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Belgium

22/7/15.

Dearest mother.

Yesterday I returned from a week's leave and found several of your dear letters waiting me also a good many others. You will probably have heard from Bob and Sarah as to my sayings but perhaps I had better give a brief outline just the same.

I left here at 3 P.M. on the thirtieth and reached Boulogne about ten. The boat brought us into Folkestone about 3^{am} and I went to a hotel for the necessary sleep. Later got a taxi and motored out to Bob's camp where I lunched. He looks splendidly and seems to have a good unit both officers and men. Later he took me down to the house and I had tea there with Sarah and spent a couple of hours. She is well and bright and apparently so happy to see Bob.

I went to London that night and down to Wiltshire the next afternoon where I spent the night with the Simpkins at Stanton. The weather was bad, continuous rain

but I quite enjoyed the visit and
am glad I made it. I came back to
London the following evening and
on Saturday Ibb joined me there.
We went to the theatre together and
on Sunday out to Rotten Row,
Horse Guards, St Pauls, The Tower
and a number of other places of
interest. I tried to see Mrs Allport
but could not get her flat
by telephone though I tried several
times and conclude she must have
been out of town for the week
end.

We came back to Hythe on
Sunday night. On Monday I saw Harry
Gruntles, Mills and others and in
the evening Ibb, Sarah & I dined at
the Metropole and drank the
health of your grand son - Larkes
cable announcing the new arrival -
Loring reached Ibb that afternoon.
Mr & Mrs. Hale were also there with
George - having just arrived from
Canada that morning, I think.
I looked up some more friends
the following day, dined again with
Ibb and Sarah and left in the
evening reaching Bantlonge about ten

am. and getting back to the Battery
about seven yesterday morning.
altogether I had a most enjoyable
state holiday - so much so that
I felt quite sick (in mind only) on
returning but that soon wears
off. Things at the Battery had
been very quiet during my absence, and
the front breakfasts is quieter than
I ever remember it. I expect the
Boche are busy with the Russians
and the troops brought over here
were transported merely as a blind.

Borden was here yesterday and
inspected the newly infantry. They
raked up a band of sorts and there
was much cheering. Word was sent to
me that he would be over to see
the guns but later I got a message
saying time did not permit which
suited me just as well.

We were all naturally delighted to
hear about Elaine and I hope she
and the babe continue to do well.
I am writing her direct so will not
say more on the subject at present.
I have put the enclosed cable with
my other papers - It is quite a
souvenir.

I had a letter from Aunt Elizabeth
inclosing a religious pamphlet. I
shall answer the former but
the latter really only makes me
smile. Also had another letter from
Uncle Jack and some more cigarettes
which are so appreciated. Letters from
both Alice and Estelle are also beside
me and I shall write them shortly.

At present it is raining rather
hard but we have built a
new mess room and office out of lumber
secured from the engineers so shall be
fairly dry - at all events - when in it.
McEwen will go on leave next week
and one of the others every fortnight
hereafter unless things liven up
a lot and all leave is cancelled.
From what I can gather the 2nd
Division will not be out for a
month or so. England seems to be
full of troops - khaki is really more
in evidence than mufti and sooner
or later all this will tell. In the
meantime Russia seems to be having
a hard time of it but even if
Warsaw falls it will make no
material difference to the Allies as
long as Russia can retire with

her forces fairly intact. This she seems
able to do as recent events have
shown.

Will not add more now.
Best love to all

your devoted son
Whod.