my dear Spencer

Many thanks for your letter. I am much distressed to hear that my letter written to Mrs. Spencer never reached her. You must have thought me both rude & ungrateful, whereas I would not be rude, & I could not be ungrateful after all your kindness. I expect that the letter must have been given to a steward to post & he may not have thought it worth while. I apologize for the seeming neglect. I am sorry that you have been exercised in mind over my box. Don't worry about it. From what you say about The Things Which you are so kindly adding in the way of specimens the consignment will have greatly increased in interest by the time it reaches me. I shall be most keen to see what.
you are adding to my series here. Also
Kenyon's collection is sure to be of much
interest. There is a type of stone axe which
I am most anxious to get examples of-
The kind with a well-defined hafting
groove round it. With the exception
of America (where it is very common),
Australia +, to a limited extent, Denmark
This type is rare, + I badly want Australian
examples for comparison with how bored me,
so if you can persuade Kenyon to let any
of these go, they would be of very great interest
here. Stone implements fascinate me + are
very absorbing, + the show at Jenius
was a revelation in Australian varieties.
Thank you so much for having thought
to send me The news of Sir F. Suttor's death
I should have remained ignorant of it but
for you. I am extremely sorry to hear the sad news, as I got very fond of the old man when I stayed with him. He was very kind and I think I should think would be greatly missed. I am very sorry for Miss Suther. Miss Stirling is in London and I am greatly hoping to see her and get her to stay with us. As usual she is bringing herself with doing work for others (feeding Belgians just now).

The war certainly keeps us alive here, and the appalling waste of life recorded daily makes sad reading. So many of our friends have gone under already. However, I must say I feel optimistic still, in spite of the mean, barbarous methods of the Germans. They are no better man than mere cut-throats. Their "blockade" by submarines is a stupid and ineffective bit of boorish spitefulness.
Strategically, it is worth noting that no one is frightened. I only hope that when they go under, they will be made to reap the full reward of their savagery. Oxford has barely third of its complement of undergrads, and more are largely physically unfit, American or other non-combatants. Pully well every athlete has joined the forces. I expect to hear that Poulton's son was killed recently. He was a very nice man, coming cheap to a magnificent footballer. Franklin (the entomologist) is a great loss from the Oxford Museum. He has just been killed in the Dardanelles. It is all very sad, one's friends are going so fast. As to the next result of the war I still feel quite Optimistic, but the sacrifice is awful. The Australians have been doing splendidly, & I hear that their raising of the high grounds when the landing on Gallipoli was effected, was as fine an achievement as ever was.

I have been awfully glad to read latey
Langle Lodge, Headington Hill, Oxford.

That the Australian drought is over, and that there are good harvest prospects. Hope it is true. We are having a drought here now, and gardens are suffering badly.

My wife, I am glad to say, is quite recovered from the effects of her operation, and is as energetic and busy as ever.

Have you published your guide to the Melbourne Museum yet? Some day I should be awfully obliged if I could have a photograph or drawing of your fishing kite from the Solomon Isles. I was only able to make a very rough sketch in a hurry. I will post to you a copy of my short monograph on Fishing-Kites, which will show why I want to get all records I can of the practice and varieties of apparatus.

Did I tell you that I picked up on the way
home a number of fine Melville I? Spears. They were given to Dickens in Port Darwin and he passed them on to me. Nothing like your magnificent series however.

I will write to Mrs. Spencer in a day or two & hope my letter will have better luck than the last. Please remember me very kindly to Verruga, the Grimwades, & my other friends in Melbourne. I also send very kind regards to Mrs. Miss Spencer, I hope you are all still flourishing.

My wife joins me in all kinds of messages ("tante cose" as the Italians say) to your good self.

Ever
Henry Balfour