**1915**

Mary Whitall Berenson

I Tatti

Settignano

Italy, Florence

[024]

Friday, January 1, 1915, I Tatti

Rain

Yoï came up to lunch and was really silly enough to put into a lunatic asylum. I have never known a person more self-absorbed and impervious to the impression she makes on others–except, bien entendu, sexually–of that she is well aware.

  She went for a walk with Geoffrey in the Laghetto–the last time, B.B. says, such a thing must happen. Of course I only cared when Nello was away, by means of lies on her part, for she told me he was frightfully jealous. It was a bad beginning to the New Year.

[025]

Saturday, January 2, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent, Naima >Staying

 Rain

It rained so horribly that none of us went out.

[026]

Sunday, January 3, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent, Naima

Rain

The Hendersons and Margaret Strong came to lunch. We walked in the laghetto, in spite of the rain.

[027]

Monday, January 4, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Rain

The Nelson Gays came to lunch and Miss Priestly to stay in the afternoon. She has just lost her Mother (at 92!) and she seemed to need a change. She is a dear person, though rather fluffy in the upper storey.

[028]

Tuesday, January 5, 1915, I Tatti

Flora Priestley

Rain

Called on Trenches with Flora, took Margaret Strong home and walked back from Villa Medici.

[029]

Wednesday, January 6, 1915, I Tatti

Flora Priestley

Rain

A.W. Benn came to lunch, and Mrs. Krayl, very full of her complicated affaire [sic] with Gordon Craig, poor child.

Placci and Salvemini came to dine, both sure that Italy is going to fight. Placci says on the 20th of this month, Salvemini on the 15th of February.

What tragic nonsense it all is.

[later] It really was the 23 of May.

[030]

Thursday, January 7, 1915, I Tatti

Flora, Geoffrey Scott

Rain

Miss De Robeck’s concert at 3:30. Called on Lady Enniskillen with Geoffrey, and met Flora there and brought her back again.

[031]

Friday, January 8, 1915, I Tatti

Flora

Rain

Dentist at 9.30.

Walked with Flora to Gamberaia and saw Florence Blood’s Days.

[032]

Saturday, January 9, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent, Flora

[no entry]

[033]

Sunday, January 10, 1915, I Tatti

Rain and mist here Fine at Fiesole

Flora Priestley, Geoffrey, Cecil

Had a telegram from Edward Hutton to say Frank Crisp was killed in action on the 5th, and now I must tell Mrs. Ross. So I did. It was really heartbreaking.  What grisly fantastic nonsense it is, tragic too. To think that human beings can find no way of settling their commerce and politics than killing all their young men.

Margaret Strong and Miss Paterson came to lunch, and afterwards I went up to see Lady Sybil, and walked back with Flora, stopping in to see Aunt Janet on the way.

[034]

Monday, January 11, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey staying

Miss Priestly went after lunch. Geoffrey had a cold and went to bed. I took Flora down and did errands and went to the dressmaker:

Although everyone is in distress, complaining of lack of work, I have found only one who finishes the work you give them in reasonable time. That is my old maid, Luisa.

I engaged a new cameriere.

Nello, Yoï and Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Gay came to dine. Yoï looked awfully bored at the general talk, and contributed only the remark that Mrs. Ugo Ojetti had got very fat. Afterwards she told me she was the most sensitive and “pensive” person I had ever seen, she always felt and “intuited” what others were feeling and thinking. Had she known what a fool I thought her, she wouldn’t have gone on! She said Nello was frightfully jealous, and suspicious and wouldn’t let her go out alone. I said I thought he was quite right.

[035]

Tuesday, January 12, 1915, I Tatti

Fine, here cloudy

[no entry]

[036]

Wednesday, January 13, 1915, I Tatti

Mr. Benn and Edmund and Mary Houghton and Cecil came to lunch. We offered Edmund our little De Dion motor–a small return for the endless pleasure he used to give us with his in those wonderful first days of motoring!

B.B. had tea with Sybil and I had a most glorious walk alone over the hills. Such a day! All the little streams came stealing out of the rocks with soft whispers, and a rushing brook at the bottom of the ravine sang a sort of ground bass to the other soft voices, The light on the oak-forest was ruddy copper and the sky made me almost faint with its purity.

Cecil and Geoffrey gave a dinner to Mr. and Miss De Robeck and the Misses Hamilton.

Earthquake al Avezzano

[037]

Thursday, January 14, 1915, I Tatti

Placci and Edmund Houghton came to lunch. Pl.[acci] is afraid the terrible earthquake of Avezzano and the Abruzzi may put off or hinder the War. He says Giolitti means to try to snatch the power from Salandra, where the House reassembles, and for that if he can find a good Casus Belli, Salandra may declare war first. Von Bülow is constantly seeing Giolitti, who would come in with a Neutral Policy. But Pl.[acci] says he would change it to War fast enough once he was in the seat. What miserable business it is–determining such things by such motives!

Geoffrey telephoned and wished he were here to walk with us to the Tree. He seemed to feel there was no point in doing anything by himself. Those boys live in far too restricted a circle. I do deplore it. But Florence is a desert for our sort of people.

[038]

Friday, January 15, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Worked and had a walk in the laghetto.

Some awful people came to tea -Thomases and Halls. Prof. Hall of Harvard is himself a very pleasant nice sort of person, but his wife and daughter are hopelessly squaw-ish, and the Thomases all sheer horrors, with an accent that would ruin even the best talk–and theirs is the worst!

[039]

Saturday, January 16, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent, Naima

Cecil took a 5:45 train to Empoli to eat a pig at the Ali Maccaroni fattoria near San Miniato al Tedesco - a yearly ceremony. They ate endlessly and drank ditto and he appeared here at 6 only to fall into bed!

BB as usual called on Sybil, and I went to see poor Aunt Janet. Crisp was shot by a German “sniper” on his way from the trenches to billets on the 5th at 11:30, and he died at noon, hardly recovering consciousness.

Looked at Indian photos in evening.

[040]

Sunday, January 17, 1915, I Tatti

 Cecil Pinsent, Geoffrey Scott, Naima

Work in morning. In the afternoon B.B, and Naima had a drive to Monte Senario and Geoffrey and I called on Sybil and the Strongs, and walked back. Cecil called on Aunt Janet. B.B. got awfully cross, but I can see that he is anything but well.

Aunt Janet is terribly broken by Frank Crisp’s death.

  We sent £ 500 and clothes to the Terremoto Committee.

Cecil got up at 9 quite restored from his savage feast.

[041]

Monday, January 18, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, new footman Domenico Pieri

Foot sore, so could not walk. Went to town with Geoffrey, and called for BB at Sybil’s at 6. He says she reminds him of a cicala, no body or insides but all voice. I have never known anybody [to] talk the way she does. I can hardly bear it, although I am inclined to like her.

Poor B.B. is not well. I feel really troubled and anxious about him. He doesn’t sleep well, and he can’t digest. Most of the time he feels awfully tired.

Yoï and Nello came to dine. Nello was charming. Yoï had a sneezing cold, and her manner was cooler and to me much more agreeable. The more intimate she feels the more she puts me in a false position by taking it for granted I “understand” and “sympathize with” all her foolishness.

[042]

Tuesday, January 19, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Worked all morning, after seeing corset maker and lace mender. Cecil came to lunch and we gave him 500 francs for the Terremoto sufferers in the Abruzzo.

Geoffrey and Cecil and I went to town in the car and did various errands, and then Geoffrey and I called on the Loesers (out) and on Yoï. Nello came in late, and when we were going Yoï kept back Geoffrey to whisper to him that she heard “from all sides” that we hadn’t liked her meeting him here and taking a long walk with him. She was evidently blaming him for our criticism of her–so silly. It all came from her babbling to Stan Krayl about the walk, only half truths revised with lies, and where Stan spoke to me of it, I said I thought it was wrong of Yoï to deceive Nello and try to keep poor Geoffrey on. I am for myself glad Yoï heard of it, but it upsets Geoffrey to have her furious with him. However, I believe it is good for him in the long run.

[043]

Wednesday, January 20, 1915, I Tatti

Freezing

Geoffrey and Cecil got off to Rome. Geoffrey didn’t want to go at the last, as he loves the quiet life here in the library all day. But I am sure it will do him good and deliver him from his preoccupations with Yoï, which it is so hard to shake off in this little circle of which she forms part. He will feel that after all the world, his world is too big to let her play such an overwhelming part in it.

B.B. as usual went to see Sybil. I walked halfway and came home through the woods–a glorious day. The American Consul and his wife (Dumont) came to dine–very American and provincial, but well-meaning people, rather intelligent. They stayed too late.

[044]

Thursday, January 21, 1915, I Tatti

Rain

Day of heavenly do nothing.  I mean nothing involving others, but just the work I like to do in the Library, with no one to bother me. I love such days, though I love them more when Geoffrey’s sitting opposite to me, also at work.

This year, for the first time in my life, I feel peaceful and at leisure. Nothing hurries or bothers me. It comes from having good health and very fine people to see and make social arrangements for.

If it weren’t for the War I should be happy. But that is such ghastly background that it is nearly intolerable.

BB at Sybil’s.

[045]

Friday, January 22, 1915, I Tatti

Fine

I cursed today when the Marainis telephoned to ask if they could come up and look at the Art Magazines, for I do so love my quiet days.

However, I made an excuse of Mrs. Ross and got a long walk alone in the woods, which I truly love.  And Yoï wasn’t so bad. She’s been less *gênante* ever since Stan repeated to her some of the severe things I said. She sees I don’t “understand,” so she bothers me less.

Later I called on poor Mrs. Ross, who has fallen into a sad apathy. She sits all day by the fire, only stirring to make it up, and shuddering and wincing from time to time as if someone struck her.

  B.B. went up to Sybil’s as usual.

She does talk – unceasingly.

[046]

Saturday, January 23, 1915, I Tatti

Rain

Naima

Worked. Took Nelly Erichsen to town for her errands, while I called on Herbert Horne, who now has sciatica as well as all the rest of his ailments.

Geoffrey wrote they were going to Balzorano [sic] to distribute the old clothes they had bought in the ghetto. The poor people won’t use nice things, they save them to sell and meantime freeze to death.

  Brought up Naima, who is nice but hideously devoid of conversation and interests. It is hard to know how to amuse her. In fact, one can’t, for she cares chiefly for flirting!

B.B. at Sybil’s

[047]

Sunday, January 24, 1915, I Tatti

Rain

Naima

Mr. Strong and Margaret came to lunch. B.B. was ill, Naima silent, Strong deaf and Margaret bored. I felt desperate.

Later B.B. and I called on Aunt Janet and met Ashburner there. Quiet evening of work. I am putting our scattered notes of the “minor” painters in order.

We decided to join Guido Cagnola in editing (a rather purging form) the “Rassegna d’Arte.”

[048]

Monday, January 25, 1915, I Tatti

Rain

A most interesting letter from Geoffrey describing the “*confusione*” that reigns in the Relief work in the Abruzzo.  They spent the night at Balsorano (Friday). The only person who was of any use was Salvemini, and he has the Socialist maggot in his head which makes him believe that the people can be made to live in a quite new well drained town, deserting their old unsanitary and now destroyed haunts. But the human animal is unlike that. I fear.

I began an article for Guido’s “Rassegna d’Arte” on the Italian pictures in Cracow–a rather silly proceeding, full of padding.

Yoï and Nello to dine. Rather flat. I called on Sybil with B.B., walking up and back. Wonderful misty effects, between Turner and Guardi.

[049]

Tuesday, January 26, 1915, I Tatti

Rain

Too rainy to go out tho BB went as usual to Sybil’s.

I went on with my article and had a splendid “go” at various odds and ends of work.

Alys writes that Logan has offered to go to inspect the Relief Work in France, to report to the British Red Cross. How awful if he should be killed, or even taken prisoner. He has become a British subject.

[050]

Wednesday, January 27, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey

Solid Rain

Went on with my article. Suddenly Geoffrey appeared, full of interesting talk about the Earthquake zone. It was too rainy to go out, but Mr. Benn came to lunch.

Geoffrey reported the Florentine Committee as too rotten and silly for words. The only man who is doing anything is Salvemini; and he is a little too doctrinaire for the situation, for he wants to build a sanitary new town in the plain, and thinks the peasants will desert their tumbled down hovels to live in it, whereas they probably won’t.  Cecil is helping him put up his skeleton town.

  BB afternoon at Sybil’s

[051]

Thursday, January 28, 1915, I Tatti

Wet

 Geoffrey Scott

Alys writes that Logan has offered to go to the Red Cross in North France–headquarters at Dunkirk, where alas the Germans keep dropping bombs. I feel very anxious.

