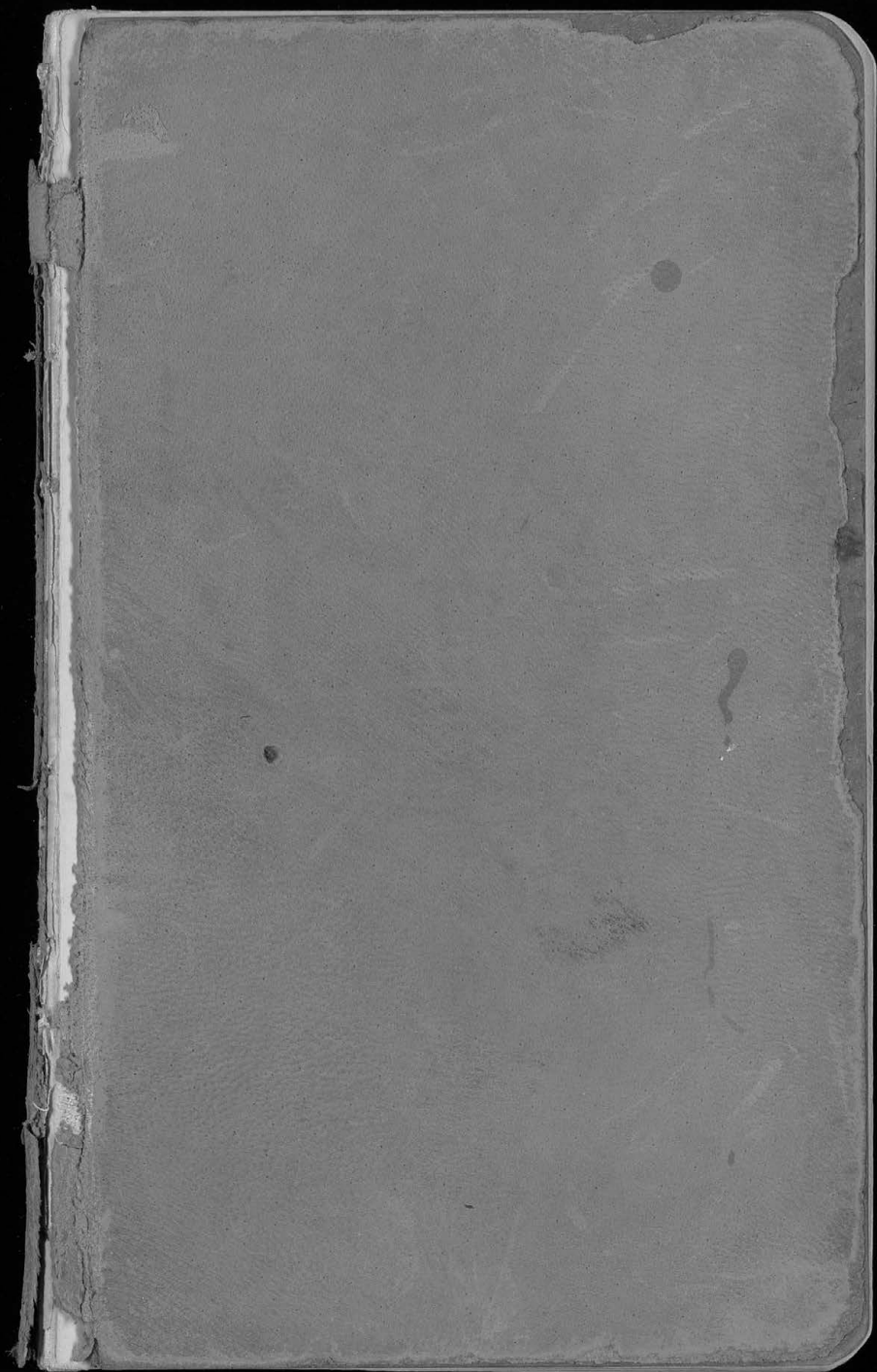




[Ruth Cutler and family papers.](#)

Copyright Notice:

This material may be protected by copyright law (U.S. Code, Title 17). Researchers are liable for any infringement. For more information, visit www.mnhs.org/copyright.



Brown Tracy & Sperry Co.
ST. PAUL MINN.
When Duplicate is
wanted, order
6423
NO.

Rutha Cullen

May 1918.

July 4. Fri.

Today, I have lived to the full. It is the anniversary of much personal happiness & sadness in the family life — yet it is best not to make too much of anniversaries.

We rose early, before 9, and at 5 a.m. of the sun, were out sailing. The sea, streaks in the Eastern sky were shimmering and the rift in the dark cloud banks brightened and broadened. The coloring was not so wonderfully blue nor variegated as it often is, & the next vivid dash of it was the yellow green marsh grass of Hardrip Beach against the blue distance of Harwich & the Chatham in the fog. The men being in a sail boat again with the water flapping against the bow brought back a chain of reminiscences — and always the feeling, gentle & unanalyzable, which comes then & at no other time. It is just living. In the afternoon we walked to Sunset Heights. Such a view! & such coloring! The sea was bright, but the haze reflected everything & gave to the ships on the horizon a

neglecting appearance. The tide was
out & the sands were all colors from
dry, yellow to the wildest brown. The
wreck of last year was washed nearer
the main land, and its form quite
obliterated. In the evening - to cap
the day as it were - we took our supper
on the new beach - Fred & I. Oh to
feel the wind blowing through you as
you walk barefoot along the beach,
and look out over the white sea
horses to the horizon, or as you watch
the flocks of terns sailing & circling
& halting in mid air - poised - & darting
down into the waves for a catch. We
gathered drift wood, then munches on
crackers while the sun still shone. There
was no sunset light to speak of, for
a dark fog bank came up & quickly, &
like a dragon with outstretched claws,
crept over the sky. And then we lit
our fire & watched the gold & red
coals glow & burn in the heart of the
drift wood pile, & felt the night come
on - and knew we were alive.

