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The Field

19/12/15.

Dearest Mother

Will write a few lines as another more or less uneventful week has passed. I bh was over at the Battery for a few moments on Wednesday and brought your circular letter of November twenty third. He is well and quite hopes to get to England for a few days at Christmas. Leave is not being granted to the second division but as they are allowing a few of the more senior officers to get away.

I expect that you are waiting now for word to go to Uttarva if you have not already received it. It will be an anxious time for you all but I hope the ending will be a happy one. I wrote father about the middle of the week. Please thank him for papers re the 33rd troubles and other matters which came to hand yesterday. I believe that Gordon Ingram is going home to take one of the new battalions and

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I hope he does as he would make  
an excellent commanding officer.

I had dinner at divisional  
headquarters on Thursday night with  
Ed. Parrot and saw Lamb, Gordon  
Hall, Frank Ware and quite a few  
other friends. Lamb in particular  
made enquiries about you all. He  
says that Chester Mathewson was  
fired from the Public Works Dept.  
as a result of the investigation  
into conditions at the Toronto  
Harbour Work. Not that he was  
implicated in any wrong doing but  
merely that he allowed the  
contractors to put in over him as  
regards certain parts of the work.

You certainly have had most  
wonderful weather! Ours is the reverse  
to a corresponding degree. Today it  
is bright and fine but one does  
not even hope that it will keep  
up. This morning the Germans have  
been using gas shells and even  
down here the smell is sufficiently  
strong to make the eyes water. I  
believe it was known beforehand  
that something of the sort was

coming off. It is really wonderful how much of each other's plans the opposing armies seem to pick up.

I had my bundle of papers arrived safely from the Savoy and hope the other package with revolver and other trinkets turns up. It was sent the following day I think. Since Thursday I have been away from the Battery acting as provost marshal for the division while the regular man is away. I am in charge of the policing of the whole divisional area and also regulate the movements and so forth of the inhabitants. There are a number of mounted police to deal with the troops, gendarmes (Both Belgian and French) for the civilians and twelve border posts to prevent unauthorized persons crossing the frontier. There is a good deal of correspondence both French and English also some Flemish but I have two interpreters on the staff and get on very well. Usually put in the mornings at the office and ride about the area in the afternoon inspecting and

so forth. It makes a nice change from the ordinary Battery routine and of course the work is much easier. I shall return to my unit a day or so after Xmas.

Yesterday I called on Col. Penhale of the Div<sup>l</sup> Amm<sup>n</sup> "Col<sup>n</sup>" and will try and get down and have dinner with him early next week. Harry Greenlee has now joined them, having arrived in France about a week ago, so I hope to get him with me in due course. Green is in charge of the Battery in my absence.

I met General Armstrong the other day (Charlie), he used to be in the Royal Scots and was I think quite a friend of Uncle Ned and Jack. He is in command of the entire engineer units of the Canadian Corps. I also saw young Dunbar at the same time. He is now adjutant of the Div<sup>l</sup> Engineers under Bill Lindsay.

I am very comfortable in the present billet. The only other officer here is Major Frank Cartwright of Strathemais Horse who is permanent

president of courts martial for the  
division. He is, I think, the  
youngest son of Sir Richard and  
we get on very well. ~~He is~~ He  
took several courses years ago  
at London Barracks in the days  
of old Henry Smith and was in  
the mounted police for years also  
got the D.S.O. in South Africa.

I don't think there is  
anything else for me to write about.  
Except for a minor cold I am  
very well and my hands have not  
bothered me lately at all thanks,  
I think, to the stuff that Lally  
sent me a month ago. I intended to  
see up and all I got at first  
opportunity. Much love  
your devoted son  
Wood