

11. 8. 23.

My dear Isabel.

Tarbat.

Plain selfish pig! That's what I am.  
I don't know why I didn't think of writing to you -  
knowing that W.P. meant as much to you as to  
any of us. I think it is because you I thought  
can W.P. be telling you - or indeed she may have in  
the letter in which I enclosed a stupid note for you.  
I found your letter here & of course I will gladly  
tell you - There are some folk you just want  
to tell - tho' I find words are very poor - & I  
cannot convey anything of the glory of his passing.  
It wasn't like death, as I have seen it so often - has  
like translation - caught up & transfigured.

We had the happiest summer - Florence, Vallombrosa  
(I had never seen him happier walking in the Carthusian  
& coming home at dusk with ~~his~~ reaching Dante &  
Stoner as we came down under the pines) Seina &  
S Gimignano & then to Lorbata to the Starks & walks  
to beautiful medieval towns in the Ligurian hills  
& then W.P. came home for his Dante lecture (W.P.  
his Goshy says was as good a thing as his dog)  
, then we all joined up at Maceranga - the  
Olivia, Freya Stark, his Stark & I. It is a perfect  
place in a valley that comes down from the  
hale Rosa, we had 10 delicious days. One

day we were up 10,000 ft! but otherwise we  
werent energetic - tho' / think W.P. was  
feeling perfectly well. We started off for  
Pizzo Bianco at 2 a.m. on the 17<sup>th</sup> all in  
top form (his skunk didnt come, but we four &  
Jacchini the guide) It was a wonderful start  
under stars - W.P. naming them & judging  
Pindar as we walked up among the hay fields  
past the sheeping chalets & daylight came when  
we were on a hillside that W.P. called his  
"because it was the most beautiful in the world"  
Blaeben, dwarf rhododendron & little flowers.  
We part out the larches at a little Alpe where  
the goats were sheeping on the roofs & soon  
after, the first one caught the peaks - estimating  
then hillaint zone. We had breakfast at 4.50  
(So W.P.'s diary says, written up 10 minutes before  
his death) & watched the sun light sweep over  
the whole Rosa range. Not talking much, but  
very sociable & friendly & happy - what we said  
was chiefly about flowers. Jacchini said to  
him "Vahere signore?" & he replied "Benissimo!"  
We went on at 5.15 & had about an hour  
on a snow slope. Beautiful hard snow & not  
harder exertion tho' / noticed at the top that  
he was out of breath. We had only a short

halt when we reached the rock stones, as usual, he gave us a drink from his cup & then wrote up the log. We 3 were in front, he & Jacchini behind & we had gone perhaps a couple of hundred feet when Jacchini gave a shout. He had staggered suddenly & Jacchini had caught him as he fell. I was down in a few seconds - but he had gone. No weakness or sense of fainting - not even the pain of knowing he was leaving us, far less any pain or struggle. We didn't kill Olivia but sent her straight down for help & presently sent Jacchini down too with a note to hire Stank. This was about 6.30 P.M. & I sat with him till about 1.30 when the men came up. I can't tell you how beautiful it was - with Pereg's axe we made a level place so that he lay easily, his head on his wide sac (we buried it with him) & a handful of alpine ramunculus on his breast. We left his face bare to the sky. It was beautiful beyond words & happy & very young. The mist came down round us & it was quite quiet except for water running in the valley thousands of feet below & for the sound of far off aralancher on horse Rosa. Everything was blotted out - & now & again the mist lifted & we saw shining snowy peaks or little glimpses

down to the valley, at our feet - It was a great privilege.

They were good come by folk that came for him - One said "11 soldato ~~no~~ more sul campo di battaglia ed il marinaio more sul mare ed il montanaro vuol' morire sui monti". W.P. we have liked that. That is how I left him - asleep in his tweeds with the guides & mountaineers round them, as we came down, the mist came down & covered them.

There were many beautiful & touching things afterwards - tho' to me it had curiously little relation to W.P. We have liked the prayers of Mother Church read over him - & his old guide sitting by him all night in the little chapel in the camposanto by the old church. It is a beautiful place & his grave his looking towards his own hillside & to the Monte Rosa by the church there was a granite stean that he always likened to the Gault Alt in Aruan. And all the mountaineers that ever the Monte Rosa or go to Zermatt will pass by & round him his hill people. The peasant people knew & loved him - His old guide volunteered to light a lamp on his grave on All Souls Day "as it is our custom to put lamps on the

Graves & pray for their souls & w: ~~is~~ not like the  
professors' grave to be dark on that night. They  
had a mass for him & for all mountaineers &  
that w: have pleased him too. But there are  
a great many other things that I have not  
time to tell. Nothing but well & fair - the dear.  
Car is much harder down with business & all  
that & rather in a defiant, dark case mood -  
Poor dear. But better than she was & Penelope  
delightful & very sane & quiet. And those dear  
hostess Charles & Robert. It is always a bad  
time when one has to come down from the mountain  
& take up the work of every day - is then you  
begin to miss them to share jokes & write to & so  
on. But for W.P. it was the perfect end -  
It was chiefly discontent & restlessness that made  
me write asking you about a job. In the meantime  
I really must stay in Glasgow & do my work like  
a sensible woman at Sick Childrens - but some day  
perhaps it might be feasible - keep an open  
eye for me! I may manage another flying visit  
less - I may manage another flying visit  
to Cabot & hope that I may see Catherine.  
I wish I c<sup>d</sup> write better - I wish to write  
sooner to you. Yrs affectly  
P. B. Ores