Called on Lady Enniskillen with Geoffrey and also on the Giulianis.

[052]

Friday, January 29, 1915, I Tatti

Damp

Geoffrey Scott

[no entry]

BB at Sybil’s

[053]

Saturday, January 30, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Naima

[No entry]

[054]

Sunday, January 31, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Naima

Fine

Charles Strong and his daughter came to lunch. It was certainly very dull.

BB took Naima on drive and Geoffrey and I had a glorious walk in the woods.

[055]

Monday, February 1, 1915, I Tatti

Deep Snow

Geoffrey Scott

Cecil writes of the hopeless and cruel *confusione* that prevails in the earthquake zone. The timber came 15 days late and then couldn’t get unloaded because the railway siderigs were choked with wagons which sheltered not the unfortunate survivors but the Committees who had come to build barracks out of that same timber!!

  I wonder what would happen if Italy went to war? I hope they’ll keep out.

Had a splendid walk and called on Aunt Janet, whom I found all alone crying.

The Marainis came to dine, and left Geoffrey rather miserable. She seems utterly fake and boring. He is delightful. She says they have only £300 a year to live on.

BB at Sybil’s in afternoon.

[056]

Tuesday, February 2, 1915, I Tatti

Fine, Snow deep

Geoffrey Scott, Naima

Alys writes that Logan is not wanted at Dunkirk, they have already found someone to do the job. I am awfully relieved. He is in the meantime working hard for the Belgian refugees.

Byba Giuliani came and took Geoffrey for a walk, and then came in and paid a call.

BB afternoon at Sybil’s.

[057]

Wednesday, February 3, 1915, I Tatti

Fine, cold

Geoffrey Scott

In bed with cold.

Giglioli came and said Cecil was the most valuable of all the workers in the Earthquake Zone.

Lady Enniskillen and Mr. Benn came to lunch, but I didn’t get up.

I did get up to arrive and receive the Dumonts (Consul) and a young friend of theirs, Miss Blazo of Providence. They stayed very late. Geoffrey showed the pictures to the young lady, who “adored” them all, all for the wrong reasons.

BB afternoon at Sybil’s.

[058]

Thursday, February 4, 1915, I Tatti

 Geoffrey Scott

Stayed in bed most of the day with my cold. Miss Erichsen called, very anxious about Aunt Janet’s state, who has lost all interest in life with Frank Crisp’s death.

BB tea at Sybil’s.

[059]

Friday, February 5, 1915, I Tatti

Rain

Cecil Pinsent, Geoffrey Scott

Day of work. Placci and the Gays came to dine. Placci has been for three weeks in Piedmont and Lombardy, and he was very much discouraged by the state of popular feeling there – no one even dreaming of joining the war.

It is a perpetual question, up, down, shall we? should we? devoid of all dignity or moral importance. In the end I fear I will depend rather on Giolitti’s parliamentary juggling than on any respectable reason.

Cecil came up in the car which took the Gays back. He has had a hard but most interesting time at Balsorano. The greatest discomfort he suffered was from a finger that one amateur Red Cross doctor seized upon and burned nearly to the bone with undiluted iodine, which he tied up on the finger!

BB tea at Sybil’s.

[060]

Saturday, February 6, 1915, I Tatti

Rain

Naima, Cecil Pinsent, Geoffrey Scott

I was going to town, but sent Miss Erichsen instead, as I felt too ill. She called on Yoï and brought Naima up.

Margaret Strong and Romola Trench came to dine, looking very sweet and young. Romola is a real beauty, but Margaret is, I think, nicer. Cecil was helpful and agreeable, but BB and Geoffrey buried their noses in a book of Chinese characters and paid no attention to the company.

[061]

Sunday, February 7, 1915, I Tatti

Rain

Naima, Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

Did absolutely nothing but read and work all day.

Cecil cleared up lots of household things, the angel, and then went to tea with Sybil, while BB (for a change) called on the Strongs. Geoffrey was awfully depressed, but got better after a walk all by himself. I couldn’t go, as my cold was heavy on me.

[062]

Monday, February 8, 1915, I Tatti

Rain

Cold still rather heavy, but I had to go to town. I took Geoffrey down and then by chance met him later wandering vaguely with a letter to post, about new complications in the tragic history of his family. It is like a Greek cycle–an almost inevitable doom. May he escape it.

I called at Sybil’s for BB. She was in overwhelming voice, and I came away quite stunned.

Yoï and Nello came to dine and announced, with bursting pride on his part, and conscious sex satisfaction on hers, that a new baby was on its way.

She said it made Nello so unhappy to meet Geoffrey here that he almost gave up coming, and I felt that Geoffrey and I have been very self-absorbed not to think of Nello’s side. Fortunately Geoffrey was away, dining with the Giulianis.

[063]

Tuesday, February 9, 1915, I Tatti

Rain Scirocco

I had my first “letter” from little Barbara today, a scrawl in coloured pencils representing, apparently, “Grandma with sticks.”

Alys had to suggest the eyes and the arms–children’s imaginations are either so indefinite or so lively that they are contented with the barest indications.

It has been poured [sic] all day, but I walked with BB through the Laghetto on his faithful road to tea at Sybil’s and then roamed by myself in the enclosure. I like walking alone best of all. It is the only way to really get in contact with nature.

Read a Japanese soldier’s book on the taking of Port Arthur. The horror of it kept me awake all night. But the little soldier loved it, horror and all, as a Xn [Christian] martyr might love his martyrdom.

[064]

Wednesday, February 10, 1915, I Tatti

Pour

Mr. Benn and Cecil came to lunch. Cecil’s municipal plan for the new town near Balsorano has been accepted by the “Genio Militare” and he is to go down to Rome to present it to them complete. It is I fear a barren honour as far as cash goes, but it shows that his work is recognized as good.

I had a heavenly day of quiet work and reading (newspapers alas), except that everything has a bitter taste while the War lasts. BB went to Sybil’s as usual, and then called on Aunt Janet. When he came back we had one of our weekly rows over the change I wanted to introduce into the Ms. of his article on “Venetian Pictures in the United States” for the magazine “Art in America”, but we made it up, and he accepted most of my suggestions. As we were quarrelling I saw how tired his eyes looked, and felt awfully sorry for him.

[065]

Thursday, February 11, 1915, I Tatti

Rain

Geoffrey Scott

Went with Geoffrey and Byba Giuliani to Donizetti’s opera “Elisir d'amore” but had to leave before it ended, as I went to the American Consul’s reception–a dull affair. The music was charming and Burci sang well.

Salvemini came to dine. He said he had not read the papers for 2 weeks, while he was working at Balsorano, and he was tremendously struck with the change of tone.

[066]

Friday, February 12, 1915, I Tatti

Rain

Geoffrey Scott

Cecil went off to Rome and Balzorano [sic.].

Walked with BB to Villa Medici and called on the Herberts (out) the Strongs, and Sybil. Came home with him in car. We discussed Miss Giuliani as a wife for Geoffrey, and decided it might just do, as she has plenty of money. She looks, BB said, like a “Levantine monkey” and she is very tiny, but I think she is a really good sort. She seems to be making a dead set at our young friend. He says there is no danger.

[067]

Saturday, February 13, 1915, I Tatti

Fine but hot

Naima, Geoffrey Scott

[No entry]

[068]

Sunday, February 14, 1915, I Tatti

Rain

Naima, Geoffrey Scott

My 51st birthday.

Everyone nice to me.

Geoffrey and I went to Donizetti’s “Don Pasquale” (with Byba Giuliani), a charming thing, very well given, which we thoroughly enjoyed. Such ‘flattering’ music.

[069]

Monday, February 15, 1915, I Tatti

Fine

Geoffrey Scott

Called on Mrs. Ross to thank her for the Burmese fan she gave me for my birthday. The Strongs and Miss Herbert and her mother and Iris came to tea. Disappointed in Miss Herbert. She is very shy.

Nello and

[070]

Tuesday, February 16, 1915, I Tatti

Dull

Geoffrey Scott

*L’ultimo giorno di carnevale*

Didn’t want to go down to Placci’s to tea, but enjoyed ourselves when we went. Liked Lucien Henraux’s wife, who has come home as she could no longer follow Lucien. She doesn’t know where he is now. Salvemini and the Marchesa Benzoni were there, the latter sure, through her father, the Cabinet Minister Martini, that Italy is going to war.

[071]

Wednesday, February 17, 1915, I Tatti

Fine

Margaret Strong brought Miss Vida Bispham (daughter of my old friend David, the singer) to lunch. We all liked her.

It was a lovely day and we sat in the *stanzone*. BB had a drive with Sybil and Geoffrey dined with her. Geoffrey and I had a beautiful walk over to Fiesole (under Castel di Poggio) but it was dark when I came back and the road was so stony I got tired.

Old age shows in the circulation in my hip, which are at times quite painful. *Coraggio!*

Cecil got here from Balzorano [sic.] entirely disgusted with the muddle and confusion. He thinks nothing useful will be done.

[072]

Thursday, February 18, 1916, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

Mr. and Mrs. Dumont brought the ineffable Mrs Tryphosa Bates Batcheller (and Mr.) to call. BB ran away with Sybil after ½ hour but I had them there for 3 hours. Cecil came in and helped. “Tryphosa” is a Worcester, Massachusetts girl who has pushed her way, being pretty and snobbish, into Austrian and Italian society and written indescribably silly books. Geoffrey reviewed one once in the Manchester Guardian.

Placci came to dine. This time we absolutely are going to war, “early in April.”

[073]

Friday, February 19, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Rain

Sybil called and BB went back to tea with her.

Cecil came in and said he thought he would have to go to the War after all. His brother has been sent to the Front after only 2 month’s drill.

It will be an awful calamity for us.

I do not believe he will ever come back, he is not strong enough to survive it. It is heartbreaking. I am so fond of him.

Geoffrey and I had a gloomy walk, especially as, at lunch, BB was in such a rage with Cecil he wouldn’t hear of any Terms we might make about at least finishing the Library.

Geoffrey was upheld, though, by having had a really charming letter from “Nicky Mariano” who is in Russia. He is ½ in love with her already. Well, I have Barbara, and envy no one!

[074]

Saturday, February 20, 1915, I Tatti

Cecil Pinsent, Geoffrey Scott, Naomi R.

Rain

Byba came and walked with Geoffrey. I had a headache, but got over it and went [for] a delightful walk by myself in the woods.

Cecil had been dining with Sybil, who pumped into him a feeling that he must enlist. She feels it herself so fervently that she is contagious. So Cecil came and told me he meant to, the more so as his brother has gone to the front after only 2 month’s drill. I argued and argued (inutile de repéter) and then Geoffrey talked with him half the night. All Cecil put forward was that “people” were criticizing him for not going, and these “people” were Sybil and Edmund Houghton. He told Naima he didn’t want to go.

I was very agitated and miserable on it all, and I must confess cross with Sybil.

[075]

Sunday, February 21, 1915, I Tatti

Cecil Pinsent, Geoffrey Scott, Naomi

 Rain

Cecil said he would stay to finish our work. Four months gained to his life. Perhaps the War will be over – but I am afraid not, although BB is sure it will.

Naima feels rather more at her ease now, and her hoydenish, stupid flirtatiousness is getting on my nerves. It is such bad form. There is nothing else on earth she takes the slightest interest in, except her illnesses, and, I must add, her little niece in Sweden. She reduces us to about the level of a servant’s hall. I cannot blame the men for following her lead, for there is really absolutely nothing else to do with her. If she were belle et spirituelle I think I should even like it. But her gambols are uncouth—her hand is heavy and I really got sick of it.

Walked in woods with Geoffrey.

[076]

Monday, February 22, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Rain

A “submerged Personality” took possession of me, and I raged and said things that I should never had said had I been “myself”. It was a very strange experience, and as I was self-conscious through it all, it has taught me a lot. But it really did get hold of me. It kept me awake at night simply furious and disgusted. B.B. was quite frightened and became as meek as a lamb. It all started with my finding him kissing Naomi and feeling disgust: which was silly, as I know it is the only thing one can do with that wild goat of a young female. This, however, brought up all my “grievances”, from Belle Greene to Sybil, and I said the nastiest and most devilish things about them all and about BB. The worst of it was, I enjoyed it! Fortunately I retained enough secure to tear up my sub-acid letter to Sybil about Cecil.

[077]

Tuesday, February 23, 1915

Rain

Miss Priestly came to lunch rather depressed, but keeping a gay exterior. She has a delightful quality of lady likeness.

