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2 Jun 16

closed - no boat today - 3 vessel sunk last night.

We felt pretty blue as you may imagine and the men were marched off to a rest camp and the officers hung around the town. I had a good meal at the restaurant on the wharf and enjoyed the loaf of bread about a yard long off which I am sure I ate a foot. I had foolishly forgotten to take a bite of something before I left the billet. I took a long walk over the heights above the town in the afternoon and then went to a very nice hotel for dinner where I was fortunate enough to meet Elkins RCMA and Megan of Wood's battery with whom I dined. They were returning from leave. We had a bottle of wine which I think was the immediate cause of my "mal de mer" on the boat later as we did finally get away on a very crowded boat about 8.30 accompanied by a destroyer. I managed to get room to sit on a life preserver box but before I got over would have just as soon have been on the deck as it was really very rough. Once we rolled so much that the men slid to the lee scuppers on the lower deck. Half a dozen Irishman who would run his boat for Dublin as a result of the delay. I had to go to War Office and apply for an extra day to make up for it. A train was

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Canadian rendezvous which was our principal reason for not going there as I did not want to meet a lot of people and the Carleton is much quieter, and if anything more exclusive.

Thursday 23rd Dec. Did not go out until lunch as today wet and miserable but very mild, in fact during my whole visit. I only wore my warmer once. Lunched at "Monsies" and dined at my club "The Services" where things are very nice and most reasonable 2/6 for lunch or dinner while at any of the hotels a pound is practically "done" for a meal for two. I enjoyed oysters on the half nearly every day at either lunch or dinner. I do not complain about our meals in France which are excellent at all times (largely due to people's kindness to us all) but the change of surroundings was very nice. Went to the Monies in the afternoon and listened to the beautiful Italian stringed orchestra [along lines of Park in Montreal as Alice will remember] in the evening. They do play beautifully and I did enjoy it and immensely. One very interesting Belgian family (elderly father, mother and 3 pretty daughters) apparently living at the Carleton, interested Sarah is very much. Had nice letter from Mrs Leonard at Bedford.

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waiting at the wharf at Folkestone and was simply packed. I believe some Tommies could not crowd in. We all dozed and were surprised to find ourselves at Victoria Station about 1.00 AM on

Wednesday 22nd Dec. I could not get a taxi but finally coralled a "four wheeler" and found Sarah waiting up for me at the Carlton.

She was looking well and I am glad to say a well but stouter although even yet she only weighs 125½ which is hardly enough.

Had breakfast in bed the next morning which was a rare treat which I indulged in several other days as well. We were very comfortable and had the use of a nice sitting room off the bedroom (without charge) which made it very nice. I had a regular "loaf" as Father expresses it for a whole week. Bought myself a pair of heavy ankle boots out of £2 Aunt May had sent and wore my spacks which Sarah had brought up. Took in a theatre in the afternoon and had tea at the Carlton. The scene was gay and the rooms crowded but things seemed subdued and most of the women in sombre clothes. I saw a few wounded officers on new but generally in mufti which showed rather good taste I thought. Did not see anybody I knew as the Savoy is the

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Friday December 24th 1915 Up early and spent most of the day shopping and attending to some commissions I had been entrusted with by the officers. Spent best part of morning trying to locate the wholesale firm that we are buying rubber boots from for the men on Bridge road, across the river and was finally successful although I was told about 10 minutes walk on three occasions and finally walked about 45 minutes. English diets of 10 minutes walk are very elastic. Came back on tube to Chancery Cross and regained Sarah for lunch and spent most of the afternoon doing things on Regent Street as far up as Clifford Circus. Engaged 2 places for dinner at the Savoy which is supposed to be the gayest for Christmas.

