



3<sup>rd</sup> Dec. 1914

West Down north  
Salisbury Plain

My dear Father

I was very pleased to receive today your letter dated November the thirteenth with its interesting particulars as to business. The mail service is apparently very bad as it should not take three weeks for a letter from London to reach me. However most of them take that long or a little less and I suppose the mail at this end is poorly handled. I hope my letters are not so slow in reaching their destination in Canada.

I am rather sorry that you did not see fit to take a share of the shell business even if small, you are of course the best judge of what could be done and if 5.M. would mean making them at a loss the concern is much better without the order. There will be tremendous quantities of the 15 M. required and from what we are told a very serious shortage exists at present as regards ammunition for

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the field guns. In fact one of the reasons advanced for our not going forward yet is that they are having extreme difficulty in supplying the batteries now at the front with sufficient ammunition. This is, of course, confidential and may not be altogether true but it would be quite possible. Some of the batteries have fired each upwards of a thousand shells in one day (this is of course an exceptionally high consumption) and when we remember that there are probably upwards of one hundred and fifty batteries of the one type now over there, some idea of the quantities needed can be arrived at.

As regards the termination of the war, it is the general opinion over here that it will last several years. It may be that Germany will be forced to her knees sooner than is expected but this is considered doubtful. Germany alone was ready and prepared for the war and even now after four

months of it all the fighting is still being done on the allies territory. I am told (by those who know) that Russia was not ready at all for a conflict and everyone knows that France was anything but prepared. The latter country could not even furnish rifles for thousands of her reservists and even now military equipment of various kinds is being supplied to the French by various concerns in Britain.

It is to be regretted that business is so dull but if the others are in like predicament such a state of affairs cannot be helped. I had a nice letter from Logan Waterous the other day and he complains about conditions and lack of orders. It is encouraging to note that collections are keeping up fairly well and that our liabilities to both the Bank and outside creditors have been reduced. You do not say what was done about the Winnipeg branch and I suppose that steps have already been taken to close it for

the present at least. It seems too bad that the machine shop should suffer so severely and that both Lammot and Wheaton cannot be kept on regularly. However all these things will be faced, I am sure, in the proper spirit.

I have always intended writing to Messrs. Morgan and Holmes but do not seem able to do it. However I have not forgotten them and when an opportunity to write arrives I shall take advantage of it. Please remember me to them and to other members of the staff who may enquire.

As I have stated in other letters I was transferred to the Third Field Artillery Brigade as adjutant some three weeks ago and I am still filling this position. I was glad to get away from the Ammunition Column to a more active post and am glad to say that a still more congenial change is scheduled to take place in the near future. The artillery of the Canadian Contingent is being re-organized to conform to changes which have been

found advantageous in actual war. The Batteries are being reduced to units with 4 guns instead of six and I am to have command of one of them. I am trying to get McEwen and Scandrett and a number of the London men into this unit and expect to succeed in doing so. I shall however be obliged to fill up the Battery with men from some other locality. However the change is an eminently satisfactory one from my standpoint though being adjutant is not a bad position at all.

I see from the Canadian papers that the Canadian artillery is reported as being at the front. This is, of course, an unqualified falsehood and the government should take action against papers that publish unauthorized news of this kind. Any war news emanating from other than official British, French or Russian sources should be looked upon as of doubtful veracity especially if it comes through U. S. press agencies. I shall endeavor to notify you promptly when our plans are defined but I see no reason

at present for altering my previously  
expressed opinion that we will not move  
for another month at least.

On the whole our sojourn in  
England has been productive of few, if  
any, of the benefits and improvements that  
were expected. The Ordnance people are in  
hopeless shape and the shortages and  
deficiencies are not being made up as they  
should. As I have said before, the  
weather has been subtly abominable, it  
is no exaggeration to say that rain has  
fallen three out of every four days  
since our arrival and the camps are  
little better than quagmires of a  
thick clayey mud which is ankle deep.  
Naturally training cannot be properly  
carried out under these conditions and  
little if any progress is being made. The  
men naturally suffer more from the wet  
than do the officers and it is a marvel  
to me that there is so little sickness  
and practically no complaining on their part.  
Those who have not bought rubber boots  
go about from day to day with wet  
feet and our move into huts is still

as far off as ever. These remarks are entirely confidential and must not go beyond the immediate family etc. We hoped on leaving Canada to be cleared of all the bungling and mismanagement which pervaded everything there but apparently no such a prospect is ahead of us.

To give an example of the weather, I might cite a storm of yesterday afternoon. It blew hard and rained practically all evening and afternoon and about eight p.m. the wind developed into a gale. The rain poured through tents as through a lot of sieves and practically all the marquees in the camp were blown down. One brigade office tent was saved by strenuous efforts and I think at present is the only one that is still standing. The horse lines of most of the batteries are half a mile or so away from the mens tents and are moved every few days but even despite this, the horses are usually standing up to their fetlocks in mud.

Please do not think that I am complaining as I am perfectly well and quite as comfortable as circumstances permit but I

though it would be interesting for you to know the exact conditions as they exist here.

I have not a great deal of news to give you as it has been covered pretty well in my family letters, of which I try to write at least two a week. As you know I had a very pleasant half hour with Mr. Blair in London a week ago though I did not see young Redston as he happened to be out at the time. I have written for a draft for \$150<sup>00</sup> which I will mail to Mother when received. It is to be expended on a present for your new daughter or given her in cash just as Mother thinks best.

I asked Ibb some time ago to try and let me know how my personal finances stand but suppose he was so inundated with work that he did not accomplish it. However the principal things to be looked after are my two insurance policies (Canada Life due in Nov. and Mutual due in May), the purchase of N. E. stock, the payment of loan on Mutual policy and payment of a note to Ibb for some two hundred dollars or thereabouts.



I have made a small deposit in the Bank of Montreal (Waterloo Place London England) and have made arrangements whereby my pay cheques will be deposited direct therein at the end of each month commencing at the 31<sup>st</sup> of December. This may simplify matters a little and I shall transfer some money to you for deposit in London (ent when there is enough here to make it worth while doing so.

I have sent home from time to time papers and other things of interest which I understood Ith was putting away for me for scrap book purposes. I shall be glad if you will look after this for me in the event of any such envelopes being sent. (One enclosed herewith being cable announcing Ith's marriage)

Any letters for me should still be addressed to the Third Brigade as I do not know the number of the Battery I will get nor do I know what Brigade it will be allotted to. There is some talk of

making a new Brigade but I rather imagine they will leave the present Brigades alone and make them consist of 4-4 gun batteries instead of 3-6 gun batteries. All this re-organization could have been avoided had we been left alone at first by Sam. Hughes. I see he is as yet unmuzzled by the Conservative party. Surely they cannot put up with such a d — fool as a member of the cabinet for much longer. I have yet to meet a man on this contingent who has a good word to say for him or his work. I am also positive that his remarks led the British War Office to think we were much better prepared and equipped than we actually were and the result has been that we are not up to their expectations and they feel that they have been misled.

I think I have covered all I have to say just now so will close.  
 Best love to all and again my best  
 thanks for interesting letter  
 your devoted son  
 Woodman Leonard