I went to see Aunt Janet, who is certainly very changed by young Crisp’s death.

Sybil called here while I was out, and had a long talk with Geoffrey, which upset his conscience and made him feel maybe he had thwarted the bent of Cecil’s real nature, in presenting the arguments for his staying to finish one job. Of course Cecil is free–but not really, for his nature is so weak he cannot resist pressure. Poor Geoffrey was trying to “see straight,” and got himself all tied up in scruples and difficulties.

Afterwards BB said Sybil had been greatly influenced by her talk with Geoffrey!!

[078]

Wednesday, February 24, 1915, I Tatti

Fair-ish

Mr. Benn came to lunch, and we went in the afternoon to see Yoï and Nello and the Loesers. Loeser was going on about having “outgrown architects” and the superiority of a simple building, a box, not a house. He has in fact put up one, which comes very close to looking like a tenement house! They have a really darling little girl, a year and 8 months old–so intelligent.

Yoï is very seasick and miserable already dreads her confinement next next [sic] October. Olga, who was sick for 9 months, day and night, says nothing will ever induce her to have another baby.

BB dined with Sybil.

[079]

Thursday, February 25, 1915, I Tatti

Fair

Placci came to lunch. This time the *orario della partenza in guerra* is again set forward. We mobilize in March and go to war in April. But we got the impression that he was vehement rather than confident.

I took him to see Mrs. Ross, and then did errands etc. in town and called again on Yoï.

[080]

Friday, February 26, 1915

Fine

Bad rheumatism, but had a long walk with Geoffrey, very delightful in the new wealth of sunshine and blue hills. We called on the Priest at Vincigliata, a nice cultivated little person, fond of music and languages. Walked 3 hours–it was so enchanting.

BB had a motor ride with Sybil.

[081]

Saturday, February 27, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

Fine

Woke still rheumatic. Giglioli advised taking atophan. It was glorious walking, such spring sunshine, daffodils and anemoni and narcissus out, and pussy-willows all grey by the streams. But Geoffrey was very gloomy and seemed to spread a blackness over the sky, which I could only just manage to pierce here and there. I wanted awfully to walk off by myself and really enjoy all the loveliness. He was only cross because Sybil was all in a turmoil about his worries of Cecil enlisting, and Lady Enniskillen having reported her as “working to that end” some ten days ago. I was silly to have repeated this to BB as I might have known the coil it would cause. Well, I might have repeated much worse!!

[082]

Sunday, February 28, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

Fine, sat out after lunch

Margaret and her father and Miss Guiliani came to lunch. Cecil and I walked with the Strongs part way back, and Geoffrey had a very long walk with Byba, whom he much likes. But she agitated him talking a lot about Yoï. Cecil and I had a walk. BB called on Mrs. Ross. Sunday is his “day off” from Sybil.

A most beautiful day. But I was sad because Ray’s hopes for and another baby have come to nothing. I sent her £10 as a consolation present, poor child. She is awfully disappointed.

[083]

Monday, March 1, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Rain again

No home letters—but better War news–the Dardanelles really attacked and troops landing in the Gallipoli peninsula. Russian making a stand and even advancing, “blockade” fizzling out, and the “Dacia” towed by the French into Brest.

Walked with Bernhard halfway to *la solita* Sybil, and there called on Mrs. Ross and Miss Erichsen. Nello came to dine, but without Yoï, who is still sick. Oh but I envy her for Ray!

Geoffrey tells me that Byba Giuliani, who observes very keenly, thinks Yoï is neither contented nor happy, and that the marriage cannot turn out well. Italians read these things quickly. I think Byba knows nothing of the facts, but she sees Yoï is false and feels her to be dissatisfied.

[084]

Tuesday, March 2, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Perfect

Geoffrey has *influenza*, and Cecil came up to spend the night, instead of Geoffrey’s going down there.

Had a lovely walk alone, which I prefer to anybody’s company almost–in fact, quite. It is the only way to escape into nature.

BB had a motor drive in the Mugello with Sybil.

[085]

Wednesday, March 3, 1915, I Tatti

Fine, colder

Mr. Benn and Miss Paterson came to lunch. I took the latter to call on Mrs. Ross and Miss Erichsen.

Had a walk with BB. He dined with Sybil and Geoffrey and I dined here. He feels low with his influenza. Talked of Nikky and grew more cheerful.

[086]

Thursday, March 4, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Fine

Had to go to town, which I really hate doing now. Called on Yoï who is still very sick and miserable. A horrible hour with the dressmaker and then called on the Strongs, and saw their new building. I like Margaret. Called on Sybil, with whom BB had been dining all afternoon.

  I get horribly fussed when I have too much to do, such as calls and things in town. I hate it and love the quiet life here walking in the woods and seeing almost no one.

[087]

Friday, March 5, 1915, I Tatti

Took the Trenches down to dine with the boys, and also Miss Blazo. It was quite pleasant, but I caught a sort of cold or rheumatism in my neck and ear. Trench was nicer than I have seen him, talking about his 17 years work in the Education Office, where they have about 1200 men doing red-tape work, while he thinks 150 would be enough!!

[088]

Saturday, March 6, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent, Vida Bispham

Fine

Had a walk with Geoffrey while BB called on Sybil, as usual.

The Dumonts came to dine and Margaret Strong. The “young people” went off into the music-room and seemed to enjoy themselves. Even Geoffrey liked it. How I wish I could have plenty of youngsters about.

[089]

Sunday, March 7, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent, Vida Bispham

Fine and then cloudy

Took Miss Bispham [on] a motor ride, and then called on Sybil and the Strongs.

It was a lovely day and we sat out after lunch, enjoying the sunshine. In the evening we went (but not B.B.) with the Loesers to the *Folies Bergeres* to see a French Music Hall actress called Mistinguett. It wasn’t very good, but on the other hand, we got home at 11:15, so no harm was done.

[090]

Monday, March 8, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Cold, fine

Ray’s trouble seems to be “nervous” after all, for the doctor finds there was no miscarriage this time, and infers there wasn’t the last time. But it is now too late for darling Barbara to have a real companion.

B.B. and Geoffrey and I had a walk in the *laghetto* and then BB and I called on Aunt Janet, who does seem very broken and aged.

We are all getting positively sea-sick with newspapers!

[091]

Tuesday, March 9, 1915, I Tatti

Cold

Placci came to lunch, and afterwards Sybil and Carlo Visconti Venosta came for a *Santa* [sic.] *Conversazione* (on the War of course) which lasted until 5:30. We get more and more the feeling that Italy isn’t going in, in spite of Carlo’s knowing it. The papers are changing, too. Von Bülow is persuading them they can get something for nothing.

BB dined with Sybil.

[092]

Wednesday, March 10, 1915, I Tatti

Cold

Karin’s 26th Birthday.

Wrote to her and to Ray and Alys.

Was very rheumatic and stayed in all day working and reading Cromer’s book on Egypt and a story of a Chinese Courtesan.

Benn came to lunch. We think he has had a slight stroke, although, apparently, he does not know it.

BB motored and had tea with Sybil.

Received a button sewed onto a rag by Barbara!!

[093]

Thursday, March 11, 1915, I Tatti

Beautiful

Mr. Gentner, director of the Worcester Museum (Massachusetts) came to lunch, and to see the pictures. While BB and Sybil motored I took a 2 ½ hrs. walk all over the quarries on Monte Ceceri. It was very beautiful and I enjoyed it in spite of being still bedeviled with “uric acid”. The Mugello mountains were entirely covered with snow and Vallombrosa more or less.

I enjoy walking alone more than with anyone.

Lance Cherry’s mother writes that he has gone off on active service, as a big Cunard Liner, not to France. This must mean he has gone on to the Dardanelles. If he comes through, how interesting he will have found it!

[no entries until 18 March]

[100]

Thursday, March 18, 1915, I Tatti

Ray

Placci came to lunch. Ray, who had been carried on to Rome asleep (!!) arrived at 9. I am glad to see her.

[no entries until 27 March]

[109]

Saturday, March 27, 1915, I Tatti

Ray, Geoffrey Scott

Miss Priestley came to lunch.

[110]

Sunday, March 28, 1915, I Tatti

Ray, Geoffrey Scott

The Villaris and Hultons came to call, also a Rev. Dr. Vance, sent by Britten. Ray motored him and BB to Fiesole, where BB called on Strong and dined with Sybil.

[112]

Tuesday, March 30, 1915, I Tatti

Ray and dressmaker

[115]

Friday, April 2, 1915, I Tatti

Ray

Dressmaking

[118]

Monday, April 5, 1915, I Tatti

Ray, Pippa, Geoffrey Scott

Rainy

Pippa Strachey arrived–an agreeable person, probably shining more in some other milieu. Ray and she seem very fond of each other.

[120]

Wednesday, April 7, 1915, Grand Hotel Siena

Geoffrey Scott, Ray

Motored over after lunch (Benn) and saw the town. BB and Sybil came in her car, but were late, having been to San Gimignano. Sybil reduced us all to complete silence by a flood of dull sub-comic self-absorbed talk. It was really horrible, and we decided to fly away and leave BB to bear it. As he is in the silly shape of infatuation he probably likes it. I think she is a nice person behind all this appalling rubbish, but I wish he would some time choose an amie whom one didn’t have to explore in the subterranean depths to like. However, this is a vast improvement in the grating vulgarity of Belle Greene!!

[121]

Thursday, April 8, 1915, Hotel Bastiani Grosseto

Pippa

Rain and Shine

Left Siena at 10:30, lunched in a downpour in the car at Sant’Antimo, passed Arcidosso and Rocca Albenga, had wine with the little Sacerdote at Poggio Ferrato and came here.

Have been to the Opera “Andrea Chénier,” which was excruciating.

[122]

Friday, April 9, 1915, Albergo Angelo Viterbo

Geoffrey Scott, Ray

Fine

Most awful coffee at Grosseto! Explored Talamone and Orbetello, where we lunched. Saw Pitigliano and the Lago di Bolsena and Toscanella and came here. Pippa rather sick.

[123]

Saturday, April 19, 1915, Hotel Brufani Perugia

Pippa Strachey

Saw Villa Lante and thoroughly explored Bagnaia. Lunched at Orvieto and there saw the Church at Todi and dined at Foligno and came on here to sleep.

[124]

Sunday, April 11, 1915, Hotel d’Italia, Urbino

Ray, Pippa, Geoffrey Scott motoring

Ray and Pippa visited Assisi while Geoffrey and I strolled about Perugia in the sunshine. After lunch motored to Gubbio and there on to Urbino, in a cold rain which came on. Played competitive Patience.

[125]

Monday, April 12, 1915, Hotel d’Italia, Urbino

Ray, Pippa, Geoffrey Scott

Saw Ducal Palace and frescoes of Salimbeni, and there motored to Borgo Sansepolcro, through deep snow, where we lunched. Then came home by the lower slopes of Vallombrosa, a most lovely road through that curious humped-up country. The afternoon was perfect.

Found BB who had arrived from Siena last night. They seem to have been very happy.

[126]

Tuesday, April 13, 1915, I Tatti

Ray, Pippa

Rain

Called on Mrs. Ross with Pippa. Saw the lovely sight of Lina putting the two youngsters to bed.

BB spent afternoon with Sybil.

[127]

Wednesday, April 14, 1915, I Tatti

Ray, Pippa

Fine

Mr. Benn came to lunch also Miss Paterson. We motored her back and called on the Strongs and walked on his orange avenue. Went to town.

BB spent afternoon with Sybil.

[128]

Thursday, April 15, 1915, I Tatti

Ray, Pippa, Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

Mrs. Krayl and Cecil lunched here. Ray and Pippa went to the Pitti.

Mrs. Krayl has quarreled with Gordon Craig, who has made her choose between seeing no one at all but himself, or never seeing him again. He is half crazy with jealousy and embarrassment.

We all went to the Gamberaia and walked back. Saw the ilexes there with a view to the cutting back of our own infant grove.

BB dined with Sybil and we revelled here and had gambling patiences.

[130]

Saturday, April 17, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent, Ray, Pippa

Fine

Ray and Pippa got their tickets etc. In the afternoon we went with the boys to see the Gamberaia, while BB called on Sybil.

Mr. and Mrs. Dumont came to dine.

[131]

Sunday, April 18, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

Miss Blazo brought her pretentious and horribly vulgar sister to lunch. It was a frost. Goodness–!

Ray and Pippa left early, and I was up at 5:30 and had a before breakfast walk, which left me very weary.

Walked with BB later.

