*sic*) Sodium Bicarbonate tablets (*sic*) after meals, as I had a bit of indigestion, inflated feeling. Darling, do take care of yourself & don't overwork. Heaps of love & kisses, my pet, from your br? Lover & husband, Charlie.

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9th April 1916, United Service Club, **Calcutta**: My own sweet darling, As the days slip by & I hear nothing about my leave, I rather despair about it; but much better news from Mesopotamia. Gorrings's force storming two Turkish positions cheers me up. He is a sapper two years junior to me, a Lieut. General now, a very fine fellow I believe. The War Office at home have taken over charge of the operations, so we now hear news by Reuters from England. The Viceroy is coming down here next week, & I have to go to a garden party after dinner on Tuesday, so I have ordered some white mess kit & new kamerband (*sic*), it will always be useful. This is what I am living on now each month.

November 1915	Rs563-0-0)
December "	495-7-0)
January 1916	556-15-3) Average Rs.516-14-6
February "	542-9-3)
March "	425-15-0)

I've got to get it down to Rs.500, but that is all right because the rent of my room was 100/- during those 5 months. Now it is only 50/-, light 3/-, ?fan 12/-, subscription 20/-. I have won almost Rs.50 a month at bridge. My pay is now Rs.1853-12-0: sending you home £90 a month costs me Rs.1350, so I have Rs.503 left to live on. I can do it all right, but you must manage without drawing cheques on Cox, except for the boys school bills. **Lisle's** first term came to £56-11-0, the small boys to £66-19-0 = £123-10-0 a term or £370-10-0 a year = £102 a month. As I send home £90, there is £12 to

⁵ His brother, also in the Royal Engineers.

⁶ Sir Sidney Burrard, the Surveyor General.

make up somewhere. That is a proposition for you to solve. But I think now you don't have **Lisle's** schooling at **Eastbourne** to pay & none of the boys to feed for about 9 months in the year. You ought to manage on considerably less than £65. Owing to the war everyone is economising so it is easier really to do it. You'll do it all right if you say each time you're going to buy anything, is it necessary?

I've got a little boil in my armpit, rather irritating. I've had two already. They come up very easily & pop themselves. I use drying powder for my feet, 'twixt the toes. What are your arrangements for preventing lights from showing through the windows. I see the "Kashmir" is the steamer that leaves **Bombay** on 14th May. 1st class accommodation return to **Marseilles** is Rs.990, 2nd class B the cheapest is Rs.810. So if I go I think I shall go first. The people I saw in 2nd when I came out were too awful, no sahibs among them. I should have to land & cross France in uniform. I believe all the Indian cavalry have remained in France. Lady Carmichael has returned with another niece. Everyone is clearing out of **Calcutta** as soon as the Viceroy leaves.

14th April: Mail in tomorrow. I wonder whether I shall get any letters. On Tuesday I went to the Garden Party at Govt. House after dinner. It rained, so it was indoors, such a pity as the garden was beautifully lit up. On Thursday, yesterday, I went out to Garden Reach, played tennis & dined with the Jelletts, they motored me back. Tonight I'm dining with the American Consul, Mr Smith, to play Bridge. Easter holidays come on next week. Major Crosthwait is taking Mrs C. up to Darjiling (*sic*). Gunter going to the seaside somewhere. No news of my leave. So I'm afraid it's all up with (*page turns*) my leg doesn't trouble me, but I am having a succession of little boils, or large pimples under my right armpit, one a day. Darling I do long for you & wonder when we shall be together again. Heaps of love & kisses to the girls, the boys will be off to school again. Ever your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

16th April, United Service Club, **Calcutta**: My own sweet darling, Sunday morning, but although some people got letters yesterday I got none. All lost, I suppose in the "Sussex"⁷. So here's another mail with no letters to answer. I heard yesterday from Burrard that as he had heard nothing about my leave I had better shove in my official application and that went off yesterday. I said, if my leave was sanctioned, I should like to leave here on 12th May. **Bombay** on 14th May to catch the "Kashmir"; but of course if you haven't had a telegram before this reaches you, you will know haven't got my leave. I see in the papers many references to economy, urging people at home to reduce servants and not to buy new clothes, but I don't suppose it has much effect. I ought to have been playing tennis yesterday, forgot all about it & went & played golf, very badly as usual. I'd have much sooner played tennis. I see Major Mcpherson of the 40th Pathians is married. Burrard told me that Bythell had asked for permission to retire so he evidently can't get employment. That will make me a pukka Superintendent, but no extra pay. I think his leave is up on 23rd May; funny he should be stuffy with you. Have you asked him to come & stay with you. He has always been so kind to the children, so go out of your way to be nice to him. My latest economy is doing without Chota Hazri⁸. It cost 6 annas. I first tried giving up toast & bananas & only had a cup of tea, but that cost 4 annas. So now I have glass of water which costs nothing & have some oranges in my room my bearer buys, probably 1 anna each. My lunch consists of a bottle of soda water and 3 biscuits, I have a box of Marie biscuits in office. On Sundays & holidays I'm afraid I indulge in lunch that costs 1 rupee. I don't take my whisky now. None of these are any hardship to give up. The only thing I find it hard to refuse is a glass of port, but that costs 10 annas now. Everything has gone up in price. I feel much better & not so fat & full of indigestion from eating less. The two days before & two days after Easter are holidays so a good many people are going off for a few days. The only sort of place I should have liked to have gone to would have been to sea bathe at **Puri**. However one of us must stay here, and all the other 3 want to go away. I'm sorry you didn't arrange for Lisle to go to some other boarding house not Mr Tanner's as there wasn't room there.

21st April, Good Friday & so an office holiday, but I was in office all the morning as I am rewriting

⁷ On March 24, a German U-Boat mistook a French cross-channel ferry to be a minelayer, and sank the Sussex.

⁸ A light meal taken early in the morning.

a handbook on map drawing, which has got very much out of date. It is difficult to do when office is open & one is being constantly interrupted. There was a good storm of rain last night & the air is quite cool, but I am sitting in my room under the fan, dressed in a vest and a bath towel, very easy & comfortable. My right armpit is rather itchy with its crop of little boils. Otherwise I am very fit. My official leave application is with the S G⁹ 6 months leave from 12th May (Steamer Kashmir P & O from **Bombay** on 14th May). He is going up to **Simla** just about today I think & will first find out from the Military Dept. whether there is any objection. The actual sanctioning of leave only takes a day or two. I am not very hopeful. The Club is very empty, most people having gone up to **Darjiling**, but I get my bridge most evenings. I am well up this month. Two mails next week, but the last one which was lost on the "Sussex" probably told me if you had all passed your 2nd examinations, so I shan't know.

