

TO KILL REFUSING

BRISTOL'S WORLD WAR 1 CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

**This image is to be reproduced and used
for educational purposes only**

Title: Letter from Hope Squire 1/6

Description: A hand written letter

Details: Letter from Hope Squire (Frank Merrick's first wife) to Frank in prison, 13 Oct 1917.

Source: University of Bristol Special Collections DM2103/F/5 Reference SC006413-4

Credit: With permission of Frank Merrick's family - Celia Bloor, Phoebe Merrick and Paul Merrick

File name: RTK_Primary_DOC_SC006413-4.pdf

From: <https://www.brh.org.uk/site/articles/refusing-to-kill/>

I.

23/11
1844
7/1/47



2 Parsonage Road, Wokingham. Oct 13th 1911.

My adored Frank, - Your letter was such a surprise & I am so thankful to have it. Of course I knew there must be some good reason for your silence, & I perfectly understand your action & all that it stood for; like all your actions it has done & is doing more effectual work than even you could suppose - I support you in everything - I don't wear my wedding ring - I wait till we can give them to each other again, and I do all I can to help the Causes you love. I have been fortunate in twice getting strong letters into the M.S. You are quite right about remaining where you are, though Heaven alone (& you) know how I miss you. When you do come home, I shall have to keep the fact a secret for some while, as you will be mobbed by friends, & I shall never get a moment alone with you. Every one misses you, rich & poor. Amongst the Crowd ^{whom} I have promised to give you, are the Mayers, Rothschilds, Isaacs, Bankers, Robinsons, Dr Brodsky, the Students, Crewdson (who won't take a 1/2 for that suit) Mr Street, the Normans, Murrins, Skwants etc. etc. Grace very well & getting very grand. Bebe, very well, Mager, ditto, forewoman over 200 then. Diddy ditto much gardening, Auntie fell gone to live with them. Lindsey, all right, still at Sheffield. Mother in bed with bronchitis at Settle but going to Sheffield when better. Pansy very well & important. The Humphreys have moved to 22 Heaton Rd (2nd from pillar box). Harold well & writes very kind letters, Neville Swainson ditto. Arthur was to be married in Sept. Jack & Ellen were married on Aug 2nd live in Hull. Mr Beauland going to South Africa, Dr says he can't live another winter in Eng; he is very sore, & wants your photograph, I'm going to give him the only one. Max is keeping up one of your Subscriptions. I will give all your messages. Beauland is every thing, he is just thinking over an ^{invitation} to be president of College Council!!! Willie has left but may take private lessons, Chapman left (got his diploma). Irene got hers & has come back. Mr Forbes lots of new pupils, Max one, he none. Seal is at Cleethorpes, he made a very gallant attempt to follow your example, had a bad time, was ill & finally his nerve gave way, & he gave in. He is awfully unhappy, & writes very often, & I love him very dearly. - I tried to move mountains on his behalf, but all that trouble, after having struggled through the term's work on 2 nights sleep per week with Veronal, & bromide & chloroform mixture 3 times a day & such suffering as I haven't had for ages, caused me to collapse. I was much more ill when I last saw you than I would show & I am only now just beginning to get better. On Sept 7th I went away to a wee cottage near Dole, with Gladys and two black cats. Two weeks before that Potato, who

had grown as big as Nandy, but heavier, was run over & killed. ^{my} A little black kitten was tortured by some cruel children & is buried near Potato. A few days before we went Hugball & another grey & white one I had taken in, became very ill (poisoned I fear) Mr Hills (St Pauls Rd) took the new cat, & both are now, by dint of great care & Amie, quite better, & very fat & lively. A day or two after we arrived at Disley, Mouscorfski began to show symptoms, & in spite of the most unsparring trouble, I couldn't save him. He never really cheered up much after you went, & he hadn't strength to pull through the illness. I brought him home the same night to be buried in this garden. I am so grieved to have to tell you all this, but it would so spoil your home coming if I didn't, & you expected to see them. M slept with me every night since you went & I miss him dreadfully. These pupils is a new puss now called Matt-hew - white with tawny patches, - very clean, sometimes dazzlingly so, & very thin yet - a week ago he was a skeleton - (Deserted, or turned out,) very loving & large - he & the bull-cat (Hugball) are fond of each other.