Sunday, July 7-1918.

Mother is in my thoughts so often, all
the time in fact, and I see her here &
there & every where I catch the smile
on her face just as I have done in odd
little ways so many many times before.
I looked back in my diary ~~today~~ & saw
it was two years ago today she was
having her second operation - and I
was thankful, & so thankful, that she
need never never go through that again -
that never again need we leave her at
the hospital an evening before, kneeling
& dreadfear with her. What the morrow
holds. No, we can grieve for her, but
we can never grieve for her.

Letter

A brief note from Jack asking me if I
had seen that "Lieutenant Roland Jackson
was killed in action June 6, 1918." She
asks if they are not "blank words" - and
indeed they are, in one sense, with their
utter finality and resultant feeling of loss.
But in another, they teem with spiritual
significance of which Jack must be proud.

Roland was essentially an artist, a lover
a beauty, a dreamer. He lived what
Henderson calls the "experimental life."
a pacifist at heart, he was, a year ago,
a carefree globe hatter, cataloguing birds
on idiosyncratic records in Spain! He entered
the army for the experience - so he said.
I wonder if his conscience did not have
more to do with it than he could admit,
but at least I hope he came to admit
the rightness of the cause he was
championing, before he was called on to
make the final sacrifice. I imagine he
was impelled by some life & discipline, but
I can fancy the careless ^{his} regard for
himself with which he entered the fray.
Spirits like his are daring to die bravely
these days - but oh what a hardship
and irretrievable loss for his family. I
can see him now the afternoon we strolled
along the Charles - his handsome, clean cut
face, tanned dark, his easy manner, &
his eyes, like Jack's, which twinkled in
appreciation when a joke passed between
them. Jack & I dubbed him Brian Gray
- but in the main, it was a gross slander.

Saturday eve. July 20, 1918.

We went yesterday afternoon to the
aviation field to see the dirigible return.
It takes short trips pleasant afternoons
and is due to return about four. We
parked on the high ground by the officers'
quarters overlooking the field - overlooking
too the firs & laurels & greens of
Pleasant Bay and the channel toward
the ocean, with the sand dunes bordering
it - and far on the horizon through which
a white sail mysteriously peered now
and then, on the smoke of a distant
brig. It was a view to feast one's eyes
on. And we had our Rittling - for socks
are wanted by the millions these days -
and we could work our fingers while our
eyes roamed about us. Two automobiles
came & parked around us, all expect-
ant as we. At about 5, a sailor climbed
to the ridge pole (really a narrow platform)
of the hangar, and squinted north thru
his spy glasses. Seeing nothing, he
walked the length of the ridge pole,
squinted some more & we jiggled. Oh
hadn't we learned the signals! A short

from somewhere there, and the men who
were riveting the new gas tank below,
quit work. We could see them in the
distance below us. By six, most of the
other crew had left, another sailor had
relieved number one, and he was sitting
resignedly at his post - not pacing up
& down as he had been. We feared the
dirigible had met with some accident
- and yet we felt too that if we waited
long enough, so long as the sailor was
up there, we must see it. Once I had
all the thrill of seeing it climbing up
over the distance horizon into sight - head
on! but it proved to be a harmless
water tank in the horizon, & a very
stationary one! We finally left -
we heard bonfires were lit that evening.
Then rumor had it that she returned
this morning. But this evening, some
sailors from the station said she was
probably lost at sea. They had no word from
her, & there was a strong offshore wind
blowing. Friday night they were anxious,
and despairing. There were two officers
and some seamen aboard. And this is Chatham.

Monday, July 22, 1918.

Are we dreaming? For Sunday seemed
like one long dream from beginning to
end, with a slice of war sandwiched in
between peaces. It came over me
strangely what a queer & momentous day
it had been - last night when we waited
outside the Methodist church in Bethel -
and watched the moon climb higher while
listening to the song social going on in
the basement of the church. It was a
strange effect - a quaint street lighted
up by our dimmed lamps and one
bright door lamp at the corner of the
road, but lightened unnoticably, too, by
the misty moon. Then to our right the
gaunt white church loomed up, with
its little portico opening in to the bright
light of the church rooms, and its low
small - paned windows through which
couples would peep at those inside.
There were many married sailors with
their "girls". But the queerest part
was the songs that were sung - the old
Oaken Bucket, Tramp, tramp, tramp,
bravita, Speak to me only, and all