[132]

Monday, April 19, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Am writing an article on Bicci di Lorenzo which amuses me. Sirén, Giglioli, Venturi, Poggi, Carotti, and Toesca have all worked him up, getting together a list of about 35 pictures, and I find 29 more in our notes that they’ve never heard of. It is the same with every painter I think. I am glad to constate it for it shows we work well and are fairly competent.

Geoffrey and I called on Lady Enniskillen and Madame von Heiroth and BB spent the afternoon with Sybil.

[133]

Tuesday, April 20, 1915, I Tatti

We went out for the day in 2 autos, B.B. Sybil and Iris in one, and I and the two boys in another. We went first to S. Martino Carnano (near Rignano) to see the Rosellino and Minos discovered by Giglioli–then to Montecarlo, where we had lunch in the woods; then to Croppino [sic.] (a fine Romanesque church on the slopes of Vallombrosa), and finally to Poggio (above Loro Ciuffena) where there was an old picture, not very important.

It was a beautiful day and very enjoyable.

We must do it often.

[134]

Wednesday, April 21, 1915, I Tatti

Benn came to lunch. He no longer thinks the War will end this summer. Alas, it seems only at the beginning.

[138]

Sunday, April 25, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent, Naima

Rain

Finished my article on Bicci di Lorenzo.

[139]

Monday, April 26, 1915, I Tatti

Hot and sultry

Geoffrey awfully depressed. It seems to me really pathological. It is pitiful, and yet so depressing to me as almost to get on my nerves, but I try my best not to let it. I feel so awfully sorry for him. It is all burned up with Yoï, who came to dine, along with Dott. De Nicola. Geoffrey fled her and dined with Sybil, spending the night there.

I went to town with Lina and saw Horne’s new Palazzo which he has restored in Quattrocento style. Mascha von Heiroth (now de Heiroth) and Lina helped me get more hats. Yoï is scared to death about her approaching confinement.

[140]

Tuesday, April 27, 1915, Hotel Brufani Perugia

Fine, Rain, Pour, Fine

Started with Geoffrey and Cecil, BB and Sybil in another car. Lunched above Montevarchi, got into a cloud-burst near Borgo Sansepolcro, but had a glorious evening for Montone. Found Mr. and Mrs. Loeser at Perugia, but felt no enthusiasm.

[141]

Wednesday, April 28, 1915, Hotel Brufani Perugia

Fine, Rain

I went with Cecil and Geoffrey to Chiusi and Sarteano to look for sponge-stone. A most lovely country. Left Cecil at Cortona to return. The Lake of Thrasymenus under a storm was so beautiful that we could hardly believe we really saw it.

[142]

Thursday, April 29, 1915, Hotel Brufani Perugia

Fine, Rain

Motored to Spoleto and had lunch. Mem. Never return to the Hotel Lucini!

By the Val di Nera to Terni saw Aquasparta (the “Cure” there would be very dull).

[143]

Friday, April 30, 1915, Hotel Brufani Perugia

Fine, rain, fine

Motored to Gualdo Tadino by a new road. Lunched at the Castello there, in the garden. Saw Nocera and finally Trevi in a most lovely light.

Sybil, who had been very nice all along, suddenly got a talking fit, and shouted us all down and drove me to bed with my ears ringing and my face in uncomfortable smiles at her over emphasis of what she thought was humorous. She is really ghastly when she gets like that. But at bottom she is so nice that I must learn not to be disgusted and annoyed by this peculiarity.

Rupert Brooke died out at Lemnos. Geoffrey was very fond of him. What a terrible waste it all is.

[144]

Saturday, May1, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Rain, Fine

Home

Motored pretty straight home from Perugia, lunching by the Church under Cortona. Got back just after the rain and found the garden divine, the great azaleas out and everything glorious.

Salvemini came to dine. He seemed less confident about Italy’s joining the war. But I fear the Allies Need her, alas, the Germans are so frightfully strong and so well prepared and so keen.

[145]

Sunday, May 2, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

Fine

A lovely quiet day. Walked with Bernhard and called on Mrs. Ross. Geoffrey rather better from his depression.

[146]

Monday, May 3, 1915, I Tatti

Fine

Quiet day, but took Margaret and her friend to call on Vida Bispham. Walked with BB Yoï and Nello and Mascha and her husband-to-be, Mr. Travers-Borgström came to dine. Geoffrey, after much indecision, dined with Sybil.

Yoï was busy complaining about Nello and his family not wanting her to have an English nurse, for economy. She must be fearfully tiresome the way

[147]

Tuesday, May 4, 1915, I Tatti

Fine

Quiet day of work, which I greatly enjoyed.

[148]

Wednesday, May 5, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Fine

Geoffrey worked on BB’s Bellini.

Mr. Benn came to lunch. Afterwards I took Lina and Mrs. Ross to town, and then we called on Mr. Strong and BB remained to dine with Sybil.

[149]

Thursday, May 6, 1915, I Tatti

Fine

Worked on BB’s Bellini in morning.

Sybil lunched here.

Took the Consul and his wife in the car to S. Martino alla Palma.

She is rather a hopeless goose.

  Ady, Placci, Consolo, the pianist, Mrs. Ross and Lina came to dine.

[150]

Friday, May 7, 1915, I Tatti

Fine

Worked on BB’s Bellini in the morning. Took Yoï and Nello and Stan to see Montefiano, where Yoï wants to go for the summer. Brought them back for tea. Stan is still immersed in her relations with Gordon Craig, who is frightfully unreasonable and jealous.

Sybil, Madame Luchaire and Salvemini came to dinner. Salvemini has lost all his youthful illusions of being able to convince “the people” of anything reasonable. The power of the press is too great for cultivated and disinterested and reasonable ideas to gain ground.

[167]

Monday, May 24, 1915, I Tatti

WAR with Austria

[168]

Tuesday, May 25, 1915, I Tatti

Urbino Albergo d’Italia

Our motoring trip with BB and Sybil in her car driven by Parry, with Sybil’s maid, Lenty, and Geoffrey and I in our car driven by Cecil, with my maid Eliza. Got off about 11, lunched above Rignano, passed through Borgo Sansepolcro in a terrible rain, and got on to Urbino to find it full of refugees from Ancona, scared by the bombardment.

Great trouble to get rooms.

[169]

Wednesday, May 26, 1915, Hotel Brufani Perugia

Went to Fossombrone and were shut up as German spies, until the Commanding officer got too hungry to wait any longer for his *collazione* [sic].

Strange sensation to be gazed at by myriads of hard, unfriendly eyes. The people are quite off their heads with excitement, and would have loved to lynch us!

Sybil’s letter from the Marchese Imperiali, Ambassador in Rome, was the only thing that counted.

Our passports were nothing.

Came on to Perugia, rather disgusted.

[170]

Thursday, May 27, 1915, Hotel Brufani Perugia

Sybil laid up all day. We motored to Mongiovino to see the Church and tried to see the frescoes at Panicale but the man was away with the key in his pocket.

Rather uncomfortable talk with the Loesers. She is pro-German of course. He pretends to be neutral. BB was too violent.

[171]

Friday, May 28, 1915, Narni

A beautiful day. Stopped at Cerqueto to see the fine Perugino fresco. A very wonderful\*\* drive from Amelia to Guardea\*\*\* almost classic in its beauty.

Nice simple hotel but food rather poor.

[172]

Saturday May 29, 1915, Hotel d’Italie, Aquila

Wonderful run here via Terni and Piediluco.

[173]

Sunday, May 30, 1915, Hotel d’Italie, Aquila

Saw Aquila + motored to Assergi. Not a very interesting trip with clouds hung over the Gran Sasso. Church full of strange images, very polytheistic. People suspicious. Well they may be at sightseers now!

Monday, May 31, 1915, Castello Ari Prov. di Chieti

BB nearly lynched by mob for looking at Church through opera-glasses. This was yesterday. Today we had a guard to accompany us, and when we departed after an early lunch the people gathered and cheered us!

Stopped at Capistrano and motored to Popoli to get our papers in order. Tea at San Clemente in Casavera and pushed on to Chieti and then here, where we found an English country house, and BB’s old acquaintance, Carnegy Johnson, established as permanent pensionnaire.

[175]

Tuesday, June 1, 1915, , Castello Ari Prov. di Chieti

All morning getting our papers signed at Chieti. Tried to get to Atri, but didn’t push much further than Penna. Had wonderful views. Geoffrey very depressed and nervous.

[176]

Wednesday, June 2, 1915, Albergo Pace, Scanno

Sybil’s motor skidded and BB’s head was wounded, but not seriously. Axle cracked, so we came on slowly to Sulmona\*\*\*.

Drive from Guardiagrele to Pescocostanzo absolutely divine along the Maiella–\*\*\*

Sulmona crowded with officers so we came up here to sleep.

[177]

Thursday, June 3, 1915, Grand Hotel Rome

Sybil’s car broke down on a hill near Sulmona, so we came on all in our car, leaving Parry and maids to follow.

Road to Tivoli via Avezzano, Tagliacozzo, Carsoli, Carsoli most beautiful. Sybil fainted at tea time. Dined at Tivoli and got to Rome about 10.

[178]

Friday, June 4, 1915, Grand Hotel Rome

Cecil went off at 2:20.

[179]

Saturday, June 5, 1915, Grand Hotel Rome

Lunched at Jay’s (1st Secretary to American embassy).

[180]

Sunday, June, 6 1915, Grand Hotel Rome

Lunched at Eng.[lish] Embassy with Rodds.

Geoffrey and I walked to Villa Livia.

\*Divine spot \*

[181]

Monday, June 7, 1915, Grand Hotel Rome

Dined with Nelson Gays and met American Ambassador, Mr. Page.

Geoffrey and I had tea with Mrs. Strong at the British School.

[182]

Tuesday, June 8, 1915, Grand Hotel Rome

Sybil ill in afternoon. Eugenie Strong came to dine.

We all motored to Frascati and Geoffrey and I saw the Villa Aldobrandini while the others motored about. Dined at Frascati.

M. Peters’

[183]

Wednesday, June 9, 1915, Grand Hotel Rome

Marconi and Inez Milholland Boissevain lunched with us and Mr. McClure, correspondent of “Times”.

Morning in Terme

[186]

Saturday, June 12, 1915, Grand Hotel Rome

“Ines” lunched with us again–and defended the Germans for putting inflammable liquid on the wounded.

G[eoffrey] + I spent the afternoon in the Forum, after seeing churches in morning.

[187]

Sunday, June 13, 1915, Grand Hotel Rome

Palazzo della Fonte Fiuggi

Saw S. Prassede, S.M. Sopra Minerva, Gesù etc.

Motored here, seeing Palestrina on the way. Road from Palestrina to Capranica divine.

\*\*\*

[217]

Tuesday, July 13, 1915

Left for Paris. BB remains behind with Geoffrey and Sybil. Cecil is slacking so that I think the work won’t be done before Xmas! His war flurry is over.

[218]

Wednesday, July 14, 1915

Pisa–Paris

[no entry]

[219]

Thursday, July 15, 1915, 53 Rue de Varenne Paris

Paris at Mrs. Wharton’s

53 Rue de Varenne

[no entry]

[220]

Friday, July 16, 1915, 53 Rue de Varenne Paris

Lunched with Reinach who is daft on the subject of Réné[e] Vivien.

Dined with Madame di Cossé + Mr. Schlumberger.

[221]

Saturday, July 17, 1915, 53 Rue de Varenne Paris

Called on Mrs. Cameron.

[222]

Sunday, July 18, 1915, 53 Rue de Varenne Paris

Crossed to London

At Ray’s. 96 South Hill Park Hampstead.

[223]

Monday, July 19, 1915, 96 South Hill Park Hampstead London

Barbara thought I was “Aunty Loo” at first–and then said questioningly, “Julia?” But she quickly got used to me.

[224]

Tuesday, July 20, 1915, 96 South Hill Park Hampstead London

[drawing]

Wednesday, July 21, 1915, 96 South Hill Park Hampstead London

[drawing]

Thursday, July 22, 191, 96 South Hill Park Hampstead London 5

[drawing]

[227]

Friday, July 23, 1915, 96 South Hill Park Hampstead London

[drawing]

[228]

Saturday, July 24, 1915, 96 South Hill Park Hampstead London

[drawing]

Bought Ray + Oliver a motor!

[229]

Sunday, July 25, 1915, 96 South Hill Park Hampstead London

[drawing]

[230]

Monday, July 26, 1915, Ford Place London

Came down with Barbara

[234]

Friday, July 30, 1915, Ford Place Arundel

Ray and Oliver, Karin and Adrian, for weekend and Bank Holiday

[258]

Monday, August 23, 1915, Landsdowner

Grove House with Alys and Barbara

We had Barbara all to ourselves for a week of bliss. She did keep us busy. But what a darling angel.

