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14 May  
Sunday

Dearest Mother

Such a nice letter from about your  
doings at Easter also one from Alice with  
a p.s. from Estelle asking me to be god-father  
to Leonard James and several from Father  
about business which seemed to indicate  
that matters were shaping a little better.

I am sorry that I have not kept them to  
assure in detail and refer to by date  
but was hurried yesterday and put them in  
an envelope and sent them all down to  
Wood as I knew he would be interested.

yesterday was a parcel mail and I received  
4 bundles of papers from your mother dear  
and two bundles of books which are most  
welcome, also three bundles of papers from  
Father. Where did you dig the books up?  
Shakespeare and Hawthorne, but they will  
be very welcome for a change from  
magazine stories.

I'll tell Estelle that I will write her as  
soon as possible but in the meantime  
feel highly honored by being requested  
to act as god-father. As it is the  
first time I have been honoured I hardly  
know what responsibilities it will  
involve and what will be expected of  
me. However I will do my best.

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14 May.  
What a great joy it must have been to  
have had them all at Lakewood at Easter  
even if, Limes and Schof had to  
hurry back the following day. I  
understand Estelle and Etan are  
going to spend a month or so. Ann  
Sweet will be delightful for you  
all.

I have had rather an unsettled week  
as I heard a week ago as I told you in my  
last that the mounted troops are being  
re-organized under the Corps. I don't yet  
know where I will stand in the new  
regiment, but still feel that I should only  
take second place to Jamison. He will  
be back today as I will likely hear  
something more but I believe he is to go  
back to Canada to take over some  
job that and that Emsley (of the R.C.O.)  
is to get the regiment and Macmillan of  
the same unit the Cyclists. Why they  
should bring outsiders in instead of  
promoting [it is really no promotion in  
my case as Jamison] those who have  
stuck to it from the beginning and  
deserve some recognition is more  
than I can say. It seems to be the  
way they run things over here.  
Hubert of the cyclists seems very out

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up about it and I consider he may be entitled to  
the Cyclist Btm. I suppose these things all  
work out for the best somehow but they are  
very upsetting and cause a great deal of  
unpleasantness at the time.

14 May  
Now. Mail just in and a cable from Sarah  
announcing her safe arrival. It is a great  
relief to get it and I hope that the passage  
was not rough and uncomfortable.

I have missed the little woman's letters from  
England this last week very much indeed.

They have meant so much to me ever  
since I have been over in France. I  
suppose it will be the best part of two  
weeks before I hear again. A nice letter

from Aunt Louisa in today's mail and  
some magazines from the Warrisons  
in Oxford who agreed to look after me  
in that respect during Sarah's absence.

I will take up the thread of my diary from  
Monday 8th May. Spent the afternoon

around the billet on account of inoculation  
Campbell in bed with it all day. Smith of

3rd Div Cavalry called in afternoon and  
feels about as much upset about these  
changes as I do. We discussed the situation

pretty freely but decided we could not do  
very much without Jamison who is away  
at his training. It would almost appear as

if advantage had <sup>4</sup> been taken of his <sup>14 May</sup> absence  
although this is not the case as I know it  
was as much of a surprise to the Army and  
Corps as it was to ourselves.

Tuesday 9th May Out on stables and took  
the ride for Cocksbutt as Campbell still  
under the weather. Rode to rail head after  
lunch with Cocksbutt to meet 15 remnants.  
Heavy rain and got quite wet. Called on Smith  
of 3rd Div. on way back and compared notes  
again. We both feel pretty blue. He gave up  
command of 4th CMA to take over this  
job. Sent him a letter correcting some  
mistakes in Army List. Quite cold and  
glad of a fire at night.

Wednesday 10th May Did not sleep very well  
and did not get up for stables. Rode to  
Divisional Headquarters and saw Col Thacker  
about my graduation and he offered to put  
through a letter about it if sent it in.

Rode back via Corps Hqts and saw Ed  
Paret who advised the same and said  
nothing had been done yet. Rode on and  
had dinner with Smith of 3rd Div. Cav.

Hennedy was there also. We played  
"racehorses" afterwards and rode home  
about 11.00. A beautiful night. Think  
I will see Wood tomorrow and get the  
benefit of his advice.

Thursday 11th May. <sup>5</sup> wrote Alice Sarah and <sup>14 May</sup>  
Edna to thank her for the very nice box  
she sent and which I was thoroughly  
enjoyed. Letter from Jamison in answer to mine  
saying he had <sup>heard</sup> nothing about charges but  
to keep in touch with the Corps about it.

Rode down to front and went over the  
arrangements and posts of my "trench guides"  
who work with the Bugabe holding the  
line. The country up there is simply  
pestered with shell holes of all sizes.

They were coming over quite steadily  
and never seem to let up for very long.

Visited one ruined Chateau with a moat  
and duck pond and beautiful garden in which  
the flowers were still coming up in spite  
of two springs of war. Nature still pushes  
her way up as a reminder of what  
things might have been. I was particularly  
struck by a huge Spanish chestnut tree  
covered with bloom which alone seemed to  
be undisfigured. Half the trees are  
cut down by a direct hit on the trunk  
and very few but what have spruce  
holes in the trunk and limbs shattered.

