

From the holdings of
Western Archives, Western University

Sunday 3 Nov-18

Dearest Mother

I wonder if this is the last diary letter I will write, as yesterday I received my warrant for leave to England & thence Canada and hope before end of another week to be on the way or at least in England. Unfortunately we have been ordered today to "stand to" and move forward tomorrow and the car which I had planned for next Tuesday cannot be supplied until the military situation settles again and almost impossible to go to Boulogne by train with all my kit. Further Emil is in hospital, having had a fall from his horse and may be away 10 days and as I have to hand over to him I don't just know how things can be arranged. However I will do best I can to get away as soon as possible and will run no unnecessary risks in the meantime.

The news from all sides seems excellent and the downfall of Germany seems inevitable. If she will not swallow the bitter pill of an armistice on our terms now and wants to fight on until we assemble the Italians, and our eastern forces on frontier of Bavaria, she will have to swallow a doubly bitter one later on and not likely get the chance until

3-11-18

we have passed the German frontier and reached a few of her cities about.

Show not a very interesting week but will make a start.

Monday 28 Oct German day, warm & just like summer. Took Wals out for a 2 hour gallop and had a good look over our mounts and grazing. They are improving and my great difficulty now is shortage of men & being about 80 under strength. People here cannot do enough for us, feed us, clean, wash our fires and wait on us hand & foot. I suppose they will get over it but just now our treatment of them is such a contrast to that of the Germans. Recommended 5 MCO's for commissions and 5 men for honors during recent operations. Looked over such recommended horses of which we have still quite a few. Had a haircut & wash after lunch, and it was one of the best I have ever seen. Had all our bicycles out too.

One squadron ordered forward and sent Roussier up with "A". They got off in dark about 5.30 PM. Was sorry as had arranged a sports day for men, but cannot start with the other 3 squadrons. We had 3 jumps and last jumping. Have 100 prisoners in prison on the spot. We have a lot of such opportunities as they come

3-11-18

and was glad we carried it through. The
 R.N.W.M.P are not very much at all
 but pegging or jumping compared to my
 men. Called up Ed Parrot about A's squadron
 Alex & Greille & Lind Plummer for dinner
 and spent a pleasant evening with them.
 Col Perry of 13th called in with Jennings. Wrote
 Col MacCormack about being again. The — th
 shs are to attack — in morning. No
 word of leave.

Tuesday 29 Oct. Breakfast before 8.00. Did
 some writing and drew my last 200 for pay
 this month as have had to supplement
 Sally's expenses returning to England.
 Attached postponed. Rode out to 2nd squadron
 at riding school and gave D some instruction
 in jumping. Another beautiful day &
 had along Gellafan Wake. attended noon
 stables. Held office and "dispensed justice".
 Letter from Sally saying she was getting
 ready to leave Paris for London.

McLinnon in for dinner and we had
 a general discussion on the war situation.
 Went over war diary for Oct. Very
 pleased with P & C medals and ordered 4
 more.

Wednesday 30 Oct Thinking the attack
 was on went forward with Jennings
 about 9.00 about finding Brigade B's

3-11-18

Hats where they had been ~~there~~ and not seeing
 anybody about thought all had gone on
 and rode to canal in outskirts of — where
 we were sniped at on cross road & beat a hasty
 retreat. The attack had been put off and we
 had ridden into front line and the cross road
 in question had been christened "Blighty Corner"
 as 34 casualties in 3 days from M. G.
 fire and snipers in city. We came up again on
 foot made a reconnaissance from above
 which we entered through back garden. The
 place had been heavily gassed right before
 quite a few civilian casualties. All our lunch
 and rode back via Bodo Hill but did not locate
 Hannon himself although saw some of
 his men. A glorious day for us but
 Jennings not much on cross country.
 Saw Balders Shadachat, a capt with M. C.
 Jean still in hole of night. On return found
 Smith had put his shoulder and jumping
 around when too high jumping. Suffering
 quite a bit and hoped would improve with
 my leave. Felt chilly & fear I have a
 little dose of "flu". With Sally prebed early.
 Thursday 31 Oct. Saw a miserable
 Hunt up to see Smith who later was
 sent to hospital. Sent in report on
 recent operations and about 10.30
 Mr. Hannon called in his car & took me

3-11-18

to big city of — — — — — half of which
 places. Looks anxious to visit as such
 historic points. The latter intact but
 destitute of civilians and horribly looted
 and all factories destroyed completely.

