

MOLEYNES MEAD ELLERSLIE LANE BEXHILL ON SEA
SUSSEX ENGLAND. started 23rd Apl 1960

Dear Wesley

Whilst it is a fine and sunny day at 9 a.m. the Mist is evidently down on the sea for I hear the foghorn which is at Beachy Head 12 miles away. I thought I would start my return letter to you and over the next few days add a little. I had best tell you that my wife would not come with me on the trip. In fact she is now, I am sorry to say, not well and we have had to put ~~it~~ off a trip we were to make along our coast to Cornwall. We have as you probably know, the finest country in the world for sight-seeing and holidays, such a comparative small country when compared with say Canada, U S A or Australia, but we seem to have collected in it such a variety of scenery, and industrial ugliness

The world is always in torment or shall I say the people in it. We are in the midst of this Black and White affair in S.A. but USA have similar trouble, and I am looking forward to my trip to Canada to see if you have such racial and religious friction. I was interested to learn how your postal services for instance are so dealt with. In any of the smallest villages isolated farms and homesteads there is a twice daily postal delivery. This is probably why emigrants from Britain feel the change when living in Canada and USA after their lifetime acceptance of our complete civil services. There are many who feel in the Welfare State too much is being done. As I am 65 this coming week, the 28th April, I have been "dealt with" by the Old Age Pension Authorities, whose task it is to see that persons arriving at that age DO get their pensions and all that is due to them. I had a letter too from the Retired Pay Dept to tell me I was to receive another £13 per annum for my age group. I am a 40 per cent disability case and for the years from 1918 have been in receipt of this rate of Pension and Retired pay. Useful as it has been it is not a recompense for the inability to do some of the things I would have liked to do, but in many activities I have been able to ride a horse, walk long distances and take me down the River Danube to Vienna from Regensburg in Germany in a single canoe.

Sunday

8th May 1960

As I set off on Tuesday next for a two week walking tour in Eire, Southern Ireland perhaps it would be good to write a few more lines before sending off this letter. Have been as busy as you no doubt, but different work. Gardening is one of the MUSTS at this time of the year and yesterday I visited London, which you may know is the day our Football Cup match is played, incidentally the day after Princess Margarets wedding. I saw the decorations and the crowds still wandering round. This yearly date of the Football Match at Wembley is used also by our Regimental Battalion Re-union meeting, and it is now our 36th meeting. I do not think there is any similar re-union dinner club anywhere in the world. At least we know there is no other battalion or Unit which as kept up for so long this meeting of "old Soldiers". We get less every year and now have 24 members of which 15 of us turned up this time.

We have pledged ourselves to maintain to the last TWO members meeting on this particular day which I have no doubt will never be changed, but we mortal men will in turn come to our "final" and so there will be One survivor and then he will also be gone.

TWO

I am one of X four who were actually in the landing in Gallipoli in 1915 when our battalion took part in the campaign, others of our dinner club, of course, joined the battalion as reinforcements. The whole affair is rather a splendid thing. We meet and talk, have an excellent dinner at the Oxford and Cambridge Club in Pall Mall, which runs parallel to the Mall approaching Buckingham Palace, We toast "The Queen" and then "The Regiment" and then "The Battalion" "Absent Friends"

I discovered that I am the youngest member by a month or so of the nearest. Two are 84 and several nearly 80 One of our members who is still at 66 in the Military service as link between Territorial units and War office was talking to an American USA General recently ab ot the Espri-de-corps and this USA Pentagon man was completely amazed at sych continued friendship at this level.

From about 6 p.m. till train time about 10 p.m. we re-live and share our memories of the days of trench warfare such as as not been comared since, of that particular type, as I said last night... We actually went home on leave for 10 days in turn, and then returned to the same place probably and carried on. It was like a factory job, each taking turn in having a rest and then back to it. Not all the whole period of the 1914 war was like this but certainly from 1915 till early 1918.

One of our dinner members but who was not there last night, he is younger than I and was in the last war and actually had a worse time personally in it than in 1914/18 He had about 12 months of the 1918 war and was still in the reserve of Officers and spent three years in a prison camp in Burma.!!

What a mess we make of our human relationships It is not merely the treatment of Black by White, for there are all shades of colour and of mind in between. This last episode of the USA plane spying over Russian Territory is about the last act of stupidity, and one wonders where these military men will lead us.

Well, I hope your work progresses and life is entertaining for you and your Father well and happy. My wife is not passed as fit enough to go away for a change on account of her diet being special so I am making a change myself and she will go into a Hydro 12 miles away from her Doctor.

Will write you when I return from Eire.

Yours sincerely,

