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Stodel, Daisy, fl. 1916-1917

Papers

Auckland War Memorial Museum – Tāmaki Paenga Hira

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These verses  
are very good  
P.P.S. mine was  
whichever too.

France

17.1.17.

My dear Daisy,

I wrote to you on 11/1/17 which  
was a jolly long time after the  
receipt of your enjoyably long  
letter.

Today I received two more letters  
from you dated 12<sup>th</sup> + 20<sup>th</sup> of Dec.  
I have determined that I shall  
not be so long in answering  
them. Please forgive me for  
being so dilatory before + believe  
that I will not be guilty of  
a second offence.

Now Daisy, it is good of you  
to write as you do. I think I  
told you before that letters in  
the trenches were appreciated more

I want anything else. You are a  
"dear" to write as you have done  
→ I hope you will continue  
the good work. I believe you  
told me that you could write  
a decent letter → now I have  
no doubt about it

First to satisfy your womanly  
curiosity I shall tell you a  
little about my doings. You  
already know that I joined  
up with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Anichlans Battalion  
on Nov 25<sup>th</sup> last so I am getting  
to know the little about this  
war game now. I'm generally  
considered a "lucky beggar" + my  
luck still seems to hold good  
for on my arrival I was given  
charge of a company + I'm  
not likely to lose that much

3  
I think I am the only one of the  
officers of the 16<sup>th</sup> reinforcements who  
has a company to look after.  
Well I hope that when the hot  
work comes in the Spring I shall  
be able to do the job & that  
my lucky star will still keep  
going. Which latter reminds me  
the charm you sent has  
not yet arrived but when  
it does I shall wear it, I'm  
not a bit superstitious - I don't  
believe in charms etc any more  
than you do but I shall keep  
it with me & it will remind me  
of a dear little friend in  
Sunny Capetown. Do you think  
that that sounds as if I needed  
a reminder? You know that

If the charm is not necessary. Don't you? It is true tho' that it will be a reminder. I've had a good few things given me + as I use them — a pair of gloves, a holdall, a razor strap etc — I often think of the girls.

Just as I wrote that I looked up + my eyes fell on a photo of Mrs King + my little one, Myee. I don't need any reminder of them but I carry it all the same.

Do you ever, Daisy, worry about life + its riddle. Hundreds have wondered + attempted to solve the Riddle of the Universe + as I think of my life + especially of the last 7 years I too wonder + wonder. Will the mystery ever be solved

5

What is there beyond this life?  
I wonder. Do you, Daisy? As  
a youngster I used to enjoy climbing  
a hill & then lying on my back  
gazing away into space &  
wondering!! But we never get any  
further! Do we? What are your  
ideas of life & the hereafter?  
Too big a question to answer  
perhaps, but I should like to  
know some of your thoughts.

Now to return to more mundane  
things, would you believe it  
last Saturday I journeyed  
to a township 20 miles away  
in order to play football. Dana  
football in war time & in a  
war area. Army Commanders are  
not sensible now & the value of

Games in keeping men fit is  
recognised & when we are not  
in the trenches we encourage the  
men to play. The match was  
1st Army Officers v N.Y. Officers  
we had a very enjoyable game  
& won by 17 to nil. By the  
by - are you fond of games?

We are right into the winter  
now. This week it has been  
snowing & there is about 6 inches  
of snow on the ground at  
present. We indulged in a bit  
of snowballing today. I suppose  
you have seen snow like this.

It looks very beautiful & I  
wish I were allowed to have  
my camera here. I could  
get some great snapshots.  
Our troubles will come when

2<sup>nd</sup> Haws - then we will have  
slush everywhere + creeks overflowing  
- sides of trenches falling in etc  
etc.

Do you know I think I have  
written sufficient about myself  
except to add that I am  
keeping top-top + feel very fit  
+ also please address my letters  
to 22513 Cap. Harkin

2<sup>nd</sup> - Auckland Battalion

N. S. & F. France.

Now I wonder if there are any  
questions in your letters that  
need answering. You know a  
woman always asks questions.