the old song you connect more with college singing than church singing. Well, we sat there waiting for Belcher & listening to these "singing Methodists" and we pinched ourselves to make sure we were we. Was it in the morning sail that we set sail, & in five hours got us further than South Clatham & back? - because the tide & wind turned against us each time, & because the wind was light & fickle? We holed when the wind dropped all together - & when it breezed up again, each time in a different quarter, we sped, comparatively, for a time, then drifted some more. But the morning was all haze & pearl errides cant - gyps, & there never was a quieter feeling of peace upon sea or earth. And then - later in the afternoon, news came to us that boats had been sunk & a German U. boat off Hants Heights!! She was within ten or eleven miles of us! We could scarcely believe our senses. So we hurried over to Hants Heights along with other automobiles - & there, sure enough was a lone lone tug,

deserted looking & burning inside, or new took, within 2 1/2 miles of the beach! We stopped the first man we met, and as luck would have it, he was an eye-witness of the whole affair. It happened at 10.30 in the morning. The U. boat fired shots across the tug's bow - then, with us warning, proceeded to shoot up the three tugs - and riddled them with shot. One caught fire & all sank. The pilot house of the tug was blown off & the tug caught fire. The crew - 20 of them, with some women & children aboard - were gotten off safely, but one man had an arm blown off & another, both arms shattered. They were taken to the Massachusetts General. This man saw the submarine later around in the most insolent fashion. But it must have been disappointed that the tugs were empty! Word was sent to Charleston Navy yards - but no help had come - and word, too, to the air station. In about half an hour an aeroplane came (a sea plane, as they call the hydro. aeroplanes) but

simply circled around until the U-boat disappeared - then started away! (My, but the man was indignant!) Then the U-boat came up again & fired at the sea plane, but of course didn't hit her. One shot landed on the beach & exploded there without doing any damage. One shot landed in Pleasant Bay. We learned later than the sea plane had dropped ^{depth} bombs, but for some unexplained reason, they failed to explode. Mustn't the aviator be kicking himself - a chance in a lifetime to do the heroic, & then fail. There is much else to be explained about the whole affair. And now that the U-boat is probably safely away from here, the sea planes have been buzzing around "more than busy" all this morning, & the sea plane has been scooting around in the most agilest fashion & there is tremendous excitement slipping in the air, & everyone thanks ~~they~~ ^{he} sees a submarine on the horizon! It has brought the war close home & made the sceptics set up like

holio. People here who didn't know there was a war on last summer, are quite rampant about it now.

We heard too that the dingy is still missing - tho' there is a rumor that it was sent off on a secret mission. But that sounds fishy in view of the sailor on guard & the tin snips. The wife of the seaman aboard lives in North Chatham, & they say she is nearly frantic.

Marcellus Harding told us the S.P. 729 which has been in dock a week now, struck a mine and lost its shaft. Every looping Cape Codder refers referring to the "red tape" of the government. They would do it then & so. It's amusing when you know they're slow as the proverbial snail itself - & unreliable as to finishing up a job. But this patrol boat is assigned to the air station to keep an eye on the sea planes in case they get into trouble - & goodness knows where it will be off the ways again.

Jul 23. 1918.

I am reading Algernon Blackwoods
"The Promise of Air" enjoying it
tremendously. This paragraph, which
I happened upon last evening, struck me
as applicable to many people I know:

"What?" said Mrs. Winkle, who, like
all slow thinkers, liked sentences repeated,
thus giving time to find an intelligent
reply. !!!

Later: word was received last night
that the dirigible and crew are safe in
Nova Scotia! and rumors are rampant
about the submarine or - mines off the
coast. Everyone you meet has a different
tale to tell! We saw an observation
balloon up over the aviation field this
morning. Had not known of its existence
before. And this afternoon we saw the
sea sled towing a sea plane up the
channel. The plane was acting queerly
when we started out on our ride & was
evidently disabled in some way & seeking
a good landing.

Jul 25. 1918.

Yesterday afternoon at Harwich port, a
sea plane landed on the water right beyond
the Fibers' cottage. It was about dead low
tide, & in skimming along, got stuck on
the sand bar. By the time they reached
the Belmont they were stuck hard & fast.
The observer climbed aboard & tried to push
her off. And then, from nowhere, crowds
flocked to the beach & the surrounding
banks, & the fathers at the Belmont waded
out & helped leave the sea plane & shore
her off into deeper water! A curious sight!
And this morning sea plane #9 circled
low over "Mitchell's river" from the harbor,
swooped up over the hedge & windmill
hill & scooted toward the pier with
deepening roar. Then with the engine
suddenly shut off, it shot down over
the hill & landed skimming on the water.
Again, the sea plane too, got stuck on
the scallop flats in the harbor, but only
a guahang man was near — & he kept
on guahanging in utter unconcern! The
observer managed to shore her off alone,
Though, & soon the plane was gathering

speed to glide slowly up into the air. This was the closest view we've had of me - when it swooped over Hutchell River, & seemed almost to be over our very lawn.

Mrs. Lewis Ruess several of the aviators. The one who failed to touch the submarine told her that the bomb got caught in the rigging & his observer had to climb out on a wing 10 feet to loosen it. They were then flying so low that they believed they should both be killed when the bomb burst - but nevertheless went ahead & dropped her. Then nothing happened! The bomb had been tampered with. But what an ordeal for those two men in that second. What a relief - yet - what disgust that they had failed when they had such a golden opportunity to sink the U-boat. (which goes to show that people who are quick in passing judgment very often do not know the facts.)