[270]

Saturday, September 4, 1915, Bath

Logan and Alys and I lunched with Elizabeth Stewart, who had Mary staying there convalescing after a second operation for cancer (both breasts) and also a charming creature, Countess Cairns, who said the war was “sent” because of the Belgians’ treatment of the natives of the Congo.

[271]

Sunday, September 5, 1915, Bath

Motored on to Bedminster with Logan and had tea with the Duke and Duchess of Beaufort.

[272]

Monday, September 6, 1915, Bath

Logan left. Alys and I visited Prior Park and drove around a bit after we had (to our sorrow) seen Barbara and Nanny off to London–Barbara is too sweet.

[273]

Tuesday, September 7, 1915, Bath

Lunched with Lady Cairns, Farleigh House, who had the Newbolts and Miss Hope the Bath town-councillor. Lady Cairns is a very charming sweet creature.

[274]

Wednesday, September 8, 1915, Bath

Motored out and called on Mary Stewart and Lady Cairns–latter away.

[275]

Thursday, September 9, 1915, Bath

Motored through Cheddar Gorge and Wells. On way called on Lady Strachie at the family Seat, Sutton Court.

[276]

Friday, September 10, 1915, Bath

Alys left. I took Miss Hope to see Peto’s garden at Iford Manor. Such a junk-shop of Italian rubbish. But he does understand plants.

[277]

Saturday, September 11, 1915, London

Dined with Ray. Barbara was playing with the little McCarthys when I arrived. The angel!

[278]

Sunday, September 12, 1915, London

Barbara nearly killed me walking on the Heath, but I adore her and would wear myself to the bone to give her pleasure.

[279]

Monday, September 13, 1915, 11 St. Leonard’s Terrace SW London

Henry James and Santayana came to lunch. James was positively Himself in every detail and to the highest degree. It was most agreeable.

  I dined with Karin and Adrian. I think they are very sick of the Union of Democratic Control they so rashly went into!

[280]

Tuesday, September 14, 1915, London

Karin and Ray came to lunch. I saw Barbara have her bath and kissed her goodbye. It is too awful.

[281]

Wednesday, September 15, 1915, Paris

Julia and I had the most awful journey here. 5 hours after reaching Dieppe were consumed in the examination of passports and we only got in at 3.30 a.m!

[282]

Thursday, September 16, 1915, Paris

Fun

[283]

Friday, September 17, 1915, I Tatti

Arrived at 5.30. Geoffrey met me. BB seemed fairly well, and the house looked enchanting. The garden burnt to a cinder.

This was Saturday. \*drawing of finger pointing up\*

[284]

Saturday, September 18, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

Called on Yoi and Princess Bassiano (both expecting babies very shortly) and Mrs. Ross.

Heard that our old friend Alfred Benn died in Switzerland on the 16th. He lay down on the sofa in the morning of the 10th, having been apparently very well all summer, and became suddenly unconscious and never recovered. A blood vessel broke in his brain.

What a lovely way to die.

[285]

Sunday, September 19, 1915, I Tatti

BB came with me to call on the Bassianos at the Villa Granduchessa. I enjoyed driving out with him.

All the servants are in a turmoil. It is so hard to understand them. But I daresay it will settle down. Aristea gave notice, but I can’t let her go, as she works just the way that suits BB.

[286]

Monday, September 20, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

Called on Mrs. Dumont. Sybil and 2 of her officers came to dine. One had his nerves all to pieces, a young barrister named Bax. He said it was awful landing at Gallipoli and being shelled.

[287]

Tuesday, September 21, 1915, I Tatti

Took Mrs. Ross to call on Bassianos and on Mrs. Benn, and did some errands. Mrs. Ross was so fussy I could not get to see Yoï as I meant to do. Perhaps it was as well, for Geoffrey hates to have me see her, and after all he is a million times more important to me than she is.

[288]

Wednesday, September 22, 1915, I Tatti

I believe the entries Of these days are on the last pages. It makes little difference.

Yoï gave birth to a boy.

[289]

Thursday, September 23, 1915, I Tatti

I believe the entries Of these days are on the last pages. It makes little difference.

September, 1915

[290]

Friday, September 24, 1915, Orvieto

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

Geoffrey and Cecil and I got off at 11, and saw the big Villa at San Donato (Torre d’Acona) [sic] before lunch. It has a park filled with sculptures done by the cook in his hours of leisure. The chief one, a really very fine Hercules and Caccus was inscribed:

*D'altre opere e di questo Ercole invitto*

*Io Giuseppe Catini fui l’autore*

*Che dopo aver nella cucina fritto*

*Feci a tempo avanzato lo scultore.*

*Del calzolaio pria da urgenza afflitto*

*Mestiere esercitai di mal umore*

*E studiai fui d’archittettura un poco*

*Fui comico, pittore, poeta e cuoco*

         A.S. MDCCLVI

We came on through Lucignano and Montepulciano here. The moonlight was glorious. The land looked like a desert.

BB went to stay at Villa Medici with Sybil.

[291]

Saturday, September 25, 1915, Caprarola

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

Lunched at Orvieto, and rain came on. We reached Caprarola for tea in a downpour.

Mrs. Baldwin has lost her beauty, poor thing, but keeps the values of a frivolous adventuress. It is very painful–horrible.

Yet she is extremely able and has not only restored this huge place admirably but has made over her village and is now doing a valuable war work. I admire her and yet abhor her.

[292]

Sunday, September 26, 1915, Caprarola

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

Rain and shine–chiefly rain. But we motored to Sutri and saw that wonderful romantic villa overlooking the theatre.

[293]

Monday, September 27, 1915, Caprarola

Cecil Pinsent, Geoffrey Scott

Rain rain rain

We motored to Bomarzo but it was too rainy to walk in the park.

[294]

Tuesday, September 28, 1915, Caprarola

Cecil Pinsent, Geoffrey Scott

Motored to Soriano, Bomarzo and Vignanello. Bomarzo has a Park filled with great rocks and boulders carved into giants and dragons, elephants etc., more like a deserted Eastern shrine (Chinese) than anything I ever saw in Europe.

Mrs. Baldwin recounted to me the whole Gladys-Marlborough epic, how they were devoted to each other through 14 years of trial, and how those “dirty hounds” the “Yanks,” i.e., the Duchess’ Mother and friends put the blame on angel-innocent Gladys.

They quarreled like maniacs, till once, quarreling about Titian, Gladys bit his hand, and he thrashed her nose till it cracked, and she has been an angel ever since!

[295]

Wednesday, September 29, 1915, Grand Hotel Siena

 Cecil Pinsent, Geoffrey Scott

Motored from Caprarola. Had lunch by Lake of Bolsena. Saw Monteoliveto.

Found letter from Inez Boisservaire, who has been sent home by the Italian Government. She richly deserved it!

“I’m not pro-German–” she wrote, “not in the least–nothing would grieve me more than a German victory–except a victory for the Allies. I am against war–all war–that is all. And if this war ends with a victory gained by military strength, we shall have militarism rampant in the world for a long time to come. I want an intelligent adjudication and I want it soon. And I don’t go on the theory that any parties to the certified are more to blame than the others. I am not interested in placing blame. I am interested in avoiding such stupidities for the future.”

The Italian government evidently was interested in avoiding such stupidities for the present.

[296]

Thursday, September 30, 1915, Albergo Universo Lucca

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

Left Siena at 10 and lunched under Volterra, having seen the Villa Celsa first–charming connecting gallery, chapel and gardens by Peruzzi.

Saw Laré and inspected the Bagni di Casciano–nel caso mai.

Reached here in time to see the most glorified sunset there ever was from the city wall.

BB writes “Sybil amuses me a bit and annoys me more by the indirection wherewith she goes back as every plan we make directly her hotel-keeping preoccupations demand it. Today another lot of ‘officers’ arrive and their indirection will take up most of her energies for the rest of my stay….The fact is, I wish you were back. I am not much of a visitor, except for 2 or 3 days at a time.

HENRI was killed on the French front.

[297]

Friday, October 1, 1915, Albergo Universo Lucca

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

We saw today 6 interesting XVIII century villas: 1) Mansi, with street of water surrounded by parapet and statues and a fountain-grotto with Diana and Actaeon.

2) Villa Torrigiani, with glorious cypress avenue, and charming sunk garden, and diverting jeux d’eaux to wet the runway. 3) Villa dei Vescovi, the most liveable-in of all, a lovely situation, and fine baroque entrance to wood 4) Villa della Principessa, inhabited by a mad Bourbon prince, Principe di Capua, who for 40 years hasn’t spoken to anyone, and gets in a rage of anyone goes near him. He sits all day from 6 till sunset on his front step, and throws away all his plates and cups. We saw him throwing away his tea things–made of enamel or horn, of course–a bent old figure with white hair. The place is magnificent and has a green theatre and glorious water-garden. 5) Villa Rossellini with fine loggia and 6) Villa Bernardini, with large ilex groves and a lovely water garden. Such an enchanting day.

[298]

Saturday, October 2, 1915, Villa Bice Marina di Pisa

Geoffrey Scott

We motored to Collodi in the morning, saw over it and the garden and had lunch in a delicious olive grove on the hills above Pescia. Saw Cecil off to Florence and then Geoffrey and I motored to Massa, got out our permits to stay in the Zona di Guerra and came on here to visit Mascha and her husband, Arthur Travers-Borgström. They seem very comfortable  and happy. He had a terrible drinking-fit for a month when they first came, and such D. T.s that 2 men could hardly control him, but since then he has been very nice. It is a madness, poor man, and he quite forgets what he does or says.

[299]

Sunday, October 3, 1915, Villa Bice Marina di Pisa

Geoffrey Scott

Walked and talked with Mascha. A lovely walk along the little river, the Frigido. Geoffrey had a walk with her husband. Little Algar is a nice little boy.

[300]

Monday, October 4, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Called on the Loesers in the morning, who live like German pigs, in their bath wrappers all day. Saw their hideous little “Milda” playing in the back, longed for my “Barbar”.

Lunched with Lina at Viareggio and enjoyed her two darling children. I motored her home.

It was delightful to arrive.

[301]

Tuesday, October 5, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Cecil Pinsent

BB came home from Villa Medici. We engaged a new valet, Umberto Simoneschi.

[312]

Saturday, October 16, 1915, I Tatti

G[eoffrey] S[cott]

Cecil and Geoffrey and I motored out to Pistoia, with Capecchi to choose box and trees. We stopped on the road to watch the gyrations of a great silver air-fish whose huge hangar stood in a field by the road.

I got a fierce headache coming home.

The two Miss Hultons dined here.

[313]

Sunday, October 17, 1915, I Tatti

Walked with BB and Geoffrey to the Madonna del Sasso­–a perfectly divine day with the year at its best.

[314]

Monday, October 18, 1915, I Tatti

Took Mrs. Ross to lunch with the Dumonts. Then called on Horne who lives most uncomfortable in a stuffy little room at the top of his bare Palazzo, which he has furnished with a Carlo Dolci and a picture painted on variegated marble. He seemed very ill, but very keen, as always, about “collecting” (also about selling, I fancy). Then I went to see Yoï, who vaunted the return of her figure to its wanted grace after her 4th maternity. She had stood up nude for Nello to inspect it in every detail, and he was–enraptured!

[315]

Tuesday, October 19, 1915, I Tatti

At last tackled my little writing room and emptied and arranged the drawers of letters and papers. I found that card of Donnino's whose loss (ie careful putting away!) caused such well-deserved fury.

In the afternoon, while BB called on Sybil, who was ill in bed, I took our old “rampart walk,” around the hill to Fiesole, and enjoyed it immensely. There we called on the Bassianos.

Coming back we heard the bad news of our little Henri’s death–the very best servant there ever was, and one of the nicest men. We both feel it very much, and so do all those who knew him.

What a brutal, crazy, tragic, meaningless war.

[316]

Wednesday, October 20, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

Irene Law and Placci came to lunch, and we walked with him from the Madonna del Sasso down to S. Brigida. He had no news, but said we must “trust” that Italy was going to do the right thing in the Balkans. Considering that she is in fact nothing but a Balkanic state herself, how are we to have confidence?

The boys dined with Sybil and Irene.

[317]

Thursday, October 21, 1915, I Tatti

G[eoffrey] S[cott]

The Bassianos came to lunch and stayed rather long. BB went out with Sybil and Geoffrey and I had a delicious walk in perfect weather.

Mrs. Ross and the Dowdeswells came to dine.

