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Belgium
2 Oct

My dear Father

Please accept my very best wishes for many many happy returns of 16th Nov your birthday. I hope that a year from ^{now} (D.V.) you may have your family around you to offer their congratulations in person instead of by letter only, as I fear this is the way sorrow will come in this momentous year.

I think you are to be doubly congratulated on the way you are carrying on the business single handed and, ^{on your own} undertakes to do your share in making ammunition for the British Army. Your participation in the war is as great if not greater than that of your sons even if you are about 3500 miles from the actual front.

I also think that the other members of your family especially dear Mother and Alice are doing a tremendous lot. I don't believe that there are any other women in the Empire who are doing more unselfish hard work than they are. I only hope that they will not overdo it. We were all issued today with beautiful white flannel 'cholera belts' which are the work of some women's fingers somewhere; beautifully made and almost too good to be issued to some of the men who will get them. Personally I don't think I will wear one but at the same time it is there if I should want it.

II

27 Oct

I think it is really wonderful the way all the men in the B.E.F. are equipped and fed. They really have everything supplied that is possible for their well being and comfort. The poor fellows in the trenches certainly have a hard time when weather is wet and cold but those (like ourselves) whose work does not take them down there so often are really most comfortable and well looked after.

Foolishly did not keep the date of my last diary letter (book sent you last week) but think I stopped after.

Friday 22 Oct Took the morning ride at 6.25 AM after a good cold bath and thoroughly enjoyed it as morning beautiful and bright. It is hard to realize we are at war sometimes everything seems so peaceful until you hear a gun go off or a shell burst. Stratton & I came up for lunch (on invitation) and food came up in early afternoon before I left and we had a nice talk about old times. There are only 5 or 6 of our class who are not over here or doing their share somewhere and two (Bright and Flegg) have been killed. Some of the more recent classes are all over to a man, and in all about 500 ex cadets out of a little over 1000 are in British or Canadian Expeditionary Forces. This ought to refute an article in some Winnipeg paper that I was told was running down the old college and asking where the graduates were. At the same

III

27 Sept

Don't think there are many who have stuck
faithfully to the Canadian Militia since graduation.
The way Good & I have through many vicissitudes,
Good went over his experiences in the
evening which were much more interesting &
thrilling now that I know the country & all.
Saturday 23rd Sept. Stayed in all morning thinking
and doing one thing and another. Looked at
beside me at long table making a map ^{that} I had
asked all the officers to do for instructional purposes.

Called on Col Hughes in afternoon about some of
men taking d'Arish Warfare Class that he is
arranging. There are so many little details and
new ideas for our own protection and the getting
ahead of, and distracting the enemy that these
things have to be followed up very closely. It is
pretty hard too to get ahead of the Boche even if
he is a brute with no sense of honor and
without mercy, as recently again depicted by
execution of Miss Cornell. Walked up to 1st
& 3rd Troop billets (about 3 miles) and had a
little chat with White before dinner. He is
a fine young chap and improves as you know
him better & in fact have very little fault to
find with any of my officers.

Sunday 24th Sept A rather beautiful day.

Attended divine service with those of my men
who were off duty at 11.00 and enjoyed it very
much. Two of our staff officers shifted

27 Oct

IV

in behind and remained. It is nice to see them do this as the services are more or less broken up and carried on wherever a few men can be collected together. Arranged about making a survey of 2nd line G/H trenches in PM which I have been ordered to do, and fortunately have 2 Cavalry (Whit & Campbell) and 3 Cyclist officers who are engineers or surveyors and know how to handle an instrument and tape or chain. Unfortunately I could not get a transit anywhere so will have to resort to compass bearings.

Rode over to 12th Battery about 4.00 and had a "hang up" (Father's expression) dinner about which I already wrote. Spent a pleasant evening and rode back in moonlight. Some moon that a few hours later would shine over Lakewood. The fall here is very like ours in Canada, beautiful autumn tints everywhere. The holly hedges are beautiful with green leaves and bright red berries. They are very numerous.

Monday 25th Oct Took ride in AM in a heavy downpour which lasted all day but really first we have had in 5 weeks. Was sorry for officers surveying in trenches but they carried on just the same although their notes were very wet. Stayed in all day as feel some officer must be here at HQ to

all the time in case of some important orders coming. Took a walk about 4 miles between 5 & 6 PM in rubber boots & slicker and passed Gen Turner & his aid doing likewise. Spent evening reading papers around fire. An enclosing an article I cut out by Crown Hays which I thought very good and which should be given greater publicity in face of all the recent unfair criticism of our cabinet ministers who really have a gigantic task and after all must not be blamed if everything does not go as we would want it. I think the reorganizing plan will work out all right and the other difficulties will eventually be overcome. I am sure.

Tuesday 26th was as beautiful as yesterday was bad. Took the rd again but mud awful. Spent a couple of hours in AM on top of our hill watching artillery duel (they took advantage of clear day) could plainly see our shells bursting over German trenches and their striking ground near ours and raising huge columns of mud & dust. also saw a great many planes. Two Boche ^{machines} were brought down on our front in AM, one with a lot of valuable notes and photos. Gordon Ingram came up for lunch and I had a very pleasant chat with him and gave him words

map location. He is a nice chap. He says his wife was greatly relieved when she heard he had left the 18th and got this job. He certainly is safer. Took him up on Hill in P.M. to show him the sights. We could plainly see the chimneys and church of Lille; the day was so clear, and the country south of us so flat. Surveys made good progress with map. Have a draughtsman plotting their notes under my supervision beside me at this table. The scale is 5,000 or about 400 feet = 1 inch.

Wednesday 27th Oct. Cloudy & uncertain. Took ride again. The Canadian Corps 1st & 2nd Divisions under Gen Alderson were inspected by H.M. the King, Gen French & I think Gen Jaffer. This P.M. are rather detachments from each unit; the Div. Intd. Troops being represented by myself & 15 men. We marched fast in column by route and then lined the road of Chemin d'Als. Majesty as he motored away. All this took place about 2 miles from the trenches and well under the German big guns had they known about it. We did not know who was to inspect us as everything was supposed to be very secret, and I think it was. Am now sitting by my brozier and think will close for tonight and add a few lines

in the morning before the mail goes.

Thursday 28th Oct. Another wet and bleak day.
 not out again. Surveyors started out but will
 have a miserable time. Am going down this P.M.
 to see some of the trenches they are peatting. Mail
 not in yet. I have had no direct letters from home
 now for nearly two weeks but Sarah sent me
 a sweet letter dear Mother had written her from
 N.Y. about Mr. Green. By the bye he looked
 wood up a little while ago as he may have
 told you. Forgot to mention that I saw Ed. Benet
 Gordon Hall & Green Hadgins at Review yesterday.
 They also say the Prince of Wales was with the
 King but I did not pick him out.

Tell Mother I have no objection to these
 letters being sent to Aunt Emma, Uncle Jack and
 Aunt Louisa (at her discretion) as I feel that I
 ought to write them more frequently but
 there really is so little to say. Canadian
 mails leave here on Mondays & Thursdays
 and I try and a few lines off in addition to
 this each time.

Expect to send you a small remittance to
 deposit in my $\text{\pounds}$ at H & E early in the month
 as I am saving a little all the time.

Well collect now dear Father with very
 best wishes for a bright & happy birthday
 and many many returns. Your loving son
 P.S. Try & wash in a game of golf on 16th

Edh