Darling, how I am longing to see you again. I get rather lazy here about taking exercise, but I don't feel as if one wanted as much here as in **Mussoorie** say. Heaps of love & kisses, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

24th April 1916, United Service Club, **Calcutta**: Leave refused¹⁰.

My darling sweetheart, Your letters of 30th March came yesterday, and another mail promised tomorrow. So sorry in a way for **Ernie** having the German measles, but it's really a good thing got over. I wonder whether **Bobby** got it too. **Enid, Violet & Lisle** were all going to Bedford. Glad to get from **Enid** the list of March's cheques & to see none were drawn on Cox. To make the list complete you or she ought to add a list of unpaid bills. Darling, I feel sure you are doing your best all of you to spend as little as possible. It is just during the war that every penny is important. If I know that you are economising, I out here, can deny myself little things with the greatest of ease. The only way to do it is to say every time you buy something, is this absolutely necessary. If you don't let the house & go into lodgings, perhaps you might do with only one servant & let the girls do the house work.¹¹ Everybody out here talks of what their relations are doing at home to economise. When the war is over we shall be all right, as Burrard & Renny-Tailyour retire & I get my Rs2,250 & probably officiate for a year in 1918 as S. G. on Rs.3,000. I'm bringing my Club bill down nicely by not drinking anything & chucking chota hazri & lunch. In this heat one doesn't want to eat so much, so it is not a hardship.

27th April, U. S. Club, **Calcutta**: My own sweet darling, Leave refused. The Commander-in-Chief considers that as there is a large demand for RE officers for Mesopotamia which cannot be complied with, he does not think that Lt Col Ryder should be granted leave out of India, as "he is always liable to be recalled to military duty." So that is the end of that & when I shall get home or see any of you again God alone knows. I have two dear letters of yours to answer & lots from the children, but I feel too sick at heart to write much. We've also got a lot of snags on. Thermometer up to 97° in my office, so I've bought myself a Thermos flask to have iced water at intervals. It was 12/8, an extravagance, but I could not stand the heat & thirst.

28th April: I find I've been writing on two separate sheets. I will try to write you a longer letter on Sunday. As I can't get home there are lots of things I want you to do, to take my place with the boys. Heaps of love, my pet & forgive this short letter. I'm too disappointed for words at not getting home. I heard from Col Bythele after seeing you. He said you all looked very well, **Margaret** stouter than when she was in **Mussoorie**. Heaps of love & kisses from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

9 Surveyor General.

10 Perhaps this was added later as there is no reference to leave until the next letter.

11 Margaret had married Claud Riall 9th November 1915.

30th April, U. S. Club, **Calcutta**: My own sweet darling, In order that you can understand all about our affairs here is a full statement.

My pay	Rs.1853-12-0	
£90 home	<u>1350-0-0</u>	
	503-12-0	left for me in India

Now let us see what I average

November 1915	563-0-0
December 1915	495-7-0
January 1916	556-15-3
February "	542-9-3
March "	425-15-0
April "	<u>439-5-6</u>
	3023-4-0 in 6 months or 503-14-0 per month.

It is only in the last two months that I have taken myself in hand to cut down every expense I can. I order to encourage you to do ditto here are some of the things I have cut. I have become a teetotaler practically. A glass of port cost /10/- a day & a ½ peg whisky -/5/- a day or Rs.28-2-0 a month. By not having chota hazri /6/- a day & having a glass of water & an orange I save /5/- a day = Rs9-6-0. My lunch costs me -/1/- a day instead of -/4/- but that is only for 5 days in the week, however that saves Rs4/-. On Saturdays & Sundays I regret to say I am greedy and eat lunch which costs 1/- but I go without tea on those days. In the hot weather one drinks more of course. I go in for iced water as much as possible. As I have been here 6 months as a temporary member I have had to join the Club pukka now & pay Rs150 entrance. However my monthly subscription is reduced from Rs20 to Rs14. In Sept. or October last I spent Rs2/- at a cinema. Since then I haven't spent an anna on anything of the sort. I always walk to office & back, as I always have, that doesn't reduce my expenses. I have one of the cheapest rooms in the Club Rs50 a month in the hot weather Rs100 in the cold. I have had to get a good deal of hot weather clothes, but I think I have enough now to last me through the hot weather. I haven't joined the Saturday Club or the Eden Gardens tennis courts. **Tollygunge Golf**¹² I pay 10/- a month for, but go out very rarely. Probably in the rains I may go out more. I think I shall get my expenses down to an average of Rs.450, but less than that will be impossible. I have purposely called on as few people as possible to cut down taxis &c to tennis parties. I honestly don't see how I can do more; but I am quite happy to do all this, so long as it is being done also by you all. Now if that £90 a month I sent home was enough we should be just making both ends meet, but as I already showed you it is £12 a month short.

Sent home £90 a month	=£1,080	
Ida £65 a month	= £780	
Insurance &c	72	
Small boys £67 a term =	201	
Lisle , say £57 a term	<u>171</u>	<u>£1,224</u>
		£144 a year or £12 a month.

Of course as I don't see your accounts I can't tell what you are spending. I only see the list of cheques, but **Violet's** riding lessons £5-12-6 rather struck me as superfluous, probably they were some time ago. I wonder whether people in England realise the necessity of being economical.. In our case it happens to be necessary privately as well. I believe you could quite easily supply the £12 a month we are short out of your £65; but it can only be done if you think of every penny. I'm very sorry, darling, to go (*on*) so much about money.¹³ () Perhaps you may think it 's become a craze with me, perhaps it has, but I can see so clearly our getting more & more into difficulties that I want to call a halt while there is time. I wonder if you will let the house, but if you do and go into lodgings why not go to **Cheltenham**, live in lodgings there & send all the boys as day boys to **Cheltenham**.

12 Now the Royal Kolkata Golf Club.

13 There is a photograph of Ida and Enid working at Gwynne's airplane factory later in 1916.

Bobby going to one of the many small schools, then you would at once save £200 a year & everything would be all right. Then when you came here the boys could go as boarders, **Lisle** to **Cheltenham** & the two others to **Frant**. I only want you to think of this. I'm not on the spot & I must leave you to judge what is best. Of course while the war lasts it is very difficult to make plans. If the war came to an end you would come out here I suppose with **Enid** & **Violet**. I should have had my turn of **Calcutta** & could probably get to **Mussoorie** or **Bangalore**. I believe the best thing to do, if you reject the idea of going to Cheltenham would be to cut down one servant. Anyhow as a beginning, darling, go through your accounts & see what you've spent that wasn't absolutely necessary. Don't have things put down to your account except food, and don't go out with money in your pocket.

