

W. C. Brown to  
19 Dec 14.

My dear Mr. H.

I only received your letter of November twenty third and I was more than glad to get the full particulars of your recent achievement. I have already sent to Mother a small draft to be used in purchasing a present or to be given in cash as she thinks best. I only wish the amount were double what it is. However should you need funds do not hesitate to use mine. I hope you have already drawn a cheque on my account in your favor to cover the note of mine you hold.

I have already written expressing my delight at your marriage and can only re-iterate that you are to be much congratulated and so is Sally. May you both live happily "ever afterwards", as they say in the fairy tales.

Am not sure that this letter will come before you have but think it likely so am chancing it. If you are asked your opinion as to the advisability of getting to England as soon as possible register a no. as strongly as possible. The first contingent has been left to rot in the mud on Salisbury Plain and everything in connection with it

is beginning to deteriorate. The men all have colds and their clothing is getting very bad shape with no immediate prospect of new issues as the Ordnance are simply baseless. On early stable parade we can hardly bear the roll call for the coughing and there is no pretence about it either. The horses are falling off in condition every day and are now in worse condition than they were when just off the ship after a four weeks voyage. Everyone thought things at Valcarlos were horribly mismanaged but this is far worse and apparently no one in authority gives a damn. The mud is ankle deep everywhere and we have not had a dozen days without rain since arriving in the highland country.

As I have already advised you now a Battery commander will be in charge of the 12th Battery 3rd Brigade. I have my own officers and a goodly number of my own people but am short both men and horses and some of those that I have of both are anything but first class. Am short good r.c.o.'s but will have to make do and hope that chance will throw me something better in the

future. Harry Greenlee has command of a depot Battery in the second brigade and the others are with me except Magann whom I expect to get shortly.

I have decided not to assign any pay and have opened an account in the Bank of Montreal at London and will have <sup>my</sup> deposited there direct, and pay accounts and get ready cash by cheque. Then when I have something worth while earned up will transfer to London bank.

Am disappointed not to have seen Mrs. Betts or Hylton yet but neither he nor I have managed to be in London at the same time and Mrs. Betts was away when I was there. Mrs. Mackenzie asked me up for Xmas but I have declined as not wise to leave my Battery until it gets on a better basis. I also had a nice invitation from Mrs. Allport (Aunt Louis's sister) and will try and see her when I am next in town. I called up Trip Amaden the other day and if opportunity offers will try and get out to Richmond to see her.

We had some excitement this week when the Germans bombarded here or

four defenseless towns on the East coast.  
The Brigade was ordered to stand by and  
for a few hours it looked as if we might  
get a move. They feared the bombardment  
was a feint and that troops might be  
landed elsewhere but nothing came of it.

I see nothing of the London infantry  
as they are some miles from here. Suppose  
you know that Gordon Hunt was one of  
those published in orders as being sent  
home. I see Cole occasionally and saw  
William (the vet) this afternoon when on  
my rounds as field officer of the day.

Have very little news so will  
draw to a close. Love to Sally  
your affectionate brother  
Ward