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13-17

March 24-17
11.00 P.M.

1917

Dearest Mother

Will start tonight (Saturday) as I may have a busy day tomorrow. Your letter of Feb 18 (5 weeks ago) came today, the first Canadian in nearly 3 weeks. Although some of the others got letters dated March 5th. Long gaps like this seem to separate us even more than usual but all the same I am glad to hear all well and your letter was most cheerful and a great relief. I do hope our letters to you have not been correspondingly delayed.

Have had all the regiment together and we have managed some training although with interruptions and some very cold and slippery weather. It has done the men good however and they are looking better after their long spell in the trenches where they practically lived underground.

I also have a long and interesting letter from James which I will send on to Maud and answer in due course.

No, dearest Mother, I don't want another sweater and with my old "Yaegar" jacket and yours am very well supplied. I am also very well off for such far some time to come as Aunt Elizabeth, Emma and Geneva sent some light ones which

24 Nov

will do for the summer months and I have seven or 8 pairs of Alces and have splendid heavy ones for colder weather. Means not nearly as hard on soles as the infantry as we have practically no marching and as Cavalry officers very few long spells in the trenches. I saw wearing 1915 mas leggings and have two suits (1916 mas) to the good which I will send to England next month with my other surplus under kit.

I have worn out my winter underwear (3 winters with mending) and have four or five suits of B.V.D. for the summer in good repair.

Father's letter of Feb 19th also came signed by Mr Holmes in the former's absence in Montreal. Its contents seem very satisfactory.

Have just heard that one of our officers, Leggo, attached to R.F.C. was shot down by a German "archie" and killed about 2000 this afternoon. A very fine chap too who left us about 2 months ago and we all feel very badly. I think I told you that Trav Lucas was also killed about a month ago during a raid.

Speaking of hardware I want to say that I have fixed the "Witch of Ender" again and admire it so much. It gives on

24-III-17

one and I want to add my small quota of well deserved praise for him. You might say how much I enjoyed it when you see him. I am going to pass it on to Dad and then to Sarah.

We had a 2 mile cross country run for the regiment this P.M. in which over 60 ran. It was quite a success and good exercise for the men I ran also as well as most of the other officers but find I am not as good at these tests of endurance as I used to be, however I managed to finish about 2/3 of the way down the list.

I do feel for poor Uncle Jack and wish I could do more. I am still smoking the pipe and tobacco he sent me at Mysos.

As you say all our recollections of Myra are the sweetest one could have of any body and I only wish I had been able to see more of her lately.

Glad yourazaar was such a great success but am sure that your work merited it. The costumes must have been very effective, I wish I could have seen you all.

Dear Myra is temp Lt. Col while AM, LO at ~~---~~ but you would not see his promotion of Canadian list as he is in the R.E. and quite out

of the Canadian forces. I have not yet heard whether Harry Mathew has returned to France. Sarah had Joan to lunch and he then took her to a matinee and tea at the Carlton. She speaks so highly of him and says she should be very proud of my frame sahé. I would like to see Shepard but find it hard to locate him and he has never written, however I will be on the lookout.

Am sure you will be glad when the cold is over as I know you find it trying. We too have had an extraordinarily severe winter, snow most of the past week which is very unusual here. A lot of potatoes and other roots stored in cellars and fields have been frozen, the farmer are very hard to get now and better about 20 francs a kilo or about \$1.00 a pound. !!!

My leave is now a long way off and if it were still on (all cancelled) I would be about half way towards my next one.

I will think over what you say about an operation on my nose and see what Wood thinks but of course won't attempt it at present and must say have been extraordinarily well and my spirit as demonstrated today makes had as a good many younger chaps. has given

24-IV-17

finished lot of the officers. 2 miles in $13\frac{1}{2}$ minutes with two steep hills and was very greasy and slippery. Alice's letters have been quipped and much but expect some will turn up very soon. Hope dear Father keeps well and is not overtaxed, sometimes I feel a little anxious about him. Nearly midnight so will finish tomorrow - which perhaps may be able to get a side car and go up and see Wood.