Sunday morning, and very hot, a towel & vest is my costume. I'm going out this afternoon to tennis & dine with the Jelletts. They motor me out & back. They have such a good tennis court & so I enjoy it. Dear pet, I adore you. Don't think I'm going for you. I only want to help & advise.

6th May 1916. Darling, no mail this week, but two next. You mustn't mind my economy lectures. They are quite right and everyone has to go in for it. We can post a day later this week, the departure of the mail is delayed for some reason. I'm going out to play golf this afternoon at **Tollygunge**, omething to do, but I dislike the game now, & only go about once a month. I have had to pay Rs160 entrance subscription to the Club year, which will make rather a hole in my subalterns 450/- a month. My prickly heat armpit pustules are better from smearing on some stuff called Storaxol. Cowie & Crosthwaite use it for boils. Col. Bythell told me in his last letter that he was going to retire at the end of this month. He had got nothing to do. I also heard from Mr Dentith saying if ever I came to Shillong I was to stay with him. I'm all agog to get the boys' term reports. Heaps of love & kisses. My pet & I adore you ever, ever so. Ever your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

12th May, U S Club, **Calcutta**: My own sweet darling, I have a lot to write about, as I have had two mails this week, those of April 13 & 20. I send you back the boys reports, so that when you get those for this term you can compare them & see how they have improved or the reverse. Now as regards **Lisle**¹⁴. I hope you have arranged for him to play cricket for the following reasons: shooting he should do but it isn't an exercise; rowing also should come later, it is a good exercise, but not for boys who are a bit young. I've done a lot myself, but one has to be careful not to strain the heart. **Cheltenham** too is not, like **Bedford**, a good school for rowing, they have to go down to Tewkesbury, 9 miles away by train & it takes up a lot of time. If **Lisle** continues to have his fat face, it shows he wants a lot of exercise; football & running are the best. As regards his lessons the boys he talks of as 15 & 16, as you can imagine from their being in the bottom class are of course next door to being idiots. I shouldn't mind him being low in his class. Every boy can't be top, if he was trying his hardest, we know he isn't and he is dreadfully careless in writing. Those are things he can easily cure himself of and his being of an affectionate nature is a great point because I think if you appeal to his love for you it would have great effect. You none of you mention holiday tasks; another holiday take great notice of these & see that they are done thoroughly; to be well up in the holiday task exam is a great start for the term.

About **Ernle**¹⁵ I can't tell you how pleased. I have written him a special letter of praise.

Bobby is of course very young¹⁶, only don't let him be lazy about anything; he has such a good example in **Ernle**. So praising Bobby before **Ernle** will do a lot of good. Darling as regards the boys you will try and do things you know I would like as I can't get home¹⁷. I've been through the whole of a boy's life myself and I know where I succeeded & where I failed. **Ernle** is doing better than I did. I was probably cleverer at his age, but he is so splendidly earnest & hard working. I feel

14 Now nearly 16.

15 Just 10.

16 Aged 8.

17 In the past eight years he would have only seen them briefly at the end of 1914.

Lisle just wants being guided into the right line and he will be all right, although never a flier. Rowing would be rather expensive at **Cheltenham**. The advantage of cricket is that it is a game of eye, and therefore good training for tennis & other such games.

I am very pleased that you have £239 from dear old **Harry's** estate¹⁸ & very glad you have put it into Treasury Bonds. It has always been a bit of a blow to me that I haven't been able to myself buy some. Everyone in the Club does it regularly. I have decided to go up to **Shillong** for a week on duty. The S. G. says I may. I leave on the 20th & get back on the 30th & shall stay with Dentith. It will be a pleasant change especially as I rather liked Shillong, in spite of its lack of British cavalry! And a trip like this one always scores in I. G. (*or T. G.*)

(Private: It must have been very nice for **Margaret** having **Claud** over for a bit, she always writes so fondly of him. She is devoted to him which is good. Of course he is old for her, but that often happens especially now-a-days & when men marry older than in our day. All the world is not alike.)

Margaret says the change to **Bedford** has done **Violet** good. She is more energetic. I am sure you are all doing your best to be economical. I think we shall manage all right, unless taxes go on increasing. I wonder if you have managed to do with one servant. Now that conscription of all men married & single has come in there will be more demand than ever for women for work. It isn't sound economy for **Enid** & **Violet** to wash & scrub in a hospital & then to keep servants to do the same in the house.

Darling pet, how I long for a good hug from you & to be with you & all the children. I feel very lonely at times. I am glad I am getting through my time in **Calcutta** though, while you are at home. I look forward anyhow, war or no war, leave or no leave to your joining me out here in October next year at latest. Heaps of love & kisses, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

17th May, U S Club, **Calcutta**: My darling sweetheart, I am writing rather under difficulties as on the 14th while I was playing tennis I slipped & twisted my ankle. Felt jolly bad for a bit, but a couple of brandy pegs bucked me up & after 10 minutes I felt better, though I felt very faint & far away till then. It was at the Du Val's (very nice people). Luckily a doctor was there & bathed my ankle in iced water & bandaged it & Crosthwait drove me back in his motor. I had a rotten night, never slept a wink. However next day Bourke, a doctor in the Club took charge & has been very good, massaging my foot every evening for about ¾'s of an hour & now it doesn't hurt; only a very fine bruise starting about 1 inch from my toes & reaching 2 inches above my ankle. I'm not allowed up, but with crutches can hobble to the bath. I thought of **Margaret** as I lay on the ground. Everybody very nice & kind. I have to put off my trip to **Shillong**, but I think instead of going on Saturday the 20th I shall go about the 23rd or 24th. Not sorry for this, as I hear 22nd to 27th was to be the May week which I should like to avoid. It is my right leg, rather lucky, as it will get well much quicker than my old game leg. Bad luck I hadn't any of my Red Cross wife or daughters to look after me. Life is bit dull. I read a lot & today have been doing files in bed, & yesterday 3 fellows came & played bridge & that I enjoyed. We get no mail this week. Too tired to write more now.