Saturday Christmas Day. Intended doing a theatre but found everything closed right up just like Sunday so we spent rather a quiet but very happy day by ourselves in our sitting room reading some new books Sarah had bought. Took a taxi over to Savoy about 8.00 PM and had quite a gay evening. The place was crowded and there were quite a few gay parties near us. A number of Naval Officers who always impressed us both very much

both by their looks and demeanor. It is
 the 'premier' branch of the service over here
 and the best go into it. The English women
 impressed us both very much less than the
 men. Generally speaking they did not seem
 smart or pretty and if the latter dressed
 badly. Everybody pulled crackers and
 later went down to the Ball room. I tried
 a dance but my boots were too heavy and
 later they stopped officers in uniform
 dancing as it is against the rules although
 I did not know that a hotel like the Savoy
 would come under the catalogue of
 "night clubs". Some of the younger officers
 formed a catapiller and walked around
 the room and amongst the dancers to show
 their indignation and finally so many got
 into it that it almost stopped the dancing
 and they played God save the King and closed
 up the show about 11.30 P.M. We walked back
 but it is almost dangerous as the streets were
 so dark especially at the crossings, but we
 felt almost safer than in a taxi as
 accidents are frequent although kept very
 quiet. I tried Warchesters and returned
Sunday 26th Dec. Billy Bishop looked us
 up and we took him out to lunch at the
 "Luncheon". He was in mufti and on leave.
 The flying Corps are not allowed to wear

uniform in London so he says although I saw some Cronyn in his jar a few minutes today. He looked very well and hoped to get over very soon. you might tell Mrs Cronyn that I thought he looked particularly fit.

After which we tipped to Hensington and had tea with Mrs Allport who was most kind. She showed us some flowers Wood had sent her. She seemed less like the Gauls than any I have met. We then took the tube to Westminster and looked up a Mrs Gardow wife of 2nd vicar of St Margaret's who was one of the English Brintons. She was charming and asked us to lunch the following Tuesday.

We then went to evening service at the Abbey. To say I was very much impressed and affected hardly expresses my feelings. He was not pompous high church display, the service being very simple, music beautiful (nobody singing) and the sermon unusually impressive. We had good seats just under the pulpit. Took tube back to Piccadilly Circus getting a little wet and had supper at the Carleton and again listened to lovely orchestra.

Monday 27th Dec Boxing day and the real holiday in England. Took a long walk in Hyde Park in the morning as day beautiful and went to Drums water afterwards.

which we thoroughly enjoyed. Had wanted to go to one of the Christmas pantomimes but time too late booking our seats. Have heard so much about them. Had tea at the Savoy and dinner at Monica's. Sarah received quite a few Christmas letters and some I had sent to Offord before I left and had evidently been delayed as I had three from after I returned here written before we met.

Thursday 27th Dec. Our week seems to have flown but it has meant a great deal to both of us and although the parting will be hard it will have been well worth while. Up early and went to Victoria to see about trains and then to A&N stores about the few Xmas cards which I wanted to get. Left one of my watches for repairs. Went to lunch at the Gardens and enjoyed meeting the rector and talking to his charming wife very much. She has 5 brothers (Blunt's) two in British Cavalry regiments, one in India on frontier at present and the other on the staff of the Cavalry Corps in France. Talked politics a little and tried to find out why English people are sneaking the Cabinet as much instead of helping the situation. No body seems to have a solution to offer so what is the use of giving the German paper matter to Harp and use for their own

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ends. They were most kind and I hope
will ask Sarah down to see them some
time this winter as it will make a nice
change for her. Went to movies again in
afternoon and had early dinner at Monica's.
Packed up and spent a quiet evening together.
Wednesday 29th Dec. Sarah came down to
Folkestone with me in case I should be
held up a day there which often happens
and I was able to take a later boat and
had lunch and a couple of hours there with
her. Left her on the wharf about 2.00. She
was very brave and promised to look up
Lama Reid and if invited stay over night
with her, but had not had a letter yet.

Crossed with reinforcements for Grenadier
Guards and the Buffs all speak of saw in
new clothes and fresh kits which will
not look so smart as soon as they strike
"the mud". Had dinner at the French Post
and caught my train at 7.15 and
was met by faithful Leslie with my
horses about 1.00 A.M. now.

