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Thursday 26 Apr
4:00 PM

My darling mother

Whenever possible I am going to write, and write you a few lines in the middle of the week as well as my usual midweek letter to some other member of the family.

I suppose that during the next few days you will get some of my first letters written very hurriedly I fear after the 9th and will have all the details I can give. I am also expecting letters from you before the end of the week but your cables (four in all) have been a wonderful comfort to me in the interim and as I have several times said made me feel very close to you all in this our common grief.

Yesterday afternoon I rode over to visit the Starbays grave for the first time. It is about an hour's ride cross country and as the ground is now drying up very quickly it is possible to go that way. The chaplain was not in when I arrived at the C.C.S. so I went up to the cemetery alone. It is about half a mile from the village on the side of quite a little hill and not far from a "Calvary" overlooking the village.

with the usual ²crucifix and embellishments.
The cemetery is rather a narrow strip, as it
was started at the time of the 2005 offensive
in Sept 1915 and been added to since.
Many officers and men who then fell are
buried here in plot No 1. Dear Wood's remains
are in plot No 2 grave D-14 and will be
about the middle when the cemetery is full.

There is a low fence around it with some kind
of shrub all around which of course have not
started to bud yet. Quite a few trees have been
planted some time ago and I am sure that
later on it will be a very beautiful spot.

I find I was wrong in thinking it an
exclusively officers' cemetery as no difference
is acknowledged in military burials,
officers and men being placed side by
side and a private is beside Wood's grave
and the walk on the other side as it is
at the end. I will enclose a rough sketch.

At present there is only the regulation
wooden cross with his name, rank, unit
and date. No stone or iron monuments
are now allowed anywhere in France
although after the war I believe they will be.
I understand that his Brigade is making

a larger and more appropriate cross, but I know that at present they have their hands full so it may be delayed. I saw Mc-Garr last night about it and if they are not I will have one made in the Regiment and put up but I do not want to interfere with their plans if they want to do it as I am sure they do. Grass seed has already been planted and as soon as the cross is up I can arrange to have an official photograph taken and sent to you.

I did not stay as long as I would have liked as the burying parties were there and made it public (12 yesterday) but am going over very soon again.

On my return to the village I had tea with Capt CALDERBANK C.F. whose address at present is No 18 Casualty Clearing Station B.E.F. and who conducted the service. He is a very fine type and I gave him your address and he said he wanted to write.

It appears that Mc-Garr and Robertson who were at the funeral rode all the way about 17 miles, I thought they had a car but apparently not.

His funeral was a special one and a
marching artillery ammunition column
supplied a waggon and six horses, which
I think Calderbank arranged.

By a curious co-incidence one of my
men # 551213 Plt Crawford is buried the 2nd
grave away.

I have had no letters from Canada for a
long time but hope for some soon now.

Larsh's have been very regular and a great
comfort. In her last she asks for a little
remembrance of Woods whom I know she
loved very dearly and subject to your
approval I am sending her a little leather
cigarette case which I had kept here
together with the dear boy's pipe, pouch,
lighter, mirror and pneumatic compass.
but as I said before if you would like
any of these things freely tell me and I
will return them.

I am enclosing a little remembrance
I spoke of before. I never bath in the
habit of wearing our hair short.

Very much love dearest of mothers
from your devoted son. J. B.
P.S. Enclose notes from Mrs. and Capt.
and Ed. P. and.