

TO KILL REFUSING

BRISTOL'S WORLD WAR 1 CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

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Title: Letter from Hope Squire 5/6

Description: A hand written letter

Details: Letter from Hope Squire (Frank Merrick's first wife) to Frank in prison, 26 April 1918.

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Friday April 26th 1918.

My own beloved ~~friends~~ ^{Alfred} ~~heart~~ ^{Memoranda} ~~is~~ ^{very} disappointing to find that we have done ourselves out of
three or four weeks. I do think we might have been warned about those visiting rules. How is one to
know these things when they are not on the printed rules and we are not habitues of prison! Annie and I
will come alone next time, for I don't intend inviting your people again of course if you or they write &
specially want a visit I would. You have evidently not quite understood what annoyed me so, it was
that Daddy has evidently let Uncle George think you are in the Army! Well I have some really
interesting news this time. On Monday who should turn up but Harold Webster - I was so taken
aback I hardly knew what to say, but eventually gasped out "You haven't taken on the Scheme?"
He said "No"; I said "Thank God"; & then couldn't get any further, fearing from his looks that it was
on account of Dennis's fatal illness, he came forward & putting his Arm round me in a brotherly
fashion said "I wish it were Mr Merrick who had been let out instead of me, but not for the reason
which has liberated me!" We had a 2 1/2 hours good talk, he really does look a wreck, & was
discharged because things had got so serious that the Prison would not be responsible any
longer. He is just as nice as ever, & says if called out again is prepared of course to go though
at all again. He has received (& showed me) a letter from his firm intimating that they will
not have anything more to do with him, although if you remember at the time of his calling up
the lead went to the Vicar and tried to get him off because he was so "irreparable" to the
Mr Lowe has at last been arrested, is at Warrington & will be turning up soon at W. Scrubs.
I heard from Ann today, that "Charles" has been discharged Dennis heart trouble having
come on. It's nice to think these two good men have got their liberty again, though it
seems sad that they should have had to waste so much time in getting ill when
they would otherwise have been leading useful unselfish lives. Yes I did answer about
U.S. the Society has been disbanded. So has the M.M. League - & the Christian Chivalry
pamphlets are to be shared up between existing Societies that will distribute them.
There was a little balance which is for defraying postage. On June 16th we are going to
have a big missed Service of Intercession in S. Square, at least we are going to try.
Today I was stopped in the road by Simon Speelman who asked very kindly after you
& wished me particularly to send his kindest regards. D.B. is going to write to a friend
in Ireland who has the Hayden job to lend them to you. I constantly promise to send people
messages, but I don't always remember - the habitual & old ones I need not repeat, but
among new ones are Dora Wilson, Annie Lord, Leopold Klein, Henry Hill, Hunt Hill, Mr
Garat, the Dennis's, Aunt Robinson, D. Darling Smith, Mr D'Angier, Bretey, Julius, etc etc etc.
The London lot of course, & Sheffield. Eleanor B. is sending a book called "Wild Animal Ways"; & Helen
is lending you a lovely book which I've just read called "The Beloved Vagabond". Also we

I love & nurse myself. He is all the other people & things. One has been great for me, & all about the rest. I don't know how much the end means. More all if it comes to you. I'll be glad to have you. I'll be glad to have you.

