

My dearest Mother,

29-4-17

I went to be able to finish this letter in time for
mail tonight as I am just in from — where
I rode with Smith after lunch today, however will
make a start.

Monday 23rd April Harrow and night. started
out for the front at 9.00 and picked up specimens
at — and after calling at Carps Hqs for a few
minutes pushed on to — which a month
ago could only be entered except in benches
at night but now is a steady stream of
traffic with the old double track and line
rapidly put back into use before the war.
Where we left our horses behind us a
battery of 7" guns whose firing they did not
in the least object to and proceeded on foot
over the top of the ridge to a village of the
same name to reconnoitre a new forward
rendezvous. The wire had selected behind the
railway. There had been an attack of
one of our divisions early that morning on
the left and we had a good view of the last
part of it and the city of — in the distance
where we spent half the day studying
the country. We could see red brick dust
as a shell hit a house and white when it
hit a stone building and black when they
hit in a field. It was quite a sight and
a splendid view point. We passed a

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cross road which the Hun has required to a
 safety road over which our transport and
 ammunition waggon have to go at night.
 There were 40 or fifty dead barbed wire
 down the embankment barbed wire smashed
 and waggon and quite a few dead. I have
 not often seen such a bloody mess in one
 place but the brave drivers face it every
 time they go up and take their chance. It
 was deserted then except for an occasional
 shell. A little further on we ate our lunch
 in a German dugout until the Hun quit
 shelling a straddled aeroplane and a
 German 2" howitzer. I did not
 have lunch. I did not
 altogether like the Hun. We were had
 chased and I think would be better a
 little further forward. We may back met
 Billy Hodgson coming up with his transport
 (12th) He has stuck to it and is one of the
 three originals left.

Wonderful progress as regards roads
 and communications have been made
 and I saw a full gauge locomotive near
 our former final forward rendezvous
 of 9th which we only reached then
 after crossing about 2 miles of trenches and
 shell holes. Had tea at the Huns but on
 way back and got in just in time for
 dinner at 7.30. Finished the morning

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commencing as not used is it and my feet
 were sore after long tramps. I was told from
 speech to whom I small before retiring.
Tuesday 24 Apr. Displeased with the way
 our men were carrying out their sword
 work and felt satisfied very few of them could
 stick a blow if they got the chance and get
 away with it. Must have some good stiff
 exercises made on which they will
 break their wrists or swords if they don't
 assume the "locked arm" position.
 Another nice day although colder again.
 In huts even. Bunks started yet. We had a
 little work with Smith and attended to office
 work and prepared an imaginary course
 of attacking villages on our front so as to
 make officers study them and be ready to
 go after any one if called on to do so
 later. 25 reinforcements arrived to
 cover part of our casualties from 9th with
 amongst whom were several old men.
 Inspected them mostly from Midway Hat.
 Made Army and unit facts. An intelligent
 officer who had been interviewing German
 prisoners for last 2 weeks was stranded
 in the village for the night so we put him
 up and were much interested in his
 experiences. There is certainly no want
 of food amongst German soldiers
 captured on this front.

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Were for names of medical officers serving in
 combatant units (20 will have to submit
 Hazards name. Received another long
 cable from dear Father urging me to
 carry on here and mentioning the
 conditions in London & satisfactory
 lot. Support was a defined cable from
 Canada trailed up from the base.
Wednesday 25th April. Circulated my
 scheme to the Squadron and then went up on
 hill and watched "C" jumping and
 rushing imaginary machine guns.
 Inspected all belts and mess at noon
 with the M.O. which necessitates walking
 all over the village. Saw the "habitués"
 helping themselves to meat from a base
 we had to shoot with a broken leg before
 we could bring it. They were able to hit
 but the sight was not conducive to my
 eating a hearty lunch. I dread French
 sandwiches and meat eat them although I
 suppose a horse is a cleaner animal than
 a steer or cow. Paddled over to see dear
 Jack's grave in P.M. about which I have
 already written dear Walter. Saw things
 about recommendations for some
 French decorations that may!! be
 allotted to me for work on 4th.
 (Summer time so will finish bright)
 I have 22 letters to answer!!!!

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Now have a new man as C-O's orderly
 (new man entitled to a 3rd man) The way
 would judge his place as I considered him
 for good a man for the job and returned
 him to duty where he can get promotion.

Told the way I expected him to be the
 cleanest man in the regiment and I think
 he is doing his best. His head chain is
 like silver. He don't carry head rap any
 longer. Usual papers come in mess in
 evening. I had made some which now
 come to me. Letter of sympathy from
 Mrs Leonard (friend of P. W. M. Mother
 at length and sent off cablegramme
 which should reach you today. Bid about
 1.00 A.M. on

Thursday 26 April Cool but bright but
 hardly any signs of buds yet. They are a
 month late according to French farmers.
 Sent Smith (Langley V.O.) forward to
 look over B Squadron Horses which they
 found picking up wonderfully. He can not
 afford extra forage which helps.
 Inspected a full marching order parade
 and sent them off for route march while
 I look over Harris. Hope also saw Peggy who
 I find very rough. Felt very lonely in
 afternoon and after writing a few letters
 went into Smith's room and chatted
 to him for an hour. He is very

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companionable and we are getting along well.
 Mrs. Mrs. Claudia Cochran to thank her
 for 27 pairs of socks for each Wood to also
 Mrs. Leonard of Bedford. Tried to read in
 evening but could not settle down. Bed 12:00 PM
Friday 27th April Drill again and drilled
 with sword work and they have not yet made
 the drummers' servant. Did not say too much
 however. Find they are ploughing up our
 drill field so will have to go elsewhere but
 unused fields are few and far between.

Rode to Chateaufort saw samples of iron
 ore if I could get one of hers. He refused
 to let me have one please! and accompanied
 me to inspect the field and about 100 ft
 perspective for 3 months lease so I did not
 close. They were both very nice and when
 got back I had to eat dinner and drink
 a couple of glasses of wine and talk. Heard
 Lambert's also joined in. Seeing a
 small bar peddling outside each of the
 count of it I went to see. He said yes, I
 have not died, one you see there and a third
 coming there, pointing to the lamplight
 whose condition was atrocious. Why now we
 all laughed. They look on these things as
 natural and not to be kept secret or avoided.
 How curious faced we are as a nation
 and how superstitious. Galloped back
 with dumb Carlo I had kept washing under