July 26, 1918.

There are times when I'm more or less like a snail. I go into my shell & shut the door & am cut off, except vaguely & subconsciously, from what's going on without. It's a stagnant condition to get into, & even tho' one lives in thought rather than in perception or action, the thoughts are sluggish, not keen. It is a dopey condition. But when I was in it, the other day, I felt almost as though I were dead, yet there amongst people here. I went in & sat motionless - seeing them vaguely, but not sharing life with them. It is better to be an amoeba than a snail - for the amoeba sees? hears? feels (?) & lives all over! Better yet, of course, to be alive all over, but like a creature higher in the scale - a bird, or even, since we're human! There is a thrill about being alive all over which wakes the snail condition simply lay - & stupid.

July 30 - 1918.

So often I find myself wanting to stick a spoke in the wheel of Time - to draw out some pleasure, to slacken up the speed of passing days. Especially is this true when I'm at Chatham - or elsewhere living an out-of-door, care-free life. I'm making just today that it were June 30 instead of July 30 - because there is so much to enjoy here. And then it occurred to me that no measure of enjoyment is out of tune. That we might have years instead of months to enjoy it here - yet get no more from it. It's a matter of receptivity - a capacity which seems more or less fixed, but really, should be indefinitely elastic. A sensitive person can enjoy in the same space of time a vast amount more than a sluggish person. In fact, the time element becomes meaningless, for the sensitive one "senses" life through all his senses, while the other usually looks out upon it through one window at a time - through vision or hearing or the like, but not comprehending it through all his senses at once. He, too, regards

life in piecemeal - bit by bit like the parts of a picture puzzle, whereas the one with a sensitive disposition sees life as a whole - as though spread out before him. Perhaps this vision cannot be sustained always at high pitch even in the most sensitive. There will always be spiritual valleys as well as mountains. And for those less sensitive of us, the vision comes ^{at} times. A well known view may suddenly burst upon us for the first time pregnant with new meanings, brimming with significance. And then it is that the universal, the wholeness, the wonder of life, overwhelms us - not as a problem but as a marvellous & accepted reality. Then it is that the details of life slip naturally into their subordinate places as mere parts of underlying general principles. The receptivity then is not a passive condition - an empty bowl to be filled - but an active, aggressive, constructive function, one which gives to life its zest & interest & meaning. It is a matter of keen observance, of deep feeling, of alert thinking, of high living.

July 31-1918.

Picked vegetables this morning in a driving rain. Got gloriously soaping.

August 2, 1918.

Went to Provincetown yesterday. It was one day in a hundred - sandwiched in between days of fog and wind. We climbed to the top of the Monument - the easiest 252 feet climb I've ever had, for the slope is easy & the steps are few & on the walls, to direct the climber, perhaps, are tablets of towns & their dates - those towns presumably which contributed to the cost of the tower. And then once up - the view! One wanted to sweep away with some giant arm the huge blocks of stone which walled me in & interrupted one's view. But they give me a feeling of security, so perhaps they have their place. And between them, we could see toward the four points of the compass. There was the Cape curving up into its fished fish hook, on the tip of which is the Provincetown light house. All

sorts of Government warships & cruisers were in the harbor, & sailors were drilling on some of the wharves. We could look down upon the tower of the Town hall & the church steeple, down too upon rows & rows of gray roofs (the general tone of the town was distinctly gray) & upon the cemetery so orderly appearing from above. And still closer at our feet was the smooth green lawn of the park around the monument. But off toward the north & east was the best of all, for there was the deep blue of the ocean - above the Cape. And the impression one carried away was of water on all sides - a blue day.

As soon as we were home again, I jumped into the 445 & set sail for anywhere. The wind died down soon & the last part of the way home was a sunset drift. Coming close to the island, at high tide, I heard of the singing of the birds - & the undercurrent of pounding surf in the distance. The boat moved so slowly that it made not a sound & the only evidence we were sailing at all, not drifting, was

the thin line of ripple from the bow.
As the sun got lower, the blue & bronze
of the water became more marked, &
as the surface became calmer, an
opalescent hue appeared - & the masts
of sail boats moored in the harbor, were
reflected as in a mirror, like mirror.

And after I had landed, the after-glow
in the sky brightened, & lit up a broad
arch of cloud stretching over the west
where the sun had set.

From "The Living Age" # 3865. Aug 3, 1918.

Soldiers of Freedom. (By Katharine Lee
Bates)

They veiled their souls with laughter
And many a mocking pose,
These lads who follow after
Wherever Freedom goes;

These lads we used to censure
For levity and ease,

On Freedom's high adventure
So shining overseas.

Our springing trees adore them,

These boys at school and play,
Fair-fortuned years before them,
Alas! but yesterday;

Divine with sudden splendor

- Oh, how our eyes were kind! -

In careless self-surrender

They battle for mankind.

Soldiers of Freedom! gleaming

And golden they depart,

Transfigured by the dreaming
Of boyhood's hidden heart.

Her lovers they confess their

And, rushing on her foes,

For her their youth - God bless them! -
As light as a rose.

August 7, 1918.

