

Dear Sophy

I will tell you a small bit of news which I hope will be pleasing. We have heard from very good authority that there are going to be 3 new captains made to each Regiment so that will give me 3 steps wherever I may be posted to, and as there are generally one or two old lieutenants who would retire soon as they get their Captaincies, it will not be at all unlikely for me to be Lieut. Ryder before I have been a year in the service. You will not likely have heard of the mutiny in the

34th and their refusal to go to Scinde and their subsequent disbandment. I believe the same thing is going on in other regiments under orders for Scinde.

?lizards

The heat is awful particularly at night. This house has other tenants besides the human species [?] run about the walls, sparrows are continually flying in and out (for the venetians are all open) and there are plenty of rats and mice, and in some places (though I have not been troubled much by them) there are immense quantities of Bugs, there is a nice list of grievances for you but the heat is the worst part of it. I study with a Moonshiee for 2 hours in the day, so I cannot be called quite idle. Pray remember me kindly to all your neighbours and believe me yours

Spencer.

May 16th (1844)  
Singapore.

Dear Mother

I have removed from my old quarters and am now living in a Bungalow with Hickey. It is a small cottage with only the ground floor we each have a room to ourselves and a bath room with a larger room in the middle for breakfasting - a large verandah runs round the house and it is much cooler than quarters as we always get the wind if there is any. There is a smaller "compound" or bit of ground attached to it and altogether it is very comfortable - only I have rather further to walk to the Mess house and parade.

I have seen no letters yet of last month, Edward has neglected to send them and it is now nearly time for the mail of this month to come in - very wrong of him indeed.

I have a Moonshiee now from 7 to 9 in the morning I do not get on very well yet as he can speak no English & I cannot speak much Hindostanee. I have not been posted yet but there are now only 3 above me and there are 4 or 5 vacancies so I shall not have to wait long.

May 28. I have just received a large packet of home letters through Edward 2 or 3 of last month (for he had lost some) and all of this month, so I will talk a little about what is going on at home.

In the first place I am glad to hear you liked my attempt at a journal by this you will have another of my travels on land. I am very comfortable here as far as my companions go - and I wish I might be posted to the 1st But that is impossible

as there is no vacancy. I do not think that I used to be very remarkable in the way of getting up early, was I Sophy? Now I have had to get up 4 days out of the week at about 4 o'clock (Gunfire) for parade or drill and at 6 on other days, that is pretty comfortable is it not. I do not think my temper is improved by the 4 o'clock business. Miles has just been posted to the 23rd he was doing duty with the 36th here his Regt is also here so I have not lost him yet. There is now only one above me on the list; namely Hume (he came out with me) and I am expecting to be posted every day at all events before I shut up my packet. I have not read that book you mention (Allen's Diary of Scinde). Edward has told me that he has got the money he will take care of it till I want it. I hope you may be able to sell the house it must be a great loss to you.\*

\* Her London house.

You say you wish to know how my day is spent. Well in the 1st place I get up at 4 for parade

or 6 for a walk

Breakfast when I happen to come in

about 7 - 9 Moonshes

9 - 1 Read, write &c.

1 - 2 Tiffin

after 2 - 3 Billiards or a nap the latter very seldom.

5 dress for dinner take a walk, go to the band which plays 4 Evenings in the week and then

7 $\frac{1}{2}$  or 8 dinner & go to bed.

That is the way I spend my time in the hot weather now I shall spend it in the cold weather I cannot tell But I think I shall be out all the latter part of the day. The Thermometer is 99° in this room - rather warm.

What fine alterations have been going on in the garden & What a delightful snuggerly you have made quite sheltered from the roads. I think if you alter it much more I shall hardly know it again. There, I have filled this sheet and if there is anything more to tell why I will write more at present believe me Yr aff & dutiful

Son Spencer.

May 16.