[318]

Friday, October 22, 1915, I Tatti

The Travers-Borgström came to tea. She does fuss. BB dined with Sybil.

I have given up hope about Cecil. His character is too weak for his talents to prosper. All these years I have hoped and excused or hoped, but something has snapped.  BB is also unhopeful for his future and I think Geoffrey is also. Such a pity, for he has genius.

Ray has a choice of and wants Friday’s Hill Cottage, where she spent her childhood. I’ve had to advise her against it, as we none of us know what the war may do to our money. She is busy getting women to work on munitions.

[319]

Saturday, October 23, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Walked with BB and Geoffrey over the quarries. A most wonderful day and a delicious walk.

The Hultons and Reggie Temple dined here. The latter, after going to see Herbert Horne every day for 4 years, and spending from 1-5 hours at each visit, suddenly stopped, about a year ago, and hasn’t been near him since. Pure caprice. I hope I persuaded him to go again, for Horne felt it very much. But of course he never lets anyone become friends with him.

[320]

Sunday, October 24, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Naima

The Blackes have lost their second son, on the French Front. Poor people.

We are all terribly low about the war, with these Balkan complications. It is too miserable to talk about.

BB and Naima motored up Monte Morello, and Geoffrey and I walked in the garden borders waiting for Lady Enniskillen, who came very late. She, too, is depressed and anxious.

[321]

Monday, October 25, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Began to get the villino in order. BB motored with Sybil, and Geoffrey and I walked, and I called on Mrs. Ross. Geoffrey very down with liver attack.

Salvemini and Madame Luchaire came to dine, his last evening before going North. The horror of it gripped and held us so that we could scarcely find anything to say. That a brilliant upright useful man like that–the nicest Italian we have ever known–should throw his life away for the Trentino or Trieste is fantastic–and tragic. I wept after he had gone. Salvemini was very distressed at Italy’s taking no actions in the Balkans. Altogether he feels something “*poco chiaro*” in her present policy.

[322]

Tuesday, October 25, 1915

Geoffrey Scott

Villino, servant’s clothes, Aristea’s pickup, chair-covers, carpets etc. in morning. How constantly a big house keeps one employed!

I took Mrs. Ross in in the afternoon: it upsets my own plans, but she enjoys it, and it makes me feel the motor is of use. I called on Mascha while she called on Professor Villari who feels as Salvemini does about the situation.

Sybil came to lunch, brimming over, as usual, with her own affairs. She is an A [sic] Number 1 Bore. She is so fearfully self-absorbed, she notices nothing.

[323]

Wednesday, October 27, 1915

Geoffrey Scott

Geoffrey still liver-y, poor thing.

I am sending garments to soldiers at the front, so many touching appeals. Alas.

Bernard and I walked over old Careggi mound, over the pine-hill. It is being enclosed as hospital ground. We have walked there for 25 years.

Called on Bassianos. She suffered so she says she’ll never have another baby.

This one is a great beauty already, although only 4 days old.

Geoffrey dining at Villa Medici.

[324]

Thursday, October 28, 1915, I Tatti

Same foot trouble as 2 years ago after Brides-les-Bains–this time after Bath. I think it’s called Intertrigo. Feels like shingles. Naima trying Kundan Lal’s massage, i.e. bringing blood down into feet and holding it there while she massages toes, pushing it back and then massaging calves of legs.

Read over our old letters of 1890-94. This amuses and interests me very much.

BB motored with Sybil. Geoffrey had tea-party of Mascha and her husband and Marcella Michela. He might fairly easily fall in love with the latter, but I hope he won’t as she is poor.

[325]

Friday, October 29, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Still in bed and still reading over those old letters. Bernard then, as now, passionate for reading. He dined with Sybil and Geoffrey with me, who told me I had the habit of flattering the men I was fond of, and every one remarked it about Bernard and thought it had spoiled him. Cheerful.

[326]

Saturday, October 30, 1915, I Tatti

Naima Lofroth

Got up at noon. Feel better. Bernard went over to see Sybil. Naima came. She says Aristea boasts in the market of having made 30000 francs out of us.

Geoffrey dined and slept at Villa Medici.

I made myself very miserable reading over some old letters of 1895. I’m so afraid I am the same person still, and I feel rather muddled about things. BB comes out very well from these letters–I horrible.

[327]

Sunday, October 31, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, N[aima]L[öfrot]

The Dumonts came to lunch, and then I took them to call on Aunt Janet. He said financial reason would cause the war to end next spring. Alas for all the suffering first!

My feet seem well again. It  must be that Indian Massage.

[328]

Monday, November 1, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Went to Villino, and to Madame Roselmini about the move. Long confab with Ammannati about household expenses. I have been horribly careless. Didn’t quite dare to walk, but went a little in the garden. Madame Luchaire and her young friend, Marcella Michela, came to dine. The latter is very pretty, hard and bright, intelligent, amusing, but not sweet. Madame Luchaire stayed till midnight. It was far too long.

[329]

Tuesday, November 2, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Went to Hospital in Villa Pisa and saw “our” radioscope and the bullet in a man’s arm by means of it. Saw a picture Pavletti has to sell, which is really a very good Ambrogio Lorenzetti–a great temptation!

The Gravina came to dine, and was nice till towards the end when she said that Germany had been attacked and the war and its present length was all England’s fault, and if Europe were militarized certainly Germany couldn’t be blamed etc. – I suppose she has to think all this.

Got the Roselminis into the villino, poor feckless things.

[330]

Wednesday, November 3, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

BB and I had a violent discussion about money, and I spent the rest of the day trying to see just how it all stands. I am inclined to feel that everything is always my fault.

I took Mrs. Ross to lunch with the Dumonts, not a great treat for any of us, I fear.

I had a little walk with Geoffrey and Bernard, and this was a treat, for me, at any rate. They both seem well.

Sybil and Irene and Cecil and Carlo and Ady Placci came to dine–a thoroughly boring evening. I am paralyzed as a hostess by Sybil, who talks in a loud voice, very vehemently, and distracts everyone.

She is a Bore!!

[331]

Thursday, November 4, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Rain in the morning, but Bernard and I had a good walk in the afternoon, visiting that incredible deserted quarry all filled with flaming red leaves, just that one spot on the hillside, as if it were a faerie’s land where they had lighted inextinguishable torches.

BB dined with Cecil, who had had a letter from Percy Lubbock saying that while he was in the office of the Foreign Edition of the “Times”, the Dutch Ambassador came in great haste and importance to ask what line the “Times” would take if Germany proposed Peace on the basis of the status quo ante. This is connected with Bïslow’s visit (Switzerland brings some hope).

[332]

Friday, November 5, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Raining nearly all day. I went out at 1:30 and dressmaked and shopped till 6. Horrible.

Sybil came to see BB and they had a walk.

Geoffrey dined with Sybil.

Advised Ray and Karin to invest their 1000 from Aunty Lill’s estate through Bontbright in New York.

BB had a letter from Miss Greene after 3 months silence–a very ordinary sort of letter chiefly about money and deals, she explains her long silence by depression. Probably she is lying.

[333]

Saturday, November 6, 1915, I Tatti

Began to grapple with accounts. I am about as unsuited for this as a rabbit for driving a motor-car!

Walked with BB on the Careggi hill, called on the Bassianos, and on Mascha to say goodbye. Her husband has taken to drinking once more.

Vida Bispham and her husband Riccardo Daddi came to dine. He is a nice young fellow, serious and good, but delicate and with a harsh voice. She is certainly very boring. They’re horribly poor–£200 (francs) a month.

BB said that Sybil had begun to bore him dreadfully, as does nothing but talk of her officers and her entertainment. I am not surprised, for she has always struck me as a peculiarly insistent bore.

[334]

Sunday, November 7, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Naima Lofroth

A perfectly heavenly day–real St. Martin’s summer.

Grappled very unsuccessfully with accounts this morning. With several false alarms and mistakes. I must get Geoffrey to help me.

We all far motored up to Monte Senario in the afternoon and walked along that delicious meadow on the ridge looking down into the Val di Mugello. There I called on Mrs. Ross and Lina. Found Aunt Janet very depressed on England’s muddle

[335]

Monday, November 8, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Accounts–how complicated! But I shall manage these. Sybil came and walked with BB and I went to Dr. Banti about my heart. He says it’s only uric acid–the old foe–and not functional, so I needn’t bother. It has been such a queer sensation hearing and feeling it always pumping away. However now I shan’t bother. I brought Lina up from town. She sent over to Geoffrey her first chapter of “Sicily”, a regular outpouring à la Symond-cum-Hutton, but not badly done for that.

[336]

Tuesday, November 9, 1915, I Tatti

Rain

Began work on North Italians–such fun.

Sybil came, and this time talked of Art and other non-war themes. BB had told her he simply couldn’t bear it when his friend turned into public institutions or philanthropical [sic] committees.

I called on poor asthmatic Miss Paterson and then on poor bronchial-pleurisy-enteritis Miss Preistley, an infinitely nicer creature.

Geoffrey had Marcella Michela to tea.

[337]

Wednesday, November 10, 1915, I Tatti

Worked on North Italians. Nello came to go over with BB the translation of his 4 books and then Yoï came to lunch looking somewhat pale and drawn from childbirth. (Harry Wladimir Maraini Sept 23), and extraordinarily boring and false. What an ill-assorted couple–he so keen and full of impersonal interests, she so bound up in sex-vanity and self absorbed. She is getting very restive with the narrowness of the life he imposes on her. It will end badly.

Geoffrey came back. BB and I had a walk after the rain at dusk, under the new moon.

We are reading Busch on Bismarck.

[338]

Thursday, November 11, 1915, I Tatti

11

Geoffrey Scott

Heavenly day very warm

A Soldier’s epitaph

Poor old Bill! He left this place

With smoking guns and sinking face,

But Bill won’t miss if some good chap

Will follow up and fill the gap.

Lina walked over in the morning and called on the lady at the villino. Madame Luchaire, Marcella, and Nello came to lunch.

I took Mrs. Ross and Lina to shop, called on Lady Enniskillen and Mrs. Dumont.

Aristea left.

BB dined with Sybil.

[339]

Friday, November 12, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Raining

The new cook came, and gave us a horrid lunch, but a worse dinner, meat eggs and fish all bad, potatoes uneatable. He won’t do, I fear. Alas–to begin again all that fuss.

I took Yoï and her baby over to see the Bassiano and theirs. Hers is absolutely hideous while the little Caetani–a great beauty.

Brought Lina up, after some shopping.

Sybil took tea with BB. Placci and Prince Paul of Serbia came in for an instant.

[340]

Saturday, November 13, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott Naima Lofroth

Worked on North Italians. Miss Paterson came to lunch and I went to sleep talking to her! Took Mrs. Ross to the Acton’s tea party for the Officers, and saw over Acton’s garden with him. It already looks better. He is very bold and puts in his stone-work and waits for things to grow. The principle is right, but it takes courage!

Mascha came to dine in a beautiful white Fortuny gown, quite gay, although she left her husband drunk at home. BB went to Pratolino with Prince Paul of Serbia. A lady asked Barbara how old she was “Free” she answered–“And when will you be four?” B, much puzzled, at last banged out “When I stop being free.”

[341]

Sunday, November 14, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Naima Lofroth

Rainy and stormy, too cold to sit out after lunch. Still working on North Italians. Drove up with BB and Naima and had walk around hill. It was very lovely.

[342]

Monday, November 15, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

The most heavenly day but I had to go in to town to take Mrs. Ross to tea with the Dowdeswells. Savage Landon came in and said he was just off to England to sell an invention he had made to destroy submarines.

Interviewed a nurse for Karin. She is named Ida Steury (Swiss) and has been 6 years with the Herrans.

[343]

Tuesday, November 16, 1915, I Tatti

 Geoffrey Scott

BB came in and quarreled about the nurse and would not stay to hear. But I wrote it out for his calmer eye, and he was very nice and reasonable. Still, it upset my nerves for the day.

[344]

Wednesday, November 17, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Beautiful

Dreadful day for BB. Could not find 2 photos he wanted in the portfolios I brought him, and he became like a madman with rage–said he would leave the house and never return–and all sorts of things.

There was only one place where they could be, the place where we put all the as yet undistributed photos, but Geoffrey and I were so paralyzed and upset by his rage that we could not find the Piero della Francesca photo. By lunch he had calmed down a little, and in the afternoon we had a pleasant walk. But I was most awfully upset and couldn’t sleep.

