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T.S.S. "MONTEZUMA."

17th Oct. 1914.

Devonport Harbor

dearest Mother

We have now been here for the best part of three days and we are still waiting for disembarkation orders. The contingent was to have gone into Southampton but at the last moment the destination had to be changed owing to the presence of German submarines in the channel. We were held up outside the Eddystone light on Wednesday night and next morning we anchored in the outer harbor at Plymouth, later we came through Plymouth inner harbor and up here.

The seaward as far as one can see seemed to be fortified and there were small camps dotted all along. Devonport is a very important naval base and apparently impregnable. They draw a wire netting boom across the harbor mouth at dusk and no shipping can enter or depart.

People all along the shore cheered wildly as our ship was towed in and we also got a great reception from the inner forts and from the training ships in the harbor. No one of course had

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any idea we were coming in and the delay in getting us off the ships is due probably to the difficulties involved in getting sufficient rolling stock here on such short notice. In the meantime our horses are falling off very seriously each day. I pointed this out to General Alderson when he came aboard yesterday and he promised to do all he could to get us disembarked with as little delay as possible.

I sent off a cable early yesterday morning announcing our arrival.

In Camp

22 Oct 14.

West Down South

Salisbury Plains

Since writing the above we have passed through a very strenuous five days and are now camped as above. Thanks to Gen Alderson who commands the Canadian Contingent a special effort was made to get our horses off before schedule time. On Saturday we pulled into the coaling docks of the Navy Yard and unloaded horses from 9 P.M. until noon the following day. We had no accidents but it was hard work as many of the horses were so stiff that it was

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very difficult to get them up out of the lower decks. One jumped off the quay and we thought he was gone for good but he swam across the bay (several miles) and was brought back the next day. The horses were tethered in a field in Demopost and we went on unloading the baggage etc. Finished this Sunday night and spent Monday manhandling it to the Naval Drill Hall where it was stored. We got no help from anyone and had a pretty hard time of it.

We left Demopost at 10 P.M. and arrived at Ameshury at 4 A.M. - got the train unloaded and left for camp at 6.30 arriving a little after eleven. It was a good 12 miles and ^{little} no one was sorry to reach our destination where we found the rest of the column already comfortably settled.

Since our arrival it has rained every day and I suppose there will be a lot of it in lieu of our good Canadian snow. We are all in tents but are to be moved into huts as soon as they can be built.

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General Alderson addressed us on Thursday. He commends the Canadian division and he announced that he had secured permission for properly managed canteens to be established despite serious opposition for Col Hughes. So that means at least that we are passing out of the jurisdiction of the latter, who has, by the way, just got himself made a major general.

Today we were reviewed by Lord Roberts. He went down the lines slowly in a motor car but it was pouring rain and there was no time lost over it. Tomorrow there is to be a church parade and after that the Colonel, the adjutant and I are going out for a motor trip and will visit Sahabuy and other neighboring towns.

I still have Greenlee, McSaggart and Webber as my three officers and the section is working well though our equipment has not yet arrived; this is due to the perfectly rotten way the embarkation was carried out at Quebec.

I see a good many I know as we have a

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large mess including Col Ponet and others from Kingston, Colles & Williams of London also others. It looks as if we would be in England for two to three months and then perhaps there will be a move made.

I got a letter from Hyla Betts yesterday much to my surprise. He has joined some territorial corps in London as a private but his friends are trying to get him a commission and they will doubtless succeed shortly. He also said that Mrs. Betts was on her way across. I shall take a few days leave shortly and will make a point of seeing Hyla in London as soon as possible.

The news from the front does not convey very much but the allies are handicapped by lack of men and cannot do a great deal until a large proportion of the men now training in England (nearly a million) are sent to reinforce the lines.

Yesterday Campbell Becher came down for a few moments, his regiment and its brigade



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we camped about 2 miles from here. Peggy is
in good shape - a little thin and quite irritable
after her trip but really none the worse.

Best love to all

your devoted son
Wood.

as usual I enclose a few
scraps etc. Please ask Bob to file
them away