It thundered incessantly this morning from 2 to 7. At first we thought it funny. At 7 we saw a huge black cloud in the north, like a range of mountains. Before I could get to my room, a gale was blowing - and a few minutes later, the wind had stopped and the mountain was looming up over the Southern horizon. Then it poured - rain hail, and two fishermen coming in, caught all there was of it right in the narrows. Later, after 8, there were more rumblings & the mist grew dark. As the morning of the poor day have broken & she lays her anchor in a strong wind, I decided she'd better have another - in case the gale should this time come up from the south-west & drive her onto the dock or hedge. Before I got started in the skiff, the storm broke. Ye floods, such a deluge. I was soaked in a second, & the rain beat so in my face that I could scarcely see. I got the 445th anchor and hitched it to the balustrade. My hat was glorious! - with the rain spattering about, the wind whistling & shrieks of lightning shooting down.

Copy of letter from Cameron Canby to L.W.C.
written 5/4/18.

----- " At last I have something interesting to tell you. I have at last been off of the ground! I walked over to an American aviation camp near here, & one of the lieutenants took me up. It is wonderful, & I am more anxious than ever, now, to get right into it. It's hard and impossible for me to really describe my feelings, I was so excited & acted & felt just exactly like a small boy at a circus. I had made several trips to the camp but had not been able to get up, so the last time I was over there, one of the lieutenants told me that if I came over again he could see that I went up. Incidentally, I don't believe I shall ever forget that man. The camp is a sort of concentration point where squadrons await for machines etc. before departing to the front, & so they are all rather finished flyers. There always seems to be a goodly number of officers, not to mention all available cadets of my detachment, waiting for an opportunity to fly, too. You see this is an officers' school & officers of all branches of the service come here for various points of instruction. Many of them, or most of them, have never been in the air & are here for a ride as we are. The flying

lieutenants appreciate our sad plight & have been wonderful about taking us up in our first flight. The wonderful day arrived, & I scooted in the field, five miles away, as soon as school was over. There were the usual number of anxious aspirants present & it looked rather doubtful for me, I thought. But my lieutenant friend recognized me & said he would get one of the pilots to take me up. There were about ten of them flying, & he was not as he was not feeling well. After he had asked several, all of which had promised others a ride, he came & told me he would take me up himself, & dressed & got a plane for that purpose. You can't imagine my gratitude. It was then that the circus grin appeared on my countenance & I certainly was as excited & tickled as any kid ever was. The planes are of French make & very fast. Double seaters with powerful motors and four machine guns in all. Guess I had better not mention the name of the plane. Well I put on goggles & slipped my hat into helmet shape, then climbed into the observer's seat & strapped myself in, the happiest individual imaginable, & oh, so excited. After much

coaxing the engine started with a roar & the propellers sent back their gale of wind. You can feel the wind easily at a distance of fifty feet, to the rear of the plane, while it is still stationary, & the propeller is turning rapidly. The pilot turned to me & asked me, or bowed to me, asking if I was (?) strapped in & to hold on when he turned me in the air. I couldn't suppress my grin no but I nodded that I understood. So at last away we started. We jockeyed the plane out into the field, terribly rocky field, too, with the wheels on the ground & the skid dragging. It reminded me of riding in a farm wagon over a country road at that time. When the plane was facing the wind, as he wanted it, he stopped stopped one minute & then opened wide the throttle. The plane started tearing across the ground with the tail raised & the skid not dragging at all. It wasn't quite as bumpy & sudden as we were off of the ground. We gradually rose & I think that of all the trip, that part is the prettiest & most pleasing. The sun was shining & the trees, fields, hangars, roads & every thing contracted & grew smaller. We went up rapidly in a large curve & reached an altitude of

2000 feet finally. The trees looked like bushes, or heavy shrubbery & these French fields like a painted picture, small patches of different colored cloth with the roads showing up as white as chalk. It was the most beautiful thing I have ever seen. You can see for miles & everything looks so small - lakes, rivers & you can see so plain every object on the ground. Planes near the ground look like large bugs and nothing seems to be moving. You just have the impression of wind tearing at and by you, & I was going over 115 miles an hour. You can look over the side, & the wind doesn't seem so awfully bad. Looking at the wings & tail of your own plane looks like a picture & it all seems so unreal. But I had a nice ride & varied sensations. Several of the cadets who have been up before me, said that the sensation was nothing, or no sensation at all, even in the trick flying, which I couldn't believe & now know I don't believe. It is perfectly different with everyone, though. Well not to come back to earth! soon the pilot turned & said hold on, which I couldn't hear but understood from his lip movement. The

engine made an awful noise with the wind too, so you couldn't hear much else. But I held on without persuasion, grabbing a seat bar with one hand & the gun carriage around the rim of the observer's circle with the other hand, & waited excitedly. Well, he pointed the plane straight down & dived. I had the sensation of going down in an elevator, magnified 7,000,000 times, perhaps more, & the knowledge that I was, or the impression I was leaving my seat. I grabbed pulling, or attempted to, myself back to my seat, where I was all the time, but had little power in my arms as my full time & mind was being occupied with that elevator feeling. I thought that if he didn't stop at once I would certainly be terribly sick, toate de sint, & glanced straight ahead at the ground & kept my gaze on one object, a lovely tree in a field, whereupon the feeling left me at once, oh thanks for the lovely tree. Then we straightened out, & I was terribly relieved, but still possessed that happy grin. It was too great an experience to be able to describe. Then we dived again & wondrous, looped the loop. It wasn't near what I imagined, not nearly

