

Poppy Walters

Diary



11th April 1925

Dear Mary

Mummy's crying again. She has been a lot since daddy left, but tonight the worst. She's just huddled up on the sofa with a glass of wine, mumbling strange latin words like Dulce Et Decorum Est. I asked her what it means but she just told me she'd tell me later and sent me to my room. Mummy's been strange lately. She gets up early every single morning to rush out and buy a newspaper. Then she sits at the table poring over it, reading every single word. It's been 4 whole days since daddy went on his holiday, and I want him to come home. I want to go on holiday too!

Love Poffy

xx

22nd April 1915

Dear Diary

Today me and mummy went to buy some things for daddy to send in the front. We got him a bar of Zam, 5 pairs of socks and some tough boots. Mummy said daddy was staying in a wet place so he needed warmth on his feet, otherwise he would get nasty diseases. It doesn't sound like a very good holiday! We also both wrote him a letter and I drew him a picture. It's getting very strange round the streets now, because you never see any men walking round. Only the other day, I was with Uncle George and a lady strangely walked up to us and gave him a white flower. He bent his head down and walked briskly away. I bet he was embarrassed because she fancied him!

Love Poffy

xx

23rd April 1915

Dear Diary

you'll never believe what mummy just told me! Daddy isn't on holiday, he's actively in the Great War, the one you hear about in newspapers! I started crying when she told me this, because that means daddy is a soldier who fights, and everyone knows soldiers who fight get killed. But mummy calmed me down. She said that daddy does in fact fight, but he won't die. She repeated this several times, like some sort of ritual. She told me I should be proud because he is fighting for us and our country, and she finally told me what those special words mean - *dece et decorum est pro patria mori*. It is sweet and right to die for your country. I'm not sure what it means, but mummy said I should never forget it, no matter what happens.

Love Poppy

xx

21st April 1915

Dear Diary

We got a letter from daddy today! As soon as mummy ripped it open, she burst into tears, a huge grin of relief on her face. After she'd read the letter, which I could see was a dirty sheet of A4 paper filled with daddy's small, neat handwriting, she read it again and again, once, twice, three times. I could see her eyes darting around the page, recognizing every letter. After her hour's time of reading it, I went and sat down next to her, wanting to read it to. Before I could lay my eyes on it, she snatched it from my view and told me that I wasn't allowed to see it because it was private between her and daddy. But she also told me daddy had written me a special part in the letter, and she read it out. Daddy says he misses me so much it hurts, and he loves me to the moon and back. He hopes I'm being a good girl, and hopes I'm reading the storybook he got me before he left because he knew I liked him telling me a story before bed.

I miss my daddy. I don't understand why he can't come home. The newspapers say thousands of men are joining the army, so why do they need my daddy?

Love
Lizzy
xxx

25th April 1915

Dear Diary

we went to get some more things for daddy today

We sent him some marmalade, and a jar of sweets. It turns out that when mummy rushed out every morning to buy a newspaper, she was looking for articles on the war. She bought me a scrapbook, and said when she's done reading the newspaper each day, I can cut pictures and stories on the war out and stick them in it. I'm already on my second page. I've read every single article, and this war seems to be going quite good!

Love Potty

xx

26th April 1915

Dear Diary

mummy and me are very worried today. In the newspapers this morning it said how the British troops went over the top. I asked mummy what that meant, and she said its like a big battle with guns and bombs. She added that daddy would be fine, but I don't believe her. What if daddy is dead? How will I live without my daddy?

Love Poffy

xx

27th April 1915

Dear Diary

DADDY IS OK! We got a letter from him this morning! As soon as the post came, mummy started crying because she thought he was dead. With shaky hands she opened the letter, and imagine our relief when a dirty sheet of paper fell out with daddy's handwriting on it. Because she was so happy, mummy took me out for some sweets. On the way we saw 2 soldiers walking down the street, laughing in their smart uniforms. Ladies smiled at them, and shook their hands or gave them a nod. They seem very important, and people seem to be afraid of them. My daddy's a soldier, and I'm proud of him.

Love Toffy

xx

28th April 1915

Dear Diary,

Something scary has happened to mummy. A telegram came this morning, and the second she opened it, she collapsed onto her knees, sobbing so loud it sounded like she was in pain. I asked her if she was ok, but she just replied with more floods of tears. I retreated to my room, and when I came out after an hour, she was curled up on the sofa, a photo of daddy pressed to her heart. It was wet with tears, and so were her cheeks. She was sleeping gently. I've come back to my room again, but I'm very frightened, so I'm going to sneak out and look at the telegram.

Love Poffy

xxx



This is my daddy, Jim Walters. He died on 27th April 1915, fighting in the British Army. He was a hero, and very brave. I love him to the moon and back, and always will.

R.I.P daddy