

W. D. W.

18. 12. 14.

(Woir)

Dearest Mother

Your letter of November twenty ninth with many enclosures reached me on Tuesday. I read all with great interest though there was, I must confess, quite a lot of Aunt Emma's that I could not make out.

I do not wonder that you have some difficulty in getting used to the idea of Bob being married. Naturally people would want to hear all about it which was doubtless rather tiresome but after all they did the very best thing possible under the circumstance. You gain a daughter by it and I am sure you will rejoice with me in that and that Bob has attained his heart's desire even if he moved rather rapidly in bringing things to a culmination. She is a dear girl and I only hope that your second son will be as fortunate if he ever makes a matrimonial venture. There were

quite a few of the officers of this contingent who got married just before leaving, Darling of Toronto who married the younger Hellmouth girl and Elkins, who was at R.M.C. with us and who married one of the Sharts of Kingston and lots of others.

Your letter might be taken as a query as to whether I have lost my heart too or not. Rest assured that I am still quite a free lance and for the present at least have no intention of "putting it to the touch, to win or lose it all."

I am returning Lolly's letters as you request and do not wonder that you want to keep them as they are beautiful. It must have meant a great deal to Lolly to have had Elaine with her at the time of the marriage and both she and Aubrey have been perfect bricks. Ith was fortunate too in being able to have Uncle Jack's help and there is no one I would rather have with me

than Uncle John, who has always been a brick to us all and certainly stands first among all the Aunts and Uncles.

I had a note yesterday from Mrs. Mackenzie asking me to have dinner with them on Christmas night, Mrs. Betts to be there also. It is very kind of her but I am as yet undecided what to do. My Battery is still anything but organized and so much has yet to be done before it will be in proper running order. If I do not go up to London for Christmas will try and take a couple of days at New Year and let me or two of the other officers have leave at Xmas instead.

I intend trying to give the men some sort of a spread, plum pudding, mince pie and some beer perhaps but it is so hard to get anything delivered here satisfactorily that it is a bit of a problem. Colonel Mitchell is doing all he can to help and

I shall be able to count on his support in the reorganization work which will no doubt be helpful.

at present I am short about fifty men and nearly as many horses and the make up of the units I am supposed to draw from is very inferior. It almost infuriates me to think of that man Hughes whose absolute incapability is directly responsible for all this extra work and also for the lack of equipment which is the outstanding weakness of the whole contingent especially as far as the Artillery is concerned.

Please thank Alice for her letter enclosing a long one from Clarie giving a full description of the wonderful week in Montreal. She and Father must have had quite a time at the Kennels treating the crowd to champagne. As usual Marshall was to the occasion. I am glad to hear that Edna was surprised as well as lots of others; it will do

them all good

Dont think I mentioned that I had another note from Mrs. Bells regarding the Mackenzie invitation for Christmas. She has evidently heard about the wedding and is naturally very anxious to get some particulars. I also had a letter from Aunt Louisa saying she is sending a pair of socks which she has knitted herself, which is very nice of her. You need not worry about my not having all the clothes etc that are necessary as I am really well supplied. When we do really go to the front I shall have to get a box or something of the sort and put a lot of things into it as things accumulate so fast as I certainly cannot take all I have. The chilblains have not bothered me for weeks and I am exceptionally well kept for a slight cold which nearly all here have as impossible to avoid them under present conditions. I have taken my ring off as it bothered me a

bit and will leave it behind if slightly swollen finger does not get normal again.

Am glad that Maria did not leave you as it will only mean the breaking in of one. Such a small family to look after must lighten the work of the domestics to some extent though it does not make the house any smaller. Am glad you had the maids in. I knew him in Winnipeg years ago and he is an awfully decent chap though I have never met his wife.

The clothing of the men is fast wearing out with so much hard and rough work and such wet weather. At present the wardrobe is in a hopelessly chaotic state but we all hope that things will improve before very long. The weather is not very cold but I think the average Canadian feels it a little as so much damper than our beautiful climate.

I think Mr. Hammond is very foolish to go with the

second contingent as captain though it is none of my business. A clergyman or monk of this sort is neither one thing nor the other and you do not see many of them in the British service. I've had about Poi being lonely; cannot he make friends with the squirrel and get a little companionship in that way.

Had my Battery out today and had some most valuable instruction from a Colonel Billson R. N. a who is helping the Canadian Artillery for a few weeks. His battery suffered severely in the near disaster at Mons. all his officers were killed and he himself was wounded in the neck but has now quite recovered.

We are shortly to do some work in conjunction with aeroplanes which promises to be very interesting. They fly above our target which we cannot see at all and signal to us where the shots are going and thus help to get the proper line and range etc. I

had a letter from Mary Labatt a few days ago thanking me for congratulations. She seems very happy and I sincerely hope that she will settle down this time.

Everyone here is much excited over yesterday's raid on the East coast by the Germans. Our division was ordered to stand to all last night and if there had been any more serious developments we would certainly have been ordered to move out. Fortunately the damage done was slight but it is sure to be repeated and there is not a doubt in the world that a Zeppelin attack will be made on London itself when Berlin thinks the proper time has come. It will surprise no one if this is carried out at the Christmas season but we can only wait. Will close now as it is after eleven and I have had a busy day. Much love to all
your devoted son
Wood.