20th May, I am now up & about, though I go lame & my ankle is still swollen & weak. Got a jolly old cold also & so I shall be glad to get away to Shillong on the 23rd. I'm feeling up to nothing. Look with envy & admiration on pi-dogs & worms. Heaps of love, dear pet, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

23rd May, U S Club, **Calcutta**: My own sweet darling, As I am off today to Shillong I shall I fancy miss the mail up there. So I'm writing before I start. My foot is still hurting but is much better & I walked to office today for the first time. A mail of 27th April arrived yesterday & one comes tomorrow, that will be forwarded up after me. We have been having better weather, strong winds but no rain. I shall be jolly glad to get out of Calcutta for a bit. I'm not taking up golf clubs or tennis bat (*sic*), as I shall be able to play even golf for some time. Please thank **Enid** for her list of cheques for April. I hope now you will be quite clear of drawing cheques on Cox except for schooling & even then we have somehow got to find £12 a month to make both ends meet. Gunter & E. A. Tandy

18 Ida's brother Harry was killed at Festubert 16th May 1915.

have been warned to hold themselves in readiness for military duty in Mesopotamia. I fancy Thillier will come here in place of Gunter. This effectively knocks on the head any idea of my getting away on leave or in any other capacity.

Yes, I'm immensely proud of my three boys, as well as the 3 girls. When I ?jaw & urge, it is because I love them so. I want them to have the very best opportunities. It will be no good 10 years hence saying, as so many young men say "If I'd only understood when I was a boy what a lot depended on work, how hard I should have worked"; it is then too late. I want you always to make a great ? tamashr? On the arrival of the term reports 7 also to see that holiday tasks are thoroughly well done. No one has mentioned the subject of holiday tasks. Did none of the boys have any for the Easter holidays. I shall be very glad what **Lisle** leaves the P. B. H. He wants a harder life, less eating & more exercise. Heaps of love & kisses, my darling, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

23rd May, United Service Club, **Calcutta**: My own sweet darling, I wrote you a letter in office, but I think I didn't post it. I'm off this afternoon to **Shillong** & looking forward to the change immensely. My foot still hurts, but I can walk. In fact I walked to office this morning but that was a bit far. Your mail of 27th April got here yesterday, and another one comes tomorrow & will follow me up to **Shillong**. Yes, I'm immensely proud of my 3 boys, as well as my 3 dear girls. So I when I jaw & urge it is for love of them, because I know what they will know 10 years hence; when they will say, "Well, you see, I never understood when I was a boy," & so on. I want you to make a great tamasha¹⁹ () always of the arrival of the terms reports. They shouldn't be just glanced at & chucked away, but talked over & discussed, & praise or blame given where right. I again ask whether any of the boys had any. No mention has been made to me of any. Thank **Enid** for her list of cheques for April. I'm afraid "self" or "Cowley ?Dairy" are still very extravagant people. Sorry to see Cox & Co are still being drawn upon, but I have had my say on all that. It would encourage me a lot if I knew what great economies you were going in for. I wouldn't waste any more money on **Violet's** music. It has all been wasted on **M & E**. If she is going to be any use at all, she can now practise &c. herself.

It will be hot in the train, but I shall enjoy myself. Gunter & E. A. Tandy have been warned to hold themselves in readiness to proceed to Mesopotamia on military duty, lucky fellows. Heaps of love & kisses, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

28th May, **Shillong**, to **Ida**: My own sweet darling, I am enjoying myself in the cool. **I left Calcutta** on the 23rd at 3:30 pm, crossed the Ganges by the new bridge at **Saraqat** (?) & then had to change at **Santahar** (?) onto the narrow gauge, where I had dinner. Of course all that part was hot, but next morning when I woke up at **Sorbhaq** (?) it was raining & cloudy & cool. Old Mr Copeland was in my carriage, a sporting old man, Ian has joined the Indian Army Reserve as a 2nd Lieut. in the 8th Gurkhas & has been very useful recruiting. One of his daughters is engaged to a man in the Forests & in the I.A.R. We had a very pleasant journey up in the motor & got here at 5. Mr Bentinck D.C. of Ganhati is in the is in the house, as there is a week on and Mr Kidman from **Calcutta**; both very nice, the latter knew you all up here I think or in **Calcutta**. He said **Enid** was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen, the exact image of the Teda (?) pearl girl. There are not many people up here whom we knew, but such as I've seen asked after you, Mrs Holder, Mrs Botham &c. The place is followed than usual, they are enlarging the hotel, which has been taken over by Calcutta people. Morello only has his sweet shop now. There was a cricket match on Saturday, **Shillong v Ganhati**, which the former won. The 1/8th are in Mesopotamia, Mr Moran was killed, like Capt Huddlestone by a sentry as he came back to the line at night, Mr Meade wounded but gone back, Major Jewitt is the only one left with the depot, 1000 recruits, Capt Harrington has just arrived, he was wounded but only a bit stiff in the left shoulder; he said he saw some of you in **Eastbourne**. Mr Cummings is engaged to a Miss Parry, older than himself, sister of an I.C.S man. I play bridge most evenings & write all day at my handbook. Haven't seen Crichton yet as he has been seedy. I go over his office tomorrow, he has it in a new house next door to Morello's shop. I haven't had time to go & look at our house & I can't find any traces of Jacob, Leah & Rachel. I shall be very reluctant to go back to the heat of **Calcutta**. I went to a rather good show at the Club, the Follies got up by some Di

19 Indian: a grand show, performance, or celebration.

bungah (?) people. Archie is still here, but Lady Earle is home, they say she is more a bunniah²⁰ than ever. I saw Mrs Kenwood to speak to.

31st May. I inspect an office one day and work at my pamphlet the other & enjoy the cool. We have some rain most days. They have built another tennis court at the Club and the old No. 3 is now good, the new one not so. Let me see what local gossip I have. Mrs Kennedy divorced Major Kennedy & then married Major Giffard, they are not here. Miss Bolger didn't marry that man she was engaged to, Capt Grey but has since married a Mr Stewart in the 123rd Ontran's (?) Rifles who was up here last year. Major Gunter leaves Calcutta today, Major Thillier taking his place. He & Major Tandy are to be Asst Directors of Works looking after all works on the line of communications, of course large reinforcements are going there. I think you may look on it as pretty well settled that I shan't get any leave or go anywhere on service but live and inglorious life at **Calcutta**.

I have enjoyed my trip up here, prickly heat gone & ankle much better. I can walk all right on the flat, not fast of course, but I'm not very good on the hill side or on steps. Mr Dentith has got a tame monkey, a hulluch (?), It goes about on its hind legs, waving its arms, a friendly little animal. I dined one night with the Mears, and they are dining here tomorrow. Nearly everyone has motors here now. Cowie goes up to **Mussoorie** for a month as soon as I return. I hope **Lisle** will do better next term. Work on his affectionate nature. **Ida**, my darling pet, when shall I see you again & when I do I know you'll be beastly independent & think you know much better than I do about everything. Dear **Margaret** I do feel for her in her daily anxiety. I expect **Claud** has been put in as 2nd in command in order to be given command presently. Mr Kidman is motoring me out to **Manphlong** tomorrow. Mr David still collects bugs & is said to be rather mad, he was devoted to a Miss Row but she refused him.

