

LETTER NO. 11  
(I think the last must  
have been dated the 22nd.)

Contree (L-et C.)  
France  
26th July, 1916.

Dearest Father:-

I had wonderful luck last week - three batches of mail! The middle one wasn't exactly a "batch" for it was just a letter from Peter and you can't flock in a corner all by yourself but it was as good as a batch. Wain't that grand. I don't suppose I'll have luck like that often, but since it's happened once, I can always hope for it again. There have been at least 10 days intervals always before.

Things have been moving too quickly during this last week for me to get in an extra letter to you. My last went on Monday. On Tuesday Mr. Fleming told me he was to be transferred and by 9 o'clock Wednesday morning he was gone. That means that I'm in sole charge of the tent now, and Mr. Randall says I may continue in sole charge of the canteen even when another Secretary turns up. He'll have charge of athletics, meetings etc. and have nothing whatever to do with the canteen. Of course I've been running the canteen right along; but Mr. F. was nominal head and offered supplies, kept accounts etc. He also had a little way of changing things around and upsetting plans which was sometimes rather trying. I'm happy to say though, that that had nothing to do with his leaving; we had not had a single sign of a "scrap" (I think I'm about the only person who could say that). Now the whole thing is up to me and of course I adore it! It means a little extra work and responsibility of course but not more than I can easily handle. Our receipts for each day run between 125. and 250. francs only so the accounts aren't hard. I have a standard list of values for changing money (we get all kinds - even Chinese) and Mr. Randall will handle the draughts and postal orders. Once a week I hand in my receipt and accounts to Headquarters, and twice a week I hand in my requisition for supplies. It isn't complicated.

I'm awfully glad to have charge of our various cupboards and shelves. They were in an awful mess when Mr. F. left but I had a grand house cleaning and got them in pretty good order. I'm making a few changes but not many, and I'm planning a little painting etc which ought to brighten us up a bit. Of course Marie is my right hand man and I have a couple of soldiers detailed to help me behind the counter so things so far have run smoothly. On Saturday Mr. Randall asked me if I'd "take one" one of the other Y. women for a few days. She hasn't made very good in the town Y and he wants to try her out with me. My heart sank a bit for she's not the aid I would deliberately choose, but of course I said yes, so she's been working there spasmodically. I like her better than I did though, so it may not be so bad. The chief trouble is that when I hear her chatter (and she never stops) it fascinates me as a snake fascinates birds - and I catch myself falling into the same line of inane trivialities or else I get tongue-tied and hand out cigarettes and chocolate without a word. Otherwise I don't mind her much. She calls me "dear" and "honey" and wants to kiss me - which would make me rather ill except that you can brush it off like flies. I just go on with whatever I'm saying or doing and she chatters on quite happily and tritely. I set her to cooking yesterday - stirring chocolate which freed me so that I could help a nice boy who is beginning French. Maybe I can find enough things for her to do to really help a little. She really ought to be working with someone a good deal older than she, for she needs a little advice and looking after and she'd probably resent from me.

Mr. Randall asked if I could supply 100 cakes on Friday to send out to the soldiers in the Isolation Camp who are being watched for illness. It was a pretty big order for we can't bake more than 25 at a time in our little oven, but Marie rose to the occasion - as she always does and turned out over 200 on Thursday, so we had some to sell ourselves besides those to send out. Marie worked 9 hours that day and wouldn't take an extra cent for it. It was for the soldiers she said. She's pretty grand. I sent her home at 8 o'clock - she'd had no dinner - and she sent her little Suzanne up to wash dishes during the evening. Suzanne is a darling. I wish you could see her washing away very efficiently, in an apron much too big for her all one beaming smile. I want to do something for Suzanne, I