

From the holdings of
Western Archives, Western University

16th West
BELGIUM

My dear Father

I have your very interesting letter of Sept 30th and am glad that you received the draft and maps I sent you in England safely. I regret to say that the picture of the Squadron was unfortunately out of focus and the faces of men are not discernible. Otherwise I would have sent key. Sarah will however send you some as well as a M.C. group and review before long.

Your action in paying off my Mutual Life Loan is very satisfactory. I hope you will be able to assist remainder in H & E as already suggested in the near future. I think this now pretty well clears me of all debts.

Have already answered you about Lolly and hope you will be able to make some satisfactory arrangement about her. Hardly think she would do as a mount on account of her wound. I already approached Tamlin once about her and he said he would rather not have it put up to him. Feel sure some farmer would keep her for winter for \$5 or 6 a week if she cannot be sold.

Sorry to hear about poor old Abell. He is a good soul and I do hope he will not be permanently disabled. I will write him soon. I heard that Balkus had been given another C.M.R. Squadron in London. I wonder if this is true. Would not recommend Abell in connection with Lolly.

II

16 Oct

Very sorry to hear about Mr Fred Blake, am sure he would appreciate a visit from you. [Can hear the gun pounding away as I sit here now]
Many thanks for London papers which are much appreciated. News has just now come in.

Are you receiving the "Times" I ordered for you? Am enclosing a clipping therefrom which might be worth preserving for future reference.

I was wondering if you had any word of Woods gun which sent Tra Pitson some time ago.

It should be over by now if it has survived submarines. I am enclosing Pitson's letter about it, which was delayed in reaching me due to improper address. Mr Blain has been most kind to us both on all occasions.

Wood handed me a couple of very interesting letters to him from Alice which were a great pleasure. They were dated Sept 22nd & 29th and told about clams at Hunt and also in New York. Am so glad that she and mother got away and hope they will be rested on return. Sarah writes me a diary letter from Oxford, where I think she is very comfortable and busy at Red Cross work.

Feel much concerned about Balkan situation as I fear it is going to complicate matters very much for the British, undoubtedly prolonging the War. Have been over ^{the} world today. Time seems to slip by very rapidly.

Tell Mother that Wood's copy of my diary letter is being sent to Estelle or Elaine direct so that she need no longer forward to them. I will soon have a second book to send you. Am enclosing a poem written by men in the trenches which, if not literary yet is rather amusing. If the paper has not already had it I suppose it would do no harm to be published. You might also publish that the Dimensional Cylinders were included in my command a few weeks ago giving me 366 men instead of 161. My new title in the Dimension is "D.C. Mounted Troops". I see some mention of Col Nigle and Major Bulligan in local papers ~~very~~ frequently but very little about Wood & I, so it would do no harm to put this in. There is very little to record in diary but will keep it up to preserve sequence:—

Thursday 12th Oct:— Sent first of weekly cables home at 2 1/2d (5¢) a word which is very cheap and will possibly be a relief in Canada to hear direct once a week. Will include good & allan the men whenever we are close to them. Looked Wood up (about 3 miles away) and had lunch with him. Watched him registering his battery on Berlin Trenches. Very interesting arranged a new daily routine for Squadron with exercise etc from 6.30 to 8.00 AM before

IV

16 Oct

breakfast. With so many men away on guard it keeps us going to look after horses.

Wednesday 13th Oct - Had all horses rebranded "DIV. CAV" on right shoulder with iron Father had made at works. It is just as well to know them on sight in case of one straying. Went up to neighboring windmill land watched over heavy bombardment of German line from 2.00 to 3.30 and then a great gas attack! Beautiful clear day. Could see some trenches with naked eye and shrapnel bursting over them. The gas or smoke as it actually was in most cases went up to the minute and the firing stopped for about 10 minutes and then started again all at once, to catch them as they came from support trenches to meet the surprised attack.

It was very interesting. They bombarded us all evening in retaliation but I don't think did much damage. Sent dear Mother a cable for her birthday tomorrow. Wrote Sarah in evening.

Thursday 14th Oct. Went out for early ride and injured my breakfast as a result. Went over to see Cyclists about some duties they are performing. Then O.C. Major Penniket is a very decent chap and I get along very well with him. Rode down to Wood about 4.01 PM and had dinner and spent a very pleasant evening chatting over his wonderful experiences at V.P.R.E.S and elsewhere.

16th Oct

Rode back about 8.30 P.M. It certainly is dark here
alright but my little mare can find her way
through the woods perfectly as long as she is
heading home. Leslie is most faithful and
attentive.

Friday 15th Oct. Stayed in most of the day. Took
a walk around country before dinner to get up
an appetite. Very foggy but very little rain lately
although roads are muddy. Markham my
servant prepared a hot bath (before our fireplace)
for me in evening that would be hardly equal
anywhere. It was a long time since I had one
and I enjoyed it and slept well. Saw George
Cruckshanks (tool room) about a week ago
looking very well, also see Percy C. G. G. G.
occasionally. Received another box from Sarah
with apple, pears, cake & figs. Needless to say
most acceptable.

Saturday 16th Oct Am early up again. Am
sending the men south on Sunday to look
over roads and approaches in case we
should later on get a move. All the
men get a hot bath a week and clean undies
leaving this to be boiled, washed, and mended
under Divisional arrangements. It is well
carried out and most necessary, especially
for men in trenches.

Well close now - with very much love to father
and all
Yours devoted son
J.H.