

3rd September 1916

Copy of a letter written by Mrs Annie Maida Ward (1873-1963) then staying at Scadbury Manor, Southfleet to her sister Julia Barry living in Middlesex. Both daughters of Captain Thomas Alchin Andrus of Scadbury Manor.

My darling Sister

Just a short letter to tell you we are safe and we hope all is well with you all too. It has been a terrible experience and I never want such another. Two Zeppelin came over, one of them exactly over the house at 1.30, which I saw when it was over the Chestnut tree and it dropped the first bomb in the wood by Broadditch, the commotion nearly took out the windows, then the Westwood guns simply fired and fired and the noise was fearful. Bombs were dropped at Northfleet Green (smashed Harris' shed and made a hole about 30ft wide) Also just in the corner of the Hop Garden near the village and all the Warren Cottages, and the Chapel have their windows smashed.

Another bomb fell on the stacks just beyond the Limes and burned, 2 fell at Westwood and another in Red Street. Altogether the noise was terrible and the flashes of the guns and search lights, made a horrible looking glare. I didn't know who to see to first. For of course everyone was awake and I felt drawn in every way. However everyone was quite alright and Joyce was not all frightened, so I left her and Mrs Cambridge together and went to find Katie who was in her night gown perfectly calm and merely saying "are we going downstairs"? However I packed her back into bed again. It was extraordinary to see one Zeppelin in the far distance apparently on fire and we heard shouts of "Hurrah Hurrah". Harvey tells us that the search light people here say that the Zeppelin was bombed by one of our airman and that it came down in North Woolwich – I am so thankful I was able to support Father and Mother for it was a fearful affair and we seemed bound to get the next bomb, for it seemed crashing all around us. Tell Charlie I can rise to the occasion when required and keep calm as he would have been.

Love from Nan (Annie)