

Shuttle Camp, Surrey
Dec 20/11

Dear People at Home.

Well this is the day after
the day before. We have a holiday today,
giving us a chance to recuperate.
I had a very good Xmas yesterday,
much better than last year, plenty to
eat and a nice home like time
in a private home in Guildford in the
evening.

I sent you our Xmas menu &
we had exactly what it called for.

Our dinner was good, a good square
meal of turkey, dressing, - sausages etc.
In the morning we had plenty of
bacon & eggs (egg powder) and at nine o'
clock we had a short service in the
mess hall. Our Chaplain Mr. Johnston is
just a new man on the job as quite a
nice fellow, not quite so good as our
old chaplain Capt. Cobbly but will be
allright when we get to know him I
think.

I told you in my last letter about
the Y.M.C.A. finding places for about
5000 soldiers to spend Xmas afternoon.
Tuesday Dec 7. & I happened to be at the
Y. the night we heard about it so put
our names in right off. We were sent
to Guildford to a Mr. Colbrooke's home.
Two special trains ran down to

Guildford yesterday afternoon, took down about 1000 the rest were nearer than Guildford, within walking distance. We went down on the 2nd train 3.30. Boy Scouts met us at the train and directed us to the places we were to go. There were six, all, as follows went to this place.

Mr. Colbrooke and family resembles our family very much as for age & number. There were the four children, the oldest about my age, a second Lieutenant, home on last leave going to France Monday, the second boy in long pants a little younger than Les., one girl about the size & age of Mabel & the youngest I would judge about a year younger than the latter. I couldn't help but think how much it resembled home.

It was certainly home like, they used us real well. The Lieut. Edward by name is a fine chap just the sort of fellow appeals to me, the product of a good home. He & I had a long chat about the army, Can't I find you see always have to make companions and relate experiences. As far as being an officer he overlooked altogether, was just like the rest of us; Of course they all are but some of them think they belong to some other clan altogether, especially the Imperials.

They gave us tea at five & supper at 9.30.

The tea was light, bread & butter, jam, jam roll & tea. For supper of course we had the real stuff, a big turkey set up on the table, sausage, bacon, dressing Xmas cake etc.

That is the way with the Eng., have supper, then big meal about nine o'clock & then they are not in shape for another good meal till the next night.

They had a maid to do the work, I just had one glimpse at her, she made everything ready and then beat it to the kitchen.

The other fellows who were there were very quiet, I had to do a good deal of the talking, not in my line exactly but when everybody else keeps quiet I let it go. One fellow of C. Co. never said a dozen words while he was there, he is one of the 'sodbusters' from Dyers Bay never been out from behind the Alfalfa as the boys say, and a couple more were very late bethers so MacD had to make up for the rest.

I was glad to get away from the camp any how because there was rather a rough sea on here they tell me, and it looked like it this morning.

I am sending a couple of flash light pictures taken over at the school. I thought the ones especially would give you an idea of the inside of a hut, but I think it rather platters it.

The stove in the library is the kind of stove we all have and the tables & benches are the kind in use here.

In the History class, the Officer on the right as you look at the picture was the secretary but has gone to France, the other Officer is the present secretary.

He is a first contingent man, came over a private, a splendid fellow.

He was over here on Monday & had all the teachers in the Batt^r into the orderly room finding out what we can do for the teaching staff. Several of us are going to help them out, also a couple of the officers.

Half our Xmas mail has not arrived yet at least I don't think so. It is being held up in London they say, the mail for France being sent out first. We had one good mail last week, twelve wagon loads from the station, but there is still a good deal to come & it didn't go up at Halifax.

We have had no Roville these last two mornings. Murray & I slept till 9:30 this morning, the longest I think I ever slept in the morning since I came into the army.

I suppose the new army will be soon be on the war path in Canada now. They are watching every move

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here now, there is sure to be, either
a draft or the Div. go across this winter or
spring.

Nearly all the fellows I have had
a pass now without the last four months
so I am beginning to think that my
turn will come around again in a
month or so, so you better send me
about four £ when you get this letter.
In case of a move I might not need
it but then we have thinking of going
to France for a year so now I never
think about France at all just keep
thinking this is our destination. The best
way to send the money is a bank
cheque in a registered letter or whatever
arrangement does the bank's have. I have
plenty of money to keep me going from the
pay but I never seem to be able to get
much ahead.

Well I guess that is all the news
for this time.

Love to All

Russel

Dec 20/17