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32 S.F.T.S.

Moose Jaw,  
Saskatchewan  
Canada.

24.10.43



REGINA, SASK.

Dear Father & Mother,

Very many thanks for all mail received last week, I had quite a load; two gazettes and letter, two papers, three airgraphs and one air-letter from you, an air mail and airgraph from Barbara, and an airgraph from Mrs Noblett.

I should very much like to read the "Leicester Illustrated Chronicle" if you can arrange to have it sent each week; In Regina and Edmonton I managed to see a copy of the "Overseas Times" every week, but in Moose Jaw I have been unable to find one, so could you please have a copy sent to me direct each week.

We've been very busy during the last fortnight, and its now rumoured that we are getting fourteen days leave, starting on the 1st of November. I dont know quite where I shall go, as we do not get a travelling warrant and rail fares from Moose Jaw to anywhere worth visiting are so high, I think I shall try and get to Jasper at Banff though, I would much prefer to have it added to a leave in England, but that impossible I'm afraid, especially as from the

latest "gen" I've received <sup>21</sup> it appears we shall be in Canada for another nine months at least Now, at last! I have an opportunity to write a more detailed account of my first trip to the Rockies, it seems such a long time ago, but they made such a deep impression that the trip still remains quite vivid in my memory.

I nearly didn't go as the rail fare was eleven dollars (that is the single fare, forces get a return ticket for single fare in Canada) and the majority of the fellows couldn't afford it, and a few that could didn't think it was worth it for two days, but they were a few; the majority of the fellows are always broke, a few days after pay day, when they have paid their debts they start borrowing again, I haven't been really short so far, although some weeks I've had to watch it; By the way I don't know whether we told you, I thought I had but from your <sup>letter</sup> I apparently haven't, our basic rate of pay here is \$1-50¢ (about 7/-) plus 75¢ (about 3/-) flying pay making \$2-25¢ per day; \$5-75¢ income tax is deducted every fortnight.

At Edmonton we were not drawing flying pay but the same income tax was being deducted, this was rather a sore point especially as the Dominion forces do not pay any income tax. But as I was saying I couldn't get anyone



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else to go with me to Jasper, so I decided to go alone; I caught the Transcontinental on Saturday morning and arrived in Jasper 2 1/2 hours late, at 5 o'clock; we were held up by some trucks of a freight train that had been derailed, I quite enjoy travelling out here though, not because of the scenery which is often very tedious, but because of the great variety of different types of people one meets, and as they are usually far more sociable than on an English train, the many opportunities presented for interesting conversations.

In Jasper I managed to get quite a nice room and bed for \$1 per day.

On Saturday evening I found two excellent guides, local boys, one 16 and the other 13 who provided me with a cycle that belonged to one of their fathers, and took me round the neighbourhood on Saturday and Sunday morning.

On Sunday night I went to evening at the small Anglican church.

On Monday morning I hired a horse and joined a party that were going along some of the

pony trails round <sup>4/</sup>Pyramid Mountain (9,076' above  
M.S.L.) horse back is the only way to reach many  
of the beauty spots in the district; many of the  
wild animals in the park are fairly tame and  
riding along trails through the forest I saw  
a lot of Elk, mule deer, coyote, and black and  
brown bears, which are quite amusing to watch;  
some even wander into the Town and carry  
out some very funny little tricks to try and  
induce the people to give them a few tip-bits;  
To see a great black bear sitting up begging  
is really comical.

I cannot attempt in the time and space  
available to describe the beauty of the great  
towering peaks, the enchanting splendour of  
of the snow covered slopes of Mt. Edith Cavell  
(11,033-ft. above M.S.L.) the Angel glacier so called  
because its shape is like an angel with  
outspread wings; or the clear, deep blue waters  
of Lake Edith, where we bathed on Sunday  
afternoon, 5,000 ft above M.S.L.; it was quite a  
warm afternoon and the water looked so  
inviting, but it was rather deceiving, it  
turned out to be much colder than we anticipated  
so after we had been swimming around for  
about ten minutes, we <sup>were</sup> forced to come out  
on to the bank to thaw.

We rode back to Gasper along part of the 149 mile



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long highway that joins Jasper to Banff, completed in 1939, for quite a considerable distance it runs parallel to the wide, swift flowing Athabaska River, which eventually empties its waters into Hudsons Bay.

I left Jasper at 4 o'clock on Monday afternoon, my only regret being that I could not stay longer in this mountain paradise.

I have accumulated during my travels in Canada a lot of post cards, views, and printed matter about Regina, Edmonton, Jasper, and Moose jaw etc, which I will see about sending home, as I'm sure you will find them interesting.

