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Dearest Mother

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Sunday 25 Nov

Have already acknowledged your last letter about 25 Dec via Alice but see that I still have yours of 28th Oct in my folder with some envelopes from the girls. You must not sit up late to write me, that is my privilege and you must not usurp it.

Unfortunately I have been unable to find out Mrs Smith's address otherwise we would have corresponded with her and sent her a Christmas card. Are they "St Mark's Rectory Salisbury" as I see that address without a name in Wanda's list that I have kept. Doubtless I will hear from her.

Glad to hear you like new rectory and hope you will fit in, but of course it takes time.

I do agree with you about Bessie; how small to let one's religious circle about an individual as if it should be worn on one's sleeve. Don't personally feel like subscribing to rectory but must Father to have kept up my £52 annual subscription to General fund.

Magazines come regularly and fairly fast so don't worry as think I get them all.

Am wondering if you got Wanda's cap and other things I had kept but forwarded to you on 7th Sept. Am still holding receipt from B.T.O. and will try and follow up if not received.

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Am expecting to hear Hammer has been awarded any day now.

Fathers letter 28 Oct also to hand and so pleased to hear increased shell order as it will make a hecking for time being at least and in view of your sweet cable not expecting my presence now is quite a relief. I did appreciate it as fear I misled you, but quite unintentionally as fully believed it could be arranged until it intervened for Farmer. If I had gone would have been returned to depot in England after leave and have had to wait my turn to come over in a junior position which I would likely have done for very little chance with ~~the~~ one cavalry reg in Corps. That would have meant coming back here as a Capt or sub, but would have done it if you had wanted me at once. Now we will hope that in near future arrangements will be made to give those longest in France leave to Canada without sacrifice as has already been mentioned several times with reference to 1st Div and likely the others would follow. Nicely settled here and if it were not for blank spaces could hardly realize we had been in Flanders again.

Monday 19 Nov - Up at 5.45 and breakfast
for last time here at 6.15. Dull but mild
and no rain. Walked up to starting point to
see transport (2nd line) off at 7.15 and was much
put out by the messengers. Two of the squaddies
being nearly half an hour late, however
reached me self with difficulty and thought
over what I should say to the respective squadron
commanders about it after the move!!!

Some thing at 8.15 when regiment was
to assemble at same point but kept to
my good start at self restraint. It didn't
matter much but it might have as
only meant less light to get settled by at
night as we have over 25 miles to go.

Left all hills very clear which was
somewhat fortunate. Passed 2nd line
padding along at ---. We trotted
past them. They had had one mawgon
in ditch and broke a shaft and lost
half an hour. One casualty the lead
band of a mess cart stumbled and the
wheel and cart going over ridge and
base. Man is broken and has cut but
both might have been killed as we were at
"the hot" One cyclist also skidded into a
bush and had knee crushed. Fortunately
Mr. Orchard and field ambulances were
near so left them in good hands.

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Lunched at — where we halted for lunch
 also in Sept 15 and got into good billets at —
 with horses along the path on bank of canal.
 Had a hour's light to get settled in. Some
 officers think of themselves 1st men 2nd
 and horses 3rd instead of horses first
 men second and officers last and one
 who answered back when I checked him
 quietly got a call before the whole squadron
 that I don't think he will forget for some
 time!! Miss in school house and had a
 bed and sheets for a change and turned in
 about 9.00 as tired and as no fire cold
 although night comparatively mild.

Tuesday 20 Nov. Got off to a good start at
 same time passing through ancient town
 of — en route saw full of dirty Portuguese
 B Squadron leading today! So had McEwen
 riding in front with me followed by
 ardaly McElroy who carries my German
 lance at the corner". Passed various
 Canadian fortifications also on their way
 south, and met several thousand
 reinforcements marching north to meet
 them to fill depleted ranks!! Pushed
 forward a little as better to get load off
 horses backs than halt for lunch and
 got in about 1.30 without accident.
 Campbell leading officer met

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and we went straight into our old
bulletin board stables just at it started to
rain. Found the Iron Horse had worked
at them and left them in good shape except
for missing cushions and windows broken
by small boys since they left 5 days before.

Madame Elmont had a fire in her mess
and Harrison's table and was delighted to see
Canadian back, as evidently the Irishmen
has not been as friendly as we are.

Could not get my old room and at first
so fine here but the old people whom I saw
with a most kind offer to look of them
and have put a room in which makes me
very comfortable but about only place in
village without electric light from mess.