both think you will like to read a pamphlet called "the Bahai Movement." Oscar has done a grand binding for it. He was so enraptured because you mentioned his name in your last. I remember reading another booklet at the B. M. ¹ during the same illness when I learned Esperanto (while you were in Australia I think.) Thekla is going to learn Esp. & find to her amazement that lots of Esp. books have been brailled & are in the B. library. Pauline sends her love & best wishes for your birthday on Tuesday - she is going in for a Commercial exam on that day. Matthew has just given vent to the most blood-curdling howls, a strange puss came into the kitchen - he has driven it away & I can still hear piercing howls further down the road. Hugball has not yet forgiven me for sending them to Mr Brooks banks while I came to London. He won't stay in the house, won't eat, & looks grumpy, but he goes visiting to various other houses where he is as affable as a cat could be. Matthew is extremely loopy, he wants a fuss making of him all day & all night! Mr Craver Sykes has given me an old pig for your birthday present, it holds a quart, & is no particular china but very old & a beautiful shape - apple green neck & faint flowers below. I have got you a tiny diamond, about as large as an egg - in black metal (not bronze.) very realistic. The other presents which are waiting for you were described in the letter you did not get. A Jacobean knife box with two hangers - oak - this shape  there is a shallow drawer for tea spoons, & above it a knife & fork inlaid in pear-wood. Then there is a cigarette tobacco jar, like a barrel made of walnut with very curly grain, & some hebrew words on it. Also a Spode vase, white with double handles & blue & gold patterns. I nearly got you a cello for £4.10 - took, but some one else got it first. I have sold the violin. Mr B had a new pupil who wanted me cheap, so, as I never get time to practice I let him have it for what I paid for it. If you would be horrified if you saw the lopped trees in the garden, but the house will be much lighter, & the garden will benefit, & they will soon sprout & be quite nice to look at. I've got such a good show of wall flowers, & am growing - & the two first to flower were those on Woden's grave. Also his primroses are out. Some of my vegetables are appearing satisfactory & the sweet peas are coming up in great profusion. Nearly every time I have been out for the past 3 weeks I have seen the detective who arrested you. He never sees me. Yesterday, I got the windows all cleaned - such an event! First time they've been properly done since last whitsuntide. Can you believe that it's nearly a year since you arrested. I feel as if it were many years. I was much interested in your "thinkings re: punishment." I generally find a good deal of justice & comfort in the idea,

never do to tell her, she couldn't bear it. She goes to see him every other day, ^{trans-}
miles, & what she lives a Heaven knows, for she is with out means. Of course I
keep her supplied at intervals with bits of this & that & occasional anonymous
money, & Mr Watts is awfully good, & one or two others. But she's very proud &
won't have help of the form the members if she can escape it, & indeed it's
very difficult to make her accept anything. She is a remarkable little woman.
I went to see Allen twice (in bed) before he was moved to the Home where he now is,
& he looked really beautiful, so quiet & peaceful & so totally devoid of bitterness
or complaining. They like to hear every scrap about you. ~~Mr W~~ Of course he
might pull you for being 28, & I'm often mistaken. Phillis is 37. Mr McCarty
died on April 2nd, Poor Olive was literally a wreck - she has just gone over to
Ireland for a change & rest. They had a dreadful time for the last few weeks, as he
was kept out of pain, all sorts of complications set in, but a very peaceful end.
Arthur is now so unsettled - he thinks he'd rather throw up the business altogether,
& go to Canada, so Mr McC & Kitty (or Olive) think they will leave the house & get a little
one. Selma has been awfully un-true & depressed for last 6 months, we can't make
out if she's really happy. She has painted a few beautiful pictures - I want to
get one for you - land - with a bit of deep blue sea, & a sand hill. She comes often
to see me but Jack never does - he is still sulking I think. @ there is so much
I want to do - & how I shall ever get it done - well I simply can't write out you,
I'm always thinking of grand surprises & preparations for when you come home,
but what with all my work & the time that follows waste I don't get half done that
I would like. Oscar has given me 15 yds of light blue cloth for a new set of curtains
for the large bedroom - which is exactly you, to be done up by grandly for your return.
I put our large bed in there long ago, & a small one in an room, I used to feel so cold
& lonely in the large one. I expect you often wonder if it's a dream that you ever used
to spend your nights with me! Often it seems to me like the days before we were married
when you were in Australia & I couldn't see you, & so seldom hear from you - the only difference
is that I know how that you are thinking of me & hoping for me all the time, I have no delusions
as to which I lay for most, you or Peace - I've hoped for you more than anything for so
many many years, - and so often lately the saying comes into my mind "My Country gets the
Government & deserves". I suppose it isn't true, but I get so tired of people's apathy about the
things that matter, & their fussing about the things that could easily be put up with. Mr Webster says the
same. We are going very "individualistic". Perhaps you would if you had been at liberty for the past
8 or 10 months. When you come out of prison, I'm going to put you first above everything, to