Saw engine boilers of small. Latter had
 charges put in cylinders & around hubs of
 flywheels & exploded, former the same
 but fired without result. Horrible messes.

now. Arrived at — about 12.30. City
 intact and about 200,000 civilians still there
 but looking huddled and shabby &
 mostly working class. A wonderful
 old place but badly damaged in certain
 districts by fire in early days of war.

Had good lunch at Hotel Strassberg
 costing me 60 frs. Spent a couple of
 hours walking about talking to

civilians brought fully a sermon from
 from a private family. They have
 suffered hell for word of the 60,000

girls who were medically examined!!
 and departed a year ago to learn German
 habits. Talk about the rape of Sabine
 in ancient history. This puts it in the
 back ground. We heard some sad stories.

Every home was visited between 10 PM &
 3 AM and all chains made, no good bys
 and never heard of again.

3-11-18

Got back about 5.00 and although cold not
improved was glad of the opportunity to see
her for myself. Glad of a fire in Miss.
Letter from Sally at Lyson a great
relief. She had a comparatively
comfortable trip over. Arrived early
Friday at Nov. The attack on — came
off this AM and was successful, "A"
participating. 1000 prisoners with 200
casualties and all at times. Our baggage
was wonderful they say and killed a
great many. The Town of which
surrounded by campains and have
been concentrated in this village a
mally new. I ran near up here
would have ridden forward but did not
feel up to it. Gordon to take in for
lunch, very well & cheerful. He took me
forward in P.M. and we saw Slawson's
head about the show. It was 'all saints'
day so holiday and in — a big moving
town the whole population was out
with flowers & sitting on chairs on
sidewalks and I will never forget seeing
the hordes of German prisoners some
wounded passing them. They knew a lot
of farmers who had been killed there
and the gas boats and shaking of fists
especially women was well seen.

3-11-18

6

There was no violence although some
"effectionation" but one could not help
feeling the whole batch of sums should
have been turned over to the Germans.

An mysterious abatch was killed in
front of me & I had a Prussian
officer in ~~and~~ who could talk French
and questioned him, but he would not
admit that they were beaten & that the
Germans must fall. Told White about my
plans. Sent 20 men to hospital with
"flu". Two have died this week of it.

Have made Maximilian using paymaster.
Lansen lost 10 horses for shell but
fortunately no men. Letter from Sally
Saturday 2nd Nov - who tells my cut
up about poor old Mac, about whom she
had just heard. He was our best friend
in France. Sorry no cable this week
last but for present they are suspended.

Agreeably surprised to find my leave
warrant in and orders to report to
Argyll House forthwith. I can hardly
realize it, and that I will see you all
again perhaps this month. It seems
so good to be there so long. Have
arranged to get off soon. Sent a
message to Smith and will be see
him tomorrow. Inspected regt at 4.30

3-11-18

but as met a miserable did not stay out long and began to get things in shape to "hand over" my command.

attended a council meeting at 4.00 PM. Entertained a Canadian RAF Officer at dinner and in evening called via Callington of — M. C. Ben who was a sub & did his book during week in 24th. He had gone on since Oct 14. I have stood still !!!

Sunday 3 Nov 18 Had church parade & service at 8.30 in a German cinema. One of the best & heartiest services we have ever had. Got 50 Huns to help clean up stables and streets & made the — — work. Orders to "stand to" and a message that for that reason I could not get a car on Tuesday as I had planned. Will see General today or tomorrow and if he wants me to stay for this advance I feel I will have to do as with him. Load up of the seven dead & Farris would be only Hanson left amongst senior officers who is up with his squadrons. If the General says "go". I will as soon as I can get a car.

Father's letter Oct 7th. Mother's same date and Ella ~~Oct 7th~~ ^{Oct 2nd}. No mail today. If I get away this week, this will be last diary letter !!! Love Bob