France.
Dec 28/16.

Dear Gladys,

I have just received a new writing pad from my sister, so I can start and write to you without any fear of running short of paper, all this is a good deal I have to say on various topics.

Primarily and in the first place: I want to thank your mother for her letter received just before Xmas to which I hope to reply in the near future, and also yourself for your letter received a couple of weeks ago. Yes, I was really glad to receive it in spite of certain portions of the content. As regards your not feeling like writing you quite understand how the reason for my remarks I guess, as your letter of Oct 6th took over a month to reach me. I replied however to that one, so we'll let that go. I would have liked to have replied to your last letter sooner, but we have been unsettled the last two weeks, not that we are ever really settled. We had to leave the dug-out where I spent the happiest 3 weeks I have had ever here as yet. I forget whether I have told you anything about that period of my sojourn here. There were 3 of us quartered in the dug-out, which was near and fairly large. It was a signalling office, so our work was right to hand and we were very comfortable. Midwinter, yours truly being in charge of it. We ex-
permitted with several species of stoves, but finally finished by building an open fire place in one of the walls. This was a complete success. The dug-out was about 3 miles from Fritz's line, but we never got any shells near than 100 yards, and very few at that. Our chief risk was machine gun bullets at night, which came over the top of our frame at no stated hour. Fritz must have a machine gun position which he could only occupy at night time so we never heard any bullets during the day. Our fellows blew a mine up one night while we were there and there was force Columbia there for about 30 minutes. That was the only excitement we had. We were really sorry to leave that place, especially as we were hoping to spend holidays there. However, we had to leave it, and that was just after your letter arrived. Our billets are now very much the reverse. We are residing in a large barn or stable (very appropriate for times, is't -ce pas?) which never did and apparently never will lack ventilation. The battalion, too, is not engaged on a different job, we are doing rail road construction work, and as no signalling system has been established yet, we have to help with the daily working party and ploy the pick and shovel. We are making standard gauge, metre gauge and light railways, or as they are
commonly called 'Charlie Chaplin' railways.
I can safely trust this form of amusement will
not last long as it is neither easy nor interesting.
Xmas passed very quietly here for us. We were
more fortunate than a good many, I guess, as
there was no working party that day, and we
had a very good meal, the best ever here as yet.
The menu including turkey and plum pudding,
yes, and I was able to have a quiet siesta
on my bunk in the afternoon. This favour
its pastime of wine, I am afraid, has of
necessity been very much neglected these
last few months. Stove had quite a number
of parcels sent before after Xmas. A surprise
for me arrived for me yesterday from Mr X was
weeklong, containing a pair of socks knitted by
Frank himself on his machine. Cigarettes re-
now I am going to thank you for your parcel
altho' I have not had it as yet, unless it is ad
fear. The following is the sad story. He might
before we left our last billet, I received two
parcels, one from my mother & one from
Grimsby. This last seemed to be a round tin
was done up in cloth (presumably white
at one time). The sender's name was K Morris
as far as I could make out. I did not open it
then as we were going to move and I had
no room in my pack, so I left it on my bunk to
the war to my equipment after inspection as we
were inspected by our garrison before leaving. After
the inspection it was nowhere to be found. That is
the whole sad story. Some one else enjoyed the con
lents, or else it was just blown out. If this was yours, I am sorry, but the loss is mine. If not, will you make discreet inquiries and if you can trace the sender, explain matters and truly my thanks, as I don't know whom to thank for it.

I think it was addressed to my sister's place originally. The tin was round about 8" high & 4" in diameter.

Secondly and in continuation, I have another piece of news that may interest you. We have an officer in our company by the name of Griffin, or as we call him "Whizz-bang." He is from Hamilton, and was born at 2:15. Once with a team from Highfield. He is about 5ft 10 in, fair, wears glasses. He says he met you once at a dance in Hamilton. Do you remember him? There is also another short officer from that city by the name of H. R. Nicholson, but I don't know any details regarding him as yet. Nearly all the other officers are from the west.

I had a letter from Miss Manson yesterday enclosing a print of the portrait she took of Harold himself at Lake Town over a year ago. I was surprised to hear that Alf had enlisted. I thought he would be too old for the business. You say he makes the bulk from 1:55. Am I included among the 10 who worked in the farm?

I can well appreciate the trying circumstances under which you wrote your letter even though it was in the seclusion of your own room. I also wrote under trying circumstances but in a different way. Most of this is being written in a standing position by the aid of a candle's light. As they say over here
it is "nonsense."

Thirdly, and once more, I was glad to conclude that your disease did not get such strong hold upon you as to cut short your letter, as you continued for several pages after telling me about Dr. Clark's wonderful discovery, so the truth has at least been revealed? It is too bad Dr. Clark has to learn grudgingly! a continuance of his practice there might have been found with excellent results.

Thusly and in conclusion, like yourself, I have left the most important part of my letter till the end, as I remarked aloud after reading your letter, I would have given all I had to have them (Sarah 50 years, one) for 5 minutes conversation with the writer provided I was allowed to do most of the talking. I'll admit it was near to you, but not to surprise, but do you remember a remark you made in one of your letters to the effect that if I could find no better subject for discussion than D. B., I had better refrain, or words to that effect?

and yet you have the nerve to plunge into 2 whole pages of caustic remarks on the same subject. Your conscience is as a thing of nought, you defy all the rules of the game, you—(picture me very worked up here) and walking up and down. Thinker soon really doing at intervals to keep my feet warm. It will be the old stand by, I suppose.

A girl is always privileged &c., you need not have reminded me that the Atlantic is between us; as Henry VIII. or Henry VIII. or Henry VIII. said, I forgot which; "that was the worst main indest out of all." Now I'll give you a question to
answer. Where does Bruce want in? You
want to have a lot to say about that do you
hmm. I have the middle for me will you
please?

Finally and for the latest time I will
draw to a close. But stay, I had nearly
forgotten one important item of news.
The great stand-by, the weather. We have it
over here in great perfection. Yesterday
must, today rain, tomorrow snow soon.
Shine, so it goes. Remember me to it when
you see her, also Mrs. Steele. Write
sincerely with kindest regards to all, please
write for 1917, which I think will see us
back in Canada. I am yours ever truly

J. A. Clifton Jones

PS. I found it was using too much exper-
nice paper, said the "the last

street. Paper is hard to get here some
times, and in any case one should
always practice "struggling."
ON ACTIVE SERVICE.

COIN OR ARTICLES OF VALUE SHOULD NOT BE SENT IN THIS ENVELOPE.
THIS ENVELOPE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED FOR REGISTRATION.

NOTE.—
Correspondence in this envelope need not be censored Regimentally. The Contents are liable to examination at the Base.
The following Certificate must be signed by the writer:

I certify on my honour that the contents of this envelope refer to nothing but private and family matters.

Signature
(Name only)

Address

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Grimsby
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