Yours of 27/11/16

1<sup>st</sup> - Rejoining Captain to England  
took 26 days

2<sup>nd</sup> - Yes some promises are made to  
be broken



8/13(3) Yes I can be cheeky (I am  
fond of pretty cheeks) →  
can be otherwise

(4) Your photo not yet received  
but I certainly shall tell  
you when it arrives whether it  
is like you

Yours of 12/11/16

(1) Photo not yet received. D — a  
those postal authorities

(2) Got to actual firing line  
on 16/11/16.

(3) Have not yet met Sgt Aaron

(4) Yes. "you tease" I have been  
to duckhead & it is "tres bon".

(5) Yes you mentioned that  
Mr Stodel had charge of the  
Refreshment Stall (+ two Quakers)

(6) Charm not yet received  
I repeat most fervently the last  
portion of (1) above.

9  
9/11  
Answers of 20/12/16

① I did enjoy my Thomas painting  
It came all the way from Chch

② "You would!!" Yes I would  
like to join in the picnic to  
Camp Bay

③ No I did not visit Milner  
(but I did visit M. Stuart)

④ No your photo not yet  
arrived. This time in silent  
(Silence can occasionally  
be more eloquent than words)

⑤ No; you had not told me  
about landscape painting. Hope  
to see some of your work one of  
these days.

⑥ I am getting a O.K.

⑦ Yes old Hun wants peace &  
he is going to get it some day

- 10  
11
- (8) I have seen Shandens in winter only & I don't think much of it.
- (9) Lyttelton is the chief port of Canterbury (Foggy mutton). It is a small place - uninteresting & is 8 miles from Chch by railway. Train takes 25 minutes to do the journey & passes through a tunnel  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles long.
- (10) I have not seen Great Good since 28/11/16.

Now young lady, I think that is 'one track' on your best letter I wrote. I shall ask questions.

I hope you will send me a snapshot of the little Quakeresses who look so angelic (i.e. D.T. either). So you.

11  
I think you will call me "your  
precious little Baby"; when I get  
back to Cape Town. Just you  
look her over. Five feet two - I'm  
5 ft 8 1/2 in & weigh 13 stone so if  
you are going to adopt me you  
must hire assistance. Perhaps  
Nannie will help you to look  
after me or do you think she  
will be kept busy with some-  
one else - Her "good" little baby  
wouldn't require much attention.

Daisy! You're on the downward  
path - Fancy winning 14f at the  
races. See what a pity about  
that last race.

Oh! by the way I'm going  
to ask a question. Your  
last three letters are here

✓ they begin thus

27/11/16

Dear Kingi

12/12/16

my Dear Kingi

20/12/16

Dear Kingi

I suppose I must take that as a reprimand for not writing well you've sent me two letters today so you are "my Dear Dan" awfully familiar - all that "bally kind of rot" but it sounds very nice.

However, excuse my nonsense I am cheeky some times - nonsensical at others + sometimes just natural.

Well, girl I think I must ping off + get to byes. I am looking forward to getting that photo + will let you know as soon as it + the mascot arrive. I hope you

all had a jolly time at  
 Xmas & New Year. I do most  
 sincerely wish I could have been  
 there. I'm certain to have enjoyed  
 it all but who knows - the  
 time may come again when  
 I shall get to Capetown. By the  
 by is Capetown spelled Capetown  
 or Capetown. ?

Also Daisy, please don't apologise  
 for your scrawl. It is not a  
 scrawl even if it were it is  
 nevertheless much appreciated. I'm  
 not going to apologise for mine  
 but you might correct any  
 mistakes you see because I'm  
 going to correct three of yours  
 Khaki not Kharki  
 Lyttelton not Littleton  
 Auckland not Ankland. How

14  
You must not mind my doing that, I  
am always grateful to anyone who  
corrects any mistakes in my English. I've  
not yet met the person who didn't make  
mistakes & I have always considered  
it quite kind to correct anything  
rather than let it go on. Do you  
understand?

Please thank Nannie for her love. I shall  
write to her one of these days. I received  
both hers & your Xmas Cards. They  
are very good & I thank you both for the  
wishes they convey. Please remember  
me to your Mother & wish your sister  
success in "Dr. Marshall"; was it the  
younger sister I met? How many  
questions is that?

Best wishes for 1917 & love to  
Nannie & yourself

P.S. nil.

Yours sincerely  
Kings