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Sunday
22 April 1917
5.30 P.M.

My dearest ones at Lakewood

I think I will give you my week's doings before touching on other subjects and leave them until the end this time.

Monday 16th April Brighter but cold and horses all have their backs up and are rapidly failing in spite of all we can do for them.

I think we might do better at a more forward rendezvous if we can get water so full that we know but we have things up to reconnoiter between — and I have and also two small officers patrols to select alternative routes like jumping appears as often. Wadges experience when going over the crest with a patrol it would be useless to try there again by day. I don't know whether I told you but the 11th spotted the horses and literally followed them along the road with 4.1's and 5.9's finally literally blowing Wadge off his horse with a shot by roadside. How he escaped I do not know.

Feeling very uneasy about you dearest Mother and Father and not knowing if you were well again when the 2nd week arrived, I felt I might get to Canada for a few weeks and so rode into Cape Hats to make enquiries. I saw young BOVEY (son of the Dean) in the A office

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and he looked it up for me, and also a new order that is about to come out, and said the policy of the Army was to be as lenient as possible with all ~~requests~~ ^{requests} for leave for urgent business purposes and that in the case of a commanding officer leave could be granted to Canada up to 4 months if a strong enough case was presented. In such a case the command would be kept open although junior officers would be returned to England and have to await their turn.

After getting this information I cabled dear Alice that I should get leave if really wanted and you don't know how proud I felt of you all, the three of you for the beautiful inspiring discourse that reached me on Friday last one from Father one for Alice. I cannot tell you how I felt as I was affected very much and strengthened. Your bravery and steadfastness are indeed worthy of the dear brave spirit we all mourn but are so proud of. I cabled per enclosed and hope you will get it and my second deferred cablegram with further particulars today. Sarah sent me the five you sent her and it touched me very much. You are indeed a family to be proud

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of and are "playing the game" as I know
Dear Wood would like to see us play it.

I can never hope to do all he has
done for our cause but his noble
example and the record he leaves inspire
me to do my best and I am thankful
that at last I am in a position where
I feel I can be of some use.

I had lunch at "B" (Corps) Mess with
Frog Anderson whose brother had his hand
blown off. He was once in London very
tall and thin. I received orders to make
back leaving one squadron in Corps
reserve up in front. I inspected at
ground park of guns various M G's
and other weapons which are being
collected in the garden in front of Corps
Commanders Chateau. Saw the Town
Major and got billets for the squadron
and then rode back. I wanted my dug
out but made a bad deal, as although
I was more private (with the mess before)
as far as humans were concerned
I found the Russo-Burma parasites that
joined me on Friday night put it off
with an English friend who had the
dug out and the result was a general
gathering!! Issued my orders for
the return and then after dinner
maded over to 3rd Brigade Wagon

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lines formerly headquarters and spent the evening with Dick Robertson talking about the dear boy. He had planned to meet Wood in London after the war and they had many political discussions as he is a hot topic and often used to say he could bring about his defeat when he ran in the house. I believe the dear lad would have liked politics. Robertson & his wife had also undertaken to look him up as suitable heiress as soon as possible. He told me how false Wood had been to look an officer who was thrust on him and who he did not like but all the same was just by fun and gave him every chance. I believe he was respected and loved by all ranks in the brigade. Robertson has his case as if could not be sent and either he or I will take it over the first leave we get. He can tell us more little personal things about Wood than anybody as they were very intimate. I will see him again soon. Foolishly I had not brought my torch and spent an hour getting home and in the rain falling twice right into old benches / boots full of mud & water. Did not sleep but fell fast reasons already explained.

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First letter of sympathy received from
 dear Sarah which was such a help.
 The letters have been unusually regular
 and have been a great solace to me.

Tuesday 17th April. The worst kind of
 a day for a man with a cold heavy steady
 rain but all out in the open it did
 not matter so made no change in plans.

Cast a shoe on way in but reached here
 in time for lunch I arranged a hot feed
 for horses who were following several
 far men. Found Smith, Spenser &
 Pagnister who were left behind before
 in good form. Old Leslie nearly all in, the
 first time I have ever seen him give up. I
 had to get another man to unsaddle horses
 & pulled himself together later and did
 not have to go sick. Brought "Peggy"
 & the "Wako" back with me also Wood's
 saddle. Gave the brigade 2 of my horses
 and a saddle in exchange.