Binsapore

My dear Sophy

Here I am comfortably fixed for the present in a Bungalow. It looks out on the Race Course and it has been very cool for the last 3 or 4 days, the thermometer standing about 90° or not quite so much, with a strong easterly wind (the westerly winds

are the hot winds). The river has risen very much lately I was out on it once to go to a steamer that was just come up from Calcutta there were 2 Miss Stacey on board who came out in the Queen and the Captain of the steamer came out with me also. They were going up to Allahabad and then had to go (dsk) or travel in a palanquin for 10 days further and I believe all by themselves (poor things how I pity them this hot weather). How did you like journal of the voyage you received it I think in March so this next mail will bring me some account of it. I hope my next letter will give you the news of my posting as I am 4th the last who was posted is to go up to Almora in the hills the 31st Reg. a beautiful station and a good corps.

May 18. Another has just been posted to the 8th Barrackpore. There remains the 45th, 14th 62nd & 23rd. I shall have one of them I suppose before I send this. Yesterday we had a delightful storm of thunder & lightening then a dust storm and then it rained cats & dogs, so the air today is pleasantly cool.

May 28. I have just received a packet of letters, containing an enormous one from you, I wish I could write as much, but I will do what I can. I am glad to hear that my journal went off pretty well, I am delighted at the description of the new garden I understand it completely from the plan you have sent me. I wish I could fly over to help you as I used to do.

What a nice party you must have had at Easter. Has the Dick got through his troubles yet. I expect great things of him. I am glad to hear your account of Georgy I like his fancy for the army though his mother is not of the same opinion I suppose. Well that is a strange pet I never heard of a pet water rat before. Does Mother (think) it is like me ..ahem.. What a shocking thing for poor Mrs Ridley, another child born dead (Annie says so in her letter).

You may well say "I suppose you feel the heat now" It is 89 at present it will (go) above 90 in the afternoon. You wish me to continue my drawing in the 1st place my paint box was stolen on board ship and as to drawing in this weather it is impossible & here at all events there is nothing to draw, though I think I will try & sketch the Bungalow in which I am if I can, to give you some idea of what sort of things most of them are. But I will try my hand when I go up the country. I am glad to hear the account you give of Julia & her child - Fancy Michael, what a strange name, Mickey Eh. I believe I do deserve my name a little better than I did in England But I always feel as if I would rather trust to my own legs than those of any other being - there is no pride about me. However it is a necessary thing

x  
Jed wife of his brother Henry.  
She had 5 sons born in  
1842, 43 and 44 but  
none was called Michael.  
The first two, who died as  
infants were called Julius  
& the third Harry (the one  
referred to here)



to be able to ride, so I hope I shall be able to keep it up.

May 29. How well Uncle H seems to get over all his attacks what a wonder it is. I believe it is not at all unlikely that there will be a row somewhere soon and if I go up the country which I expect to do I may come in time for it.

June 3rd. Here it is "Ensign S.O.D. Ryder at present doing duty with the 1st Reg. M.I. is posted to the 14th Reg and directed to proceed and join". I am off in a few days for a 4 months trip - you must excuse me not writing you a longer letter as I wish to send several letters this mail so I am obliged to divide my news. I have written Minnie the 1st news of my posting (it happened yesterday) as I had begun her letter the last. I will try and send a line to Annie if possible.  
Yrs Spenny.

May 29 (1944)  
Dinapore.

My dear Minnie

I am glad you give me good news of Julia and her baby. How is Poor Henry now, I suppose in the same state as when I left. I get on pretty well with Hindoostanee I have 2 hours of a morning from 7 - 9 with a Moonshree But I cannot speak it very well yet. What a shocking thing this is about S. Murray turning R. Catholic I recollect it was said so when I was in England but it was then denied. I suppose there will be a monastery built by the time I come back. If anyone else has written to me besides yourselves and Annie it is Edward's fault that I have not received them for he tells me that he lost some of last month's packet.

