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**Western Archives, Western University**

Belgium

28/4/15

dearest mother

It is about a week since I wrote last and to give a coherent account of what has passed in that time would require pages and pages. It can be summed up by saying that we have had a hellish experience and I hope it won't be repeated.

Late in the afternoon of the 22nd the Boches attacked. The French on our immediate left. The latter broke and came running through us as did their supports and reserves. It was a disgraceful exhibition and the troops concerned were mostly gouaches and Turcos. This left our left exposed and the Germans of course took us on the flank and in rear besides subjecting us to a terrific shell fire. We fought the guns until towards

undoubtedly and at times the Germans  
were only a few hundred yards away  
then we were ordered to withdraw  
which we did without much loss  
although some of the other batteries  
were caught by shell fire and  
the roads were cumbered with  
dead horses and overturned vehicles.

We took up another position  
a little further back and from  
there have moved twice since,  
firing nearly all the time at  
different points as ordered. We were  
caught in one position and when the  
teams were sent to pull the guns  
out they were shot. However we  
hauled the guns out by hand  
and saved them although a  
British battery beside us was  
obliged to abandon its guns.

We are now holding a line  
about two miles behind our  
old one and things have  
slackened off a bit. For five

say no one <sup>(2)</sup> had their boots off  
and we fired thousands of  
rounds. Two of my guns were  
hit by shells and put out of  
action but I brought them out  
and am sending them to the  
rear for repairs if possible.

The 12<sup>th</sup> has been  
wonderfully lucky and our losses  
are less than any of the other  
batteries in the brigade although  
we have fired more than any  
other. The Canadian infantry  
has suffered severely and made  
a most gallant stand. In fact  
I think Britain can thank the  
3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade for  
the fact that the line was  
not definitely pierced and a bad  
defeat inflicted on us. This brigade  
(Highland under Turner) has only  
1300 men left out of 4600

which speaks volumes. They bore  
the brunt of the attack all  
night and died fighting hard -  
not like the cowardly French  
who were panic stricken and  
left their allies open to attack  
from the side throwing away their  
rifles etc and running for miles.

I think the worst is over  
now but we are being shelled  
all the time and last night  
a small one burst in the house  
I was in. Fortunately it only  
wounded one man and we quickly  
evacuated the premises. I think this  
battle (whatever it may be called)  
is the fiercest of the whole  
war and our losses will be  
terrific. I could give details  
ad nauseam of the fighting and  
details in connection therewith  
but cannot bring myself to  
write anymore at present. I think

we are all pretty well shaken by  
the frightful experience but most  
thankful to have escaped. I have  
lost about fifteen men and  
twenty horses but have more  
of both than I want as only  
two guns left and even they  
are in bad shape having  
each fired thousands of  
rounds.

Will write again at first  
chance. Best love

Your devoted son

Wood