

West Down No. 10
Lalrahay Plain

T.S.S. "MONTEZUMA."

5th November 1914.



Dear Ibb.

Your letter of the seventeenth October is before me and I will endeavor to reply now. The cables should have been despatched as you quite correctly surmised. Some of the ships lost a great many horses but we were more fortunate and our percentage was very low. I am surprised to hear of Gordon Glass' marriage; he certainly lost no time in getting over his previous affair.

Will write Mary Labatt at the first opportunity as you suggest. I had no idea that Russell was paying her any attention at all. What about Jean? Does Boldeus like the climate of Bermuda. It must be far more pleasant than what we are experiencing here. It has rained practically every day since our arrival and the contingent, speaking generally, has done little or no work on this account. The soil is clay overlying chalk and the clay is a thick mud anywhere that there is any traffic to speak of. I have moved my horse lines now five times and have



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to do so again as soon as the rain lets up. The horses sometimes have to stand up to the fetlocks in mud and the rank and file go about more or less wet all the time.

I shall try and look up the Leonard Wall that Fisher speaks of. The whole camp is busy with doctors and medical units and they, of course, have nothing to do. I really do not see why some of them are not sent away to help with the wounded at the landing points and elsewhere. I see Street Fisher and Cameron Wilson occasionally. Our own doctor comes from Victoria B.C. and is absolutely no good. I should not be surprised if the Colonel asked for some one else in the near future.

The photograph of an Artillery officer in Fisher's desk belongs to Holding the night watchman. It is a picture of one of his former officers who was stationed at London tent. years ago.

Hope you and Alice will keep up

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the hunting as much as possible. From what you say of business the office can certainly spare you whenever you care to go. Peggy is well but does not pick up the fleet she lost on the voyage as rapidly as I would like.

Do you not think it would be wiser to take as much of the shell business as they will give us. If for no other reason it would help to keep some of the at work. I note that you have fully determined to come on the second contingent and would probably do the same were I in your position. In coming to this decision you have doubtless given consideration to the requirements of the business and the family.

From what I can see of the Allies' strategy it would seem that they are allowing the Germans to do all the attacking and keeping just enough men on the opposing line to hold them back. The first territorial to go into actual fighting were the London



Scallop and they were only put into the firing line this week. They have been training ever since the war started as our chances of getting across at an early date are not good. I think the intention is to tire and wear out the Germans and then launch strong forces against them. There are fifty thousand Indian troops on the plain some miles from here and there must be nearly two million men training in England and elsewhere. The struggle is bound to be a long one and the losses will be heavy when the Allies are the attackers.

I had another letter from Nyla the other day also one from Bertie Biggar. The former is camped at Berkhamsted and complains of having to sleep in a tent in the mud. He still expects to get a commission. Bertie wants to meet me in London and I will try and arrange a day next week. My sails for Canada this week so he will be a grass widower for a while.

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Col. Mitchell has again been after me to take over the adjutancy of the Third Brigade and I am quite undecided what to do in the matter. Rolston, his present adjutant, is a very nice chap but is rather easy going whereas the Colonel is quite a stickler for etiquette. Hence they do not pull very well; in fact I think the Colonel is probably rather a hard man to get on with as he is not well liked in his own Brigade. The matter has not assumed any definite form yet and the only thing that appeals to me is that it would bring me up on the firing line. As you know I am very happily situated here with my own command, my own officers etc and Colonel Penhale is business itself. The work on the other hand is not likely to be very interesting and at present we are only marking time. Will try and make the best choice I can when the proper time comes.

Am glad that you had a good three days at Westchester and will write there at

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an early date. You might as well have given the links yourself, as anything I have is always at your disposal especially for such a worthy object.

When I go up to London I propose completing my outfit (at present quite meagre) and will purchase some further clothing and equipment. Will probably call at the B.B.N.A. and make a remittance to you for deposit as I think shall have at least a hundred or so dollars more than I need. When we go on service I will also probably assign a couple of dollars per diem of my pay to you for deposit unless I am advised that one needs it all over there.

We were inspected by Their Majesties yesterday and quite a large party including Mitchener and Roberts. I enclose a couple of clippings about this. For a wonder it did not rain a drop while it was going on though at the rehearsal a couple of days before it simply poured and all ranks



got a thorough soaking.

I enclose also a clipping showing that Eddie Mills has been granted a temporary commission of Major in the R.F.A. I always felt convinced he would bob up again but hardly anticipated that he could get anything of this sort at the hands of the War Office. He has probably been living on the fat of the land over here while everyone at home thought he was down and out.

A doctor, home on leave, told our doctor yesterday that he had attended hundreds of wounded men and only came across rifle bullet wounds very very occasionally. It seems that the German rifle fire is very inaccurate, they often fire from the hip without really aiming but the artillery fire is most accurate and searching and the aeroplanes do much towards advising where the British troops and batteries are under cover.

Do not think there is very much else

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to write about so will draw this to a close.
I saw Jack Hunt yesterday, he is very well
and just as chipper as ever but his most
of the other doctors is on leave in London
a good portion of his time. Will write mother
in a day or so but this letter will do for
all in the meantime. Best love to all

yours
Ward.

p.s.
Regards to Messrs Morgan & Holmes
Eng.

clippings