

Kitley, Jan. 27/18

Dear People at Home,

This is Sunday afternoon and I have just had a big sleep since noon.

A Canadian mail arrived this morning and I received two letters, one written on 23<sup>rd</sup>, other on 30<sup>th</sup>. One was one Elizabeth had written, I was glad to hear that she had recovered so well. The other one had the small bundle from Uncle Bob.

The watch and razor have not come yet, they will likely be along later. Did you register them? Anything like that wants to be labelled "Soldiers' Comforts", not nearly so liable to be lost I think.

I had a letter from Neil this morning and as he expects his pass this week we will sure be glad to see him. I will try to get a pass up to Scotland with him when he comes, he will likely have 14 days, that is the length of nearly all the passes from France now.

We had a good trip down to Coates Castle last week, just got back Friday night and were warned for guard tomorrow morning so we have been fairly jumping since getting ready. We had an inspection at 11 o'clock this morning and proved fairly satisfactory in the Adjutants' eye so all we have to do now is give our brass a scrub up tonight and we are yake



We had fine weather while out at the castle and today is simply a swell warm day for this time of year.

This castle belong to Lord Leconfield. That big lord I told you about last fall who had all the hounds and deer where we stayed one night, but it was not on his estate, about six mile farther on. We stayed in the stable of the castle and it was fairly comfortable. Five of us occupied a stall, about like our box-stall, with a buck floor. The event out to a farm yard one night & gained a few big bundles of straw in so had a fine bed.

On Wednesday we went out on the mountains there called the South downs. It was quite a climb but we had only belts on so it was not difficult. We had to stake out a point that could be used for defensive purposes in case of an invasion from the south.

On Wed. the clouds were low & it was like working in a mist and we could not see the Channel at all but Thursday was clear and the Channel could be seen quite distinctly. We could see the coast towns of Bognor & Worthing.



The people down around Petworth are very sociable give the soldiers a splendid time. I was at a concert at Petworth on Tuesday night and I was more than amused. It was given by children of the town with three or four grown ups and was something like the little school house concerts at home. The school teacher figured largely in getting up the programme she was an artist herself. I think all the fellows who were down to it enjoyed it because of its simplicity, home like indeed. The little kids get up & do their piece as best they could and the rest turn around to see from our expression what we thought of it. Then they sold us a lunch after quite plain I'll tell you, unless you have plenty of Kale here now the best food for rats is in the army.

On Tuesday we were at West Burton making a billeting report of the village, a very small place. Three of us went to a house for water & she was kind enough to take us in and make tea for us. Then she asked us if we cared for bread & jam that was all she had. She said she had not even had margarine for over two weeks, only one small piece of meat in two weeks and no grease or currants to bake cakes since Christmas.



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The poor especially are feeling the pinch this winter. She said she had thrown away bushels of plums last fall because the authorities would give her no sugar to preserve them. Everybody uses jam from the cannery. Martin Welsh is on draft now for France, expects to go inside 10 days. He was the boy that would go to the U.S.A. before he would sign up when we did.

We expect the fellows back from Seaford this week. Major Moffat came up yesterday and is going to try to have another god go down to take the course.

Those corrugated boxes stand the rail pretty good, but you can't beat those tin biscuit boxes. I have seen more of the former shook up.

Well I think this is all for this time. Hope the box gets her allright.  
Love to all

Russell

P.S. I am enclosing a snap taken away last summer from the boy in the hat. I think it is a good fellow, wish I had been in it.