If there is anything in the way of clothing etc that you would like or cannot get I will try to obtain same, and send them, conditions have changed a little since Allen Bastle was here, and many foods are now rationed, or are unobtainable unless you are known, but if there is anything you would like please let me know.

In one of your letters you ask me if I've considered what I am going to do when I come out of the service; well, I've naturally thought about

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it, and I'm sure of one thing, I have no intention of ever going back into a mass production factory, or indeed into mechanical engineering at all if I can possibly help it, that is one thing that I shall always remain grateful to the Air Force for, it took me out of the rut into which I had so innocently fallen, the rut that ~~no~~ causes mental stagnation, and loss of initiative, because the mind becomes resigned to the daily toil as a means of paying for the small pleasures of a smoke, drink, a night at the cinema and an occasional week by the sea.

It need not of necessity, be a bad life I know, some men seem to find it quite satisfactory, it depends on the mental attitude to a large extent; but in my opinion the daily occupation should not be a toil but a source of pleasure through interest and the knowledge that one is achieving or has a reasonable chance of achieving something in the world of constructive thought.

As I was saying though, I have in mind three possible courses which I might or should like to take after the War; they are as follows.

If I may as you suggest stay in the services if the pay and chances of promotion seem reasonably good; this depends on so many unknown



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factors though, that at present I see no useful purpose in going into the matter any further, it remains a thing to be considered, just a possibility.

Probably the most likely course to go into the social services either National (civil service) or local government (a lot depends on contacts of course) where the opportunities and scope should I imagine be particularly good after the War, considering the amount of reorganization that will be necessary; but here again I have to be rather ambiguous, I cannot state any specific department or branch as too much depends on unknown opportunities that may, or may not present themselves, and conditions prevailing at the time.

One thing that I have found out by mixing with many fellows of my own age who have been educated and developed in many different environments, is that my mind seems to take to administration and organization generally far easier than the majority, and whilst I am being constantly reminded of my

educational deficiencies, which are I know  
pretty great and mainly due to the six  
practically wasted years spent in "Hell" sorry  
"L" but believe me, from my point of view  
quite appropriately named; which are quite a  
big drawback, I still think that, while I  
know I am not in any way, and make no  
pretence to be a genius; my mental make  
up, the action of my brain, my outlook on life  
if you like, is definitely different from the  
majority of my contemporaries; and  
consequently that while I have made very  
few close friends in the service mainly  
because my interests are not the same and  
I detest following a crowd or being a  
member of a clik, I have made very few,  
if any enemies, and am generally treated  
respectfully or merely friendly by all types.  
I write this to give you some idea of the  
lines along which my mind runs when I think  
of the future.

I could and sometimes do go about with other  
fellows but their activities usually bore me  
stiff, unless they have a game in the drill hall  
when I usually join in.

Of the third and most unlikely I suppose, but  
still I think my first choice if financial  
considerations did not decree otherwise



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would be to make a serious study of anthropology (that is the application of science, biology, economics, and history, mainly, to human evolution and general social conditions) at the same time take a teachers certificate in history, geography and biology; but this I'm afraid must remain just a dream as it would mean spending at least three years at a university, which at my age and in my position would not be very practicable, unless Mr Butlers "Further education and training scheme" bears fruit; I'm no doubt that you have read a lot about it in the papers though, I read a long article in the "Times" about it a few weeks ago. If anything comes of it, it certainly might help; in any case demobilization would have to be very slow to avert the disaster of flooding industry and business with far more men than they can possibly absorb until reconstruction plans really get under way. I have a few more ideas of even more revolutionary nature but I will not bore

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you any further with ideas and ambitions that depend on so many ifs.

I've tried to answer your question as clearly as possible, I apologize if some of my remarks do not meet with your approval or appear as dear old Leaske would say hypothetical, they are not I admit, as practicable or as definite as I should like them to be, but when so many unknown quantities are involved, I see no alternative, I have though, I hope, given you some indication of the type of career I desire, and I shall await with interest your remarks on my exposition.

After this long and rather disconnected discourse I had hoped to write a few lines on life in Moose Jaw, but as I've very little time left, I shall have to leave it until I write again. I enquired at the post office in Moose Jaw about these "War Effort" stamps and they had not seen or heard anything about them, I had not heard of them before, but I will make further enquires.

I retired to bed early tonight with the intention of getting some extra sleep, but I started writing this letter, and it's now nearly 11 o'clock (lights out) you will I'm sure realize that this letter is written for you only. Please do not show it to other people, as they might misinterpret my meanings, you have I hope through me long enough not to. Ever your most devoted son, Ray.