I think that is all my news, darling. Heaps of love & kisses from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

& love & kisses to the girls.

3rd June, Shillong, to Ida: My own sweet darling, Yesterday I got yours of May 10. I am indeed very proud & pleased that you have gone onto Muniton work²¹. It is some consolation to me, when I am stuck out here and cannot myself help in the war, that my family do. I think it splendid of you & **Enid**. I see another male comes in on the 8th before this letter goes, so I shall hope to hear more details. You had only done two days work when you wrote. Both you & **Enid** will do well at that sort of work. I was so excited I didn't go to sleep last night for a long time, and in my prayers I put in a special one of gratitude for the very dear wife and children I have. The £1 a week you are each earning will be very useful, and I shall be most interested to hear what your weekly accounts are, including rail fares & everything. Don't cut your food, darling, you know both you & **Enid** are "pickers" and as your work will be tiring you must have good food. I want you to keep a careful account of how much you receive, so that when our ship comes home what (*you*) and shall be spent on something for our future home with a suitable inscription and what **Enid** earns shall be her own. I especially want this, as I always felt it a little hard that my scholarship money was put into the common fund and not kept for me as I earned it. I want to do what sort of machines you work & what you actually make. I had a long letter from **Margaret** too full of her housekeeping. I'm so glad she can manage now with only one servant. I hope you wear gloves & don't spoil your pretty hands. This is my last day in **Shillong**, it has done me a lot of good. I am feeling very fit, my ankle is much better, I still feel it, but no pain, and my pimples under the arm have at last all gone. I go down tomorrow. I really ought to be writing my pamphlet, but I have knocked off to write. I have been grumbling & writing so much about economy &c. that I feel I am more than repaid, and when I walk along Park Street to the office every day to save 8 annas for a taxi I shall do it with a light heart. A remark of **Lisle's** in his letter to **Enid** that he is working hard at his lessons has made me very happy too; so altogether this is a good mail, King's birthday too. I have been most comfortable here, Dentith is a very good chap.

²⁰ A merchant or petty trader.

²¹ Gwynne's factory in Chiswick.

I wish I could give you a great hug, both of you for what you are doing. You are splendid **Ida**, so beautiful & so energetic. I am a lucky fellow & I am proud of you. I look on it in this way; in peace time things don't so much matter, in war time they do; if you are doing nothing you are a drone, a drain on the nation, all you eat & wear has to be made by others, by working munitions or hospital work you are releasing men for the front & yet enabling the necessary work of the nation to go on, and you especially you splendid darling, having had 6 children, you have already done 6 times more than most women now-a-days. Besides which the example you set will probably induce a dozen others to start in and work. Both you & **Enid** are so good with your hands I expect you will do splendidly. Tell me all about the other women working in your room.

9th June. Darling I have had a long day in office and am a bit tired. Cowie is away for a month in **Mussoorie**, so I have his work as well as my own. I wish I could see you at work, do tell me all about it. I long to hear. We have had some rain again today & it looks quite monsoony. We are re-making the tennis court at the office, which ought to be first class for next winter. I have been elected a member of the Club Committee. Any other news, no I don't think so. I have no news, but I long for news of you all. Now I must write old **Ernie** a letter; so heaps of love & kisses & don't get too independent I am still a better man than you are. Ever your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

15th June, U S Club, **Calcutta**, to **Ida**: My own darling Sweetheart, I'm so sorry, darling, that I haven't thought long enough ahead to send you my very best & most loving wishes for your birthday, to reach you near the day, but I shall be thinking of you & with great love & gratitude for a very dear wife & the sweet children you have given me. I am much touched & very pleased & happy at all you are doing. I only hope you won't starve yourself. I got rid of my armpit pimples in **Shillong**, they are showing an inclination to come back, but we have been having really quite good cool weather, rain everyday. The monsoon has started very early. I suppose we shall have some bad breaks in consequence. My ankle doesn't progress as quickly as I had hoped, it feels weak when I walk. I get to office & back & that is all the exercise I get. M.O'C. Tandy is being sent back to India, he never really recovered from his wound, but we don't know whether he is coming to the Survey or to military duty. I look at my letters with increased interest now I know you are working there (?). I don't leave your letters lying about, so you can tell me full details. I am hugely delighted at **Ernie** being top of his class. I gather from **Lisle** that he is on some m***tion (?) work, I suppose in their workshop. He would be delighted if you got him a job for the summer holidays, as long as he is fit, he wants plenty of exercise & not too much food. I wish I could see you at work. We are making a new tennis court at the office, but of course it will be no good till after the rains. I have plenty of work, now Cowie is away. No one has ever told me what Francis Tarleton is doing. I feel more cheerful about the news. The Russians seem to be beating the Austrians again. You are living very economically. I hope not too much so; get plenty of good roast beef with nice red gravy.

The evenings before dinner are rather dull as I can't get out & don't always get bridge, but as I eat so much less now I can do with less exercise. Darling, I adore you. **Margaret** tells me that **Claud** offered to contribute towards the expenses of Murhill, very nice of him, but you were quite right to refuse. We shall manage all right now. If you let the house & so give up **Eastbourne** you must arrange to stop the payment by Cox of the £65 a month to the Eastbourne bank, and draw all your cheques so (*sic*) Cox. I hope now **Enid** is at work someone will continue to send me the list of monthly cheques. I am writing in office, but I must go over & do some work, files are accumulating.

17th June. Very cool & comfy in my room Saturday afternoon under the fan, dressed in a shirt & towel. I dined last night with the Duvals. He is judge at Alipore. All the ladies were immensely interested when I 'talked' about my wife & my daughter making aeroplane engines & living on their wages. I see the Whitsuntide holidays were off, I wonder if you worked through them. Miss Carmichael, there are two, but I think this is the one you know is engaged to a Mr Roddick, a businessman & a great rider. I tried a stroke or two at golf yesterday but couldn't manage it, hope to in another week. Major Thillier told me about his being arrested at a German spy at (*sic*) Harwich, it was interesting.

Heaps of love & kisses from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie

Love to Enid, I'm so glad she liked the wristlet watch.

28th June, U S Club, **Calcutta**. To **Ida**: My own sweet darling, Our birthday, and I wonder if you are thinking of me. You hard at work at your lathe and I sitting in my luxurious Club. However you have the better climate, not that ours is so very bad, under a fan. We shall get no mail this week, perhaps it may arrive Friday evening, just a day I have to post. Without a letter from you I feel dull, and my letters are dull, as my thoughts are always with you & our darling children.