as sensational as the straight dive, but seemed awfully odd to see the earth directly below & to see it whirl back into place again in a circle. The machine didn't move, or so it seemed & there was not the sensation of leaving ones seat but you felt the pressure of the seat during the whole loop, with the exception of the small dive at the start of it. After that we banked & wing-tipped which is an awfully helpless sensation similar to the diving one. Then we spiraled down to earth & it seemed most unusual to see it coming gradually toward you. I didn't realize that we had landed until our tail had lowered & the drag was scraping on the ground. When you are riding along evenly you feel as secure & safe as when on the ground, without odd sensations, & I know I am just simply crazy about it. But I realize too how much I have to learn & it makes one wonder, in a way, whether he has enough brains or sense to be able to do it. I have even a healthier respect for pilots than heretofore "

Aug. 22. 1918.

Prudy spent "four days" here - four days which we packed chuck full of sail, & tanks. We sailed 3 sunlights & one sailed by moonlight and we had a fine supper on Harding's Beach & set by the fire till it was dark & the shore lights came out. The moon was hidden behind dense clouds, so we sailed home at high tide, Prud steering & I at the bow peering into the dark for boats or wrecks ahead. The next night the moon was out, & we sailed with the sunset & watched the after glow, then drifted about till the moon was well up, then home. Sunday afternoon we went to Great Hill & lay on the sunny slope & talked & talked, & later boiled on coffee & watched the sun set & the stars come out. Prud was frightfully disconcerting. She thinks I ought to go to France - as if I wouldn't all along have jumped at the chance, but felt I was doing the harder, more needed thing in taking up nursing. It seems there is a dearth of available social workers & not only was it found necessary to revoke the "sixty clause" to get more candidates, but the age limit has been lowered from 30 to 25. At least she succeeded in convincing me that I

must make inquiries to see whether the Red Cross would rather have me as an immediate social worker in France or as a potential nurse here. If they said France, we would both be in the Russian Unit so as to be together. For my own part I am keen to get to France if I can do the same good there - by taking a nurse's training, it is a gamble how long the war would last & whether I would get there. (Not that I would have the signing of the peace treaty delayed on my account!) But in France one is nearer the centre of the biggest event in history, & until one has been there, how can one discuss issues except theoretically, or how can one understand with any degree of real insight. Until one has shared the common danger, one is unqualified to judge. That is what appeals to me especially - that by going over we get out of this safe existence over here & take chances along with those others who are facing them all. The Red Cross must decide it, & whichever way it goes, I shall be satisfied. What surprised me is that the family would rather I went to France.

August 27, 1918.

I went up to Boston yesterday to meet Fried & go with her to consult the Red Cross Personnel Bureau about the need for social workers in France vs. the need for student nurses. Mrs. Allen gave me a good deal of her time, but not all of her attention. I felt as though she were anxious to get out to lunch. She showed the strain of being overworked - in a small crowded office where she was pestered with calls from those who had sent in their names & thought they should be getting an answer. I left her about as wise as I went - then Fried had some errands to do & we didn't have much of a chance to talk things over at lunch or during about afterwards. I got back to Welles still undecided - except that I would write to the Russian Unit to see what the chances of a vacancy were. Today I received an answer "Still chance for you in unit. Are sending necessary blank." I wonder.

August 28. 1918.

Great excitement last evening. he saw again an unaccountable light in the Abbott's house. He had seen it once before this summer - & Sister made Greenwood has seen it - & Mr. Sayles asked us to be on the watch for it again. It is a good place for a spy to do some spying. Last night, Annie saw the light & called me. Sure enough - there it was, dim & intermittent and on the beach to the East of the Coast Guard station was obvious flashing. Son Father & Sister & Belter saw the light too (John was too sleepy to be interested!) he phoned Mr. Sayles - & he notified ^{Lieutenant} ~~captain~~ Eaton of the Naval Air Station. Mr. Sayles & two others also saw the lights from their house. But when the moon rose - the lights stopped. Then came Capt. Eaton & his wife & several andlers on motor cycles. They raced up & down between the Shattucks & the Greenwood, threw their searchlights on the house to reproduce the light - but unsuccessfully. He credited/fashioned why they didn't enter the house first experiment afterwards. Any spy could have made an easy get-away. But that was not the worst. Capt. Eaton - accompanied by his wife

who wore a white skirt, which showed below her long coat, & white shoes & stockings which flared in the moonlight, strolled across my place & snooped around the tangle bed. Goodness knows what they thought they were doing. It was the most amateur thing conceivable. And the next morning, it was left to Fred Bease to go over the house!!! Of course he'd detect any evidence. He let dogs break into the house in the winter, & later he noticed that a bunch of Keys were missing - then this morning he found coferees (as if they showed anything) & a cigar stick on the floor (which he can't account for), & he carefully bolted a door which was not bolted before & said "nobody can get in now" -! - as if that made everything all right. But neither Mr. Sayles nor ourselves are satisfied. Nobody has explained the light. It may have a simple explanation, but ~~Capt.~~ ^{Mr.} Eaton hasn't furnished it.

