

H.S.G.

Highclere School for Girls

3/10/68

Dear Mummy

Well, it's been three weeks since I last wrote and we're now grinding (slowly...) towards half-term. I'm gradually settling in but, to answer your questions, no, the food is not improving, and yes, the beds seem to be quite as uncomfortable as you remember them! And you asked about the girls... well, I quite like some of them but there are others (known to girls and staff alike as the Bi***es – I won't use the full word!) who are to be avoided like 'the bally Plague' (as I remember Granny used to say!) I do miss the old bird and all her silly sayings, don't you?

Just like in your day, the choice of sports is hockey or lacrosse. Both are a mystery to me and, if I'm being perfectly honest, I can't bear either of them. You stand about for hours on end, freezing cold and muddy, waiting for half time when you can get a cup of cha and a piece of cook's rock cake – watch your dentures!

You asked me how I was finding the work. Well, the truth is, pretty darned hard. I thought I might manage to have some time in the evenings for a hobby or two (or at least to finish a book) but no – they expect so much from you here at Highclere!

You will gather that I am finding things a little tough, but I have taken your advice and I am trying to put on a brave face – stiff upper lip and all that. But I do miss you and Daddy so much and I sometimes find that I cry myself to sleep. But, Hey! Ho! Half-term isn't so very far away.

Your loving daughter,

Daisy

'The Elms'

7 October '68

Dearest Daisy

Thank you for your letter, and I'm sorry to hear that you are still finding the going a little tough. But, do you recall what Granny used to say about being a McFarland? Hardy Scottish stock and all that! Just remember, Daisy, that although things might seem a little dark just now, it will all be all right in the morning. The sun goes down, the sun comes up...it's the way of the world, darling.

As for the B-ladies! Well, you need to show them that you are a cut above the rest and won't be intimidated. Dig deep, refuse to buckle, and they'll back off. Bullies are always like that – cowards at heart.

Your comments about the sports-field did make me laugh! I never told you, but I hated Wednesdays and Saturdays too – but sometimes you just have to do what's expected of you. Daddy swears that it's 'character building' and I'm sure he's right.

Well, we are both looking forward to seeing you very soon. Keep smiling and I'll warm your bed for you in readiness!

All my love,

Mummy

P.S. When do you expect to appoint a deputy-head? That should take the pressure off you a bit.