Our pupils played so splendidly at the Cream. Concerts - hills did the Handel Brahms, - & with part of Scherwenzka's Concerto (Nelly accompanied) - Nelly Chopin's Nocturne $\frac{6}{8}$ time - Seal Glazounow Variations with Chapman accompanying. I could not go to any of the Concerts, as it was all I could do to teach, but I spent hours here over the Glaz, & H-Bs. And I heard many opinions - all very flattering. hills was scolded in the Paper (Brahms more so) Seal & Edith completely ignored. Nelly was praised for some little Variations she had composed. Edith had done a 2-part invention in Caprice form - very good, on Elfin lines. I don't think I shall get my book done, Seal is the only one who is sufficiently fond of me & willing & intelligent enough to help - & he is gone. Besides, what does it matter, - when you come back I shall vanish into the No-where whence I emerged - by emerging task will be finished, & I shall be so overwhelmingly glad to see you again that I shall not care whether I'm forgotten or remembered. Besides, I must save my bit of mental strength for the teaching - it's only the joy of writing to you that is enabling me to do this letter. I'm now taking Quinine 3 times daily & Coronal once a week - less if possible, but thank goodness the frequent

fainting attacks are quite gone. Dr Buck has lent me a very shabby violin, & I felt it would cheer me to "scrape" a bit, & I shall try to be able to play easy things decently in a few weeks I hope. Gladys lived with me until I went away, - I think her departure is one of the reasons for my decided improvement. Now I have given you the unvarnished account you asked for. My own beloved man, is it an unvarnished truth that you are extremely well? I wonder! I am showing your letter to certain privileged friends, those who love & understand you best. I'm so glad you have learned Esperanto, I must learn it up again - I think it ought to have been much more used, but no doubt it will be. I will tell W.P.L. of your suggestions. At the Liverpool I.L.P. they are having weekly free Esperanto classes. The M.M.L. are giving "Beanland" a wrist watch. Myrtle spent her holidays in London helping to look after 5000 destitute women & children whose husbands are interned. Eleanor still at Highgate, very well & bright & very thin. Winnie Bradshaw well & playing well - All send love. Prof Unwin called this morning & we had a long talk - the first - he is most interesting, & evidently cherishes an affection for you, - he says he must be really musical because he knows when people make mistakes in a piece he has heard once or twice, & Mozart is his favourite. Mrs Mary & Portman has had another operation, & is recovering; her son has gone away again for 2 years this time, he has translated some things from Norwegian, and he is now studying Arabic. Mr Lowe comes to see me sometimes, he & J. McManis have shown much brotherly kindness. Old Mr Brook is as active as ever. Robert and Arthur are awfully busy, they were called up but Robert's wretched health and the fact that he is practically blind eventually caused him to be exempted. I think Arthur was exempted as indispensable to his "employers". There are only to be 15 Halle's Concerts instead of 21. They have not sent me tickets. The Promenade Concerts are now organized by Sir Thomas, and he wrote a foreword saying that with the judicious introduction of tobacco & refreshments he hoped the public would drop in & drop out in great numbers. Max has written a poem on the subject - you can imagine it. The old gardener who lives in St Paul's R. is quite fatherly to me, & under his guidance the

garden is going to be very fine! He says ours is the best soil in Wittington,
& it is due partly to having buried so many leaves, & partly the mould
base, which has enriched it extremely. The reason that flowers & the
lawn don't thrive is because we get so little sun, and he is going to lop
the trees, when they are quite bare, & make them grow thicker & less straggling.
I bury leaves on a trench system. I have 4 lines of trenches going - ~~you~~ I'll
a trench & dig one along side ready for next day, & so on: in this way the entire
garden will have been turned over & leaf manured - mould base goes into the
new trench each day. The Chrysanthemums are going to be wonderful, if they
don't get frost bitten, & wall flowers very good too. My own dear, unselfish
brave Frank, I feel often so unhappy to think you have no garden, no free-
dom, no companions - I have often I have wished we could change places,
sometimes I have been nearly desperate with the longing for one or two hours
even, of solitude & quiet, - but I generally repeat to myself "Perfect love
casteth out fear", & now I am really ~~to~~ getting better, & can bear the
talking, & the noise & the lack of "being left in peace" moderately well; so you
won't worry over me, will you Love, - I feel I can get through this term
easily now. Of course your letter has been a great help. It is very nice
having Penelope living so near, she has your latch key & Sheila has one.
I prefer living alone, but the house feels very large without you, - still I
keep it all nice, although this awful weather & having to work so much
in the garden mean days when all the brass is dripping & floors not quite
so nice as usual. I do so hope you will be warm enough; if not, ask
the Dr. to let you have Angier's - explain that you usually take it every
few months for a spell - I will send it if you may have it, it is warming.
I suppose I must not write more than this sheet full, - I must leave
a line or two for possible messages from Bristol. They don't hurry themselves.
I can't express how I miss you, how I love you or how I want you; but you know.
Mary H was Mother's great Aunt, 43 at that date. I will send the books if possible
to obtain them. In next letter lots more College news etc. Yours faithful Hope who is
perfectly satisfied with whatever you choose to do. There are many scents on this letter.

Monday - Just heard Daddy sends love, Marger sends very best love & glad to know you have some conducting to do & suppose
it is the Union Choir!!! I miss still very fit, always ends his letters as usual & you are to take that as sending his love.

Monday Mother, Annie Penelope send love & kisses. No news of Dickson Bridgewater. Others all well, but poor F. Gipping - he
was killed - flying - in August. The pussies have helped to write this, you can see their messages. XXXX XXXX XXXX
to be taken down.