

France, Oct. 7/18.

Dear Folk at Home;

This is forenoon, Tom & I have just been out gathering some fire wood for our fire place.

Well my birthday box did not arrive in time but soon after two of them came together the other night. ("date Aug. 26th & 29th). The small cakes you asked to know how they came were not at all crumbled just as natural as when they come out of the oven. I think the icing on the big cakes preserved them, at least it froved rather hard for our molars so I took it all off and melted it down for our rice & porridge, it went better that way I think. The boxes are sure appreciated these times as it is pretty hard to get any extras. Just lately we have been on night work, get three meals within eight hours in the daytime and then go sixteen without, so when we get back about 2 A.M. a piece of cake is a good thing to go asleep on. You see we are away from the French people altogether now since we have started East

so that we are unable to purchase eggs & such stuff as they may have.
 Well the war looks quite favorable of late, since Turkey & Bulgaria are squeezed out, if Austria can be forced to do likewise then Germany is up against the wall sure. I saw in the daily record where the bells were rung & the whistles blew when the above two countries surrendered. (In Canada). There was no such applause over here, it was taken more or less as a matter of fact by the fellows, after going thru the last couple of months ordeal there is not much cheer left, just that artful cheeriness of self in which I think every Canadian feels he is doing his bit to win this war anyhow.

There were overpowering odds against the Canadians in this latest ^{attack} and they had made up their minds to go no further according to fusions & captured documents but after being driven back a piece in the counter-attack they went forward again & went past their objective -

The story goes I won't vouch for its truth that a German officer said that the Cans' were the best fighters in the war as far as his experience had gone. When they are taken prisoner by the Can. they are well used anywhere.

I was talking to Dave Stark the other day. He has been down the line with a slight wound on his hip, & then he was kept on hospital duty for awhile but is back up the line again. He was telling me that he sawt Colntryp. Arthur in the hospital with a bullet hole thro' his hand kind of lengthwise, went in at his wrist & came out somewhere between his fingers.

Gutz dropped a shell pretty near our cook house the other day, wounded one of the cooks, an old timer. It was a pretty lucky one tho', might have been worse. His shelling is pretty much at random now, his aeroplane hardly ever venture over the line ^{in daytime} so he doesn't know when a good target is presented.

I havint seen Jim George for a long time now, Louise & I are the only

two from the neighborhood now
 who are together, so naturally we are
 often together talking over news we
 get and summarizing a whole lot of
 things. Liver is great fellow for talking,
 he can mimic every body in that country
 pretty ~~and~~^{well} and remember things they said.
 He got talking about John Robison last
 night and I was recalling the time he
 came to our place to pay his subscription
 for Ed. Palmer, when Lis. & I laughed
 in his face. Just before going away he
 says "This is the missus" & then his remarks
 about our lawn mower as we used
 to call her (old sow).

Our Co'y Commander has gone on furlough
 at present to Eng. He is being made Major
 over there I believe. Major Dunsmore it
 will be then. He is a pretty good fellow
 in a great many ways, is a good
 living man for one thing. He hails from
 St. Thomas.

I am expecting a letter tonight, some
 Can. mail drifted in last night. I think
 there ought to be more tonight. I am
 anxious to know how Lis. is progressing -
 Love to all Russell

C. S. Oct 10th

Didn't post the letter I had written so am going to add another page. Have not received any more mail.

Had quite an experience the night before last. I was over the top for the first time and saw the way the thing is done anyhow. The engineers had to go right with the infantry and build bridges across the canal for them, ~~then~~ took the light bridges right with us.

We had a bunch of casualties, nobody killed however. The Germans came up across the fields with their hands up, nearly falling over you to show you they had their hands up. Our barrage certainly gets their goat right away.

I didn't get any souvenirs. Jack Callahan got a bunch of watches and other fellows got some nice things, too, but I have my best souvenir right here with me yet, a whole hide.

I think I said some time ago that I was going to send my watch home. Well I lost it since, it was rather a poor success in France, wouldn't seemingly go but it might have been all right if I had sent it back, but anyhow it's gone. A wrist watch is hard to keep here, the others are the best for the knocking around.

So George Martin has been wounded
and is in England. He is lucky for he
is likely thro' with France. Sam. Martin
was inquiring for me the other night
before you went over; he is a ~~Sergeant~~
now, but somehow I missed him
altho' I was right beside a bunch of
his Batt~~ry~~

Had a letter from R. McCadder yesterday.
He is still down the line.

Tom is out boiling his shirt this
morning, fooling there all. We all got
new underwear at the last bath, and it
has just come in right. I guess we will
soon get another coat again of jerkins (that
is the name of our sleeveless leather
coat). We turned them in, in the Spring.

Good bye
Farewell

Very sincerely
John