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Book #IX

Sunday
20 Aug 1946

My dearest Mother

I did not know last week that I would
be here when next I write but sudden moves
must be expected in this game.

I think I have already acknowledged your
last letters via Sarah & Wood in my letter to Father.

Your nice birthday letter to me and also
Father's written on 30th July came to hand here
and I wish to thank you both very much for
your good wishes and loving thoughts and I
endure to hope that I may have many more
"30th Julys" with both you & Father. As you
will know by now I spent a very happy
day with Wood which is about as pleasant
a holiday as I can get over here.

Father's letter of 2nd Aug came yesterday
with one from Sarah. There is nothing very
much to answer except to say that the
"Waterloo bay tractor" is exactly along the lines
of my ideas and I think well worth following
up. I have noted London address and I
will write when on leave if possible. Sorry that
the heat has bothered your output so much
but it cannot be helped and perhaps the
additional capacity will more than make
up later on.

This is book #9. I am not attempting
to send them home now but will keep
them. you have your copies on file.

20 Aug

14th August. Cooler and cloudy.
 "C" Squadron schooling all ranks over
 course of 3 jumps we have prepared. They
 all took it finally without interruptions which
 is pretty good I think. Made out a training
 scheme for the following week. Rode
 up to — and bought some cigarettes. I
 find I can buy Abdulla Egyptian for 4.50
 for 90¢ per 100 and I rather prefer them
 to the Nigerian I have generally used.
 Prices at the E.F. Canteen are practically
 wholesale, but to troops only. Called in on
 Bowmy way back and congratulated
 McEwen on his promotion. Saw sure
 he deserves it and will make good.

Wrote in evening.

Tuesday 15th August. Up at 6.00 and spent
 the morning with "A" on the scheme. They
 showed a marked improvement. Saw the
 remains of an incendiary bomb the Germans
 dropped near an aerodrome last night.
 It looked like a lantern three times as
 large as usual. Rode down to a Belgian
 sports day after lunch. They had made
 very elaborate preparations; flags and white
 flags etc but they ran it off very slowly.
 General Byng presented the prizes for the
 "mule" event which was excellent.
 Alan McEwen jumped in the officers

III

20 Aug

uping event but did not get placed. There were about 40 entries. There were some very pretty Belgian nurses there but unfortunately I did not meet them. They rode out to see Wood who was tomorrow and stayed to dinner, riding home by moonlight across the stubble. He looks remarkably well and is wearing his extra stars. I congratulated him also on his promotion as it was the first time I had seen him since.

Wednesday 16 August. Up at 6.00 and worked over same scheme with "B" sqdn who did very well also. We return heard that we were to move back on Friday. It was rather a surprise as we did not expect to go so soon. Rode into the corps area to the north of us and watched the officers of a British Cavalry regiment play polo. We were going to play against them if we had not been making. After tea I went over to "C" and was judge at a boxing and wrestling competition between B & C in which B won practically everything. Remained there for dinner. It was very pleasant.

Thursday 17th August Looked over my kit and collection of odds and ends and found as usual I had quite an accumulation which

IV

20 Aug

must cut down at first opportunity.
It is wonderful how things seem to collect.
Wrote Father & Sarah and sent the weekly
cable. Rode around the Squadron to see
how they were getting on and settled one
or two small claims with farmers so as
to leave with a clean shell. A each of us
or a few francs on the spot after
promptly a claim being put in after we
have gone and endless trouble. Went to
sleep in my nice little hut for the last time.
I will be sorry to leave my bed with its
"chicken netting" springs.

Friday 18th July 5.00 AM start as the hut had to
be knocked down and removed. Left our
starting point at 8.15 and were at our first
bivouac by noon. Although our transport of
24 vehicles did not get in until 3.00. Straw
got rooms in a deserted (and haunted)
chateau 17.15 but slept very well all the same.
In each had a huge bed room which at one time
had been beautifully fitted. The arms were
in the windows and on the stairs and
some old family portraits were still hanging.
There was a moat all around it and we had
to enter over a small stone bridge. The family
was all killed off at the revolution and
descendants of the female side were present
owners. The latter officers were in

V

20 Aug

The modern chateau which was more
completely furnished and in the library of
which I spent several hours in the afternoon.
Saturday 19th Aug Made a good start and
had a very pleasant track here arriving at
noon. It can move much quicker than
our waggons. We passed through a lovely
country and a large town which is now
very close. Saw very comfortable here
and have a bed with sheets and electric
light by which I am now writing. The
whole Regiment is billeted in the town
and we are very concentrated and although
the men and horses are a little cramped the
officers are most comfortable. The
daughter of the owner of our mess plays
very well and is really very sweet and
willing about it, so that it is also and no
urgency required. She is quite pretty. My
madame here is very talkative and quite
attractive. We do not know how long
our training here will last but we hope
we won't be hurried away. Read by
electric light over my bed and retired.

Sunday 20 Aug Rode down our
training area this morning and did
not get back until lunch time. A
letter from Sarah. The country is rolling
and well suited for cavalry work.

a lunch. I saw and made into the
 and saw the sights, a cathedral some
 claims to 700 and some pretty girls too
 to drink into Ray Jones who I saw in
 the artillery and he had tea together.
 Later we listened to the band in the
 garden and saw the crowd. We had a
 little music after dinner of our own
 and now have broken up as we have
 an early start tomorrow.

I am afraid this is not a very
 interesting letter but somehow I do not
 seem to feel like writing tonight. Wood is
 about 10 miles away but I will try and
 get over and see him before the week
 is out. Very much love to all
 your devoted son
 Bob