

? Dec. 14  
Westdown N.

Dearest Mother

It is now ten o'clock but I will start a letter and add to it later as time permits. I received two letters both forwarded from Montreal with letters from Boston also enclosed. I hope you <sup>will</sup> have received my letter, with draft enclosed, before this and will be glad to know what you decided in the matter. Hope the new men you get will be satisfactory. Is it intended to have him spend all his time at Kakawood or only part. I suppose the latter as not enough to keep a man busy in the winter when there are no horses.

It froze up here again on Saturday night but by Sunday afternoon the rain was again falling and the air quite mild. I have gone about today without a coat except an oil skin to keep us much of the rain out as possible. We have always been taught that the rainy season in the tropics was something to dread but I really

had no idea that a similar state of things could exist in England. Of course we get both wind and rain worse here than elsewhere as we are up on a fairly high plateau without any shelter. Fear you must be tired at hearing so much about the weather but it is a topic that is uppermost in my mind at all times here and I cannot help dilating on it.

How are the Kendalls getting on with the Homestake mine. I notice Aunt Lizzy does not even refer to it in her letter. The present stringency does not make matters any the easier for them. Are they still working at development or have the funds run so low as to prevent this.

Am glad to learn that Aunt Miriam is gradually getting better. She must have had a hard time of it but probably would not do as she was told at first which would account for a good deal. She seems to be very comfortable in Boston and it probably makes a nice change for Uncle John to go down there.

for a brief holiday every few weeks.

I dropped a line to Bertie Biggar before I went to town asking him to meet me up there but did not get any reply. It is therefore fairly safe betting that he has gone to the front as he is not to sort to overlook sending a note of explanation at least.

I think I acknowledged Alice's long and interesting letter of November thirtieth. Please thank her for it and for all her loving wishes. Her marriage will leave only Alice and I for "mother" to look after which I am sure will take a load off your mind. If Alice makes up her mind about anyone in the near future it will certainly clear the decks for me in great style. I thought that Johnson gave up his house when he ~~gave up~~ bought a motor car but apparently not. It seems strange to talk about double windows and all the other preparations for winter when we are still living in tents. It is wonderful how warm an oil stove will make a tent when the ventilators are

stuffed up. It is of course cold in the morning but we dare not spend very much time in it during the day.

I have heard nothing further about Gordon Hunt but suppose he will not go straight home. If I were in his place I would enlist in Kitchener's army if nothing else offered rather than return to Canada at this juncture. Perhaps he intends doing something of this sort. Frank Reid is still down at headquarters but does not seem to have a great deal to do. I sent a return of the ex cadets serving in this brigade in to Lamb the other day. There are fourteen altogether out of twenty combatant officers which is a pretty good showing.

On Monday we had a route march lasting about five hours and passed through the villages of Wickford, Market Lavington, and Eastton. The horses are now picking up considerably even despite the weather conditions. Peggy is in good shape and my bay horse is gradually getting rid of his cold but does not seem to be picking up in

pleak very much.

It is now definitely decided that I am to have McEwen as captain in my new Battery and Leandert as one of the lieutenants. Another chap named Alderson is probably another of the subalterns and I am trying hard to get Mesogart as the third. If I succeed with the last named I shall feel that my lot will be as well off as any, to all intents and purposes.

When I left Canada I certainly had not anticipated that I would get a battery as such and even when the adjutancy of this brigade came my way there was no hint of any additional change.

Yesterday General Alderson inspected all the horses in this camp and I am glad to say that the Third Brigade pleased him most and he congratulated our Colonel heartily on their condition. It really is a wonder that they look as well as they do standing in the

mind and run with mud after up  
to the pettocks.

Since writing the above I  
have received nice long interesting  
letters from J. H. and Alice, the  
one from the latter being written  
on my birthday. The former gave  
me particulars of his marriage with  
an outline of what finally decided  
them to take the step of which  
you doubtless have heard fully  
about.

Alice did not enclose F. Dixie  
Cassidy's address but I hope to  
get up to London for another  
couple of days at the end of the week  
and if time permits I shall ring her  
up and perhaps try to arrange a  
small party. Sir George Gibbons  
may be right in assuming that the  
war will be over in the spring but  
I can see no indication of any such  
thing nor is his opinion coincided  
with by any people I have talked to  
here. I've had about Victor Kent not  
being allowed to come. I do not  
think that a mother's affection

for her children should take the form it did in Mrs. Kent's case. I quite agree with all Alice says about Lolly (from the letter I have seen of her) after all it is a great thing to move about a bit before getting married and above all, to know what one wants. My chances of marrying a Red Cross nurse are rather slim as I am not as susceptible as I used to be and the specimens one sees are not even in the somewhat attractive class.

One sees a good deal in the Canadian papers about Misses Plummer and Arnoldi and the good work they are doing for the Canadians over here. So far I have not seen them nor have I heard of them doing anything for any unit in this camp. I've had about young Hindley Beattie not getting into the contingent, a German bullet might put some sense into him provided of course that it did not finish him altogether.

It is rather funny that Alice should speak of my ring. As you

know I have been bothered a bit with swollen fingers and my ring was a continuous annoyance on account of being too tight. Last night I made up my mind to get it off and after a long tussle managed to do so. I now have it put away with my money and will try and mail it home the first opportunity unless the dampness lessens and my fingers assume more normal proportions.

Tomorrow I am to give a lecture to the officers of the Brigade on the causes of the war and as I want to do some reading to this end will shortly draw to a close. Before doing so I might mention that it has occurred to me that it might do no harm to get a little something in the papers regarding the fact that London battery is again to be a separate unit under its own officers and so on. A good many people would be interested especially those who may have relatives who enlisted and



went to Volunteer under me. Ask  
 Father to check this over and I  
 may send a brief outline of what ought  
 to go in, in my next. Of course it  
 must not be known that it  
 emanated from me or any of the  
 family. The change may come out in  
 orders any time now but just how  
 they will put it into force I cannot  
 say without first getting a further  
 insight into the scheme as approved  
 by headquarters.

I do not think that I mentioned  
 having had a letter from Aunt  
 Emma last week which will be  
 answered in due course. She writes  
 very brightly I thought.

If you want a bright visitor  
 why don't you ask Delia Davies up  
 for a few days. Naturally you need  
 not consider me at all in the  
 matter and I only make the suggestion.  
 I do not think, from what I gathered  
 the last time I saw her, that she  
 will visit Rita. Of course you  
 and Abie have to take into  
 consideration the fact that Delia's

crowd in Toronto are not those that you know and all that sort of thing. (if it really matters)

I am enclosing a few small pamphlets which are issued by the War Office for the instruction of British troops. I thought perhaps that Father might be interested in looking them over and he could then put them away for my scrap book.

Best love to all

your devoted son

Wood