August 31, 1916. Saturday.

Elvin left this morning. It seems like the beginning of the further breaking up of things. She feels that Amelia will be terribly lonely this winter, and it makes me feel still more uncomfortable about leaving her. The application Blank has gone astray, and I have had to write for another - so the little time left me for a decision is fast slipping away. I do want to go - but my eagerness is dulled a good deal by what it means to Father & Amelia. The risk of going - the mere physical risk both in crossing & in being behind the firing in the devastated regions - should I go - does not concern me. I would be willing to give up my life if necessary for a cause which has already claimed its millions. But somehow it is the thought of those I would leave behind, that makes the thought of going hard. It is a little the way Mother must have felt when she knew she was leaving us.

October 3, 1918.

Yesterday, on going to Minneapolis (Northern Division Headquarters for the Red Cross) I learned that I shall be told to apply for a passport in a few days. Now after that there may be some weeks of waiting. Not that I am at all loath to be here, but there is an uneasiness & an uncertainty about the whole business which makes me restless to get started - once one has made the decision to attempt it. Moreover the chances are that Fred will sail before I am ready to - and we did hope we might be able to go together. The war news looks brighter for the allies & Foch's push still continues - but that means more work for reconstruction workers to do rather than less - in helping settle the evacuated districts.

The influenza plague is spreading out here now. Boston & its vicinity have been hard hit - as poor Elvin can testify from experience.

Nov. 1, 1918. Fri.

Four weeks ago today, I applied for my passport, and at last word came today that I had been enrolled for foreign service by the Red Cross, subject to the approval of the War Department. I wonder how many more days or weeks of waiting that will mean - before I get definite orders to go to U.S. to sail. Now now, I can't tell it in. With Bulgaria, Turkey, & perhaps Austria dropping out, & Germany making at least a feint at Berninades, it looks as tho' peace might come any day. We are eager to hear the results of the Allied War Council at the Little Trianon - a spot which, more than ever, will have historic interest to coming generations years hence. But in spite of the ascendancy of the Allies & the rapidity with which German-occupied French villages are being evacuated, they say the military relief is the most important work of the Red Cross just now - & there is no telling but what we may be transferred to that line of work for the present, and "after the war" (a phrase to be conjured with) be switched back to the

work of reconstruction. Personally I hope that is what may happen. It would give me the experience of military relief work & help me get more acclimated before plunging in to chatting in bad Parisian French with French peasants who speak an incomprehensible patois.

While I've been waiting I helped a bit sorting old clothing to go to the fire sufferers in the northern part of the state, where an area as large as that fought over in France was devastated, not long ago, by a horrible frost fire. I wanted to go to Cambridge to help Elsie out - but the Red Cross fears influenza & prefers I stay here - which means I am useless. And there is a great demand for nurse's aids, with the shortage of nurses due to both war & influenza epidemics. All I have been doing, beside idling, is studying French. First with Prof. Guillet - but he was a dismal failure. Now I have grammar with Miss Medhurst, but conversation with Mlle. Angelle Petite. She nearly dies of mirth over my French, which I am all too aware is atrocious, but we have such a good time I don't in the least mind.

Thurs. Nov. 9. 1918.

It is reported that the armistice has been signed by the Germans. Whistles are blowing & horns are tooting. If it is true, I cannot at all comprehend the significance of it yet. Why, why, were "they" so long in passing on my application. August - November, and I am still here.

Mon. November 11, 1918 Victory Day.

The Thursday dinner was unfounded. Since then the Allies & the U.S. have virtually put the German army to route, Germany is in the hands of the revolutionists, the plenipotentiaries sent to Marshall Foch have signed the armistice and the Kaiser & Crown Prince have abdicated & fled into Holland! Enough events to last a hundred years in ordinary times - & all have happened in the last few days. That is too easy an escape for the Kaiser. Judging by the dummy Kaiser, the corpse & coffin, which the mob displays here today, they would not have let him out his jail doors if they could lay hands on him. The armistice was signed, by St Paul time, early this morning. & the orchestra of whistles and horns and

drums & giant crackers, woke me at 2:45 and gradually the meaning of it dawned on me. There was no more sleep for the weary. The wind has kept up steadily all through the day ever since. Good natured but hilarious crowds throng the streets with flags & horns & whistles, & tin cans trailing behind auto - and the whole town has closed its doors & emptied itself upon the streets. It will probably continue well into the night. In some windows is the sign "Don Jay" - and surely this is the day for which the allied world has looked forward for over four years. We, who have no close relatives at the front cannot feel the utter joy so many thousands must be experiencing, except indirectly. Their tension & anxiety & dread is over now. And what remains is reconstruction, politically, morally, & physically. Wilson, is to my mind the man of the hour, but he is among many (stand-pat republicans in particular) who distrust him. A prophet without honor among them, yet idolized by our allies & our own liberals. As for myself, I would not have the war continue a minute longer than necessary, but I am frankly disappointed to have missed getting there before it stopped.

