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as I have stated pretty
frequently in my recent
letters the First Canadian
Contingent which left Canada
amidst the blasts of
Sam. Hughes trumpet is
now being left to rot on
Salisbury Plain and
apparently no one cares. I
cannot make out why and
often wonder if the General
realizes what is going on
under his nose. The only
gratifying part of the
whole thing is the
excellent spirit shown by
the men, the vast
majority of whom are
behaving admirably and
there is little or no

West Linn N.
20. Dec. 14.

Dearest Mother

Though there is
little or nothing to write
about will start a letter
as the evening is yet young.
I wrote Bob a couple of
days ago and hope that
my letter will reach him
before he sails. Unless I
am much mistaken expect
that it will as I cannot
see that any good object
will be attained by
rushing the Second Contingent
over here. Certainly not, if
they are to be located
here or in any place
resembling it.

grumbling. Many of them
have not had dry feet
for weeks and the chorus
of coughs on the early
stable parade is not to
be wondered at. There is
not much real sickness but
the general health must
be and is suffering and
at the same time no good
object is being served.

One reason advanced is
that the War Office want
to keep the Canadians
to themselves as our pay
(all ranks, especially the men)
is somewhat higher than
what is being given over
here. It is feared that
the old country troops

would get discontented if
the Canadians mixed with
them to any extent. There
may be something in this
but I cannot see that
it is a good enough
reason to leave the
contingent here where it
cannot train properly and
where its general condition
is bound to decline.

Did I tell you that
I had a nice letter
from Mrs. Allport telling
me that two rooms in
her flat are at my
disposal any time I
go up to town. Aunt
Louisa has apparently

dinner as possible. Later
on I may run up to town
for another couple of days
if nothing interferes. These
little jaunts are fairly
expensive but make a
tremendously welcome break
and also enable me to
get a decent bath, for
which there are absolutely
no facilities in this entire
camp.

21. Dec.

We had considerable rain last
night but it was bright today,
the sun shone for a time and
tonight it is freezing. Wish
we could get a spell of clear
cold weather as men and horses
would all feel better.

Had the Battery out all
morning and got in some
good work but am sorely
handicapped with as many unfit
horses and a shortage of them
also to say nothing of good
men.



written her and she is
really very kind to make the
offer. She also wanted to
know if there was anything
she could do for me or
for any of my men.

Orders have come out
authorizing the sending of
twenty per cent of the men
on leave for five days at
Christmas and a similar
number at the New Year.

This naturally interferes
with the routine but does
not really matter as so little
work of any value can be
carried out under present
conditions. I shall stay here
for Christmas and will
try and see that the men
in camp have as good a



We have hitherto had a brigade mess where all the officers have taken their meals but the contract expired today and we decided to have our own Battery mess. This naturally means some trouble and perhaps a slightly enhanced cost but the officers will not be away from the lines at meal time and we will save considerable time walking to and from. Both these points count for a good deal and on the whole we should be better off after we get things properly started.

I had two more invitations today for Christmas and following week end but I declined them both as consider it advisable as stated before to remain with the men. In addition to these do not think I previously mentioned having had a note from Bertie Biggar asking me to spend the holidays with him at Worcester where he is apparently stationed. So he has not gone to the front after all

22 Dec. 14.

Your dear letter of Sunday (Dec 6th?) just came in tonight also two from Alice, one enclosing clipping from the Advertiser. It states facts fairly well and reads well enough, though I am at a loss to know how they got word of the

Am surprised to hear about
Tom Beattie's death. Hindley
will likely get everything
despite the worry and
pain he has given the old
man in the last few
years.

As I have frequently
said before I think his marriage
is the finest thing he
has ever brought about
and the more I think of
it the more it seems to
me that he and Sally
are admirably suited to
one another.

I note what you say
about Hyla and Ritchie's
army and am sure he will
make an excellent officer.
It is very easy to get
into the sparehead army
and lots of commissions in
it have been given to men
from the ranks of the



re-organization as soon.
There is apparently
nothing being provided in the
way of Xmas dinner for the
Canadians over here but I
am looking after my men
and presume other C.O.'s will
do likewise. The officers
will have a nice little
dinner of their own and
you may be sure we will
not forget to drink a
toast to the loved ones
at home.

Am sorry that I think feels
so tired. Probably he is
doing more than his
share of the work and then
the events of the past
month would be enough
to tax anyone.

Canadian contingent.

my fingers and the
chilblains still bother
me a little, but they
are minor ailments and my
general health is excellent. I
get my washing done at a
millage near here but there
is not a great deal of it to
be done I can assure you.

As you say, the
progress of the war is very
slow. However the allies
are advancing step by step
and I think better things
can be expected one of these
days. I think that they
will pierce the German
line at one or two points
and force the enemy to
retire to prevent being
outflanked. Col. Victor
Williams who has been
at the front for a fortnight

gave us a lecture today on
what he had seen but he
is a very poor speaker and
brought out little or nothing
we had not heard before.

Will be glad to get the
snaps Alice speaks of also
a wedding picture if one
is to be sent me. Somebody
ought to shoot that dog
of Lealy Smiths and the
Humane Society are quite
right in asking her to get
rid of it. Suppose the
sentiment attached makes him
valuable but she could
have him stuffed and
mounted in her room

Well Will certainly has a
pinch in not having to work
for a living but I doubt
if he is any happier for
it than the rest of us.

someone inferred such a
thing to them. What has
Jean Allen done to think
so well of herself. I rather
thought she, at least,
would have more sense.

I quite agree with
Colonel Denison that Ibb
is bitter where he is,
especially after he has
worked so hard for the
battalion. Harry Greenleaf
has command of the
 Depot Battery in the Second
Brigade and will now get
Captains pay well more which
he was not drawing in
the ammunition column. The
job ought to just suit
him and the monetary
consideration is considerable
in his case, though I
am sorry not to have him
here to keep us all

It will certainly be very nice
if you have the Schopis and
Ibb Leonard's for Xmas
and I hope you all have
a nice time.

Am not altogether
surprised at Aunt Lizzie's
attitude re Ibb and Sally.
She is rather a hard one to
understand and after all
Ibb did for her in the
past two years one would
imagine that she might
have something nice to say.

The row in the Princess
Patricia chapter is rather
amusing and they are a
pack of fools in my
estimation though they
might not believe it if

cheered up.

Clair's letters are very interesting, as they do, particularly such full movements of Ibb and sally. Hope they both enjoyed the brief honeymoon at Lake Placid.

am sending about thirty men on pass tomorrow and they do not have to be back until the Monday after Christmas. They get free transportation and I will let another lot go next week for the new year. We cannot do much actual training while they are away but it will be a welcome change and a great many are going to their own homes.

Do not bother about

sending me any cats as we are doing very well in that line and I can always buy extras and as for them when we feel like them. Our own mess promises to be a great innovation. We are very cosy in a bell tent with oil cloth on table and all more or less congenial. Oceans of love to all.

Your devoted son
Wood