

The last
but one

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My dearest Mum.

Thank you very much indeed for the lovely parcel & letters which arrived quite safely today. It is so good of you all and I can't tell you how grateful I am and how I appreciate all your kindness. I read the letters over & over again. I also received

Grandie's lovely parcel and a letter from her Auntie and from Mr. Warden of Stood.

The Christmas pudding we shall dispose of tomorrow if we are here. Am afraid there are no means of boiling or toasting it on French stoves, even if we had one, as are all of an urn shape & entirely closed in. But you need have no fear for our digestions for they must be like an ostriches now, considering what we have had to eat. So rest assured dear Mum that although cold the pudding

will be appreciated. Thank each one for
the gifts which were enclosed for me. and
ask them to excuse me if I fail to acknowledge
each one, but I am truly very grateful to
each one. & thank Sara for her letter which
I was very pleased to receive.

Well Mum dear we have just had 2
days "standing fast." which means that you
must be absolutely ready at any moment
for a forced march to the trenches. ~~The 48~~
hours have not yet quite expired. But
reports have it that the lines are being
held & in parts advances are being made &
the probability is, we shall not be wanted this
time. Yes dear Mum. I know you all
must miss me & no doubt can to some
extent realize what my feelings are.
for I cannot express them. But I console
myself with the thought that I was guided