[345]

Thursday, November 18, 1915, I Tatti

Guido Cagnola, Geoffrey Scott

Fine

Guido arrived soon after lunch. Later Prince Paul of Serbia came and we went up to Pratolino and saw the “Appennino” and the Villa, with its appalling mixture of lovely Empire and hideous vulgar modern stuff.

Geoffrey went as usher to Sybil’s Entertainment.

[346]

Friday, November 19, 1915, I Tatti

Guido Cagnola, Geoffrey Scott, Naima Lofroth

Walked with Guido in garden. BB and he and I called on the Bassianos and Sybil. He flirted with Naima in the evening.

Sent off Karin’s $5000 to Mr. Childs G W. P Bontbright 14 Wall Street to invest in Mobile West Utilities Co.

[347]

Saturday, November 20, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott Naima Lofroth

Wind

Called for Mrs. Ross and Miss Hunter and went to the Red Cross Entertainment at Villa Medici. The lights went out for nearly all the time, but at the end Iris’ Play “The Slippers of the Princess” got its lighting. It was very pretty, and all ended well. We felt pretty tired just from seeing, and Cecil who did it all looked a ghost.

Guido went at 11:30. We had a long talk. He said he was awfully anxious and distressed about Italy’s policy, feared a secret and disgraceful treaty with Germany, etc.

Yoï was there and rather played off Nello and Geoffrey, making them both uncomfortable, and Geoffrey acutely miserable and sea-sick.

[348]

Sunday, November 21, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Naima Lofroth

Horrible Wind

Scattered morning. Putting away photos. Found the lost Pieros just where they ought to be! Must have been made positively blind by panic, Geoffrey too. Very strange!

BB by no means “adequate”. Walked a little in garden in high mind.

Mr. Mrs. Dumont came bringing Mr. Flowroy, the expert in American passports. They said Volpi had gone to America with 4 million of goods to sell, and that his son-in-law, Ciampolini came in the awful state saying his young concubine had 2 confidants on board who meant with her aid to rob him. They wanted her prevented from entering, but mismanaged so that he too is held up, under a sort of White Slave law, not allowed to enter!

[349]

Monday, November 22, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Cecil Pinsent

Ammannati came to announce the purchase of the San Martino podere for 70000 francs. He also looked into the accounts of the cook, which he found to be over 100 francs a day!

12 pesce–5.50

Macellaio– 34.40

Frutta–14.10

ortolano–20.35

Pizzicheria–50.50

stesso–1.85

Sale–2.00

B–120.55

Pizzicheria–19.50

Ortolano–12.55

Macelaio [sic]–19.15

Frutta–10.25

Ghiaccio–2.50

Pollo–3.00

Pane–.40

Tram–.80

77.15

Macelaio [sic]–25.30

Polli–7.00

Ortolano–10.90

Frutta–12.50

Formaggi–8.10

Tram–1.40

Pizzicheria–24.70

84.90

Caffè–5.30

Tram–1.10

Polli–5.00

Ghiaccio–2.30

Burro–2.25

Pizzicheria–20.75

Ortolano–25.70

Macelan–21.80

Frutta–10.40

Pane–.40

94.80

Macelaro–23.50

Polli–13.30

Frutto–15.00

Bovino- 2.50

Tram–1.40

Tagliere–.70

Pizzi–14.00

Burro–4.05

Powder–1.20

Uova–2.00

Pesce–4.00

89.20

Plus 3 kili of sugar a day!!

Bread, rice, sugar, coffee all extra. Making an average of 104/5 a day!!

I sacked this cook.

[350]

Tuesday, November 23, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

Fine

The boys went round the grounds and buildings. I went to town at 2:30 and had a most horrid session of dressmaking, or (worse still) dress correcting. Called on Mrs. Dumont and Mr. Batcheler who said the Germans had returned with everything but GOD. Nothing but GOD could have stopped their march at Paris. I suppose He didn’t care about Brussels or Antwerp. “Oh” she said “but that is only for a time”.

She is a Goose.

Marchese de Rosale and his wife who was a Miss Bagg when Terry Fürholzen wrote to me about as an adventuress at the Bulgarian Court, came to dine and Sybil and Irene. It wasn’t very lively.

[351]

Wednesday, November 24, 1915, I Tatti

Fine

What a heavenly day. We planned things in the garden. Then the boys and I went to Villa Beccari to buy bees, but all the people have gone to fight. Geoffrey and I called on Mascha, who is just leaving for Lucerne. She said the Loesers most trusted servant had been caught and confessed to having stolen from them every day. His room was full of pilfered things, but, worse still, undelivered letters. Someone stole Mrs. Loeser’s passport and money–probably an ex-servant as a vendetta–and this led to all the rooms being searched and this man discovered.

I sympathize with him. I hear on all sides that my beloved Aristea was a filthy traitoress or disloyal wretch.

[352]

Thursday, November 25, 1915, I Tatti

Fine

BB and I walked on a new road leading to the Madonna del Sasso. Too beautiful, I left him at Sybil’s and picked up the boys and went to the Dumont’s “Thanksgiving” reception. Mr. Gregory Swift promised me some more gourd-seeds. Dumont said that he warned the Prefetto and Volpi’s other friends that if they did not give him the letter they promised on Sunday by 4 on Wednesday he would call to the NY authorities that Volpi was not a character to allow into the US.  This he did: to their surprise and rage when they turned up with the letter on Thursday morning!!  This is so characteristically Italian that I can’t imagine how they ever carry on any concerted warlike operations.

Lucien Henraux’s wife, Elizabetta Piccollelis came to dine, a beautiful young creature and apparently very nice. Geoffrey felt very envious!

[353]

Friday, November 26, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Naima Lofroth

Fine

BB and I had a splendid walk in the valley behind Castel del Poggio. Such a day!

The boys and Naima and I went to the Theatre to see a rather dull play by Goldoni (Zago Company) Le smanie per la villeg[g]iatura” but I enjoyed it as being so different from the war! It was an incredible relief to get back into that kind of world–the more frivolous, the better.

I lunched with Naima, to taste the skill of the new cook, Margarita, whom I am engaging. She seems very good.

Aristea does really seem to have been a complete fraud and wretch–liar, prostitute, cheat, braggart, plotter and everything else. I was deceived!

[354]

Saturday, November 27, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent, Naima Lofroth

Fine

Had to go to town–a great shame as such a lovely day. Dressmaker and furrier–neither of them ready.

BB called on Sybil.

We are just buying a new property (to safeguard our view) which has houses on it, and BB said he didn’t mean to do a single thing to these houses, he loathed the people and didn’t care a damn if they lived in unsanitary conditions, and wished them all in hell anyhow. It is so silly. Of course if we own houses we must keep them decent. It gave me an indescribable feeling amounting almost to a sort of illness to hear such talk, such brutal selfishness and lack of responsibility and such unkindness. It took me hours and hours to get over it, though I said “it’s only talk”.

[355]

Sunday, November 28, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent, Naima Lofroth

Fine

Such a heavenly day–but Ray says she can’t let Barbara come out, and all was black, until we got out on that wonderful Madonna del Sasso walk, BB and Naima and I.

When we came in, Prince Paul of Serbia, Nello and the weird-looking, tiger-eyed Marchesa Casati were here. They stayed a long time.

The Consul and his wife came to lunch. They say Loeser without a passport may have to go back to America, as the US wishes to have no German-Americans living abroad at this moment, and it is making it very awkward for them.

[356]

Monday, November 29, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

Very Cold

Prince Paul came to lunch. I suspect we should have put him at the head of the table! We all went up to Pratolino and walked about the park, saw the Villa and Napoleon's furniture, etc. and had tea. It would be glorious if he gave work to the boys, when he comes in for the property.

We were all awfully tired when we got home, and all had rheumatism. Geoffrey woke up with a very sharp attack in the night, which made him feel for the soldiers.

[357]

Tuesday, November 30, 1915, I Tatti

Very cold

Miss Paterson and Mrs. Clapp (very charming) came to lunch. I called on Flora Priestley, who talked for an hour and a quarter uninterrupted about her own affairs–it was very painful–reminded me of machinery running down.

Called on Placci, here for 24 hours between Udine and Rome. He had a talk with Cadorna and other big wigs. He says he KNOWS that Italy is silently going to declare War on Germany! That Romania and Greece will follow suit, and probably Bulgaria! Wonderfully good news, if true: but I can’t believe it. I think Greece will go with Germany and Romania too. The Bassianos and Marainis came to dine. Geoffrey stayed away, and it was as well, for Yoï really looked very beautiful, in spite of signs of age.

[358]

Wednesday, December 1, 1915, I Tatti

Wednesday 1

Warmer Rainy

BB received a most unexpected cheque from Wildenstein for 50,000 (francs)! He had written it off as a bad debt.

Cecil came to lunch. They have put one great Buddha into a most beautiful wooden niche in the new library. Boxes are being planted today in the new garden.

I took BB to Sybil’s and then did some errands in town, including buying a sewing machine, and then called for Sybil. Prince Paul was there, playing with Irene, and seeming very much a boy.

Wrote Alys, Helen Huntington, Martin Prince, Mr. Cannon, Salomon Reinach, Maurice Brockwell.

[359]

Thursday, December 2, 1915, I Tatti

Damp Scirocco

Went to town deposited BB’s cheque. Went to furrier dressmaker and I called on Miss Cohen, Mrs. Dumont, Naima (who was ill), Vida Daddi. Motored Geoffrey to Villa Medici. BB walked all day and enjoyed it.

Wrote to Inez Bossevain, Alys, Florence Baldwin. Sally Harlan, BB’s mother etc.

[360]

Friday, December 3, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

 Scirocco

Struggled with accounts–too horrible. I can’t add twice alike.

Went with Madame Lucien Henraux to see a little Villa at Scandicci to which she has taken a great fancy. It might be arranged comfortably, as it is overwhelmingly romantic.

BB arrived with Sybil and Iris, Irene, Temple and the boys at 5 Via delle Terme, to go to see the Italian “Grand Guignol“.

Luckily they gave comedies chiefly. Splendid actors the Sainati couple, and all of them, really.

Geoffrey had a fearful “thump” it is a second personality (a hateful one). This time brought on by an oncoming cold I think. He suffered dreadfully from it and tried to conceal it and get the better of it, poor boy.

[361]

Saturday, December 4, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Rain, Dull

Geoffrey went to bed with a bad cold. Nello came to lunch. BB took Sybil motoring and walked from the Madonna del Sasso.

Mrs. Ross, the Bates-Batchellers and Reggie Temple came to dine, Mrs. Ross bringing the book of pictures and autographs of celebrated people she had known–most interesting. Mrs. Batcheller has such a passion for the Great, that she was really interested in it. She sang ballads to us and the “The Last Rose of Summer”–a surprising but not sympathetic voice, very high, and an unmusical unspontaneous manner of singing. But it was a pleasant evening.

Sent 40 to pay for Julia’s school, from BB.

[362]

Sunday, December 5, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Naima Lofroth

Dull

Geoffrey in bed. Miss Cohen came to lunch. Walked down from “the Grove”.

Wrote to Ray, Alban, Spragues, Sally Harlan, Alys.

Got very angry with the men servants for their inability to organize the service of Geoffrey’s meals in his room. They are really awfully stupid, but I suppose they can’t help it.

I am led to believe that getting angry is the only way to impress Italian servants, but it is very degrading for one’s self.

[363]

Monday, December 6, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott in bed

 Dull

Geoffrey in bed, but he got up for dinner, which was a mistake, as he felt wretched.

Sybil and Irene and 2 officers, Captain Peary and Mr. Williams came, and Price Paul of Serbia. I was feeling ill and the evening seemed indescribably flat.

[364]

Tuesday, December 7, 1915, I Tatti

Scirocco

Geoffrey Scott

Go to bed with influenza, or at least don’t get up.

BB dined with Sybil.

[365]

Wednesday, December 8, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott

Scirocco

In bed with influenza. Feel very ill.

BB took Sybil a drive.

[366]

Thursday, December 9, 1915, I Tatti

Scirocco

Mrs. Baldwin

Still in bed with influenza. Mrs. Baldwin arrived at 2, but left her dress-suit case behind her in the train. The Dumonts and Marainis came to dine, while Geoffrey went to dine with Sybil.

BB took Sybil a drive, and the machine got stuck in the mud and had to be hauled out by contadini.

Ammannati came and cast great woe into my soul by saying the cook’s books were an average of 86 francs a day–quite monstrous.

[367]

Friday, December 10, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Mrs. Baldwin, Cecil Pinsent

Scirocco

I got up to lunch, but felt very very *giù* and went to bed after.

Examined myself the cook’s account–Ammannati must have been bewitched! They came to 70 a day. That is too much for 9 servants and an average of four people at a table, but still not so monstrous as 86! What could have happened?