There had been some statuary in the  
garden also <sup>but now only as</sup> a reminder that human  
things had once thought of art and  
beauty. I suppose these things strike me

more forcibly because my duties do <sup>14 May</sup> not  
take me up very often and I am not  
so hardened to these scenes of ruin and  
destruction as the infantry who pass them  
day by day. White says he had to go through  
the trench on Friday night which had been  
pounded to a pulp with its occupants  
and that they are still there and visible in  
a mass of mud and wreckage that looks  
like porridge. The trench is terrible and  
it is impossible to fill the trench in  
because it is so planned up that there  
is nothing left to fill it in with and  
the position is so exposed that even a  
small working party ~~but~~ might have  
not a chance. It was therefore  
abandoned. This is surely a bad part  
of the line.

It was so late when I came in that we  
decided to see if I could sponge a meal  
on Wood before taking my 2 mile ride  
home. Found him very well but worried  
over the fact that one of his Battery commanders  
had been missing for 3 days and could not be  
found high or low. He was still in his  
Chalet acting o.c. group. I discussed my  
own affairs and was helped by his  
advice ~~and relief~~. He gave me a very good  
dinner. He had a B.C. from 3rd Lt. Art.

attached for instructions. Rode back about 9.00  
with a former one of Wood's cubs who had  
been slightly wounded and was going on leave  
arriving at my own billet about 11.00 where  
I found all in bed. We retire early over  
here.

Friday 12th May Saw Kennedy in the A.M.

He had had a very unpleasant interview  
with Macmillan his new P.C. who has  
usurped the job from him. Things are going  
to be very unpleasant for him and I  
am just wondering where I will stand.  
However I suppose a few days will let  
me know and until then I had better keep  
quiet. Wrote a letter about my graduation  
and sent same in through Col Shaker. It  
may make ill feeling and if I were considering  
myself only I might not have written but  
as my being held back holds back those  
under me I consider it only fair to them  
to take this stand. Had some butt pegging  
and jumping in the afternoon over the  
course we have prepared and quite enjoyed  
it. Kennedy came in again very much  
exercised and I made an appointment  
with General Turner and we both saw him.  
He was most kind as he always is and  
listened to all our troubles and took them  
up with Gen Harrington of the Corps for

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us. He waited and had tea and then he told us that the matter had been arranged and he was afraid nothing could be done and advised us to make the best of it. He was so kind and decent that our interview seemed to smooth matters out a little even if amounted to nothing. Discussed matters with McEwen in the evening and retired early.

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> May Rain and did not go out for stables. attended my board in the morning and arranged for the relief of the mounted troops. Was congratulated by several on having Elishy as my new C.O. Could not quite see where the congratulations come in when I was entitled to the job myself but did not say very much. Was soaked when I got back so changed all my clothes and spent the afternoon in billets. We all felt rather blue. Sent letters from home all down to Wood together with two I had received from Maitland and S Cook.

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May Still cloudy. Cocksbutt has quite a bad cold but it is getting better. Church at 10.00 under Major Owen again who came to lunch with me. He had communion also to which I stayed with half a dozen others. Kennedy



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in during afternoon also Jamison and we  
discussed the situation together. Jamison  
feels they have passed him over but that it  
is too late to do anything now and so has  
accepted a job in Canada and returns very  
soon. He says he feels he cannot serve any  
longer under Alderson and wants to get  
away from him as soon as possible. We  
can therefore no longer look to him for  
advice. I am telling you all about  
these things I suppose because they are  
uppermost in my mind just at present  
and I know they will go no further.

It is now nearly 5.00 P.M. so I will draw  
to a close until tomorrow morning.

Monday 15th May. Had our usual quiet  
dinner last night followed by some music on  
gramophone. Then read until 10.00 after  
writing Aunt Elizabeth a few lines thanking  
her for the parcel. We all feel sorry at the  
thought of leaving our nice billet and  
especially our comfortable stable and  
picking up our parcels out of doors again.

Got up for stables this AM. Another wet  
cold day. I wonder what changes it will  
mean and where we "will be at".

Mother dear your papers and books were a  
great pleasure yesterday and I have still  
some bundles to fall back on today

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Breakfast has just come in. Partridge  
brought eggs (which I meant to) toast coffee  
marmalade and honey (Edna's). Just as nice  
a meal as one could ask for.

Have just finished and after having  
read some London papers will finish  
this letter. The day gets worse so I  
have cancelled the ride for this morning.  
I have finished another diary book and  
this is no VII but I won't send no VI  
back as it may have the same fate  
as the other one I sent.

I hope Father is not worrying too  
much. Tell him Wood & mine were very  
much relieved to get his last letter  
written at Oakwood and think the  
arrangement he made a very good  
one. I am sure he was much  
relieved to. I had a letter from Aunt  
Louisa yesterday who said he had been  
in Montreal and was going to Ottawa.  
I hope his trip there was successful.  
Very much love to the "three" sisters  
the "two" nephews' Father and your  
dear self.

your devoted son

J.H.