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Sunday  
19th Nov  
7.00 P.M.

Dearest Mother not

As I fear this will reach you by the Canadian mail next Wednesday I have just dropped Alice a line to let you know the reason. The mails are slower now getting to England than before and even if I mail on Sunday I fear the letters only make the boat by a narrow margin. Unfortunately there is no one going on leave tomorrow - so I cannot send it over in that way.

No Canadian letters this week except Alice's and Father's diary letter of 30th last which does not call for any special answer.

I am not going to attempt to send any Xmas presents this year so I warn you all beforehand, not that I sent very much last year. I may feel sorry later and dare say I will but feel just now that my finances will not permit of it. It is of course how the money goes over here where you would think there would be very little opportunity of sending any. I sometimes grudge what I spend on messing but cannot very well get out of it.

Monday 13th Nov. Get up about 7.30 and have breakfast at 8.15. The mess is only a couple of hundred yards away and the little walk is good for the appetite. We now get the continental edition of daily news of

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previous day for breakfast which gives us  
 the principal events at least. I generally read  
 it after breakfast which for me consists of  
 partridge toast and jam & coffee as I don't eat  
 eggs and bacon. I miss our Canadian fruit  
 and breakfast foods (parce of habit I suppose)  
 but seem to thrive and get fat all the same.

Rade is a village about 4 miles away to  
 see about repairs to a stable floor for one,  
 Alfred Gide, caused by troops who previously  
 occupied the billet. The French are very exact  
 about such things and the British authorities  
 try to do all they can and settle claims very  
 generously. In this case we will draw  
 down and make the repairs. Dawson came  
 back from leave. As two of our Captains  
 Tipton and Robertson have returned to Canada  
 there will be two promotions to make but they  
 won't reach White yet as the "A" Squadron chaps  
 are all senior. It is hard on my old  
 officers in the same way as on myself.  
 I feel sorry for them but nothing can be  
 done. Col Smith goes on leave in the

morning so wrote a few lines for him to  
 take out to Sarah as it came 2 or 3 days.  
 Had my usual French lessons with Mlle  
 Duplas & M Barlier. I am just beginning  
 to find out how little French I really know.

Tuesday 14th Nov Rade to the quarries  
 again in the morning to see about stone

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Studied French and in the evening had tea with Owen Hadgins at the Café. They have a nice mess near the old Chateau where owners can trace their ancestry back to the times of the Crusaders. Wrote Father a long letter at night and also drafted a cable to him as expect to leave tomorrow.

Wednesday 15th Nov. Borrowed a motor from our neighbors, the Motor Machine gun brigade and Strawbenze and I went up in front to secure working parties, a very much easier way than riding 30 miles and walking about 12. We went right up in the front line and went down into a tunnel and right out to the end which was under the Hun lines but 50 or 60 feet down. The passage was  $4\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$  and there was quite a bump in my back when I got up. I ran the chalk back on a little trolley and down near lake it from the mouth and hide it with brown earth so that the Hun cannot see where we are mining. It does seem funny to be fighting in this way. Met Claude Hill up to a post back from here and looking very well. Had a sandwich lunch and got back about 4.00 and were glad of a hot cup of tea as turning much colder. No mail which is always a disappointment. Our men put on a

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concert at night which was very poor  
in comparison to some I have heard, in the  
local <sup>French</sup> cinema theatre. We had no  
dinner as was at 7.00 PM and cold supper  
afterwards.

Thursday 16th Nov - Very cold with about  
10 degrees of frost. Was glad of having  
underwear which Sarah has mended and  
sent over, the ones you got for me in London.  
I am just starting out nice new pyjamas  
you sent last time and they are soft  
and nice. The old ones are just about done  
but have been in use 18 months. I have  
a very plentiful supply of winter socks  
thanks to Alice especially, and will regard  
of them. With the breeches and "trench coat"  
I bought on leave I should last another year.

Rode over to 2nd Divisional Hqts and  
met Col Wilson who used to be our vet in  
1st Hussars. Studied French in P.M. but  
as old Barber says I did not have my  
lesson with him. Cockshutt went on  
leave. Warnings about a rumour about a  
big Zeppelin raid on London. It is the  
only rumour I don't like Sarah tho as I  
feel they are going to raid with a lot of  
them some day and do a lot of damage.  
Arranged for three old B Squadron men  
to apply for commissions in this regiment  
and hope they will get them.

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Friday 17th Nov. Cold and slipping on roads so went for a 2½ hours walk and studied some French en route. I remembered me of walks I used to take with the girls and 2 puppies when I was studying one winter for R.M. Entrance, Alice & Elaine will remember as we usually took a sleigh too. A couple of tanks over and one of our anti aircraft shells failing to explode in air fell on the roof of the school in the next village to us and landed in the centre of a little girls class, killing 5 and injuring 6 more poor little tots. I passed on way back and the women were weeping in the streets. It was too sad for words. A little miners boy accidentally shot himself with one of our miners revolvers but not fatally. I died in afternoon. Mrs Little front Father also Saturday night.

Old Barber feeling better but we had our left by his kitchen stove.

Saturday 18th Nov. Very cold last night and everything frozen solid. All hydrants are covered with snow which is then tared. We are glad of our nice grate fires and good quarters. Went for a crisp country ride but as a sleet blizzard blew up I was not much pleasure. What Mrs Betts a few lines, am so glad of the French as otherwise I would not know what to

to do with myself. I seem to miss Sarah more than I ever have and long for a glimpse of the rest of you more than I can say.

Sunday 19th Nov - Usual hot bath in my green commode tub. It leaks a little now and I am afraid to have it scrubbed out as it makes it look worse and Madame would raise a row. She is very particular but supplies clean sheets once a week so we cannot say much. Mildew and wet. Rode in morning and did some court martial work. Wrote Sarah at length after French lesson in P.M. as 22nd is our 2nd anniversary. Mr. Ewen back from leave and brought me a letter from her with such nice letters to her from Fanny & Elaine. Sent them on to Wood as felt sure they would not mind.

It is now 10. So so will draw to a close. Pick me up at tea at Oakwood with Elaine and Stephen. Hear that artillery will not be up until end of month so don't see Wood for his birthday after all so write him a few lines today. Must try and begin a few outside the war letters but find it hard to write except to family. Very much love Mother dear. I hope for your diary letter this week.  
 Your devoted son  
 Alf