Thursday 30th Dec. The boat trip across
and journey up I think were the most
dreary and lonely I ever remember. I did
not meet a soul and just hated to look
forward to another three months overseas.

That is the worst of IX, it is so hard to ^{2 Jan 1916} settle
down again and such a wrench to leave your dear
ones. Some of the English officers who were relieved
said they did not always like this as it was
so hard to "leave" and come back again. I
felt a little better after I woke up about 8.00 AM
and had breakfast with cheerful little Campbell.
Found things in very good shape and
never have any doubts when I leave things
in Mc Ewen's hands. He is very dependable.
attended to business correspondence all
morning and saw most of the officers.
Took a walk in my new boots in the
afternoon, reporting back at Hqts. Campbell
came with me. Spent evening reading
a huge pile of letters which I will mention
after the diary. Everybody was so good
about writing as well as studying things.
I had 10 packages in all and still have
the pleasure of opening several to look
forward to as we have almost a surfeit
of everything now on the table.

Friday 31 Dec 1915. Wrote some Christmas
letters in the morning. Horses inoculated
for the "glanders test" [to see if they would
be subject to it if an epidemic broke out
as the Germans have it across the line]. There
is no antidote or antibiotic yet for this
terrible disease which we would be almost

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since to pick up if we moved forward.

Proceder to Wood about 3.00 PM and remained to "New years eve" dinner. They seem to have fared as well as we did. He had 2 English artillery officers in as well.

He was bright and very well as also were Green, Mc Gann and Murray his new officers. I showed him your letter. Father affd left him the one with the P.S about the flask to answer. Did not get home until 11.00 and as fire out and Campbell did not wait up to see the New year in.

Saturday 1st January 1916 New Year's Day

No ride on horses require 48 hours after inoculation. Wrote letters all morning and made a round of calls in afternoon including Gen Turpin's staff who were most kind. Every body calls Turner (if I can apply the expression) He is always so kind and nice. Saw Folger & Billy Gibson and also Major Hill who is now on the seasonal staff - G.S.O.3 - having left the 24th. He goes on leave today and is very happy. Then I called on Cyclist officers and M.C.O.s and then rode around to practically all my billets and posts and wished each party of my new new a happy New Year and shook hands all around. It was dark before I got home

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and wrote some more Christmas letters
and read the advertisements Father had sent
me (and which I saw passing on to Wood) I also
brought several books back with me
to read.

Sunday 2nd Jan No ride and slept until
8.30 and am ashamed to say did not go
out (except around billet) all day. Have been
writing this on and off. Officers all in at
1.00 for a fine dinner at 1.00, Chusker &
mince pie and a beautiful Christmas cake
sent to Cookshutt. Half expected Wood over
but suppose he could not get off as still
short handed. Mr Ewen has just now
left me and Campbell has not returned yet
for tea.

I sent Christmas cards to ^{some} employees which
should have gone before I left but we were
disappointed by printer and only had a
limited quantity at first. Please explain
Father if they should think it was a
second thought as I had all the names on
my first list.

Now I will go over my list of letters
and parcels which I will endeavour to
acknowledge and answer in due course.

I have your letter of 3rd Dec on general
business which covered the ground very
fully. Sorry to hear that engine and

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boiler section is not holding together, especially in view of great advance in cost of raw material. I recommend, however, that we stick to it as long as possible. Has Yeates gone into the machine tool business once again? I suppose he has given up making shells and using his profits as capital for a new business. I am very sorry about Calgary Hospital as I think we were very careful in London about getting change in design approved by George before starting on the boiler for which material had to be ordered.

I am afraid I cannot remember about discounts for smoke stacks "sold alone" but think McRay's contention is right, as we agreed to get as much as we could for such business, but if sold with boilers the prices were fixed at discounts in price list. It is a great pity that any have withdrawn and good policy to get them back if at all possible.

Will try and look up Walter Williams in 19th Stn which is in this division. The third Division is now over here in part and is a unit in the Corps since about 15th Dec.

