

W. D. N.  
Salisbury Plain  
6. Dec. 1914.

Dearest Mother

I received two letters from you in one envelope, one of which was headed for Bob so I suppose they were forwarded from Montreal. I did not notice the post mark on the envelope so am not quite sure of this.

It is rather a pity that he cannot stay with Claire but could hardly attend to his work properly and not be more or less on the job most of the time. But her McEwen's letter was enclosed with yours and I am returning it as think you might perhaps want to keep it. It was very good of him to offer his services and if there is anything he can do I know he is quite sincere when he says he would be only too glad to attend to it. The McEwens are a fine family and the boys are all very capable. I think I told you I am hoping to get Alan in my Battery as captain and feel confident I shall succeed. His present command (the Brigade ammunition column) has not turned

out very well and he will be glad to relinquish it to go with me. He has been handicapped through lack of capable people under him and as far as I can tell has had rather a hard time. In addition he is perhaps a little young to do the thing justice.

Am glad that Father had a successful and interesting trip to Toronto. These little changes make a nice break and help to keep me from getting too much localized.

It seems funny to hear you talking about double windows and other preparations for winter while we are still in tents on these downs. The weather has not improved at all lately as it has been raining more or less steadily for the past week. Our work has been sadly interfered with and the discomfort somewhat increased though everyone is pretty well used by now to the mud and the rain. We have had several violent wind storms lately which seem to sweep straight

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across from the north sea. Nearly all the big magazines are down including post office and canteens but our own office is still standing. It seems pretty sound but is creaking and groaning as I write and unless the wind lets up, may go at any time. Really I do not quite understand why we are left here under these conditions as it cannot be expected that the Canadian Division will make any progress when so situated.

I am glad that Bob is going to have Faulkner with him as he will prove invaluable but hope that it will not entail too much work on you and Alice in getting someone in shape to take his place. Closing the stable will of course help considerably and in winter time if the furnace, plants and paths are looked after there is not a great deal more to be attended to. My servant Shirley is excellent and I am told that a good one means everything at the front so it is

something to be thankful for. My groom who looks after Peggy and the other horse is willing enough but not any too capable so perhaps will make a change as far as he is concerned. I have named my bay horse "The Wabbe" after Hereward the Wabbe as his eyes are quite different colours as were those of the Saxon hero.

I wrote Ibb a couple of weeks ago and gave him a rough list as best I could of what are essential to his comfort so he ought to know by now pretty well what he needs. There is no limit to what an officer can have here but when going to the front the regular allowance of thirty five pounds of baggage per officer cannot be exceeded.

Your letter was apparently written before the marriage and I expect you are all rejoicing as I am at the good news. I was delighted when Ibb told me of his engagement last September and it is even better to know that they are now happily married.

I am enclosing part of a divisional order giving a list of the officers who are being sent home, among the number is Gordon Hunt. According to the order they are all recalled to Canada and that is a nice way of saying that they are not much good and are better out of the way. I heard some time ago that Gordon was not getting on well so was not surprised when I noticed his name on the list.

Your speaking of going to market reminds me of the apparent lack of various vegetables over here. One gets nothing but cabbage or brussels sprouts all the time and everyone is sick of them both by now. They are apparently the staples and even at fairly good hotels it seems that no others are provided. I am not, of course, grumbling as our messing is really very good but this is one thing in which Ontario is far ahead of England.

Am glad that Alice seems to

be enjoying herself and hope that you  
 all enjoyed having John up for the  
 week end. These little changes help  
 to make life worth living and I  
 hope you will have others come  
 and stay at Calwood as it makes  
 such a pleasant break (as a rule) in  
 the routine. I added "as a rule because  
 I happened to think of Estelle's red  
 headed friend whose name, for  
 the moment, I have completely forgotten.  
 I suppose the bride will be going  
 up to London for a visit but  
 probably not before I do leave.  
 You might tell Jean that I think  
 she ought to write me a letter and  
 tell me how her affairs are  
 progressing as I am always much  
 interested.

I did intend sending to London  
 for one or two small presents or  
 else getting some one to get them  
 for me, but so far have not  
 managed it. Should I run up again  
 for a day or so this month I  
 shall look round but please do  
 not think that I have forgotten

about you all in the event of my not doing so.

There is one thing about this contingent that I have not hitherto criticized but I am going to now, and that is the matter of chaplains. They have been shoved into every corps and there must be nearly fifty of them altogether. One hundred thousand dollars a year would be a moderate estimate of what this costs Canada in salaries alone and I cannot see where such an expenditure is justifiable. I am willing to admit that there should be such officers but ten or a dozen would be more than enough and I know that the majority of them are doing little else but eating three square meals a day and getting ten or twelve hours of sleep every night. It is a case of "too much of a good thing". The chaplain of this brigade is a Baptist named Grimshaw and though he may be and undoubtedly is a man of God, there is not the slightest shadow of an excuse for his being here and

there are lots of others like him. Some of them are outstanding figures who are working hard but many (in my opinion) are having a fine holiday. I hear there is a great wish for such posts on the second contingent and I hope common sense will be used and that only a few will be sent. I am really beginning to look with some suspicion on a good many of them.

Talking about the above reminds me to ask if you ever heard whether Heakes got a post. I saw him in the distance once at Valcartier and heard that he was trying to get the chaplaincy of the Patricia's at the time but have heard nothing about him since either direct or indirect.

I mentioned in my letter to father that I had received a very nice letter from Logan Watrous and I answered it yesterday. I thought it very nice of him to write and appreciated getting his letter very much. It is remarkable how few people have taken the trouble to write and though it is perhaps

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not to be expected of very many, it makes one appreciate those who do, just so much more.

I sent a few photographs forward in my letter to father all of which have to do with our trip over on the Montezuma. Some of them are really quite good. I had a letter from her captain the other day and he says that she is to be used either as a mission ship or else to be sent to blockade some harbor as he was transferred to the Montford and the ship herself has been dismantled. I enclose a letter from him which I would like kept for the scrap book.

I had hoped to have a draft for me hundred and fifty dollars to enclose in this letter as mentioned before. I wrote to London for it some days ago but so far have had no reply. Our mail is poorly handled and the blowing down of the post office tents (twice) this week will probably account for some further

delay. I am allowing the local post office people the use of half our office marquee for the present to try and help them out as it is the only one standing in the whole camp. Colonel Mitchell has gone away on three days leave and I am once more running the brigade but this does not entail much extra work as things are running along very smoothly.

I have about exhausted my present stock of news so will draw to a close. Much love to all especially yourself.

your devoted son  
Ward