Had a good hot bath after lunch
 and had clean coil blankets in my
 bed roll and hope some rest of my
 friends for the present. Your first
 sweet cable of love comfort and
 sympathy came and it brought me
 very close to Lakewood also quite a few
 letters from dear Wood which I am
 attending to. [B.W.I Regiment going

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long with left forearm band, as far as
 looking left of back fingers as shown
 were from same part of hand and well
 disciplined. They are called hand and
 used for many and talk about talk with
 and frequent visit. [White Walker as
 part letter and returned. Nothing more
 after dinner but fell asleep at my table
 and so concluded. This was the last place
 because of 12th April. Got wounded by
 lice and found under what Madame
 would say. I got them into my
 one bed. Very busy till morning in
 line with 10 days into a concentration
 which was about the same time as
 with me and not less than 10 days. Got
 about 10 weeks over our wounded
 about 15, minor wounds which were
 necessary. The worst over had to
 be shot and a few sent to the M.V.S.
 in treatment. The V.C. I saw could
 not give. That was the day 2
 officers killed and 14 wounded and
 42 horses which were so busy when
 you considered. We took a village
 through with machine guns
 and actually got a footing in it and
 had killed 2000 persons with hands
 up calling "Khandas" when the
 machine gun swept the street and us.

done (my parents)

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we wanted we had no chance to do
 for course. I enclose a copy of the Corps
 Commanders report on our venture
 (we made 2 others as well) and the Army
 Commanders remarks in reply. These of
 course are confidential, but if we could
 publish them I think they might be
 very interesting reading than the eulogy
 on our esteemed friend Pearson which I
 see in the Advertiser you sent. Wood, brother
 dear, wherein he dined with Kitchener
 about which we have already heard
 several times. I also see an article about
 Lt Col Hyacinth Betts in which both Wood &
 our very much referred to. You dear
 people are "playing the game" in Canada
 but the poor far soldiers to play it and
 take part in the "Great Adventure" as dear
 Wood puts it, is right here on the firing
 line in France.

after lunch I rode up again on the
 "bake" with Smith to see the crew and
 his apparatus in their new quarters
 and found them in "Sisson" huts and houses
 in fields and fairly comfortable. Back
 just in time for a good dinner.

Called on the B.G.C. to see about when
 we would next be needed but was only
 able to see his assistant. (Mrs Aunt
 Elizabeth (or delmon, staffed) Aunt

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May (for safety reason 3 with handkerchiefs)
 and all part for a delicious box she
 had sent Wood and also answered 2 more
 of his business letters. Bed about 1.00
 A.M. Thursday 19th April. Inspected
 and allotted 25 treatments to replace
 casualties. Very good as a whole, attended
 office and inspected wounded horses
 with the V.O. at room stables, all doing
 well but decided to evacuate bathers in
 a run down condition suffering from
 general debility and exposure. Light
 afternoon going over dear Wood's
 parlour and diary and sorting over his
 papers. The former I am sending to
 Sarah with some things to forward to
 you with his other things but the diary
 since 1st Jan I am sending today by
 registered mail, sealed, to dear Father.
 It is now 7.00 P.M. and old dear is
 waiting to go to mail so will finish
 tonight but want what I have written
 to get off now. So much love dear
 dear Mother and Father & Alice
 Jbb

22-6-77

June 11th (cont). Feel asleep in Mess after dinner
 the first time I remember doing it, but I suppose
 that's due to last 10 days. Finished the diary this
 evening instead of writing as I intended in my
 notes. Some names to follow his name and
 name and then mine. Greatfully in future
 although in a way these letters (at least) place
 a number on my mind of what I'd like to do (at least)
 (some thoughts and sentiments and names
 expressed in his diary are a revelation to me
 I'd thought I knew him well and when
 I read his diary I feel completely amazed
 at how true and so! Gordon White said in
 his sympathy today more more than his
 own like he might say. I have taken the
 liberty of writing up his last day for him
 in my diary. Both I'll call it every
 day on his writing of doing some diary
 writing as I want every day to be able to
 stick to it. I want to be going to the church
 by a new road. Cleared up the material
 records of the regiment and had it done up in
 book form with copies of our records
 notes. I intended sending Father and
 my copy it can early later. Much things
 and completed by the two other members
 and Father. I don't know. I have spoken
 his letter from Mrs Mother for good
 March 15th 21st for which so many thanks
 also for interesting enclosures. Yours
 dear