Good for Miller. I hope he will keep us posted as to his future movements. I think Col Greene should make a good C.O.

About further expenditure for making 400 shells. Is this necessary as Yeates

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already been making this size with present plant. Would it be possible to make up a statement of how we came out on first orders before to see if the profit would more than cover the "capital" expenditure indicated by increase in bank $\%.$ Such a statement would give us actual figures and facts to work on as I do not feel we can afford to lose or increase our indebtedness even to make shells. The difference in price between \$6.90 and \$5.00 seems considerable.

I hear the Dominion Bridge made \$4,000,000 profit on shell business to date, but hardly believe it although suppose their facilities were easily adapted to new requirements.

Your other interesting letter to us jointly I left with Wood and will answer later. The enclosures were most interesting but I do not quite understand the advertisers quite uncalled for article about your shell business but suppose the true price made the most of it.

I wonder what Gordie has and is doing in the shell line. Watsons you say is behind us in delivery so we know how Bradford stands you did not say anything in your letter about chippings and can only hope that you will not take them too much to heart as you will agree with me when I say

that both our "local rags" carry very little real weight and are often carried away by petty local feelings.

With reference to Max Low would say that if another is to be subscribed to (I see this closed on 30 Nov last) I would like to subscribe what funds I may have available in H. & E.

I am sending Alice a little money I have saved out of my pay to deposit in B of Montreal where I have a small % made up of wedding presents etc to start housekeeping with some day I hope (D.V.)

I am sending you my "drawy letter book" from 27th Dec to date under separate cover.

I fear I cannot help the uniform bairn regulations in U.S. just at present although I sympathize with them well.

I see you enclosed roads civic insurance receipt. I was examined etc for a policy issued by City of London. I wonder if it ever went through?

I also took out \$2000 with some company (U.S.) just before I left. I wonder if you are paying the premiums I am sure I forget the name of the company.

I next have to acknowledge dear Mother two letters of Dec 2nd and Dec 9th with enclosures which I have passed on to Bob

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to destroy as requested. They were most interesting and I will expect a circular letter through Sarah shortly as mentioned therein. Your love box dearest Mother was here on my return and I am still holding both it and Alice and claims to open at later date as we have almost a surfeit of presents, in fact I am overwhelmed by all your dear thoughts and gifts. The number I have received does not in the least take away from my deep deep affection.

Am a little worried about dear Estelle as the 1st of Jan was mentioned as a possible date and so far have heard nothing. I pray that everything will be all right. She is continually in my thoughts and Woods and Sarahs too. I opened her dear box today and was quite affected by her dear little tray of doing everything up. I am eating some of the ginger now. You have all been so good. Your letter to me, Mother dear, about treatment of men and the British officers you have met of days gone by was quite an inspiration to me and touched me very much. Your dear advice was good and I am daily trying to act on it. Will look up John Bleckner of 34th is now near us. Tell his mother if you like.

Must next thank dear Alice, to whom

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I have already started a letter, for her
beautiful letter of 5th Dec. Bernard is
one of my most faithful Corporals, a
model of good behavior and reliability in
every way. He is in 4th (Campbell's) troop and
I thought a great deal of. He was with me
in 1st Hussars for quite a time before
the war. He is one of the finest types of
young man I have met, and I have some
very splendid young men. I am looking
forward with much pleasure to Alice's
box which promises to be an interesting one.

I wonder if Alice ever calls on Mrs Tom
Leslie (London West) my groom's wife. He is
so faithful and devoted to me in every
way and even occasionally suggests my
riding by a road which he considers a
little safer.

Will say good night as I fear this long
ramble will tire you all and possibly will
add a few lines before mail time tomorrow
Monday 3rd January 1916. Went out on ride. Very
windy and some trees blown down across the
roads. Campbell away at a grenade school for
a week, so I am alone with the censoring to do
so will have to cut short. Much love to
dearest mother and Alice and very best
wishes for the year 1916, the end of which I hope
will see us together. your affectionate son JH