

*My first letter from Sid*

Dangin

*End of Sept, 1914*

Dear Miss Marryat

There is truth in the old adage that "all good things come to those who wait". It is equally true that these good things, when they come; live; have their day and oft times vanish.

This at all events is the case with me. My month's holiday in town I had long looked forward to. In due time it came, like the "good" things mentioned above, but like many other of our life's experiences was of such a nature as to render it impossible to be of infinite duration. It has come and gone, and I am now left to enjoy, at my leisure, the pleasure which a contemplation of it affords me.

Never, even if I live to be a hundred, will the thought of this holiday cease to revive associations within my mind, which I would not have excluded from my life's history for worlds. Too many of us I think fail to fully realise the great part played in the moulding of our characters by the influence of those with whom we daily come into contact. During my stay in Claremont I have made quite a lot of new acquaintances for which I hope I shall never be sorry. And the kindness shown to me by Mr Ward, your family and others has left an impression which the effects of time will never efface.

II

But however pleasant my holiday may have been, yet the constitution of my nature forbids that I should be otherwise than glad to be home again.

While in town I seemed always to be longing to complete once more the old family circle; to see the old familiar faces, especially of the little ones here at home, which I always miss when away. "Home Sweet Home", these three words convey a meaning, which I trust, I for one will never fail to grasp.

I arrived quite safely this afternoon at about 4-30; there's no fear of an accident on this line, you know, for the train travels fearfully slow from York to Dangin. But this was more than compensated for, when I arrived to find nearly all the family at the station to meet me – you remember seeing all the little ones in that photo I showed you – . It was good to think that I had been missed. All were glad to see me back again.

I was going to ring you up at dinner time from York, but the train arrived a little bit late. It was due to arrive at 12-20 and to depart at 12-45, it however did not arrive until about

12-40, so you see I had no time. That pleasure however remains for some future date.

III

I told Mother tonight that you were coming to spend a day or so with us, and she was pleased to hear it. Of course everybody pricked up their ears and began to think things, which was silly of them! ! ? ? – ! ? It will be impossible now for you not to come. You must not disappoint us. Although at present the dry weather is making the country a little less enticing than it might otherwise have been, yet I am sure you will never regret a trip to Dangin. I at all events will be expecting you.

I met my brother at the train this morning, and he told me that he was round at Mrs Butterworth's last night to see me – I was of course out – and after discussing many subjects with great vehemence she finally started upon "Sid" – my defenceless self – and hinted in a round about way that she was not sorry I was going home. I must say this surprised me very much.

Of course I can trust you to say nothing about this, for personally I have nothing against the "old dame" but in fact am greatly indebted to her for her kindness. They asked me to stay [with] them seeing Olive and Mr Butterworth

IV

spent 4 or 5 weeks between them up here with us. So that if I have been unable to conduct myself in a manner pleasing to her, it is that I am to blame, and must hitherto endeavour to rectify my incompetency.

I am sorry I could not have been in Claremont for this afternoon. Herbert was telling me that the College Camera Club was going on an excursion, which had I been there, I could also have attended. This I would have enjoyed, for I have always been interested in anything of the sort. When he comes home for a holiday he generally brings a camera with him, and we have a good time photographing the various things and places of interest. I have enclosed a specimen, which was taken during such an adventure. It is supposed to represent myself and our little pony.

Well I think I must close. Just remember me kindly to all the rest, especially Mr Ward. Also Mrs Butterworth if you see her.

I am yours etc  
Sid Minchin

*Written across the side of the letter:*

P.S. O! By the way, I completely forgot to give you that ½ crown,, which you gave me to get those muscatels with. Please find it enclosed. S.M.