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letters Mother are always an inspiration and
 your devotion to your duties and work
 wonderful. I'm glad your efforts for W.C.A.
 fund were so successful and I know they
 would be. Write the three letters you
 letter which, under the circumstances I
 hope they won't object to. Write Col Hobbs
 thanking him for tobacco, also Mrs Bell's few
 sweet note (enclosed) just to come after Sarah's
 Roger from Mrs Elm & dates for Wood case.
 I am wondering now if I dare tackle another
 layer and hope is still bright. You know
 my capacity for such things. Prepared a
 lecture on "Shipping of a cargo". Bed about 12:30
Saturday 21st April. Had all ranks practicing
 this job and the finishing of machine guns
 which were my way against them, up on the
 hill, a lovely morning although ground very
 wet. Several autumn in office and attended
 stables. Received 6 pro sacks from Mrs
 Cochrane (formerly at work), very thoughtful
 of her and well suited. Inspected
 the transport 25 vehicles in all and must
 say they look well. There are excellent
 transport sergeant. Delivered my lecture at
 3:00 P.M. with aid of large map to all ranks
 and men appeared (?) very interested.
 I am getting along so well with work
 and trying to make away with the little
 things that irritate me when I am in

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the same position. The rooms next to here
 now in the Chateau and as a matter of fact has
 the better room facing south, as I did not
 bother to change, and am still in same place
 when I have now been 6 months. Checked over
 lots of Woods' kit and made a few notes on
 some and will send them to Walter. In
 evening I wrote up his diary
 and did not know in mind nearly 2:00 A.M. a
 very heavy bombardment and a huge fire.
 I suppose the town as usual is burning the
 beautiful city of ~~---~~.

Sunday 22nd April Bright but still cold
 but had to snow did not get down to high foot
 until 4:00. Am quite fit from 4 rooms. Visited
 Col. Armon & Capt. Shalford who called to express
 sympathy. The fire for an hour and injured
 saddery and wounded horses at wounds
 all done with. Worst cases are debility from
 exposure. We are still short 27 and 28 men.
 After lunch practiced but freezing on the
 hill with sword & lance with 1st officer's
 as uniforms to keep them warm and also put
 Peggy & found over our jumps. Do you
 remember back Wood's school her alone
 winter in the snow? she has not forgotten
 what she learnt there. Packed Woods
 portfolios and a few things to send to Sarah
 for transmission to Canada and also diary
 by registered post to Father and have been

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at this except for dinner (checked on Sunday)
 ever since (now 11.00 AM). Am having words
 to me. to which he has subscribed without cost

Laise told Sarah to allow his latest
 picture to be sent to illustrated papers in
 answer to a request they made to her and which
 she referred to me. It is his due as if there
 ever was an unassuming modest soul it
 was he and he never allowed himself even
 to be justly advertised. I hope you will
 approve. Laise wrote a little article about
 his military career. I saw Col. Calver's
 picture in Starline almost at once.

Miss Legden and her mother were at
 Lyson and Sarah likes her so much. She
 is very sympathetic and knows us all
 by name at least. Was she ever supposed to
 be engaged to Campbell Bisher? She told
 Sarah about the bill dog & Poi.

I did not get over to the dear graces I
 had hoped as I want to go alone and
 also wanted to get this making finished but
 will go soon, although to know must do
 some reconsidering if in front.

The French women and girls are all
 sporting them. Easter hats and dresses
 and bonnets. I saw the paper 'seats'
 in the house here for the holidays each have
 one too, although black & purple predominates

22-47

Shan not seen much of them this time. I can
what I can see one might expect a small
crop of pecanories in the part of France
in about a year's time!! The Turbos left
them mark in the same way about 1 1/2 years ago
where they were here.

Very heavy fog again to night, and the
sky is almost constantly bright with the flashes
of the snow.

I find Rankham, as original and am so
glad to have him in the mess. He went through
his introduction to shell fire very creditably and
had some bursts very close to him. He was
with me the night of 13 the 14th in the woods.

I am enclosing clippings from Times
and Daily Mail which please keep for me
as they are the only ones I have; also the
other letters and things I spoke of.

I suppose Aunt Tilly is with you now
and know you will enjoy her visit and hope
she stays sometime I am wondering if
the dear grandchildren & their mothers are
were with you for Easter. I hope so.

Again I want to thank you for all
kindnesses for all loving sympathy
and help. You have no idea what a
relief your cables were and how strength
I was by them. I am so sorry now I did not
write more fully the first day but you soon
will have my letters. So much love off