Madame Henraux came to dine, a really charming person, so poised and simple and sane and healthy.

Mrs. Baldwin’s talk is something horrible. She has abandoned all pretence at moralities and is absolutely cynical. BB is afraid to ask Sybil here to meet her. He thinks she w[ould] faint away.

[368]

Saturday, December 11, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Florence Baldwin

 Scirocco

My cold still weighs heavily on me. Flora Priestley came to lunch, bringing the very bad news that Henry James had had two strokes. He was left with speech and his mind, however.

Mrs. Baldwin went to Acton’s with Geoffrey, and hated the house and garden, and then paid a brief call at Sybil’s.

[369]

Sunday, December 12, 1915, I Tatti

Scirocco

Geoffrey Scott, Florence Baldwin

Felt rather ill, but as no one else would, I took Florence Baldwin out and we visited the grave of her daughter Audrey and then the Gamberaia, deserted of its inhabitants who for 15 months have been running a soldier’s hospital at Biarritz.

When I came home I was about worn out with her silly and extraordinary talk, and made Geoffrey take her to the music room. He was consternated for he too is fed up with her.

She is extraordinarily like Yoï, but grown old and without any man’s protection. She called herself a “battered butterfly”.

[370]

Monday, December 13, 1915, I Tatti

Scirocco

Geoffrey Scott

Mrs. Baldwin left, to our immense relief. I stayed in bed all day and did not even get up for a dinner to which Sybil and Irene and a couple of officers came. Sybil fainted away, of course into officers’ arms. She is having the time of her life.

They played games in the evening, and I ever glad indeed to be in bed. Sybil is one of the (fortunately few) people who invariably rubs me up the wrong way. Better not to see her.

[371]

Tuesday, December 14, 1915, I Tatti

Tramontana

Geoffrey Scott

Got through BB’s article and, strange to say, he accepted all our corrections like a lamb. I had anticipated a bloody row. He took Sybil a drive and Lucien Henraux and his pretty wife came to dine. He told us some horrible stories of the Bosches, beyond the abstract stretches of imagination, however macabre or obscene.

6 of the servants went to the theatre.

[372]

Wednesday, December 15, 1915, I Tatti

Tramontana

A young American art student named Judson came to lunch, and earlier, to ask questions about Simone Martini. He was precise and self-possessed, but unattractive. I do loathe Americans almost as much as Germans at the present moment!

I called on Mrs. Ross and interviewed 4 cooks while BB took Sybil and her beloved Captain Peary a drive to the Madonna del Sasso.

I had made the cooks each write out for me a week’s menu with I prezzi relativi. That will give me some idea of their repertoire and of their extravagance.

I got a dreadful “Hump” against Geoffrey. It has taken possession of me like a cross, morose and unfair “secondary personality”.

[373]

Thursday, December 16, 1915, I Tatti

Rain

Geoffrey Scott

My “Hump” still persists, and I feel disgusted with everybody–myself most of all. Yet there is a certain bitter pleasure in ruminating my grievances.

Cecil came up to inspect the falling bridge and the unsafe wall of our house on the stream–both due to the remissness of the Comune in accepting our offer to pay ½ expenses of a necessary dam. BB lost his temper over it, and said he wouldn’t do a thing, he wanted his house to fall down, etc. etc. and damn the Comune instead of the stream.

It took Cecil ½ hour to bring him to reason. I do hate to see him make such a silly spectacle of himself.

Prince Paul, who has been ill, came to tea, and Geoffrey and me went the evening trying to make up, while BB dined with Sybil. Of course a hump, being unreasonable, is not dispersed by argument. However. I’m so fond of him, it can’t last.

[374]

Friday, December 17, 1915, I Tatti

Rain, and then clearing

Geoffrey Scott

Hump going, but I feel very ill. Miss Marcella Michela came to lunch, a brilliant, beautiful, clean-cut girl, with real talent for description. She was very amusing about D'Annunzio.

BB had tea with Sybil, who is in bed, and Geoffrey, Marcella had a long walk, from 3:30-7:15. I got the hump again, at the sort of casual way, coming in and ordering tea at 7 and being so smisurati–but it goes with Youth, and I’m fearfully glad for Geoffrey to have a good time. The truth is, I got anxious about them, as it was so dark and I thought she might have slipped and turned her ankle. I received a call from Mr. and Mrs. Batcheller and Miss Cochrane, whom we last saw at Mrs. Charles T. Fields’ in Boston.

Long talk with Geoffrey about Marcella. All my “Hump” vanished.

[375]

Saturday, December 18, 1915, I Tatti

Warm, Dampish

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent, Naima Lofroth

Continued the talk throughout the day.

We read BB’s manuscript. I feel as if it were those old old days when I used to get so wild with his lumbering careless elephantine style. I nearly weep sometimes in sheer despair that a person can be so bungling and clumsy in expression. It gets into one’s mind so it is awfully hard to rewrite in a crisper cleaner way–he has a Madonna “rising from the hips and emitting a radiance from her head”–

BB and I had a walk from the grove down. It was very beautiful and I enjoyed it very much.

[376]

Sunday, December 19, 1915, I Tatti

Rainy and clearing

Cecil Pinsent, Naima Lofroth

A quiet day, spent mostly in correcting BB’s manuscript. This time he has surpassed himself in bad writing!

BB and Naima went for a walk, and I called on Lina and Aunt Janet. Lucien and his wife called. He goes back to Udine tomorrow.

Marcella took tea and dined with Geoffrey. She is a very unconventional creature and does just what she feels like doing. But I think she is a nice creature, too.

[377]

Monday, December 20, 1915, I Tatti

Finer

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

A very quiet day, but a delightful afternoon walk with Bernard, who dined with Sybil, while we here had an evening w[ith] music.

I didn’t sleep a wink till 5 o’clock. Such a nuisance.

[378]

Tuesday, December 21, 1915, I Tatti

Better

Had rather a hump, but got over it. Had a nice walk with BB down from San Clemente and left him at Sybil’s.

Geoffrey went in to dine with Marcella Michela.

Yoï and Nello dined here. She was very nice at first, and I began to think I had been unjust to her, when all of a sudden she began on the Roy Kennard story all over again, worse than Mrs. Baldwin with her sad story. I was disgusted and bored. Later on, she told me she didn’t really care anything about sex– “In spite of my wild life”–but greatly preferred to keep herself to herself. Does she take me for an idiot?

[379]

Wednesday, December 22, 1915, I Tatti

Julia

Fine

Julia arrived at 8.30, and we went shopping after lunch. She is a dear intelligent child. Called at Sybil’s while Julia saw Iris. I went sound asleep while Sybil was telling me about her hospital committee, but I think she did not notice it.

The Dumonts, Cecil, Mrs. Ross and Lina dined here. Mrs. Dumont opened her heart (?) a little and disclosed a strange (?) sex complex there.

[380]

Thursday, December 23, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Julia

Frost and more mist

Shopped in town with Julia, Lina and Gordon, and brought Geoffrey back. Mr. Keeling, who has  been in the Embassy in Serbia and who has just accompanied 200 nurses from Uskub to the Albanian coast and across to Brindisi in a small Italian boat (they had to have 200 miles with about nothing to eat!) came to lunch. Afterwards BB and Geoffrey and I had a walk in the woods, while Julia and Eliza shopped.

Alys writes she is going to America in February!

[381]

Friday, December 24, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent, Naima Lofroth, Julia

Rain

Julia went to the Academy. After lunch we all went up to the children’s party at Villa Medici, which Julia enjoyed. Sybil, from being in bed quite worn out and ill, was dancing and skipping around like a crazy person, not still a second. It is clear that half (or more) of her illness is hysteria. She always faints into manly arms, then talks of it afterwards with immense gusto. Jiminy Whiskers, how I do dislike that young woman! I don’t even try not to now.

[382]

Saturday, December 25, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Naima Lofroth, Julia

Rain, muggy

Lina and her nice youngster came to see me before I was up, and transformed my peaceful bedroom into a Menagerie. I loved it. Julia and Naima and I went there for tea and games. Sybil and Irene called here, the latter to say goodbye, as she is going tomorrow. Cecil and Geoffrey dined at Villa Medici.

Presents

Naima a rug

Julia dresses

20 each to

Amerigo

Giulio

Cuoco

Maria

Eliza

Agusta

Argia

Capecchi

Giulio

Alberti

Manelli

Agostino

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

10 each to

Rosa

Biondani

Gali at Poggio

Nuns

Frati

Annunziata

Scuola

Postmaster

Letter-Courier

Tramps

Blind boy

Road mender

100 to Priest and Ammannati

25 Franciscans

Toys to Contadini

Fosco, Lina’s children, etc.

Stimatine 10

Orfani 10

Beppina 5

[383]

Sunday, December 26, 1915, I Tatti

4 lunch, 5 dinner

Julia, Naima Lofroth, Geoffrey Scott

Fairish warm

Naima lunched with Mrs. Ross. Julia and Gordon explored the laghetto. Geoffrey and I talked ourselves deaf and blind. But it all perfectly clear to me, and I see him walking into a very perilous trap, and sophisticating himself (and sometimes me) into thinking “I’m sure that's not a hook.”

However young people must try their experiments however dangerous.

BB had a walk with Naima, and I with Geoffrey.

[384]

Monday, December 27, 1915, I Tatti

Naima Lofroth, Julia

Warm and Sunny

3 lunch 4 dinner.

BB took Sybil for a drive and I walked in the garden after Geoffrey went down to his snare. Julia lunched in town with Lina and Gordon. Nello and Yoï came with his Mother and sister. Yoï is nearly crazy with “family”, but I think she deserves it all–and more. Marcella went to see Geoffrey.

I am well over 50, and I don’t yet know how to live in any sense, whether physically, as to my body, or materialistically as to the use of wealth, or socially, as to the kind and amount of companionship I want, or normally––to be anything at all!–or emotionally, as to what to care for and how much.

[385]

Tuesday, December 28, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

3 lunch 4 dinner

Julia went to stay a couple of days with Iris.

Sybil came over to have a walk with BB and later Lady Limerick and her son and daughter came to tea. I went to town and called on Miss Cochrane and Herbert Horne, and stopped at Geoffrey’s to pick him up: but Byba Guiliani was there and took no hint to leave, so I came away at 7, and Cecil brought him back later in Sybil’s little car. Byba is evidently in love with him, poor little thing–little suspecting what her friend has done in her absence. Both these girls behave as no well brought up English or even American girls could behave. Their talk about wanting emancipation to “become themselves” is amusing–it simply means to be free to run after young men. That is very natural, too, but their language is a travesty in the facts.

[386]

Wednesday, December 29, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Cecil Pinsent

4 lunch 8 dinner

Miss *Che-mi-fa* Michela came to lunch, and was very brilliant. She is one of those who perform their shining and notes not with pining all the fever of some differing soul. BB thinks Geoffrey will come to an end of her fairly soon, but I see him sinking fracturally into the sex bog. By now he is up to the knees. However, she is independent and original and interesting, a real personality. He stayed on to dinner in spite of Yoï’s coming, and I think Nello had a horrid evening. Mrs. Ross and Lina came too. Yoï looked pretty, but he found her silly, and she had no longer the old power over him. Meno male.

[387]

Thursday, December 30, 1915, I Tatti

Geoffrey Scott, Julia

3 lunch 5 dinner

Called with Geoffrey and Julia on the Trenches.

Salvemini came to dine, looking 10 years older since his feet were frozen in the trenches–and Madame Luchaire, whom he is to marry, and Gui the musician.

No one had had any light to throw on why war in Germany isn’t declared.

Geoffrey dined at Sybil’s.

[388]

Friday, December 31, 1915, I Tatti

Julia, Geoffrey Scott, Naima Lofroth, Cecil Pinsent

Geoffrey called on Lady Enniskillen. BB and I had a glorious walk over the very high hills, with wonderful views and mists. Sybil came to dine with Lady Limerick and her son and daughter. Lady Florence and Mark Pery, the latter half engaged to Irene Lawley, as Sybil informs all and sundry, after having vowed absolute secrecy. (I do hate Sybil). It was a quiet, chatty evening. Geoffrey and I, like two old idiots, talked till the new year came in about Marcella, whom he envisages as a mermaid or nymph or form of dryad, only half human, not quite understanding the human portion of her actions. I reserve judgment, but I think she is only a vicious, headstrong, sensual (but gifted) girl, very self-absorbed, I fear 1916 will bring him horrid unhappiness. But he absolutely forbids me to say it. Dryads don’t dye their hair!