The Day after

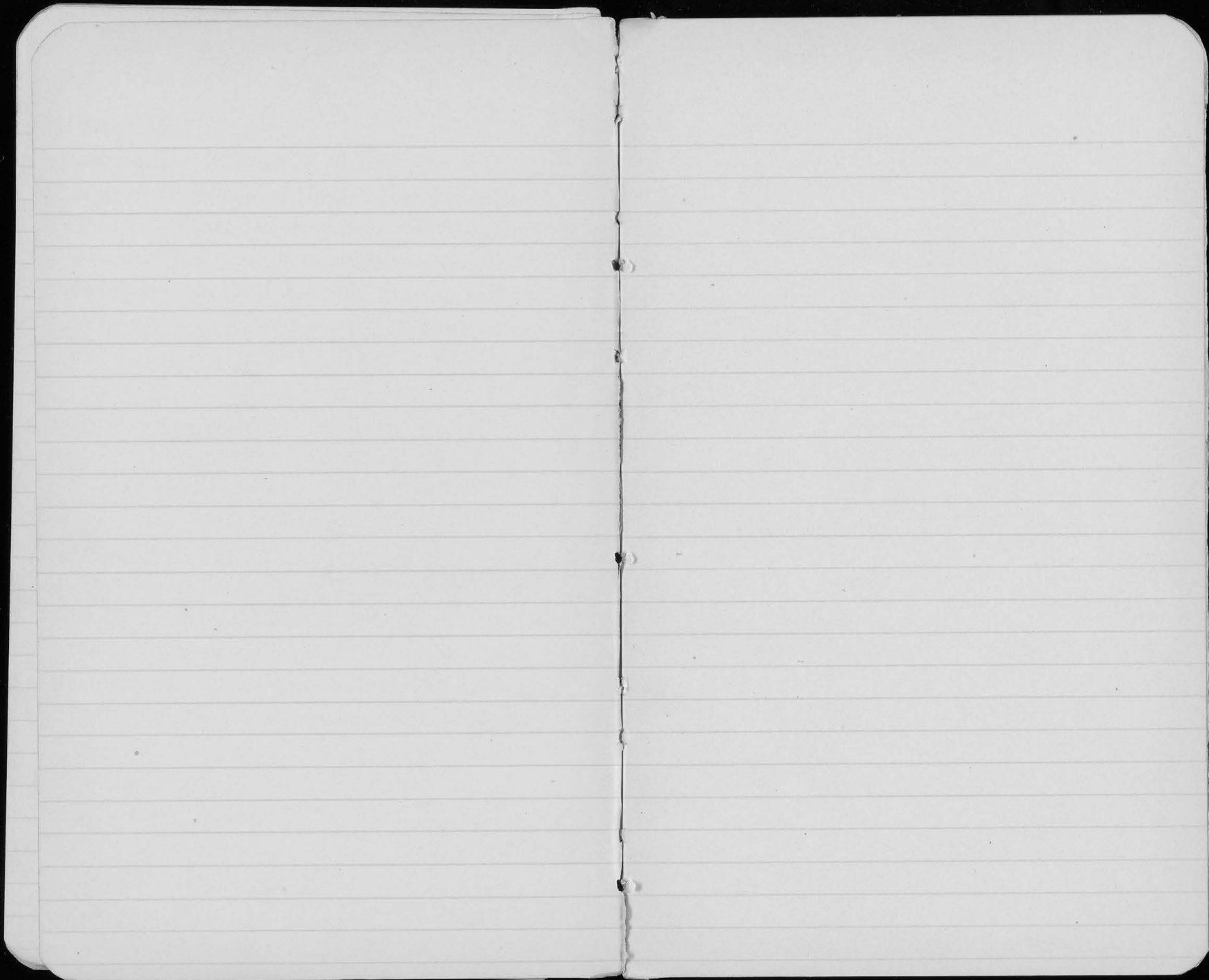
Last evening we went to ^{watch} the outdoor song service at the House of Hope. Not wanting father to take cold, as he feared (although it was a beautiful night) we stayed in the automobile. We could hear the singing well but not all the speaking, nor could we hear the organ play the Marseillaise. The outdoor meeting (because of the influenza scare) was very impressive - the portal lit and the crowd in front merging into the dark - the stars sparkled hazy in their midst - and behind them the church looming up into the sky. All during the service automobiles passed, some quietly, some still continuing their tooting and whistling. But now so there was a great deal of tremendous impression about the service, and a thanksgiving more appropriate to the occasion than all the flaying waving & bell-ringing of the day.

He never saw the trouble; he only saw the deed.
He never thought of distance; his mind was on the need.
He never reckoned money as a prize worth clinging to;
He said its only value was the good that it could do.

He never stopped to reckon what he'd miss of joy, to stay
And help a fellow being who was stranded on the way—
Never paused to think of pleasures that he'd cherished long and
planned;
All he saw was one in trouble who must have a helping hand.

There seemed nothing so important that he wouldn't turn aside
For the man who needed friendship and was really trouble-tried;
He wasn't one to answer, "I have something else to do."
He thought his foremost duty was to help a man he knew.

He never saw the trouble; he only saw the deed.
He never thought of sacrifice; his mind was on the need.
And he had this simple motto, which he followed to the end:
"When the other man's in trouble, that's the time to be his friend."





Partially Scanned Material

Blank pages from this item have been omitted from the digital version. The original can be viewed at the Minnesota Historical Society's Gale Family Library in Saint Paul, Minnesota. For more information, visit www.mnhs.org/library/.

6423

