

Larks Hill

2-6-17

Dear Sisters Mag, Agg and Lill,

I sent home and told them to readdress all my letters on to you "however". We have had a six day disembarkation leave, and we spent four full days in Ireland with Uncle Sam and Auntie Maggie & two finer families never breathed, we left Salisbury Plains in the morning of the 25th of May and arrived in Belfast Saturday morning. There was quite a dozen ladies took possession of us before we had hardly hit the wharf and it was for who could do the most for us. However we did justice a lovely breakfast of ham and eggs, coffee and home made bread.

Caught the 9.30 for Coleraine and arrived close on midday, we just came off the train when Uncle Sam came and put his hand on my shoulder, I can tell you he was proud of us. We were not long in getting to his beautiful home, which is some two hundred yards from the railway, where Auntie and her maid had prepared a dinner of some class for us. She is simply a darling woman, always smiling; the maid is treated as one of themselves. He has one of the finest houses I have ever put foot in, 8 beautiful rooms and all furnished with the best. Hot and Cold water laid on to every room and at any hour.

Saturday evening he motored us all through Portbrush, introducing us to all his friends at the golf club, a beautiful place, nearly all doctors, teachers lawyers etc they could not do enough for us. From here we visited a place called The Giants Causeway, a similar historic place like our mountain caves; they are really wonderful and are visited by people from all over the world. I will be sending you some cards of the same. We came home and Auntie, Uncle, Bob and self paid a visit and had tea at Auntie Maggies at Dunedin Terrace quite close to Uncle's place.

Young Mrs Moore is living there also. Samuel James Moore and his wife and children who are in business in Ballymina came home & spent the time with us till we went away. He has a wholesale druggist and grocery business, fine couple. Auntie Maggie, Uncle Sam and Father are the living image of one another.

Both Aunties' are getting very grey. We had a royal evening, Joseph Leitch was there. He and his mother, who is now 95, live two doors away from Auntie Maggie. Granny is a sweet little woman & can see as well as I yet. Joe is a fine fellow. Sunday we all went to Church, Uncle Sam is one of the leading men of the Parish and is highly respected by everyone. We had invitations from lawyers, doctors, etc to motor out and

dine with them but time would not allow it. Monday, Uncle, Aunties, Bob and self motored right through Father & Mothers old homes, we passed through many towns Killrats, Armoy, Stronocum, Ballycastle etc. Father and Mothers homes are quite close together. Uncle Sam sold out to an old friend of his by the name of Gardiner. He still has men employed on the farm that were there in Fathers time, they were all delighted to see us, also his old shop, the man Connolly that bought it is still there. I am led to believe he is a real bad egg. The crops and country was looking at its best, no fences all hedges. From here we motored home and all hands spent the evening with a Mr and Mrs O'Neill, a barrister from Coleraine. You talk about a spread and reception, they keep three nice girl servants, and we did not get away till midnight. Tuesday morning we motored round and saw the different nurseries of the district, tomatoes and grapes are grown in glass houses. You could hardly credit how they bear, simply loaded & all free from diseases. Came home and had dinner & from there all hands went to Auntie Maggies, we only had an hour or two as we had to catch the 4.30pm from Coleraine to Belfast. We were loaded up with socks, chocolates, cigarettes writing pads and all manner of things from both families, also the widow young Mrs Moore, a real nice woman. We were given a great send-off at the railway station and arrived in Belfast some two hours later.

We spent an hour or so in Belfast then went on board & sailed for London, arriving next day at 12.30pm, we had eight hours to spend before leaving for Salisbury and made the best of it looking around the principal places of interest. We made the acquaintance of a Dr Murray Jones and a Frank Pullen a big business man in the city, while having dinner. They showed us all through the King's stables, horses, carriage and harness marvellous sight, also the War Office, House of Lords and Commons. It is here you see the thrones of Kings and Queens from past to present. Library of old volumes, we even saw the death warrant of Charles the First signed by Oliver Cromwell and Thomas Grey. It would take me too long to tell you everything. Also visited horse guard's parade, spring gardens, Queen Vic statue, Trafalgar Square, National Gallery, and St Thomas Hospital. Time was drawing to a close so we had tea and took our departure for no mans land on Salisbury Plains, if ever there was a convict station this is one, but are living in hope of seeing better times. I have several letters from Sam; poor boy is in the thick of the fighting but is at present having a few days spell in one of the villages. He seems to be quite well and happy; He has sent word over to John to reserve him a block of ground at the subway, also to secure him a good accordion.

Bob's well and has grown much bigger, and even Sam goes 12 stone 10, Bob 11 stone 2 and myself 12 stone 6. I think I will settle down in Ireland after the War, no country in the world like it. I suppose you get correspondence from Sam, don't forget to write to Uncle and both Auntie's, they are very interested in all the family -you have no idea of their kindness towards us. I suppose Frank had a good time at the shows, don't forget to write & give us any little news as it is very acceptable in this part of the world. I am sending PC photo. I had this taken on the way over to England. We had a few hours off at Capetown and one of the boys took a snapshot. You can address all letters to me privately Mr Jas K c/o Mr S.K Salem Lodge etc. We never know when or where we will be shifted and we can communicate with him in a few hours and he will readdress them on to us.

Well dear sisters I hope you and yours are all well and happy and to see you all 'ere long is the wish of your brother

Jim.

Please note -the underlined words have been inserted after careful study of the letter.
The original words are illegible