There is a new loan out here, which everyone is taking up who has any of the old 3½ per cent as 100 rupees in the new loan enables you to convert 100 rupees of the 3½ per cent into new loan, which is at 4%, so I have subscribed 100 rupees for each, **Lisle & Bobby**; it costs 104 rupees actually, so I want to the same amount to be given to **Ernle**, it is £6-18-8. Will you pay it into his savings bank account, not to be spent, but buy War Loan with it. I really ought to give the same amount to the girls, but I don't know whether we can afford it just now. I've had rather a long day in office, not so long as your hours but then the climb it is more trying. Don't forget to keep an exact account of yours and **Enid's** earnings. You don't tell me at what rate you are paid for overtime, but I think especially in the heat of the summer you oughtn't to do overtime, it will knock you up. I think it is wonderful how you both stand it. I think by now I've told everyone I know about you, and they will ask questions but I am able to answer very few of them. I sleep rather later in the mornings now & go to bed later. It is now over a year since you all went home, a very dreary year for me. Please I want you to make a special note of my wish that if **Ernle** or any other boys are top of their class at the end of term a special tamasha²² is to be made over it, and if you can give something special from me, it would give me great pleasure. Anyhow £1 on the nail, will you? You won't forget, because I attach special importance to this. I had my hair cut this morning, my birthday treat, but you would be surprised at the length I let it grow to. I spent a pleasant hour day before yesterday, at the dentist, one tooth out & another stopped, & I have to go again to have one more tooth stopped & tartar scraped off, a thing I especially enjoy! The dentist murmured something about a plate, but I said no! I had a wife & 6 children & with my own lot that made 256 teeth I have to pay for. I've lost 9 altogether of my original 32.

1st July. Hope this won't miss the post. Just received a splendid bunch of letters from you all. Heaps of love & kisses to everyone, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

19th July, U S Club, to **Ida**: My own sweet darling, S.G. turned up to date and talking about to Tandy & Gunter going to Mesopotamia. He handed me a letter from Col Dallas, Head of the military works saying 'We require two senior R.E. officers for Mesopotamia, can you let us have them, Ryder & Cowie would be most suitable.' Now isn't that the most cruel luck, to be actually asked for & not sent, never even asked if I would like to go; so when I protested Burrard said he was so sorry, he had no idea I would have liked to have gone, and that he thought he had better send the two who were least use to the Survey Dept.!!! Do sympathise with me. I had no idea I had been asked for. I think this is one of the most sickening blows I've had. Tandy as everyone expected, has already made an ass of himself. What an ass I was ever to have left the Caucasus, however I was gradually getting reconciled to that, as past & done with; now I have this blow.

I've just had tea after office & it is so hot I've come up to my room & in negligé costume & I thought I'd pour out my grievance to you while I felt hot over it. Mail comes in on Friday morning. Still good news about our offensive. I wonder if we shall capture their third line, it seems very promising, but of course out here one doesn't hear the whole story. I see Ernest Byrde has been wounded, how well he has done.

21st July. Had a very busy day in office and feel pretty tired. Darling, I'm as proud as possible at all you are doing. I do think it splendid. I'm so glad, as I can do nothing that my family are. I'm going to give the S.G. a piece of my mind before he leaves. Lathbury who went from here to be Deputy Director of Works in Mesopotamia is junior to me, so that is the job I would have got. At times I think Burrard is rather dotty! However it's no good repining. **Bobby** I see for half term is still bottom of his class. I fancy he is about the youngest; but all I want in his reports is 'doing his best'

22 A grand show, celebration or performance, especially involving dance.

or 'trying hard' or something like that."

I feel very fed up with things sometimes in this beastly climate. Burrard doesn't understand one's feelings. Darling, God bless you, anyhow I have a darling wife & children. Heaps of love & kisses from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

28th July, U S Club, to **Ida**: My own sweet Darling, Yours of 5th July came last week. How kind of Mr Dentith to send chocolates? He is most kind. I'm so glad to know some more about your work. Crank shafts are of course very important & would have to be made most carefully to gauge. How do you gauge them? I think it splendid of you & **Enid** to be living on your pay. I was a little disappointed on receiving June's cheques to see that you apparently had only a small balance at Eastbourne & the dentist's big bill still not paid. I'm afraid you must have had a long list of unpaid bills which you have only gradually been able to pay off since you started to economise. I don't know who is the cheque writer & who makes out the list of cheques (**Enid** sends it to me) but **Margaret** who is at **Eastbourne** might go to the bank & enquire what is the balance in hand with the cheque book to see that all cheques drawn have been cashed at the bank (sometimes people don't send them to the bank the same day), then start Square & correct & let me know what is the balance in hand at the end of each month & what are the unpaid bills in hand, other than ordinary weekly ones or quite small ones; then I know exactly how we stand. We can (*sic*) a big downpour of rain 2 days ago & that has made it much cooler & last night sleeping under a fan I was glad of a blanket. When you see **Lisle**, you must tell him to write about the things that interest us, his games, his place in class &c. by the bye I've never been told what pocket money any of the boys get.

5 pm. Just back from office & had tea I'm so proud of what you & **Enid** are doing, it is some consolation because I can do nothing. I've broken a tooth, one of which the dentist stopped the other day & said it would only last a short time; it has. So sorry about **Ernle** & **Bobby** with their flu. They must be about ending their term are now. I'm so excited to know if **Ernle** is top. I must write to Mother²³, I'm becoming a dreadful correspondent. Darling, God bless you. Heaps of love & kisses from your adoring lover & husband.

Darling **Enid** a kiss to you, you're doing splendidly.

3rd August, Calcutta, to **Ida**: My own sweet darling, The mail comes in late tonight, but letters have to be posted tomorrow, so I must get on with my letters. I'm sitting in the Club reading room looking out onto the Maidan. We are still short of rain and the showers we get although they do cool the air a bit while the rain is falling, leave it gummy in between. I'm dining out tonight, quite an event. I've just been doing up my monthly accounts and I find my average monthly expenditure during the last 5 months has been Rs.400/- that is since I really discovered I've got to be economical.

Darling, I long for your letters, I do so enjoy them and the girl's too. There are not many men in the Club now, so I often don't get any bridge. Major Thillier is getting his wife out in November, as he has been out here without her for 2 years. The Thillier family have done pretty well in the war, the Sapper brother, C.B. & C.M.G. Fasken C.B. Ravenshaw the other brother-in-law C.M.G. & Bt. Colonel. The Survey have recently lost Oakes killed & Field missing & Couchman wounded.

