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Western Archives, Western University

Thursday 12th Apr
11.00 A.M.

My darling Mother

I cabled yesterday per enclosed and hope you will get it on Sunday next. I could not give many particulars as I have not yet been able to see all those who might know something but know who they are pretty well.

Mr. Kenwood told me that his brigade was the first to move forward after the 2nd objective, was taken on the day of the attack. Monday I did not like the thought of it and told him to be careful. He said there was no need to worry as our guns would have silenced all the German guns by 11.00 A.M. when his guns were to move up. He said if I am but at all it will be by a premature fire from some of our own R.H.A. guns which were just behind the positions he had selected.

2

He had made a road very nearly up to our front line which was planked part way and he showed it to me in fact marked it on my map as I felt I might want it to bring my people up. They tell me now that before he started out to reconnoiter the new positions about 8:00 A.M. he said that this orderly officer would get back but he did not think he would and a note was found in his pocket saying to advise me if anything happened (I will try and get the note) The infantry went over at 5:30^{AM} and his guns took part in the barrage up to 2nd objective about 10:00 when they were to move up so as to cover the final objective.

Cremer, Ball & De Gruchy (his orderly officer) made the reconnaissance with him and as the road was impassible they decided on positions

3

in our old front line instead of in German front line as had been Wood's intention. The Germans were still shelling our old front line with gas shells pretty heavily although they stopped soon after our infantry approached their gun positions.

About 9.30 Crean & Ball left Wood & De Gruchy and a few minutes later a shell landed near them getting the latter in the leg and Wood in shoulder & back (am not quite clear yet as have been unable to see De Gruchy but will try to today) It was a gas shell and lit very close to them so I fear dear Wood got quite a dose of gas as well as his comrades and the German gas has a very lowering effect on the heart. He may have been too overcome to get his marks on. However he told De Gruchy who tied up his wound first, to look after himself as he was done for.

4

so he must have felt he was hard hit. It was just like him to think of himself last. I think I told you that he objected when Col Simpson sent him in on a special ambulance with an officer, and took the wounded man on the stretcher above cut so as to give him more air. I have not yet been able to have him through the dressing station but heard yesterday he died there and that Capt EARP chaplain of 16th Bn was with him when died. The other story is that he died in ambulance between dressing station and casualty clearing station. Will get these particulars as soon as possible.

As I said he looked very calm and peaceful and not as if he had suffered. Col Simpson asked him if he were suffering and he said he had no pain but could not move his legs which makes Simpson think it must have touched

his spine. I am satisfied he got every attention and was moved out from trenches to ^{#2} field ambulance (where Simpson saw him) and thence to dressing station with all possible speed.

Saw Mr Gamm yesterday who was at the funeral on Tuesday about 11.00 AM(?) and said the chaplain there was a fine chap and was going to write. There was a C of E service and I will be able to get a photo of the grave in due time.

Everybody I have seen is deeply grieved and the things they all say of the dear boy touch me very much. I was very moved when talking to Mr Gamm and I hated it I fear as he was such a friend of Woods, but I can bear it better than you my darling mother and dear Father and Alice. I pray God to give you grace to bear it. He played the game without show or ostentation and rather feel that he would like to have filled a soldier's grave as a fitting end.

6

is a gallant $2\frac{1}{2}$ years of hard and strenuous soldiering. It seems hard indeed that he did not live to see the victory we have just gained of which you will know by this time. The Canadians have taken the ridge the French partly took in the fall of 15 and which the British lost later and we have taken a good deal more besides.

General Thacher said he was his best brigade commander and when he heard about it sent his own car to bring him out but he had gone. He told me he would write you as soon as possible. Cremer said she had set them all an example it would be hard to follow and is going to get his things together for me. I will also try and get Peggy. Col. Hersey yesterday & So. still told me how badly he felt and how much they all thought of Wood who got results without advertising himself. He moved up a little closer yesterday.

but did not send a patrol out as air
 next attack has been postponed 24 hours
 (tomorrow) as the weather is so bad. 6" of
 snow last night and I don't ~~have~~ harness from
 exposure. The men are however better off
 in some old gun pits and I have a dug out
 so cover over my head. It is still cold but
 sun is bright and snow is turning whole
 country into a quagmire. A little good
 weather would help our advance more
 than anything.

Major Ball 70th Battery himself slightly
 wounded in 2 places is here with me, in
 fact has let me share his dugout, and
 writes per enclosed.

Will write again on Sunday and hope
 to have a few more particulars as I know you
 would like all details. Wish I could say
 something to comfort you but cannot. He
 died ~~the~~ Ball says that Right may
 win tonight, to save the weak from
 the strength of brute force. Love
 John