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I have never yet been quite able to imagine that I am not at home and that this is all a dream. But the face of an ugly nigger now and then puts me out of my calculations, it seems such a short time ago when I was at home. How beautiful the garden must be looking now the trees clothed in their spring foliage, and what beautiful weather you must be having the same kind as when "Each sweet sound takes a sweet colour by the hand and rhapsodies walks into your heart and rejoices therein" there's poetry for you Can you guess where I took it from, it was little book about a little boy and a little lark and a great many other little things. There, now you may guess.

India I fancy has been frequently represented as full of snakes and other horrors, so are parts of it certainly but you must not fancy that I find snakes in my bed and about my room I have only seen one and that was when I was out shooting. I

X Son of his brother Henry by his first wife presumably - He was born in 1834 - Henry also had a son Henry, but the first is more likely to be referred to in this context - The family tree (compiled in 1880) gives no information about him except his birth - Possibly he was mentally deficient -

know when Mother reads any horrid snake stories she will immediately imagine me half way down a boa constrictor's throat or something equally horrible so I hope you will always stop her fancy on such occasions.

June 3rd. Here I am at last posted to the 14th and moreover I am posted 4th Bn, so I am in luck I hope my luck may continue and not give me a beginning and then go away. I start in about 10 days with Hume (I have mentioned him before as one who came out with me) in a Budgerow or boat, from here up to Ghur Moktesa then we march to Loodianah about a fortnights march, where I leave him, as he has been posted to the 48th at that place, and then I proceed to Ferozepore about 50 miles. I shall be  $3\frac{1}{2}$  months on the River Ganges and about  $\frac{1}{2}$  a month afterwards marching so my trip will all together last about 4 Months, so for that time at least you know my movements I hope I may be able to leave a letter on the way But if not I will write as soon as I can. So good bye for the present Yrs Spencer R. How do you get on with your work. Please tell me in your next. I will try and send you a journal of the trip but I am afraid it will not be very interesting. Spen.

June 16 /44  
Dinapore.

My dear Mother

I am still at this place But I purpose going off about Wednesday by Boat and a tiresome trip it will be, We expect the Rains to begin every day, The Moon changes today and that will [be] a signal for a change of weather I hope. It will set in with fearful storms, the violence of which those who do not live in tropic climates can have no idea. A steady and a very strong easterly wind blows up the river which will help us along finely. I shall send a journal of the trip but I am afraid the sameness will be very uninteresting. There are reports in the Papers saying that the commissariat at Ferozepore has received orders to get ready provisions for an army of 50,000 men for Lahore But it is only a report.

I have had a slight touch of fever lately But I am recovered and pretty well now. The weather is still fearfully hot no stirring out in the day time. The garden must be looking very gay now But I suppose there is no one there to enjoy it.

July 13 !! I have been and gone and missed the mail as I am on the river and did not know from what place to send the letters - however I must make it up some other time I suppose.

I am gliding up the river in a Budgerow with a companion, the weather is delightfully cool, I am on my way from Allahabad to Cawnpore. But I do not know when I shall get there, it will not be near  $\frac{1}{2}$  way. I send you an attempt at a journal, I hope it will give you some idea of the voyage up the Ganges - And as that will give you all news I suppose I may be excused writing much more. I hear from Edward that you intend sending me 100£ a year, it is much more than I thought I should have it all remains in E's hands and he intends making it increase if possible it will be a nice little bit for me when I go home on furlough if that ever happens. I suppose the sun is pretty comfortably warm with you But with us most of the days are cloudy with a delightful breeze, and then sometimes it will be very close the ground sending up a great steam. I find that there is an old friend of Edward's in the 14th. I hope he will be the same to me. I shall most likely send my letters from Cawnpore, if I get there in time. I have not received the last mail yet. In future you had better direct your letters not through E but straight to me at Persepore - 14th N.I.

July 23. We expect to be at Cawnpore in 3 or 4 days and I intend if possible to send the mail off then. I should have told you by my last not to expect any letters for 2 or 3 months 1 month you will have to go without as it is.

Here we are at Cawnpore July 24. and I will wish you good bye for it may be 2 or 3 months more.

Yrs Spencer.

Sophy must excuse me writing to her this month as I send a journal and all the news is there.