Darling, I'm so pleased & proud of all you are doing.

11th Aug. this is a bit of an old letter begun last week. I am writing in office & have just remembered I have to go to the dentist at 4.30 & shall spend the afternoon having a tooth out; it won't take long & with Eucaine²⁴ injected, it doesn't hurt. We are having plenty of rain, my trip to **Simla** is off but I may go up to **Mussoorie** for a week. No mail this week, it doesn't come in till Sunday morning, however that is a very nice day for it to arrive. Dear heart, how I long for this war to be over & for us to be together again. I dread your becoming too independent, who were so much too un** (?) The last time when I came back from Persia.

23 Ida's mother, Josephine Grigg 1846-1918 (née Roberts).

24 Used as a local anaesthetic, substituting for cocaine, in veterinary medicine!

I have just taken to pipe smoking instead of cheroots. The latter are very nasty in the rains and the pipe is cheaper, and I smoke less so altogether it will be a good thing. But I bought an expensive pipe with the hole on top like this²⁵. It is supposed not to burn one's tongue. I got drenched yesterday walking back from office, but it doesn't matter with white washing clothes on. God bless you, darling, heaps of love & kisses from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

I could write lots! But the censor!!!

4th August, Calcutta, to Ida: My own sweet darling, I have yours of 12th July, arrived this morning, and the mail goes today & I stupidly have arranged to play golf after office, so I am rushed. I went this morning to the Service to commemorate the beginning of the war, everyone in khaki. I'm gradually getting to know a lot about your work, most interesting. I wonder if you let the house, I expect not, it wouldn't be worthwhile for the holidays just when you want it for the boys. Major Cowie's boy David has just won one of the 3 mathematical prizes opened to the whole of his school. I had a letter from Col Coldstream, much better. It's a dreadful rush when the mail comes in & goes out on the same day, as I write, I see the pile of files by my side steadily growing, and I can't collect my thoughts, which seemed to me every week to be less conducive to letter writing. I've got a fine pile of letters because M. (**Margaret**) sent me on a long one of **Enid's** & **Violet** copied out parts of another, that is how I'm getting to know about your work.

Dear pet I do adore you and admire you for all you are doing. If everyone did the same we'd soon have enough munitions, but of course it is not everyone who could do the things as well as you & **Enid**. Did I tell you Joan Burrard is a clerk in Portsmouth Dockyard on £1 a week. We think of nothing now but the big fighting in France. I think another 10 days will decide whether we can go on or not. Dear little **Margaret**, I constantly think of her anxiety. I may have to go up to **Simla** this month for a few days & perhaps over to Burma in October for 10 days or so; they are all pleasant little changes. I think it very sweet how all of you are trying to be economical, darlings, I am indeed grateful. I expect you long to have a little burst now & then. I, being greedy, found it very hard to keep away from the oysters when they were in, never eat one! Heaps of love & kisses, my darling, from your adoring lover & husband Charlie.

16th August, U.S.Club, Calcutta, to Ida: My own darling sweetheart, I may or may not be able to get you off a letter from **Mussoorie**. I leave here this evening, Wednesday, and get to **Mussoorie** on Friday which is mail day. I shall be pretty busy, but will try & write. The S.G. is using me to settle several rather awkward things, which he ought to do himself, but I shall enjoy being up in the cool again, even if only for a week. I am writing in office, but pretty busy, one always is clearing up things. I like to leave things up to date. Crosthwait does my work while I am away, he is rather slapdash, so I like to leave as little as possible for him to settle. All the fellows here, Crosthwait, Cowie & Thillier are nice to work with.

You were going to meet **M & V** again at Bevendean, very delightful for all of you. I wish I could meet even one of you. There is a nice strong breeze blowing, and last night I had to pull a blanket over me. I feel slightly more prosperous, bridge going on well, and a trip like this to **Mussoorie** means another Rs.200, but even then, the £90 I send home when the enough even to make both ends meet. As I explained we are £12 short a month & that must come out of the £65 to **Eastbourne**. I had hoped by now it would have begun, but there seemed to have been a lot of unpaid bills to work off. I will try soon & send home £95, but that is very hard on me, however I mustn't grumble, you are doing your best. Darling, God bless you. Heaps of love & kisses from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

18th August, Himalaya Club, Mussoorie, to Ida: My own sweet darling, Here I am back in the old place after a very pleasant cool journey. The Club is very full & has done better this year even than last; all these hill stations are full this year, so few people having gone home, hardly a room anywhere. I had a carriage to myself all the way from **Calcutta**, took a motor up to **Rajpore** & then a dhandy (?) instead of a pony, as it looked as if it would pour with rain but it didn't.

Col Pirrie & Col Wanhope (Wahab that was) & the Turners (Algy) I think are the only people you

²⁵ There is a diagram showing the hole on the top of the mouth piece rather than at the end.

know, who are here. Mr Bell is Secretary. Pirrie & I are going off to the Conynghams this afternoon to tea. It is delightful being up in the cool again, and I feel as if I should sleep like a top. Major H.H. Turner, by the bye, got cholera in **Dehra**, but has just recovered. He got it as soon as he got back from Mesopotamia. I've just interviewed the Babu²⁶, who asked after you all, likewise Saroda, when I was at the office, likewise old Churaman. I ought to get my dak on Sunday, today being Friday. Just read the afternoon Reuters, good progress in France in places. It is cloudy so no view. I thought of you all just as I came to the Club, the last place where I saw you June a year ago. Oh! dear, we are getting on in years & here's over a year we had been parted. Heaps of love, dearest, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

23rd August, Himalaya Club, Mussoorie, to Ida: My darling Sweetheart, I was so disappointed this week not to get a letter. I'm still stupid enough to get all of a flutter when I see your handwriting, however I had a good long one from **Enid**, to whom many thanks & you had all been together. It is jolly being up here in the cold, a fire in the anteroom, and I'm sitting after chota hazri & before I have dressed in my thick dressing gown. There has been a good lot of rain, but not too much. I haven't seen the snows though. I got up here on Friday 18th & leave again next Saturday. The Club is doing excellently, and has been followed than it has ever been, so they asked me for suggestions for a meeting of the Committee they had & I have suggested a lot of expenditure on new dharna's (?) & mattresses. They have moved the billiard table into the 2nd back room behind the anteroom & that has made it much more used. The only stupid things they've done are taking up all the matting in the dining room & breakfast verandah, and leaving the boards bare dounget (?) For the dining room but it has only been used once and was very expensive. Col Wanhope is here, back from **Aden**, Robin by the bye has a son, his daughter Eileen is nursing in France. Col Pirrie back from Mesopotamia, having frightful rows with the S.G. and in fact most of my work is trying to push him along & get work done. His boy is going to Wellington, he is just the age of **Lisle**.

