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Sunday 8 April 1917
Easter Day.

Dearest Mother

I won't be able to write at much length today as am a little rushed and am starting now (11.45 AM) in case I am called away later on.

I think I acknowledged all letters in mine to Alice last Wednesday except yours of Mar 13th which came Eric via Wood.

Heather's marriage was news to me, but feel fairly sure that he has managed to do fairly well for himself. He has assuredly gotten on over here as he is now a Major and Field Cashier of the 4th Div, and started out as an orderly room clerk I believe. There are a great many people no doubt who do not see him from our point of view like the Frasers and Mrs Tilly.

I did enjoy Aunt Emma's letter so much, it was good of her to write. I suppose that by the time this reaches you she will have gone. I am so glad you find the upstairs telephone such a help, you should have had it long ago.

Sarah has sent me several of your last letters to her and I am reading them as much as I can to read it. She has been laid up with a sore

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throat and I fear has been quite miserable but said she was better in her last which however was nearly a week old.

Your last letters about dear Father has made me feel easier as I was a bit worried when I first heard of his indisposition, especially two complications together. I do hope he is quite well again by now and know you or Alice would cable at any time if necessary. I see the business letter of March 19th which came this week was written and signed by Mr Holmes so he was not back then. It was quite satisfactory in every way.

I agree with Wood in what he says about you and Alice getting more diversions and think that a congenial guest young or old staying at Lakewood does you a lot of good. I don't think you have people to tea on Sundays after as you might and I know Father enjoys seeing people like that.

I had such a nice letter from James & Schoof and also from Elizabeth but fear I may not be able to answer them for some little time.

Two bundles of magazines came this week but no Cuckoo yet.

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Monday 2nd April. Had a rummah ride up on the hill for all ranks and put the men over our three jumps and only one man was caught which was pretty good I thought. A very high wind and the A.F.C. officer in a single seater had to make a forced landing near us and I asked him 'in to lunch. A heavy snow storm and blizzard in the afternoon prevented his getting up again so he remained over night and we were all most interested in his talk and experiences. He was all through the campaign under General Smuts in S.A. before he joined the A.F.C. Their casualties lately have been terrible but they expect better and faster machines soon. 10 remnants arrived from which I picked one for myself but fear she is gone in front although otherwise a very nice mare. About 6" of snow and slush on ground. Spent an hour with old Barber and paid him 58.50 for lessons at 12/6 each but consider it money well spent.

Tuesday 3rd April. Our A.F.C. friend got up after lunch and safely away although there was quite a high wind. Rain in morning prevented drilling as ground altogether too soft and we

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have to be so careful about cutting it up and interfering with agriculture. I tried out the new mare in the afternoon and liked her but fear she is too light to do much work for me. I inspected some fields with the squadron officers for which we have been asked to pay damages. It was very cold. Barber at 6.00 dinner at 7.30 and read and wrote as usual until midnight.

Wednesday 4th April. Had a full marching order parade and was very pleased with the turnout, which was only first regimental parade. Visited B Squadron at the ranges in the afternoon and then started the historical record of the Regiment which we are asked to furnish. I'll send Father a copy in due course. Young Bishop was up for a few minutes but looks worn as he is up 3 or 4 hours every day that the weather is good. He is with the army to the south of us.

Thursday 5th April Our first real spring day, bright sun and warm breezy snow. Lunch and I started out to make a reconnaissance of the forward area at 9.00 and did not get back until 7.30 P.M. We had to go a long way to a front line

position from which we could get the
view we wanted of the German country.
Our guns were very busy and we
saw one of our ^{traps} bartraps put down and
how anything could live above ground
through it beats me. It seemed a
regular wall of bursting shells. All our
sandwiches while watching at and
then made out through liquid mud.
Our own calves in places. I was in
a horrible mess when I got home
but it brushes off easily when dry.

Saw one 12" gun (not saw) on
a flat car. The piece itself must be
30 feet long. On way back called in
our Wood who seemed well and cheerful
in a new dug out. He showed us the
remains of one of our planes that
had been shot down close to him.

Did not even wash for dinner
as was just in time and we have a
france fine for late ones. Two letters
from Sarah.

Good Friday 1917. Up on drill ground
in A.M. but rain again in afternoon
which enabled me to finish the
historical record. I did not go down
to old Barber and saw now Bull
how to discounting or a time at
any rate but have been pretty

regular for the winter months since November. Read and wrote in evenings while the others had a small game of poker.

Saturday 7th April. Another bright day but a cold north wind but all ranks up on the hill. After lunch I rode up to Corps Hqts and had a nice interview with the B.C.C.S. Gen Radcliff who said what good work our men had done all winter on the tunnels and how useful they would now be.

He showed me a lot of schemes and maps and could not have been nicer. Kachham went up with me and I must say I like him very much, and find him congenial and sensible.

Back in time for dinner and had a conference of officers in the mess after dinner.

Sunday 8th Easter Day. Had such a nice surprise this A.M. I found little Shatford who is back again in France. We had 31 communists and I am sure it did us all good. He is a fine little chap in every way.

Another gorgeous day and I only hope it will continue for the coming weeks, as horses and men need now the sun and warm weather.

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4.00 P.M.

Had to leave for lunch and must now finish. Have been in orderly room for an hour but nothing very exciting. We are to move up early in the week and there is a slim chance for a little cavalry work. All our plans are made and a party detailed to fill in trenches and make a route for us over both the front lines in case we get a chance. Everybody of course is very keen.

A letter in from Sarah dated 3rd in which she left her room for meals so I hope she is better. It is a great relief to me to know she has two or three really interested friends at the hospital with her.

At last the die seems to be cast in the U.S. and from all reports they seem to be going into the war in a whole hearted sort of way. Their fleet & money can help now but it will be some time before they can do much on land even if they decide to send an expeditionary force over.

I have thought very much of a part dear ones on this Easter day and picture you now at Memorial.
Very much love
Jbb