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Sunday 30th July
8.30 P.M.

Dearest Mother

I have moved my table (made out of
bacon boxes) outside my hut and am writing
out of doors. Some of the younger officers are
playing indoor baseball on the field in
front of me but have promised not to knock
any foul in my direction. It has been a
typical summer day and I have spent
the afternoon very pleasantly with Wood.
I think I have already acknowledged
all letters in my last to Father except
your first circular one, Mother dear,
from Kingsville which Sarah forwarded
and I left with Wood today. I forgot to
make a note of the date. Father's last
one also I believe came since Wednesday
last in which he enclosed the business
letters Holmes had sent to Kingsville. It
was his first one after returning to
London. The progress at the Works I am
sure is most gratifying especially
the reduction in overhead. It seems
hard to realize what it means and I
only hope it will continue without
drawbacks. It must be as great a
satisfaction to him as to Wood and
myself. I fear you will miss the

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dear "marrieds" very much and the darling sons. You will be lonely without them. Please thank Alice so much for the beautiful snaps of the boys & Mally. I got two of them back ^{from my wood} today one of which I want to carry in my cigarette case. They were beautiful pictures of beautiful children and seem to bring them so much closer to us. It seems hard to believe that we have never seen them. It has been another very quiet week on our front although we have not been down at all and have been training hard morning and afternoon all week and the change of work has been very pleasant especially for the men who are rather "fed up" with digging. The horses too are looking better as a result of the extra work wearable to put out them.

I am so sorry I omitted to cable last week; it was a pure oversight on my part and I hope has not caused you worry. You should have received it today. I will not forget next Thursday.

Monday 24th July. Made an earlier start than usual on account of training as we drill from 8.30 to 11.00 and 2.00 to 3.30 which with stables for the

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squadrons makes a pretty full day. We have rented a large pasture from the Trappists to drill in for 200 francs for the month. We are buying cheese from the regularly and it is awfully good. Two squadrons can drill in this field and the other smaller one we have at headquarters. We also use them for grazing in the afternoons and it is a sight to see the horses enjoy a roll and a run around. Called in at B during stables. Saw trying to give me even as much help as possible but he is handling the squadron extremely well and assuming the responsibility which after all is considerable. Tried out a new horse over the jumps as I have taken the shoes off my best charger as he was shamefully begins of going in front. These hard roads play the devil with a horses feet and I easily average 20 miles a day.

Tuesday 25th July Letters from Sarah
 (mother). Spent the morning with
 C Squadron and later rode to Camp
 Hope with Strawbenzie and obtained
 a pass from the A.P.M. for the town
 of — which was so heavily shelled.

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two weeks ago and consequently put "out of bounds" except for those on duty. A great many inhabitants have left and are living in huts all around here. It has not been shelled at all however for 2 weeks. Rode over to call on the O.C. of the Motor Machine Gun Brigade which is now near us but he was out. When we got back there was a note from the Corps Commander saying he wanted more sword work done in our training and that he was coming up tomorrow. So I went to a blacksmith shop and had some thrusting dummies made and put one up the same night. Beautiful night and sat outside my hut chatting to the other officers until bed time. We could hear a distant bombardment further down the front.

Wednesday 26th July [Getting too dark

so I must go in and light a candle to attract the mosquitos]. Up at 6.00 and went to Trappist Farm. The general spent a couple of hours with us and made a most thorough inspection of every detail. He criticizes freely but does not say very much. Everybody seems to think well of him and I must say

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that I like what I have seen of him. He bought a cheese from the Trappists.

Spent the afternoon going around the country looking for a new billet for one of the squadrons which has to move to mess room for another division which is coming up. Tried knocking a polo ball around later and watched a baseball game between "A" Squadron of machine gunners.

Major George Nixon called in while we were at dinner and is delighted to be over at last with the Divisional Engineers. He looks well and wanted to be remembered to you all. He is glad to be over but finds sanitary conditions in France very bad!! "Heavy gunning" at night as the result of a mine that Bosh blew as we afterwards heard. He had wind of it before and had fortunately evacuated the danger zone and retaliated pretty hard with our guns. Read an interesting continued story in Sat Eve Post outside my tent.

Thursday 27th July. Wrote Father & Sarah a few lines and spent morning at the Trappists Farm. Rode to - in

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the P.M. to find the YMCA and borrow some baseball equipment but found they had fled with the population, however saw some nice relays and bought a bunch which my groom carried home behind Strawbenzie & me. I bought four chickens for 10 francs the same way the other day. They were awfully nice I saw a snake yaw another typical summer day. Read outside the hut at night.

Friday 28th July. We have a sword instructor from 20th Lancers to give the men a brush up course. He is very good. Our men are rapidly falling into line again. Strawbenzie showed the squadrons a new movement to scatter to avoid shell fire but while good in a few countries I don't think it is very practical in this closed and cultivated land. Transport inspection in the afternoon. We are aiming to turn ours out like the "Guards Division" which are a sight whenever met with; an example of cleanliness and smartness, every bit of steel shining and harness coats like silk. Tried a little polo in the morning and some sword pegging also. We

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are having tea at 4.30 and dinner at 8.00 to permit of a couple or three hours in between for a little recreation of this kind and it works well. The summer will soon be gone and we must take advantage of the good weather now.

Saturday 29th July 6.00 AM and formed up the Regiment at 8.00 in full marching order. He looked very well. We did a few movements and then had a 10 mile march. It was very dusty. Had a sports committee meeting in the P.M. and arranged for a week today. Gen Byng has promised to be present. I had a little job again in evening. Another beautiful day. Very heavy dew at night and a mist everywhere but clear when the sun is up.

Sunday 30th July Usual bat bath and read paper after breakfast. We are now getting papers in the mess only one day old. A note Sarah a few lines for some gloves she sent over as mine were done also two nice silk handkerchiefs and then telephoned Wood and rode down to his HQs (11 miles) for lunch. Found him looking very well, much better than last summer. Stayed to tea

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and only got back at 8.10 in time for
dinner. It was very warm but I
quite enjoyed the little visit. His new
job suits him and I think he is very
happy to have command of his old Brigade.
He has had rather a nice picture taken
in — with Robertson and he promised
me he would send you one. I have
been writing ever since dinner and
will now draw to a timely close as
the mosquitoes are getting bad and get
in the cracks in the tent as I have
cheese cloth over the windows.

Very much love Mother dear
your devoted son

Hbb