Don't be angry, sweetheart, I dined with the Robertsons. She asked Wanhope & myself to dine & play bridge with Mrs McKinnon & herself & I took Rs.15 out of them, so that is part of the furniture money back. It was impossible for me to keep up the feud when I had a lot of rather delicate work with Robertson. I've been rather gay, bridge at the Happy Valley two afternoons & tonight I dine & bridge with the Petzolds, and tomorrow with the Walters. Gerald Burrard has had to have his foot amputated, wounded in France. All the news has been good for a long time, but yesterday we heard of two cruisers being submarined. I won't have to go to Simla our Committee having decided on the move to **Dehra**. I fancy September will be a nasty month in **Calcutta**, but I hope to get away to Burma for a fortnight in October. I have to inspect Wanhope's work today. I think it is the **Calcutta** climate that makes me a poor letter writer, here I feel full of vigour. Capt Perry arrives tomorrow from Mesopotamia and I think Mrs Perry is arriving from home to join him, and here is my bath.

25th Aug. pouring with rain & I've been writing a lot, only just left a minute for you. I will write from **Calcutta**. Heaps of love & kisses, my sweet darling, from your adoring lover & husband Charlie.

1st Sept. U S Club, Calcutta, to Ida: My own darling Sweetheart, A mail comes in this afternoon, it may or may not arrive before this leaves, but I found a mail waiting for me when I got back here on Monday with the splendid news of **Ernie** being top of his class & having got a prize. I am indeed proud of the dear little fellow. I expect I shall hear more this next mail. I have written to him; the news has cheered me up immensely. You will enjoy your week's holiday & seeing the dear children all together again. I had quite a pleasant journey down here, only the walk down to **Rajpur** was not pleasant as it poured with rain practically the whole way down. I drove down to the Club & changed & had dinner there. Major H.H. Turner (I think I told you he had cholera at **Dehra**) has recovered & is up at **Mussoorie**. He won't go back to Mesopotamia. I think Beazeley will take his place. I found a lot of work for me when I got back and shan't get abreast of it till I get a Saturday & Sunday quietly at it.

26 Indian respectful title or form of address for a man, especially an educated one.

You never told me whether you paid the cheques you got for birthday presents into Cox or what you did with them & the cheque you drew to pay for your Lady's Club was that on Cox or Eastbourne. Many thanks for sending me on **Margaret's** list of cheques on Eastbourne, unless these are unpaid bills the situation there is good. I think you might tell Cox from 1st Oct. to pay £55 there instead of £65, will you do so. I am sending home the usual £90 and will continue to do so. I think it better to save the extra £5 I thought of sending home & keeping it out here. I slowly save an odd Rs.100 here & there, but it is dreadfully dull work and with all the saving I can do I shall not nearly have enough for a trip home for myself and then bringing you & the girls out & setting up house.

My armpit which got all right in **Mussoorie** at once begins to break out in pustules again, the thing that does it good is a very strong drying powder. If I have time I will answer the new mail this evening. I do hope **Lisle** and **Bobby** have good reports. Heaps of love, my pet. I feel dreadfully lonely without anyone out here. Ever your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

Just heard Roumania has joined in.

3rd Sept. Calcutta, to Ida: My darling Sweetheart, Sunday is a good day for getting started with my letters, especially as next mail again comes in on Friday, the day this goes out.

Last week I wrote **Lisle** a real snorter, it's for his own good. Of course it's quite clear there isn't a ghost of a chance of his getting Sappers. I doubt his even passing into Woolwich at all. Now he is 14, he has only 3 years more. You must be very stern with him & appeal strongly to his love for us, that is what I've done. I hate to think of his being a failure but we can't certainly can't (*sic*) afford to support him, and he has the brains, and the enquiring mind right enough. What he wants is to get rid of his dreadful carelessness & to work hard at whatever he is doing, and think of that & nothing else. I am most pleased with **Ernie's** report, good all through. I wonder what his prize was, and **Bobby's** report was a distinct improvement and for a little fellow I am quite satisfied. I am so glad you were arranged the farming for **Lisle**, that was a pretty good idea. I believe **Violet** would have most influence with **Lisle** in getting him to do better at his lessons. When you were advised by Mr Tanner to send **Lisle** to Leconfield I wondered you didn't do so, but don't go chopping & changing. **Lisle** will do much better at a house which is not celebrated for games. However by the time this reaches you he will have gone to some house; of course Mr Tanner would have made room for him if he had been willing to do credit to the house at games or lessons. It is hard times, I can't get home, but as I can't the responsibility must fall on you. I think the instance during the holidays **Lisle** might be told off to write once at least to me. Major Thillier gets a letter almost every week from his boy aged 11. That of course I don't expect because I gather **Lisle** writes most weeks to one of you. I think the 2 during the holidays you or one of the girls might see to his writing carefully & neatly, not scrawling. **Lisle** expresses himself well, so he can write a good letter, the substance of it I mean, it's only the writing & careless spelling that wants being seen to. Then there is the question of holiday tasks, don't boys have them now? I haven't heard a word any holidays about them, so perhaps I'm writing about old fashioned ideas. Generally we had a good historical novel, and after the first 3 or 4 days, we had to read so many pages every day, so as to read it all through twice. It's such a good beginning for the term to start well & be high in the holiday task exam, the master is pleased & if he is it a jolly good thing, he takes much more interest in the boy & will be ready to help & explain little difficulties about lessons. I want everyone to concentrate on the schemes for helping **Lisle** in his own interests. **Claud** would understand if he was at home. I feel so sad to think of dear little **Lisle** throwing away his chances, because on certain lines he has ability above the average. I hope next mail to have all the boys school lists and magazines. I will send you back the reports so that at Xmas you can compare them with the new reports.

9th Sept. Margaret has told me about the holiday tasks. I had a fine mail this week, including her letter from **Enid** for which a kiss to her. September is a beastly month here & my right armpit is a mass of prickly heat pustules. How awfully good of Mother to give you the £30, a great help. I'm going to the Cinema art tonight to see war pictures. I last went in October 1915. We've all got to attend a wedding on Monday in khaki. Fernier's (?) Daughter to Capt Garstin (?). (Fernier is in charge of the Maths Instrument Office under me) that is where I have my leaves working. You must have enjoyed your holiday. I'm afraid you don't get enough sleep. Darling, goodbye & God bless

you. Heaps of love & kisses, my heart warms very much to you & all our dear children & I long to see you all, ever your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.