

[Lady Osler to Mrs. Chapin]

[Oxford] Sunday Eve Feb 13th (1916)

Dear Sister

Finches? (7) Yesterday's post went with a family letter to Canton - I really hadn't anything else to write. I feel rather bored about the censoring business but cannot imagine that I can write anything that can do any harm - or be censored. Joan MacKenzie is here and at the moment looking over Archie's paper about the Finches. The Rotterdam made a splendid passage but they were detained almost 24 hours before finally landing at Falmouth - Isabel Meredith decided to stay there and rest so Joan came on and I met her in London - She received the parcel and had all the things in her trunk. Thanks so much for sending them. I am writing Kate and Marion Shepherd. It is a great comfort to have the socks and of course the chocolate. I am delighted with Joan. She has a charming face lovely eyes and bright & vivacious. Jean & Marion have plans of making her work at a canteen they are interested in. There is a big battalion of Fusiliers in North Oxford - Some girls have taken 92 Banbury Rd - fitted it up - have bath rooms where the men can pay for a bath - They have a billiard table, games of all kinds - tea etc - for which they pay - The girls serve and help. It is a great success - Jean is simply delightful - so full of interest and energy. I think Joan will help them. I do not know how long she will stay - Her lover comes over from France next Sunday. Jack Osler has gone to France and not Egypt. His wife has gone home - Hugh goes very soon & his wife will go home. Campbell Gwyn was here for last night - he is having a very stiff course and expects to go out before long.

Revere's papers have gone in for his transfer to the Royal Artillery and I do not know how long it will take or when he may be back - I fancy his course of work will be in England, hope so at least. Harry Wright went over to France yesterday and Palmer goes back tomorrow, so that is is rather sat 7 depressing for Mrs Wright. Hilda will move home on Wednesday. I wrote to Alice Sturgis & asked her to bring Helen Homans out to see us. Joan saw them on the ship - I haven't heard yet. Marion Emmons lunched here with Bob today. She and Hamilton motored from Leamington, he went on to London & Marion is staying here a day or two. She seems very well now. Cousin Etta & Martin are at Bournemouth. Adèle had a fuss with her Matron and she has departed. She should never have taken Miss Wedgewood - she knew she was an impossible person - Adèle is terribly fussed and has been telephoning here every day. W.O takes her calmly fortunately and really can't be at her beck and call. A most extraordinary thing happened last week. Wednesday Eve a cable came from Toronto from Willie's cousin Ernest Osler saying that his nephew Stewart Thorne was very ill in Hospital at Shorncliffe - & please to see him & report. He decided to go - wired the Hospital and word [came] back that Thorne was dead "but please come & make arrangements". So off he went. I telegraphed Campbell Gwyn to meet him - which he did and they made all the arrangements. W.O was spending the night at the Beachborough Hospital. Late in the Eve the undertaker called up about the name and it was discovered that the man was another Thorne altogether - a man from Nova Scotia. Willie had arranged the funeral, guns fired etc. It was an escape. The other man, our Thorne, was on leave in London & perfectly well. We really couldn't help laughing.

Yesterday I dismissed Peazley the chauffeur. The car has gone to be painted - & we may not use it later - if petrol goes on going up - The car

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has been most horribly neglected - and Peazley does not really understand the engine at all. He has been so careless and senseless that I can't bear it another moment. Benning is again in Hospital and I believe will be discharged from service - I hope so as I should much prefer him to this Jackass. - This latest business about steamers makes me feel that I shall never see any of you again - The world here is making dark blinds - not a ray of light to be seen anywhere. Collis is on leave and I am going up to lunch with him on Tuesday - Excuse this long epistle - Much, much love

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