No mail so wrote Sarah and Helen early.

Wednesday 21 Nov. Rain and miserable
most of day so took a walk instead of ride
as 2 birds developing where I sit and
spent an hour at stables. Decided to finish
clipping horses although rather late in
season but heavy coats make them so hot
if called upon to do much work that
worse than none as they never dry and
here we have stables and cages for a
month or so at least we hope.

12 more abnormals and an officer in
Hodges place wanted at once. Had all
offered in mess at 2.00 and spoke pretty

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plainly but generally about certain matters of discipline and housewifery and also laziness, impressing on subalterns that when they were squadron commanders or C.O.'s they could groom their horses only once a day if they liked but that now they must conform to my wishes and those of their squadron commanders without a word. Am having them all out at morning stables for a time. Am going out myself tomorrow and will excuse all those who are there before trumpet stops and say - rest on for a couple of weeks more (!!!). Am O.C.'s position is one of continued aggression. If standards are to be kept high.

Business cable received from Father but after I had sent my weekly one. Sent a wire mail. Made in mess after a rubber of bridge as was sold in my room. Sarah miserable and full the uncertainty about Constance and your disappointment has bothered us both a bit, but unavoidable.

Thursday 22. Now less anniversary but as a personal matter had to celebrate in my own heart and thoughts but have only feelings of deepest thankfulness for what my love has brought into my life and what Sarah has meant to me the last three years. Had a nice

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left from here about it which was next
best to being together but we may find
this. We have not yet spent one together.

Visited 2 M. stores and went over things
with Cockshut. Went to M.O. about boils
but did not get much comfort and will have
to diet for a week or so as they have been
on since a few days due to boat last time.

Went for long walk and worked in office.
Left office after lunch and then back up
to camp to see about a number of matters.
Scorch mist so much as started with me
returned. Walked most of way home as Wake
went home. Engaged about 30 day leave and
McMullen thinks I can get it if I apply at once
as only one a day allowed in whole Corps
and a lot of applications in so would have to
wait turn. However must await Father's cable.

Friday 23rd Nov. Dear Wood's birthday and
intended going over to grave but could not
make it. However was with him & thought
a great deal. What a sweet memory he has
left us all. Worked in office and let Smith
take stable. Took short walk before lunch
and short ride after a so nice sunny day.

Strained back a little picking up box at
A.M. no great trouble but will pass off in a
few days. Allan Taylor for lunch. Played
bridge to make a 4th although did not
feel much like it.

Saturday 24th Nov. Toast and cocoa for breakfast and walked to — for exercise. Arranged for an inspection of bicycles after noon. Sent 127 men and 2 officers away to conduct remnants from the coast. They like this trip as holiday in —. Rain and quite windy. Inspected men's messes while they were at dinner. Spent afternoon in mess finishing up Xmas cards and making out a list to send regimentally with Smith's help. Cable came at last and such a relief but my heart went out to you in your selfishness and disappointment. I sit in hope it may soon come about without compromising my position which has taken 2 years to acquire. Balance of regimental ribbon also arrived and glad to get it so men can get what they want for their girls!!! Box of candy from Sarah for 22nd but must keep it awhile. Read Times in mess and wrote Alice and Sarah warmest warmest New Year's fire.

Sunday 25th March applied for 30 day leave to NICE and called Sarah to that effect. Spent half an hour in office and then walked across country to deer park and had a little stroll alone there. No one about. Flowers all green so old warden has baked after it. Camerary now full but a new one started alongside. Thought of

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you all alone so far away "carrying
on" in spite of your disaffection.

Late for lunch but as nothing much
did not matter. Major Arthur over from
England about elections and voting there.
Lunched with us. There is to be a poll for
each squadron and I should get ballots
and papers any date now and will start.

We discussed a number of points and
also as to whether I should institute a
campaign in regt. to get men and
officers to subscribe to Victory Loans.

I am undecided about it as they are
doing their bit but know that money
is needed. Met all afternoon so glad
I had walk in A.M. also much colder.

Got my few little Christmas presents together
for mailing tomorrow, not much as
income barely meets expenses and
don't want to draw on what I have at
home.

Also good tea at 6.00 cold beef and
turned peas, played cribbage and have
spent balance of evening looking this
and will now turn in and want to be
out before "stables" sounds at 6.15.

all love

JH