Sunday 11.00 P.M. Up an hour earlier as clock advanced one hour last night to conform with the French. Telephoned Wood and found he would be in and after a little difficulty secured a side car and started out about 11.00 and found him about 1.30 after having covered about 23 kilometers partly "à pied" and only got back in time for dinner at 7.30. He is in a dugout and not very comfortable and has suffered a little from the cold weather which seems to get his hands. We spent a pleasant afternoon together and I gave him your letter of 18th also mine and he showed me some enclosures and also an interesting one from Alice. Quite a bit of activity as it was a bright day and encountered a great

25-III-17

deal of traffic and saw a few shells
bursting and some dead horses for the
first time in some months.

On my return I found your dear letter
of Feb 26th with two enclosures from
Father and also some more enclosures
which Wood had forwarded. Mr Holmer
business letter of 25th Feb - also
received and a cable from Father about
purchase of preferred stock which is
very gratifying and which I will telephone
to Wood tomorrow. Am now in my
comfortable room with a fire and mist
finish this before I retire. Had
clipping about Miriums will which
seemed very satisfactory for dear Uncle
Jack.

Monday 19th March. Rode to — was
president of a court martial on another
poor drunk but let him down as easily
as possible as I consider the Government
that makes liquor accessible may rather
that encourages its production and sale
more to blame than its unhappy
victims. Attended stables and after
lunch watched our men at dismounted
drill. Am home in effort, then
Barber and read in evening in my
room.

25-3-17

Tuesday 20 Mar. Unusual ride on the hill in morning in spite of frost and cold. Rode 10 miles to lecture on gas at — after lunch with McEwen and Hazard only to find it had been cancelled. Got soaked with sleet and snow and a cutting wind on way back and had to change. Found Rackham a very nice chap and think he will be quite an acquisition to our mess.

Wednesday March 21st Too muddy for drill so had a route march instead and rifle exercise in the afternoon. Walked around the course for an hour cross country run in 32 minutes. Plotted the advance down south on my map. We all wonder what it is going to mean and are following everything very closely. Got a note to send 20 men to the coast for remnants at midnight and had to get out an operation order before I turned in.

Thursday 22nd March 2" of snow and quite cold. Suspected the conducting party and they went far afield. Got Smith back from his month's special leave, looking much better. He is a nice chap and I am sure we will get along very well together. He says it is harder to say good bye after a month than after 10 days. Woods

25-III-17

Moods paymaster, by the way got leave to Paris where his wife met him! I wish I could look forward to that in the summer if there is no leave.

Friday 23rd March. Had a very good drill on the hill and find both men and horses looking better for the regular work. Inspected all the mens quarters cook houses and messrooms on Wednesday and was pleased with things. They are getting good food, well cooked and served hot and can have no ground for complaint.

Dismounted drill in the afternoon after which I had my usual 6 kilometer walk and spent an hour with Barber.

Saturday 24th March Drill in morning and out run in the afternoon which I described last night. 3 letters from Sarah as well as those I have mentioned. Poker game in mess but did not join in and wrote you instead.

Sunday 25th, already described except that we had Smith the Town Major and "chicken" for dinner and I have just now left another poker game well in progress.

I hear there was an alarm on Saturday night until 4.00 A.M. when they remembered that the clock was to go ahead an hour and that it was really 5.00 A.M.!!

25-3-17

Give my love to Aunt Emma if she is still with you and tell James how much we both enjoyed his letter especially his statistics about the recruiting by denominations in which the Methodists are little more than half the R. C.'s who are third after Anglicans and Presbyterians. It would be well for Dr Flanders and the Littles and others of like kidney to ponder these figures a little!

Have just read some enclosures which Grand sent and am always so glad to be able to get in touch with family matters. Father's letters to you were so sweet and life giving.

Getting late dearest Mother so must close. So much love
Devotedly Bob