

November 25, 1942.

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My dear Nic,

You were (probably) as stunned as we by the news of Weygand's departure. An event quickly arranged and greatly surprising the poor populace which thought that the tenacity of the umpire, I mean the chef d'Etat was no Kedgerrie. Unfortunately the old fellow is not uninfluenced by all his horrid queezy ministers, although knowing that this beastly business of kowtowing means the quagmire for the country. Alas! there is however a new rumour, one which I can not check but on which I do not look haughtily. Strange things - you know - often do happen. The whisper here which zigzags from the low to high, which echos and reverberates like a xilophone is that Philippe wished to resist but his cabinate had already bowed assent. This whitewashes the oldster perhaps but is bloody bad business. Nine of ten unite in a scathing and bitter denunciation of this volteface and as you know for yourself, the french when aroused and irate are quite unmerciful in outspokenness.

But I daresay it will all come to nothing but the tightening of the Bosche stranglehold on our throats. Opinion is still divided and some people snatch at the pretext of whitewash as the straw of salvation. The cowardly salads.

I've moved to Lyons which is a much better idea. I can go and see things from there. Travel being slightly less horrible than from Vichy. And I've made such a lot of friends, doctors, business men, a few newspaper people (they are so daft I don't like them though) refugees, professors. One nice red headed doctor has a chasse nearby so I'm going shooting again - I shall keep Cuthbert well out of the way. A bloke I used to know in a bank - he's looking thinner than when I last saw him, but in good spirits - most every one has lost weight, an average loss of about 8 Kilos - not bad. I still retain my rotundity, shingles. It isn't really shingles. Its "lichen" a purely nervous

disease says the doc. I hope he's not kidding as it's g.d. awful looking -  
anyhow it isn't mange.

Reports from Africa - Lybia - are entirely conflicting and contradictory  
but I know who is winning. It will make such a difference. But the b. people  
are afraid John Bull is going to grab their colonies. Only a club over the head  
will help. Certainly they don't believe me when I say they're idiots. I wish  
somebody important could dispel that particular boogey man for them. Oh gee,  
and I write nice drivel such as the censors approve of about these most trivial -  
well, I hope to go to Marseille soon and then to Brittany with a red cross convoy.  
That at least shouldn't be trivial -

Best to you all. I've got my fingers crossed and, as usual, chin  
up and tail over the dashboard.

V.H.